



Southwestern Texas Synod

For the Common Good: A Resource for Congregations in Public Life

We are grateful to share a new resource, **For the Common Good: Prayers and Resources for Congregations in Public Life**, developed by the Northwest Intermountain Synod's Prayer and Presence in Public Life Task Force.

As we move through another election season, many of our congregations are asking an important question: **What does faithful Christian presence in public life look like?**

The answer is not that the church tells people how to vote. Our calling is deeper than that. We are communities formed by Word and Sacrament, called to love our neighbors, seek the common good, listen across differences, pray for those who serve in public life, and participate faithfully in the communities of which we are a part.

This resource begins from that Lutheran grounding. It reminds us that faith is not something confined to our homes or church buildings, but something lived in community and in the public square. It also challenges us to remain in conversation with people whose experiences and perspectives may differ from our own, seeking understanding and respect even amid disagreement.

That feels particularly important in a season when public life can be marked by conflict, fear, mistrust, and deep disagreement. The church has something distinctive to offer in such a time: not another partisan voice, but communities grounded in prayer, grace, truth, hope, and love of neighbor. The resource reminds us that worship itself forms us for this work—restoring us in God's mercy and hope and then sending us into the world for the good of our communities.

For the Common Good includes theological reflection, connections between worship and civic life, hymn suggestions, ideas for praying for public servants and election workers by name, resources for special services or vigils, and prayers that can be incorporated into Sunday worship. Among them are prayers for poll workers, election officials, candidates for public office, voters, public trust, nonviolence, and free and fair elections.

No congregation will use every piece of this resource. That isn't the intention. Rather, we encourage pastors, deacons, worship leaders, councils, and congregations to explore it and ask: **What might help us be a faithful, prayerful presence in our community right now?**

For such a time as this, may our congregations be places where people are grounded in Christ, where neighbors are treated with dignity, where differences do not have to become divisions, and where we are continually sent out to seek the well-being of all.

Love, Bishop Sue