

6 Ways to Pray For Our Country During The Election

World Vision, Written by Katie Taylor on August 16, 2024

How can we be more Christlike – in word and deed – during the 2024 U.S. election? We know a few things for sure: We're called to love others (John 15:12). We're called to pray for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-2). And we're called to live in unity (Ephesians 4:3). In an election year, choosing love feels extra challenging when your environment often pushes you to pick one side and shun the other. How can we keep choosing to love rather than burying our heads under our pillows until November 5? God sees our frustration and confusion. And He promises that when we lift our voices and thoughts in prayer for our country, He'll give us guidance and peace.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- *Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)*

It seems too simple. And sometimes our voices feel too small. But when we pray, we allow God to start growing our capacity to love each other as Jesus does – even people who are the most different from us. As we approach the 2024 presidential election, we're humbled that God saw our anger, confusion, and prejudice and still loved us enough to send His Son to be our Savior. That perspective calms our frustration and calls us to prayer. Our bold decision to kneel at God's throne when we're being pulled to one side or the other allows God to change our hearts – and the hearts of people we pray for. This election year, let's unite in prayer for our country and its leaders, asking God to help us all see each other with His love.

1. Pray for candidates to seek God's guidance.

More than 8 in 10 members of Congress claim faith in Jesus. But like all of us, they're susceptible to losing sight of what's most important to God. Pray that they would seek God first as they seek to serve our country. For those who don't publicly follow Christ, pray that they would seek wise counsel and be encouraged toward good perspectives and actions by the Christians around them.

[ALoud] Dear Lord, thank You that we have government representatives who believe Your truth. Remind them to seek Your guidance as they make decisions that affect our country and world. Send them godly wisdom and good counselors.

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2. Pray that candidates (and all of us!) would have listening ears and soft hearts.

Most of us have been guilty of preparing an answer before someone has even finished asking a question. Or we've been so concerned with promoting our own agenda that we fail to understand the big picture. During elections we see this even more, in our personal lives and in political campaigns. We all – our leaders included – need the humility to listen first.

[ALOUD] Lord Jesus, forgive us for the times we've entered a conversation without really listening. Show us how to listen with open and humble hearts, especially to people different from us. Help our leaders to do the same. Teach us as a nation to focus less on getting our way and more on loving our neighbors, especially the most vulnerable among us. Lord, give our leaders and prospective leaders the strength to be humble, soft-hearted, and willing to listen to every voice.

3. Pray for candidates to address poverty and justice issues.

The 2024 election will have lasting effects on issues deeply important to Americans. People with money and power will have an easier time promoting their perspectives, but the election will also affect others without the means to amplify their voices. God's Word calls us to "uphold the cause of the poor and oppressed" (Psalm 82:3, NIV). We can start by praying that leaders would care about issues affecting the most vulnerable and work to address them.

[ALOUD] Father God, we are grateful that You love each of us no matter our status or abilities. Thank You that You walk with children and families struggling against poverty and injustice, calling us to do the same. We ask that candidates running for election would speak out about poverty and listen to the voices of the vulnerable. Give our leaders wisdom to create solutions that empower people living in poverty to survive and thrive. Help us to answer Your call to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You.

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4. Pray for strength and encouragement for our leaders and election candidates.

Public service is exhausting in the best of times. People who hold, or are running for, positions of power expose themselves to high levels of scrutiny. It's easy to become discouraged and lose sight of what inspired them to run for office in the first place. As Christians, we can encourage our leaders even when we don't agree with them, and even when we didn't vote for them. We show Christ's love when we choose to say a prayer for the leaders of our country – no matter what.

[ALoud] Holy Father, thank You for creating each of us with unique gifts, and for gifting some with leadership abilities to help guide our country. For everyone running for office, whether they win or lose, give them the strength to make good decisions both in and out of the public eye. Help them readily give grace – and receive it. Protect their families from bitterness and discouragement. May every leader be encouraged by the truth that Your love is always stronger than hate.

5. Pray that our leaders would commit to working together (and that we would too).

God purposely created us with differences and designed us to work together. “Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12, NIV).

We are one nation, but made up of many different parts – so it's easy to become divided. We hear “us vs. them” rhetoric on TV and in the news. And sometimes we're guilty of buying into it. But we pray against the idea that we cannot work together. We lift up a prayer for government and we pray that, with God's grace, we would work as a nation toward unity.

[ALoud] Jesus, thank You for humbling Yourself to walk alongside us as a man. Help our leaders be willing to walk alongside each other, their constituents, and especially the marginalized. Our leaders have different opinions and priorities; give them the wisdom to navigate differences and work together to strengthen

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our country. Remind us in this election year that You have called Christians to be one body.

6. Pray that we would see each other through Jesus' eyes.

Imagine how different our lives would be if we loved each other like Jesus loves us. It's not always easy to love our own family and friends, let alone people who seem to insult us or our beliefs. During the election, we'll see people default to anger, and we may do the same ourselves. But Jesus' call to love makes no exceptions for election season.

[ALoud] God, forgive us for the times we've failed to treat each other as Your creation. Forgive us for celebrating unloving behavior in our candidates and our leaders. Call our leaders and political candidates to a new level of respect and civility. Remind them that You are sovereign and that the wisest choice we can make is to serve You and serve others. May there be a new movement of collaboration and respect in our nation's capital and throughout the country. Give Your people the strength to lead by example with radical, world-changing love.