

1. How does one go about voting? When do we vote? Where do we vote?

You need to be 18 years of age on Election Day and you must be a Canadian Citizen. Election Day is May 2, 2011.

Before Election Day, you need to make sure your name is on the Voters List, prepared by Elections Canada. It contains the names and addresses of registered voters in each electoral district.

Check Elections Canada website and confirm that you are on the register. This site will give you directions about getting your name added to the list, or correcting information that is incorrect.

You will receive a Notice of Registration card that will provide you with the address of the polling where you vote on Election Day. Polls are open from 9am-9pm EST and 8am-8pm CST. If you are unable to vote on May 2, 2011 you may vote at an advance poll, by proxy or mail.

Advance Polls: Every district has advance poll locations, the dates, times and locations of these polls are provided on the Notice of Registration card.

Proxy Voting: A Canadian Citizen who is house bound, hospitalized or cannot get out to vote can still have a voice; they have to give another Canadian Citizen a proxy.

2. What is the best way to talk with a candidate about issues that are important to me? Can you get past the show that politicians seem to put on in public?

The best way to speak to a candidate:

- Choose someone to represent your church
- Use terms of respect. If the candidate is a Minister, be sure to address them as Minister.
- Set up a meeting with the candidate by calling the campaign headquarters; be sure to mention that you are a registered voter.
- Go into the meeting prepared, candidates are very busy and have many demands on their time, respect their time restrictions.
- Be concise- communicate everything that needs to be communicated in ½ hour or less, make it real and bring in personal experiences.
- Ask clear questions and ask for a response to them, leave your contact information so that the candidate can get back to you.
- Send a thank you note and follow up with any information that adds to the presentation of your stand on certain issues.
- If you have met with all candidates, and we recommend that you do, be sure to send them all a note after the election, either congratulating them on winning or thanking them for the contribution that they have made to the process.

3. How do I decide which candidate will best represent me?

Informed Voting- All of the candidates running in your community are representatives of different political parties. Each one of those parties has a platform that has been adopted by its membership. You can start by looking at each of those platforms on the party websites.

Most of the media focus leading up to an election is focused on the leader of a party, but that doesn't necessarily mean that your local candidate's views are being expressed in the media so you need to make an effort on the local level to get to know what your candidate stands for and how you can work with them so that they best represent you.

4. Once I know what a candidate stands for, what comes next?

You can participate on a different level once you decide to stand with a certain candidate.

Volunteer your time on the campaign-go door to door; make phone calls for the candidate etc.

Donate

Restrictions exist on churches supporting specific parties or candidates, but members of a church and staff members of that church are not restricted in volunteering their time.

5. I have researched the Candidates, and none seem to fit with my beliefs, should I just skip voting this time?

Don't skip the vote! We need to pick the best candidate; there is no such thing as a perfect candidate. The best candidate is someone that you can build a relationship with, someone that will keep the lines of communication open.

Vote your values- best, not perfect