

August 13 Partisan Primary Election A Voting Guide from the WCC

At the WCC we often speak of the importance of connecting “Jesus and Justice in Public.” We know that the Church has a deep history of healthy engagement in the political sphere and want to help encourage Christians to be part of a healthy civic life...On a very basic level, both [“politics” and ...civic engagement] are about community and how we are in community with each other - an essential reality of the life of faith. – Excerpt *Jesus and Justice in Public* – A Study-Action Guide by the Wisconsin Council of Churches



How to Vote

Go to the Wisconsin Voter Information site at <https://myvote.wi.gov> to vote by absentee mail, to find your polling place, to register to vote and see a sample ballot. You may be in a new voting district starting with the August 13 election and have new candidates. You can see that on your ballot.

Photo identification is required. To find out what forms of photo ID are allowed, how to obtain a free photo ID if you don't have one, requirements for absentee voting, etc., call your local elections official or visit <https://elections.wi.gov/photoid>

What is on my Ballot?

When voting in the primary you will need to choose a party and can only vote for candidates in that one party. If you vote for candidates in multiple parties, your votes will not count.

Your ballot may include primary elections for:

- ✓ Local Issues
 - County-level offices
 - County executives
- ✓ State
 - Assembly and some state Senate members
 - Two constitutional amendments ([See other side for more info](#))
- ✓ National
 - Members of Congress - Senate & House of Representatives

See **insert side 2** to find the 2 Constitutional Amendment questions.

How do I learn more about candidates?

The League of Women offers vote411.org where you can enter your address and view candidate information personalized for your ballot.

View your ballot and find your polling place at www.myvote.wi.gov

Constitutional Amendments on August Ballot

Doug Poland, Partner at Stafford Rosenbaum LLP, Ruling Elder at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Madison, has written an article, “**Understanding Proposed Amendments to the Wisconsin Constitution in a Christian Context**” that can be found using the QR code or visiting <https://bit.ly/August13ProposedAmendments>



The Ballot Questions

Question 1: Delegation of appropriation power.

Question 2: Allocation of federal moneys.

- The background for both questions is the same: Under current Wisconsin law, the Governor has authority to accept federal moneys on behalf of the state and to allocate those funds in emergency situations without the specific approval or participation of the legislature.
 - Currently, Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) works under the executive branch to coordinate disaster response efforts.
- These two questions, if answered “yes,” would replace the system that has existed for more than 50 years and would instead grant to the Wisconsin State Legislature the “sole power” to determine how funds are appropriated. This would remove the Governor’s current authority to allocate federal funds accepted on behalf of the state without the approval of the Legislature.
- Support for the proposed constitutional amendments has been voiced by some Republican legislators but opposed by groups like the Wi Education Association Council, League of Women Voters, Wi Association of Local Health Departments & Boards, Wi Conservation Voters, Wi Democracy Campaign, and Wi Public Health Association.
- It is difficult not to see the proposed constitutional amendments as an attempt by the Legislature to grab for itself power that it does not now and never has had. This appears to be another attempt by the Legislature to vastly expand its own power and to take away power that has been used by Republican and Democratic Governors alike for decades to ensure that federal funds are quickly distributed to those in need in times of emergency.

In considering how to vote on August 13, we, as Christians, should consider the justness of the existing laws and government structures that ensure our neighbors will receive emergency assistance in times of disaster, and we should consider how an attempt by one political body to seize power solely for itself and its own control will impede the swift distribution of relief to our neighbors in need of times of emergency. Just as Jesus opposed and challenged the unjust laws in his day to ensure that God’s justice and mercy were done, and the earliest disciples similarly challenged prohibitions by the authorities on their acts of mercy and healing, we as followers of Jesus Christ have an obligation to engage in our civic lives in a way that most actively promotes mercy, compassion, and healing, and that resists efforts to seize power and control that serve no just purpose.