

AME Church relaunches voter education program

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [January 1, 2020](#) issue



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In December, the African Methodist Episcopal Church announced the relaunch of AME Voter Alert, its voting awareness campaign. The goal of the campaign is to encourage AME congregants—and the nation’s black communities more broadly—to vote in the 2020 presidential election.

A voter toolkit, available online, provides resources for potential voters, including solutions for voter suppression, and answers to frequently asked questions like how to register to vote and how to access polling sites. Additionally, the denomination has highlighted four issues it would like congregants to mobilize around: the rights of formerly incarcerated people, the 2020 census, climate change, and gun control.

In a press release, Valerie Gary Bell, president of the AME Connectional Lay Organization, said gun control was of particular significance to the AME community because members are still reeling from the 2015 shooting at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, that left nine people dead.

“It calls us to be vigilant—even in the face of a wealthy organization such as the NRA—for more effective gun control,” she said.

In the same press release, Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker, director of the Social Action Commission, said the denomination plans to be “all in” when it comes to the election.

“One hundred percent voter turn-out should not be impossible to achieve. We know that people will show up. . . . This is important for future generations. We must leave a legacy,” she said.