Siblings in Christ,

The time is almost here. Election day is almost upon us.

For the last few months, my newsletter articles have been an encouragement for you to think faithfully about your role in American civic life, particularly as related to the upcoming election. Some people have called this the most important election our country has had in many years.

As Christians, we are not called to be partisan – Christ does not call us to be Democrats or Republicans. But Christ also does not call us to be apolitical. The gospel is, by its very nature, political, because Jesus was political. He challenged the prevailing notion that might makes right. He challenged the prevailing notion that those in power could enforce their will on the powerless just because they were in power.

Instead, Jesus was on the side of justice. Jesus was on the side of mercy. Jesus was on the side of the poor, and on the side of those who were silenced by the powerful.

There’s a modern belief that religion, or faith, should be private. Personal. But that’s not true – in fact, it takes religion and makes it an idol. Jesus called us to be public in our proclamation of our faith.

In his first public proclamation as a teacher, Jesus read from the book of Isaiah: “The Spirit of our God is upon me: because the Most High has anointed me to bring Good News to those who are poor. God has sent me to proclaim liberty to those held captive, recovery of sight to those who are blind, and release to those in prison – to proclaim the year of our God’s favor.” (Luke 4:18-19)

We are called by Jesus to proclaim the year of jubilee, the freedom from bondage to sin and debt.

How do we do that as members of society? How do we live out our faith?

Because as Lutherans, we are called to do so. Luther talked about two kingdoms: the spiritual kingdom, or the kingdom of God, which we are called to help try to bring to fruition, and the kingdom of the world, which is the day-to-day life in which we live – the world in which we vote and follow the law and go to work or school and shop for groceries. And we are called to make that kingdom the very best that we can, as well.

How do we do that? We refuse to keep our faith private. We take our faith with us into the voting booth. We take our faith with us into the grocery stores, and when we’re in traffic and deciding whether to let someone merge into traffic.

We don’t have to agree. But we do have to agree that we are all children of God. We do have to agree that, as children of God, we are all sacred. We are all holy. We can trust the reality that we are united with Christ.

Take all of this – everything I’ve written over the past four months – and give it whatever weight you think it deserves.

And then go vote your faith.