



Living in the Balance

September and October 2020

The 19th Amendment states that “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” And 100 years later we celebrate its ratification. Yippee! Women can vote. And for most people that is the end of the story. But the truth is that many women could vote before the ratification and not every woman could vote after ratification. In an Op-Ed by the *New York Times* Editorial Board on August 14, 2020, they address the long and arduous journey that continued....and still continues....long after ratification to secure the rights of not only black women, but people of all colors and ethnicities to exercise their right to vote “....Among those (changes).....were the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 and the adoption of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, the 24th Amendment (prohibiting poll taxes) in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965, along with its amendments of 1970 and 1975. In other words, the 19th Amendment was one step in a long, racially fraught battle for voting rights that seemed secure a few decades ago but face a grave threat today.”

And so it is. At this very moment voting in 2020 is under peril. Our most fundamental right of participation in this republic is heavily under threat from those elected to protect and defend the US Constitution. Our President is attempting to block the right to vote by strangling the flow of mail, seeking limits on absentee voting even as we struggle with a pandemic, and promoting unfounded conspiracy theories about the danger of mail in voting which some states have been using for years. And a number of states are equally culpable in restricting voting by their actions or inactions. Threats from and collusion with foreign governments may be an issue as well, but the most egregious violations of our voting rights are coming from within our own governmental houses.

We cannot allow anything to restrict the right to vote. REGISTER! VOTE! Make sure that you understand where and how to vote. Check to make sure that your personal voter registration is correct. This information is readily available online through your state election commission. Many states have specific requirements and deadlines for registering and voting. Do NOT delay. Do not let anyone or anything stand in your way. Once you are registered make sure others are as well. You can make a difference one voter at a time.

On this anniversary of the 19th Amendment, we cannot take anything for granted. As we have seen, many laws and an additional Amendment were necessary for voting rights to be opened to women and other American citizens. We must continue to be vigilant and clear all barriers whatever they may be.

Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it. *Susan B. Anthony*

Voting is not only our right....it is our power. *Loung Ung*

The future of this republic is in the hands of the American Voter. *Dwight D. Eisenhower*

Every election is determined by the people who show up. *Larry Sabato*

Voting is a civics sacrament *Theodore Hesburgh*

Who we elect as President will represent our values on the world stage.

There is no such thing as a vote that doesn't matter. *Barack Obama*

Your vote is precious, almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union.
John Lewis



About Spiritual Direction —

- Offers a space and time for you to explore, reflect upon, and deepen your relationship with God.
- Provides a haven from the daily busyness of the outer world and opens a time to be still and to reflect on your inner journey.
- Is a companioning relationship grounded in dialogue and discernment.
- Explores ways you may integrate spirituality into your daily life.
- Is not limited to any one spiritual practice or tradition.
- May involve one or two meetings or multiple meetings over time.

You may wish to consider spiritual companioning if you are —

- Longing for a deeper relationship with the Divine
- Looking for a place to dialogue about spiritual questions
- Seeking ways to connect with the Spirit in a more intentional way
- Discerning ways to live in a more integrated and whole way
- Standing at a crossroads in your life
- Exploring new or fresh ways to be in relationship with God

For more information about Spiritual Direction, please feel free to contact me by phone
864-246-3960 or via email at wmeade@meadellc.com

Wanda Meade, M.Ed.
Completed Haden Institute in Spiritual Direction Program
PO Box 14940
Greenville, SC 29610



All of these photos are mine. Taken in Washington, DC and in Philadelphia.