



## 2020 is the Year to Be Counted.

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# Integrating the Census into Worship: Census Sermon Guide

## Dignity

- We believe that all people, regardless of race, religion, or immigration status, are made in the divine image. Our existence and our divinely given dignity demand recognition by our government. That means we must all be counted in the Census.
- What we declare when we answer the Census is that we are here, and we are part of “we the people” and we refuse to be excluded.
- “Fear not” is the most often-repeated phrase in Hebrew and Christian scripture – mentioned a combined 365 times. Do not be afraid to state your presence by answering the Census.
- Originally, the Census counted every white man, woman and child as a full person, counted enslaved people of African descent as  $\frac{3}{5}$  of a person, and didn’t count Native Americans at all. But now we have an opportunity to reclaim the census as a tool for dignity, justice, and equity.

## Community

- When you count yourself by completing the Census, you are also making sure your neighbor’s child has a seat in their classroom and their mother has access to medical care. We must work together to make sure that everyone in our community is counted so we all get the resources we deserve.
- The 2020 Census’ impact on our communities is profound. It shapes everything from whether we have fair political representation in Congress to whether our roads, hospitals, schools and fire departments have the funding they need to support our health and well-being.
- You count in this country. Your work and your contribution to the common good moves beyond the walls of where we worship. Your voice matters. All people, regardless of your voting eligibility, can be counted in the census.

## Democracy

- If we are undercounted in the Census, we are under-represented in Congress, diminishing our voices and depriving us of democracy and equality.
- A full, accurate count lays the foundation for a healthy democracy and communities where families thrive and flourish. By completing the Census and encouraging our communities do so, we claim our rightful representation and fulfill our responsibility to our neighbors and future generations.
- It is important to be counted in the Census because it provides economic empowerment and political empowerment. To participate in our democracy is to be counted.

## Litany on Dignity and Justice

**Reader:** God, you tell us that we are made in your image. We believe that all people, regardless of race, religion, or immigration status have inherent dignity because you made us. Our God-given dignity demands recognition.

**All:** We will celebrate our dignity and we will count ourselves!

**Reader:** Diversity is part of being human. God delights in the abundance of differences His human creatures possess. The book of Revelation describes the final gathering of God's people from "every nation, tribe, and tongue" (Revelation 7:9).

**All:** We will celebrate our dignity and we will count ourselves!

**Reader:** The angels and elders around God's throne adore Jesus with the words "with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Revelation 5:9). So God enjoys the diversity within the human race. We are each created in His image for His pleasure and glory (Revelation 4:11; Colossians 1:16). He designed us the way we are and delights in His handiwork (Psalms 139:13-16).

**All:** We will celebrate our dignity and we will count ourselves!

**Reader:** In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching, show integrity and seriousness. (Titus 2:7) Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor. (1 Peter 2:17)

**All:** We will celebrate our dignity and we will count ourselves!

**Reader:** I had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people and tongue. (Rev. 7:9) Fortify efforts to restore peoples of this country and welcome them into our midst.

**All:** We will celebrate our dignity and we will count ourselves!

## Prayers of the Faithful on the Census:

***Response: Lord, hear our prayer.***

As we listened to the Word of God during the Christmas season, we heard that “a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.” May the census this year be a faithful count of all people in the U.S.

***We pray to the Lord.***

For our nation and our own community as a Census 2020 is taken and for all who will take part in the census ***We pray to the Lord.***

For the Census 2020 that we may take it serious for its importance in determining the dollars in federal funding that are received by the states and its communities each year. ***We pray to the Lord.***

For a faithful participation of our community in the Census 2020 so that our State will have a correct number of seats for the Congress. ***We pray to the Lord.***

That we may trust that all the information taken during the census may be held in confidence and therefore everyone may take part in the census.

***We pray to the Lord.***

That all employees of the Census 2020 may be respectful and well-versed to include all peoples in our communities. ***We pray to the Lord.***

That the census may shape the many aspects of our community according to our reality. ***We pray to the Lord.***

That all of us may do our part in getting a complete and accurate count in the Census 2020. ***We pray to the Lord.***

# Sacred Texts Related to the Census, Respect and Justice

## Old Testament – Hebrew Scriptures

- "Take a census of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, every male, head by head from twenty years old and upward, whoever is able to go out to war in Israel, you and Aaron shall number them by their armies. "With you, moreover, there shall be a man of each tribe, each one head of his father's household. Numbers 1:2-46 ???
- "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights.  
I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.  
"He will not cry out or raise His voice, nor make His voice heard in the street.  
"A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish;  
He will faithfully bring forth justice. "He will not be disheartened or crushed.  
Until He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law." Isaiah 42:1-4
- Therefore, the LORD longs to be gracious to you. And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.  
Isaiah 30:18
- "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11

## New Testament Christian Scriptures

- “In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world...So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.” (Luke 2:1-5)
- "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. \_ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." \_ He also told them this parable: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit? \_ The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher. \_ "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? \_ How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. Luke 6:37-42
- “His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’” Matthew 25:21
- Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. (1 Peter 2:17)
- His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit (Ephesian 2:15-22)

## Prayer for Bulletin Insert

God of all Peoples,

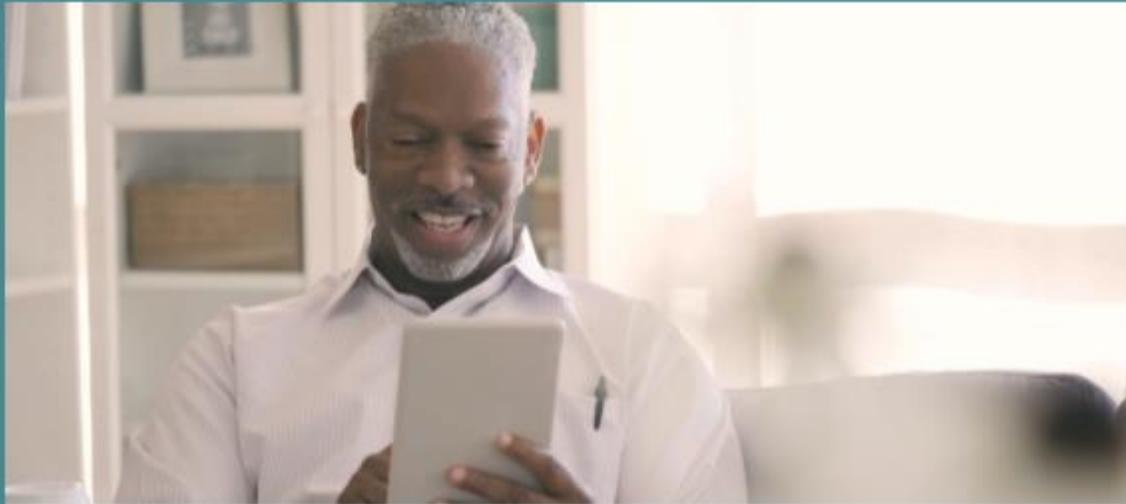
Please help everyone in our communities to be counted in the Census for 2020.

You know our fears, our challenges and questions about taking part in this census.

Help us to have the courage, strength and insight to participate so that every person is counted in this important event in our country.

We need to be counted to have our necessary representatives, the federal money that we deserve and show the diversity of who we are in the United States.

We make this prayer in a God who loves and cares for each of us. Amen.



## Respond to the 2020 Census online.

The 2020 Census marks the first time you will be invited to respond online—even on your mobile device. You can respond by phone or mail—they're secure, too—but going online is a great option, because it is:

### **Convenient**

You can respond from anywhere, at any time, using a mobile phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer. You just need to be connected to the internet.

### **Easy**

When you respond online, the website will guide you through each question on the 2020 Census and provide more information if you need it. The census form will be available in English and 12 additional languages. Videos and guides to the form will be available in 59 languages.

### **Secure**

All responses submitted online are encrypted to protect personal privacy. Once responses are received, they are no longer online.

### **How to respond online: as easy as 1-2-3**

1. In March 2020, your household will receive an invitation in the mail to respond online.
2. Visit [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov) to access and complete the census questionnaire.
3. You're done!

For more information, visit:

**2020CENSUS.GOV**

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2020**

# 2020 Census FAQ

## What is the census?

The census is a count of every person who lives in the United States and its territories. It happens every 10 years. In early 2020, you will be asked to count everyone who lives in your home as of April 1. Responding to the 2020 Census is a chance to shape your future.

## What's In It for me?



Your responses inform where over \$675 billion is distributed each year to communities nationwide for clinics, schools, roads, and more.



Census data gives community leaders vital information to make decisions about building community centers, opening businesses, and planning for the future.



Responding also fulfills your civic duty because it's mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The United States has counted its population every 10 years since 1790.



Your responses are used to redraw legislative districts and determine the number of seats your state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

## Is my information safe?

Your responses to the 2020 Census are safe, secure, and protected by federal law. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics. They cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way—not by the FBI, not by the CIA, not by the DHS, and not by ICE.

## When can I respond to the census?

In early 2020, every household in America will receive a notice to complete the census online, by phone, or by mail. In May, the U.S. Census Bureau will begin following up in person with households that have yet to respond.

## What will I be asked?

You will be asked a few simple questions, like age, sex, and the number of people who live in your home, including children.

## What won't be asked?

The census will never ask for Social Security numbers, bank or credit card numbers, money or donations, or anything related to political parties.

For more information, visit:

**2020CENSUS.GOV**

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2020

# The 2020 Census is accessible for everyone.

We're making sure that **however you choose to respond**—online, by phone, or by mail—that **the census is accessible**. You'll receive an invitation to respond **beginning in mid-March**. You choose how you want to respond.



You can respond **online** in English or in 12 additional languages. The online questionnaire is accessible, following the latest web accessibility guidelines. We'll also have a video in **American Sign Language** available to guide you through responding online.



You can respond by **phone** in English or in 12 additional languages. You can also respond in English by **TDD** at 844-467-2020.



By mid-April, we'll mail a **paper questionnaire** to every household that hasn't already responded. (Some households will receive a paper questionnaire along with the first invitation in March.)

We'll have **braille and large print guides** available online to assist you with completing the paper questionnaire.



If necessary, you can respond **in person** beginning in mid-May. Census takers will visit all households that have not yet responded.

We'll have census takers available who can communicate in **American Sign Language** and additional languages. When the census taker visits to help you respond, you can request that another census taker who communicates in American Sign Language returns, if you prefer.

If you prefer, you may also choose to have another member of your household interact with the census taker.

**Responding is important.** A complete count helps ensure that services like Medicare, Medicaid, social security, and public transportation can support those who need them.

**Responding is safe.** All of the information you share with us is protected by law and cannot be used against you.

**Responding is accessible.** We're doing everything we can to ensure the ways to respond are accessible for everyone.

Any questions? Please visit **2020census.gov**.  
This website is 508 compliant and accessible to people of all abilities.

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