



BLACK CHURCHES COUNT:

A Toolkit to Prepare
for the 2020 Census



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A Call to Action

April 1, 2020 is Census Day!

Every 10 years, the U.S. Constitution requires that every person living in the United States be counted. It is mandated that everyone, regardless of race, class, gender, or citizenship, be included in this count. However, while the mission is to ensure that every person is counted, historically, many groups have been disproportionately underrepresented in previous census efforts, and the Census Bureau classifies these groups as Hard to Count (HTC). HTC populations include racial and ethnic minorities, low income persons, those without Internet access, LGBTQ persons, those in rural areas, young children, blended families, renters, rural residents, immigrants, and the homeless. In particular, **Black and Latinx communities are at a higher risk of being left out.**

Although the biggest challenge to the U.S. Census is ensuring that all populations are accurately counted, it is not the only challenge. Federal budget cuts have led to a decrease in staff, and the current administration shuttered 39,000 Questionnaire Assistance Centers that were open in 2010, instead opting for a roving response team that many fear will be completely ineffective. The 2020 Census will be conducted primarily online for the first time. For minority communities, this is especially concerning because the 2020 Census is expected to deliver the worst undercount of Black and Latinx people since 1990. **The Urban Institute has estimated that 1.7 million Black people are at risk to be undercounted in the 2020 Census.**

Based on data from the 2010 U.S. Religion Census, **nearly 18,000 Black Protestant Churches are active in the country, representing approximately 4.9 million attendees nationwide.** However, the study acknowledges that the data is incomplete. Moreover, Black people are also active members in the remaining 300,000 Christian and non-Christian faith institutions identified in the study, and they all deserve to be fairly and accurately counted.

As a Faith Leader, your respectable standing and ability to mobilize parishioners is critical to achieving full participation and representation in the 2020 Census. This is especially relevant for members of your congregation and community who are classified as HTC. **In particular, as a Black pastor, you are the head of a local institution that for generations has stood as a safe resource of trusted leadership, guidance, and information.** You often lead the charge and have the ability to reach into your community, through local networks, in a way that others can't.

Fair Count has designed this toolkit as a guide for understanding the 2020 Census and its importance. The kit will also help you set up your own Complete Count Committee to ensure that your congregation is fully counted and accurately represented. You are a vital component of the efforts to ensure that **EVERYONE is counted!**

What is the Census?

- Every 10 years, the Census Bureau counts every person living in the U.S., once and in the right place.
- It is mandated by Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution.
- The goal is to count everyone, regardless of immigration status, living situation or age.
- The data collected directs state and federal distribution of funds, resources, and political representation.
- **The 2020 Census will direct nearly \$800 billion annually to states and counties through—roughly 132 federal programs.**
- For the first time, the 2020 Census will be conducted primarily online.

Is it Safe?

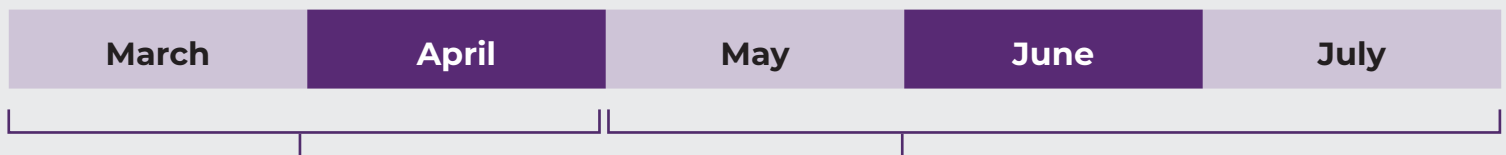
- Title 13 of the U.S. Code mandates that every employee of the Census Bureau take an oath to protect census data.
- The sharing of your information is a felony, with a penalty of up to 5 years in jail and/or a \$250,000 fine.
- Census data are encrypted, and access to the information is limited.
- **Census data is not shared locally or with other governmental agencies and is in fact some of the most protected information in our government.**
- **The government will not release any personal identifiable information about any person until 72 years after the information is collected.**

How Does it Work?

- The goal of the 2020 Census is to count every single person where they live. However, there are some exceptions for college students, the incarcerated, homeless, and transient communities.
- **There will be three ways to respond: online, by phone, and by mail.**
- In March of 2020, most households will receive a letter with a unique identification number, inviting them to fill out the 2020 Census online or by phone. Some households will receive the paper form.
- **One person will respond for the entire household, but everyone living in the household as of April 1, 2020 should be counted.**
- Census takers will only come to your home if you don't complete the census after several reminders.

What's the Timeline?

April 1, 2020 is Census Day! You should count everyone who is living in your home, including someone who sleeps there most of the time, someone who is “couch-surfing”, and babies born on/before April 1st who are still in the hospital. Count everyone!



Complete the census online, by phone, or by mail. You will receive up to FIVE reminders if you don't participate.

Census takers will visit homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census to make sure everyone is counted. You can apply to be a census taker at <https://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html>

Why is the Census Important?

- The census informs businesses and opportunities for economic development, is the basis for Voting Rights enforcement and civil rights legislation, provides population benchmarks for nearly every other government effort.
- Census data will be used to direct more than **\$800 billion annually** to states and counties through roughly 132 federal programs.
 - **Educational programs include:** Federal Pell Grants, national school lunch programs, Title 1 grants to schools, Special education grants, Head Start programs, teacher improvement grants, ESL grants, and rural education funding.
 - **Healthcare programs include:** Medicaid/Medicare, WIC, SNAP, CHIP, HIV emergency relief grants, community mental health services, disability assistance, and domestic violence and child abuse prevention and services.
 - **Other funded programs include:** Highway planning & construction, Section 8 housing programs, TANF, foster care funding, environmental protection, disaster recovery, wildlife restoration, home investment programs, and public housing programs
- Census data are also used to draw lines for congressional, state, and local districts. **Lines for school districts also depend on census data and inaccurate counts can lead to overcrowding in schools.**



What are the Challenges in 2020?

- Although no longer a barrier, the citizenship question debate added fear and could limit participation in the 2020 Census.
- For the first time ever, the census will be conducted primarily online. **Unfortunately, at least 24 million households across the nation don't have access to high-speed Internet**, and these homes are primarily in rural areas.
- The budget for Census Bureau staff has been reduced.
- The administration has red-lined 39,000 Questionnaire Assistance Centers that were available in 2010 in favor of a roving-response team, which may not be effective in rural areas.
- Prison gerrymandering occurs when incarcerated persons are counted where they are imprisoned, instead of at their pre-incarceration residences, effectively shifting resources away from their communities.





Who is Hard to Count (HTC)?

- Some groups are hard to locate, contact, interview, or persuade, and the Census Bureau classifies them as **Hard to Count (HTC)**.
- HTC groups include:
 - Racial and ethnic minorities
 - Children (particularly children of color)
 - Religious and cultural minorities
 - Immigrant and/or undocumented communities
 - Transient and homeless communities
 - Renters
 - Young adults
 - Low income people
 - LGBTQ communities
 - People with mental and physical disabilities
 - Populations living in isolated or rural areas
 - People with limited internet access
 - Communities displaced after disasters
- **HTC communities are often missed or undercounted in the census.**



What Happens if Black People are Missed?

- **In 2010, 3.7 million Black people were missed in the 2010 Census**, leading to underrepresentation and billions of dollars in lost funds to our communities over the past decade.
- In the 2010 Census, Black men typically experienced particularly high net undercount rates, with some age groups being undercounted by 10%.
- An estimated 1.7 million Black people could be undercounted the 2020 Census nationwide. **This could lead to a loss of \$3.3 billion in federal funding annually for the next decade**, ranging from \$451,000 lost per year in Wyoming to \$392 million lost per year in New York. Visit www.faircount.org/state-undercounts to see how much your state could lose if there's an undercount in the 2020 Census.



Messaging the Census to Your Congregation

- **In 2010, there were at least 18,000 active Black Protestant Churches in the country, representing approximately 4.9 million attendees.**
- **Faith Leaders are trusted community members whose leadership will be is essential to reaching and engaging the Black community in the 2020 Census.**
- Faith Leaders in urban, suburban, and rural communities minister to, interact with, and mobilize many of the hardest to reach communities on a daily basis, so your voice and continued encouragement can help increase participation in your community.
- By engaging your members, you have the opportunity to encourage them to reach out to their family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!
- Each month and week leading up to the 2020 Census, you have the opportunity and the platform to educate your congregation about the importance of the census.



How Can the Black Church Help Ensure a Complete Count?

- Make a commitment to count your congregation.
- **Form a Complete Count Committee** to make sure all of the babies, children, youth, adults, sick-and-shut in, and everyone who attends special services (e.g., Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, and Father's Day, etc.) are counted.
- **Use Church Services, Sunday School, Bible Study, prayer meetings, etc. to share 2020 Census information** (see our Resources at the end of this toolkit).
- Encourage other Faith Leaders to become involved, especially leaders of neighboring churches.
- Become a 2020 Census Resource Hub for your church and community.
- If possible, allow those without Internet access at home to complete the 2020 Census online at your facility.
- Periodically share 2020 Census information in bulletin inserts, on worship screens, and via social media.
- Learn more and stay informed by signing up at **FairCount.org**.

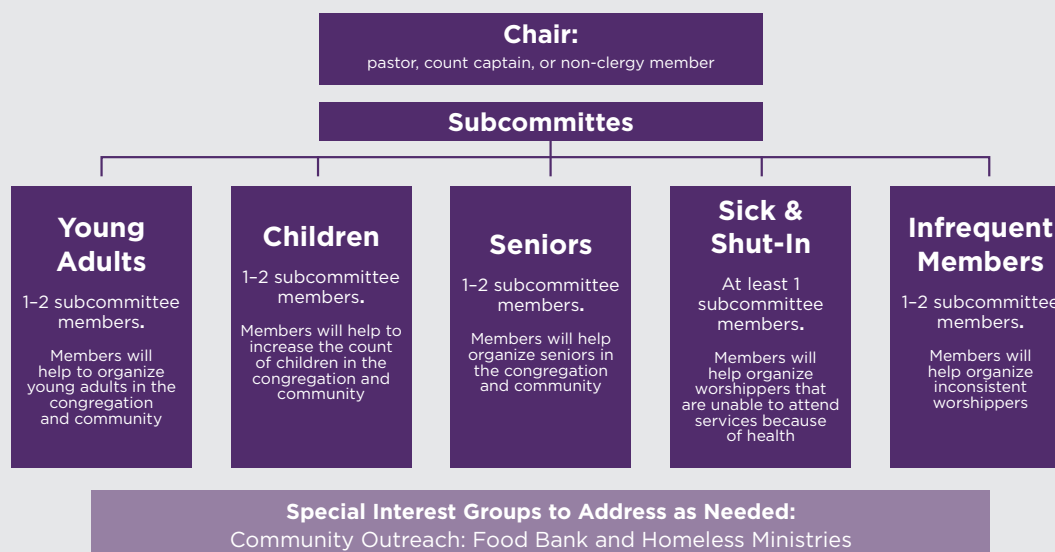




How do I form a Complete Count Committee (CCC)?

- Complete Count Committees (CCCs) are volunteer committees formed to educate and mobilize people around the census.
- They are essential to identifying and engaging HTC communities.
- Anyone who is committed and willing to work can be on the committee, including church leaders, members, and even youth! You can learn more about forming a CCC here www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/newsroom/press-kits/2018/ccc-guide-d-1280.pdf.
- Much like precinct captains make sure a group of people have voted in elections, the Chair of the CCC makes sure EVERYONE is counted in the Census.
- Here's an example of what your CCC could look like:

EXAMPLE FAITH COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE



How are CCCs Helpful?

- By forming a CCC at your church, you can:
 - Help to dismiss fears and concerns about the 2020 Census.
 - Create and implement outreach plans that are tailored to your community.
 - Increase participation before census takers start to knock on doors.
 - Partner with other organizations to increase awareness.
 - Host events to encourage participation in the 2020 Census.

Resource: Sample “Census” Scriptures and Sermons

Numbers 1:1–2 The Lord spoke to Moses in the tent of meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. He said: “Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one.

Numbers 2:32 Here is a summary of the census of the Israelis according to the tribes of their ancestral houses: All the divisions in the camps numbered 603,550.

Numbers 3:40 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Number every male of the sons of Israel from a month old and upward and make a list of their names.

Numbers 31:49 and told him, “Your servants have taken a census of the fighting men under our command, and not one of us is missing.

Samuel 24:2 The king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, “Go about now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and register the people, that I may know the number of the people.”

1 Chron 23:24 These were the sons of Levi according to their fathers’ households, even the heads of the fathers’ households of those of them who were counted, in the number of names by their census, doing the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from twenty years old and upward.

1 Chron 27:23 David did not complete a census of those younger than 20 years of age, since the LORD had said he would make Israel as numerous as the stars of heaven.

1 Chron 27:24 Joab son of Zariah began to count them, but he didn’t complete it. There was wrath against Israel because of this census, and the number was not entered in the Historical Record of King David.

Psalms 87:6 The Lord writes in the census book of the nations, “This one was born there.”

Matthew 14:21 Those who ate were about five thousand, not counting women and children.

Luke 2:1 But it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census should be made of all the habitable world.

Luke 2:2 The census itself first took place when Cyrenius had the government of Syria.

Luke 2:1–5 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. [...] And everyone went to his own town to register. 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.

Acts 5:37 After this man, Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and attracted a following. That man also perished, and all his partisans were scattered.

**Sample Sermons and additional scriptures can be found
at www.faircount.org/sermons**

Resource: Sample Bulletin Inserts

Month	Sample Text for Bulletin Inserts
December	<i>"And all went to be inscribed in the census roll, each to his own city...to be inscribed in the census roll with Mary who was betrothed to him as his wife, she being great with child."</i> The 2020 Census is coming, and we all need to commit to be counted. We have to make it a priority like Mary and Joseph. We each need to make a plan to get counted, and we can't make excuses when the time comes. If Mary could travel 90 miles while pregnant for the census, you can set aside a few minutes of your day. Be like Mary, and commit to count!
January	Happy New Year! We pray that 2020 brings you health and prosperity. As we make our New Year's resolutions, let's resolve to be a blessing to our community this year and beyond by committing to count in the 2020 Census. Our participation in the census will steer our community's share of \$800 billion to where it is needed each year for the next decade. These funds will be used to fund education, healthcare, infrastructure and more! So, while you're committing to exercise, to quit smoking, and to check some things off of your bucket list, don't forget to commit to count in the 2020 Census!
February	<i>"Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us, sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us."</i> Next month, you will start receiving information about the 2020 Census, and you'll see commercials and hear ads encouraging you to fill it out. It may get overwhelming, but you can let anything deter you from participating in the census. When first census was conducted in 1790, our ancestors were only counted as three-fifths of person. Three-fifths. They fought during that dark past to be equally and fairly counted. It is our duty to continue the legacy by being seen and counted, because our participation will determine the hope and prosperity that we and our children have in the future. Make a plan and commit to be counted in the 2020 Census.
March	<i>"Indeed, the hairs of your head are all counted."</i> The Lord values you so much that each strand of your hair is counted. Amazing! You might not be able to count hair, but you can count everyone in your home. The 2020 Census is here, and everyone who lives with you must be counted! We need you to count babies (even if they're still at the hospital), children, folks who don't pay rent but sleep there most of the time, and friends who are couch surfing. The people in your household are much more valuable than hair, so it's up to you to make sure they are counted! God bless!
April	Every 10 years, the U.S. census counts every person living in the United States, and the data that is collected is protected. It is required that everyone, regardless of race, class, gender, or citizenship, be included in this count. However, many groups have been underrepresented in previous census efforts, such as renters, rural residents, immigrants, low income, and the homeless. Black and Latino Communities are at a higher risk of being left out. As a church, we have the ability to not only count our entire congregation, but also encourage our families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Tell everyone you know about the 2020 Census. Because if you aren't counted, you simply won't count.
May	Knock! Knock! Who's there? The Census Bureau because you haven't completed the 2020 Census! Remember, if you don't want a census taker to knock on your door, complete the 2020 Census TODAY. You can complete it online at several locations [list locations and times]. Being counted benefits your family, community, and church for the next 10 years. Bless your community and get counted!
June	Summertime, and the livin' is easy...Unless you're not counted in the 2020 Census. Without you, our community could lose thousands of dollars in federal funding each year for the next 10 years. There's still time, so please take a few minutes out of your day to complete the 2020 Census. Your church and community are depending on you. Be a blessing and be counted!
July	Time is almost up! If you haven't completed the 2020 Census, please join us immediately after church in the fellowship hall to get it done. We have to get a complete count for the sake of our community. We need your help, so please get counted! God bless!

Why is the Black Church Important?

The Census and Our History:

- In 1790, when the Census first began, our ancestors were counted as 3/5 of a person. Our ancestors fought to be counted equally and fairly and we cannot let them down.
- In past censuses, white homeowners were overcounted, and Black communities were undercounted. That means that white homeowners received their fair share (or more!) of financial resources and political power, while Black communities received less. This inequity is secured for a decade at a time.

On Mistrusting the Government:

- If you are concerned that you don't want "them" (the government) to know who you are or where you are, well, the jig is up. They already know. They will contact you by mail, and they will knock on your door.
- The Census isn't about finding people—they already know you are here. It's about counting you so that you get your fair share of resources and power. Don't be confused by this.
- If you are worried because you have someone staying with you that your landlord doesn't know about, or maybe someone has a warrant out, or maybe someone isn't a citizen—it's OK. They will not share your information. You need to count everyone in your home—even that nephew that sleeps on your couch every now and then. If he's staying with you when you fill out the 2020 Census form, count him. Count everyone.

On the Citizenship Question:

- The current administration wanted to silence immigrant and refugee communities and sought to include the Citizenship question to instill fear in communities of color.

- We cannot let those who don't want us to count win—participating in the census is the only way to fight back. It's the only way to make them see us and give us our fair share.
- The census counts ALL of us, not SOME of us. And we ALL must get counted.
- Whether you are here on a student visa, a green card, or undocumented, you still matter in America. You use resources, drive on roads, shop at stores, and send your kids to school. You count, so you must be counted.
- Approximately 4.2 million Black immigrants live in the United States. Roughly 1 in 10 Black people are foreign-born, and we need to protect and stand up for them by getting counted.

It's Up to Us:

- The only people who can bring our fair share of money to our community and political power to our area is us. If we speak up and get counted, they cannot erase us. If we remain silent, we will be silenced for 10 years.
- If you aren't counted, you simply won't count.
- Our community will be targeted, especially online, by people who don't want us to participate because they don't want our communities to have the money we deserve or our fair share of political power. We cannot let them do that to us. We must stand up and be counted.
- Stacey Abrams has said, "If they can erase us from the story of America, they can erase us from the future of America."

The Fight Against Misinformation/Disinformation

The census advocacy community is preparing for an intense campaign, particularly online, of disinformation about the census. In fact, “misinformation and other online influence campaigns are among the [Census] bureau’s biggest concerns in the run-up to the 2020 count. By sowing distrust among U.S. residents, adversaries could suppress participation in the census and distort the data that the government uses to distribute federal funds, allocate congressional seats and conduct a wide range of other activities.”

- Many communities of color have been the targets of election-related disinformation campaigns that were focused on suppressing voter turnout, and **the Black community was a primary target of Russian interference in the 2016 election.**
- Therefore, communities of color should expect that there are some who want to suppress 2020 Census participation to keep these same communities from resources and power.
- Faith leaders are uniquely positioned to fight these tactics by **providing regular and recurring information about the census.**

Shareable Social Media Content?

Faith leaders can share (and urge members of their congregations to share) accurate and up to date information about the 2020 Census online and through their social media networks. Doing so will help fight the spread of misinformation/disinformation, and it will expand 2020 Census messaging and reach.

- Visit www.faircount.org/faith-shareable-content to access graphics, articles, and other digital content that can be tweeted, posted on Facebook/Instagram/Snapchat, shared via text or email, etc.
- Follow Fair Count on Twitter (@faircount), Facebook (@faircountgeorgia), and Instagram (@faircount) to stay updated. Please retweet and/or share as often as possible.

Fair Count is committed to keeping this toolkit up to date and providing more shareable information throughout the Get Out the Count (GOTC) period.

Black Men Count

Representation matters. In the 2010 Census, Black men were undercounted by roughly 800,000 nationwide, and they have been historically undercounted in greater numbers than men of other racial or ethnic groups. In the spring of 2019, Fair Count launched Black Men Count, a statewide Complete Count Committee (CCC) in an effort to address this disparity and solve the long-term obstacles to participation in the census. Seeking to bring leaders of organizations led by and serving black men together to address the historical undercounts of Black men, Fair Count staffs and supports the effort and is committed to growing its connection throughout the nation. **In Georgia, faith leaders have been integral to the success of this program, and in fact Black Men Count is Co-Chaired by the Sixth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Reginald Thomas Jackson.**

- Faith leaders across the nation can use the efforts and materials from the Black Men Count program as advocacy tools in:
 - Men's ministry programs
 - Men's Bible studies
 - Returning citizen efforts
 - Youth outreach
 - Fraternal activities
- Learn more at blackmencount.org.
- Join the discussion at the Facebook page for Black Men Count www.facebook.com/blackmencount.
- Share the 90 second video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEIMPML7guY) with your congregations and your networks.

When you sign up for the Faith Toolkit email list, you will receive links to media, social, and conversation-starting materials about outreach to Black men throughout the Get Out the Count (GOTC) period.



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