

WITH MALICE TOWARDS NONE



Minnesota

A Braver Angels Initiative beginning November 4, 2020

The Challenge

- November 4th, the day after the Presidential election, will likely be the most divisive day in modern U.S. history—no matter who wins (or if it is not yet decided).
- People on the losing side will have emotions ranging from intense disappointment to grief, rage, and despair. They will be tempted to avoid, ostracize, or attack people on the winning side.
- People on the winning side will feel vindicated and be tempted to act triumphantly towards those on the other side. And they will worry about how the “losers” will treat them.
- In other words, November 4th will begin a dark time of polarization in the land—unless we act together to make it otherwise.

The Opportunity

Seize the post-election moment by bringing hundreds of thousands of Americans together in their religious communities, civic groups, and colleges to deal with their emotions (positive and negative) and to commit to bringing people together rather than further dividing us. Note: this is not about covering over strong political differences or encouraging people to support whoever wins the election, but about a commitment to respecting the humanity of those who differ from us.

What Will Happen on November 4th?

- Religious communities (conservative, moderate, and liberal) will hold With Malice Towards None Day services on November 4th or soon thereafter. They would have pre-committed to holding the service and recruiting members no matter who wins or loses the election. The services will be just for their own congregation and will involve separate initial gatherings for those who feel good or awful about the election. Then red and blue leaders will plan a joint gathering.
- Colleges/universities and non-partisan civic groups will pre-commit to sponsoring their own events on November 4th or soon thereafter.
- Bipartisan political groups and pairs of red and blue political figures will be invited to sponsor and attend events.
- Braver Angels will develop a *civic ritual* featuring songs, readings, talking points for community leaders, and a call to commit to action steps.
- Sponsoring groups will enhance the Braver Angels civic ritual with their own traditions, rituals, and sacred words.
- These gatherings will give people a collective opportunity to deal with strong emotions and move through them towards commitment to holding malice towards none.

November 4th Through January 20th

- We will invite participating November 4th religious communities, civic groups, and colleges/universities to use the 77 days until Inauguration Day to work together across differences to convene local With Malice Toward None events during Inauguration Week. Braver Angels will assist in the organizing and design of these events.
- From these gatherings will come plans to work with one another and with Braver Angels to build the capacity of we-the-people to depolarize our politics, meet our common challenges, and forge a new citizenship.