

David Boase, Episcopal priest, fights deportation order

Boase, who is English, mistakenly voted once after a driver's licensing employee offered him a registration form.

by [David Paulsen](#) in the [November 21, 2018](#) issue



David Boase. Photo courtesy of Friends United for Fr. David Boase.

David Boase, 69, a retired Episcopal priest in southern Illinois, received a deportation order to go back to his native England because he voted in a U.S. election. He said he was not aware at the time that only U.S. citizens could participate in federal elections.

That 12-year-old mistake came back to haunt Boase recently when it was discovered by federal authorities reviewing his application for U.S. citizenship. On October 9, the judge at his immigration hearing allowed his lawyer to submit papers by April 23 pursuing cancellation of the deportation order.

“We’re optimistic that David will be allowed to keep his permanent legal residence,” supporters wrote on the [Friends United for Fr. David Boase Facebook page](#).

In a video on that page, Boase described applying for a driver’s license with his British passport in 2005. A licensing employee asked if he also wanted to register to vote. Boase said he was surprised at the invitation but went ahead and signed the

voter form. He received the registration card and voted just once, in a local election in 2006, and learned of his error the next day.

“I never voted again,” said Boase, who came to the United States to be priest of the Episcopal Parish of Alton from 2004 until his retirement in 2014. He continues to serve as a “fill-in priest in central and southern Illinois,” he said.

Friends and parishioners rallied behind Boase, raising more than \$8,000 for his legal bills and other costs through a GoFundMe page. They also asked lawmakers to support Boase’s cause. —Episcopal News Service; *Christian Century* staff

A version of this article appears in the print edition under the title “People: David Boase.”