PRESS KIT

65 YEARS LATER, WE GOT BACK ON THE BUS.

October 17–28, 2026 · Washington, D.C. → New Orleans



The Art Bus wrap — “Let It Flow,” AP, 2026.

ABOUT

THE RIDE

Two weeks before the 2026 midterm elections, a coalition of civil rights leaders, artists, faith leaders and original Freedom Riders retraced the 1961 Freedom Ride route – from Washington, D.C. through the Deep South to New Orleans, the city the original riders never reached. The buses arrived on October 28, 2026. A feature documentary was filmed along the way, and the work the ride set out to do goes on.

12 Days on the road	**19** Cities along the route	**8** States, plus D.C.	**2 wks** Before the midterms

FAST FACTS

Dates	October 17–28, 2026. Leg One: Oct 17–22 (D.C. → South Carolina). Leg Two: Oct 23–28 (Georgia → New Orleans).
Route	Washington, D.C. · Richmond · Petersburg · Lynchburg · Greensboro · Charlotte · Rock Hill · Winnsboro · Sumter · Augusta · Atlanta · Anniston · Birmingham · Nashville · Montgomery · Selma · Jackson · Baton Rouge · New Orleans
Convened by	Vote Common Good, Greater Things Foundation, Faith Out Loud, Americans United and Red Letter Christians
Leadership	Rev. Dr. Michael Waters and Pastor Doug Pagitt, executive producers · Rev. Traci Blackmon, organizing partner · Sura Mallouh, documentary director
Freedom Riders	Original 1961 riders and their families took part, including relatives of Hank Thomas, John Lewis, Charles Person and the Petway family, with Joan Trumpauer Mulholland meeting The Ride in D.C.
Status	Non-partisan 501(c)(3) — nonpartisan statement

COPY-READY

SHORT DESCRIPTION

> The Ride 2026 was a 12-day national bus tour and feature documentary retracing the 1961 Freedom Rides from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans, October 17–28, 2026. Original Freedom Riders, their families, faith leaders, artists and pilgrims traveled together through 19 cities in the final weeks before the midterm elections, arriving in New Orleans – the city the 1961 riders never reached – on October 28. The Ride is a non-partisan 501(c)(3) effort convened by Vote Common Good, Greater Things Foundation, Faith Out Loud, Americans United and Red Letter Christians. Learn more at theride2026.org.

AFTER THE RIDE

WHAT'S HERE NOW

In the news

Coverage of the ride, day by day — stories, videos and social posts, each one ready to share.

the.ride26.us/news — https://the.ride26.us/news/

Photos from the road

The riders' own photos, grouped by day and stop, with a map of where each one was taken.

the.ride26.us/photos — https://the.ride26.us/photos/

The film

A feature documentary was filmed along the whole route. News about it will come from theride2026.org.

About the film — https://theride2026.org/the-film/

Media & interviews

Pastor Doug Pagitt, Executive Director, Vote Common Good and Greater Things Foundation.

Contact Doug — https://www.votecommongood.com/contact/

Logo, photos and the latest version of this kit: **the.ride26.us/press**

Everything else — the full route, the riders, the film: theride2026.org — https://theride2026.org/
Press kit updated September 30, 2026.