

Working for Justice



Exploration: Discovery

About this Age Group

There are many stages of life and faith maturity in adulthood. Each adult participant will have some level of experience with working for justice, though none of those experiences may be the same. Yet within that diverse set of experiences, there is also a common desire to learn. Encourage adults to share their ideas and to be open to the ideas of others. Encourage them to ask as many questions as they share thoughts. As you choose activities for your group, be aware of the history they bring to working for justice. Offer ideas for working for justice in the church, in the community, and in all walks of life.

About this Exploration

Working for justice is vital in the personal and communal lives of God's faithful people. God desires and requires the faithful to work for justice. Through it, we creatively level the playing field, break down walls, and nurture environments so that all may experience a whole and holy life. This life is free of oppression, degradation, and exclusion. We encounter stories, interpret scriptures, and participate in activities through which we discover how to engage actively in justice work in the home, church, community, and world.

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:
Isaiah 1:1, 10–18
Luke 4:14–21

Leader Preparation

Think about discoveries you have made in your life. Did you make an amazing find at a flea market? Did you see a beautiful rock formation in a previously untouched area of land? Did you hear an amazing sermon in church? Bring all of your thoughts about discovery to God. Bring to God any fears about leading discussions. Bring all of your hopes for working for justice to God. Discover!

Prayer: God of discovery, help me to reflect, speak, ask, respond, and act as one who has just made an amazing find, seen a beautiful site, or heard profound words. Please speak to me, O God, as I prepare to assist all gathered in discovering what it means to work for justice. Amen.

Session Development

For each session leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Crossword (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Write “Justice” in the middle of a sheet of newsprint or on one side of a whiteboard or sheet of newsprint.

Supplies:

- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Invite participants to call out words that relate to justice. Write them on newsprint or a whiteboard. Write every word that is called out.

After a few minutes of calling out words, ask participants to choose 8–10 words that give them the most positive view of justice. Use these words to weave into the word “justice,” much like a crossword puzzle. As you place the words into the growing puzzle, talk about how the different ways we understand justice are woven into (connected with) one another. For instance, when we value the intrinsic worth of every person, the idea of fairness for every person weaves together into a desire for justice.

As the puzzle fills up with words, ask participants to describe ways in which they experience this weaving together of ideas toward justice. Across the bottom of the newsprint or whiteboard, use the words that are woven together to write active sentences that inspire participants to work for justice. For example: “Living for justice challenges us to seek the causes of need instead of only addressing need.”

2 Two Sides

Leader preparation: During this activity, participants will ask how they are working for a just world in their walk of faith. In the discussion, be sure to be kind rather than judgmental about the opinions offered. Encourage all to live working for justice.

Supplies:

- 8½ × 11” sheets of paper
- markers, pencils, or crayons in a variety of colors

Give each participant a sheet of paper and access to the markers, pencils, or crayons. Give the following instructions: You may work with a partner if you wish. Please draw a line to divide the paper into two sides. (Which way? Whatever way you wish!) *On half of the sheet, draw symbols or write words that come to mind as you think about justice from the point of view of a judge and a jury. On the other half of the sheet, draw symbols or write words that reflect how you might think about justice from the point of view of fairness and wholeness.*

After the drawings are done, invite participants to show their art to everyone. Note the similarities and differences in the two sides of the papers and the similarities and differences from one participant to the next. Ask: *How are the two views of justice similar? How are they different? As it relates to any of the symbols or words, how do you see yourself working for justice? How do you see this group working for justice?*



using one activity from each category.

- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

Encourage all in the opinions they have offered. Encourage all to take the discussion seriously and to be involved in working for justice.



3 Intense

Leader preparation: In the painting “Embrace of Peace,” artist George Tooker shows two people reaching for and ultimately embracing each other. The emotions expressed in their faces are powerful and intense. Be ready to discuss the emotions raised in the participants as they engage the art. Be aware of your own emotional reaction to the art and to the Bible reading, and work to channel that emotion into positive discussion and action.

Supplies:

- artwork: “Embrace of Peace” by George Tooker
https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/1801449515?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=15626&store_id=1401
- Bible

Prepare to enter this experience by displaying “Embrace of Peace” by George Tooker. As the participants view the art, read aloud Luke 4:14–21.

After the reading, ask the participants to respond. You may use the following questions, or others you think of, to help with the discussion. Give significant time for thought and discussion for each question or reaction.

- What is intense about the picture?
- What is intense about the Bible reading?
- Where do you see peace in the picture?
- Where do you hear peace in the Bible reading?
- What does the picture make you want to do?
- What does the Bible reading make you want to do?
- How do our emotions affect our working for justice?
- How does working for justice affect our emotions?
- How are the picture and the Bible reading related? How are they unrelated?
- What hasn’t been said as it relates to the picture of the reading?

Encourage the participants to make connections every day to justice in both their observations and their work. Encourage them not to ignore the intense emotions they have in reacting to their observations, but rather to channel that emotion into positive action.



Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 Justice Prayer (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Participants may be familiar with the Serenity Prayer. The “Justice Prayer” is inspired by the Serenity Prayer. As you prepare to lead the group through this prayer, spend personal time reflecting on your own life and justice work in light of it. If you have the time and resources, you might print a wallet- or purse-sized copy of this prayer for all to take with them.

Supplies:

- “Justice Prayer,” Attachment: Activity 4

You can use this prayer as an opening or closing of the session by leading the participants in praying the “Justice Prayer” in unison. It could also be used as an inventory. Invite the participants to reflect on the phrase(s) that speak most immediately to their own lives.



5 Justice Debate

Leader preparation: Isaiah 1:1, 10–18 reads as if it were a debate with one side unspoken. What would happen if the other voice in the conversation were heard? What kind of discussion would it bring about? This activity adds the unspoken voice and offers suggestions for a conversation about the debate.

Supplies:

- “Justice Debate,” Attachment: Activity 5

Divide the group into two sides. Have each side speak alternating lines from the handout. If desired, have participants alternate lines from the handout.

After the reading, invite discussion. Some possible questions to discuss and debate are:

- How does the debate dynamic affect your understanding of the reading?
- How effective is negative reinforcement in challenging people to work for justice?
- In what ways does this reading challenge you to work for justice?



6 Justice Journaling

Leader preparation: Journaling helps people reflect on their thoughts in relation to the world. Reading through a journal also helps a person see how his or her views on a particular subject have evolved over a long or short period of time. This activity encourages participants to begin or continue a journal on the subject of working for justice. Some find that having a personal notebook or composition book is most effective for journaling. Others prefer to compose their thoughts at a keyboard. Still others may be drawn to online journaling or blogging.

Supplies:

- spiral notebooks or composition books (most inexpensively purchased during “back to school” sales in the months of July and August)
- writing instruments
- online journaling resources such as blogger.com or wordpress.com

Distribute notebooks and writing instruments. Give the participants the addresses for some online journaling or blogging websites. Give participants several minutes to write their thoughts about justice in their notebooks. For those who are interested in writing on a computer or blogging, encourage them to begin by first jotting down some notes in the notebook and then transferring the notes to the digital source. If participants have a difficult time beginning, encourage them to respond to the following statements in their journals:

- Some ways I have been working for justice in my life are . . .
- I have learned that I can also do these things as I work for justice.
- My thoughts regarding working for justice have changed in these ways.
- I’m uncomfortable about these items as they relate to working for justice.

Encourage participants regularly to write reactions and thoughts in their justice journals. Ask them to reread what they have written after a period of time, perhaps a month or more, to see how their thoughts have changed. Where appropriate, ask them to share their thoughts with all participants.

Sending & Serving Activities



7 Our Congregation (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Study the history of your congregation. Use existing print or digital resources as well as the stories of members who have been around for a long time. As you study, pay close attention to the ways working for justice has shaped the congregation.

Supplies:

- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Ask the group what they remember of the history of your congregation, using questions such as these:

- What were some memorable events in the life of the congregation?
- How have those events shaped the way the congregation is today?
- How has the church addressed working for justice in the past?



- How has that shaped how the church is working for justice today?
- What challenges lie ahead for the congregation?
- What are ways that the church can continue working for justice?
- In what ways does the congregation need to improve?
- How would the group members like to be a part of what will come next?

Record key points from the discussion on newsprint or a whiteboard. Ask the group to pick one or more that they can focus on in encouraging this group and the entire congregation to work for justice.



8 The Universe Is Bending

Leader preparation: Familiarize yourself with the words and the tune to the song “The Universe Is Bending” by Jeremy McLeod. The song lists justice, freedom, wholeness, joy, and peace as items the universe bends toward justice. Though the focus for this activity is on justice, each item mentioned relates to a just and peaceful world. Reading the song lyrics together can lead to good discussion, but singing the song together will stir more emotions and bring about better discussion.

Supplies:

- “The Universe Is Bending,” Attachment: Activity 8, music and lyrics available for purchase, https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/132881847?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=27341&store_id=1401
- musical accompaniment for singing (guitar, piano)

Sing “The Universe Is Bending” as a group. Either sing the first verse several times, or sing all four verses. After the song, lead the group in a discussion about the song. Mention that the idea of the universe bending toward justice, though often attributed to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is actually a phrase originally uttered by Rev. Theodore Parker in 1853. The following questions may be helpful in guiding the conversation:

- What does “the universe is bending” mean?
- How does the universe bend towards justice? Where do you see the universe seemingly doing the opposite?
- What does it mean to work for justice in a universe that is going that way anyway? How does our work for justice impact the moral arc of the universe?
- What other thoughts do you have about the song?
- How does singing this song and discussing it affect how you plan to act today?



9 Listen

Leader preparation: This activity asks participants to spend time listening for God's voice. Participants read one or both of the focus scriptures for this Exploration on their own and reflect. They need not reflect with any particular question in mind or any agenda other than to listen for God's voice. Encourage the participants to read, reflect on, and listen to one or both scripture readings each day for the next week.

Supplies:

- Bible
- (optional) journal

Invite the participants to select either Isaiah 1:1, 10–18 or Luke 4:14–21 or both to read daily for a week. Try to experience the verses in different settings and at different times of the day. *As you read, reflect on the verses and listen silently for God's voice. If you keep a journal, record details of your experience. At the end of the week review the details and share your experience with the group, if you desire.*

Reflect

Think about your group and the individuals in the group. What surprised you in your session? What needs or concerns have you noticed? Where has your heart been moved and where have you noticed the hearts of those in the group moved? Spend a few moments thanking God for the discoveries you've made. Ask for God's continued guidance for you and for all gathered as you seek to work for justice.

Attachment: Activity 4

Justice Prayer

God, please grant us the
Courage to work for justice;
Honesty to acknowledge our failures
in living for justice;
Discernment to seek the root cause
of need;
Patience to work toward justice
through all obstacles;
Respect for the intrinsic value of
each person;
Ability to love you and one another;
and
Fairness to live out that love to
everyone.

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Attachment: Activity 5

Justice Debate

- 1:** Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorah!
- 2:** We've been hearing, listening, and learning, LORD! What are we missing?
- 1:** What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.
- 2:** But you told us to offer you our best! Why are you so angry?
- 1:** When you come to appear before me, who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more;
- 2:** Have we insulted you? How are we trampling your courts?
- 1:** Bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation—I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity.
- 2:** Are you saying that we are doing things for the wrong reason? Are you angry that we are showing devotion to others in addition to you?
- 1:** Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them.
- 2:** We adopted the practices of other religions because we thought you wanted us to get along better!
- 1:** When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.
- 2:** What can we do to change your mind? How can we change so that you'll listen?
- 1:** Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.
- 2:** That's a tall order, God. But we will do better. We will change. We will do good and seek justice.
- 1:** Come now, let us argue it out: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.
- 2:** Didn't you just tell us how horrible we've been acting? Now you're saying that you forgive us? What happens if we mess up again?

Attachment: Activity 8

The Universe Is Bending

Jeremy McLeod

$\text{♩} = 84$ F Dm B \flat Gm F F/A Gm/B \flat Dm

The U-ni-verse is bend-ing. stretch-ing long and stretch-ing out, em -

5 F Dm C Dm 3 F B \flat C

brac - ing all our strug - gles with — gen tle arms of Hope. The

9 Am F B \flat C Dm 3 F 3 C/E B \flat

U - ni-verse is bend - ing, stretch - ing long and stretch - ing out and it's

13 F Dm F/A B \flat F/C B \flat F F

lead - ing to-ward Just - ice* by the Clear — Light of Love. The Love.

**Substitute:*
 Free-dom
 Whole-ness
 Joy and Peace

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Working for Justice



Exploration: Scripture

About this Age Group

Adults encounter scripture in different ways and at many different levels. Some participants may have very little experience in reading or studying the Bible. Others may have just the opposite. With the differences of experience also comes a different view of what scripture is. Words of anger and warning may challenge some to work hard for justice while scaring others from taking a first step. Reassure the adult participants that their questions and ideas are important as you explore scripture together. Encourage all to seek to understand scripture and to continue to work for justice.

About this Exploration

Scripture asks what does God require of us and answers the question with marching orders and a road map. It admonishes against oppression, reminds us that we are created in the image of God, and demands that we work for a just world rooted in love. In Jesus we see the embodiment of loving justice, which, like an ever-flowing stream, grows to encompass the whole creation. We discover God's disappointment and anger with injustice, God's care for the poor and disenfranchised, God's zeal for justice as a way of life, and God's expectation that we structure our lives and relationships as did Jesus.

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:

Micah 6:1-8
Amos 5:18-24

Leader Preparation

“Scripture.” How often do you use that word in casual conversation? Do the words “Bible readings” make more sense? Think of how much time you have spent in your life reading the Bible. How has it changed the way you think? How has it challenged you to act? When has it been too difficult to understand? When has it made you wish that parts of it had not been written? Bring all your thoughts about scripture to God. Bring any fears about leading discussions to God. Bring all your hopes for working for justice to God.

Prayer: Please help me, O God, to reflect, speak, ask, respond, and act in ways that honor you and that help others to understand the words and thoughts in the Bible. Please speak to me, O God, as I prepare to assist others in reading and discussing scripture and what it says about working for justice. Amen.

Session Development

For each session leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Be Kind (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: If you have time, prepare a personal list of ways people are kind to one another. (If you don’t have the time, you will create that list in your session with participants.) The settings where people show kindness may be at work, at home, out in public, and even at church. Some of the items on your list might be: greet a person with a handshake and a smile, offer to help someone carry a heavy load, clean the snow off of someone’s windshield, take a meal to a person in need, apologize to a person you’ve been angry at a long time, treat the customer service representative with kindness even though you are upset, or even keep your opinion to yourself instead of starting an argument.

Supplies: None

Divide the participants into two groups. Invite them to identify settings where people show kindness at work, at home, at church, or wherever. Then invite participants to role-play scenarios suggested from your list. For the scenario, one group will send a person offering kindness. The other group will send a person receiving the kindness. You could also have the group act out an opposite situation for each scene: not offering kindness. After each scenario is acted out, offer a short discussion time. Alternate the groups giving or receiving kindness. After all the scenarios have been acted out, invite deeper discussion. Some questions to ask might include:

- How do you think showing kindness relates to working for justice?
- What was it like to give kindness?
- What was it like to receive kindness?
- What would you say to a person who has a hard time showing kindness?
- What would you say to a person who has a hard time receiving kindness?
- How has this role-play activity affected the way you look at working for justice?

2 Action Verbs

Leader preparation: Familiarize yourself with the song “What Does Our God Require of Us” by Bryan Sirchio. It is from the album *Something Beautiful for God*. A lyrics sheet with music and an audio recording of the song are available at www.sirchio.com; click on the “Music for Social Justice” link. Audio recordings of the song are also available from many digital download stores (such as iTunes and Amazonmp3.com).

Supplies:

- Bibles
- lyrics to the song “What Does Our God Require of Us” displayed for the participants (on paper, overhead, or PowerPoint)
- audio recording of “What Does Our God Require of Us,” or a musician to lead the song

Read Micah 6:1-8 together. Ask the participants to identify the action verbs in the Bible passage. If no one offers any words of action, offer these: “rise,” “plead,” “answer,” “remember,” “do,” “love,” “walk.”

church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

Of the words offered, ask which ones come as a requirement from God. The three that are identified with a direct requirement are “do,” “love,” and “walk.”

To those action verbs, add the rest of the words from the Bible reading: “Do Justice,” “Love Kindness,” “Walk Humbly with God.”

Sing the song “What Does Our God Require of Us” together. After the song, encourage the participants to be doers, lovers, and walkers—following what God requires of us.



3 Paint Justice

Leader preparation: This activity invites participants with a variety of artistic skills (and nonskills) to paint images, words, and symbols that express the feelings they have while they listen to Amos 5:18–24. They will draw the most powerful images from what they hear and also share their art with all in the group. Many adults may not have painted since childhood. Be supportive of all the creative efforts.

Supplies:

- “Amos 5:18–24,” Attachment: Activity 3
- pencils or highlighters
- paper for painting
- paint and brushes (school watercolor sets are fine for this activity)
- water cups for paints
- table covering to keep spills from causing damage
- aprons or smocks
- flat space for drying

Slowly read aloud Amos 5:18–24. Using the handout, ask the participants to notice, underline, or highlight the powerful images in the verses. They may highlight descriptions of lions, bears, snakes, darkness, light, gloom, burnt offerings, fatted animals, harps, waters, and streams. Distribute the art supplies and invite the adults to paint images, words, and symbols that express these images, or paint how the images make them feel. The artists may want to paint the images singly or perhaps paint them all together in a cacophony of visual music. After the paintings are finished, invite participants to share their art with the group. Let the conversation and discussion flow like the waters and streams mentioned in the Bible reading. Ask how the painting and the discussion have affected their view of working for justice.



Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 Priorities (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: This activity takes place in the church building and is best done “cold” without preparation. You should participate in the tour at the same time as all the participants so that your discoveries will reflect a quick search rather than an extended search around the church.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- paper and pens

Divide the group into pairs and give each pair paper and pens. (Or give each person paper and pen and have the participants go out individually.) Invite the participants to walk around the church building for 5–10 minutes and note what the congregation seems to prioritize in building use and displays. Ask them also to find any obvious signs of the congregation prioritizing working for justice. After the participants return, read Micah 6:1–8 together and then, through the lens of the scripture, view the lists the participants made. Some questions for an ensuing discussion might include:

- Where do you find pretense in the activities of our church?
- Where do you find an underlying search for justice in the activities of our church?
- How can we become more justice-oriented without having to cause anger and upheaval in the church?
- Where do we need to be unafraid to speak out for justice without worrying about anger and upheaval?
- What have you learned from today’s church tour and discussion?

5 Videodramatic

Leader preparation: Familiarize yourself with Amos 5:18–24. Think of ways to dramatize parts of the text and write these on newsprint or a whiteboard. Some thoughts to get you started are: (1) Someone runs from one dangerous situation to the next, only to find that the second situation, which seemed safe, is even more dangerous. (2) Someone presents an offering and another turns away from it.

Prepare to video record the participants as they act out the passages in a spontaneous, melodramatic way. Some participants may not want to act in front of a camera. Encourage them as much as seems appropriate to participate, either by suggesting actions or in the discussion that follows the activity.

Supplies:

- Bible
- paper
- video recording camera
- television
- (optional) video production software

Read aloud Amos 5:18–24. Then invite participants to act out the scenes portrayed in the verses. Tell them to overact and to be overly melodramatic in their portrayals. The action can be mimed as a narrator reads the verses in melodramatic form, or the actors can act out and vocalize their artistic interpretation of the verses.



When the participants are prepared—though with no or very little rehearsal—video record their scenes as a narrator reads the Bible passage. Play back the recording right away and discuss the experience. If desired, add titles and music to the videos with video production software. (Most computers have simple video editing software included in basic operating system installations.) The saved videos can be played for other groups for further discussions.

Helpful discussion starters include:

- How does acting out, or embodying, Bible passages help you to remember them?
- What are some of the funniest parts of the videos we made?
- What are some of the most memorable?
- How do the videos help you in thinking about working for justice?
- What other ways can you think to learn about and remember to work for justice?
- What else would you like to talk about?

6 Found in Translations

Leader preparation: Assemble as many translations and paraphrases of the Bible as you can. Some popular English translations and paraphrases are the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), the New Living Translation (NLT), the New Century Version (NCV) and *The Message* paraphrase (TMSG). In this activity you will read Micah 6:1–8 from each translation or paraphrase, seeking new ways to understand the passage. You can find a variety of Bible translations at www.biblegateway.com.

Supplies:

- several different translations and paraphrases of the bible
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Invite each participant to read aloud Micah 6:1–8 from a different translation or paraphrase of the Bible. After each passage is read, ask participants to call out key words, phrases, or ideas they heard in the passage. As each different translation is read, note the differences and similarities in the words, meanings, and even ideas. After all translations and paraphrases are finished, discuss what the group has learned. Some questions to help the discussion include:

- How does reading the Bible from different translations help you understand the meaning?
- How have your views about working for justice been affected by reading these verses from so many different translations?
- What surprised you in the different translations and paraphrases?
- What do you plan to do with the understanding you have today?
- What else would you like to talk about?



Sending & Serving Activities

7 Prophets (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: The Bible readings with this activity express the words of two significant Old Testament prophets. Some have described prophets as “big picture people” who see the greater scheme of things when everyone else seems to be looking more narrowly. Prophets often brought news that was difficult to say as well as difficult to hear. Participants in this activity imagine what prophets of old were like and how modern-day prophets are similar and different.

Supplies:

- Bibles

Read aloud Amos 5:18–24 and Micah 6:1–8. Ask the participants to listen to the readings from the perspective of the prophets speaking the words. After the reading, discuss the following questions:

- What qualities do you think a person needed to be a prophet in Old Testament times?
- What qualities do you think a person needs to be a prophet today?
- How are the words the prophets spoke in the past similar or different to the words prophets speak today?
- Prophets have been described as “big picture people.” They see the greater scheme of things when others seem to look more narrowly. What do you think of that description?
- Who are some people from the recent past or present that you would consider to be prophets? Why?
- What words should modern-day prophets speak?
- Could you be a prophet?
- How do prophetic words help you to work for justice?

8 Cut and Paste Poems and Prose

Leader preparation: Collect several newspapers, old bulletins, and/or old church-school take-home papers from around the church building. Be sure to use items that can be cut into pieces and do not need to be returned. This activity has the added benefit of cleaning up old papers no one has taken the time to recycle.

Supplies:

- old newspapers, bulletins, church-school papers, or similar
- scissors
- glue
- Bible

Distribute papers, scissors, and glue to the participants. Read aloud Amos 5:18–24 and then ask the group to create a poem or a prose story inspired by the Bible reading. They are permitted to use only words that they can find and cut out from the papers you provided. Participants will cut out words and glue them in order onto another piece of paper. After all have finished their poems or stories, invite everyone to share their creations. Follow up with some helpful thoughts for an ensuing discussion like these:

- How did this exercise help you in working for justice?

- What did you find most difficult about the activity?
- What was refreshing about the activity?
- If you had more time, what would you have done differently?
- What would you like to do with these poems and stories?
- What else would you like to talk about?

9 ACTS: Unlikely Prophets

Leader preparation: Amos wasn't a likely prophet. In Amos 7:14–14, he said to King Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'" Amos had no intention of speaking to kings and leaders or issuing warnings and other prophetic statements. God had another idea.

Supplies:

- Bibles

Invite participants to read thoughtfully Amos 5:18–24 and 7:14–15. Ask them to notice the powerful statements from the first reading in contrast to the words Amos said to the king in the second reading. Invite the group to think of some unlikely prophets in their lives.

- Who first taught you to think about working for justice?
- Who has encouraged you on your journey of faith?
- Who do you consider to be a prophetic presence in your life?
- How surprised are you that they are that prophetic presence?
- What do you think God is calling you to do in working for justice?

Reflect

Think about your group's encounters with scripture. Where have group members been open to learning from the Bible? Where have they asked the best questions? Where have they found difficulty understanding? Where have they been challenged by what they read? Spend a few moments thanking God for time to study the Bible. Ask for God's continued guidance for you and for all gathered as you seek to work for justice.

Attachment: Activity 3

Amos 5:18–24 (NRSV)

Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord!
Why do you want the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, not light;
as if someone fled from a lion,
and was met by a bear;
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,
and was bitten by a snake.
Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?

I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Working for Justice



Exploration: Discipleship

About this Age Group

Adults have many responsibilities. They also have continuing opportunities to learn. Somewhere amid the stress of jobs, family, financial obligations, health, and rest, adults also need to find a path to a discipleship way of life; grounded there, they will always find opportunities to learn and grow. Discipleship is an everyday activity. It is a commitment to follow Jesus' call wherever it leads.

About this Exploration

When Jesus bids us come and follow, what does he mean? It means following Jesus in justice work. Disciples are invited to practice their faith by making conscious choices, exploring ideas, and acquiring skills for the lives to which Jesus calls us. The activities in this exploration lead disciples to ask: How do our daily plans and routines show our commitment to working for justice?

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:
Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22
John 10:11-18

Leader Preparation

Why is it that every time I hear the word “discipleship,” I think either of the Twelve who followed Jesus or a group of evangelical Christians who meet together to listen to, without ever questioning, a pastor, avoiding whatever sin the pastor defines? Discipleship should not be loaded with negativity or a lack of intellectual exercise. Think of the way Jesus engaged the disciples. He told them parables that made them think. He helped them when they made mistakes and encouraged them to grow in faith. Bring all your thoughts about discipleship to God. Bring any fears about leading discussions to God. Bring all your hopes for working for justice to God.

Prayer: Please help me, O God, to reflect, speak, ask, respond, and act in ways that honor you and that help others understand the journey called discipleship. Please speak to me, O God, as I prepare to assist all gathered to talk about discipleship and how it affects how all can work for justice. Amen.

Session Development

For each session leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Conscious Choices (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: We make choices every day. Some choices have little noticeable impact on the world around us, while others may have more world-changing results. This activity encourages the participants to notice impact our choices have and to think of ways to make choices that will help in working for justice.

Supplies:

- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Present participants with typical choices they make every day. Create several lists of choices on newsprint or a whiteboard. These items can come from you, others, or a combination.

- *coffee:* designer store, gas station, fast food, fair trade, home
- *personal automobile:* big, small, hybrid, walk
- *food:* super center, local grocer, farm stand, raise your own
- *dining:* dinner out, carry out, fast food, cook and eat
- *water:* bottled, tap
- *donations:* church, school, disaster relief, poverty relief, political candidates
- *shopping:* garage sales, thrift store, discount store, designer store
- *time:* work, family, church, advocacy, play, rest

For each “choices” list, rather than ask which choice a person makes, invite discussion about the impact each choice may have. Some questions to help guide the discussion are:

- If you made a different choice part of the time, how would that change you? How could it make an impact on the world?
- What choices do you think folk who live without basic life necessities make?
- How do the choices you make affect folk all over the world?
- What do you think it means to advocate for justice?
- What else would you like to talk about?

2 Sheep

Leader preparation: Read John 10: 11-18.

Supplies:

- video: “Sheep runs into a wall,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJaSBsjyOoM>
- computer or other method of showing video

Show the 6-second video of a sheep running into a wall. Since it is so short, you will be able to show it several times. Stop before anyone feels sick. After showing the video, in your own words, say this to participants:

is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

This little video is often used as evidence that all sheep are stupid. Does that mean that one person tripping and falling is evidence that all humans are clumsy? Let me tell you a little about sheep: Sheep tend to stay close to other sheep. If they get separated, they become quite agitated and uncomfortable. They know that when they are together as a flock, they are more protected from predators. Sheep also recognize sheep faces—and human faces, to some extent. They recognize sounds and can even recognize the voice of the shepherd who tends to their flock. Additionally, sheep know how to choose the kind of food that will give them the best nourishment based on the season and their dietary needs. Sheep are not stupid.

Shepherds, on the other hand, can be good for, or not so good for, their flock. If shepherds care for the sheep and seek to protect the sheep from trouble, they do what is good for the sheep. If shepherds try to lead the sheep astray and run at the first sign of danger, the shepherds don't do what is good for the sheep.

Read aloud John 10:14–15. Then lead a discussion using questions such as the following.

- What does it mean when Jesus says, “I am the good shepherd”?
- How does having a loving and caring shepherd affect how you can work for justice?
- What other thoughts do you have?
- In what ways are we like sheep and in what ways are we like shepherds?
- What does shepherding have to do with discipleship?

3 Souper Bowl

Leader preparation: The National Football League's Super Bowl is one of the most-watched television events of the year. People gather to eat, watch football, and watch television commercials together. Friends enjoy one another's company during Super Bowl parties. There's a way to work for justice with the Super Bowl as inspiration. The “Souper Bowl of Caring” draws on the attention of the Super Bowl to encourage people to work for local advocacy groups and to donate food and money to local hunger relief programs. All items and money collected in a “Souper Bowl of Caring” drive go directly to local food relief programs. Complete information and resources are available at www.souperbowl.org.

Supplies:

- “Souper Bowl of Caring” posters and information
- list of local food relief organizations
- soup pots or collection baskets

Show the participants the “Souper Bowl of Caring” information. Tell them that while it is primarily a youth-oriented advocacy group, adults often get in on the action. Tell the participants that the aim of the “Souper Bowl of Caring” is to help local food relief organizations through food, money, and time and talent donations. Invite all participants to work in a “Service Blitz” (see <http://www.souperbowl.org/serviceblitz/>). Plan to hold your event on a day near the date of the Super Bowl game (usually in late January or early February). Invite participants to be generous with their time and resources in helping all to have enough to eat.



Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 Exploring Ideas (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: “There is nothing new under the sun,” penned the writer of Lamentations. Too often we see these words as a challenge to find the newest and best idea. It’s important to remember that some of the best ideas for working for justice come from repeating great ideas from the Bible. Sometimes what seems new is really just a reimagining of something ancient and profound.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Read both Jeremiah 17:7–10 and Micah 6:1–8 together and ask: *What ideas for working for justice did you hear in the Bible verses? What new ideas come to mind?* If the participants have difficulty coming up with ideas, offer some of these:

- Offer shelter to travelers in need.
- Establish health care ministries in the congregation.
- Establish mental health workshops and ministries.
- Offer a month of daily acts of kindness ideas via text or e-mail.
- Get involved with an organizations such as www.heifer.org or www.foodsresourcebank.org.

Give all an opportunity to talk about their ideas. After exploring the possibilities, pick a favorite and discuss ways to act on that idea to work for justice.

5 The Sower

Leader preparation: This activity encourages the participants to think about planting seeds as they think about working for justice. In Van Gogh’s paintings, color often carries a symbolic meaning. Yellow indicated faith, and blue often meant divinity. Locate the print “The Sower” by Vincent van Gogh.

Supplies:

- artwork: “The Sower” by Vincent van Gogh, https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/1801449515?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=15625&store_id=1401

Display “The Sower” by Vincent van Gogh. Give the participants time to study the art, and then ask:

- What might this artwork have to do with working for justice?
- How is the sower in the picture working for justice?
- What is hopeful in the painting?
- What is troubling about the painting?
- What do you think might happen next?
- How does the presence of so much yellow and blue in the painting affect your experience of viewing it?
- How does this painting move you to work for justice?
- What else would you like to say about the painting?



6 Relentlessly

Leader preparation: Read the beat poem “Pray. Act.” several times in order to establish a rhythm. You can hear a spoken version of the poem at the end of the sermon podcast “Justice,” by Kirk Moore, accessed at <http://www.moredomainsforless.com/audio/justice.mp3>.

Supplies:

- “Pray. Act.” Attachment: Activity 6

Invite the group to participate in reading the beat poem “Pray. Act.”

Sending & Serving Activities



7 Disciples for Justice

Leader preparation: Prepare a list of modern-day disciples who have followed Jesus by working for justice. Use people from the following list or others that you think of, especially if there are persons in your community. Write these names on newsprint or a whiteboard. The list is in no way exhaustive. (If you don’t know the stories of all of these, use an Internet search engine for research.)

- Ella Josephine Baker—Civil Rights activist
- Bono—philanthropic performer and activist
- Jimmy Carter—former president and humanitarian activist
- Dorothy Day—aid worker and activist on behalf of those in poverty
- Dorothea Dix—mental health activist
- Julia Butterfly Hill—environmental activist
- William R. Johnson—first openly gay ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ and founder of the UCC Gay Caucus
- Martin Luther King, Jr.—Civil Rights activist
- Nelson Mandela—anti-apartheid and human rights activist
- Harvey Milk—first openly gay man to be elected to public office in California
- Florence Nightingale—nurse, philanthropist, feminist
- Rosa Parks—Civil Rights activist
- Bishop Gene Robinson—first openly gay, noncelibate priest to be ordained a bishop in the Episcopal Church
- Oscar Romero—justice advocate, liberation theologian
- Mother Teresa—minister to the poor, sick, orphaned, and dying
- Desmond Tutu—anti-apartheid and human rights activist
- Phyllis Wheatley—first African American woman to publish a book, and the first to make a living from her writing

Supplies:

- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Introduce the list as the names of some modern-day disciples who worked for justice. Share the above list, or ask participants to name others that they think belong on this list. *Who would you include from the community and from this congregation?* Ask participants what they know of the justice work from the modern-



day disciples of Jesus. *How have you been inspired by their ministry? What have you learned from these disciples? How does the witness of these disciples challenge you to work for justice? How has the witness of these people changed the views of others or initiated change in the culture or in politics?*

8 Guide My Feet

Leader preparation: Oftentimes when we think of justice movements, the Civil Rights movement comes to mind. Music played an essential role in this important movement. Singing enabled the people of the movement to feel secure in achieving their goals; it made them feel confident, it gave them support. The hymns sung by all the people of the movement were hard to ignore; the songs were loud, expressive, moving, inspiring, and very real. The music that emerged during the early part of the movement was based largely on old slave spirituals and songs from the Emancipation period. Songs that had been revived during the labor movement of the 1920s–1940s were repurposed for Civil Rights meetings. These songs were so prevalent, everyone already knew them; they simply needed to be reworked and reapplied to the new struggles.

Ask someone to play guitar or piano for the group as participants sing the hymn “Guide My Feet.” Alternately, play the YouTube video of the song and have the group sing along.

Supplies:

- song: “Guide My Feet,” African American traditional hymn (tune: Guide My Feet); words and music, <http://www.hymnsite.com/fws/hymn.cgi?2208>
- video: “Guide My Feet,” <http://tinyurl.com/FPSong20>
- computer with Internet access
- musical accompaniment, if needed

Sing “Guide My Feet” together and then discuss, using questions such as these:

- The lyrics ask for help on the journey. “Guide my feet, hold my hand, stand by me, I’m your child, and search my heart” carry with them powerful images. How do you experience the requests in the song?
- What requests do you think are missing?
- How are the lyrics “while I run this race” helpful in inspiring you to work for justice? How might they be harmful to you or someone else?
- For what contemporary justice issue might this song be “repurposed”?

9 Acquiring Skills

Leader preparation: Review the resources from the justice pages of Global Ministries, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ or from your own communion or denomination. Make a plan to share some of the resources with the participants, such as projecting the websites on a screen.

- <http://www.globalministries.org/get-involved/justice-and-advocacy/>
- <http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/pages/justice>
- <http://ucc.org/justice/>

Supplies:

- computer with Internet access
- projector

Present the resources you selected from the denominational justice ministry websites. Ask the participants to discuss how some of the resources for working for justice could be used with the group or with the congregation. Make a plan to work with one of the resources with the congregation in the coming weeks.

Reflect

Think about the journey of discipleship for the individuals in your group. Where do you think they have been challenged? Where has there been a hesitancy to move forward in faith? How have the activities helped them work for justice? Spend a few moments thanking God for the time to help all make conscious choices, explore ideas, and acquire skills for the life to which Jesus calls.

Attachment: Activity 6

Pray. Act.
by Kirk Moore

Pray
Pray relentlessly
Pray relentlessly and boldly—ask God for justice
Pray
Even if the world may not care about justice
Take on the world
Pray
Pray relentlessly
Pray relentlessly and boldly—ask God for justice
Even if the world may not care about justice
Take on the world
And be encouraged that God is listening and responding
Pray

Act
Act relentlessly
Act relentlessly and boldly—ask God for justice
Act
Even if the world may not care about justice
Take on the world
Act
Act relentlessly
Act relentlessly and boldly—ask God for justice
Even if the world may not care about justice
Take on the world
And be encouraged that God is listening and responding
Act

And pray

For justice.

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Working for Justice



Exploration: Christian Tradition

About this Age Group

Christian tradition can be viewed positively or negatively by adults. Some have been profoundly affected through the rituals, music, prayers, and actions of the communities they have been a part of. Others are simply fed up with the continuing chorus of “We’ve never done it that way before.” Navigating the positive and the negative in Christian tradition can be difficult, but it also opens up wonderful possibilities for discussion and for encouragement for all to work for justice.

About this Exploration

In working for justice, as in everything, our past is our prologue. Christian tradition calls the church to confess its participation in the creation and perpetuation of injustice. It also calls us to celebrate as Christian people who claim and test our heritage through doing the work of justice. Grounded in this history, we follow God’s leading and discover new ways to practice our faith working for justice.

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:
Psalm 34:15–22
Ephesians 2:11–22

Leader Preparation

Christian tradition may bring up warm memories of the rituals and events you've been a part of for many years. It may bring up memories of tired ideas and exploitive behavior that you've experience in the church. Open your mind to embrace the traditions that have been meaningful to you. Be willing to discuss openly the ones you found to be harmful. Be open to learn new traditions and to renew old ones that you discover along the way. Bring all your thoughts about Christian tradition to God. Bring any fears about leading discussions to God. Bring all your hopes for working for justice to God.

Prayer: Please help me, O God, to reflect, speak, ask, respond, and act in ways that honor you and that help others to remember, discuss, and learn about working for justice through Christian tradition. Please speak to me, O God, as I prepare to assist all gathered to talk about Christian tradition and how it affects how all can work for justice. Amen.

Session Development

For each session leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from "Exploring and Engaging," at least one from "Discerning and Deciding," and at least one from "Sending and Serving." The first activity in each category

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Our Past Is our Prologue (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Looking back to the "good old days" can remind us of better times; it can also remind us of times when the church participated in and perpetrated injustices toward others. Use this time to look at the history of your congregation and to find times of both working for justice and participating in injustice

Supplies:

- a church history book or document, if available
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Invite the group to name significant moments in the history of the congregation. Ask specifically for times or events they remember or have heard of where the church worked for justice, such as participating in a hunger walk or building a house or being a stop on the Underground Railroad. Additionally, ask the group to consider times when the church participated in situations or events that are now considered unjust, such as racial segregation. Encourage the participants to talk openly and honestly about the past, while also remembering to share opinions with kindness and gentleness. Write the events and moments shared on the newsprint or whiteboard. After several minutes, say that you'd like to keep this list of moments and events as a resource to remember the positive and the negative, as the group looks forward and works for justice.

2 Firsts

Leader preparation: All denominations have achieved "firsts," though they might not all have such events recorded as the United Church of Christ (UCC) has. Check around to see what firsts there are for your congregation and denomination. For an example, see the list of firsts that the UCC and its predecessors achieved. Explore this list and some of the "unwritten extras" as a celebration and also a challenge for what lies ahead.

Supplies:

- UCC Firsts list—an interactive Internet version available at <http://www.ucc.org/about-us/ucc—firsts.html>; a printable 3-page sheet available at <http://www.ucc.org/50/pdfs/firsts.pdf>

If your group is of a denomination or communion other than the United Church of Christ (UCC), consider building your own list of "firsts." Share the UCC list as an example. If you are part of the UCC, review and discuss the many "firsts" listed in the resources from the United Church of Christ. These "more to the story" snippets add to the ensuing conversation:

- Antoinette Brown ultimately left the Congregational church, where she had been ordained with some difficulty because she was a woman. She did not return to parish ministry for more than 20 years. When she did return, it was as a Unitarian instead of a Congregationalist (see <http://www25.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/antoinettebrownblackwell.html>).
- William R. Johnson, the first openly gay person to be ordained to Christian ministry, has never received a call to serve as a pastor of a local church (see <http://www.ucc.org/ucnews/june2002/bill-johnson-reflects-on-his.html>).

is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

- Cotton Mather, the celebrated New England Congregational minister and one of the founders of Yale University, published writings that were used as part of the Salem witch trials in the late 1600s (see <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Mather,+Cotton>).

Consider these topics for discussion:

- History is rarely remembered without bias.
- What bias do you think is present in this list of “firsts”?
- How does this list inspire you to work for justice?
- Do you have a special place to pray? What is it like?
- Water can symbolize cleansing and new life. What other places speak to you as a meaningful place to pray?



3 “Shotgun, Third Ward, #1”

Leader preparation: Preview the painting “Shotgun, Third Ward, #1” by John Biggers. Notice the church building on fire and the reactions of the people viewing the fire. Notice also the absence of any fire protection people or equipment.

Supplies:

- artwork: “Shotgun, Third Ward, #1” by John Biggers, https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/1801449515?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=17101&store_id=1401

Display the artwork. After the group has had a chance to look closely and deeply, discuss the painting. Some helpful questions include:

- What do you see on fire? Why do you think the artist displays a church on fire?
- Notice the reactions of the different people in the picture. What emotions do you see expressed?
- What is missing from this painting?
- How do you think the larger church community participated in scenes like this?
- How do you think the larger church community participated in changing the likelihood of there being any more scenes like this?
- How does this painting and this discussion inspire you to work for justice?



Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 Justice Search (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Participants will be invited to exercise their imagination as they tour the church building looking for items they can bring to the rest of the group and share how the items connect to working for justice.

Supplies: None

Send the participants on a tour through the church building. Their assignment is to look for one or more items to bring back to the group to talk about working for justice. If they have difficulty with ideas of items to look for, offer these examples:

- A Bible, with the idea of reviewing the Bible Focus Passages from this Exploration as passages that teach about working for justice
- Communion ware, with the idea of talking about places where not everyone is welcome at the table
- A church bulletin, with the idea of looking at ways visitors may feel excluded by the assumptions in the liturgy, such as thinking everyone knows how to pray the Lord's Prayer or sing the Doxology
- A church publication printed in small font, with the idea of talking about how the small print excludes people with limited vision from reading the publication
- An offering tray

After an appropriate time, gather the group together so that participants can share the items they've found along with a description of the connection between the item and working for justice.

5 "Singing for Our Lives"

Leader preparation: Music is deeply imbedded in justice traditions. Holly Near wrote the song "Singing for Our Lives" after Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone were assassinated in San Francisco in 1978. It has become an unofficial anthem of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) equality movement. This song has been used for other justice movements as well, such as the March for Women's Lives (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=johabhyURIw>).

Supplies:

- video: "Singing for Our Lives," <http://tinyurl.com/FPSong21b>
- lyrics to "Singing for Our Lives," <http://tinyurl.com/FPSong21a>

If you printed the lyrics, distribute them and sing the song with the group. If you do not have the lyrics, allow participants to listen to the song several times. The tune is easy to pick up. Then invite the group to discuss the song and the emotions it elicits. Some possible questions for discussion include:

- What does it mean to be a "gentle" and "angry people"?
- What does it mean to be "singing for our lives"?
- Where do you see struggle in the song?
- Where do you see hope?
- What else would you like to talk about?



6 Ask Questions

Leader preparation: Reviewing our Christian tradition provides ways to find answers to the questions we often have, but it also offers new questions. The wisdom of the ages teaches us to have the patience to strive for new patterns of behavior and new ways of expressing faith. The wisdom of the ages also encourages us to continue working for justice.

Supplies:

- Bibles

Read Psalm 34:15–22 and Ephesians 2:11–22 in unison. Then give the participants time to ask questions that emerge from reading the texts. Discuss these questions. If the participants have difficulty offering questions to discuss, offer these suggestions:

- What do you think of the contrast in what Psalm 34 says about what God does and does not do?
- Where is there comfort in Psalm 34? Where does it make you feel uncomfortable?
- What are your thoughts about the new humanity Christ offers in place of the law's commandments and ordinances from Ephesians 2?
- What does the sentence that talks of peace for those near and far make you think of?
- What else would you like to talk about?

Sending & Serving Activities



7 Justice on the Fly (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Learn how to make a few different types of paper airplanes. You can find an online source for making simple designs at <http://www.10paperairplanes.com> or <http://www.paperairplanes.co.uk/>. Participants will make the airplanes, fly them, and then describe the imaginary places where the planes landed. They will then describe how they would work for justice in that location.

Supplies:

- paper for airplanes (varying kinds and weights)
- paper airplane instructions (see the websites referenced above)
- (optional) globe or world map
- (optional) Ecumenical Prayer Calendar, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/prayer-cycle.html>

Offer several simple paper airplane designs to the participants. Write the name of a country or region either globally or nationally on each piece of paper used to make an airplane. Invite the participants to make a plane from the designs you offered or another design they know. Tell them that they will be flying the planes to see how far they will go. After the planes are done, fly them in an open area. Have each participant remember where their plane landed. After all planes have flown, ask each participant to talk about the following.



- Read the name of the country or region on your airplane. What do you know about that area?
- If you were on a real plane that landed in that location, what might you do there to work for justice?

Option: Use the list of countries on the Ecumenical Prayer Calendar as a way to remember the names of countries. In which of these regions is there a need to work for justice? One way of working for justice is praying. The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle enables us to journey in prayer through every region of the world and through every week of the year affirming our solidarity with Christians all over the world, brothers and sisters living in diverse situations, experiencing diverse problems and sharing diverse gifts.

8 Decoding

Leader preparation: Sometimes our Christian tradition seems more like a difficult code to decipher. This activity asks participants to decipher a basic code to reveal a message of hope from the Christian tradition.

Supplies:

- printed, coded message of Ephesians 2:19–20; find an online secret code generator at <http://quizstop.com/askcode.htm>

Give the participants the coded version of Ephesians 2:19–20 and ask them to decipher the message. Tell them that sometimes our Christian tradition seems like a code that is difficult to decipher. In this case, the code should be easier to decipher and the participants will find a message of hope. If you have time, talk together about other codes that may be confusing to guests, new folks, and visitors.

9 Pass It On

Leader preparation: Secure a relay baton from a sporting goods store or borrow one from a local track and field team. Alternately, decorate an empty paper towel roll to look more “baton-ish.” Find a song about the way the church has worked for justice through the years. The group will symbolize passing on the wisdom of the ages as they sing the song. Some suggestions are: “God of Grace and God of Glory” by Harry Emerson Fosdick; “Let Justice Flow like Streams” by Jane Parker Huber; “We Shall Overcome”; “Lift Every Voice and Sing” by James Weldon Johnson. Check your church’s hymnal to find other justice hymns.

Supplies:

- hymnals
- musical accompaniment for the song you choose.
- hymn: “God of Grace and God of Glory” (tune: Rhondda), <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/g/o/godgrace.htm>; widely available in most hymnals
- hymn: “Let Justice Flow like Streams” (tune: St. Thomas), <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/pdf/s/t/t/St.%20Thomas%20%28Williams%29.pdf>; lyrics available at <http://cdf.childrensdefense.org/site/DocServer/program.pdf?docID=793> (this link is for an entire worship service; lyrics on page 3); congregational recessional hymn on video available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_VDCy_CnEM



Sing the song you selected as a group. As the song is sung, ask each person to pass the baton to another person, symbolizing the passing on of wisdom from one to another and from one age to another. Encourage all to learn from one another and from our Christian tradition as they continue to work for justice.

Reflect

Think about the traditions of your congregation and the traditions of the Christian church. How have they been helpful in the activities you have done? How have they made things more difficult? How have the participants' different experiences with tradition affected the way the group has been able to discuss, learn, and act? Spend a few moments thanking God for the time to learn from, ask questions of, and be challenged to act as a result of our Christian tradition.

Working for Justice



Exploration: Context and Mission

About this Age Group

Adults may find mission the easiest part of working for justice. They can advocate for causes for which they have passion. They can seek ways to address the root cause of need. They also need to imagine what things would be like if there were no need to work for justice. Additionally, adults need to recognize their context and the context they enter when working for justice. An ongoing challenge for adults in working for justice is to act with love and to seek to do no harm.

About this Exploration

All are created in the image of God, children of God, unique and diverse in our own context. Jesus imagined a different reality from the one in which he lived; Jesus imagined the realm of God, rooted in love and justice. When working for justice, we see the face of God in others around us. God is angered by injustice and we are called to respond. When we explore context and mission, we wake up to the just and unjust realities of our local communities and world—and are called to action.

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:

**Proverbs 22:1-2,
8-9, 22-23
Romans 13:8-14**

Leader Preparation

Each person in your group comes with a set of individual experiences and opinions. All participants bring their ideas to the mission of working for justice. Be mindful about hearing all opinions and responding gently and supportively to each person as each one enters the discussion and offers ideas. Open your mind to embrace the unique experience of each person in the group. Bring all your thoughts about context and mission to God. Bring any fears about leading discussions to God. Bring all your hopes for working for justice to God.

Prayer: Please help me, O God, to imagine, reflect, speak, ask, respond, and act in ways that honor you and that help others to remember, discuss, and learn about working for justice through context and mission. Please speak to me, O God, as I prepare to assist all gathered to talk about context and mission and how understanding it is important in working for justice. Amen.

Session Development

For each session leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Seven Days of Justice (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Working for justice can become something folks do naturally, if it is connected to daily activities. Participants will link working for justice with a week of activity in this activity.

Supplies:

- paper, notebooks (or calendars, if available)
- pens or pencils

Ask participants to write the seven days of the week across the top of their paper. Under each day, have them write their typical activities. Encourage them to list as many regular activities for each day as they can remember. After no more than five minutes, ask them to circle any activities related to working for justice. Then ask them to circle any activities that could be related to working for justice, if they modified any activity. (This activity can also be done as a group process, asking all to add typical daily tasks, building a composite picture of the group’s activities.)

Invite participants to share any activities they would like to. Discuss the connections that people can make to work for justice in their daily activities.

2 Justice in Education

Leader preparation: Screen the film *Waiting for Superman*, or study the basics of the film before leading this activity. Resources for discussing this documentary are available at <http://www.ucc.org/justice/public-education/thinking-about-the-film.html>.

Supplies:

- film: *Waiting for Superman*
- computer with Internet access
- printouts of selected resources from the United Church of Christ resource page (see website above) for discussing the film

Present a brief synopsis of the documentary. Be sure to mention that it explores the stories of five children who face uncertain futures in their education because of the significant inequities of public school funding, resources, teacher training, and educational opportunities. Share some of the resources from the UCC resource page “Thinking about the Film *Waiting for Superman*.” Some questions that may help the discussion include:

- In what ways is the United States’ public education system related to working for justice?
- What specific actions could our group or our congregation take to make a positive impact on public school education?
- Educators, government leaders, religious leaders, and parents disagree about ways to improve public education. How do you think voices of disagreement can help all work for educational justice?

with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.



3 Justice Connection

Leader preparation: “Justice Connection” is a game that asks participants to turn over, remember, and match items relating to justice and positive actions. It also leads to discussions about the connections of the subjects of justice and the positive action connections. Prepare the note cards with the words and actions suggested below. Be sure to add others. Depending on the number of participants in your group, you may need to make more than one set of cards.

Supplies:

- “Justice Connection,” Attachment: Activity 3

“Justice Connection” is a game like “Concentration” in which players connect words related to justice with actions that come from the words. Place the note cards upside down in a grid formation. Each participant takes a turn by turning one card over and then trying to find a card that matches the word with an action. Or divide the group into teams to play the game.

After all participants have had a turn and all connections have been made, discuss the connections, giving all the opportunity to agree and disagree with the connections made.

Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 Justice Proverbs (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Proverbs are short, pithy sayings that offer good, basic life advice. Proverbs 22 offers great advice that relates to working for justice. (If you have what is needed and the time, have fun with the short sayings by presenting them in the character of a current cartoon, TV, movie, or sports figure.) Presenting the proverbs in character may help the participants remember.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- (optional) character costume

Present the following bits of advice about justice with passion and energy.

- “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.”
- “The rich and the poor have this in common: the LORD is the maker of them all.”
- “Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity, and the rod of anger will fail.”
- “Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor.”
- “Do not rob the poor because they are poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate.”

After presenting and repeating each proverb three or more times, discuss actions and implications of each proverb. Invite the participants to add other proverbs to the list.



5 Miro Miro

Leader preparation: Obtain the poster of the painting “Kopf” by Joan Miro. Miro’s art has been described as “wonderfully absurd.” It is playful and energetic and offers great discussion opportunities.

Supplies:

- artwork: “Kopf” by Joan Miro, <http://tinyurl.com/FPArt18>

Show “Kopf” by Joan Miro to the group. Allow several minutes for viewing the painting without any discussion. Encourage all to look deeply at the details of the artwork, and encourage them to take in the big picture as well. After several minutes of observation, discuss the painting. Some helpful questions for discussion are:

- What do you see in this painting?
- What differences do you see on the two sides or four quadrants of the face?
- What are your thoughts about the symbols that surround the face?
- Who does the face in the picture represent?
- How does the conflict in the painting inform your view of working for justice?
- How does the playfulness of the painting inform your view of working for justice?
- What else would you like to talk about?

End the discussion by encouraging all participants to look beyond what is obvious in working for justice.

6 Do No Wrong

Leader preparation: The two greatest commandments—love God and love all—are expressed and explained many places in the Bible. In Romans 13:10, the phrase “Love does no wrong to a neighbor” speaks clearly and profoundly to the continuing need to show love when working for justice. In this activity, participants will suggest ways to work for justice without accidentally doing harm.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Read Romans 13:8–14 in unison. When the reading is finished, repeat verse 10. Then repeat the first part of verse 10, “Love does no wrong to a neighbor.” Ask the group to discuss ways to avoid doing accidental harm when working for justice. Some helpful starting points for discussion include:

- How do we avoid imposing our own cultural influence when working for justice in a different culture?
- How might we find ways to connect with people and agencies already working for justice rather than starting something on our own?
- What traditions and activities might end as the result of the work we are doing? How will this affect the people we are working with?

Close the discussion by encouraging all to remember to work with people rather than tell them what to do in working for justice.



Sending & Serving Activities

7 Imagine It Different (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Jesus imagined a reality different from the one in which he lived; Jesus imagined the realm of God, rooted in love and justice. Participants will imagine a different reality as it relates to working for justice.

Supplies:

- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Invite the group to imagine a different reality where the work for justice was no longer necessary. What would the areas where justice work continues today look like if there were no more work to do? Use the following subjects, or others you think of, to lead the discussion:

- Aging
- Disabilities
- Immigration
- Health care
- LGBT
- Mental illnesses and brain disorders
- Poverty
- War
- Racism

Close the session by encouraging all to continue to imagine a different reality where the work for justice is no longer necessary.

8 Pictures of Justice

Leader preparation: A picture paints a thousand words, so goes the saying. Participants will describe working for justice with pictures.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- cameras
- computer to display pictures

Read Proverbs 22:1–2, 8–9, 22–23, and Romans 13:8–14 in unison. Using these Bible passages as beginning points, invite the participants in groups of 3–4 to express justice themes via photographs. After several minutes of taking pictures, display them to the group. You may want to further enhance the pictures with Bible references and then make posters to hang around the church building. Some picture possibilities include:

- Someone walking away from money toward a friend
- Someone sharing bread with another
- Someone advocating for another
- A law with “LOVE” written across it
- A quarrel and then reconciliation

After viewing the pictures and discussing, consider where these photographs might be posted. Close the activity by encouraging all to live out the pictures as they continue to work for justice.

9 Widen the Welcome

Leader preparation: At least one out of four families in churches are affected by a mental illness, a brain disorder, or a mental disability. Too often, however, congregations are not equipped to welcome and minister to those who are affected. What work is being done in your denomination to help churches and families deal with this challenge? Check to see if your denomination has something like the UCC's "Widening the Welcome." This is a movement within the United Church of Christ to develop the life of congregations to include persons with disabilities and persons with mental illness or brain disorders and their families. In this activity, participants will be encouraged to widen the welcome in churches to include all.

Supplies:

- computer to view resources from <http://wideningthewelcome.com>

Show the "Widening the Welcome" website to the group. Browse around to see the different resources available to congregations to help them include all in the ministry of the church. Discuss ways that a congregation can start and continue to widen the welcome. Some helpful points for discussion include:

- Removing the stigma attached to mental illnesses and brain disorders is key to widening the welcome
- Widening the welcome is more than putting up a ramp. It requires a change of attitude.
- Becoming accessible to all is a justice issue.
- There are too many people affected by mental illness, brain disorders, and mental disabilities to ignore the necessity of widening the welcome to include all of God's children.

Close the discussion by encouraging all to work to widen the welcome to include all of God's children.

Reflect

Think about the context each individual brought to the group. Think of the mission that you all share in working for justice. Where have group members understood another's context in the discussions? Where has the context of the group been more powerful than individual context? How has it helped or hindered learning about working for justice? Spend a few moments thanking God for each person and every experience in the group. Ask for God's continued guidance for you and for all gathered as you seek to work for justice.

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Attachment: Activity 3

Justice Connection

Justice Words

Immigration

Health care

**Human
rights**

LGBT

**Torture
awareness**

Peacemaking

Bullying

**Sexuality
education**

**Anti-racism,
pro-reconciliation**

**Environmental
justice**

**Economic
justice**

**Medicare and
Social Security**

Attachment: Activity 3 (continued)

Justice Connection
Justice Actions

**Love your neighbor
as your self.**

**Decry as
unacceptable the
lack of adequate
health care for
billions in the world.**

**Advocate for all
persons whose basic
rights are denied or
limited.**

**Provide support
and sanctuary for
all who are lesbian,
gay, bisexual, or
transgender.**

**Advocate for the
abolition of torture
without exceptions.**

**Recognize the
interrelation of
friendship, justice,
and common
security from
violence.**

**Create a culture of
respect.**

**Provide life-affirming
sexuality education
for children, youth,
and adults.**

**Recognize racism
as sin, not only as
individuals but also
as communities.**

**Lower your carbon
footprint. Live
respecting the
beauty of creation.**

**Seek to discern a
vision of God's will
for society and the
economy.**

**Work to prioritize the
needs of our most
vulnerable citizens.**

Working for Justice



Exploration: Future and Vision

About this Age Group

Adults find meaning in their legacy—what they will pass on to the next generations. They also have different opinions as to what generations in the future will do with the foundation they established. In working for justice, adults share a hope and a vision of what they think things could be like in the future. Each adult's opinion should be heard and valued, and all adults should be encouraged that the good they do today will make the world a better place. All age groups can make a difference. And all age groups can work together for justice.

About this Exploration

Imagine a world where all are in right relationship with God, with other human beings, and all of God's creation. Jesus calls us to help create this future where we live out God's love in all that we are and all that we do. We do justice because we are inspired by God's vision of healing and reconciliation, restoration and wholeness, and abundance for all. As a people of hope, we accept the call to be God's hands and feet. In this future and vision exploration, we are challenged to stay focused on this hope as we live out God's call to do justice.

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:
Matthew 25:31-46
Isaiah 58:1-14

Leader Preparation

Don't you wish you knew the way everything would turn out? What is the best way to work for justice and to look forward in hope even though things often seem hopeless? Looking toward the future with vision for working for justice asks all to look ahead with hope. Be persistent. Don't give up. Know that God desires justice in the world, and our call to work for justice is God's work. Bring all your hopes and fears the future of working for justice to God. Bring any thoughts you have about leading discussions to God.

Prayer: Please help me, O God, to reflect, speak, ask, respond, and act in ways that honor you and that help others to work together and forward in faith as they work for justice. Please speak to me, O God, as I prepare to assist all gathered to talk about the future and vision of working for justice. Amen.

Session Development

For each session leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from "Exploring and Engaging," at least one from "Discerning and Deciding," and at least one from "Sending and Serving." The first activity in each category is designed for "easy preparation" (able to be done with minimal preparation

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Healing and Reconciliation (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Folks often practice their faith by giving up things during the season of Lent. While this activity about healing and reconciliation can be part of a Lent activity, it works any time of the year. It involves healing and reconciliation of relationships and the things that keep us from living a life working for justice.

Supplies:

- paper (or journals)
- pencils or pens

Invite the participants to write a reflection on some personal relationship that is estranged and in need of reconciliation and healing. Additionally, ask them to list things they neglect that can be hindrances to working for justice. Some possibilities to suggest, if the participants have difficulty starting, include:

- Business associates where the relationship has turned sour
- Family members you haven't talked to in a long time
- Former friends you still are angry with, though you may not remember why
- Staying away from worship services because you are angry with someone
- Engaging in negative political talk about politicians you disagree with
- Complaining for the sake of complaining

After participants have written their reflections, instead of a discussion, lead the group in this or a similar prayer. *God who can and who does, please help us to work for justice in our world and in our lives. We seek to be reconciled with all your children and ask for the strength to help mend broken relationships. Please give us your healing, your mercy, your compassion, and your love. Help us to experience the life you have called us to and to share with others the love and reconciliation you give. Amen.*

2 "Vendedora de Piñas"

Leader preparation: Painter Diego Rivera was a Civil Rights advocate who focused on justice for those who work as farmers and farm laborers. He often painted large murals on the sides of buildings. "Vendedora de Piñas" offers a view of a seller of pineapples in a local market.

Supplies:

- artwork: "Vendedora de Piñas" by Diego Rivera, <http://tinyurl.com/FPArt17>

View "Vendedora de Piñas" with the group. After several minutes of contemplating the painting, discuss the emotions it elicits and its connection to working for justice. The following questions may help in the discussion:

- What emotion do you see on the seller's face?
- What is hopeful in the painting?
- What is troubling about the painting?
- What do you think is missing?

with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

- What would you say to the pineapple seller in the market?
- What do you think the future holds for the seller?
- What do you hope the future holds?
- How does this painting move you to work for justice?
- What else would you like to say about the painting?

3 Restoration and Wholeness

Leader preparation: Sometimes adults stay away from the church for years because of a bad experience when they were children or young adults in church. What would it be like if working for justice helped people find their way back to a faith community as well as making a difference for good in the world?

Supplies:

- computer with Internet access
- websites that focus on returning to church, such as the following:
<http://www.catholicscomehome.org/>
<http://backtochurch.com/>
<http://rethinkchurch.com/>
<http://stillspeaking.com>
- (option) printed resources from websites to show to the group

View the websites or display the printouts from websites listed or others you have discovered. As you look, note that each site offers reasons to come back to church that describe the church as either different from the way a person remembers it or different than it used to be. Some sites even mention working for justice. Discuss the different ideas found on these sites. Additionally, consider raising questions like these for discussion:

- If you didn't attend church and you found a church while working for justice, how do you think you'd react to an invitation to attend that church?
- How important to you are the doctrinal statements of churches?
- In what ways are working for justice and church growth related?
- What do you think working for justice means for the future of churches?
- What else would you like to talk about?

Close the activity by encouraging all to invite someone to experience worship and working for justice in the church you attend.

Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 Like the Dawn (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Isaiah 58:1–14, looking for words and phrases that encourage living with hope and working for justice. Write down these words so that you can refer to them during the group activity.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard



Read Isaiah 58:1–14 together. Ask the participants to listen for key words and phrases that encourage living with hope and working for justice. After the first reading, ask them to call out the words and phrases. Write those words on the newsprint or whiteboard. Read the Bible passage again and ask the participants to look for the words and phrases that have been called out and also for any others that emerge now. After the second reading, write down new words and phrases that that participants name. After the second reading, invite discussion about the different words and phrases that the group named. Consider these questions during the discussion:

- How do the words and phrases relate to working for justice?
- How do the words and phrases offer encouragement for living with hope?
- What would the future look like if the words and phrases that offer hope and encouragement became a reality?
- What else would you like to talk about?



5 “Dream God’s Dream”

Leader preparation: Listen to and learn Bryan Sirchio’s song “Dream God’s Dream.” Since you’ll be singing it with the group, make arrangements for a song leader and musical instruments to lead the song. Include the poster “Tar Beach II” as part of this activity. This is a picture of one girl’s dream. Check out the resources identified below to put the poster in the context of its story.

Tar Beach, a story written by Faith Ringgold, is featured by the Public Television program “Reading Rainbow,” Season 8, Episode 6. One segment of this show features Ruby Dee reading the story along with images from the book. A reference librarian at your local public library may enjoy the challenge of finding a copy of this video and getting it for you. This video can be found for sale at Amazon.com (http://www.amazon.com/Reading-Rainbow-#Tar-Beach/dp/B000J0PV6O/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=dvd&qid=1286050301&sr=1-1).

Supplies:

- video: “Dream God’s Dream,” <http://tinyurl.com/FPSong19>
- “Dream God’s Dream” lyrics: <http://tinyurl.com/FPSong19a>
- musical accompaniment and song leader; accompaniment books and other song resources available at <http://sirchio.com>
- artwork: “Tar Beach II” by Faith Ringgold, <http://tinyurl.com/FPArt16>.
- website: http://www.literarytraveler.com/authors/faith_ringgold_tar_#b#each.aspx
- website: <http://www.learner.org/courses/globalart/work/251/index.html>

Sing “Dream God’s Dream” together. After singing the song, discuss reactions. Use some of the following questions for discussion, if desired:

- What phrases in the song stood out for you?
- What would the world look like where “God’s dream” was a reality?
- What would you add to the song?
- How does this song inspire you to work for justice?
- What else would you like to talk about?

Allow time for reflecting on the poster and the story of Tar Beach. Ask: *What dream do you dream? Is it God’s dream?*

After discussion, sing the song again or close with prayer.



6 You Did

Leader preparation: The sheep and the goats passage from Matthew 25:31–46 has made for powerful sermons, dramas, and songs. One song that often leaves a lasting memory was recorded by Keith Green. To prepare for this activity, listen to the song “The Sheep and the Goats” on YouTube. Arrange for one of the participants to read the scripture dramatically, or play the video for the group.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- (optional) video: “The Sheep and the Goats” by Keith Green, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ix8ddosjg-k>
- (optional) computer to play video

Play the video of “The Sheep and the Goats” by Keith Green, or have a participant dramatically read Matthew 25:31–46 for the group. After the song or the reading, say something like this:

There is nothing anyone can ever do to earn God’s love. But as a people working for justice, we are called to pay attention and to act. In the future, if you ever have to answer the question about what you did for the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the naked, the sick, or those in prison, what will you say you did?

End with a time of silent contemplation and prayer.

Sending & Serving Activities



7 Message to the Future (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: What will be the justice issues in the future? No one knows for sure, but they will likely have to do with people or groups of people who are forgotten or rejected by others. In this activity participants will write a letter to justice workers 10 years in the future, telling them about the struggle for justice today and what they hope will be accomplished in the next 10 years. If desired, change the time frame to 50 or 100 years.

Supplies:

- pencils or pens
- paper or journals

Invite the participants to write letters to those who will work for justice in 10, 50, or 100 years. In their letter suggest that they describe the work they are doing today and what they hope will have been accomplished by the time a future generation reads the letter. Participants may also write about what they think the issues future justice workers will work for. If desired, share the letters with the whole group. Ask the participants to save the letters to look at in the future.



8 Garments of Love

Leader preparation: Christopher Grundy is a seminary professor, songwriter, and song leader. He and his family recorded a backyard video for his song “Garments of Love.” You and the whole group will watch the video and discuss the meaning of the song in the realm of working for justice.

Supplies:

- video: “Garments of Love,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrwgUSLWBGw>
- (optional) “Garments of Love” audio recording, <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/garments-of-love/id200321473?i=200321506&uo=4>
- (optional) “Garments of Love” sheet music, <http://www.sibeliusmusic.com/index.php?sm=home.score&scoreID=163415>
- song leader

Play the video “Garments of Love” for the group. You may need to play it more than once. After listening, discuss it, especially how it relates to working for justice. Some questions that may help lead the discussion are:

- What in the video made you smile?
- What about the song is troubling?
- What are your thoughts about this line? “But when the freaks and geeks get picked on after class, you’ll find the love of Christ is right here on my sleeve.”
- How are love and justice connected?
- How will the future be different if all those who work for justice remember to put on their garments of love?
- What else would you like to talk about?

Christopher is pleased to have his song included here. You can contact him at www.christophergrundy.com.

9 Justice Resources

Leader preparation: Prepare a digital list or a printout of resources for participants to be advocates and active participants in working for justice. Use the resources listed in the activity description along with any others you find valuable.

Supplies:

- Working for justice Web resources digital document
- (optional) Working for justice Web resources document printout
- (optional) computer with Internet access

Display the following resources, plus any others you find valuable, for the group. Be sure to find some in your neighborhood. Encourage all to continue working for justice and to be advocates for justice in the world. Additionally, discuss how individuals and groups can be involved with the listed networks now and in the future.

- The Beatitudes Society—<http://www.beatitudessociety.org>
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Involving Congregations in Advocacy Now (ICAN)—<http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Advocacy/Congregational-Resources/ICAN.aspx>
- The International Justice Mission—<http://www.ijm.org/>
- The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism— <http://rac.org/>
- Sojourners—<http://www.sojo.net/>
- United Church of Christ Justice and Peace Action Network—<http://www.ucc.org/justice/jpanet.html>
- Unitarian Universalist Association Action Center—<http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/actioncenter/index.shtml>

Reflect

Think about what the future holds for working for justice and for how all the participants in your group and your group together will work for justice. Where have you seen places to be hopeful for what is to come? Where do you see continuing challenges in working for justice? How do you think things will look in 5, 10, or 20 years? Spend a few moments thanking God for the opportunities and ask God to help all to be active now and in the future in working for justice.