

JUBILEE SUNDAY

A Christian Worship & Action Resource
for Your Faith Community



Photo courtesy of Living Water International.



STAND UP & TAKE ACTION

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Dear Jubilee USA Supporter,

Thank you for participating in Jubilee Sunday and the worldwide Stand Up, Take Action weekend. As people of faith we are called to stand on the side of the poor, hungry, oppressed, and vulnerable. Your participation in this critical time will help show our leaders that we want the United States to be a voice for the world's poorest.

Join Jubilee Congregations around the United States in dedicating part or all of your service on September 19, 2010 to pray for global economic justice, deepen the community's understanding of the debt issue, take concrete action for debt cancellation and more just economic policies, and collect a special offering to support the work of the Jubilee USA Network. This weekend comes at a particularly important time this year – President Obama and other world leaders will be meeting to discuss the issue of global poverty on September 20-22 at a United Nations summit in New York City to review progress on the Millennium Development Goals. This is an opportunity for our voice to be heard on this issue that matters so much.

Enclosed you will find educational and worship resources for your annual Jubilee Sunday. By paying attention in new ways to the parables of the Bible and the voices of the prophets, we have an opportunity to learn how to put faith into action. We encourage you to adapt the resources in any way that works for your congregation. If you have additional ideas, we would love to hear about them to share with other congregations.

This year we are encouraging our congregations to hold Jubilee Sunday in conjunction with Stand Up, Take Action weekend. **Last year over 173 million people, including 3000 Jubilee USA supporters and 80 Jubilee congregations, took part in the mobilization.** This year we continue to link our voices to those in the world's poorest countries, helping to make their voices heard by our world leaders.

One important way to make those voices heard is to participate in the making of paper chains for a demonstration at the meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Washington, DC this October. We will be collecting paper chains from Jubilee supporters across the country and from the Global South to represent the chains of debt that enslave millions around the world. We hope to have your voices with us during that day. Please have your congregations fill out a message on the back of the paper chains that are in your packet and send them back to Jubilee USA. We will carry your chains with us on the day of our demonstration and send a strong message to our leaders that we need to break the chains of debt once and for all!

We hope that this resource will help you to plan your Jubilee Sunday and Stand Up, Take Action weekend. If you need any assistance in planning your event please feel free to contact Brooke Harper, our National Field Organizer, at 202-783-3566 ext. 103 or at brooke@jubileeusa.org.

Thank you for all the important work you do on behalf of others and for your continued participation in the worldwide Jubilee movement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric LeCompte", written in a cursive style.

Eric LeCompte
Executive Director, Jubilee USA

Jubilee USA Network

is part of the worldwide movement of people of faith and conscience seeking to cancel the debts of impoverished countries and work toward a responsible and just international economy. The Network includes a broad range of religious, social justice, environmental, and development organizations, as well as thousands of individuals who share a moral commitment to finding a definitive solution to the international debt crisis. The year of Jubilee proclaimed in the Hebrew Scriptures took place every fifty years. It was a time when all debts were cancelled, land was returned, and people were freed.

This vision of Jubilee calls for the building of right relationships between communities, peoples, and nations. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. captured the essence of Jubilee best when he said, "Injustice anywhere represents a threat to justice everywhere."

In our world today, international cooperation builds true security while the crisis of debt breeds instability, hopelessness, and unnecessary suffering.

We know debt cancellation works.

Now it is up to us to generate the political will needed to achieve this life-affirming goal. Movements turn the impossible into the inevitable. Ten years ago many economists, politicians, and development specialists argued that cancelling the debts of impoverished nations was an impossible task given the entrenched nature of the debt and the lack of public awareness and engagement around the issue. The rising wave of people of faith contacting our elected leaders, educating the media, and reaching out to others in our communities has put this crisis on the global agenda.

In the late 1990s, a broad network of people of faith and conscience from across the globe came together under the banner of Jubilee 2000, engaging their communities and challenging policy makers to address the international debt crisis. This mobilization brought the issue of debt to the global stage, and inspired the first round of poor country debt cancellation, but it did not end the debt crisis.

In 2005, pressure from the Jubilee movement, together with the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, again pushed the issues of debt and global poverty onto the agenda of world leaders. As a result, we can celebrate the more than \$100 billion of debt that has been cancelled for 29 countries. Still, while significant steps were taken, the debt crisis has not ended. The imperative to finish what was started remains: to lift the excruciating burden of debt that continues to siphon resources from impoverished countries that should be used for health care, education, and clean water, and create new structures that lift countries out of poverty and the cycle of debt.

Expanded debt cancellation must come alongside the work of addressing the root causes of indebtedness - unjust economic policies and lending practices, a history of exploitation, and unequal relationships between the Global North and South.

Inspired by the Jubilee vision of liberation and fullness of life for all, people of faith and conscience around the world continue to call for justice and liberation.

"We envision a world in which external debt no longer impoverishes nations and peoples by diverting resources from health, education, and the environment to pay rich countries and financial institutions, a world in which families and communities have a voice in economic policies and decisions that affect their lives, a world where right relationships are restored between nations.

We respond to the call for Jubilee found in Judeo-Christian scripture, where those enslaved because of debts are freed, lands lost because of debt are returned, and communities torn by inequality are restored."

-Jubilee USA Network Vision Statement

Minute for Mission

Use this guide for sharing about Jubilee in front of your congregation as part of Jubilee Sunday.

Some of you may have only a few minutes to introduce the work of Jubilee USA to your congregation as a whole on Jubilee Sunday, though of course there are many opportunities to have one-on-one conversations with others throughout the year. **As you prepare to talk about the work of Jubilee USA, stop and think about why you are passionate about the work of debt cancellation and economic justice.**

Have you seen first-hand the effects of international debt? Was there a particular story or event that motivated you to participate? Have you felt empowered by participating in advocacy work? Consider sharing your reason for participating with Jubilee USA. **Your passion will come through better than facts and figures can.** Share a personal story or share a story like this one from the global South:

Patricia, 17, who is from Malawi, tells her story:

"I am from Kambenje Province. I have four brothers and sisters, and I am in grade two. I have a problem with my leg. I have been sick for a long time, in different ways, but now the sickness has taken hold of my leg. I have tuberculosis there. My knee is all swollen. It hurts. I like to play netball, but I can't anymore.

"They give me liquid antibiotics here, but I don't feel any better yet. I have been sick like this for five months, mostly at home. I came to the hospital a week ago. They say I'll stay another week then go home again. I hope I am better in a week. I don't think I'll get better at home. My mother died of the same thing that I have. She was scared before she died, just like I'm scared now. None of my friends can come to visit, because our village is too far away from here."

Today is Jubilee Sunday, a day where we focus on the needs of some of the world's poorest countries like Malawi, where Patricia lives. There are lots of ways to address issues of poverty in our world. One of those ways is the focus of an organization called Jubilee USA Network. Jubilee USA is a network of organizations and individuals that advocates debt cancellation and more just economic policies for the world's poorest countries. Debt cancellation has already proven effective in expanding health care for people like Patricia. Governments burdened by debt are often unable to help their people get access to basic health care, education, clean water, and sufficient food.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, God commands the Israelites to hold a Sabbath year every seven years in which the land and the people were given rest. After seven cycles of the Sabbath year, the fiftieth year was to be a year of Jubilee. In this year, unpaid debts were released and people were freed from their servitude. It was a time to return



Patricia Rumer of Jubilee Oregon meets Phoebe Moono of Jubilee Zambia

to families, restore relationships, and rejoice together. However, we might be tempted to dismiss this as a rule that could only work in the ancient world's economy.

After all, as Christians we do not necessarily follow all of the laws of the Hebrew Scriptures. But if we think about God's intention for the Jubilee year, we realize that it is a way for us to honor our relationships with one another.

It is a way to keep some people from being permanently in debt to others. It is a prescription for living in right relationship with one another. Just as Jesus ate with the poor, healed the outcast, and welcomed those labeled as sinners, we too are called to live in right relationship with our sisters and brothers around the world.

One of the ways we can do this is by helping those in power to hear the voices of those in need, especially the voices from our sisters and brothers in the Global South,

and advocating on their behalf in the United States.

One of those voices is Phoebe Moono, the facilitator of a Jubilee group in Monze, Zambia, a town of 30,000 about three hours south of the capital, Lusaka. She organizes groups there to meet with their lawmakers and to make sure that the voices of their region are heard. They struggle to get meetings with their leaders and have discovered the need for a debt audit, one of many things that new regulations on international lending could provide. The group in Monze is lively and energetic, organizing large groups to talk to legislators, encouraging

civic participation, and educating the public about their role in keeping the government accountable, but their voice is even stronger when it is joined with voices all around the world.

In the United States, Jubilee USA raises up the needs of these communities through strategic advocacy to elected officials, media outreach, and grassroots education and mobilization. Jubilee USA works with partners like Jubilee Zambia and 50 other Jubilee groups around the world. Collectively that voice can make a difference for those who still struggle for their daily bread.

Invite people to get more information from you or from www.jubileeusa.org. Conclude with an invitation to participate in whatever action your church is taking this weekend. Explain how people can participate by writing a letter, signing a paper chain link, doing a Stand Up, Take Action event, or some other event your community is planning.

**Story of Patricia from Our Stories, Our Songs by Deborah Ellis.*

Prayers of Intercession for Jubilee Sunday

We join our voices with those of your people around the world to pray for the needs of the whole earth...

God of the good news, we pray for all messengers of the gospel and all who, in the spirit of Jesus, proclaim justice for the oppressed, release for the captives, and sight for the blind. Use their words to enliven the hearts of the ones who hear and motivate all to participate in your reign of peace. Good and gracious God,

Hear our prayer.

God of the poor, we lift before you those who lack access to clean water and education, for those who do not have access to health care, all who suffer from curable diseases, those who do not have enough to eat, and all who lack shelter and clothing. Bring them out of their suffering. Good and gracious God,

Hear our prayer.

God of the nations, we pray for all who govern, for those who develop laws and enforce them, for all who make decisions that affect so many people. May they heed the wisdom of the people, remember those who struggle in poverty and listen to those whose voices are rarely heard. Good and gracious God,

Hear our prayer.

God of rest, as you rested on the seventh day and commanded your people to rest also, we cry out on behalf of the overworked and overused land: the farmland, mines, and oil fields. As you commanded a year of jubilee to release debts and free those in servitude, we cry out on behalf of all who are in physical or economic slavery and for nations burdened by the inability to pay for life's most basic needs. Good and gracious God,

Hear our prayer.

(Other intercessions may be included.)

We ask these things and all you see that we need, in the name of our risen Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Worship Suggestions

Litany based on Psalm 113:7

Leader: God is the ruler of the nations, mightier than kings and princes.

People: But God raises the poor from the dust, and lifts up the needy.

Leader: God has wisdom and knowledge far beyond our human understanding.

People: But God raises the poor from the dust, and lifts up the needy.

Leader: God has power over the earth and the skies.

People: But God raises the poor from the dust, and lifts up the needy.

Leader: We consume the resources around us, forgetting to share equally with our neighbors.

People: But God raises the poor from the dust, and lifts up the needy.

Leader: We are sometimes indifferent to those who are hungry and thirsty.

People: But God raises the poor from the dust, and lifts up the needy.

Leader: We forget to see the face of God in the faces of our fellow human beings.

People: But God raises the poor from the dust, and lifts up the needy.

All: Thanks be to God! May God use us in the work of justice and mercy to raise the poor from the dust and lift up the needy.

Prayer of the Day

Liberating God, you sent prophets to proclaim justice for the oppressed and in Jesus you teach us to put you first and to lift up those in need. You make us one body with others around the world. Free us from our indifference to others, and help us speak your mercy with boldness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn Suggestions from the Global South

- ◇ **“Un Pueblo Que Camina” (“The People Walk”)** fits with the Stand Up, Take Action theme of shouting out for justice. This hymn comes from Latin America.
- ◇ **“Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love”** sets words about serving our neighbor to a folk tune from Ghana.
- ◇ A widely available **Zimbabwe Alleluia Verse** is lively and easy to learn, and could be used as the introduction to the Gospel reading.

Ghana, Zimbabwe, and many Latin American countries could potentially benefit from the expansion of debt cancellation. Highlight in your worship folder the origin of the songs.

Refer to the **Jubilee Congregations Handbook** (online at www.jubileeusa.org, under “Resources,” then “Publications”) for a full list of additional hymn suggestions, prayers, litanies, and other worship ideas.

The hymn on the following page, written by Stan Duncan, a United Church of Christ pastor in Abington, MA, highlights the theme of Jubilee and our role in standing for justice.

Jubilee Sunday Sermon Notes

General Introduction

This week's lectionary readings, like many passages in the Bible, lift up the most needy of God's people. In the words of the prophets, in the parable that Jesus tells, and in the words of the psalms we see the reversals that characterize God's reign on earth. They call us to turn our attention not to those who have power, but to those whose voices are longing to be heard and respected. Each of the readings this week raises issues that point us to the need for new policies that open opportunities for all people to live and thrive. Just as Jesus listened to the voices of the poor, we, too, are called as Christians to link our voices with those in poverty.

Hebrew Scriptures

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1 or Amos 8:4-7

The words from God in Jeremiah show the deep compassion God has for those who are crying out in distress. Just as God heard the cry of the Israelites enslaved in Egypt, the cries of hungry widows in the time of Elijah, and just as Jesus would later hear the cries of the blind, the leper, and the outcast, God hears the distress of the people in Jeremiah's time. It grieves God to hear that God's people are in great need. God still hears those who cry out today from every corner of the earth, especially those who cry out from nations struggling to emerge from poverty, many of which struggle with unpayable debts to richer nations and corporations.

The Amos text addresses our role in God's economy more directly. This passage is a direct condemnation of those who attempt to take advantage of the poor. God, through Amos, is addressing those who eagerly await the opportunity to take advantage of others. While it can be easy to see this on a one-on-one basis, it is much more complex on an international scale. This abuse of economic power is exactly what lenders have done on an international scale for generations. Often international loans are made in the interest of the lender rather than the borrower. Lenders are often looking to make a profit rather than extend a helping hand to those who are in need.

This passage points to the economic slavery that results from this, indicating that those who are in power are buying up the poor with silver. They use their economic advantage to enslave both literally and figuratively those who are vulnerable and needy. God's response is a promise to bring about justice.

New Testament Scripture

1 Timothy 2:1-7

In this passage Paul urges Timothy to pray for the government leaders of the time in order that the entire country may live a peaceful life. This is recognition that the government leaders have significant influence on the lives of the everyday people. This is still true today. We not only pray for but also speak to those in power that they might make decisions that work for the good of all of God's people around the world.

This calls to mind again the words of Psalm 113, appointed for today, in which God lifts up the needy to sit among the princes. Today we can play a role in bringing about God's vision by helping the voices of the needy be heard by those who make decisions and advocating on their behalf.

Gospel

Luke 16:1-13

This story is offensive. Jesus intends it to be offensive. It is offensive to our sensibilities about careful accounting, fulfilling obligations, and doing what is honest. We often label this story "The Parable of the Dishonest/Unjust Steward," which shows our focus on our own sense of what is right. In many of the parables that Jesus tells, our sense of what is right and fair is turned upside down. Though it seems at first that Jesus is advocating lying and deception, perhaps the intention is to point out that there are things we need to value more than money and bookkeeping.

It is important to hold up our obligations, and it is important to deal honestly and forthrightly with others. However, Jesus demonstrates in his ministry that the highest priority is the welfare of all people, especially the poor, oppressed, and vulnerable. This parable highlights that human dignity and survival are more important than our concern over holding others accountable. Just as in Jesus' time, interest rates today can often be exorbitant and lending practices dishonest, even on the international level.

The situation in this parable is being played out now on the international scale as some of the poorest countries are so burdened by debt that they are unable to provide for basic human needs. We have a chance to live out this commitment to human dignity, not as "dishonest" stewards, but as people who value human life. While the parable does not indicate how the owner, manager,

and debtors failed after this incident, in the modern economic world we know that international debt relief benefits everyone because of the interconnectedness of our economies. While we might be tempted to think that God's economics will not work in today's society, the concept of radical care and concern for human life has the power to transform our world.

This passage ends with the statement from Jesus that we cannot serve both God and wealth. We could argue many implications from this statement about the way we manage the money we have, whether that is a lot or a little. But what is clear is that God is in command of it all. We have a hard time separating ourselves from money that we perceive to be ours.

When we recognize that our wealth and the wealth of our neighbors and the wealth of our nations is all God's, it becomes easier to look past facts and figures to see the importance of relationship and human dignity.



Young children in Haiti . Photo by Craig Clouthier.

Children's Sermon on Luke 16:13

Bring a bag of candy.

Invite the children to talk about what they would do if they were given a whole bag of candy and told to do whatever they wanted with it. What would they do?

Some might suggest that they would eat it all, others might suggest sharing it with others. Ask them to imagine being another person standing next to the one who got the whole bag of candy and was not sharing.

Talk about what we might like to do versus what we know we should do. If you ate the whole bag of candy yourself, not only would someone else not get to enjoy it, but you might feel sick, too.

In the Gospel lesson today, God reminds us that sometimes we let our desire for material things become more important than taking care of each other and

more important than loving God. It is important for us to remember that God gives us a lot of things, but it is not so that we can keep them all to ourselves.

Today we are setting aside a special Sunday to remember the people around the world who do not have enough to eat or drink, and remembering the importance of sharing our resources with them.

Invite them to pray with you: Dear God, thank you for the many things that we have. Help us to share them with the people around us, especially with those who are in need.

Amen.

Intergenerational Sunday School Activity

Jubilee Sunday is a great opportunity to hold a special Sunday school event. This lesson is designed to bring all ages together for the opening and closing of the lesson. This gives everyone an opportunity to participate together in advocating justice for the world's poorest.

Background

This lesson is centered on the story we often call "The Good Samaritan." This is a familiar story to many individuals, but this lesson will help to expand our ideas about its implications for today. Though some have discussed this passage in terms of the need for systemic change to make the road to Jericho safer, the focus often still remains on individual acts of kindness. This lesson looks at another issue, the need to stop and listen to the voice of the one on the side of the road. Just as we sometimes look the other way in one-on-one interactions, we also at times look the other way on an international scale. This lesson explores a way to open up the question, "Who is our neighbor?" by listening to voices from the Global South.

Introduction (10 minutes)

Introduce that today we are going to be learning about the importance of helping other people around the world as part of our celebration of Jubilee Sunday.

Begin by singing together "God's Got the Whole World in God's Hands." Sing through several verses: God's got... (the little tiny baby, the moms and the dads, the wind and rain, the land and the seas, the sun and the moon, everybody here) ...in God's Hands..." Make up your own verses and hand motions to go along.

After singing through several verses, talk together about what the song means. It is a comfort to us, but it also challenges us to remember that God cares for everyone – the whole world. Ask: Who is our neighbor? (Encourage some of the younger kids to engage this question.) Is the person living next door your neighbor? Is a person living far away your neighbor?

Have someone read aloud Luke 10:25-37.

Exploring the Lesson (35 minutes)

Children and younger youth: Invite the kids to act out the story in the passage. If you have a large number, break up into smaller groups and act out the story for each other. This will help reinforce the story for everyone. Discuss the lesson that Jesus gives in this story about who the true neighbor is to the injured man. Explain that normally Samaritans and Jews did not get along, but this man who was a stranger acted as a neighbor. Ask children about ways they can be neighbors to others. Ask what

this says about God's love for us and God's love for all people. Remind them of the song that was sung in the opening. Bring a globe to show them. Point to where you live and explain that the other places are very far away (travel time rather than actual distance is more helpful for younger ages).

To reinforce the point, ask if the people in various countries are neighbors. What kinds of things do you think they need? Do they need the same things that we need? Do they need the same thing as the injured man in the story?

If your congregation or denomination has particular relationships with churches or missions around the world, bring some pictures and stories of those places. If not, choose a country from which you can find pictures and stories (some are included in this resource and on the Jubilee USA website). Stories about other children are particularly helpful.

Activity:

Have a Good Samaritan relay race. Select two children to be "injured victims." Divide the rest into two teams. Have them one at a time walk across the room to their injured person, pick up a roll of toilet paper and wrap the person once around as if bandaging them up. Determine when one of the "victims" is sufficiently bandaged to declare a winner. After the activity sit down and ask about times that the children have been hurt and what it felt like when someone came and took care of their injuries. Talk about how children in some countries cannot get to the hospital and do not have access to medical supplies like bandages. Tell them that you are going to rejoin the group and work together on a way to help our neighbors in other countries, like those who do not have medical care.

Youth and adults: Reread the passage if needed. Begin with a discussion of who we call neighbor in the sense given in the story. Push people to think about those whom they know they should consider neighbor but have a hard time doing so. All of us struggle at times to see others as children of God. How do we remind ourselves to expand our idea of neighbor?

Activity:

Distribute unequal amounts of play money (or simply give people an amount if you do not have play money on hand). Give some \$100, some \$50, some \$25, and some \$10. Explain that they will need to provide for a family of five, with two adults and three children. Have on hand a list of needs and wants with their costs.

Include:

- ◇ Food: basic food to survive (\$2), three meals a day (\$4), three meals a day with meat and vegetables (\$10)
- ◇ Housing: housing materials you assemble yourself (\$3), rent in a home without indoor plumbing (\$5), rent in a home with basic utilities (\$10), renting or owning a well-furnished home (\$20).
- ◇ Access to clean water (\$2)
- ◇ Education (\$2 per child, but free if you started with \$50 or more since you probably live in a country with free public education)
- ◇ Health Care: Emergency medical care and basic immunizations (\$2), minimal health insurance (\$5), sufficient health care and preventative care (\$10)
- ◇ Clothing: Used clothing (\$2), new clothing (\$6).
- ◇ Owning a car (\$7 per car)
- ◇ Recreational activities (\$5)

Add your own as you see fit.

Have people make decisions about how they will spend their money. Did they see anything on the list that they wanted but could not afford? How did they make decisions about how to spend their money? Ask if anyone had extra money and what they thought they would do with it. Did anyone want to share their extra with the ones they saw making difficult decisions?

Explain that though these numbers are simplified for the exercise, they represent real decisions that people around the world and even in our own country are making every day. Explain that in many poor countries, represented mostly by those who started with only \$10, the government is not able to provide some of the basic services because they are repaying debts to nations represented by those who had \$50 or \$100.

Return to the Bible passage and the question of who is our neighbor. Think again about who in today's world is like the injured man and what it would take for us to step up and take action as the Samaritan did. How can we be attentive to the voices of those who are most in need in our midst?

If you have time:

Many churches have partner churches in other parts of

the world. Share a story about a church partner in the Global South with which your congregation is familiar. Look at a map; discuss what the country is like so that participants are able to visualize what life might be like in that country. Invite people to discuss some things they might know about the situation in that country and then think about ways that you as individuals, as a congregation, and as citizens of a larger nation might be neighbors to these people. How is it possible for their voices to be heard? How did Jesus in this story or in others remind people to listen to all voices? Listening intently can be difficult; how can we sustain our efforts to listen to the voices of the most vulnerable?

Closing (15 minutes)

Come back together with all ages. Check in with participants about how their time in small groups went. After this, prepare people for the final activity together – creating links for a paper chain that will be used in a demonstration by Jubilee USA.

What is it like to be imprisoned in chains? Can we even imagine what that experience is like? Some people around the world are literally imprisoned, while others are imprisoned because of unfair economic policies. Today international debt has become a new form of slavery.

Debt slavery means poor people working harder and harder in a vain effort to keep up with the interest payments on debts owed to rich countries, including the US and international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. In October, Jubilee USA is planning a demonstration at the home of the IMF and World Bank in Washington, DC, using paper chains to symbolize the chains of debt enslaving millions around the world.

Distribute paper chain links. Invite adults and older children and youth to write messages and invite younger children to draw pictures that show their love for other people. Adults may include name and address on their links. You might explain to younger children that there are people far away who need help; since we cannot all travel to help them, we are writing to let other people know about it so that those people can help them. As people finish up, ask if anyone remembers the song that was sung at the beginning. Ask if the song has new meaning for anyone. Perhaps people have a new sense of particular ways God has the world in God's hands. End with prayer and/or sing again "God's Got the Whole World in God's Hands."

**Please send your paper chains and any other letters or creative activities you wish to share with your elected leaders to Jubilee USA Network, 212 E. Capitol St., NE, Washington, DC, 20003.*

Stand Up Against Debt & Global Poverty

People of faith have long been leaders in movements for justice and equality, standing up and taking action as witnesses to God's reign on earth. We trust and hope for the day when the fullness of God's vision for all people will be realized, but we also believe that words and actions have the power to create new realities. As such, by standing up to take action, we witness to God's love for all and open opportunities for the work of God to be done.

As part of your Jubilee Sunday service and/or as part of another event that weekend, we invite you to do a Stand Up, Take Action activity.

Stand Up, Take Action is an annual worldwide mobilization where citizens around the globe spread the message and take action against poverty and toward reaching the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty by 2015. At each event participants stand up together, recite the Stand Up pledge to demonstrate their unity with people across the globe to end poverty, and take action.

Jubilee USA has partnered with the United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC) and the Global Call to Action Against Poverty to mobilize together this year. As people of faith taking our call from the Jubilee scripture, we understand that we must not only work to reach the Millennium Development Goals, but work to build a system based on right relationships between nations and peoples.



Why Stand Up? In the year 2000, leaders of 189 countries signed the Millennium Declaration, committing to do everything in their power to end poverty. World leaders also established a roadmap – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – to significantly alleviate extreme poverty by 2015.

With only five years left, we must urge our leaders to stay true to their commitments. World leaders will meet in New York City for the UN Millennium Development Goals Review Summit on September 20. President Obama will make a speech outlining his commitments to challenging global poverty. Throughout 2010, Jubilee USA has been mobilizing to ensure that expanded debt cancellation and responsible lending and borrowing are part of his plan of action. Your participation in Stand Up, Take Action will help world leaders see that their citizens are calling for an end to poverty across the world.

The gap between the rich and the poor is growing – at least 64 million additional people have been forced into poverty due to the global economic crisis. Meanwhile, the world's poorest countries send \$100 million every day in debt repayment to the world's richest countries and financial institutions. We have the power to change this!

Taking Action by Making Chains

Last year Stand Up, Take Action broke world records as the largest global mobilization in history. Ten years ago, tens of thousands of people joined together in another large mobilization to call on world leaders to break the chains of debt. Linking arms, they raised up the issue of debt and global poverty and as a result, the first international debt cancellation initiative was established. Yet our work remains unfinished.

In October, we will once again form a chain to urge our world leaders to answer the call of Jubilee. With the financial crisis looming and five years to reach the Millennium Development Goals, we once again must link our voices to drop the debt of the world's poorest countries. As part of your weekend of action, we are asking you to make paper chain links that will be part of a demonstration at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC. Your participation will help us once again make history.

Distribute paper chain links with your worship bulletin or at a table during coffee hour. Or, make chains as part of your educational hour and at your separate Stand Up, Take Action activities. Be creative!

For a chain template, directions, and accompanying educational fact sheets, please see enclosed or visit www.jubileeusa.org.

How Your Congregation Can Stand Up & Take Action

There are many ways that you can Stand Up, Take Action.

If you are already planning a Jubilee Sunday service, you can easily incorporate the pledge into your service. This year, the theme for Stand Up, Take Action is "Make Noise for the MDGs!" This is an idea that came out of the Africa Campaigners Retreat held recently in Malawi. To creatively incorporate Stand Up into your Jubilee Sunday Service, you could ring church bells at a certain moment during your service or congregants could gather during coffee hour to bang spoons on metal plates to illustrate global hunger.

We encourage you to think creatively about additional Stand Up, Take Action events during the rest of the weekend.

This is a real opportunity to educate and energize your community on the issues of debt and global poverty. This weekend, people all over the world will take part in a common global action designed to grab public, political, and media attention and to make sure that this global movement is seen and heard around the world. From hosting a movie night in your home to reciting the Stand Up pledge in your class or workplace to holding an educational event that raises awareness of the growing poverty in the world, your event can be as big or as small as you would like it to be.

Here are some Stand Up, Take Action events that Jubilee activists did last year:

- ◇ In Oregon, 135 people stood up at the Ainsworth United Church of Christ, which was the first congregation to become part of the Jubilee Oregon Chapter.
- ◇ In Minnesota, the Jubilee Duluth Chapter worked together to have a refugee awareness week, building a refugee camp on their campus at the College of St. Scholastica. The week culminated in students standing up and taking the pledge against poverty.
- ◇ In Pennsylvania, community members gathered and did a CROP walk as their event for Stand Up, Take Action weekend.

Jubilee USA has many resources to use for such events. Please email brooke@jubileeusa.org for more materials and ideas.

Spread the Word about the Weekend

Below are several suggestions of ways to help proclaim Jubilee for the world's most impoverished.

- ◇ Let your local press know what you have planned. Many smaller local papers are glad to get information about faith communities getting involved in social justice. Even if your event seems small, many people would be glad to know what you're doing. Jubilee has resources available to help you write a press release. If you're interested, email brooke@jubileeusa.org or call 202-783-3566.
- ◇ Keep an eye out for articles in your local paper about the United Nations Summit taking place one week after the Stand Up events. Share these with your congregation and with others around you.
- ◇ Have your clergy share what you are doing for Jubilee Sunday at area clergy meetings. Also, many denominations are Network Council members of Jubilee USA, and some have statements about debt cancellation on their websites. You may want to print out your denomination's statement on international debt to be available for congregation members. A list of Network Council members can be found at www.jubileeusa.org/about-us/team/network-council.html.
- ◇ Set up a prayer corner in your church building. Pray for people in countries in need of debt relief and for world leaders who make decisions about international finance. Include pictures and short facts. Have a place for individuals to light candles and a journal to write prayers. If the prayer space is in the sanctuary, you might invite people who wish to visit the prayer station to do so at appropriate times during the service.

Stand Up, Take Action Pledge

Last year, more than 170 million people took this pledge. Use this Jubilee-inspired pledge at your service or your Stand Up event.

Leader: I ask you now to Stand Up with me against poverty and recite this pledge.

All: We stand now with millions around the world on this symbolic day to show our commitment to the fight against extreme poverty and inequality. We stand now because we refuse to accept more excuses in a world where 50,000 people die every day as a result of extreme poverty. We stand now because as people of faith we value the lives of all people. We stand now because we want our leaders to honor their promises to meet the Millennium Development Goals, and we ask them to exceed these goals.

As a Jubilee people, we are standing because we believe that debt cancellation and the creation of more just economic policies are essential to bringing an end to global poverty and renewal of right relationships between peoples.

Today and everyday we will stand up and take action against poverty. We will continue to pray for those in poverty and for our world leaders. We will continue to work to fight against poverty and injustice throughout the world. We will continue to hold our leaders accountable to their promises.

We stand with millions of others around the world to say: End poverty now!

Stand Up, Take Action Responsive Reading

This responsive reading and prayer may be used independently or as part of your worship service or education hour on Jubilee Sunday.

Leader: When God's people entered the Promised Land at the city of Jericho, you commanded them to sound the trumpet and cry out together and shout with a loud voice. At the sound of their cry you brought the walls crashing down. As we cry out today, linking our voices with millions of others around the world, we ask you to bring down the walls that keep people in poverty.

Leader: People in our world are hungry for bread.

People: We cry out - End poverty now!

Leader: People in our world do not have clean water.

People: We cry out - End poverty now!

Leader: People in our world die every day from preventable diseases.

People: We cry out - End poverty now!

Leader: People in our world are separated from their homes and their families by war, violence, and economic need.

People: We cry out - End poverty now!

Leader: People in our world are unable to access basic education.

People: We cry out - End poverty now!

Leader: People in our world are being hurt by our destruction of the environment.

People: We cry out - End poverty now!

Leader: Let us pray... Mighty God, you have heard the cries of your people throughout history. Hear our cries now as we seek to end poverty in our world. Strengthen our voices as we continue to speak for justice. Strengthen our hands that we may continue to work for the most vulnerable in your world. Open our ears to hear the cries of those in poverty and open our mouths to speak with them. In Jesus' name, Amen.



A Minute on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Where do the MDGs stand?

The global economic crisis greatly affected the target of achieving the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. According to the World Bank, about 64 million people in developing countries will remain poor because of the world economic slowdown. On top of this, 200,000-400,000 more children a year could die due to the persisting crisis and delay in progress towards reducing child mortality.

Debt Cancellation:

An Essential Component to Meeting the MDGs

It is clear that there is no magic bullet to achieve the MDGs. However, debt cancellation is a critical tool because we know it works. It provides direct and predictable budgetary support to impoverished countries.

The eighth Goal of the MDGs targets debt specifically. It calls for addressing the "special needs of the least developed countries," which includes debt relief, and to "deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures."

Thanks to debt relief to date:

- ◇ Zambia increased investment in health by \$54.3 million and in education by \$121 million in 2007 and 2008.
- ◇ Ghana has developed 268 new classrooms, 36 new clinics, 10 new hospital wards, and 87 water boreholes

To meet the MDGs, former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown estimates that 67 countries require 100% debt cancellation.

Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
2. Achieve universal primary education.
3. Promote gender equality and empower women.
4. Reduce child mortality.
5. Improve maternal health.
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Create a global partnership for development with targets on aid, debt, and trade.

The Washington Post

Op-ed: G-20's commitment to the poor

By Gradye Parsons and Richard Cizik · June 25, 2010

The global economic crisis continues to exact a steep human cost. As we see every day in our churches around the country, our communities have endured grave hardships - layoffs, foreclosures and bankruptcy. But the desperation is greatest in the world's poorest countries, which are burdened not only by the worldwide financial collapse, but also by crippling international debt. In the Congo, for example, the government spends 16 times more on debt service than on health care, and more than half of children don't reach their fifth birthday.

International debt is obscure to most Americans. Many of us imagine that it's akin to running up credit cards, or over-indulging in a materialism that leads one to the brink. Yet in the world's most impoverished countries, crushing indebtedness is not a personal choice, but a weight born of historic injustice. Corrupt leaders colluded with international lenders and took the money for themselves. Now decades later, these countries have emerged as democracies, but continue to pay crushing debts at the expense of the most basic services for their citizens. In other words, the poorest of poor are paying for the sins of long-dead despots and unscrupulous lenders.

Scripture tells us over and over that we must respond to this type of injustice. As Christians every time we utter the Lord's Prayer, we remind ourselves that we are called to "forgive our debtors" and "those who trespass against us". It is part of our vision of the reign of God, where the poor are fed, the grieving are comforted and the ill are healed. This vision, set forth in the book of Isaiah, is cited by Jesus in his very first act of public ministry.

This week the Group of 20 world leaders will meet in Toronto, Canada and will have a historic opportunity to address the injustice of global poverty and debt. As the "premier forum for international economic cooperation," the G-20 has the responsibility to make this a top priority of their upcoming meeting. Bold action, to help poor countries survive an economic crisis not of their making, is exactly what was promised when the G-20 leaders first convened last April. Yet they seem to have forgotten.

A recent report from Jubilee USA Network found that only \$1.2 billion of the \$50 billion in new resources promised by the G-20 has been delivered since their September summit -- the same amount the Canadian government has spent on summit security. Even more worrisome, the \$50 billion commitment itself has not been mentioned since April by G-20 leaders, and most of the money comes as loans that place countries at risk of a new debt crisis.

What the world's poorest urgently need from the G-20 are grants and a strong commitment to debt cancellation. Without it, they risk falling further into an abyss of economic degradation, because every dollar they use to satisfy IOU's to wealthy nations is a dollar they're not spending on education, health care, clean water and other life-saving basic services for their people. Former President of Tanzania Julius Nyerere put it clearly and plaintively, asking "Must we starve our children to pay our debts?"

We've seen debt cancellation work where it's been given a chance. Lifting the burden has allowed Zambia, for example, to hire 4,500 new teachers and eliminate fees for rural health care. Mozambique has been able to vaccinate half a million children, and Honduran children can now stay in school three years longer.

Sadly, the effects of indebtedness are overwhelming. Haiti, the poorest country in our hemisphere, has never been able to invest in basic infrastructure, education, health care, due in part to crippling debts that date back to its independence from France and past brutal dictatorships. When the devastating earthquake rocked its capital this past January, poorly-built infrastructure crumbled, there just a few emergency personnel who could respond. The result was catastrophic: 250,000 perished and 1 in 5 were left homeless.

But people of faith from around the world joined with us and united to call for Haiti's debt to be canceled and world leaders listened and responded. Even in the midst of its tragedy, Haiti now stands in the light of hope - hope that world leaders will cancel the debt when we unite our voices, and hope that other countries too would no longer have to suffer under unjust debt.

Debt cancellation is what Christian work should be all about. Deuteronomy 15:2 tells us that, on the Sabbath year, "The Lord himself has declared the debt canceled." Now, guided by both spiritual conscience and sober pragmatism, it is time for the world's economic powers to keep their promise to the world's poor.

Rev. Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church USA. Rev. Richard Cizik, President, New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good.

Become a Jubilee Congregation



Pray: Commit to praying regularly for debt cancellation and economic issues. Hold a yearly Jubilee Sunday, and open or close with prayer when you hold meetings to plan Jubilee events.



Act: Participate in actions organized by Jubilee USA. Hold your own educational events such as showing a movie or bringing in a speaker from the Global South.



Support: Jubilee congregations commit to supporting the work of Jubilee USA with one dollar per member per year or an annual offering dedicated to Jubilee USA.



Advocate: Jubilee congregations commit to sending one letter per member per year to elected leaders or to engage in an advocacy action proposed by Jubilee USA's national office.

How to become a Jubilee Congregation:

1. Be in touch with the Jubilee office for support and advice as you familiarize yourself with the debt issue. They can provide local contacts and lots of ideas for getting started.
2. Approach church leaders and appropriate committees and make a proposal to become a Jubilee Congregation.
3. Follow up by making a presentation to the appropriate group or committee. It may take time to generate interest in Jubilee.
4. Pick a contact person for your church to be in touch with the Jubilee office. Begin planning for events in your congregation.
5. Once we receive your registration, the Jubilee office will send a Jubilee banner, a congregations handbook, and other materials.

Jubilee USA commits to being in regular contact with our Jubilee congregations and to providing resources to support the ongoing work in your community.

When people of faith join together for a holy purpose, rooted in scripture, we can turn the tides of economic injustice, challenge harmful policies, and advance a prophetic vision of fairness, equality, and hope for the world's poor. The power to create change is in our hands.



Sign up to Be a Jubilee Congregation

Name of Congregation: _____

Name of Pastor/Leader: _____

Denomination: _____ Number of Members: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Website: _____

Contact person: _____

Role/Title in Congregation, if any: _____

Address (if different from above): _____

Phone: _____ Fax _____

Email (required): _____

Financial Commitment to Jubilee

- Enclosed is our Jubilee Congregation annual commitment of \$1 per member: \$ _____
- Enclosed is the offering received for Jubilee as our annual commitment: \$ _____
- We pledge to send in the proceeds of a special offering for Jubilee: \$ _____
- Enclosed is an additional donation to Jubilee USA Network of \$ _____

Tell us about your plans to promote Jubilee in your congregation through prayer, worship, education and letter writing:

Send registration form and donation to:

Jubilee USA Network
212 E. Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20003

Thank you for becoming a Jubilee Congregation and joining us to restore right relationships and economic justice by proclaiming Jubilee!

Your Jubilee banner, handbook, and welcome letter will arrive within 2-4 weeks.



212 E. Capitol St NE
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Please contact us with any questions or comments.

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Many thanks to the UN Millennium Campaign, the Beatitudes Society, Stan Duncan, Brooke Harper, and Alexandra Zarecky.



Longtime Jubilee supporter Patricia Rumer traveled to Zambia this year to research the benefits of debt cancellation in this African country. Visit www.jubileeusa.org to read more. Here women travel carrying water to a new classroom site for a secondary school.

JUBILEE USA NETWORK

Jubilee USA Network is an alliance of 75 religious denominations and faith communities, human rights, environmental, labor, and community groups working for the definitive cancellation of crushing debts to fight poverty and injustice in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.



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