 HERE I AM. SEND ME.

A LEADERS’ GUIDE
FOR PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY
INCORPORATING THEMES FROM
ISAIAH 6:1-8 AND MATTHEW 25:31-46
Dear Church Leader,

Peace with Justice Sunday is traditionally celebrated on Trinity Sunday (the first Sunday after Pentecost), which this year is June 16. One of The United Methodist Church’s six special Sunday offerings, Peace with Justice Sunday supports annual conference ministries as well as global denominational work.

If your church has a social action committee, include them in planning a comprehensive campaign that engages the congregation in living faith, seeking justice and pursuing peace.

When your church receives an offering for Peace with Justice Sunday, half of the money is used in your annual conference and half supports the ministries of the General Board of Church and Society.

**Peace with Justice Sunday funds are used through United Methodist channels to:**

- relate the gospel of Jesus Christ to the church, communities and the world in which members live;
- bring the whole of human life into conformity with God’s will; and
- show that reconciliation involves personal, social and civic righteousness.

Peace with Justice Sunday is an opportunity for United Methodists to highlight the Social Principles that are an integral part of our Wesleyan heritage. Please use and adapt the resources in this kit to promote Peace with Justice Sunday. Thank you for encouraging your congregation to give generously on June 16.
Incorporate the Peace with Justice Sunday theme throughout the worship service, with Scripture-based prayers, a Doxology for Peace and the United Methodist Social Creed and Litany.

- Adapt them for your context and focus on the concerns of your community.
- Print prayers in the bulletin or projected them on a screen.
PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY
HERE I AM. SEND ME.

WORSHIP RESOURCE: SERMON STARTER

When God asks who among us will be agents of peace with justice, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we are compelled to respond, “Here I am. Send me.”

This sermon starter weaves Jesus’ parable of the sheep and goats with Isaiah’s response in his vision of God in the temple. Customize current events to reflect the concerns of your community.
If you have a social action committee, invite the chair or someone else who is passionate about building peace with justice to share an offering talk with the congregation.

It is especially helpful for those who are not familiar with the work of Church and Society to hear from a trusted member of the congregation about why this offering is so important.

Whoever shares the invitation to the offering can look into how the offering is used in your annual conference or adjust the script in other ways to fit your context.
Help the children experience what it means to see Christ in another person. This retelling of the Leo Tolstoy short story, “Where Love is, God is,” provides a tangible way to connect young people with generosity and relationship building as a strategy for building peace with justice.

Matthew 25:31-46

In Jesus' parable to his disciples, he said, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his throne of glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then he will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a Stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a Stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothing? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' Then the King will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a Stranger and you did not welcome me, I was naked and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a Stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not help you?' Then he will answer them, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' Then they also will say, 'Lord, when did we see you?' Then he will answer them, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' Then he will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a Stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a Stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothing? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' Then the King will answer them, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.' Then they also will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you?' Then he will answer them, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.'
CHILDREN’S RESOURCE: CHILDREN’S BULLETIN

A special children’s bulletin makes connections with the worship service and the peace with justice theme through a coordinated coloring page, word puzzles, prayer and Scripture passages.
Children’s Resource: Activity

Through video, activity, discussion and prayer, students learn about food insecurity as an example of injustice. They examine how to seek opportunities to ensure that everyone has enough.
How do the social justice concerns that Jesus highlights in Matthew 25:31-46 affect your community? Explore Faith and Facts cards to develop a peace with justice-based response to issues that are important to your congregation.
Podcasts

Audio devotionals deepen your congregation’s appreciation of Scripture through the lens of peace with justice. Encourage parishioners to listen to a different short meditation each day of the week leading up to Peace with Justice Sunday.
RESOURCE GUIDES

Gather your leadership team and use these guides in small groups, including youth, to prepare for Peace with Justice Sunday. The reading list provides opportunities for corporate or individual study.
“Peacemaking, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding” is a written reflection that can be posted on the pastor’s blog in preparation for Peace with Justice Sunday. Adapt it to fit your voice and context or post it for a quick way to set the tone for the Special Sunday.

Peacemaking, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

The gospel is a message of redemption but also of peace and freedom. As Christians, we are called to spread peace, do good and stand for justice.

Take a look at the scriptures:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:21)

“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

Not much has changed when it comes to peace and justice from the culture and context of those Scriptures to today. We still need to work to encourage peace and seek justice. As United Methodists, Peace with Justice Sunday is one way we are working together to seek justice.

While we recognize that no nation or culture is absolutely just, we believe that we are called to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as peacemakers. It is necessary to work together to resolve conflict peacefully because it is in that resolution where work such as eliminating poverty, caring for orphans, and kickstarting health initiatives can be successful.
**Mobile Wallpapers**

“God, help us to show kindness and mercy.” (Adapted from Zechariah 7:9)

Do your congregants spend a lot of time looking at their smartphone screens? Give them something meaningful to see whenever they pick up the phone. These inspiring messages, designed to fit most smartphone screens, include a Scripture verse along with a reminder about Peace with Justice Sunday. Invite technologically savvy members to help others to install the image.
SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

- “Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times.” Psalm 106:3, NRSV
- “If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” Mother Theresa
- “Justice denied anywhere diminishes justice everywhere.” Martin Luther King Jr.
- “On Peace with Justice Sunday, the spirit of truth moves through our congregation, pouring out love as we support ministries that build up peace and justice in our conference and around the world.”

How will you share your congregation’s message of peace with justice? Quotes and Scripture are paired with powerful images that are formatted for you to post through your social media networks. For maximum impact, consider posting two to three messages a week in the month leading up to Peace with Justice Sunday.

To personalize, add your own message and hashtag and include information about your congregation’s or conference’s relationship with Peace with Justice Sunday-supported ministries.
Videos

Hear from United Methodists about how the Peace with Justice Sunday offering has impacted their ministries.

- Provide a visual countdown in worship in the weeks leading to the Special Sunday.
- Post informational videos on social media and your website.
- Screen a video during a small-group discussion or host a larger conversation and strategically show multiple videos to tell the story.

With dozens of videos from which to choose, we are confident you will find what you need to enhance your congregation’s Peace with Justice Sunday.