

JUSTICE SUNDAY 2008



The Cost of Iraq:
Who Pays the Price?



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SERVICE COMMITTEE

WWW.UUSC.ORG



CONTENTS AND RESOURCES

UUSC JUSTICE SUNDAY

Guide to Justice Sunday

This resource offers guidelines to help you organize a successful Justice Sunday program. Read the Guide to Justice Sunday first, then Simple Steps for Justice and the evaluation form before moving forward with your program planning.

Simple Steps for Justice

Use this resource to inform your congregation members about their power to seek a just resolution to the war in Iraq and refocus our nation's priorities on unmet domestic needs, like helping communities on the Gulf Coast recover from Hurricane Katrina.

Evaluation form

Please provide feedback to help us continue improving Justice Sunday.

Justice Sunday 2008 poster

Additional resources you can order or view online

More resources are available at www.uusc.org/justicesunday.

- ♦ Justice Sunday 2008 worship resources
 - » Sample sermon
 - » Suggested hymns and readings
- ♦ Justice Sunday 2008 order of service cover and insert
- ♦ UUSC membership donation envelopes
- ♦ UUSC member stickers (12 per sheet)
- ♦ Civil Liberties fact sheet
- ♦ Rights in Humanitarian Crises fact sheet



GUIDE TO JUSTICE SUNDAY

UUSC JUSTICE SUNDAY

“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.”

— *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence,” delivered April 4, 1967, Riverside Church, New York City*

Justice Sunday 2008 will empower congregants to become active participants in our nation’s democracy while honoring Dr. King’s dream on the 40th anniversary of his assassination.

The war in Iraq has drained this nation’s resources, creating a humanitarian crisis in Iraq. Meanwhile, a multitude of needs at home remain unmet. The Justice Sunday resources provided in print and online will help participants understand who is paying the price of the Iraq war.

Simple Steps for Justice, the centerpiece of each Justice Sunday program, will help congregants actively participate in this year’s election process and take action on issues including the cost of the Iraq war and the precious resources the war has diverted from so many areas, including rebuilding the Gulf Coast.

To help your congregation take part in this important Justice Sunday experience, please follow these simple steps.

1. Coordinate with congregational leadership

Identify a program coordinator and others who might wish to help. Your UUSC local representative, minister, religious educators, and worship and social action committees should all play a role in order to make Justice Sunday a meaningful program. Often UUSC members will volunteer for tasks like tallying the donations.

2. Review and share the sample resource packet

The resource packet is mailed to each congregation and UUSC local representative. It is also available online at www.uusc.org/justicesunday. Review these resources and share them with the appropriate people. For instance, share the worship kit with your minister and worship committee.

3. Plan your Justice Sunday service

UUSC suggests you hold your Justice Sunday service on March 30, 2008.

Work with your minister, your newsletter/bulletin editor, and others to communicate with adults about the program. Work with your minister or director of religious education to plan if or how RE classes will participate. Visit www.uusc.org/justicesunday to find resources and suggestions for addressing the Iraq war and Gulf Coast rebuilding during religious education classes.

Be sure to include the Simple Steps for Justice sheet inside each order of service or on each chair – or have volunteers hand them out before the service!

Make the program an enriching experience and share your success by e-mailing volunteerservices@uusc.org.

For information about inviting a UUSC speaker to your congregation, visit www.uusc.org/rightsaloud.

4. Order materials

Order materials for your congregants free of charge online at www.uusc.org/justicesunday or by using the order form included in the sample resource packet. The key item for each congregant or family is the Simple Steps for Justice sheet.

5. Communicate with your congregation

Communicate before and after your service. Publish articles through your church's newsletter, listserv, and website. Make announcements during services.

Visit www.uusc.org/justicesunday for resources to help you create effective pulpit editorials and announcements and for sample newsletter articles you can use.

6. Follow up

Work with your social action committee or other appropriate leadership to provide a way for congregants to follow up on, or discuss with each other, the actions they took. This could be a discussion session following a service, a film screening and discussion, or an online chat or blog, just to name a few possibilities.

7. Celebrate

Be sure to celebrate your congregation's commitment to social justice by publishing a newsletter or web article and making a pulpit announcement following Justice Sunday. Provide an update to the congregation after Justice Sunday, again, through a newsletter and/or web article.

8. Plan ahead for the next year

By the spring, make sure that the dates for next year's Justice Sunday service date is in your congregation's worship calendar.



UUSC JUSTICE SUNDAY

SIMPLE STEPS FOR JUSTICE

The situation: Trading justice for war

In 2008, the year of the 40th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, let us honor his legacy by restoring justice for the people of the United States and the people of Iraq.

In the Gulf Coast

More than two years ago, the terrible power of nature, combined with a failure of government, brought about a massive humanitarian crisis. The recovery process remains horribly inadequate and severely skewed along lines of race and class.

Affordable housing is nonexistent with rents up as much as 200 percent and thousands of habitable public housing units remaining closed or slated for destruction. **Health care** continues to be sorely lacking with only one of seven general hospitals in New Orleans operating at pre-storm levels, according to a detailed analysis by the Institute for Southern Studies. Immediately following Katrina, New Orleans **public schools** fired 4,000 experienced teachers. In January 2007, 300 students were placed on waiting lists because schools simply had no room for them. While severe mental health issues are on the rise and post-traumatic stress disorder continues to worsen, funding for mental health services has been cut.

All this is happening in the wealthiest nation in the world. Meanwhile our tax dollars have been diverted to pay for a misguided war rather than to fund programs of social uplift. We must change this course.

Nationwide

As these materials went to press, the war in Iraq had cost more than **\$463,000,000,000**. For the same amount of money any of the following could have been provided throughout the nation:

- ◆ 4,171,107 affordable housing units
- ◆ 8,028,134 elementary school teachers
- ◆ 61,357,297 Head Start places for children
- ◆ health care for 277,393,900 children

Taxpayers in **Louisiana** will pay **\$1.2 billion** for proposed Iraq war spending for FY 2008. According to the National Priorities Project, for the same amount of money, any of the following could have been provided:

- ◆ 14,220 affordable housing units
- ◆ 24,974 elementary school teachers
- ◆ 178,783 Head Start places for children
- ◆ health care for 783,949 children
- ◆ 36,443 public safety officers

Taxpayers in **Mississippi** will pay **\$604.9 million** for proposed Iraq war spending for FY 2008. For the same amount of money, any of the following could have been provided:

- ◆ 8,907 affordable housing units
- ◆ 13,345 elementary school teachers
- ◆ 99,990 Head Start places for children
- ◆ health care for 343,547 children
- ◆ 19,631 public safety officers

What you can do

These are just a few of the actions you can take. Visit www.uusc.org/justicesunday to find more.

Educate

Visit www.uusc.org/justicesunday to find resources to educate yourself and your community with the facts about the Gulf Coast, Iraq war, and our nation's continuing practice of spending more on our military programs than on programs of social uplift.

Visit www.nationalpriorities.org to learn what the war in Iraq is costing the Gulf Coast, or your own community, right now.

Keep these issues at the forefront of your local media. Visit www.uusc.org/justicesunday for guidance in writing letters to the editor.

Hold a candlelight vigil to honor those surviving and those who have become victims of the humanitarian crises in the Gulf Coast and Iraq. This is a great opportunity for engaging children and youth. Visit www.uusc.org/justicesunday for Iraqi and Katrina kids' stories to read during your vigil.

Act

Support UUSC's human rights work for peace in Iraq, for a just rebuilding of the Gulf Coast, and more. Visit www.uusc.org today.

▶ Become a Human Rights Defender

Join our network of activists who receive regular e-mail alerts about opportunities to advocate for justice on specific issues related to UUSC's major program and advocacy initiatives. Take active part in the advocacy initiative for justice in the Gulf Coast and join us in taking action for peace in Iraq.

▶ Volunteer in the Gulf Coast

Visit www.uusc.org/gulfcoastvolunteerprogram or contact Peggy Powell at 617-868-6600. Groups can take an active part in Gulf Coast recovery work by participating in the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Volunteer Program. While doing hands-on work, volunteers will learn about the communities affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, particularly the inequalities that continue to affect the rebuilding of Louisiana and Mississippi.

Speak out

Talk to the candidates. Ask them questions about our nation's priorities in the Gulf Coast and Iraq. Take active part in our nation's democracy as an informed participant. See below and online at www.uusc.org/justicesunday for examples and resources.

▶ On Iraq

- ◆ *Do you favor or oppose reductions in spending for defense?*
- ◆ *Do you favor or oppose withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq and if you favor it, when should it happen?*
- ◆ *Do you favor or oppose the United States' giving financial aid to the 4 million Iraqis displaced by the Iraq war?*
- ◆ *What percentage of money being spent on Iraq should we spend on the Gulf Coast?*

▶ On the Gulf Coast

- ◆ *What is your assessment of the inequities that have affected the Gulf Coast rebuilding process? How do you propose we address them?*
- ◆ *What is your plan to rebuild the Gulf Coast? What would you do differently from what is currently being done?*
- ◆ *Do you support the right of return for all Gulf Coast residents, including people who rented homes or lived in public housing? If so, how will you protect their right of return?*
- ◆ *What do you see as the obstacles that account for the slow recovery of the Gulf Coast?*



EVALUATION FORM

Please help us improve the Justice Sunday program by completing this form and returning it to UUSC, Attn: Justice Sunday. Use a separate sheet for your answers if necessary.

UUSC JUSTICE SUNDAY

1. Did your congregation:

Devote a Sunday service to Justice Sunday?

Yes No If YES, on what date was your service?

Organize another activity for Justice Sunday?

Yes No

Participate in Guest at Your Table?

Yes No

2. Which of the following items did you use in conducting your Justice Sunday program?
(Check all that apply.)

- Civil Liberties fact sheet
- Rights in Humanitarian Crises fact sheet
- Worship resources
- Guide to Justice Sunday
- Order of service inserts
- Order of service covers
- UUSC member stickers
- Simple Steps for Justice activity sheet
- Full-color poster
- UUSC membership envelopes
- Other (please specify):

3. Which items did you find most helpful? Why?

4. What suggestions or requests do you have for improving the materials or the program?

5. Did you hold an event or other special activity that made your program more successful?
Please tell us about it so that we can share it with other congregations.

6. Did you combine Justice Sunday with a UUSC membership campaign?

Yes No

7. Please share any general comments you may have about Justice Sunday and this year's materials.

8. Does your congregation have a UUSC local representative?

Yes No Please send information about becoming a UUSC local rep.

9. Please provide information about you and your congregation.

Church/Fellowship _____

UUA church code _____

City/State/Zip _____

Your name _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Position: Minister RE director UUSC local rep.
 Social Justice Committee chair
 Other (please specify) _____

