

From Charity



To Justice

**An Advocacy Guide for Congregations to Move
From Charity to Justice**

ABOUT THE GUIDE

From Charity to Justice: An Advocacy Guide for Congregations to Move From Charity to Justice is an activity guide written by the I-CAN Committee to be used by congregations looking for tools to help transition from doing charitable work to advocacy. (In this publication, the term “congregation” is used generically to refer to many forms of faith communities.)

What are the goals of this activity guide?

- To help congregations to understand the difference between doing charity work and being advocates for justice.
- To inspire congregations to choose at least one issue to act on to effect systemic change.
- To provide some guidelines for congregations to begin to take action.

Who is the target audience for this activity guide?

This curriculum is intended for all members of the congregation, including clergy, committee members and congregants.



Interfaith Congregation Action Network

Interfaith Congregation Action Network (I-CAN) is a program of the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee that seeks to engage members of area congregations in advocacy efforts around issues affecting low-income individuals and families. It does this in a variety of ways:

- Action Alerts are sent to I-CAN Doers and individuals interested in staying up to date on current issues affecting poor and underserved communities.
- An annual conference for congregations on current issues affecting the lives of the poor and related advocacy efforts.
- I –CAN Doers, or congregational liaisons, who serve to link their congregations to I-CAN information and activities.
- Forums on current issues with legislators and major players of the issues to provide non-partisan information on how the issues affect the community.
- Meet with legislators at congregations around the greater Milwaukee area.

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AND READ BEFORE YOU BEGIN

"It is not enough to pull drowning people from the river. The church is pretty good at this...charitable work. But we have to walk back upstream and see who's throwing them in, in the first place."

Bishop Gene Robinson, Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire

Read this guide from cover to cover.

This will give you a sense of the flow of the materials and how they are designed to lead your congregation to take action. It will also allow you to make the necessary preparations to ensure you are ready to lead your group in the discussions and activities in this guide.

Invite clergy and lay leaders to participate.

This includes members of committees that focus on peace and justice issues or community outreach. Their support and involvement will be important for carrying out an action plan to address the issue(s) affecting your community – so get them engaged in the activities from the beginning.

Partner with another congregation or community group in presenting this curriculum.

Your congregation's chosen issue(s) can look very different depending on a person's background and situation. Enrich the conversation by reaching across racial and class lines as you plan and gather participants for this workshop. Involve persons who have been affected by the issue if at all possible.

Determine how much time you have to work with your group and select the lesson plan that best fits your group.

Review the different lesson plans and choose the one that best meets your goals and fits your timeline. Remember that the day and time (Sunday morning, weekday evenings, etc.) will determine who will be able to come.

Use a variety of methods to promote the workshop and recruit participants.

- Post announcements on bulletin boards, inside bulletins and on the website.
- Personal invites get more people to participate.
- Ask committee members to make phone calls and contacts.

Adapted from Wisconsin Council of Churches, "Hunger on Our Doorstep" Study Guide www.wichurches.org

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FOR THE FACILITATOR

FOR THE FACILITATOR:

1. You may tailor this curriculum to meet your timeframe. Estimated section durations are listed at the beginning of each section; however the size and experience of your group will determine the actual time it will take to complete a session. This curriculum can be used over one, two or three days. Pick and choose the sections you find most useful for your group. However, we recommend that you always incorporate all of *Section I. Set the Stage* into your lesson plan, as it helps to get to the core of the purpose of this curriculum.
2. Be sure to read the *Purpose, Preparation* and *Tips* well in advance of the time you plan to facilitate your sessions.
3. Before beginning each session, review the GROUND RULES below. Everyone participating should agree to these rules.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Computer with internet access (Optional)
- Copies of the various religious texts to distribute to participants (Handout)
- Current Legislative & Congressional Directories (Optional)
- Flipchart stand and paper
- Six Month Personal Plan Worksheet. (Handout)
- Six Month Group Plan Worksheet. (Handout)
- Magic Markers
- Masking Tape
- Newspaper or online articles or links about a specific social justice issue.
- Paper, pens, envelopes and postage stamps (Optional)

GROUND RULES

1. Speak honestly. The most respectful thing we can do together is to be real.
2. Treat each other with respect, even if you disagree. Allow each other to explore thoughts and feelings, even if they make you uncomfortable.
3. Speak briefly, so everyone has a chance to participate.
4. Listen carefully to each other, without interruptions.
5. Stay on the topic at hand.
6. Speak ONLY for yourself, rather than as a representative of any group. Remember that the other people in your group are speaking only for themselves and not as a spokesperson for their group.
7. Confidentiality is important, so we should not quote each other or refer to something personal without permission. We want everyone to share what you are learning with family members, at work, and in the community, but keep the personal stories of other people confidential. Talk about what is happening, not who said it.
8. Say "OUCH!" if something hurts you. Then say how you were hurt and why it hurt. We'll only grow and change if we share with each other. If you catch yourself making an "OUCH!" statement, you can say "OOPS!" as a way to acknowledge your misspoken word or statement.
9. The facilitators are not experts. They are here to help facilitate the process and discussion.

LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

1-HOUR SESSION PLAN

Section I: Set the Stage
Section II: An Advocate Is
Section III: Sacred Texts
Section VI: Next Steps

2-HOUR SESSION PLAN

Section I: Set the Stage
Section II: An Advocate Is
Section III: Sacred Texts
Section V: Get Started
Section VI: Next Steps

TWO 1-HOUR SESSIONS PLAN

SESSION 1

Section I: Set the Stage
Section II: An Advocate Is
Section III: Sacred Texts
Section VI: Next Steps

1. Choose the "Hot Issue" the group will develop a six month plan for during Session 2.
2. Assign homework:
 - a) Ask participants to research the chosen "Hot Issue" chosen to be prepared for discussion and advocacy planning during Session 2.
 - b) Distribute the Six Month Personal Plan (p.16) and the Sample Plan on (p.18). It should be completed by next session and ready to be shared with the group if desired. (Sharing will help some people be more accountable to what they say they will do.)
 - c) Distribute the Case Study (p.14) to be discussed during Session 2. Facilitation suggestions are in IV: Break Down Barriers (p.8).

SESSION 2

Section IV: Break Down Barriers
1. Case Study discussion (approx. 15 min.)
Section V: Get Started
Section VI: Next Steps

THREE 1-HOUR SESSIONS PLAN

SESSION 1

Section I: Set the Stage
Section II: An Advocate Is
Section III: Sacred Texts
Section VI: Next Steps

1. Assign homework.
 - a) Distribute the Case Study (p.14) to be discussed during Session 2. Facilitation suggestions are in IV: Break Down Barriers (p.8).

SESSION 2

Section IV: Break Down Barriers
Section VI: Next Steps

1. Choose the "Hot Issue" the group will develop a six month plan for during Session 3.
2. Assign homework:
 - a) For Discussion to research the "Hot Issue" chosen to be prepared for discussion and advocacy planning during Session 3.
 - b) Distribute the Six Month Personal Plan (page 16) and the Sample plan (page 18). It should be completed by Session 3 and ready to be shared with the group if desired. (Sharing will help some people be more accountable to what they say they will do.)

SESSION 3

Section V: Get Started
Section VI: Next Steps

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Introductions

Introduce yourself and allow time for each of the participants to introduce themselves. Ask people to state their names and whether they consider themselves to be 'experienced', 'somewhat experienced' or have 'no experience' in advocacy. At this point, there is no working definition of *advocacy* so they can "classify" themselves. If you plan to break them up into smaller groups, if possible, make sure each group has a variety of advocacy experiences represented.

Ground Rules

Post and read through the Ground Rules. Be sure everyone understands the rules and agrees to them. If someone has questions, please be sure to answer their questions prior to beginning the curriculum. The purpose of the Ground Rules is to create an environment of respect and safety to ensure people feel safe speaking up and sharing. If facilitating more than one session, be sure to review the Ground Rules before each session.

SECTION I: SET THE STAGE

Estimated Time = 20 min

PURPOSE: People often confuse doing charitable work with doing justice. This icebreaker focuses on the definition and examples of charity. This will help participants to more easily define and distinguish the difference between charity and advocacy later on in the curriculum.

A: Icebreaker

This discussion will get participants thinking about charitable activities they have participated in and why they engaged in those activities. They may discover that others in the group share the same interests and motivations.



For Discussion:

1. What are some of the charitable activities you have been involved in either through church, another association or personal motivation?
2. Why did you choose to participate in that activity?
3. Why is there still a need for these charitable activities?

Charity: A short-term, voluntary, individual response to people's immediate needs.

Justice: A structural, community response to meet on-going needs; legally mandated responsibilities toward other persons.

B: Things That Get You "Hot"

This brainstorming activity can be done with the whole group or broken into smaller groups. If you break into groups, each group should assign a recorder to document their group's issues and report out to the rest of the group. Use flip-chart paper to compile the issues. Save the list to use in *Section V. Get Started*.

Instruct participants to:

- List social justice issues that get you "hot" - that is, things that you would like to see changed.
e.g. death penalty, education reform, health care, teen pregnancy, unemployment, etc.

C: What are the Barriers?

This activity will help participants get to the heart of and begin to break down the barriers that get in the way of action.



For Discussion:

1. Why do people tend to not engage in justice activities?
e.g. if needed: intimidation, frustrating, time constraints, lack of awareness, "too political", unending issue, too hard, etc.
2. What is the difference between doing charity work and doing justice?

SECTION II: AN ADVOCATE IS

"Almost anything you do will seem insignificant, but it is very important that you do it." Gandhi

Estimated Time = 15 min

PURPOSE: To help participants identify some famous and not so famous advocates and what they do/did. It will help participants realize that anyone can be an advocate and there are a variety of ways to advocate.

A. Famous Advocates This brief exercise will help get participants thinking about advocates and the outcome of their efforts.




For Discussion:

1. What is an advocate?
2. Who are some famous advocates?
3. What did they advocate for and how did they advocate?
4. What were the outcomes of their efforts?



- *Think ahead of some advocates and know what issues they advocated for and the outcomes. This may require some research. People will inevitably name the most notable advocates like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Theresa, Gandhi, etc. Come prepared with a brief list of other advocates in case participants need help thinking beyond the obvious. Ex: Senator Ted Kennedy, Father Groppi, etc.*
- *It may be helpful to quickly write down names as they are mentioned and then follow up with questions 3-4.*



Advocate:
noun— A person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc.

HANDOUT: EVERYDAY ADVOCATES

Distribute the *EVERYDAY ADVOCATES* handout and allow participants two minutes to answer the first question. Have a discussion about their responses as a large group. After discussion, allow participants to work independently for about 5 minutes on the second question. When the time is up, ask them to share their responses.



Additional question to ask during the discussion of the second question on handout:

1. Did you put down your own name or people in your circle of influence? Why or why not?

SECTION III: SACRED TEXTS ON ADVOCACY ACTION

Estimated Time = 20 min

PURPOSE: To allow participants to examine what some holy texts say about being advocates. Also, it highlights how similar many religions are in terms of how we are to treat each other and how God commands and expects us to be advocates.

Preparation: Distribute copies of the religious texts. You may do this exercise as a whole group or break into smaller groups. Write the discussion questions on flip chart paper.

For whole group reading and discussion, have people take turns reading aloud and follow-up with *For Discussion*. If working in small groups, assign a religion to each group and distribute the appropriate texts and allow time for small group discussion. Bring the group back together and ask each group to answer the first *For Discussion* question. After each group has answered, ask the group as a whole to answer question 2.

Religious texts included in packet:

- Christian: Luke 18:1-5, John 15:26–27, John 16:4b–15
- Jewish: Esther 7:1-3, Isaiah 58:9-10, Jeremiah 29:7
- Muslim: The Women 4.135, The Dinner Table 5:8, The Bee 16.90



For Discussion:

1. What does the text say about advocacy?
2. How is advocacy a faith activity?

If participants struggle with the question, help get them started with some examples: e.g. parents, lawyers, teachers, principals, doctors, clergy, etc.

SECTION IV: BREAK DOWN BARRIERS

Total Estimated Time = 45 min

PURPOSE: This section will provide participants opportunities to experience advocacy through a fictional case study. They will also participate in experiential activities to give them opportunities to go through the motions and emotions of what advocacy activity looks and feels like. It will help them to face some of the barriers that get in the way of advocacy and also correct misconceptions around challenges to being advocates.

A Case Study Estimated Time = 15 min

In this activity, participants will work individually and read the case study on page 14 and answer the follow-up questions. If possible, assign this as homework to be completed by the next session. Hold an open discussion and ask participants to share what they wrote.

Advocacy Simulations Estimated Time = 15-30 min per station

Preparation: Come prepared with a social justice issue for participants to work on. Be sure to choose a meaningful and non-divisive topic. This is particularly important for the *Lack of awareness* activities.

Decide which advocacy stations you want to have for your workshop and see below for the appropriate set-up for each station. If you plan to tackle more than one barrier (e.g. time constraints, lack of awareness, intimidation) it may be easier to prepare separate stations with the materials needed for each barrier.

Depending on the activities you choose and the size of your group, you may want to divide into smaller groups and rotate groups.



- If the facilitator is not an experienced advocate, it is strongly advised that they work with an experienced advocate, such as a member of the I CAN Committee, to help prepare for this activity.
- Choose an advocacy topic that will not be divisive.
- Utilize reliable resources.

SECTION IV: BREAK DOWN BARRIERS (Continued)

Advocacy Simulations Estimated Time = 15-30 min per station

Instructions:

1. Explain to the group that people often cite time constraints, lack of awareness, inexperience or fear as reasons for not being an advocate. Now is the time to start to break down some of those barriers.
2. Walk participants through a couple examples of local social changes that occurred as a result of advocacy. Use recently past or current examples.

Time Constraints Simulation

This activity allows people to see that being an effective advocate does not need to be time consuming.

- *Simulate making phone calls to legislators.* Perhaps invite a legislator, a member of their staff or an experienced advocate to role play a legislator receiving phone calls from advocates. Have participants prepare talking points before making their “phone calls”.
- *Write to a legislator.* Distribute copies of *Public Policy Advocacy* (pages 20-21) and refer participants to ‘Write a letter to your state or federal legislator’ at the bottom of page 20 as a guide. Instruct participants to write a letter to a legislator on a particular topic. It could be a practice letter, but if you choose to have them write a real letter, have envelopes and stamps available. Have paper and pens available if needed. Collect the letters, add postage and drop them in the mail.

Lack of Awareness Simulation

This activity involves researching a topic to become familiar with its advocacy issue(s) so people will have a better understanding of what the issue(s) is to help them form and articulate their point of view. Below are some examples of what could be done.

- Allow participants to search the web for information on a particular topic. Perhaps choose a topic in advance and select some websites as a starting point. You may want to choose a “hot Issue” from the group list. Remember to choose a non-divisive topic.
- Provide newspaper articles on the topic/issue.
- Have news clips bookmarked and available.
- Direct people to faith-based social justice websites (e.g. Interfaith Conference www.interfaithconference.org or Wisconsin Council of Churches www.wichurches.org) for updates on advocacy issues.

Intimidation Simulation

Many people do not know who their legislators are. They believe they are difficult to reach, too busy to talk to or that they need to be experts on an issue to speak with them. The purpose of this activity is to help people overcome discomfort with communicating directly with legislators and their staff.

1. Use the Public Policy Advocacy handout (pp. 20-21) which will tell how to identify and contact legislators.
2. Work on developing talking points. Talking points are a list of brief sentences that summarize the point one is making about a particular issue.
3. Simulate a phone conversation with a legislator and/or staff.
4. Simulate an in-person conversation with a legislator or staff. You can invite a legislator, their staff or an experienced advocate to help with the simulation.
5. Save legislators’ phone number in cell phones, or at least record their legislators’ contact information to post on their refrigerator or cork board at home.



For Discussion (after Advocacy Simulation activities are concluded):

1. What was this experience like?
2. What was your biggest challenge? How did you handle it?



SECTION V: GET STARTED

Estimated Time = 45 min

PURPOSE: *This section will help begin the advocacy journey as a group and as individuals for at least six months.*

1. Chose an issue from the “Hot Issues” list generated during the brainstorming activity in Section I.
2. Make a 6 month group Plan to advocate for that issue. See sample on p.18.
3. Make a 6 month personal Plan to advocate for an issue. See sample on p. 19.

Ensure people have time to work individually to determine what their hot topics are and provide opportunities for people to share, collaborate and reflect.



- *It may be helpful to choose your group’s “Hot Issue” at the end of the first session. If you find that the group cannot choose which “Hot Issue” to work on, break them up into teams by issue to research the issues outside of the class. They can present their case to the whole group at the next session and the group will then choose their issue.*
- *People may need a little time to complete their Six Month Personal Plan. If you facilitate two or three sessions, it may be helpful to distribute the Six Month Personal Plan (p. 16) or and Sample (p.18) as homework to be completed by the next session.*

SECTION VI: NEXT STEPS

Estimated Time = 5 min

PURPOSE: *This is the time to assign homework and schedule the next From Charity to Justice session or to schedule the next meeting to begin advocacy action.*

Please be sure to complete the Facilitator’s Survey (p. 25) when you have completed all of your sessions.. We really would like to hear from you. Any suggestions you have for improvement is appreciated.

EVERYDAY ADVOCATES

1. What is an advocate? _____

2. Make a list of people you consider to be everyday advocates. Include the issue(s) they advocate for and how they do it. This list can include professions or individuals.

Advocate 1: _____

Advocate 2: _____

Advocate 3: _____

Advocate 4: _____

Advocate 5: _____

SACRED TEXTS

HOLY BIBLE

Luke 18: 1-5

The Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge

18 Then Jesus* told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. ²He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. ³In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." ⁴For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming."

John 15:26-27

²⁶ 'When the Advocate* comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. ²⁷ You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

John 16:4-15

⁴ But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them. 'I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, "Where are you going?" ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate* will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about* sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

¹² 'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

HOLY TORAH

Esther 7: 1-3

¹ So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. ² On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, 'What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.' ³ Then Queen Esther answered, 'If I have won your favour, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request.

SACRED TEXTS (CONTINUED)

(Holy Torah Continued)

Isaiah 58: 9-10

⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, ¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

Jeremiah 29:7

⁷ But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

HOLY QURAN

The Women

4.135 You who believe! Be most upright in upholding justice, bearing true witness for the sake of God alone even if it is against your own selves, or your parents, or your nearest relatives regardless of whether one party is rich and the other is poor, for God is most regardful of what is good for them both. So do not follow whim such that you pervert equity. For if you distort testimony or turn away from the truth, then, indeed, ever is God all-aware of that all you do.

The Dinner Table

5.89 Allah does not call you to account for what is vain in your oaths, but He calls you to account for the making of deliberate oaths; so its expiation is the feeding of ten poor men out of the middling (food) you feed your families with, or their clothing, or the freeing of a neck; but whosoever cannot find (means) then fasting for three days; this is the expiation of your oaths when you swear; and guard your oaths. Thus does Allah make clear to you His communications, that you may be Fateful.

The Bee

16.90 Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful.

CASE STUDY

A Teacher's Story

A second grade teacher notices that one of her students has not gone on any field trips with the rest of his classmates during the school year. She decides to ask him why, expecting him to say that he was not interested in any of the places the class went. But instead, after a long pause, the student admits that he does not want to go on the field trips because everyone else in his class has a lunch to take on the trip and he doesn't.

A little time goes by and there is a month left in the school year. The students are gearing up for their final field trip of the year. The teacher asks the same student about his summer plans. He says he will be attending summer school activities for the whole summer.

Later on that evening, the teacher is at home watching the news. The reporter says that the Child Nutrition Act is up for reauthorization by congress in September. She learns that among other things, this act allows schools to feed school children nutritious meals and snacks in school and outside school hour programs. She learns that some programs must be reauthorized every five years and that one of those programs is the Summer Food Service Program.

She thinks of the rapidly approaching end of the school year. She thinks of what would happen to her student and others like him if the Summer Food Service Program is not reauthorized.

She thinks of what she can do.

CASE STUDY QUESTIONS

- 1. What is the issue?**
- 2. What would be the charitable action for the teacher?**
- 3. What would be the advocacy action for the teacher?**
- 4. Which would be the easier action: charity or advocacy? Why?**
- 5. Which would be the most effective action? Why?**

GET STARTED: HOT TOPICS

List your top 3 issues from the HOT TOPICS list and answer the questions below. (If your issue did not make it to the list, write it down now.)

ISSUE #1 _____

ISSUE #2 _____

ISSUE #3 _____

Why did you choose each of these issues?

ISSUE #1 _____

ISSUE #2 _____

ISSUE #3 _____

What is a desired outcome of this issue?

ISSUE #1 _____

ISSUE #2 _____

ISSUE #3 _____

Choose the one issue that you feel strongest about. Use this issue to complete your SIX MONTH PERSONAL PLAN.

SIX MONTH PERSONAL PLAN

THE ISSUE: _____

List three things you can do to advocate for this issue.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Specifically, what will you need to do to accomplish the goals above?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What are you going to do? What is your timeline? _____

What barriers do you foresee that will hinder your progress? _____

How will you address these barriers? _____

How will you hold yourself accountable? _____

SIX MONTH GROUP PLAN

THE ISSUE: _____

Identify the goals/desired outcomes of your advocacy efforts within a six month period.



1. Create a timeline with a distinct beginning and ending.
2. Make a list of steps to be taken and assign individuals to each task.
3. Determine what needs to be done to accomplish goals.
4. Make sure the goals and outcomes meet the following criterion:

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Timely

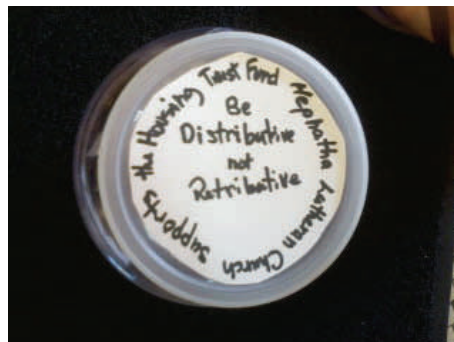
Specific: Set clear, concise and specific goals.

Measurable: Set short-term measurements of progress. Be aware that sometimes the impact of advocacy is difficult to measure. In some cases, the impact may not be seen for quite some time.

Attainable: Be mindful of who your group is and what they are capable of doing within the timeline.

Realistic: Make goals that can realistically be achieved within the timeline.

Timely: Create a timeline to meet your goals. Having a start and end time will help to stay on task. Also, work on something that is timely and currently requires advocacy attention.



SAMPLE

SIX MONTH PERSONAL PLAN

THE ISSUE: Create More Affordable Housing in the City

List three things you can do to advocate for this issue.

1. Join church committee working on this issue.
2. Participate in activities that support making available more affordable housing.
3. Contact my legislators about this issue.

Specifically, what will you need to do to accomplish the goals above?

1. Adjust my schedule to allow time to attend committee meetings and related events and activities.
2. Set aside time to educate myself on the issue.
3. Learn who my legislators are and keep their contact information on the refrigerator.

What are you going to do? What is your timeline?

1. I will speak with Mrs. Smith with the Human Concerns Committee after service this week to request to join the committee.
2. I will attend the Affordable Housing Helps All rally in February. I will ask my sister and neighbor to come to the rally with me.
3. This Saturday I will look up my legislators online, write down their contact information and put it on my refrigerator for convenient access.

What barriers do you foresee that will hinder your progress?

1. I am trying to loose 15lbs for my cousin's wedding in 3 months and my aerobic class meets on Tuesdays when the Human Concerns Committee meets. I see the results of exercising and I really don't want to skip any classes.
2. Several of the community rallies on affordable housing take place during regular business hours. It's difficult to travel to the rallies and stay for the event within my allotted lunchtime.
3. I'm really uncomfortable meeting one on one with people in positions of power like a legislator. I'm afraid that I'll be put on the spot and won't be able to articulate my point of view.

How will you address these barriers?

1. Since the committee meets once a month I will switch to the Wednesday aerobics class the week of the meeting.
2. I will notify my boss of the activities taking place and request extra time off to attend the rally. I'm willing to make up the extra time off.
3. I will refer to the Public Policy Advocacy handout from the I CAN Curriculum and work with my fellow committee members to develop and become knowledgeable of and comfortable with my talking points.

How will you hold yourself accountable?

1. I will ask the Affordable Housing Committee to put me on the Feb. 1 agenda to share my talking points to receive feedback.
2. I will put committee meetings and affordable housing activities on my PDA and work calendar and program them to send me reminders.
3. Since mom doesn't forget anything, I will ask her to check up on me and my progress.

SAMPLE

SIX MONTH GROUP PLAN

THE ISSUE: Our Community Needs More Affordable Housing

Identify the goals/desired outcomes of your advocacy efforts within a six month period.

Outcomes/Impact of our advocacy efforts:

A. Congregants will understand the need for and importance and benefits of affordable housing in our community.

B. Our synagogue will be regarded as a solid supporter of affordable housing in the community.

Six Month Goals:

1. Form a congregational Affordable Housing Committee.
2. Host two events advocating for affordable housing
 - a) *Affordable Housing Advocates Training*
 - b) *Legislator Visit*
3. Dedicate a Saturday service to the need for affordable housing and our duty as people of faith to be advocates.
4. Organize 50 congregants to contact at least one of their legislators about creating more affordable housing in the community.

GOAL 2a

Timeline for Affordable Housing Advocates Training Event: January 1 – June 1

Project leads: Pamela James and James Brown

Jan. 15	Planning meeting.
Feb. 30	Confirm event date.
Mar. 15	Planning meeting.
Mar. 15	Send out “Save the Date” notices.
Mar. 30	Confirm venue.
Mar. 30	Confirm event facilitators.
Apr. 15	Promote event (email, bulletin inserts, announcements, mailing)
May 15	Planning meeting.
June 15	Event

PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY

Speak out for those who cannot speak...defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Proverbs 31:8-9

What is public policy advocacy?

Public Policy is the way we govern our communities through laws and administrative rules. *Public Policy Advocacy* is a way of loving our neighbors as ourselves by helping shape public policy in ways that will affect their lives for the better.

What is an advocate?

An Advocate is anyone who cares enough about the good of his or her community and its members to speak up on their behalf. An advocate does not have to be an “expert” or a “political activist,” only someone who takes seriously the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. An advocate learns about issues affecting the community and expresses his or her views and concerns to the appropriate policy makers, building relationships with them through regular contact.

Why should I be an advocate?

Being an advocate means being:

- A good steward of the gift of citizenship in a democracy;
- A faithful witness to God’s will for a just, peaceful, and healthy world;
- A loving neighbor to those whose lives are impacted by public policies – especially the most vulnerable among us.

How can I be an advocate?

Most public policy advocacy involves telling elected officials about your support for, or opposition to, a specific piece of legislation. This can be done by a phone call, letter or email, or at an office visit or a public hearing.

Find out who your legislators are and how to contact them:

To find the name and contact information for your representatives in the Wisconsin Legislature and the U.S. Congress, go to www.legis.state.wi.us/waml and enter your address, or call the legislative hotline, 1-800-362-9472. Most legislators have little interest in the views of non-constituents.

Write a letter to your state or federal legislator:

- *Be Personal* – A handwritten letter receives much more attention than a form letter or card.
- *Be Concise* – Limit your letter to one or two paragraphs.
- *Be Specific* – State clearly what you want your legislator to do on a single topic or bill.
- *Be Polite* – Be respectful, even when you strongly disagree.
- *Give a Reason* – Say what motivates you to write, and/or support your position with a fact.
- *Identify Yourself* – Include your name and address on both the envelope and in your letter.
- *Follow up* – For example, express thanks or disappointment for the way your legislator voted.

Send an e-mail to your legislator:

Your legislator's website may include a form you can fill out to send an e-mail. Follow the same guidelines as for letters, and include your name and mailing address.

Visit with your legislator or a staff member:

A visit with the appropriate member of your legislator's staff is usually easier to arrange. You can meet them at their office in the U.S. or State Capitol, or in their home district.

- Plan ahead – Familiarize yourself with the issue and the legislator's views.
- Make an appointment – Tell them the purpose of the meeting and who will be attending.
- Be prompt, patient, and flexible – Legislators have busy schedules.
- Be prepared – Bring supporting information, and a concise fact sheet to leave behind.
- Don't forget the "Ask" – Make a specific request to the legislator and note the response.
- Keep in mind that every contact is a step in developing a long-term relationship.
- Make notes to help you or others to prepare for future contacts.
- Send a thank-you letter reviewing the meeting, and providing any additional information requested.

Offer Testimony at a Public Hearing:

The Wisconsin Legislature holds public hearings at which citizens may respond to pending legislation. You can register to testify for or against the bill or to provide information without taking a position. You can also register for or against the bill without testifying. If you want to testify:

- Be prepared – Identify your key points and anticipate counterarguments from the other side.
- Do your homework on the backgrounds and views of the committee members.
- Bring about 25 copies of your testimony to give to the committee staff and reporters.
- Limit yourself to 5 to 10 minutes. Use vivid examples, stories, or exhibits.
- Be polite, but don't let yourself be intimidated or diverted. Thank the committee.

From Wisconsin Council of Churches, "Health and Hope" Study Guide www.wichurches.org

Writing a Letter to the Editor

Why Write a Letter to the Editor?

“No other form of communication can match the impact of a thoughtful letter written by a concerned community citizen.” (Bread for the World) The op-ed page is one of the most closely read parts of a newspaper, and it is the page policy-makers look to as a gauge of public opinion.

How to Write a Letter to the Editor

1. Choose a Topic

- a) Pick a topic that you are passionate about.
- b) Relate it to an issue recently discussed in the publication to which you’re writing.

2. Make Your Case

- a) Bring in your own personal experience or angle on the subject.
- b) Back up your position with one or two key facts.
- c) Don’t personally attack those with whom you disagree.
- d) Appeal to values or beliefs that are widely shared, even by those on the “other side.”

3. Be Short and to the Point

- a) Be clear and concise – about 150 words in two or three paragraphs.
- b) Focus on only one or two points, and make the most important point early in the letter.
- c) Write short, punchy sentences, grouped in two or three paragraphs.

4. Pay Attention to Details

- a) Follow the rules given on the publication’s letters page or website, or call.
- b) If you refer to an item that appeared in the publication, give the headline and date.
- c) Type your letter, double-spaced. Check spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- d) Include your name, phone number(s), address, and e-mail address.

5. Send It In

- a) Mail, fax, or e-mail your letter to the address listed for the publication.
- b) E-mail is often preferred – but don’t send attachments.

6. If Your Letter Is Published...

- a) Share the news with others to encourage them to write their own letters.
- b) Send a copy to your legislators – Wisconsin or U.S. or both, depending on the topic.

7. ...And Even If It’s Not...

- a) If you don’t see it in print or get a confirmation call in a week or two, submit it somewhere else. (There is usually less competition for space in smaller weeklies.)
- b) Letters that aren’t published aren’t wasted. If a publication receives many letters expressing similar views on a topic, it is more likely to print one or more of them.

From Wisconsin Council of Churches, "Health and Hope" Study Guide www.wichurches.org

15 WAYS TO GET STARTED

1. Organize a letter-writing campaign in your church or group of churches to tell local, state, or national government officials of your concern about the issue.
2. Plan a special workshop service on the theme/chosen issue.
3. Organize a community forum or series of forums to discuss the issue. Invite local experts to speak.
4. Convene a group to do more thorough research to become the issue “experts” within the congregation. Collaborate with other churches and local service and advocacy agencies.
5. Participate in public hearings and rallies to support the issue.
6. Produce a series of bulletin inserts or church newsletter articles about the extent, effects, causes, and solutions to the issue in your community.
7. Submit letters to the editor, or an op-ed piece, to your local newspaper on the issue or solutions in your community.
8. If applicable, find out whether volunteer opportunities there are at organizations and recruit volunteers from your congregation. Post sign-up sheets and offer transportation for volunteers to and from the site.
9. Set up a special bulletin board or display area at a prominent place in your church with information about the issue.
10. Find creative ways to open your church to the community to promote your issue. For example, offer workshops or host forums and invite the community to attend.
11. Arrange for a small group to meet with your state legislators or congresspersons when they are in your district to talk about the issues affecting your community.
12. Find out when a state legislative committee will be holding a hearing on a proposal having to do with the issue or a related issue and offer testimony on behalf of the interests of those affected by the issue.
13. Attend a candidates’ forum and ask those who are running for office how they would address the issues in your community.
14. Join the Interfaith Congregation Action Network (I CAN) by calling 414-276-9050 or email office@interfaithconference.org.
15. Think deeply about your community and your congregation, and you may come up with some fresh and original ideas that take advantage of the uniqueness of your situation.

Adapted from Wisconsin Council of Churches, “Hunger on Our Doorstep” Study Guide www.wichurches.org

RESOURCES

Sharing Our Stories and Concerns: Hosting a Meeting with Legislators at Your Congregation

A brief how-to guide for congregations wanting to host a meeting with legislators. It also includes phone numbers, and mailing addresses for state legislators and the Governor. <http://www.interfaithconference.org/>

Political Activities: A Guide for Religious Organizations

This is a good tool for learn what congregations legally can and cannot do when advocating for an issue. http://naacp.3cdn.net/cc7771aabff25d945a_w2m6bhdev.pdf

Find Your Elected Officials

Learn who your elected officials are online. Visit the State of Wisconsin Voter Public Access site at <https://vpa.wi.gov/VoterSearchScreen.aspx?Language=en-us> where you will find your Poll Place Location in addition to a list of all of your elected officials. City of Milwaukee residents may also visit <http://itmdapps.ci.mil.wi.us/electedreps/electrep.jsp> to learn who all of elected officials are from the city to federal government.

Legislative and Congressional Directory

The Legislative & Congressional Directory provides contact and district information for all of Wisconsin's state legislators. The directory is reasonably priced and can be purchased from the Wisconsin Taxpayer's Alliance. Call 608-241-9789 or go to <http://www.wistax.org/pubs/LD10.pdf> for the online order form for the 2011 Legislative & Congressional Directory.

How the Wisconsin State Legislature Works

The State of Wisconsin Blue Book provides a variety of information about the history, culture, constitution and political structure of the state of Wisconsin. The Blue Book is a useful tool to understanding the roles of state legislators and the legislative process. <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/bb/09bb/index.htm>.

2011 – 2013 Wisconsin State Legislature Session Schedule

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/leginfo/session.htm>

FROM CHARITY TO JUSTICE Facilitator Evaluation

Thank you for using the *From Charity to Justice* curriculum. We would appreciate hearing back from you. Please take a moment to complete this brief survey

When did you facilitate your workshop? _____

How many people participated? _____

Did clergy or lay leaders participate? YES NO

Do you believe participants left with a clear understanding of the difference between charity and advocacy?
YES NO

Did your group create a Six Month Group Plan? YES NO
If yes, what is the issue? _____

Did the participants create a Six Month Personal Plan? YES NO

Which sections did you lead? Circle all that apply.

I. Set the Stage	II. An Advocate Is	III. Sacred Texts	IV. Break Down Barriers	V. Get Started	VI. Next Steps
All <input type="checkbox"/>	All <input type="checkbox"/>	All <input type="checkbox"/>	All <input type="checkbox"/>	All <input type="checkbox"/>	All <input type="checkbox"/>
Part A <input type="checkbox"/>	Part A <input type="checkbox"/>		Part A <input type="checkbox"/>	Part A <input type="checkbox"/>	
Part B <input type="checkbox"/>	Part B <input type="checkbox"/>		Part B <input type="checkbox"/>	Part B <input type="checkbox"/>	
Part C <input type="checkbox"/>				Part C <input type="checkbox"/>	

Which section(s) did you find to be successful/interesting? Circle all that apply.

I. Set the Stage	II. An Advocate Is	III. Sacred Texts	IV. Break Down Barriers	V. Get Started	VI. Next Steps
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Which section(s) did you find were NOT successful/interesting? Circle all that apply.

I. Set the Stage	II. An Advocate Is	III. Sacred Texts	IV. Break Down Barriers	V. Get Started	VI. Next Steps
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Overall, how would you rank the effectiveness of this curriculum?

Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Adequate	Somewhat Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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Additional comments: _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

Please send your completed evaluation to: Interfaith Conference Attn: I CAN 5409 W. Vliet St. Milwaukee, WI 53208	Or fax to: (414) 258-9030	Facilitator Name(s) _____ Congregation Name: _____
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Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee is a non-profit interfaith agency through which thirteen judicatories collaborate to address the social issues affecting the quality of life in the greater Milwaukee area. The Conference enables the religious community, including non-member faith groups, to work together in upholding “the dignity of every person and the solidarity of the human community,” as our mission statement calls on us to do. We are directed by a Cabinet of representatives from each of our thirteen member judicatories. These thirteen judicatories (or denominations) have among them approximately 500 congregations in the Milwaukee area.

The Interfaith Conference also provides and creates opportunities for people from different backgrounds to dialogue, build relationships, increase understanding, and work together to create a stronger community. Everyone has a place at our table. Working together through an inter-religious organization such as the Conference does not mean that people from different faith traditions must water-down their beliefs or otherwise compromise who they are as people of faith. Quite the contrary. We invite everyone to work with us, fully representing who they are and what they believe.

Since our founding in 1970, The Interfaith Conference has addressed such issues as poverty, hunger, homelessness, racism, health care, interfaith dialogue, education, global peace issues, international development, employment, crime and the criminal justice system, the environment, alcohol & drugs and our growing aging population.



Member judicatories:

American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin
Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Greater Milwaukee Synod
Church of God in Christ, Wisconsin First Jurisdictional Prelate
Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee
Islamic Center of Milwaukee
Jewish Community Relations Council
Presbyterian Church USA, Presbytery of Milwaukee
Religious Society of Friends, The Milwaukee Meeting
Southeast Wisconsin Unitarian Universalist Association
United Church of Christ, Southeast Wisconsin Association
United Methodist Church, The Milwaukee District
Wisconsin Council of Rabbis

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5409 W. Vliet St.
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(414) 276-9050
www.interfaithconference.org