

Jubilee Weekend 2011

Action Resources

Take action against illegitimate debt and together, let's stop the global debt cycle! Join Jubilee USA Network this October 15 and 16 for our Jubilee Weekend. In conjunction with Illegitimate Debt Week with our partners in the Global South, we can make a difference. Communities across the country and around the world will be taking action! Will you join us?

As our global partners take action, Jubilee USA is calling for actions throughout the United States to support our upcoming policy initiatives. This fall, Jubilee USA will introduce the Jubilee Act into Congress.

The legislation will provide solutions to the international debt crises and work towards implementing responsible lending and borrowing practices for International Financial Institutions. Through its passage, mechanisms to promote transparency and accountability and will produce greater worldwide economic justice.

Jubilee USA urges all people of conscience to:

- sign our Voices of Esther postcards if you are a member of a faith community,
- write letters to your members of Congress in support of the Jubilee Act,
- host events in your community and,
- take pictures of your community taking a stand in solidarity to urge your member of Congress to stop the global debt cycle. These same pictures will be sent along to our partners in the Global South with a message of support!

These steps link us together with our brothers and sisters around the world and move us forward on a path of global economic justice. Together, we will provide the changes needed in International Financial Institutions to transform the economic system and allow for more opportunities of repudiation and cancelling of unjust debt!

How to participate?

There are many ways that you can take action. This is an exciting opportunity to educate and energize your community on the issues of debt and global poverty. From hosting a movie night in your home, to facilitating an educational workshop and discussion, to having a small vigil in a local town square, this is your chance to raise awareness of unjust poverty in the world.

Your event can be as big or small as you would like it to be. Each action is part of hundreds of actions around the world, and are impactful!

Please email jeremy@jubileeusa.org for more materials and ideas or feel free to call him at 202-783-0214.

Educational Resources:

Resources on Fair and Transparent Arbitration Process which support responsible lending and borrowing

<http://www.jubileeusa.org/ftap/ftapresources.html>

Recent Articles:

Recent calls for participatory audit process in Egypt by our partners at CADTM

http://www.cadtm.org/spip.php?page=imprimer&id_article=6998

European Crisis: Time for a Debt Court

<http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/?lid=6247>

Could the Global Economic Crisis Spur Debt Reform for the Continent?

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201008161147.html>

Movies and Resources for Community Screenings:

The End of Poverty- <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/end-of-poverty/>

Debtocracy – <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/debtocracy/>

Documentary about debt crises in Greece

Debt of the Dictators

Sample Events – Vigil, Community Art Project, Letters to Congress

Letter-writing campaigns and vigils can have great impacts on building awareness and influencing your members of Congress. You can combine the letter writing campaign, the educational workshop, and a community art project all in one to make a fun, energetic, and inspiring event. Each action in this resource can be done for a successful event in your community. You can do them all, or just one or two!

Action 1: Educate

Educational workshops that can be useful in building community support, connecting concerned citizens, and bringing awareness about the issues. Announce the educational workshop and combine it with a shared potluck, movie screening, banner making, or community dialogue. These are ways to pull people into the room.

Before introducing the workshop, be sure to go around the room and make sure everyone knows each other. Ask each person to share why they came to the event.

Afterwards introduce the workshop. Explain that the workshop is a basic introduction to considering the realities of governments who are forced to pay into debts.

Discuss and engage with your community participants about the ongoing debt crises. Use the one below or develop your own!

Educational Workshop for your community:

Divide the people into groups of 5 (or whatever number seems most appropriate depending on level of participation). Each group can be assigned a different country in the world. After being assigned countries, have one member come up to the facilitator asking for their annual budget. You will distribute unequal amounts of (play) money among the participants.

Those in the U.S., U.K., and other Western nations will receive larger sums of money. Those in Chad, Togo, Eritrea, Sri Lanka, Laos, Honduras, Nicaragua, Malawi, Haiti, and others representing poorer countries, should receive much less.

Ask everyone to plan how they would like to spend their money running their country. They should write down their budget breakdowns and be ready to present to the group. This is both a great opportunity to examine and discuss local issues of social spending, as well as global spending in the world.

Facilitator should announce that their budgets must include:

- Education
- Healthcare
- Physical Infrastructure (bridges, roads, railroads, etc.)
- Food security/agriculture
- Jobs/Business/Industry

- National Security
- Other items

***Important Facilitator note**:*

5 minutes into the group discussion, facilitator should announce that countries from the Global South must give 1/3 of their budget into debt servicing. A member from all developing nations should then hand over 1/3 of their budget to one of the Western nations.

Afterwards, members can discuss how and why they chose to divide their funds.

Discussion Questions:

- What were your budgeting priorities? Were you able to reach them?
- How do people representing countries from the Global South feel about giving up a portion of their money to those in the West? How did those in the West feel?
- Is anything on the list that is unnecessary, or things their country could do without?
- Other comments or considerations?

Conclusion:

Explain to the participants that, although this game seems simple, it represents real economic and political decisions made in the international system. A lot of poor countries are kept indebted and serving loans at the expense of domestic social spending and provision of basic services to their citizens.

After you have the workshop, have participants sign our Voices of Esther Postcards or sign letters to your local Congress members urging them to support our upcoming legislation, the Jubilee Act, that will reform International Financial Institutions and extend debt cancellation.

Action 2: Create a community banner

Invite your community members to discuss the global economic and debt crises that exist in the world today while engaging in a community art project. You can purchase large poster, boards, butcher paper or a long piece of cloth to make a community banner. We ask you to include Jubilee USA somewhere on the banner. You can hang up the banner in your community space, or use it for a community vigil that same day!

Banner Suggestions:

We ask you to recognize the links between our economies and lives between the Global North and South. We ask you to draw out both the negative connections we may have, as well as the connections and transformative vision we wish to make!

On the banner you can draw out the connections that exist between your communities and those in the Global South. They can be inspiring pieces of work that connect the local and global economic crises as well as our shared lives. Illustrate the negative impacts of the crises and your future vision of a changed world.

Take fifteen or twenty minutes to talk about the economic problems in the world, and the world in which we envision global economic justice. The art project should be made family-friendly, with children and adults working together to create the banner.

You could illustrate the following, but we encourage creativity or your own ideas!

- Your community and bridges to other communities you may have visited in the Global South or are familiar with
- Future jobs, community centers, healthcare centers/hospitals, and schools that should, and can exist in both communities
- Children and adults partnering in community projects, gardening, rallying at their congressional district office or in D.C., serving food to the hungry, learning in schools, etc.
- Write out: "Pass the Jubilee Act" and "Reform IFIs and Cancel Unjust International Debt!"*

Action 3: Vigil

Take the banner that was made and have a small vigil afterwards. Print out fact sheets from Jubilee USA and hand them out to community members who may pass by. At this vigil, have someone speak about how they got involved in the work of debt cancellation and global economic justice, or say a prayer.

Action 4: Write Letters/Sign Postcards

Participants can help write a community inspired letter that each participant signs to their member of Congress. This can be done along with the banner making or after the educational workshop! If you need help with brainstorming, contact us and we can help you think of creative ways to write effective letters from your community! (go here <http://www.jubileeusa.org/get-active/grassroots-resources/how-to-contact-congress.html> for detailed instructions) For faith communities you can order our [Voices of Esther postcards](http://www.jubileeusa.org/get-active/currentcampaigns/voices-of-esther.html) at <http://www.jubileeusa.org/get-active/currentcampaigns/voices-of-esther.html>!

Action 5: Photographs!

During the vigil, banner making, or letter writing, folks should take this time as an opportunity to photograph the turnout, large and small. This is a visible message that can be sent to your member of Congress. Additionally, this year Jubilee USA will be sending these photos to our partners in the Global South. Your photo and event will be sent as a message of support and connection to those struggling in the Global South for economic justice!

Action 6: Media Coverage

Send a Letter to the Editor about your event or invite local press the day of the event to write a story!

Here are a few tips:

1. Letters should be short and concise, typically about 200 words, or about four short paragraphs. For a news magazine or a radio news show, they should be even shorter, about 100 words. Letters should be written with passion, using strong but not strident language.
2. If you can comment on a specific story or editorial covering your issue that appeared in the paper, please do so, mentioning the headline and date.
3. When emailing, include exactly one e-mail address in the "To:" field. Don't send to editors via "Cc:" or "Bcc:" and send your letter in the body of the e-mail message, not as an attachment. Also include a daytime telephone number in case the newspaper wants to verify that you are the author. Bear in mind that it usually takes at least a week from the time a newspaper receives a letter before it gets published. Weekly papers and news magazines take even longer.
4. Please mention Jubilee USA Network by name, either in the text or by identifying yourself as a Jubilee USA Network member or supporter below your signature.
5. After you send a letter, check that paper's or magazine's website to see if it ran. Make sure to send a copy to the Jubilee USA office so that we can publicize your work. Still need help? Visit www.jubileeusa.org/get-active/grassroots-resources/media-and-advocacy-how-tos.html for more detailed directions.

Letter sample for those who had a Jubilee event!

Community
Street
City State Zip

Dear _____,

Today our community participated in a special Jubilee event, connected with hundreds of other communities across the country.

As a community, we reflected about the social disparities that exist in our world. We took special time to consider the suffering and poverty that continues unabated and unjustly for those living in the developing world.

Besides taking this day to reflect we also engaged in educational workshops and dialogues. Our community has not only learned of the injustices connected to debt, which continue to exacerbate poverty, but also some of the simple solutions that can be taken by our government.

Jubilee USA Network, an organization our community supports, helped to coordinate our events and education. Our community, along with Jubilee USA, supports efforts towards debt cancellation and reforming International Financial Institutions.

Today, we end our event by signing this letter. Our community urges you to support the Jubilee Act to make responsible lending and borrowing practices of IFIs the staus quo.

Sincerely,

Signatures of those in the photograph,

Letter sample for those who had a Jubilee Sunday:

Congregation Name

Street

City State Zip

Dear _____,

Today our congregation participated in a special Jubilee Sunday service connected with hundreds of other congregations and communities across the country.

As a congregation, we prayed and reflected about the social disparities that exist in our world. We took special time to consider the suffering and poverty that continues unabated and unjustly for those living in the developing world.

Besides taking this special Jubilee Sunday to pray and reflect, we also engaged in educational workshops. Our congregation has not only learned of the injustices connected to debt, which continue to exacerbate poverty, but also some of the simple solutions that can be taken by our government.

Jubilee USA Network, an organization our congregation supports, helped to coordinate the Sunday service and education. Our congregation, along with Jubilee USA, supports efforts towards debt cancellation and reforming International Financial Institutions.

Today, we end our prayer service by signing this letter. Our congregation urges you to support the Jubilee Act to make responsible lending and borrowing practices of IFIs the status quo.

Peace and Blessings,

Congregation name – and/or alternatively signatures of those in the photograph