

Challenging Empire: A Call to Community Using the Resources

Key Elements for Engagement

- Biblical study – Fostering an awareness of an understanding of the Roman Imperial context of Jesus' ministry
- Hearing global, national and/or local voices of those who suffer from forms of empire through stories, audiovisuals, community panels, etc.
- Spiritual resources from our tradition for supporting people with feelings of guilt, lament, paralysis, and anger
- Process and options for challenging and building alternatives to empire

In Worship

Worship resources are available in

- *Worshipping Faithfully in the Midst of Empire: Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany*
- Single services are available in
 - *Mandate* May 2007, "Challenging Empire: A Call to Community"—introduction to empire in Roman times and today
 - *Mandate* May 2008, "Empire and Racial Power: Engaging the Realities of Racism"
 - *Mandate* May 2009, "Living for the Earth: Choosing Creation over Empire"
 - *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*, "Stories and Activities to Transform Your Community"—dialogue sermon explores "turning toward God" we are like plants we naturally turn to and want to embody God's goodness in response to empire

With Children

"Children Challenging Empire"—available by itself or as part of *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*

- 5 sessions for Sunday school or vacation Bible school

With Intergenerational Groups

"Intergenerational Conversations," part of *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*

- five 2-hour workshops (use each as standalone or as part of a series)
- concrete starting places with a focus on "doing"; topics covered are fair trade chocolate, conservation (intergenerational church building audit), sustainability (buying locally), peace play (war toys)
- could be used in an action-oriented intergenerational service, an after-church workshop series, or combined with potluck lunch/dinner

"Nokomis and I: A Story about the Web of Life" is a story about respect for all life that can be used with children or in an intergenerational group. It is available as an online video (www.youtube.com/unitedchurchofcanada), and with additional activity ideas in the May 2010 *Mandate* (www.united-church.ca/sales/magazines/mandate/2010/may).

Adult Study Groups

If your group....

- has no idea what empire is, use
 - *Mandate* May 2007, "Challenging Empire: A Call to Community"
 - *Challenging Empire: A Call to Community* DVD and study guide
- has a clear understanding of empire and would like apply it to their ministry, use
 - *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*, "Stories and Activities to Transform Your Community," Session 4: The Empire Lens—Your Community's Story (pp. 18–25), Session 5: Challenging Empire, Creating Alternatives (pp. 27–31)
- needs resources to deal with feelings of guilt regarding the effects of empire, use
 - *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*, "Stories and Activities to Transform Your Community," Reflection on Lament (pp.13–15)
- needs concrete topics and actions to start and end, use
 - "Intergenerational Conversations," part of *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*; this resource offers standalone workshops on fair trade chocolate, conservation (intergenerational church building audit), sustainability (buying locally), peace play (war toys)
- wants to explore ways we can live well on the Earth, and how these connect to challenging empire, use
 - *Mandate* May 2009, "Living for the Earth: Choosing Creation over Empire"
 - *Mandate* May 2010, "What's on the Menu? A Bible study on food and faith"
- wants to explore anti-racism and interculturalism within the context of empire, use
 - *Mandate* May 2008, "Empire and Racial Power"
 - *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*, "Stories and Activities to Transform Your Community, Stories from Near and Far: Racial and Gender Justice (pp. 47–53), Power and Diversity Workshop (pp. 72–79)
- wants to reach out and engage the community around it, use
 - *Challenging Empire: Justice Seeking in Your Faith Community*, "Stories and Activities to Transform Your Community," Session 4: The Empire Lens—Your Community's Story (pp. 18–25), Session 5: Challenging Empire, Creating Alternatives (pp. 27–31), or Community Asset Mapping (pp. 63–71)
- wants to assess its outreach programs in the context of empire, use
 - Social Justice Wheel (www.united-church.ca/sales/publications/CH10394)
- wants to examine the church's own processes, systems, and structures to see if they provide an alternative to empire, use
 - The Empire Lens, part 2: The Church's Story (www.united-church.ca/sales/publications/CH10394)