

Globalization We Can Grasp: The Covenanting for Justice Online Curriculum

Developed by the North American Working Group for Covenanting for Justice/Accra Confession

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

What is the Covenanting for Justice (CFJ) movement?

The CFJ movement is a worldwide movement of churches actively working against global economic and ecological injustice and for communities that sustain fullness of life for all. Initiated in the mid-1990s by member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the CFJ movement is importantly guided by the *Accra Confession*. The *Accra Confession* is a statement of faith adopted by WARC's 24th General Council in Accra, Ghana, in 2004 that calls churches and society to work for transformative change in the current global economy based on their faith in Jesus Christ. [For more about WARC and North American churches represented see "The Accra Confession Study Guide" link below.]

What is the Covenanting for Justice Online Curriculum?

The CFJ Web Curriculum offers learning tools for North American churches to bring the *Accra Confession* to life. Through film, case stories, Bible studies, and prayer, the workshops help congregations engage a variety of issues related to global economic injustice and ecological degradation. The workshops are designed primarily for use in an adult education class or series of classes, though they also could be used with a youth group and/or over the course of a day- or weekend-long retreat.

What are the parts of the CFJ Web Curriculum?

Four modules, each of which has the same components:

- ***Reading the Signs of the Times***, (include a short description/definition of what is reading the signs of the times – a lay leader may not know about this practice or what is meant by it, what is it's purpose) which includes a suggested video clip, reviews a particular justice concern, and provides facts, statistics, and background information. The video gives additional information and shares personal stories.
- ***Confessing our Faith***, which provides a relevant Bible passage, a reflection on the passage ("Bible Study"), and discussion questions that can lead to deeper reflection on the connection between our faith and the justice issue.
- ***Covenanting for Justice***, which gives examples of ways to get involved to end the injustice that is the focus of the module and includes links to key groups working on the issue and resources.
- ***The Closing Litany***, which provides excerpts from the very powerful Accra Confession as well as a Closing Prayer. The full text of the Accra Confession is available online:
English: http://warc.jalb.de/warcajsp/side.jsp?news_id=1154&navi=45
Spanish: http://warc.jalb.de/warcajsp/side.jsp?news_id=1195&navi=24
French: http://warc.jalb.de/warcajsp/side.jsp?news_id=1188&navi=47
German: http://warc.jalb.de/warcajsp/news_file/doc-183-1.pdf

Additional Resources, which provides many other web- and print-based resources on the issue. Participants may want to add others that they use.

PRESENTING A WORKSHOP

Step 1: Planning the workshop

- Select a module or modules that fits the interests of your group.
- Prepare to lead the workshop by reading through the entire module and viewing the video.
- In multiple places discussion questions are provided. Consider whether there are additional questions that you want to pose that have special relevance for your group. In the *Covenanting for Justice* section, look over the action ideas to determine whether additions are needed to address particular concerns of your church and community. Check your denomination's national website to see if actions on similar issues have been taken.
- You may want to choose a hymn or song to close the session following the litany.
- Consider how the written material will be presented. For example, the section entitled "Reading the Signs of the Times" can be read by participants in advance, be read silently at the beginning of the session, or read aloud during the session. Select the method that works best for your group. Reading aloud the Reflection on the Scripture may facilitate the conversation around the discussion questions.
- Be aware of your time constraints. Mentally assign time allotments to each section of the workshop knowing that you may also allow some flexibility. Be aware that if one section goes longer than planned, another must be shortened.
- Consider whether to provide copies of the full text of the module to all participants. The environmental concerns must be weighed against its value as an ongoing resource for participants. If you don't copy the entire module, you may want to distribute the *Covenanting for Justice* and *Additional Resources* sections for use as resources in the future.
- Consider whether you will need more than one session to complete the module. You may want to do the study (Reading the Signs of the Times), reflection (Confessing our Faith), and part or all of the Closing Litany in one session, then address what to do (*Covenanting for Justice* and *Additional Resources*) in a second session, even bringing in local people who face this issue in their daily lives.

Step 2: Leading the workshop

After Introductions and an Opening Prayer (or your usual form of workshop opening), briefly inform the group about the *Covenanting for Justice* modules (see above: *What is the Covenanting for Justice (CFJ) movement?* and *What is the Covenanting for Justice Online Workshop?*). Then introduce the module you have selected (you could use the brief overview provided on pages 1 and 2 of this curriculum).

Reading the Signs of the Times

Take the group through the Reading the Signs of the Times section. Be prepared to allow time for discussion of this material. People may want to share their experience with the issue. However, if time is short, you may want to hold all discussion until the time for discussion questions.

The workshop leader or someone s/he selects should read aloud the section that introduces the video. Show the video. After the viewing, lead the group through the discussion questions in the printed materials and those you have developed, if any.

Confessing Our Faith

Read aloud the Bible passage and Reflection. Then discuss the Bible study questions. This can be a very powerful section of the workshop as people explore the connection between their faith and the injustice they are learning about.

Covenanting for Justice

Read silently or aloud the suggestions for taking action. Discuss how individuals, families, the congregation, and the community may want to become engaged around this issue. *What is God calling the church and its members to do?* It may be helpful to revisit this section after participants have time for more reflection. Invite individuals to suggest actions that they are willing to take. Explore whether the group wants to take a particular action together or invite their congregation/broader community to do so.

Closing Litany

Read aloud, together or responsively, the excerpt from the Accra Confession. If there is time, discuss how the passages speak to the issue you have been addressing. Do we truly believe the words we are saying in the Confession? Conclude by reading aloud the closing prayer.