

*A Guide to Participating in*  
**Cruising to Equity**

...make a boatload of difference for kids



Putting Our Faith into Action  
To Seek Justice for Children

**Children's Sabbath Plan  
2005-2006**

Co-Sponsored by:  
**AWE: Children's Ministries  
& Diocesan Episcopal Church Women**

## What is the *Cruising to Equity* Campaign?

*Cruising to Equity*, is an advocacy and prayer vigil project co-sponsored by AWE: Children's Ministries and the Diocesan Episcopal Church Women (ECW) that invites congregations throughout the Diocese of Bethlehem to join in a *Sabbath Season of Prayer and Action for Children*.

It begins with the observance of the National *Children's Sabbath* (sponsored by the *Children's Defense Fund*, Washington, D.C.) and the Diocesan ECW's collection of *Undies for Children at Risk* at our Diocesan Convention.

In the months that follow Diocesan Convention, congregations throughout the Diocese are invited to unite in witness for children through prayer, education, worship and action using this *Cruising to Equity* guide for suggestions.

Following this simple *Cruising to Equity* guide will help you get ready to *Launch your Ship* and load your boat with items for needy children. Simply visit the various *Ports of Call*. Take pictures of your filled boat. Try to get an article or picture in your local paper. And distribute collected items in your community where they are needed.

Remember, it doesn't matter how many of *Ports of Call* you visit - ONE OR ALL - just embark on the Journey and learn about the needs of children in your community and throughout our country. If you are already collecting items throughout the year, check to see how they fit into the *Cruising to Equity* plan - chance are they do!

Use your imagination - the *Cruising to Equity* plan contains only suggestions. If you come up with other ideas about things to collect that benefit children - that's great! Keep a Log of your Journey to share how your boatload made a difference for kids. Plan on attending one of two simultaneously held Diocesan-wide *Safe Harbor Celebrations* on May 7, 2006 to mark the end of our Journey. *Cruising to Equity* promises to be an amazing and eye-opening trip. Get ready to set sail!

## Why Fill a Boatload for Children?

Nearly 13 million children in our rich nation are living in poverty which jeopardizes their health, learning, dreams, and very lives. Most poor children live in working families.

Food pantries, homeless shelters, and other emergency services across the nation are facing growing demands as government services are cut and safety nets for the underprivileged are withdrawn.

The needs of children should be a priority for all of us as individuals, groups and communities of faith. Our Baptismal Covenant calls us to put our faith into action by seeking justice for children.

AWE: Children's Ministries and the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Bethlehem invite you to join in praying for a brighter future for all of God's children and to take action by filling a boatload and joining the *Cruising to Equity* Campaign.

Working together, we can make a difference where the needs, hopes and dreams of children are involved.

The Rev. Debra J. Kissinger  
Missioner to Children & Child Advocate  
AWE: Children's Ministries

Mrs. Marlene Hartshorne  
President  
Diocesan Episcopal Church Women

# *Cruising to Equity Itinerary*

## *Launching the Ship*

*Season: Now to Diocesan Convention (Oct. 13, 2005)*

Collect *Undies for Children at Risk* and send them with your Parish Delegates or ECW Delegates to Diocesan Convention. Undies will be placed in the boat in the Cathedral and distributed to children in Appalachia and at New Bethany, our Diocesan ministry to homeless children.

Back home make a row boat out of a refrigerator box or purchase a small rubber life boat to collect items throughout the year at the various *Ports of Call*.

Celebrate the *Children's Sabbath* in your parish the way you always have - only this time use it to kick off the *Cruising the Equity* Campaign too!

- Sunday School Curriculum resource (pp. 95-116)\*
- Biblical Passages on Children & Poverty (pp. 117-120)\*
- Promote your efforts in your local paper (pp. 23-25)\*
- Bulletin Insert: Daily Devotional Guide (pp. 87-90)\*
- Children's Worship Bulletin (pp. 91-94)\*
- *Episcopal Liturgy for Children's Sabbath* (pp. 68-72)\*
- Honor people who work with and for children
- Invite guest speakers to preach

## **Each *Port of Call* has suggestions for:**

- Educational Resources to help you learn about children's needs
- Suggestions of what to collect to fill your boat
- Suggestions of who to call in your community to donate collected items
- Community Action suggestions
- Worship Suggestions: Bulletin Inserts, Hymns and Prayers

\* All page numbers refer to the Children's Sabbath Manual mailed to each parish priest.

# ***Port of Call #1 - A Healthy Start***

Season: Diocesan Convention to Advent (Oct. 14 - Nov. 26, 2005)

**Fact:** Over 9 million children in America lack health insurance. They are no less likely to get sick but are far less likely to see a doctor.

## **Educational Resources**

- Test Your Knowledge of American Poverty - Family 1 (pp. 42-44)\*
- Jewish approach to Children's Sabbath (pp. 121-147)\*
- Learn about the CHIP and Medicaid Programs (pp. 235-236)\*

## **Who to call in your Community**

- Health Care Professionals
- School Nurse's Office
- Community Hospitals & Clinics
- Women's Centers/Homeless Shelters

## **What to collect to fill your Boat!**

Children need all the basics to get started with a healthy life.

- Children's toothbrushes
- Children's toothpaste
- First aid kit items
- Child sensitive soap
- Children's Shampoo
- Triple antibiotic ointment
- Diaper wipes
- Disposable diapers
- Baby Lotion
- Diaper Ointment

## **Community Action**

- Attend a Community Health Fair
- Conduct Site Visits to those facing the Challenges (p. 213)\*
- Promote your efforts in your local paper (pp. 23-25; 223)\*

## **Worship Suggestions**

- Bulletin Insert: Putting Our Faith into Action (p. 27-28)\*
- Hymns: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise (Hymnal #423)
  - o All Things Bright and Beautiful (Hymnal #405)
  - o God of Justice, God of Mercy (p. 204-205)\*
- Prayer: For Illumination (p. 60); Prayers of the People (p. 63)\*

\* All page numbers refer to the Children's Sabbath Manual mailed to each parish priest.

# ***Port of Call #2 - A Fair Start***

Season: Advent to Epiphany (Nov. 27, 2005 - Jan. 6, 2006)

**Fact:** 12.9 million children in America live in poverty. Nearly three of four live in working families.

**Fact:** The Department of Agriculture reports that nearly 13 million children live in families who are not getting enough to eat. Others live in homes with no heat.

## **Educational Resources**

- Test Your Knowledge of American Poverty - Family 2 (pp. 45-46)\*
- Muslim approach to Children's Sabbath (pp. 149-164)\*
- Learn about the Food Stamp Program (p. 231-232)\*

## **Who to call in your Community**

- Staff of organizations serving families in poverty
- Conferences of Churches/Ministeriums
- Food Pantries
- Clothes Closets

## **What to Collect to fill your Boat!**

- Non-perishable food items
- Warm clothes
- Hats and mittens
- Gift Cards to Utility Companies
- Warm socks & underwear
- Sweat suits & lined wind pants

## **Community Action**

- Prepare Food for Hungry Children (p. 213)\*
- Promote your effort on your local radio station (pp. 23-25)\*
- Support a Child Advocacy Group (p. 215)\*

## **Worship Suggestions**

- Bulletin Insert: Hard Times Despite Hard Work (pp. 33-34)\*
- Hymns: God is Love (Hymnal #379)
  - o Lift Every Voice and Sing (Hymnal #599)
  - o Let Justice Flow Like Streams (p. 206)\*
- Prayer: Prayer of the Faithful (p. 66); Charge & Blessing (p. 64)\*

\* All page numbers refer to the Children's Sabbath Manual mailed to each parish priest.

# ***Port of Call #3 - A Head Start***

Season: Season after Epiphany (Jan. 7 - Feb. 28)

Fact: In many communities quality child care and early childhood education are not available or affordable. Too many children enter school not ready to learn.

## **Educational Resources**

- Test Your Knowledge of American Poverty - Family 3 (pp. 47-48)\*
- Baha'i Faith approach to Children's Sabbath (pp. 165-186)\*
- Learn about the Child Tax Credit (pp. 233-234)\*

## **Who to call in your Community**

- Public Education teachers and administrators
- Staff of after-school programs
- Head Start teachers

## **What to Collect to fill your Boat!**

- |                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| - Children's books | - Tablets |
| - Pencils          | - Crayons |
| - Washable Markers | - Puzzles |
| - Stimulating toys | - Paints  |

## **Community Action**

- Attend a PTA meeting
- Host a "Leave No Child Behind" Community Forum (pp. 212-213)\*
- Visit or write a letter to your Representative about what you have learned (pp. 223-225; 227-228)\*

## **Worship Suggestions**

- Bulletin Insert: Test Your Knowledge of Poverty (p. 35-36)\*
- Hymns: For the Beauty of the Earth (Hymnal #416)
  - o There's a Wideness in God's Mercy (Hymnal #470)
  - o I'm Gonna Live (p. 207)\*
- Prayer: Collect for Children's Sabbath (p. 68); Prayers of the People & Confession - Option 2 (pp. 69-70)\*

\* All page numbers refer to the Children's Sabbath Manual mailed to each parish priest.

# ***Port of Call #4 - A Moral Start***

Season: Lent (March 1 - April 15)

**Fact:** Thousands of children in America become homeless every day.

**Fact:** Millions of children live in substandard housing or are homeless with parents who struggle to know how to parent.

## **Educational Resources**

- Test Your Knowledge of American Poverty - Family 4 (pp. 49-50)\*
- Unitarian Universalist approach to Children's Sabbath (pp. 187-195)\*
- Learn about the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (pp. 237-238)\*

## **Who to call in your Community**

- Community Service Providers
- Representative of advocacy organizations
- Child Care Providers
- Homeless Shelters

## **What to Collect to fill your Boat!**

- Children's Books, Games & Videos that promote positive values such as: Ungame, Veggie Tales, Penguins, Box Car Children, Frog & Toad, Magic Tree House, Kids Chatter, Junie B. Jones, Babysitters Club, Safe Am I, Safe Harbor
- Parenting books and videos

## **Community Action**

- Run a community presentation on the Earned Income Tax Credit (pp. 212-213; 217-223; 229-230)\*
- Write an editorial for your local paper about what you have learned (pp. 23-25; 223; 229-230)\*
- Fix Up a Local Community Center (p. 215)\*

## **Worship Suggestions**

- Bulletin Insert: Prayers for Strength in the Struggle for Justice (p. 7-38)\*
- Hymns: Tell Out My Soul (Hymnal #438)
  - o Lord of All Hopefulness (Hymnal #482)
  - o Here I Am, Lord (p. 208)\*
- Prayer: Call to Worship, Litanies and Benedictions (pp. 73-75)\*

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# ***Port of Call #5 - A Safe Start***

Season: Easter Season (April 16 - May 6)

**Fact:** Every day, almost 8,000 children are reported victims of abuse and neglect; a child dies from gun violence almost every three hours in America.

## **Educational Resources**

- Sample Costs to Support a Family of Three (pp. 51-54)\*
- Putting Faith into Action (pp. 211-228)\*

## **Who to call in your Community**

- Juvenile justice professionals
- Police Officers
- Shelters
- Elected Officials

## **What to Collect to fill your Boat!**

(Gather items for children going into foster care.)

- Duffel Bags
- Cuddly toys
- Nap blankets
- Card & travel games
- Phone Cards
- Suitcases
- Nightlights
- Small pillows
- Activity books & Word Finds
- Used or Disposable Cell Phones

## **Community Action**

- Sponsor a Faith-in-Action Fair (p. 213)\*
- Conduct a Public Witness (p. 215)\*
- Write an article for your congregation's newsletter (pp. 23-25)\*

## **Worship Suggestions**

- Bulletin Insert: Each day in America (pp. 39-40)\*
- Hymns: Lord, You Give the Great Commission (Hymnal #528)
  - o Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love (Hymnal #602)
  - o Guide My Feet (p. 209)\*
- Prayer: Call to Worship, Litanies and Benedictions (pp. 73-75)\*

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# *Finding Safe Harbor Celebrations*



*Sunday, May 7, 2006  
4:00 p.m.*

*Trinity Church  
Bethlehem*

*St. Luke's  
Scranton*

- Bring your life boat, pictures and photos of your parish's efforts to fill a *Boatload for Children*.
- Come to celebrate, worship and pray for children and to share the *Log of your Journey* and other artifacts!
- Child-friendly service - Reception to follow!

## **The Children's Sabbath Program & its Sponsor**

The **Children's Sabbath** is sponsored by the **Children's Defense Fund (CDF)**, guided by an interfaith advisory committee, and endorsed by hundreds of denominations and religious organizations.

The mission of CDF is to Leave No Child Behind and to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

CDF provides a strong, effective voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves, with particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities.

CDF is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundations and corporate grants and individual donations that has never taken government funds. To learn more about CDF go to [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org).

### **For More Information about Cruising to Equity Contact:**

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### **Share Your Project with Us!**

You are invited to share your project. Please send stories, pictures, copies of programs, etc. to the above address.