

Mission:1

11.1.11-11.11.11

That they may all be 1



Campaign Manual

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ucc.org/mission1



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“Is this not the fast that I choose, to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke ... Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor in your house?”

— Isaiah 58:6-7

“Holy One, protect them in your name, those that you have given me, so that they may all be one, as we are one.”

— John 17:11b

What is Mission: 1?

ONE UNITED CHURCH on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice. This is **Mission: 1**.

Mission: 1 is an opportunity to make real Jesus’ prayer for his disciples: “That they may all be one.” It is also an opportunity to live out our faith — in unity — by offering the worship that God most desires from us: loosening the bonds of injustice and sharing our bread with the hungry. The staggering facts compel us to act with compassion and to be voices for justice. 925 million people still suffer from chronic hunger worldwide, nearly 90 million higher than in 2000. In the United States alone, 50.2 million people (up from 35.5 million in 2006), including 17.2 million children, are food insecure. They don’t have the money or assistance to provide food for themselves and their families. We can be God’s instruments of change.

For the first 11 days of November (11.1.11 - 11.11.11), United Church of Christ congregations, colleges, seminaries, and health and human service agencies, will join together in a collective mission campaign to collect more than 1 million food items for local food banks, raise \$111,111 in online donations for Neighbors in Need and \$111,111 for East Africa famine relief, and write 11,111 letters to Congress (in support of Bread for the World’s 2011 Offering of Letters campaign) asking that U.S. foreign assistance be reformed to more effectively serve the world’s poorest people.

A continuously updated national tote board at ucc.org will keep the entire church apprised of our collective efforts.

Churches also are encouraged to engage in creative local mission projects, service opportunities, and educational events. Here are some examples:

- ◆ One church is volunteering to paint the interior of its local food pantry during **Mission: 1**.
- ◆ One congregation is planning to feed 1,111 people during a massive community lunch.
- ◆ One church has identified 11 food items that members will be bringing with them to church over an 11-week span leading up to November.
- ◆ One church is asking members to commit to losing 11 pounds in the weeks leading up to **Mission: 1** and donate food-cost savings to Neighbors in Need.
- ◆ One large church is planning to prepare 111,111 hot meals throughout **Mission: 1**.
- ◆ Many churches are organizing friendly competitions with other UCC congregations, either locally or in other areas of the country, to see which congregation can collect the most food items, money and letters.
- ◆ Some churches and Conferences are planning to become **Mission: 1** “pacesetters” by working in advance of the campaign so that they can be among the first to report big totals on the campaign’s first day, Nov. 1.

Creativity is key to engaging your congregation in **Mission: 1**. How can your church make **Mission: 1** come alive in your context?

In addition to powerfully addressing hunger and food-related issues for 11 days, **Mission: 1** is a time for intentional theological reflection on our oneness as a church: “**That they may all be 1.**” How do we accomplish more together than we do in isolation? Plan to make “oneness” the central theme that undergirds your approach to **Mission: 1** in your worship, education and prayer life. Resources are available to assist you at <ucc.org/mission1>.

How can my church/organization participate?

- ◆ Share the idea of **Mission: 1** with your church’s — or institution’s — appropriate leadership and ask for their explicit buy-in and support.
- ◆ Convene a small **Mission: 1 Implementation Group** to set local goals and promote and coordinate your church’s campaign. Campaign materials (t-shirts, buttons, stickers, posters, etc.) are available at <ucc.org/mission1>, including a **Mission: 1 campaign kit** that contains two posters, 100 bulletin inserts, 100 offering envelopes, 100 pledge cards, 25 buttons, 25 stickers, and 25 wrist bands.
- ◆ Discuss ways to integrate any existing emphases of your congregation during November with the coordinated church-wide vision of the **Mission: 1** campaign. For example, your church may want to adopt “**That they may all be 1**” as its annual stewardship theme.
- ◆ Playfully determine your piece of the overall national goal and set your own goals for your local setting. How about 1,111 food items? Can you find and celebrate 11 or 111 persons or families that will contribute at least \$11 to **Mission: 1** online during this 11-day period? Will your congregation commit to writing at least 111 letters to Congress?
- ◆ Publicize and promote your church’s goals and devise a strategy by which you will reach and celebrate your local commitment, in addition to the national tally.
- ◆ Once your church has decided on its specific goals, share them at <ucc.org/mission1>. Your stories will be shared across the entire UCC leading up to and during **Mission: 1**.
- ◆ Designate at least one person in your congregation who will be responsible for tallying and reporting your church’s participation. (See “How will the national tally process work?” below.)

When do we get started?

Although **Mission: 1** is designed to be an 11-day mission emphasis across the United Church of Christ, Nov. 1-11, you should begin now to calendar and prepare for how your church will participate. Effective planning is key to widespread participation, especially since **Mission: 1** will include many different components: food collection, fundraising, letter-writing, education, advocacy, community service and public witness. It’s encouraged that you work ahead and build momentum. Early on, you should decide how your church will participate and plan specific events and goals that will be widely owned by your members.

How will the national tally process work?

The UCC’s website <ucc.org> will be converted into an online national tote board. There you will find regularly updated totals for the number of collected food items, dollars given online to **Mission: 1** for Neighbors in Need and East Africa famine relief, and the number of letters written to Congress.

At the homepage, you will be asked to report how many food items you’ve collected and how many

letters you've sent. Please return often to report additional food donations and letters. The dollars given online will be automatically updated throughout the 11 days.

It is important that every church or participating organization designate at least one person to be a tallying reporter and that a system be devised and communicated within your church/organization for how you will collectively report your totals. The donated food items will be easier to count (even if numerous!), but the letter-writing campaign may require some finessing, since people may be writing letters from home or on their personal computers. (*See the section "How do we write letters to Congress?" on page 8.*)

Your church's reporter will be able to report more than once during the campaign, so you may want to report updates periodically throughout the 11-day period.

If you are reporting for your congregation, you will complete the entry for how many food and household items were collected in your church and how many letters were written and mailed to Congress. Total dollars donated to **Mission: 1** will not be tabulated through self-reporting but, instead, will be based on totals given online or received by mail during the 11-day period.

If you are reporting as an individual, this assumes that you are not part of a local UCC congregation — or belong to a non-participating congregation — but you wish to be part of the **Mission: 1** campaign. You will be asked where you donated your food items and how many letters you wrote and mailed to Congress.

How does Mission: 1 impact the Neighbors in Need offering?

This is important: Congregations are still encouraged to receive special offerings for Neighbors in Need in October, as accustomed, on World Communion Sunday.

The \$111,111 goal for Neighbors in Need during **Mission: 1** is designed to emphasize online additional giving, above and beyond what is received in congregations. However, since some people may not have computer access or may wish to participate through more-traditional means of giving, mailed-in checks earmarked for **Mission: 1** should be sent to **Mission: 1**, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Please provide time for your gift to be received before the Nov. 11 tabulation date.

How does the East Africa famine relief portion fit in?

As news of the devastating famine in East Africa traveled around the world, **Mission: 1** was expanded to include raising more than \$111,111 for famine relief. "The devastating reports of drought and famine in East Africa have caused many of our congregations to urge that a new goal be added to **Mission: 1**, one that specifically addresses the crisis that is taking place in Somalia," said the Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, the UCC's general minister and president. "This is why we have decided to double our financial goals, something that is both ambitious and do-able given the enthusiasm that is building across the church for **Mission: 1**."

Under the new plan, all monetary gifts made to **Mission: 1** during the 11-day push will be divided equally between the UCC's East Africa famine appeal and Neighbors in Need hunger-related ministries. The new goal is to raise more than \$111,111 for each.

How do we tally our online gifts to Mission: 1?

During **Mission: 1**, our goal is to raise more than \$111,111 in online gifts for Neighbors in Need to support hunger-related justice ministries, and more than \$111,111 in online gifts for East Africa famine relief. Each of us is encouraged to make an online gift at <ucc.org> between Nov. 1 and 11, 2011.

A “pledge/giving card” is available under the “resources” tab at www.ucc.org/mission1. Make these little forms available for church members so they can share with the congregation, via the offering plate, how much they gave online. Congregations can use these cards to tally their congregation’s total giving. These cards, as well as traditional giving envelopes, are available in quantity at no cost (shipping and handling only) by calling UCC Resources at 800/537-3394.

Group giving via one person’s credit card is not encouraged, since the IRS does not allow individuals to claim tax deductions on bundled gifts collected and made on behalf of a group or congregation.

How do we write the letters to Congress?

Our **Mission: 1** letter-writing campaign is focused on one key point: We want Congress to protect and reform U.S. foreign aid to make it more effective in reducing hunger and poverty.

You are asked to make your letters as personal as possible, so handwritten letters or personalized emails (via Congressional web forms) are encouraged.

Web forms are actually the preferred mode of communication for most senators and representatives. You can find your respective senators’ or representatives’ offices online at <senate.gov> or <house.gov>.

Letters can also be handwritten and mailed to Sen. _____, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 or Rep. _____, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.

One idea is to ask each member of your church to commit to writing their two U.S. Senators, U.S. Representative, and the Obama Administration at 1:11 p.m. on the same day, perhaps after church on Sunday, Nov. 6.

Remember these four simple steps to effective letter writing:

1. Write your name and address at the end of your letter AND on the envelope, so your members of Congress know you are one of the people they represent.
2. Ask for specific action, using this sentence or your own words: “I ask you to reform foreign aid to make it more effective in reducing hunger and poverty.
3. Give reasons why.
 - ◆ Letters with personal stories are the most compelling and effective.
 - ◆ “My church is already helping by [example from **Mission: 1**], but I also expect my country to take the lead in combating global hunger.”
4. Put each letter in a separate envelope and address it. Send your letter to:
 - ◆ your U.S. senators:
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510
 - ◆ your U.S. representative:
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Because of security procedures, your letter may take two to four weeks to reach Congress, so please plan accordingly. Or use the web response forms for your respective senators’/representatives’ offices which can be located at <senate.gov> or <house.gov>.

Your letters will make an important difference for people who are hungry and poor.

Here is a sample letter, but be sure to personalize:

Date _____

Dear Senator _____ or Representative _____,

I am a member of _____, a congregation of the United Church of Christ, and we are passionate about the need to sustain funding for programs for hungry and poor people in the United States and around the world. My church is committed to serving hungry people in our community, but I also expect the U.S. government to take a lead in addressing hunger in systemic ways.

I am deeply concerned about some of the budget cuts Congress is considering. We need to cut the federal deficit, but we must not do it on the backs of poor people. We need to form a circle of protection around the people who benefit from these programs — struggling women and children in developing countries. Poverty-focused foreign assistance is less than 1 percent of the federal budget, so chopping it would do little to reduce the deficit.

At the same time, we need to make sure every taxpayer dollar is spent wisely. More efficient U.S. foreign aid programs will ensure that our tax dollars are used effectively and that the aid we give is what local people in poor countries really need. These reforms will help foster economic growth and opportunity and contribute to our own national security as well. As Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has stated that helping countries develop “is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers.”

Please protect families and children from cuts that cost lives, and support reforms to U.S. foreign aid so that the world’s most hungry people are the ones who actually benefit from our assistance.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Address

What do we do with the food items and letters?

All collected food and household items should be donated directly to food banks or pantries of your choosing. Similarly, letters are to be sent directly to your members of Congress.

However, you may want to gather your food items and letters at the church — or another visible location — where they can be photographed and blessed by the congregation before being delivered or mailed.

You will be invited to share videos and photos at <ucc.org/mission1>.

Don't forget the media!

Utilize **Mission: 1** as an opportunity to engage your local media. Share what your church is doing and how it's part of a collective effort of 5,300 UCC congregations nationwide.

Remember: The more creative and clever your approach to **Mission: 1**, the more likely it will garner local, regional, or even national media attention.

Think outrageous. Do something visual. TV cameras crave action.

- ◆ How about an anti-hunger sit-in or public demonstration calling for a more effective system of U.S. foreign aid?
- ◆ How about piling foodstuffs in a visible public space that will pique curiosity and inspire participation?
- ◆ How about an 11-hour teach-in on food injustice?
- ◆ Can you partner with a local grocery store or restaurant to publicize **Mission: 1**?
- ◆ What about devising your own local tote board outside your church so that passersby will see your church's participation?
- ◆ What about a community anti-hunger walk with all participants wearing **Mission: 1** shirts or buttons?
- ◆ What about a mass community service project?
- ◆ Invite your U.S. senator or member of Congress to appear with you at a press conference announcing **Mission: 1**.

The only limit is your imagination.

If you would like assistance with your congregation's media engagement strategy for Mission: 1, contact Connie Larkman, the UCC's strategic media coordinator, at <larkmanc@ucc.org> or 216-736-2196.

Join us on Facebook!

Find **Mission: 1** on Facebook at <www.ucc.org/1> and click the "I'm attending" button to begin receiving periodic updates whenever new information, materials and resources are available. Post the creative ideas from your church to inspire other congregations' participation.

Friend-Raising: Invite the community to join with you!

The first Sunday of November, All Saints Sunday, is traditionally our annual “Stillspeaking Friend-Raising Sunday,” a day in which we are intentional about inviting newcomers to visit us in worship. **Mission: 1** is a grand opportunity to showcase the passion and compassion that the United Church of Christ has for the world.

What better opportunity could we have than to invite people to experience the UCC during this time of great mission, service and advocacy? Find ways to invite individuals, community groups, organizations and ecumenical partners to share in the experience of **Mission: 1** and encourage them to join you in worship on Sunday, Nov. 6, the Sunday that falls in the middle of **Mission: 1**.

What resources are available?

An expanding library of downloadable resources are available at ucc.org/mission1, including Bible studies, sermon starters, mission moments and hunger facts. Graphic elements are also available.

Campaign materials, including t-shirts, stickers, buttons, wrist bands, posters, bulletin inserts, pledge cards and more, are available for purchase at ucc.org/mission1store, as well as a **Mission: 1 campaign kit** that includes: this manual; 100 bulletin inserts and pledge cards; 2 posters; and 25 buttons, stickers and wrist bands.

If you produce your own **Mission: 1** materials — such as sermons, devotions or educational curricula — that might benefit other congregations, please submit them to Barb Powell at powellb@ucc.org.

How will we celebrate our success?

A national service of blessing will take place at 4 p.m. (ET) on Friday, Nov. 11, at Old South Church in Boston, UCC, and will be webstreamed live at ucc.org. Plan now to attend the service — either in person or virtually via your computer.

Churches are also encouraged to hold their own service of blessing and celebration on Sunday, Nov. 13, at which time you can announce local and national tallies to your congregation. This is traditionally Stewardship Sunday in many congregations. What better opportunity to celebrate?

