



Labor in the Pulpits / On the Bimah / In the Minbar

SEPTEMBER 2025



Our theme for this year's Labor in the Pulpits/On the Bimah/in the Minbar program is **"Have Faith! Organize!"**

We decided on this theme in the summer of 2024 before we knew what 2025 would bring, and now we know that its message is more important than ever. We must have faith in God, in ourselves, each other, and in our collective power to change unjust systems. During this Labor in the Pulpits/On the Bimah/in the Minbar program, we invite you to reflect on what it means to have faith as we boldly struggle for worker justice.

To participate in this year's program, all you need to do is register your congregation [HERE](#). When you register, you can also request that Worker Justice Wisconsin provide a guest speaker (please note that the deadline for requesting a speaker is August 24). We'll reach out to you to confirm your registration.

For those who prefer to lead the service on their own, we have prepared a series of five resources for you to use. If you follow the resources in the order they are listed, selecting portions from each, you should have enough to formulate your entire service or education hour. Resources include:

1. [Scriptural passages from the Abrahamic religions and Hinduism](#)
2. [Stories of upholding worker justice](#)
 - In this section we share the experiences of workers from this last year. These stories show why collective action and solidarity are so important in the divine struggle for justice.
3. [Statements from faith leaders and traditions about worker justice](#)
4. [Ways to get involved in worker justice](#)
5. [Ending Prayer](#)

We hope these resources will be useful and inspiring. But don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. **My email is faithoutreach@workerjustice.org.** I look forward to celebrating Labor in the Pulpits/On the Bimah/in the Minbar with you!

In solidarity,

*Mary Munyutu, Faith Outreach Coordinator
Worker Justice Wisconsin*

1. Scriptural Passages

Abrahamic Traditions

The Scriptures of the Abrahamic traditions - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam - emphasize that faith is not merely a personal journey but a call to collective action. They advocate for justice, fair treatment of workers, and the protection of the vulnerable. These Scriptural passages encourage believers to stand up against oppression, ensuring that dignity and equity prevail in all aspects of society.

a. Fair Wages and Timely Pay in the Bible

- **Leviticus 19:13:** You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning.
- **Deuteronomy 24:14–15:** You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns. You shall pay them their wages daily before sunset, because they are poor and their livelihood depends on them; otherwise they might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt.
- **James 5:4:** Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.

b. Justice and Advocacy for the Oppressed in the Bible

- **Micah 6:8:** Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.
- **Isaiah 1:17:** Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.
- **Proverbs 31:9:** Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

c. Justice as a Divine Command in the Qur'an

- **Surah An-Nisa (4:135):** O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives.

- **Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:8):** O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.
- **Surah Al-Ma'un (107:1–3):** Have you seen the one who denies the Judgment? That is the one who repulses the orphan and does not encourage the feeding of the poor.

Hinduism

The *Rig Veda*, the oldest Hindu scripture, calls for unity and solidarity, urging people to come together, speak together, and align their minds. It teaches that justice and order are part of the very fabric of creation, showing us that collective action and fairness are sacred duties. The *Atharva Veda*, on the other hand, focuses on daily life, offering prayers and hymns that promote health, peace, and mutual respect. It reminds us that justice starts in our everyday actions, including how we treat each other at work. Together, these texts should inspire us to organize for justice and fairness in our communities, aligning beautifully with this year's theme, *"Have Faith! Organize!"*

- **Bhagavad Gita 3:19:** This passage highlights the sacred duty of honest work and detachment from exploitation. It reads: "Therefore, without being attached to the fruits of activities, one should act as a matter of duty, for by working without attachment, one attains the Supreme."
- **Rig Veda 10.191.2:** This passage stresses unity and collective effort for common good. It reads: "Come together, speak together, let your minds be of one accord... As the gods of old, being of one mind, accepted their share of the sacrifice."
- **Atharva Veda 3.30.1:** This passage calls for solidarity and collective action. It reads: "Let us walk together, let us speak together, let our minds be of one accord. Let our prayers be common, and our goal the same."

2. Stories of Upholding Worker Justice

In this section of the packet, we share the experiences of workers during this last year. You will see why collective action and solidarity are so important in the divine struggle for justice.

A Story of Perseverance and Joy

This story begins with injustice but ends with solidarity, strength, and dignity. After enduring wage theft and other labor abuses at the hands of numerous employers, Juana and Francisco found their way to Workers Justice Wisconsin. With support and guidance, they and a group of Latine workers built Los Volcanes, a co-op specializing in custom screenprinting, embroidery, and alterations. Today, they are not just workers—they are their own employers.

Listen to Juana and Francisco's story [here](#).



Stories of Strength in Unity

We encourage you to watch the videos associated with both these stories below, where workers describe their harrowing experiences and demonstrate their collective strength.

- **LNR Services Landscaping Workers:** Agustín, Enzo, and Makalister were owed \$36,000 by LNR Services, a landscaping company in Richland Center, WI. They went three months without receiving a single penny of the money owed to them for their work. In October 2024, they came to Worker Justice Wisconsin to learn how to fight back and get what is legally theirs. Although the company tried to

divide and conquer Agustín, Enzo, and Makalister, and cheat them out of their money, these workers remained united throughout the process and refused to settle for less. [They have an important message for all workers](#): there is strength in unity! We have to learn our rights, organize, and push back against unscrupulous employers if we're going to put a stop to wage theft in Wisconsin once and for all! If your employer is stealing your wages, join the grassroots movement at Worker Justice Wisconsin. Together, we can build a better and fairer society!

- **Yellowstone Apartments Construction Workers:** On March 25, 2025, 10 construction workers who worked on the Yellowstone Apartments, at 426 South Yellowstone Drive in Madison, came to Worker Justice Wisconsin alleging that their employer owed them nearly \$15,000 in unpaid wages. Shortly after, an additional 6 workers from the same site, which received \$1,400,000 in tax credits through the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Association (WHEDA) to build affordable housing, came to WJW, raising the amount of unpaid wages owed to nearly \$30,000. At WJW, these workers learned their rights and decided to deliver a letter to the site's general contractor, MSP Construction, to demand that they hold their subcontractor accountable and ensure full payment. By raising their voices together to demand what they were owed, the workers have recuperated over \$16,000 of their wages so far. You can utilize the [linked video](#) to hear from some of the workers directly about how this struggle to recuperate the money owed has affected them.



A Story About the Power of Community Allyship

Crescencio came to Worker Justice Wisconsin because, like many low-wage workers, his wages had been stolen. Even after the Department of Workforce Development determined that he was owed \$6,875 by Stone Concepts Corporation, his former boss refused to pay him immediately all of the money owed. This spring, Crescencio decided he had waited long enough. He decided to confront his boss directly, and we called on the [Rapid Response Network](#) to accompany him. [Over 20 people showed up to confront his employer with him!](#) Less than one month after this action, Crescencio received the full amount he was owed after years of waiting. Although in Wisconsin wage theft is not a crime, community pressure accomplished what the law could not. When people organize, justice is possible because direct action is our most powerful tool!



3. Statements From Faith Leaders and Traditions

In this section of the packet, we share the experiences of workers during this last year. You will see why collective action and solidarity are so important in the divine struggle for justice.

For all the major faith traditions, loving your neighbor as yourself is a core principle. Christian, Jews, Muslims, and others believe that the two highest religious values are to love God and love your neighbor. Worker centers [like Worker Justice Wisconsin] help put these values into practice. Almost every congregation is already involved in supporting a soup kitchen, a shelter, or sharing resources with poor people in their midst. Supporting a worker center is another form of ministry.

– **Kim Bobo and Marien Casillas Pabellon, *The Worker Center Handbook: A Practical Guide to Starting and Building the New Labor Movement* (ILR Press: 2016), pg. 126.**

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him, said, “Your servants/workers are your brothers whom God the most High has placed under your authority. Therefore, a person who has a brother under his authority, should feed him out of that which he eats himself and should dress him with the same kind of clothes which he wears himself; he should not assign work to him which is beyond his capacity, and if you do so, then help him in his work.”

– **Bukhari collection, prepared by Hussam Ayloush, Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations**

If there is a single common theme running throughout our Jewish tradition, it is that of social justice. Our scriptures teach us to support the widow, to extend our hands to the downtrodden. Our tradition demands that we “speak up, judge righteously, champion the poor and the needy (Proverbs 31:9).” As Jews, we have an obligation not only to feed the hungry but also to help those in need become self-sufficient.

– **Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah***

Justice demands that social institutions guarantee all persons the opportunity to participate actively in economic decision-making that affects them. All workers—including undocumented, migrant, and farm workers—have the right to choose to organize for the purposes of collective bargaining.

– **Principles of Vocation and Work, General Assembly Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

4. How to Get Involved

Get involved at Worker Justice Wisconsin, the only worker center in Wisconsin that empowers nonunion, low-wage, immigrant, and BIPOC workers to fight for just working conditions and an authentic voice in the workplace:

- [Make a donation](#), which is how we sustain all our programs!
- [Join the Rapid Response Network](#) to participate in direct actions
- [Invite us to give a training](#) in your congregation



5. Ending Prayer

God of justice and compassion –

*You who stand beside the weary and walk with the forgotten,
Be near to the workers in our communities,
to those who rise before the sun and return home long after dark,
whose hands build, clean, lift, serve, and sustain the world around us,
yet whose worth is too often ignored, and whose voices go unheard.*

*Grant us the courage to speak when silence protects injustice,
to organize when the weight feels too heavy,
to believe that faith is not only something we hold in our hearts but something we live out
loud: in our actions, in our unity, in our hope for something better.*

Let our congregations not only pray for justice but rise for it.

*Let our faith move us to build workplaces where dignity is not rare,
where wages are fair,
and where every worker is seen, heard, and valued.*

Amen



HAVE FAITH!
ORGANIZE!

WORKERJUSTICE.ORG