

Congo Week Resource Guide

Dear Friends,

Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ holds historic partnerships in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the Ecumenical Church of Christ in the Congo (ECC) and with the Community of the Disciples of Christ in the Congo (CDCC). In 2011, the Disciples General Assembly and UCC General Synod each passed a resolution entitled “A Call for Reflection and Advocacy on Behalf of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.” The resolution aims “to raise awareness of and engage settings of the church in advocacy regarding the violent conflicts and human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, related especially to the exploitative mining of resources for export and industrial application” and calls on the church to “reflect and advocate on behalf of sisters and brothers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.”

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the most mineral resource rich country in Africa; yet in a population of 77.3 million people, 80% of the population survives on \$.30 a day and 75% of the population is undernourished according to the UN. Many Congolese live in these dire conditions because their country is entangled in war over natural resources, which has resulted in the death of over 5.4 million people to date. This war has been described as the deadliest since WWII and has been dismissed as an internal African implosion. In reality it is a battle for minerals like diamonds and gold, destined for the jewel markets in London, New York, Antwerp and Paris, and it is a battle for industrial metals like cassiterite, cobalt and tantalum that make our technological society vibrate, ring, and bling. In addition to high death rates, the war has led to the use of child soldiers, child slavery in mines, a rise in HIV/AIDS, the mass displacement of peoples, and the widespread use of rape as a weapon of war. Rape and sexual violence against women has reached a staggering level.

Paul wrote in I Corinthian 12:26, “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” The Body of Christ suffers today because of injustice and exploitation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is our calling as members of the Body of Christ to break the silence, stop the pillaging, promote justice, defend women and children, protect the environment and support the people of the Congo. Through this resource we seek to honor the millions who have lost their lives, those who struggle to survive and the many displaced Congolese. As we gather to raise our voice to God, we pray that God will use our voices to address the root causes of suffering in the DRC.

We pray that this resource will aid your congregation in beginning the talks about the atrocities being committed in the DRC. Use it to Break the Silence during Congo Week, the 3rd week of October, to speak a word of hope to what appears to be a hopeless situation and speak prophetically to leaders around the world to make a real difference in their policies concerning the Congo.

In addition to using this resource for your congregation, visit www.globalministries.org, www.congoweeek.org, and www.friendsofthecongo.org, to learn more ways we can strengthen our collective voice in raising awareness, creating accountability and ensuring a peaceful future for the DRC.

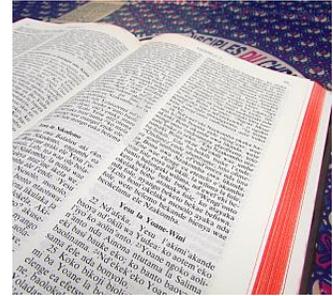
Peace,

Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ

Congo Week Resource Guide

How does scripture call us to be advocates?

The scriptures call us to be advocates for social justice, peace, and love. Yet, as persons of faith, we often seem to strive only for the latter two and ignore the biblical mandates to be justice seekers for our neighbors and for ourselves. Lest silence be seen as consent, Proverbs 31:8-9 specifically states for us to “Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Defend the rights of the poor and needy.” We must speak out and take action, in order to defend the rights of our neighbors in need.



Our faith, our understanding of God, and our biblical scriptures mandate us to get to a place of response. When our ignorance of an injustice is washed away through information, news, and knowledge of the inequities, it is then we must do something.

We live in a world today where nations, including our own, are oppressing their own citizens and others through greed, corruption, racism, xenophobia, and other yokes of cruelty. “How terrible it will be for those who make unfair laws, and those who write laws that make life hard for people. They are not fair to the poor, and they rob my people of their rights. They allow people to steal from widows and to take from orphans what really belongs to them.” —Isaiah 10:1-2

Yet knowing this reality of cruelty, we must respond, just like our Lord and Savior responded, “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.” —Isaiah 58:6-10.

We are called to love our neighbor, and advocating for our neighbor’s rights to peace and justice is an integral part of that love.

What is the relationship between Disciples and the Congo?

The [Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo \(CDCC\)](#) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was founded in 1889. The church has been affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada since its inception. The church functions with 22 ecclesial regions located in the Equator, Bandundu, East Congo, Lower Congo, and Kinshasa regions. Its 358 congregations serve 650,000 members. The church has 6 general hospitals, 9 maternity centers, and 42 functioning health centers.

Many will ask, “How can the Congolese people be my neighbors so far away across the seas?” And God will reply, “Because the same blood that was shed for you was shed for them. We are family. We share a bond that is much



Congo Week Resource Guide

deeper than denominations.”

Our denomination and our brothers and sisters in the Congo have a spiritual kinship and a denominational bond that dates over 125 years. The spiritual connection and denominational partnership that we have with the churches, congregations, and partners in the DRC is one built off longevity, the will to fight, and the heart to love. Because when we raise our voices about the injustices that occur in the DRC, we are raising our voices for our family and the world in which God loved through Jesus Christ.

How do I contribute to this conflict?

Do you have a cellphone? A laptop computer? Have you ever used an ink jet printer for work or school? How about an XBOX, PlayStation, or Nintendo? Do you know someone with hearing aids or a pacemaker? Have you ever gotten lost and turned on your GPS system for directions?



If you have answered yes to any of these questions, you contribute to this conflict. I, by typing this document, am contributing to this conflict. But how?

Coltan, also known as Columbite-tantalite, is a mineral found in large quantities in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Congo possesses 64% of the world's reserves of coltan. Coltan goes through a process of refinement where it is used in the electronic circuits of many devices we rely on for communication, health, and entertainment.

Many of us are not going to give up our devices because of the mishandling and corruption of those raping the resources, economy, and women of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Yet, we can do something. We can raise awareness of the problem, boycott [known traffickers in conflict minerals](#) in order to hold the companies who manufacture our devices and our governments accountable, and support policies that restrict the use of minerals from conflict areas that perpetuate inhumane working conditions, bloodshed, and exploitation of the people and land.

One way to do something about conflict minerals is to join us in **The Cell OUT!!!**

The Cell OUT is a “digital moment of silence” on the Wednesday of Congo Week in order to commemorate the millions of Congolese lives lost, and to raise awareness about the ongoing conflict in the Congo and the vicious scramble for Congo's spectacular natural resources.

So, from noon to midnight on Wednesday, turn off your phones and change your voicemail to say that 5 million Congolese have died in the deadliest conflict since World War II as a result of the scramble for coltan and other minerals key to the functioning of modern technology. Let's sacrifice our instant communication on behalf of the people we have relationships with: our brothers and sisters in the DRC!

Congo Week Resource Guide

Order of Worship

Suggested Scriptures

Isaiah 1:15-17

Proverbs 31:8-9

Amos 5:21-24

Matthew 12:15-21

James 2:1-19

Call to Worship

One: In the midst of a world where people hunger and thirst...

All: Come worship a God who feeds the hungry.

One: In the midst of a world where people are abused and oppressed...

All: Come worship a God who calls for compassion and justice.

One: In the midst of a world filled with wars and rumor of war...

All: Come worship a God who desires nothing less than peace for the world.

One: In the midst of a world of spiritual emptiness...

All: Come worship a God who gives life meaning.

One: In the midst of a world of animosity and hate...

All: Come worship a God whose grace and love know no end.

OR

Call to Worship

One: God of all creation, we come to worship You.

All: Creator of every man, woman, youth, and child, we come to rejoice in you.

One: Maker of the heavens and the earth, please open us to your transforming grace.

All: God of liberation and life may our acts of worship be a witness of your peace. As we lift our voices in praise, may our hearts and our hands be united in partnership with you and with our brothers and sisters in the Congo.

Opening Prayer

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” - 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Congo Week Resource Guide

OR

Opening Prayer

Nzambe (God), Heavenly Parent, Great Physician, we praise you for the blessing of Bolenge Hospital and many other health centers that minister to the needs of the people in Congo. We have seen your healing hand as it manifests itself through those working long hours in difficult conditions to offer care to those who suffer. Surround the Congolese people and us with your mercy and healing spirit as we pray for one another in all our afflictions, physical or spiritual. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful and Mighty God,

We thank you for allowing us to come before you with honesty and humility. Please forgive us when our actions lead to the oppression of others. Please forgive us when we ignore the pains and the joys of our neighbors near and far. When we feel like we can make no difference in the face of injustice and suffering, please redeem us and set us free with the good news that you are a God through whom all things are possible. When despair threatens to overwhelm, please fill us with your Spirit of hope and lead us forth with your saving love which knows no bounds. Amen.

OR

Prayer of Confession

Merciful and forgiving God,

We have reclined comfortably with our laptops in hand, cell phones in pocket, and earbuds playing endlessly. We have silently ignored the suffering of your people, especially those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We have dismissed as unfortunate tragedies the over one million Congolese displaced by violence, more than a million living with HIV/AIDS, and nearly six million deaths that are a result of war over natural resources. We have exploited our sisters and brothers, robbing them of their dignity, minerals and goods. We have denied their humanity, their spark of divinity. Forgive us, O God. Forgive us for being detached, dispirited and indifferent. Grant us the courage to speak up, naming injustices one by one and the determination to right wrongs in the Congo and around the world. This is our prayer, in Jesus' name. AMEN

Confessional Litany

Reader 1: "Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not take notice?"

"Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers." (Isaiah 58:3, NRSV)

Reader 2: Lord, we are experts in serving our own interests. We know how to make sure we do alright. We have created and perpetuated a system of global trade to serve ourselves. No

Congo Week Resource Guide

wonder our worship rings hollow in your ears.

Silence

Lord, we confess our selfishness and greed. Give us the will to change ourselves. And help us to start changing the world.

Reader 1: Lord of all the world,

All: Listen to our prayer this day.

Reader 1: “Is this not the fast that I choose? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house?” (Isaiah 58:6-7, NRSV)

Reader 2: Lord, too many of your people are hungry and homeless. Too many live in dire poverty. Too many die before they should. And in the rich countries of the world, we have done too little to change this. In fact, our governments have been leaders in forcing poor countries into unfair trade, making things worse rather than better.

Silence

Lord, make our campaigning more effective. Challenge the hearts of those in positions of power. Change the policies that keep people poor. And give food to the hungry and hope to the despairing.

Reader 1: Lord of all the world,

All: Listen to our prayer this day.

Reader 1: “If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom shall be like the noonday.” (Isaiah 58:10 NRSV)

Reader 2: Lord, this year you have given us an opportunity and a challenge. This year could be the beginning of the end of injustice and exploitation. Yet there is so much to do to make it happen.

Silence

Lord, we want to make injustice and unfair policies history. Give us the courage to speak to our friends and neighbors. Give us the resolve to advocate on behalf of the Democratic Republic of Congo and suffering people everywhere. And take our efforts and multiply them into change.

Reader 1: Lord of all the world,

All: Listen to our prayer this day

Congo Week Resource Guide

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for the Church that we may demonstrate to the world a living, vibrant faith, which seeks to include and share, and speaks out against the scandal of exploitation. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for world leaders, that they may listen to the voices of those who live in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and begin to use their power generously for the good of all. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for ourselves, that through our choices, actions and words we may live out our faith in our everyday lives, growing more compassionate and generous each day. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the work of Congo advocates around the world that we may work to improve the quality of life of the many, and together seek the common good. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

OR

Prayers of Intercession

We bring you, O Lord, the troubles and perils of people and nations: the sighing of prisoners and captives, the sorrows of the bereaved, the necessities of strangers, the helplessness of the weak, the despondency of the weary, the failing powers of the aged. O Lord, draw near to each, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Benediction

(English translation)

God bless Africa.

Guard her children.

Guide her rulers,

And give her peace for Jesus Christ's sake

(Lingala translation)

Nzambe Pambola Congo

Batela bana na ye,

Lakisa bakonzi na ye nzela,

Pesa ye kimya, na kombo ya Yezu Kristu.

Congo Week Resource Guide

OR

Benediction

May the Spirit make us wise, guide us, renew us and strengthen us

So that we will be

Strong in faith,

Discerning in proclamation,

Courageous in witness,

Persistent in good deeds. AMEN

Congo Week Resource Guide

Ways to Take Action:

Educational campaign:

- ✓ Participate in [Congo Week](#) (3rd week in October)
 - Host a book or documentary film discussion (suggested titles below)
 - Meet with your elected officials
 - Plan a Congo-focused Worship Service or Sunday School Lesson using the suggested liturgical resources.
- ✓ Join the movement “Cell OUT” in its “digital moment of silence” on the Wednesday of Congo Week OR host an Electronics Boycott (one day, one week) anytime your group decides.
- ✓ Have Small Group Discussions on the conflict, war, scriptures, and Christianity
- ✓ Suggested books for discussion:
 - [The Assassination of Lumumba](#) by Ludo De Witte
 - [The Challenge of the Congo](#) by Kwame Nkrumah
 - [The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa--From Eisenhower to Kennedy](#) by Madeleine Kalb
 - [The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila: A People's History](#) by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja
 - [Consuming the Congo: War and Conflict Minerals in the World's Deadliest Place](#) by Peter Eichstaedt
 - [Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa](#) by Jason K. Stearns
 - [King Leopold's Ghost](#) by Adam Hochschild
 - [Lumumba Speaks: The Speeches and Writings of Patrice Lumumba, 1958-1961](#) translated by Helen R. Lane. Ed. Jean Van Lierde
 - [The Poisonwood Bible](#) by Barbara Kingsolver
 - [Rise and Fall of Patrice Lumumba](#) by Thomas Kanza
- ✓ Suggested movies for discussion:
 - **Crisis In The Congo: Uncovering The Truth**
*Download or view online here: www.congojustice.org
 - **Justice in the Congo: Cultures of Resistance Short Films**
*Download or view online here: <http://films.culturesofresistance.org/congo-short-films>
 - **Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death** by Peter Bate
*This movie may be obtained from ArtMattan: <http://www.africanfilm.com/congo.htm>.

Congo Week Resource Guide

- **Blood Coltan** By Denis Boutelier & Patrick Forester
Download or view online here: http://watchdocumentary.com/watch/blood-coltan-video_b789af3ce.html
- **Mabele Na Biso (Our Land)** - In order to secure screening rights or purchase the DVD please send email to allason@yoleafrica.org
- **Dan Rather Report: All Mine**
*Download or view online here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzkmX2ROL0k>
- **Congo's Tin Miners**
*Download or view online here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lo8c81xHLMw>
- **Lumumba. 2000**, Directed by Raoul Peck
This movie can be obtained at a public library and online (Amazon and others)
- **Mobutu: King of Zaire.**
This movie can be obtained from a public library and online
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Mobutu-King-Zaire-Raymond-Barre/dp/B0001WAGTM>
- **The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo** A film by [Lisa F. Jackson](#)
North America Sales and Rentals: [Women Make Movies](#)
462 Broadway, 5th floor NYC NY 10013 Tel: 212-925-0606
- **Lumo**, PBS documentary
*Download or view online here <http://www.pbs.org/pov/lumo/video/update-lumo-sinai/>
- **Arms, Dealing and National Interests** A documentary by D. Andre & P. Moreira
This movie can be obtained by contacting Friends of the Congo at support@congoweek.org
- **Street Children of Kinshasa.** by Gilbert Mulamba
This film can be obtained by contacting the filmmaker, Mr. Gilbert Mulamba at 469-999-7484 or at gilbert@gilbertmulamba.com

*For more descriptions and titles please visit: <http://www.congoweek.org/en/films-videos.html>

- ✓ Organize a Protest at the Statehouse to raise awareness
- ✓ Organize a People-to-People pilgrimage to the Congo through Global Ministries
 - http://www.globalministries.org/people_to_people_pilgrimages
- ✓ Connect with Congolese Partners
 - Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo
 - http://www.globalministries.org/africa_partners_disciples_of_christ_community (EN)
 - <http://natana.tumblr.com/> (FR)
 - Church of Christ in the Congo

Congo Week Resource Guide

- http://www.globalministries.org/africa_partners_disciples_of_christ_congo (EN)
- <http://ecc.faithweb.com/> (FR)
- Congo Protestant University - Kinshasa
 - http://www.globalministries.org/africa_partners_protestant_university_of (EN)
 - www.sarua.org/?q=uni_Universit%C3%A9%20de%20Kinshasa (EN)

✓ **GET CREATIVE!**

*Please tell us about how you plan to spread the word, educate your congregation, and take action during and beyond Congo Week. Email lcable@dom.disciples.org