



## Local Congregations Put Faith into Action for the World's Poorest People

*ONE Sabbath highlights how local houses of worship can save lives around the world*

**WASHINGTON, D.C....** The ONE Campaign is taking the fight against extreme poverty and global disease to America's churches, synagogues and mosques with the first-ever ONE Sabbath weekend later this month.

"ONE wants to help channel the power in local congregations to solve some of the most challenging crises facing our world -- the fight against extreme poverty and global disease," ONE spokesperson Kimberly Cadena said. "The many faiths practiced in our country share a common commitment to caring for the poor. ONE Sabbath gives congregations the tools and the information that they need to become champions of advocacy and awareness for the poorest people on our planet."

Set for the weekend of November 23-25, ONE Sabbath will provide interested congregations and individuals with tools to respond within their own faith traditions and obtain resources from ONE partner organizations. Those resources are available online at [ONE.org/faith](http://ONE.org/faith). ONE Sabbath will facilitate a community-wide moment of reflection on the scourge of global disease and extreme poverty. More than discussing the challenges of extreme poverty, however, ONE Sabbath will focus on the positive actions which people of faith can take to respond, and the proven solutions that are working on the ground.

While congregations around the country are taking advantage of the planning and materials for ONE Sabbath, ONE is focusing attention on the four early-election states – Iowa, Nevada, South Carolina, and New Hampshire. Events from music concerts to compassion forums are being planned in these states, with local faith communities taking the lead.

"We are really excited about ONE Sabbath. This is a chance for us to show our people the importance of ending senseless poverty and to show that this is a scriptural idea -- to help those who are on the fringe. We're going to talk about how important it is for our people to lend their voices to this fight, to lend their voices to putting an end to poverty and disease," Ben Parker, pastor of The Crossings in Las Vegas, Nev., explained.

David Lamarre-Vincent, executive director of the New Hampshire Council of Churches, said that the values of faith communities will highlight ONE Sabbath as well as the primary election.

"ONE Sabbath epitomizes what we are seeing this primary season – people of values and people of faith coming together, trying to create the wind in the sails of our public servants on behalf of social justice," Lamarre-Vincent explained. "The ONE Campaign's identification of

global poverty and global health needs is resonating up and down. We're really excited not only about bringing groups together to collaborate like never before, but we're also interested in reaching individuals who are passionate about these issues and providing them with the tools to put this on the agenda of all religious communities."

Reverend Mr. Ellis White, pastor of the Bluff Road United Methodist Church in Columbia, S.C., believes that ONE Sabbath provides a unique moment for people of faith to join together not only to fight extreme poverty but also to impact the future policy priorities of the United States.

"I'm excited about ONE Sabbath and will definitely plug in my church and share it with as many pastors and churches in South Carolina as we can," White said.

"We have vowed to dig deep and either do something about these challenges or stop talking about it. And we have no desire to stop talking about it. That's where our partnership with ONE is so exciting because it is an organization that can help collectively to bring congregations together. We're better together than we are apart," Chris Gunnare with the Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines, Iowa, said.

This fall, ONE contacted its members to begin identifying houses of worship that would be interested in ONE Sabbath. Thousands of responses were received, leading to the creation of the tools and resources at [ONE.org/faith](http://ONE.org/faith). After this month's initial event, ONE will work on a year-long effort to spur greater awareness and action on poverty and disease issues within the faith community. The effort will culminate with a nationwide ONE Sabbath weekend next October, just ahead of the presidential and congressional elections.

ONE is supported by many national religious organizations and leaders, including Pastor Rick Warren; Rabbi Marjorie Berman; the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Mark Hanson; President and Founder of Save Africa's Children Bishop Charles E. Blake; Pastor Brian McLaren; and General Minister and President of the Disciples of Christ Sharon E. Watkins. ONE's partners also include Islamic Relief, Episcopal Church USA, World Hope International, World Vision, United Methodist Church and the American Jewish World Service.

**ONE** is an effort by Americans to rally Americans, ONE by ONE, to fight the emergency of extreme poverty and global disease. ONE is a coalition of more than 2.4 million people and nearly 160 of the nation's leading relief, humanitarian and advocacy organizations. For more information, visit [ONE.org](http://ONE.org).