



## *Building an Advocacy Case*

What about this issue concerns you?

What are some facts or elements you don't like?

What do you like about this issue?

What do think God would say about this?

What does the United Methodist Church say about this?

What would you like to see?

What do you think needs to happen to improve or change to eliminate this injustice?  
Who has the power to change public policy? Who do you have to influence?

Create some ideas about what you, or a group of you, could do to:-

- create awareness about this issue
- gather more support for this cause
- train people to advocate for this issue
- train yourself in advocacy methods
- build congregational capacity to advocate collectively

*United Methodist  
Church – North  
Carolina  
Conference*

*Board of Church  
and Society*

This series provides congregations and individuals the skills to build and deploy justice ministries and advocacy methods. Other methods in this series include:

*\*Building a relationship with your elected representative*

*\*Writing a letter or email to your elected representative*

*\*Writing a letter to the press, blog or website*

*\*Organizing a rally or protest meeting*

*\*Building a congregational justice ministry*

*\*Proposing legislation*

*\*Parish based Community Organizing*

*\*Creating a Conference Resolution*

*\*Asset Based Community Development*

*\*Challenging legislators*

*\*Community Listening*

The Board of Church and Society provides advocacy and justice programs for congregations.

<https://nccumc.org/christianformation/church-and-society/>

Use this matrix to build a comprehensive approach to advocacy in your congregation or institution. Remember that you need to build all the facts about the issue, and build organizational capacity so that you have people with you to build power to act. The journey below suggests you build *Awareness* in your constituency, then *Educate* deeper to be able to *Discern* an advocacy strategy, *Proclaim* your intent to draw more support, then deploy that strategy to reduce harm through responsive *Advocacy acts of Mercy and Charity*, followed by *Advocacy acts of Justice to restore Justice and to prevent future injustice*.

Target audience	Congregations/Districts	The Victims of Injustice Families, children, educators, immigrants etc	General Public, Policy makers, Public officials.
<b>1. Awareness</b> <i>Listening, sharing, participating with others</i>	Create a forum to speak and listen to stories about this issue. Basic facts about the injustice; Study the Biblical narrative about the issue.	Providing basic legal information; brochures; social media information; and distribute this information to victims	Learn about the law governing this issue; learn about the state budget; establish public forums to listen. Build a relationship with your lawmaker.
<b>2. Education</b> <i>Providing "just" knowledge and skills</i>	Study the current state of the law and its enforcement; look for evidence of unfairness and injustice; listen to real stories and get the facts.	Share information about the legal process affecting people subject to injustice; legal rights information and briefings; provide opportunities to share stories.	Inform public of problems at your school through letters to the press; letters to the press; letters of advocacy to elected representatives.
<b>3. Discernment</b> <i>Building advocacy skills</i>	Empowering/educating congregations to research and examine the issues. Gather lots of data. Build multiple advocacy strategies to suit each issue	Run lots of listening sessions with parents, teachers and administrators to gather facts and problem solve. Seek out the solutions required by those subject to injustice.	Start building a relationship with your local elected representative. Find out their voting patterns on relevant issues.
<b>4. Proclamation</b> <i>Declaring justice</i>	Let the community know about what you find, the problems and the opportunities for mobilization. Declaring injustices; collaborate with other advocacy groups. Preach justice.	Find leaders among these groups to build a power base with them and within themselves.	Build some form of basic policy you require to be implemented about the issue and declare this to your your state representatives.
<b>5. Advocacy</b> <i>Acts of Mercy and Charity</i>	Create support groups for the victims in your local congregation. Provide coaching for families, plus coaching in parenting responsibilities for disadvantaged children.	Supporting victims through mercy programs. Support help agencies in their efforts to improve resources.	Deepen you relationship with elected representatives and keep them informed about the state of things through letters, petitions, briefing sessions, and face to face discussions.
<b>6. Advocacy</b> <i>Acts of Justice</i>	Mobilizing congregations to advocate to improve the application of constitutional law; vote for candidates who support improved public services.	Mobilizing communities to advocate to improve the application of constitutional law; vote for candidates who support improved public services.	Build strong advocacy approaches to change public policy and funding for public services. Challenge poor decision by public officials and advocate for improvements.

This document was created by Brian Heymans while he served on the Board of Church and Society.

