



Labor in the Pulpit 2023

2023 Sample Labor in the Pulpit Presentation

Please note:

1. Labor in the Pulpit presentations should be no longer than five minutes.
2. This is a sample presentation you can use to develop your own.

Guide:

- Introduction and Why You Are Speaking
- What Faith and Labor Have in Common
- Personal Story About Your Union Involvement
- Connection Between the Faith Group and Labor
- What's Happening Now
- What We Can Do/How You Can Help

Introduction and Why You Are Speaking

Good morning.

I am honored to be here today, and I want to thank [name of clergy person] for arranging this opportunity to speak to you on this Labor Sunday.

My name is [name], and I am a member of [name of union]. I am representing the [name of state federation or area or central labor council]. We are a federation of [number] unions representing [number] of union members. [Briefly describe your role in the labor movement.]

I am speaking here today as part of the AFL-CIO Labor in the Pulpit program, in which union members across the country address congregations about the relationship between faith and labor during the Labor Day weekend.

What Faith and Labor Have in Common

Faith and labor share many values. We both affirm the dignity of human labor and workers, racial, social and economic justice; equality of all person; solidarity with the most vulnerable; justice in the workplace and freedom of association, which for us means workers' freedom to join a union for collective bargaining without fear of retaliation.

Labor Day offers a time for us to reflect on the progress working people have made over decades to create better lives for ourselves and our families, ensure safe workplaces and build a stronger economy.

Faith and labor have been mutual partners in advocating for these advances, which include the eight-hour workday, workers' compensation, health and safety laws, unemployment compensation, restrictions on child labor, a minimum wage, the right to organize for collective bargaining and more.



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Personal Story About Your Union Involvement

[Provide a short, personal story about how you became involved with the union and how there is a connection between religious values—such as the dignity of workers, equality, fair treatment in the workplace and the right to form a union—and worker justice. Think about your story, which should be able to be shared in three to four sentences.]

Connection Between the Faith Group and Labor

The [name of the denominational group or faith group] has a long tradition of support for the rights of workers to organize unions to engage in collective bargaining.

[If possible, quote from the denominational statement found in [What Faith Groups Say About Worker Justice](#) and additional statements found in [Labor in the Pulpit Faith Group Statements: Unions | Collective Bargaining](#).]

Historically, your faith group has supported the right of working people to organize unions as a fundamental human right and as essential to ensure all persons are treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.

What's Happening Now

Right now in the United States, a majority of nursing home residents are not getting the quality care they deserve.

Nursing home workers are burning out and leaving the profession, which has created a staffing crisis.

Workers in the long-term care industry—the majority of whom are women of color—are among the lowest-paid workers in our country, and many live in low-income households or below the poverty line.

Individual nursing homes determine their staffing levels, and there is no federal minimum staffing standard.

Low levels of staffing in nursing homes negatively affect resident care and lead to a dangerous work environment as well as terrible outcomes for residents.

There is a direct connection between low staffing and a higher incidence of falls, rehospitalizations, missed care and mortality rates.

Now the federal government is considering issuing a minimum national staffing standard for nursing homes, which would be the most significant reform in decades.

It will strengthen our long-term care system, improve the lives of residents every day, prevent unnecessary worker injury and burnout, and give working families peace of mind that their loved ones will receive the high-quality care they deserve.



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What You Can Do/How You Can Help

The faith community and labor unions care about the conditions of nursing home residents and care workers.

We invite the members of this congregation to learn more about the issue and join us in our campaign for a national minimum staffing standard for nursing homes by going to aflcio.org/bettercarenow. The link can be found in your bulletin.

[There is a sample bulletin insert below.]

We are also here to say that the [name of state federation/central labor council/area labor federation] wants to develop an ongoing relationship with your congregation beyond speaking to you today.

Again, thank you for this opportunity.

Sample Bulletin Announcement:

During today's service, [name of person] from [name of state federation/central labor council/area labor federation] will be making a Labor in the Pulpit presentation and will speak about the AFL-CIO campaign for a national minimum staffing standard for nursing homes, making reference to the following link: aflcio.org/bettercarenow.

For more information or if you have any questions or need any assistance, contact Michael Szpak, religion-labor coordinator in the AFL-CIO Civil, Human and Women's Rights Department, at 202-637-5284 or mszpak@aflcio.org.