



WELCOME TO THE 2025 NATIONAL OBSERVANCE OF CHILDREN'S SABBATHS® CELEBRATION

HOW TO USE THE MANUAL Organizer's Guide

Section Overview

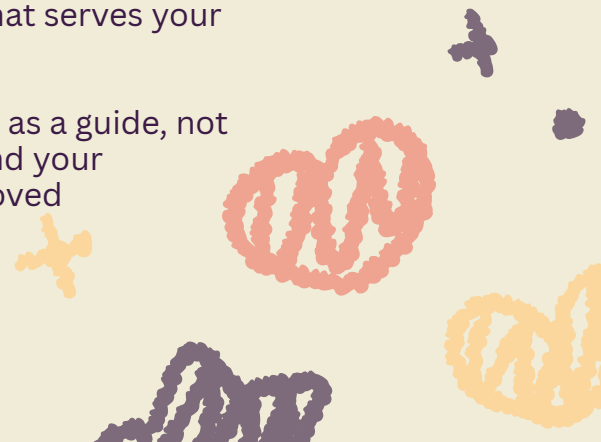
The National Observance of Children's Sabbaths® is a time to worship, reflect, and act together with and on behalf of children. This manual is your companion. It offers prayers, scripture, stories, and practical tools to help your congregations and faith communities lift up the voices of children and youth, nurture their well-being, and move faithfully from worship into action.

This year's theme, *Building Beloved Community*, reminds us that we are called to build a world where every child is cherished, protected, and free to flourish. Beloved Community is the work of love, justice, and solidarity in our neighborhoods, congregations, and public life.

Inside this manual you'll find:

- The voices of children to guide your worship and action
- Faith expressions from multiple traditions to root you in scripture and prayer
- Worship resources to help you plan services that heal, inspire, and mobilize
- Calls to action to move your congregation from prayer to public witness
- Organizing and outreach tools to help you plan, lead, and connect your community with the broader wider movement for child well-being
- Malleable tools that allow you to use what serves your context and adapt freely

This manual provides a toolbox. Let it serve as a guide, not a script. Every tool is offered to help you and your community take one more step toward Beloved Community.



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READ THE *HOW TO* GUIDE

How each section works



Introduction to Children's Sabbath

Introduction to Children's Sabbaths: Welcome, orient, and ground your community in this year's Children's Sabbaths Manual.



The How To Guide

The How-To Guide: Read this page to understand how everything fits together.



Centering Children's Voices

Centering Children's Voices: Begin planning by lifting up children's stories, art, and wisdom.



Faith Expressions

Faith Expressions: Explore multifaith scriptures and sacred texts, prayers, and reflections to ground your community.



Call to Action

Find immediate ways to connect to advocacy, like contacting your local officials



Worship Resources

Use full liturgies, prayers, and music suggestions (adapt as needed).



Organizing Tools for Leaders

Review checklists, timelines, and planning resources.



Engagement & Outreach Resources

Share the word with your wider community using templates and flyers.



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Organizer's Guide

For Children's Sabbath Organizers

Who Is a Children's Sabbath Organizer?

A Children's Sabbath Organizer is anyone who helps their congregation or faith community prepare for the Children's Sabbaths celebration. Clergy may hold this role, lay members, children's or youth coordinators, justice and advocacy organizers, or volunteers.

Children's Sabbaths Organizers do not work alone. Organizing is most faithful when shared—rooted in prayer, collaboration, and care. Together, organizers make sure that worship, children's voices, advocacy, and outreach all come together in the service of *Building Beloved Community*.



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Preparing with Intention

Organizing with intention is an act of love and justice, a way of *Building Beloved Community* in our congregations and beyond. The following steps are offered to guide Children's Sabbaths Organizers as they prepare with care, attentiveness, and hope.

Before You Begin

- Watch the welcome video and spend time with the theme, *Building Beloved Community*.
- Gather a small team of Children's Sabbath Organizers (worship, children/youth, advocacy, outreach).
- Begin with prayer, reflection, or a grounding practice as you enter the work.

Planning with Care

- Ground your planning in the scriptures, sacred texts, and reflections on *Building Beloved Community*.
- Center children's voices: Invite children to contribute prayers, art, or testimonies to the observance.
- Select liturgies, prayers, or sermon starters that resonate with your community's tradition.
- Choose at least one call to action to connect faith with justice.
- Use planning tools to assign responsibilities, set a timeline, and prepare with clarity.
- Share announcements, flyers, and posts to welcome your wider community.

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Preparing with Intention con't

Practicing Accessibility & Inclusion

- Provide large-print and screen-reader-friendly bulletins.
- Ensure captions and transcripts for all videos.
- Mark accessible seating and restrooms.
- Use inclusive and affirming language throughout worship and materials.
- Create spaces for rest, quiet, and sensory needs.

On the Day of the Sabbath

- Center children's voices and stories in worship.
- Proclaim the theme of *Building Beloved Community* clearly and prayerfully.
- Lead the chosen call to action with compassion and clarity.
- Close with a blessing or charge that sends the community forth to live out its commitments.

After the Sabbath

- Gather your organizing team to reflect, give thanks, and note what was learned.
- Share stories, photos, or testimonies with the wider movement.
- Plan one or two follow-up steps so your community continues building Beloved Community beyond the day of observance.
- Complete the Children's Sabbaths survey, available on Children's Defense Fund's (CDF) website.
- Join CDF's mailing list to stay informed about programs, events, calls to action, and next year's Children's Sabbaths resources.



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A Blessing For Children's Sabbath Organizers

Blessing for Children's Sabbath Organizers

As you prepare, may you be sustained by joy in collaboration, steadied by strength in prayer and reflection, and emboldened with courage in action.

May your planning be a sacred act, your attention to detail an offering of care, and your labor a testimony to love.

May wisdom guide you from many sources—scripture, tradition, community, and the voices of children themselves.

May the work you share remind you that you are not alone. Across faiths and communities, others are joining you in lifting up children, honoring their dignity, and *Building Beloved Community*.

And may every step of your organizing become a seed of justice and compassion, planted for the flourishing of children and the future of hope we create together.

