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Media

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Justice Sunday Amplifies the Enduring Legacy of Faith to Serve this Present Age

Washington, DC — The National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ), announced today the 21st annual observance of ***Justice Sunday***, a vital program in emphasizing unity, mentoring, preserving and reminding the nation of the enduring impact on our nation’s faith community and civil rights progress. Justice Sunday 2026 will be held on Sunday, January 18, 2026. Famed celebrity actor and producer, **Rev. Clifton Davis**, co-star of the CBS hit daytime series, ***Beyond the Gates***, serves as the National Honorary Chair.

In keeping with prior traditions, a national service will be held in Antelope Valley, California and hosted by Future Leaders of California, an affiliate of NAFJ’s PEN OR PENCIL (POP) National Mentoring Initiative. Pastor Tony Lowden, former pastor to the late President Jimmy and Mrs. Rosalyn Carter. Will be the morning speaker followed by a dignitary luncheon and final theatrical event to be presented at 4pm at the Lancaster Performing Arts Center. More details can be found at www.futureleaderscalifornia.org.

Justice Sunday highlights how faith, justice, and service were integral to the progress of civil rights in America. *Justice Sunday*, the day prior to the federal holiday which honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., aims to encourage present and future generations to appreciate the power of reflection, collective action, courage, and moral conviction in combating systemic injustice.

Founded 21 years ago by **NAFJ**, *Justice Sunday*, commemorated during National Mentoring Month, has become a cornerstone observance, adapted, and recognized in diverse settings across the nation. Since its founding, the initiative has fostered a culture of volunteerism, challenging participants to pledge their time and talent in service throughout the year. Collaborations with faith-based, civic, and social justice organizations such as the Church of God In Christ (COGIC) Urban Initiatives and the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice have strengthened outreach and built relationships across a spectrum of the country.

“Justice Sunday has historically served as a day of worship and mobilization, rallying communities of faith to come together at their respective places of worship to unite in service, compassion, and collaboration,” said Rev. Elizabeth Thurman, Vice President of NAFJ. “We have not only expanded accessibility over the past two decades, but we have also deepened our engagement through our partnership last year with COGIC Urban Initiatives, which has more than 6 million members nationally and abroad.”

The theme of *Justice Sunday* draws from a hymn by Charles Wesley, whose timeless words resonate deeply with Dr. King’s legacy: *“We have every one of us a charge to keep, an eternal God to glorify, an immortal soul to provide for, needful duty to be done, our generation to s serve; and it must be our daily care to keep this charge.”* As the nation gathers on January 18, 2026, to reflect on these principles, *Justice Sunday* invites everyone to become mentors of POP and other youth serving organizations.

Together, we can ensure that his faith and fight for justice remain vibrant and relevant for the challenges of today and tomorrow.

For more information, visit www.nafj.org

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About the National Alliance of Faith and Justice

The mission of the National Alliance of Faith and Justice is to harness the power of faith, justice, history, and service to create a more equitable and compassionate society. Through a national network of affiliates and partner organizations, NAFJ is dedicated to promoting volunteerism, civic engagement, and justice that inspires service and collaboration in communities nationwide. The PEN OR PENCIL (POP) National Mentoring Initiative is a transformative approach designed to steer youth away from incarceration ("the pen") and toward education ("the pencil") through mentoring, history-based learning, and civic engagement. Specifically, through an evidenced based curriculum, POP introduces behavioral strategies that help adolescents internalize conventional norms and values, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

About the Church of God In Christ Urban Initiatives

The Church of God in Christ (COGIC) Urban Initiatives aim to empower communities through programs focused on education, economic development, crime reduction, and family support. The COGIC UI were established under the leadership of Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, driven by a commitment to address critical issues such as poor academic performance, financial disenfranchisement, high unemployment rates, and crime in urban areas. The mission is to build healthy individuals, families, and communities for a successful future by implementing effective programs across its 12,000 churches in the United States.

About the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice

The National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ) is a non-profit, non-partisan association created in 1974 to promote the interests of blacks and other minorities in the justice system. Its members consist of criminal justice professionals, law enforcement, institutional and community corrections, courts, social services, academia, religious and other community-based groups. The NABCJ focuses on relevant legislation, law enforcement, prosecution, and defense-related needs and practices, with an emphasis on the courts, corrections, and the prevention of crime. The association aims to support the general welfare and increased influence of African Americans and people of color in the administration of justice.