

Quincy Sun Jan. 12, 2006

*At United First Parish Church*

## **Kennedy To Address Raising Federal Minimum Wage At MLK Event Monday**

Sen. Edward Kennedy will speak on increasing the federal minimum wage at a "Let Justice Roll" event on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 16 at 2:30 p.m. at United First Parish Church (Unitarian), 1306 Hancock St., Quincy Center.

The New England Conservatory Millennium Gospel will sing at the event hosted by United First Parish.

As keynote speaker, Kennedy will address the moral obligation and urgent necessity for generating support for this measure to alleviate poverty.

The state's senior senator has introduced federal legislation to raise the national minimum wage.

The Let Justice Roll Living Wage campaign is a national non-partisan interfaith and community coalition of over 50 organizations working for just a minimum wage as part of its living wage campaign. The campaign is working in several states to raise state minimum wages through ballot initiatives and legislation as necessary steps toward establishing a living wage.

See [www.LetJusticeRoll.org](http://www.LetJusticeRoll.org) for more information.



**SEN. TED KENNEDY**

Since the last minimum wage increase was passed in 1997, the value has eroded by more than 15 percent. To have the value it had in 1968 the minimum wage would have to be \$9.05 an hour today, \$3.90 more than the current national minimum of \$5.15 an hour.

Nearly 36 million people in the United States live in poverty, including 13 million children. Among full-time, year-round workers poverty has doubled since the late 1970s – from about 1.3 million then to more than 2.6 million. An unacceptably low minimum wage is a key part of the problem.

Hundreds of "Let Justice

Roll" events are being held across the country on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day weekend. Dr. King considered the struggles for racial and economic justice to be inextricably connected.

A key demand of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom was for "a national minimum wage age that will give all Americans a decent standard of living."

Event participants include Quincy Mayor William Phelan, National Council of Churches General Secretary Bob Edgar; Local SEIU 615 President Rocio Saenz, Rev. Hurman Hamilton, pastor, Roxbury Presbyterian Church; Wayne Smith of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, and others.

Sponsors of the Quincy event include the Boston Let Justice Roll Coalition, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, UUs for a Just Economic Community, MA Jobs with Justice, SEIU 615, the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry, and United for a Fair Economy.

United First Parish is being asked to host the event in part because of its participation in the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) and its work for social justice.

The public is invited to Monday's event.