

MAY 17

No Menthol

SUNDAY

Awaken

2020 Community Event Toolkit

“ Beloved, I pray in all respects you may prosper
and be in good health even as your soul prospers. ”
- 3 John 1:2



NAATPN Faith-based Initiatives

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Awaken!

NAATPN's annual No Menthol Sunday is an exciting time for faith communities to effect change in the health of their congregations. Each year we encourage faith leaders to talk about the importance of living healthfully—not only for the sake of one's own sacred physical body, but for the sake of the African-American community as a whole. We emphasize the role of menthol in quitting tobacco, but we don't stop there. We speak loudly against social, economic and governmental systems that perpetuate health disparities and keep tobacco use at status quo.

Our 2020 theme, *Awaken!*, encourages us not be deceived by the ill intentions of others. It exclaims that we must awaken ourselves to the truth so that we may be wise and expose deception and complacency (Ephesians 5:5-15). In essence, the passage calls us to stay woke!

This is fitting guidance as we work to expose the tobacco industry's deceptive practices. The tobacco industry has:

- spread unsubstantiated falsehoods about the effect menthol restrictions will have on police interactions
- developed aggressive marketing tactics targeting Black communities
- addicted a young generation to nicotine through e-cigarettes and vaping products

When it comes to protecting our young people and our most vulnerable communities, we must not grow weary or turn a blind eye! No Menthol Sunday is the perfect time to raise our consciousness about these important issues. When people of faith remain vigilant, educate youth, and inspire community action, we will begin to move toward total health justice.



Why we Fight

After a 10-year fight, the US House of Representatives has finally passed the Youth Vaping Epidemic Act. This is a major win as it eliminates the sale of all flavored tobacco products including menthol!

But this is no time to sleep!

We must now win over lawmakers in the Senate and ensure this bill goes into effect.

We are excited about the potential for flavor restriction laws like this. That is why we must dedicate ourselves to supporting cities like Berkley, Boston, New York City and Minneapolis who are implementing similar policies restricting the sale of tobacco.

No Menthol Sunday is our time to awaken our communities! We must remain vigilant, standing *in* faith and *for* one another.



Resources in this toolkit

Menthol Quick Talking Points

Speaking Points & Sermon Ideas

- Christian Believers
- Muslim Believers
- Jewish Believers
- Buddhist Believers
- Hindu Believers

No Menthol Sunday Suggested Activities

Tobacco Abstinence Pledge

Tobacco Free Church Grounds

Press Release

Church Announcement

Menthol Fact Sheet

Event Day Resources

Post-Event Ideas

Other Recommended Resources

Visit www.NoMentholSunday.com



Menthol Quick Talking Points

- Menthol is a candy flavor that makes it easier to smoke cigarettes.
- Most African American smokers smoke menthols.
- Most minorities who are smokers smoke menthols.
 - More than half of Asian American youth smokers smoke menthols
 - Nearly half of Latino youth smokers smoke menthols
 - Most menthol smokers are women
- Most kids who start smoking try menthols first.
- The tobacco industry intentionally tries to get African Americans to buy menthol cigarettes.
 - Menthol cigarettes cost less in Black communities
 - There are more and larger advertisements for menthols in Black communities
- Menthol cigarettes are harder to quit!
- The FDA has the power to ban menthol from tobacco products.
- Banning menthol would save lives.
 - If menthol were banned, a lot of people would never start smoking
 - If menthol were banned, a lot of African Americans would not die from a smoking-related disease



Sermon Topics & Speaking Points

For Christian Congregants:

A Spiritual Battle

Tobacco is a defining issue for our time. It has been proven to be one of the causes of preventable death, but also a struggle for the nation's soul. With much research and health science, we see the bridge between the ethical, mythic, and spiritual nature of the struggle among congregations around the world. The Bible says in

III John 2:2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou may prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers." In this passage the writer is letting us know that he not only wants us to prosper in life, but he also wants us to also live a healthy life free from all types of addiction.

Smoking is undoubtedly very bad for your health. Smoking has been proven to damage the lungs and the heart. God has come to help us with the fight of addictions. In 1 Corinthians 9:22, Paul says, "To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some." This scripture suggests that we should help one another with our weaknesses. On No Menthol Sunday, focus on being supportive. Be the person someone can turn to if they are struggling, just like Christ wants us to do.

Your Body as the Temple of the Holy Spirit

The apostle Paul teaches that our bodies are the temples, or the dwelling place, of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). In this way, the body does not belong to the believer; rather, the body belongs to God. It is His home and the place whereby he gives the believer His power.

This in mind, believers must not do as they will with their bodies, using it carelessly for their own pleasures. 1 Corinthians 6:20 states that believers were "bought with a price" and should, therefore, honor God with their bodies. In the Christian sense, even the smallest acts may be a part of the ways in which he or she honors God. In 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul says "whether you eat or



drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." In the Christian sense, maintaining a healthy body can be a form of worship (Romans 12:1-2). No Menthol Sunday presents an opportunity to discuss the ways in which followers of Jesus Christ can take particular care with their own health and well-being. This means quitting smoking and not allowing an addiction to destroy God's temple.

The Power to Overcome Temptation

One fundamental teaching of Christianity is that God is willing to help believers to resist temptation. No Menthol Sunday is a good time to discuss the difficulty in resisting temptations such as cigars and cigarettes, but also how it is possible to rely on the Holy Spirit for help. In 1 Corinthians 10:13, Paul states that "no temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man." This means that no one is alone in their fight against temptation. He goes on to say, though, that God is faithful to provide a way out so that one may endure it. This can be very encouraging for Christian believers. Further, it may be insightful to merchants in your congregation. They can help to be "a way out" by discontinuing the sale of mentholated tobacco products.

Quitting smoking is a struggle that can contribute to mood swings and other withdrawal symptoms. It is easy to want to give up. Prepare those who want to quit smoking by sharing the words in Psalms 34:18: "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed spirit."

Reaping the Benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle

The Gospel cautions that whatever a person sows, he or she will also reap (Galatians 6:7-8). Specifically, Paul's warns that if one sows into the fleshly desires (or gives in to the cravings of the body), that one will reap corruption. Alternatively, if one sows into the Holy Spirit, giving attention to it instead, that he or she will reap eternal life. This kind of cause-and-effect is unavoidable when it comes to smoking. On No Menthol Sunday, talk to your congregation about the "corruption" and poor health that comes from smoking. But be sure to emphasize the "life" or healthy benefits that come from quitting. Remind your congregation that just because things like cigarettes are legal does not mean they are good for you. One should not be enslaved to anything (1 Corinthians 6:12).



For Muslim Congregants

Do Not Harm Yourself or Others

Teachings in the Qur'an clearly express the importance of taking care of one's health. According to Qur'an 2:195, a follower must not make their own hands contribute to their own destruction. On No Menthol Sunday, discuss the ways in which smoking destroys the body. In addition, remind congregants that smoking tobacco can spoil prayer, the pillar of Deen, by emitting an offensive odor. Most importantly, discuss how second-hand smoke does great harm to others. Followers of the Islamic faith should remember the teachings of the Prophet: "There shall be no infliction of harm on oneself or others." For those who desire to quit smoking, invite them to start with the fast of Ramadan.

For Jewish Congregants

Watch Yourself Scrupulously

In Judaism, care for one's health is not only a vital religious value, but a halachic obligation (Deot 4:1). While we know that the Lord takes care of the simple, or those with childlike faith (Psalm 116:6), it is important to exercise wisdom when it comes to health. According to Deuteronomy 4: 9, Jewish people must "watch [themselves] scrupulously". A part of this means protecting one's self from the harmful effects of smoking. On No Menthol Sunday, remind your congregation that "a person must distance himself from things which destroy the body and accustom himself to things which heal the body" (Maimonides' Mishneh Torah).

Get Back Up Again

Quitting smoking is often one of the most challenging things that a smoker can do. It is common for a person to explore several methods and try multiple times before finding success. The Torah teaches that a good person is not one that finds immediate success; rather, a good person is one that perseveres. On No Menthol Sunday, encourage those who want to quit by reminding them of King Solomon's words in Proverbs 24: 16: "A righteous man falls down seven times and gets up."



For Buddhists Followers

Choose the Path that Leads Away from Suffering

In Buddhism, it is honorable to remain open to cravings while not giving in to them. Use No Menthol Sunday as a time to acknowledge the presence of the temptation, but to encourage resistance. Additionally, discuss the ways in which overcoming addiction can lead to freedom and clarity of mind. Remind congregants that smoking is a path that leads to suffering. Encourage those who would like to quit smoking to take time on No Menthol Sunday to meditate and stay with the feeling, knowing that it will pass naturally. Talk to followers about how ending the sale of mentholated tobacco products can be the path that leads away from the suffering of others.

For Hindu Followers

Embrace a Life of Bliss

Hinduism discourages *vyasana*, or unhealthy dependence on substances such as tobacco. In fact, caring for the body is a sacred spiritual practice. Hindu teachings compel followers to achieve a spiritual life that is free from suffering and full of bliss. On No Menthol Sunday, remind followers that smoking tobacco cannot lead to such a spiritual life. Discuss the ways in which quitting smoking and ending the sale of mentholated tobacco products can be essential in doing good to others.



No Menthol Sunday Activities

One Step Ahead of Quitting

Pathways to Freedom DVD Screening

Pop some popcorn and invite your congregation and faith community to view Pathways to Freedom: Leading the Way to a Smoke Free Community©. This educational cessation video may be your community's first step in reducing the use of tobacco and supporting one another in quitting smoking altogether. Consider hosting the event in your place of worship, or encourage members to view in small groups at someone's home. Request your hard copy DVD or get online access at www.naatpn.org.

Make a Pledge

Whether for a day or a week, challenge your congregation to join the movement by not using tobacco in observance of No Menthol Sunday. Provide plenty of copies of our Abstinence Pledge, and make a sincere request for your members to sign it. Plan to follow up with everyone's progress and provide support to those who need it.

Neighborhood Prayer Walk

Quitting smoking is a big step in a larger effort to be healthy. Encourage your entire faith community to gather after your service for a short walk around the surrounding area or in smaller groups around members' neighborhoods. Whether the walk is slow and steady or brisk, it should be a refreshing and peaceful time to reflect on the connection between spirit and body. Suggest that members meditate on specific scriptures and adages from your faith while walking. It may also be a social time that serves as a fun way for members to encourage one another to get moving and stay healthy.



Quit Support

If your place of worship has the space, set up a table where people can pick up information or simply seek comfort, strength and support as they work through the challenges associated with quitting. Remember that volunteers managing the table need not have all of the facts and stats on tobacco. After a few moments of prayer, direct visitors to call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). This number will connect with them with certified cessation counselors who can help callers develop a personalized plan to quit smoking.

One Step Ahead of Policy

Ban Menthol

Last year, the Food & Drug Administration announced a proposal to ban menthol in cigarettes. We commend and support this decision. NAATPN, Inc. has been fighting for this policy for decades. However, we understand that the government has neglected opportunities to ban menthol; and the current policy excludes e-cigarettes like Juul and cigarillos like Swisher Sweets. As such, we are committed to pursuing *local* policies that restrict of the sale of mentholated tobacco products.

Support the 500 Foot Buffer Zone

Add a little fire to your community outreach by scheduling a sit down talk with your city council or state representative. Discuss the importance of reducing youth access to mentholated tobacco products and ask them to support the 500 foot buffer zone. This means they will legally prohibit the sale of menthols and other flavored tobacco within 500 feet of a school.



Stay Woke about the Tobacco Industry

Merchant Outreach and Corner Store Visit

Just before No Menthol Sunday, gather a few of your bravest members to talk to or visit with store owners in the community who may be willing to join efforts in building a healthier environment for our communities. This means that they will agree to remove all mentholated products and associated advertising from their store on No Menthol Sunday. Approach stores that are within 500 feet of schools to start. Be sure to have the Menthol Fact Sheet handy!

Boycott Juul

In the 1990s the African American community was effective in boycotting a cigarette brand that had plans to aggressively target African American demographics. Black organizations and thought leaders came together in a unified effort to reject the intrusion of such a deadly product. The efforts were successful, and the brand launch failed. The tobacco industry is now planning to infiltrate our communities and our young people with Juul and other e-cigarette. Because these products have not yet swept our neighborhoods as in White communities, we have a chance to stop them in their tracks. Our neighborhoods battle the presence of every kind of vice. We must not allow Juul to be among them.

Make it Your Own

No Menthol Sunday is about finding unique and effective ways to educate your community and raise awareness about the need to quit smoking and end the sale of mentholated tobacco products. Use your own creativity to engage your faith community in this campaign. Don't forget to let us know how it is going by emailing your stories to thenetwork@naatpn.org.



No Menthol Sunday Abstinence Pledge

In observance of
No Menthol Sunday
on May 17, 2020

I do hereby resolve to protect my health, the health of my family, and the health of my community by pledging to abstain from tobacco products for:

_____ 24 hours

_____ 3 days

_____ 1 week

By taking this pledge, I hope to stand as a model to my family and my faith community.

Print Name

Signature

Date



Church Announcement

Today is No Menthol Sunday, and we would like to take time to talk about protecting Black health and Black lives.

Smoking kills 47,000 African Americans per year. That's more than homicides, suicides, AIDS-related death, car accidents and police brutality combined.

Most teens and African Americans who smoke choose menthols because the minty flavor helps make it easier to start smoking -- it also makes it harder to quit smoking. The same is true for e-cigarettes like Juul. The tobacco industry intentionally tries to get African Americans to smoke menthols by advertising to us more and making menthols cheaper in certain neighborhoods. This isn't right. A ban on the sale of menthol would help encourage many African Americans to quit smoking or never start. That can help save lives.

If you are a smoker but haven't talked to anyone about it, now is the time. There are many resources available and we know there is no cookie-cutter way to do it. We just want to encourage you to find your way to freedom. We are prepared to love and support you as you become healthier.

We want to take time today to pray with you about it because we know it is hard to quit smoking and can take several tries before quitting for good.

You can also call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free resources and coaching. Feel free to ask me more after service. Thank you.



Event Day Resources and Templates



Church Fan

Church fans commemorating No Menthol Sunday 2019 are available. They serve as both factsheets and cooling mechanisms. Visit www.NoMentholSunday.org to submit a purchase order. To ensure your fans arrive on time, be sure to place your order as early as possible.

Social Media Graphics

Remind congregants of the event by posting these memes to your website and social media outlets. Visit www.NoMentholSunday.org to download.



Social Media Cover Image

Help us promote the event by adding this image to your Facebook and Twitter profile. Visit www.NoMentholSunday.org to download.



PowerPoint Presentation for Special Services

Visit www.NoMentholSunday.org to download.



After No Menthol Sunday

- ✓ Encourage tobacco users to call 1-800-Quit-Now. They can talk to a Quit Line coach who can help develop a plan for quitting. Callers may also receive free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).
- ✓ Get involved by spreading the word about the harms of menthol. This may be through social media or by continuing to provide our tools and information at your services.
- ✓ Build relationships with local officials who are interested in supporting the health marginalized communities. Ask them to support measures that are proven to reduce tobacco use such as restricting the sale of mentholated tobacco products within 500 feet of a school.
- ✓ Support congregants who want to quite tobacco with prayer and patience. Help members to reduce stress and find ways to join in on efforts to be healthier.
- ✓ Talk to youth about the importance of staying tobacco free and living out the values they believe in. Encourage them to check out the Fresh Empire campaign on Twitter.

If you have any additional questions or would like to start a community-wide movement, visit www.NAATPN.org. Join the NAATPN mailing list and follow them on Facebook and Twitter.