



Economic Justice Issues

Explanations and
Suggested Action Steps
for Key Issues

**A guide to Church teaching and action steps
for congregations and individual activists on
some of the economic justice issues facing
people in the United States**

Prepared by the
Advocacy Committee of the
Episcopal Network
for Economic Justice

Revised June 30, 2012

Introduction

This set of Issue Papers is a publication of ENEJ's Advocacy Committee which is chaired by our president, Dianne Aid, TSSF. It includes brief summaries of 29 economic justice issues and provides resources and action steps for use by individuals, congregations or diocesan organizations. We suggest as related reading *Twenty Years Later: A Response to a Crisis* and ENEJ's *Economic Justice How-To Manual*. These and six popular education modules are available at www.enej.org.

We also suggest reviewing *Faith in the Balance: A Call to Action* which was published by the Episcopal Church's Office of Domestic Poverty and Jubilee Ministries as a follow up to the Presiding Bishop's Summit on Domestic Poverty which was held in 2008 in Scottsdale, Arizona. ENEJ's Issue Papers covers the Eleven Essentials of Justice outlined in that publication which is available at www.episcopalchurch.org/Jubilee Ministries. The eleven issues are:

1. Affordable Food
2. Employment
3. Affordable Quality Childcare
4. Education
5. Healthcare
6. A Just Immigration Policy
7. Cultural Affirmation
8. Equal Protection Under the Law
9. Economic Opportunity
10. A Healthy Environment
11. Housing

Our Issue Papers publication is an on-going process. We invite reader comments and assistance in updating these papers. If you have suggestions or would like to write an issue paper on a topic of concern to you please contact Dianne Aid at sanmateo921@yahoo.com.

Our thanks to the writers for submitting revisions and new papers. Dianne Aid and Verna Fausey reviewed and updated most of the older papers. Jeff Dey did the word processing.

Michael Maloney
Project Coordinator
June 30, 2012



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Predatory Lending

What is wrong

Predatory lending refers to the misleading packaging of high fees, costly credit insurance and other charges into loans to unsophisticated borrowers. These loans are often compounded by refinancing that, instead of benefiting borrowers, primarily generates fees for lenders.

Predatory lending strips billions in wealth from low-income consumers and communities in the U.S. each year. Borrowers lose an estimated \$3.4 billion from payday loans, and \$3.5 billion from other lending abuses, such as overdraft loans, excessive credit card debt, and tax refund loans.

A debtor's payments can rise unexpectedly as one lender sells the loan to another company. Due to the compounding of high interest, these loans may never be paid off. In the case of high interest home equity loans, the lenders foreclose when the borrower fails to pay, driving debtors out of their homes.

Predatory financial activities come in various forms:

- Payday loans and cash leasing services that can charge interest at an annual percentage rate (APR) of up to 390% or 400%.
- Repeated refinancing the loans incurs more fees.
- Instant check cashing services which include high fees for cashing checks.
- Use of payday lenders or check cashing services instead of banks or credit unions.
- Rent to own TVs, appliances, furniture, etc, with high and often poorly disclosed interest rates.
- Car title loans that combine the services of loan sharks with a pawnshop for automobiles.
- Predatory and sub-prime home loans, high interest home equity loans, and mortgages with balloon payments.
- Industrial loan and thrift companies
- Tax preparation agencies that charge high rates for loans on anticipated tax refunds.
- Banks and lenders that sell loans borrowers do not need.

One of the most egregious—and fastest growing—examples of predatory lending is the payday loan industry. An estimated 12 million Americans use these lenders annually. The payday industry emerged from rural Tennessee in 1993. That year there were 200 sites; now there are over 22,000 nationwide. In some states, payday lenders outnumber Starbucks' coffee shops.

The payday loan industry has persuaded 32 states to legalize its practices. Their political action committees (PACs) make campaign contributions to state legislators in an effort to gain access and influence their votes. Hired lobbyists worked to get favorable legislation passed. In 2011, predatory lenders spent \$5 million on lobbying, up from \$1 million spent in 2005, according to Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

Even respectable U.S. banks such as Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, U.S. Bank, and Wells Fargo help fund the payday loan industry by extending them credit lines, according to National People's Action and Public Accountability Initiative.

Banking on Payday. Big banks like Fifth Third Bancorp, Regions, U.S. Bancorp, and Wells Fargo offer their own payday loans, according to a Center for Responsible Lending (CRL) report. Called "direct deposit advance" or "checking account advance" these short-term loans have interest rates around 365% APR. Of interest, banks are not required to follow state regulations aimed at traditional payday lenders.

Who is affected?

Payday lenders prey on the working poor who live from payday to payday. Other targets are the poor who lack access to bank loans, credit cards or wealthy relatives. High-risk borrowers who cannot get loans from mainstream financial institutions often turn to predatory institutions. Others caught in these loans are the elderly and minorities. Loss of jobs, illness, and emergencies are reasons for seeking these loans. Unfortunately, some indulge in impulse spending or do not know how to budget.

Not all have bank accounts. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp, in a 2009 survey, reported that one out of every ten Tennesseans had no bank or credit union accounts. The national average is 7.7 percent. One third of Tennessee blacks had no account compared to the national average of 22 percent.

For example, four check-cashing services and four money orders a month can cost \$547 per year--the equivalent of two weeks pay of a minimum-wage worker.¹

Our faith

In 2001, the Episcopal Church's (TEC) executive council passed a resolution instructing the treasurer to vote in favor of all shareholder resolutions asking financial companies to avoid underwriting and servicing predatory loans. During the 2002-03-shareholder season, TEC made affirmative proxy votes on linking executive compensation and progress on predatory lending with Citigroup.

The Bible has many references against usury and oppressing the poor.

"If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them." --Exodus 22:25

"Do not take interest in advance or otherwise make a profit from them...You shall not lend them [your kin] money at interest taken in advance..." --Leviticus 25:36-37.

When John the Baptist spoke to the crowds waiting to be baptized, he had pointed advice about money. He told the tax collectors "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you" (Luke 3:12). He warned the soldiers, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusations..." (Luke 3:14).

Remedies

1. Churches can create credit unions or participate in ecumenical and secular efforts to establish credit unions and wealth-building strategies such as individual development accounts.
2. Congregations can conduct financial seminars on money and budgeting, taxes and tax refunds, credit and predatory lending.
3. Congregations can monitor predatory lending PACs to determine who gets their money, and publicize the results.
4. Dioceses can become directly involved. For example, the Diocese of New York has proposed a three-pronged anti-predatory lending initiative to:
 - Establish a \$1 million fund for small and medium-sized loans to homeowners for repairs and other critical needs. Funds will come from the Diocese, TEC's Economic Justice Loan Fund, and Seedco, one of the nation's leading community innovators and lenders.
 - Recruit commercial banks to refinance existing predatory loans.

¹ Naomi Snyder, "10% of families in TN don't have bank accounts," *Tennessean*, December 3, 2009.

- Participate, with other community organizations, in an educational campaign to help homeowners locate and access non-predatory sources of loans.

The New York Diocese hopes their initiative can have a significant impact on foreclosures and other tactics of predatory lenders now operating in upper Manhattan and the Bronx.

5. Congregations and dioceses can join with others to support legislation that curbs the activities of predatory lenders. Episcopal and United Methodist churches in South Carolina worked to get a good predatory lending law in South Carolina. For example, the Ohio Coalition for Responsible Lending promoted the Ohio Homebuyers Protection Act, which went into affect in 2007. The Dioceses of Ohio and Southern Ohio were part of the coalition. Local governments in Cincinnati and other cities have had to respond because predatory lending causes blighted neighborhoods.

There have been efforts to pass a law in Missouri, Tennessee and Wisconsin. In November 2009, the Diocese of Milwaukee passed a resolution to support state legislations to cap predatory lending rates at 36 percent. In 2009, Wisconsin was the only state without an interest rate cap for licensed lenders.

Resources/Advocacy organizations

Center for Responsible Lending (CRL)

302 West Main St.

Durham, NC 27701

Phone: (919) 313-8500

Fax: (919) 313-8595

Web: www.responsiblelending.org

Founded in 2002, CRL opposes payday loans.

Fair Mortgage Collaborative (FMC)

501 Seventh Avenue 7th Fl

New York, NY 10018

Phone: (212) 455-9365

Web: www.FairMortgage.org

Founded in 2008, this nonprofit membership organization is committed to providing mortgages with fair rates to low and moderate-income persons.

Americans for Financial Reform

1629 K Street, NW, 10th Floor

Washington, DC 20006

Phone: (202) 466-3311

Email: info@ourfinancialsecurity.org

Web: ww.ourfinancialsecurity.org

Americans for Financial Reform, a coalition of more than 250 organizations. works for a banking and financial system based on accountability, fairness and security. This organization shares an address with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) and Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF). www.civilrights.org

National Council of La Raza

1126 16th Street, NW #600

Washington, DC 20036-4845

Phone: (202) 785-1670

Fax: (202) 776-1792

Web: www.nclr.org

Opposes predatory lending in minority and Latino communities.

National people's Action (NPA)
810 N. Milwaukee
Chicago IL 60642
Phone (312) 243-3035
Web: www.npa-us.org

National People's Action (NPA) is a network of grassroots organizationst work to advance a national economic and racial justice agenda. NPA has over 200 organizers . In early 2012 NPA published a report "*Profiting from Poverty; How Big Banks Backed Payday Lenders Strip Community Wealth for Record Profits*"

Verna M. Fausey
Nashville, Tennessee

Paper # 2

Immigration: Images and Reality

The following comments and stories of individuals come from undocumented Mexican nationals who are living and working in the United States. Immigration policy varies according to country of origin. This writer's experience is with several Mexican communities, and it is from this experience that I share.

In virtually every restaurant kitchen, housekeeping staffs of hotels and airports, in every field and orchard in the western United States, Mexican and Central American workers fill the employee rolls, working long, underpaid hours, often sporadically, yet not free to take other jobs. The vast majority of these workers are undocumented, working in jobs American-born workers and legal immigrants do not want.

Family Life

Migrant life is extremely difficult on family members. Many migrant workers live in conditions beyond belief. Several years ago, advocacy groups in eastern Washington tried to encourage employers to provide some temporary housing. The employers even rejected a tent city, and one large employer took the stance that his responsibility ended with providing employment. Affected employees included children working in the fields. Landlords refused to rent to migrant families because they could not sign a lease. Churches rallied to house 62 individuals (including young children) within church buildings. It took several years to begin to develop housing resources for families who harvested and processed the crops in this farming and "friendly" community.

Many former migrant workers have settled down in the United States, desiring to provide a more predictable life for their children. They have become home and business owners, have bank accounts, participate on community boards and action groups, and are members of churches, often taking leadership roles in these groups. Some serve in professional capacities in the banking and education professions. They live under the shadow, however, of being deported at a moment's notice for something so minor as a traffic stop, which begins a domino effect eventually bringing them to the attention of U.S. Immigration Services. Families have been separated for weeks while a deported parent attempts to re-enter the United States, paying up to \$5000 to get across the border.

Employment and Benefits

Miguel worked for a sixty-hour week under the hot June sun cutting asparagus. His pay was \$80.00 in cash. Miguel was part of a crew. The crew leader was a documented worker and the only one to receive a paycheck. Miguel and the rest of the crew were paid from the trickle down of the crew leaders check. Miguel was paid only for the asparagus that went to the market fresh and received nothing for what he cut that was used for canned and frozen products.

Undocumented workers who do receive paychecks have the standard social security, income tax and unemployment taxes withheld. Most will never be able to collect their social security benefits, and they do not qualify for unemployment benefits. Fake social security cards and “green cards” (authorization-to-work cards) cost around \$300 at weekend swap meets and other locations. An individual can work with the social security number for about a year before the records show it to be not valid. The money that was withheld goes into a general Social Security Trust Fund. Undocumented families are not eligible for any type of public assistance.

How does our faith inform us for action?

There are many Biblical stories of immigration and migration, from Abraham, Joseph and the Exodus to the exile in Babylon. Our Baptismal Covenant calls us to respect the dignity of every human being. Undocumented workers are often victims of racism, poverty and violence. The Church has a call to advocacy on their behalf.

General Convention has adopted at least nine resolutions in the past twenty years addressing refugee and immigrant rights. In 2003, the Convention called for expansion of the temporary worker program to include all employed immigrants. In 1997, a General Convention resolution asked Episcopalians to advocate that needy immigrants not be denied benefits.

Faith communities are often the first places immigrants turn for help and community in a strange land. It is a place where they find compassion and the familiar. In many dioceses, growth in churches is coming from Hispanic and other immigrant communities. I have been involved with many Bible studies around the Exodus as an Education For Ministry mentor. I have also been a part of Bible study groups with Mexican immigrants who can relate first hand to wandering across a desert (as they did when they crossed the U.S. – Mexican border). It is a very powerful witness. Newcomers enrich our liturgies. The immigrant community has much to give to mainstream communities.

Together as brothers and sisters we are called to advocate for changes that allow persons who are working and contributing to our communities and supporting families in their home countries to live a life of productivity and peace, where there is justice and hope for all.

The last general amnesty for undocumented immigrants was in 1986. We can look for ways to advocate for amnesty through immigrant rights groups in our own communities and through communication with our elected officials. We can become familiar with rights immigrants are granted. The American Civil Liberties Union has published a short card in English and Spanish informing immigrants and others of their rights, for instance, police officers do not have a right to ask for proof of legal status in the U.S. (there has been recent pressure to change this law, however). In the shadow of September 11, 2001, immigrants are under scrutiny, and profile stops have increased. The market for jobs that the undocumented fill is ever present, and their ability to maintain those jobs has

become greater risk as the border inspections become more militant, and the cost of “coyotes” (those who smuggle people across the border) increases.

The image I close with is from several years ago. I had been with a family who had just crossed the border. Walking across at Imperial Beach, California, they had only the wet clothes on their backs, no money and three small children. Some friends questioned me as to the ethics of helping people to break the law. I imagined a gate at the border and asked myself whether Jesus would open the gate, or slam it shut...

Dianne Aid
Seattle, Washington

Taxes and Economic Justice

In 2003, Alabama Governor Bob Riley, a conservative Republican, began a push for a radical overhaul of the state's tax code that would have increased taxes on upper-income Alabamans while reducing the burden on the state's poor. Riley had a long record in Congress as a tax-cutter and came to the Alabama state house with strong conservative credentials, so his tax proposals surprised his supporters and opponents alike. Where had this sudden conversion come from?

It came, in large part, from an article published in the Alabama Law Review by Susan Pace Hamill, a University of Alabama law professor who was working on a graduate degree in theology during a sabbatical. Her article, titled "An Argument for Tax Reform Based on Judeo-Christian Ethics," argued that Alabama's tax system was not only unfair but, from a Christian perspective, immoral; it so burdened low-income families with excessive taxation while limiting taxes on the well-to-do that it flouted the clear ethical teachings of the Bible to do justice to the poor. Riley (who is a Southern Baptist) used much of the same moral and biblical language in his campaign for tax reform.

Ultimately, Riley's proposal was defeated in a referendum, with the state's wealthy interests as well as the Christian Coalition of Alabama leading the opposition to reform. But the experience raises an important truth for us to consider as both Americans and as Christians: our current tax system is unjust.

What is wrong

Susan Pace Hamill, the author of the article that impressed Governor Riley, focused only on Alabama's state tax system, which she persuasively identified as the most regressive and unjust in the country. But at the federal level as well as in many other states, the tax code burdens poor and middle-class Americans while giving huge breaks and advantages to the wealthy. Here are just a few examples:

- Since the 1960s, the top corporate and income tax rates (i.e. taxes on corporations and wealthy individuals) have dropped sharply, while the payroll tax (which hits the poor and middle class hardest) has more than doubled. Today only 9% of federal government revenue comes from corporate taxes, while 40% comes from payroll taxes.
- Taxes on wages, which is the only source of income for most working- and middle-class Americans, are higher than the tax on capital gains, which is the primary source of income only of the wealthiest Americans. The federal tax code is gradually being rewritten to shift taxes completely away from wealth (with cuts in taxes on capital gains, investment dividends, and estates), and onto wages and work.

- The 6.2% payroll tax that funds the Social Security system applies to only the first \$110,000 of a person's income. Breaking through that barrier (which 90% of Americans never do) gives you the equivalent of a 6.2% tax break on everything else you earn. For millionaires, the payroll tax barely even registers, while for many working Americans it is a bigger burden than the federal income tax itself.
- Because of requirements written into federal law, individuals and families claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit (a credit for the working poor) are audited by the IRS three times more often than wealthy individuals, and eight times more than business partnerships.
- The federal tax code is full of loopholes available only to people wealthy enough to hire the lawyers and accountants who can find (or create) them. While most Americans pay their taxes automatically through employer withholding, rich investors and business owners can shift money around until it is practically impossible to trace and tax.
- Tax (and service) cuts at the federal level are increasing the pressure on states to supply and pay for necessary services. Unfortunately, state and local taxes tend to be even worse than the federal system in hitting the poor and working class much harder than the well off.

What can we do

- Most importantly, pay attention! People generally think that tax policy is too technical or too complex or just too boring to understand. That's exactly what those who benefit from the current unjust system love to hear. But you don't have to be a CPA to understand that a tax that's 6.2% on someone making \$15,000, and 0.04% on someone making \$15 million, is unfair. (That's how the Social Security payroll tax works.) Likewise, our current tax policies mean that effective tax rates are going down for wealthy people and up for middle-class families. That's not hard to understand--and, if you're concerned about economic justice, it shouldn't be boring--even if the details about it are complicated. With the current ideological direction of the federal government, the system is likely to get even worse in the near future, so keep on top of what is going on in Washington and in your state.
- Spread the word. Incorporate discussion of the tax system into parish education programs. Speak about taxation in terms of biblical justice--Susan Pace Hamill's law review article is an excellent source for biblical references and theological arguments on tax justice. This is a message that should especially resonate for middle-class families: it's primarily they who will pay more and benefit less as taxes are shifted away from the wealthy.
- Find out about "tax clinics" or other free resources in your community to refer low-income people for tax help. Many law and business schools and nonprofit organizations run these volunteer-based services; if there isn't

one in your community, look into setting one up. Many low-income people don't claim refunds or tax credits they are eligible for (such as the Earned Income Tax Credit), or they spend money on tax preparers to do something no more complicated than filling out a 1040EZ. (These paid preparers also push "instant refunds," which are actually short-term loans with poorly disclosed but shockingly high fees and interest rates.) Basic education and free advice can save poor families a lot of money at tax time.

- Unlike the direct actions that we can take on many economic justice issues (establishing credit unions or CDC's, for example), we can't set up our own alternative to the tax system. This means it is vitally important to make demands on the politicians who write tax law, and hold them accountable. Let your political representatives know that we consider tax fairness a moral imperative.

More resources

- The best book on the realities of the current tax code, and written in very clear English, is David Cay Johnston's *Perfectly Legal: The Covert Campaign to Rig our Tax System to Benefit the Super Rich—and Cheat Everybody Else* (Penguin, 2003). Johnston has also published an essay on the topic in *Sojourners* magazine (April 2005): <http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=magazine.article&issue=soj0504&article=050410>
- United for a Fair Economy (the producers of ENEJ's economic justice education units) has resources on a wide range of economic policy issues: <http://www.faireconomy.org>
- UFE also offers questions and answers about tax policy and tax fairness: http://www.faireconomy.org/econ/state/Talking_Taxes/index.html
- Susan Pace Hamill's paper "An Argument for Tax Reform Based on Judeo-Christian Ethics" is available at: <http://www.law.ua.edu/susanhamill/hamill-taxreform.pdf>
- The following three organizations are think-tanks focusing on taxation issues--good for anyone looking for more technical or in-depth analysis of tax issues or for information on specific topics:
 - Citizens for Tax Justice: <http://www.ctj.org>
 - Tax Policy Center: <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org>
 - Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: <http://www.cbpp.org>

John Mark Summers
Brooklyn, New York

Outsourcing: Economic Efficiency or Global Exploitation?

What is outsourcing?

In recent years, outsourcing (especially offshore outsourcing) has become a significant hot-button issue with implications both to the United States economy as well as to the welfare of the American worker.

The simple definition of outsourcing is an arrangement in which one company provides services for another company that could also be performed in-house. As taught to any MBA student, outsourcing certain functions makes good business sense because it enables a corporation to focus on its core competencies. As a result, outsourcing business functions such as payroll processing to a company which specializes in payroll processing makes sense much in the same way that hiring a lawn care service might be a reasonable way for a family to get their grass cut while attending to more pressing family and work responsibilities.

More and more, corporations are outsourcing an ever broader array of functions to suppliers in successively cheaper locales. No longer are these the non-core support services that had been part of the traditional argument. As in earlier decades when companies moved production from labor union strongholds to places in the Sunbelt where labor unions were scarce, employers looked to reap even more lucrative cost savings beyond the borders of the US. The current era of offshore outsourcing had begun.

Why is outsourcing thought to be a good thing?

Traditionally, the same issues that applied to the simple case of a company outsourcing its payroll operations applied to entire industries. A nation could argue that moving the production of a commodity or finished product to another country made sense if that country possessed more plentiful resources for producing it. This certainly had been the argument for international trade. Why should Japan, with limited land resources, try to grow its own wheat, when Russia or the United States have superior land resources for this? In the world of the global corporation, multinational corporations own subsidiaries all around the world that can produce products by using the best resources at the most competitive prices. The consumer is then able to purchase goods and services at the best prices.

Moreover, a nation with vast human resources is able to employ its workers as the need for traditional agricultural employment wanes through improved farming technologies. These jobs are often a step up from what would be available if the industries remained in the more developed world.

Contrary to the theory, however, in the real world not quite everybody wins.

What are some of the costs of outsourcing?

From the American perspective, the most immediate result of outsourcing is the loss of jobs in many of our communities. A plant closing can devastate a community, not only leaving many of the residents jobless, but also reducing the tax base, threatening schools and government operations.

One could argue that from a global perspective, one job lost is another gained. Once all of this frictional unemployment is resolved, the worker who lost her job will be retooled with new skills for the “new economy.” In the 1990s, this proved to be true for many workers when it seemed that job losses were eclipsed by large numbers of new jobs in the growing service economy.

But, also from a global perspective, the new job that replaced the old job looks very different. It is rarely possible to replace one job with one costing the company a fraction as much without sacrificing worker safety, environmental standards, or human rights. The criticism of these effects is not limited to the United States:

Ashim Roy, the President of several unions representing General Electric workers in Gujarat in western India, said, "The jobs that multinational companies destroy in the US outnumber the jobs they create in India, as workers are working harder and longer. The companies create insecure jobs at near-poverty level wages with inhuman working conditions. We want to work with our sisters and brothers in the US and elsewhere to prevent exploitation and guarantee jobs with fair wages and human dignity for all."²

Thus, this “efficiency” is really coming at a huge cost borne not by the corporation, but by society-at-large.

What has the Church said about outsourcing?

At its General Conventions of the Episcopal Church, there have not been resolutions specifically on the subject of outsourcing. But we can apply what’s been stated regarding worker justice issues at a global level.

We need to frame this discussion in a new light: Rather than the American worker vs. the workers of the world, we need to see this as a conflict between the needs of the global worker against the needs of the global corporation.

² Sreekha, N.C., 12/03/2004, “Anti-Outsourcing Cry Comes from Indian Labor Unions”, *India Post, News Report*, 12/03/2004.

What should we be asking our legislators to do?

Push for local, regional, national and international labor standards so that the workers in one part of the world don't possess an unfair competitive advantage based on the exploitation of human and natural resources.

Ask that corporations receive tax incentives when they produce good jobs for workers and risk losing these benefits when they export jobs, especially to places which compromise human rights, health and safety standards and environmental protections.

What should we do?

"We have met the enemy... and he is us" – Walt Kelly, creator of *Pogo*

Sometimes we forget that we are the shareholders who demand higher returns on our investment. We are also the consumers who shop around for the best prices. We should always consider a corporation's labor practices and their affinity toward outsourcing when determining whether to buy their products, or to own shares of their stock.

We should also encourage our parishes and dioceses to carefully invest endowment funds, taking corporate policies regarding outsourcing and worker justice into account.

Jeff Dey
Cincinnati, Ohio

Racism and Economic Oppression

The term “racism” covers a multitude of sins. These include prejudiced attitudes, intentional discriminatory behaviors, and social structures that, without anyone’s active intent, automatically confer advantages on whites and disadvantages on people of color. Each of these components of racism is destructive on its own; together they create and perpetuate inequalities of many kinds, including economic inequality.

Public opinion surveys show a change in whites’ racial attitudes over the last fifty years. White respondents are less likely to say that African Americans, Latinos and others are inherently inferior, but are more likely to attribute these groups’ poverty to a lack of motivation or work ethic. This is because white Americans increasingly believe that discrimination is a thing of the past. The most common “racist” attitude among whites today, then, is a state of *denial*.

Has discrimination disappeared?

Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits the more intentional forms of discrimination in employment, housing, education and so on. This legislation has undoubtedly diminished the incidence of this type of discrimination, but has not come close to eradicating it. Audit studies, in which pairs of job candidates or housing applicants of different races are matched in terms of qualifications, repeatedly and consistently show continued discrimination by employers and landlords (see e.g. HUD’s 2000 Housing Discrimination Study). Lawsuits have also uncovered many examples of deliberate discrimination: in 1996, Texaco agreed to a \$176 million settlement when a secret recording revealed executives belittling African Americans and conspiring to destroy documents pertaining to an earlier discrimination lawsuit.

Even more pervasive, and easier to miss, is a more subtle form of structured inequality referred to as “institutional discrimination.” This occurs when practices that seem racially neutral produce racially negative consequences. Examples abound: a factory moves from the inner-city to the suburbs, and public transportation linking the two locations is inadequate, so inner-city residents – disproportionately people of color – have lost those jobs. Our tendency to fund schools with local property taxes means that children in the poorest neighborhoods attend the worst schools, where they’re ill-prepared for college. Requiring job applicants to have a college degree appears racially neutral, but disproportionately screens out certain nonwhite groups, since they’re less likely than whites to have a college education.

The insidious thing about institutional discrimination is that it does not require discriminatory *intent*. No bigots are needed; all that’s needed is that we continue to do business as usual, without examining too closely the consequences of our conventional practices.

The fruit of discrimination

But the consequences are staggering: the median family income for a black family in 1950 was 54% of the median white family's income; even by 2000 it had grown to only 64%. Over 23 percent of African Americans live below the poverty level, compared to 5.3 percent of non-Hispanic whites, and with the exception of a few years, black unemployment rates have been at least double those for whites since World War II. For Latinos, the picture is not much better: median family income in 2000 was 59 percent that of whites, with 20.2 percent of families under the poverty level, and unemployment rates twice those of non-Hispanic whites.

Further, while Asian Americans are often lumped together as a "model minority," many groups within this category are struggling: 42 percent of Cambodians and 62 percent of Hmongs, for example, live below the poverty line. Even more established, "successful" Asian groups such as Chinese, Filipino and Korean Americans have poverty rates higher than those of whites.

Our faith

Jesus said that the entire life of faith hangs on love of God and love of neighbor. Challenged as to who constitutes one's neighbor (Luke 10:29), he made it clear that everyone is included, even and especially those we would most like to exclude. So we know who our neighbors are, but what exactly does it mean to *love* them?

In his book *Prophetic Reflections*, Cornel West argues that love is not principally a set of feelings, but a set of commitments. The first is to the premise of *imago dei* – that is, that all people are made in the image of God, which confers on them dignity and worth independent of their social status. The second commitment is to *analysis*: we cannot claim to love our neighbors if we can't be bothered to understand their problems. But analysis without *action* – the third commitment – is dead.

Action

What kind of action can the Church take against the economic and other consequences of racism? The problem is too large to be addressed by a simple set of steps, but the Episcopal Church has already recognized two points as fundamental. First, in 1994 General Convention passed a resolution committing to "strengthening the recruitment, retention, and education of people of color for the ordained ministry," and we need to continue to recruit both ordained and lay people of color to positions of leadership. The greater the range of perspectives present in our conversations about race, the more productive they will be. But people of color need to be equal participants in these conversations, not tokens, and not "representatives" of some imagined consensus within their communities. For white people to define the issues and determine the actions to be taken "on behalf of" people of color is not the way forward, so diversifying our leadership is of the utmost importance.

Second, in 2000 General Convention passed a resolution requiring all leaders in the Church, both lay and ordained, to undergo anti-racism training. These programs are critically important, not only to raising awareness about racial issues, but to opening dialogue on matters that we usually prefer to avoid. For these programs to have a real impact, however, they must go beyond the “airing and sharing” of feelings about race, and include concrete, substantive information about the status of racial groups and the state of race relations, both in the Church and in the nation. Given that a major barrier to racial progress in our time is the denial by so many that we have a problem, presenting evidence of that problem should be a priority.

How do we love our neighbors? By seeing Christ in them, and doing for “the least” of his brothers and sisters what we claim to be willing to do for him. We need the intellectual integrity to work at understanding our neighbors’ problems, and we need the moral courage to take action based on that understanding. In short, we must take our neighbor seriously; our Lord has made it clear that *he* will take it personally.

Susan Pitchford
Seattle, Washington

Fair Trade: A Socially and Economically Just Way of Global Trading

Global trade

Every society has engaged in trade and the societies that rose to prominence were those that mastered the art of commerce. Historically, those people and societies with access to the best trade routes, the best land and the best skills relentlessly exploited those who did not.

Globalization refers to a system of global trading between nations. Currently, the most widely recognized and practiced system is known as free trade as in NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement, not yet finalized).

As the 21st century dawned, crushing poverty, soaring debt and ongoing political instability forced developing countries to skew their economies toward producing natural resource exports, frequently at the expense of their own people. As a result there exists a vast inequity in the distribution of the world's assets that is immoral and unjust. The world population in 2009 was approximately 6 billion. Of that number, 5 billion lived on less than \$2 a day. The wealth of the top 1% of households then exceeded the combined wealth of the bottom 95%.

The way in which big multinational corporations go about doing business is making the rich richer and the poor even more mired in poverty. Big business gets wealthier by exploiting poor workers all over the world, mostly in already impoverished developing countries. The dissolution of tariffs guaranteed in international trade pacts like NAFTA allows large corporations to use cheap labor from developing countries to produce the most goods possible at the expense of workers. The use of child labor and sweatshop conditions further increases profit for big business and increases the misery and poverty of workers.

Fair Trade – the alternative

Fair Trade, or Alternative Trade, refers to the exchange of goods based on principles of economic and social justice, human dignity, community, and environmental sustainability. The key goals of Fair Trade are to empower low-income, disadvantaged or otherwise marginalized artisans, craftspeople and farmers around the globe to better their conditions, and to promote understanding between them and First World consumers. Fair Trade increases the living standards of small-scale farmers and artisans in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other developing regions. Fair Trade businesses must meet the most rigorous standards for ensuring worker well being and empowerment. Advocates of Fair Trade seek to create a system of global exchange that works for producers and consumers.

What are the benefits of Fair Trade?

Fair Trade is an investment in people and their communities. Fair Trade businesses pay a fair wage in the local context that covers the cost of merchandise as well as giving the producer a good financial return. They provide equal opportunities for all people. Producers often give back to their communities by educating children, investing in schools and health clinics and encouraging further development programs.

Fair Trade businesses engage in environmentally sustainable practices. Farmers use integrated crop management and organic practices by avoiding the use of chemicals to control pests. For example, 85% of Fair Trade coffee is organic.

Fair Trade businesses provide healthy and safe working conditions and do not engage in the use of child labor.

Fair Trade empowers women. Over 60% of Fair Trade producers are women and they are often the sole source of income for their families. Women are encouraged to participate and assume leadership roles in local cooperatives and women's programs.

Fair Trade businesses provide financial and technical assistance to producers whenever possible. Long term and stable relationships between importers and producers are essential and eliminate exploitative middlemen in global trading.

Fair Trade practices are supported abundantly in scripture and church teachings

Our Baptismal Covenant calls upon us to “seek and serve Christ in all persons,” to “strive for justice and peace among all people” and to “respect the dignity of every human being.” This is exactly what Fair Trade practices and principles strive for in addressing the economic and social injustices created by current big business trade practices.

What can you do to support the Fair Trade Alternative?

Become a **Conscious Consumer**.

- **Read labels** and try to avoid buying items from countries likely to be engaged in unfair trade practices.
- **Buy Fair Trade** items on-line. Every purchase improves the life of a producer family in a developing nation.
- **Find a store** near you that stocks Fair Trade products.
- **Educate yourself**. Visit the **Fair Trade Resource Network** at www.fairtraderesource.org. FTRN gathers and compiles research and data on Fair Trade advocates and galvanizes Fair Trade organizations and individuals seeking to get involved. FTRN seeks to raise consumer awareness about improving people's lives through Fair Trade Alternatives.
- **Support local produce farmers** who are using organic farming techniques.

What can my church do to support the Fair Trade Alternative?

- Buy **Bishop's Blend** coffee or another Fair Trade coffee available locally. Invite your congregation members to a coffee hour where they can learn more about the difference Fair Trade makes for coffee farmers.
- Make **Fair Trade purchases** part of your church's purchasing priorities.
- Hold a **Fair Trade Holiday Craft Sale** featuring crafts from local **Fair Trade** businesses.
- **Start a campaign** to visit local supermarkets, restaurants and businesses to encourage them to carry Fair Trade coffee, chocolates and other items.

Additional resources

Here are some websites for more information on Fair Trade and to buy Fair Trade products.

Fair Trade Federation
www.fairtradefederation.org

Oxfam International
www.oxfam.org

Far East Handicrafts
www.fareasthandicrafts.com

World Fair Trade Organization
www.wfto.org

Fair Trade Resource Network
www.fairtraderesource.org

TransFair USA
www.transfairusa.org

Global Exchange
www.globalexchange.org

Sweatshop Watch
www.change.org/sweatshop_watch

Fair Trade Foundation
www.fairtrade.org.uk

Jubilee 2000
www.jubilee2000uk.org

Equal Exchange
www.equalexchange.com

Free the Children
www.freethechildren.com

Green America
www.greenamerica.org

Multinational Monitor
<http://multinationalmonitor.org>

Barbara Novak
Spokane, WA

Affordable Housing

The problem

Even as the real estate boom (or bubble?) of recent years has increased the wealth of homeowners and the overall health of the economy, millions of Americans still struggle with the problem of affordable housing.

Housing is the largest expense in the budgets of most Americans, but for the poor and near poor it is often overwhelming. Nationally, more than one in four households face a housing cost “burden” (the federal government defines this as spending more than 30% of after-tax income on housing); among low-income households, the figure is more than half.³ Minimum-wage earners and single-parent households are at especially high risk for excessive housing cost burden.

Excessive housing costs threaten the present economic conditions as well as the long-term financial security of families. Unaffordable housing can lead to overcrowding, as families are required to force more people into less space; to excessive debt, as households are forced to borrow more to meet their housing costs; and even to poor health, as money spent on housing is unavailable for other needs, such as medical care and good nutrition. Renters with burdensome housing costs are particularly disadvantaged, as their expenses make it nearly impossible to save enough to buy and build equity in their own home.

Causes of the problem

The crisis in affordable housing is a complex economic problem, with various causes. For many households, low wages or unemployment may simply make it difficult or impossible to pay the rent or mortgage (a particular problem in areas with declining or depressed economies). Other families may earn a decent income, but live in an area where especially high housing costs consume a burdensome portion of that income (this is the case in many “hot” housing markets on the east and west coasts). Still others may have been victimized by predatory lending (see the relevant article in this booklet) or housing discrimination). Housing issues are often community- and even neighborhood-specific, so the exact character of housing affordability problems can vary widely from place to place and from household to household.

Most generally, though, the central cause of affordable housing problems is the small (and diminishing) supply of affordable units. All things being equal, developers prefer to invest in properties at the higher end of the market, leaving a shortage of housing for low and moderate-income people. Many federal subsidies that gave private investors an incentive to supply affordable housing are running out, causing many affordable units to be converted to market-rate housing, or else fall into disrepair and abandonment.

³ “Meeting Our Nation’s Housing Challenges,” Report of the Bipartisan Millennial Housing Commission Appointed by the Congress of the United States, 2002.

The federal government has been steadily reducing its support and subsidization of housing for low-income people. According to the Los Angeles Times, “the amount of money that Congress and the president have authorized to be spent on housing assistance has plunged by nearly two-thirds in the last 25 years, from an inflation-adjusted \$82 billion in 1978 to \$29 billion [in 2003].”⁴

The position of the Bible and the Church

The idea of hospitality is central to biblical teachings, especially in the gospel and the prophets. Isaiah insists that a proper fast to the Lord requires “bring[ing] the homeless poor into your house” (58:7). Jesus speaks often of the duty to welcome the poor stranger, perhaps most dramatically in Matthew 25 (“And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? Just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me.”). Jesus and his disciples themselves traveled in poverty and depended on others to open their homes and offer shelter. In sending the disciples forth on their missions, “He said to them, ‘Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money--not even an extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.’” (Luke 9:3-5)

The Episcopal Church’s 2003 General Convention reaffirmed the church’s commitment to safe and affordable housing for low-income households.

What to do

In advocating for affordable housing, it is especially important to engage government officials and decision-makers at the local level, where most housing issues are actually decided. Affordable housing advocates can insist that permits for major new economic development projects (particularly those supported by taxpayers) include significant provisions for affordable housing.

In urban areas undergoing gentrification, advocates should demand that this process be well managed. Gentrification of marginal areas can bring a rise in property values, safer neighborhoods, and better schools. Unfortunately, it can also lead to the displacement of the low-income residents who saw the area through its more difficult times. It is essential to maintain an adequate supply of affordable housing to avoid this unfair outcome.

Lobbying at the federal level can also affect the amount of money devoted to ensuring affordable housing. Advocates can tell their representatives to stop the decline in federal spending on housing for low-income people, and support policies that enable expanded homeownership for low-income and first time buyers.

Beyond advocacy, moreover, many churches and faith-based organizations across the country are actively and directly involved in developing affordable housing for their communities, often through nonprofit community development corporations (CDCs). Communities with acute shortages of adequate housing have been transformed by the efforts of church-based development. ENEJ and

⁴ Peter G. Gosselin, “The Poor Have More Things Today -- Including Wild Income Swings,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 12, 2004.

affiliated organizations and congregations have developed an impressive amount of experience and expertise in developing affordable housing. See the section below for examples.

Other resources

Stacia M. Brown, "Building Hope: Faith-based initiatives tackle the affordable housing crisis," *Sojourners*, February 2004.

<http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=magazine.article&issue=soj0402&article=040223>

Episcopal (and other faith-based) CDCs involved in affordable housing development (this is a very partial list):

Abyssinian Development Corporation

4 West 125th St.
New York, NY 10027
212-368-4471
www.adcorp.org

Bethel New Life, Inc.

4950 W. Thomas
Chicago, IL 60651
773-473-7870
www.bethelnewlife.org

Episcopal Housing Corporation

3900 Roland Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21211
410 366-6200
Fax: 410-366-2961
Web: www.ehc.org-md.org
(Daniel McCarthy, Executive Director)

St. Edward's Redevelopment Corporation

605 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637
(The Rev. Dr. Richard L. Tolliver)

Beaver Street Enterprise Center

1225 West Beaver Street
Jacksonville, FL 32209
(Jackie Perry, Manager)
904-265-4700
Fax: 904-265-4740
Web: www.bsecenter.org
Email: info@bsecenter.org

Episcopal Community Development

31 Mulberry Street
Newark, NJ 07102
973-430-9986
Fax: 973-622-6511
(Carla Lerman, Executive Director)
ecd07102@dioceseofnewark.org
<http://www.ecdonline.org>

Episcopal Housing Ministry (EHM)

P.O. Box 17111
Raleigh, NC 27619
919-884-0110
Web: episcopalhousingministry.homestead.com
Email: ehm1@earthlink.net
(Robert Henley)

John Mark Summers
Brooklyn, New York

Living Wages

What is wrong

Some economic development strategies attract businesses by offering huge tax breaks and other benefits. This model frequently brings in employers of low wage jobs. Without sufficient income, families are forced to use city and county services to provide for their basic food, health and housing costs.

On the other hand, economic justice activists can be encouraged by the progress of various living wage campaigns. A national study showed that living wage laws are not only attracting increasing support (with over eighty now enacted since 1994 and dozens more pending), but are actually working to reduce poverty levels.

In 1994 Baltimore food bank operators noticed that many of their clients were full-time employees with city contractors. The contemporary living wage movement began when Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD) worked with unions and community groups to raise wages for city contractors. That year, Baltimore enacted a living wage law.

Proponents generally define a “living wage” as the amount a full-time worker must earn to pay for basic needs—housing, food, childcare, transportation, health care and taxes. Living wage campaigns highlight the gap between wages and the cost of living for working families. Local ordinances require a wage of at least \$8.20 an hour—higher than the current minimum wage of \$7.50. Some ordinances require a higher wage if no benefits are offered. (The federal minimum wage amounts to \$203 per week and \$10,702 per year—below the national poverty threshold of \$12,682 for a single parent with one child and \$18,660 for a couple with two children.)

As living wage campaigns began to have success, some large employers took notice. At least five states—Arizona, Colorado, Louisiana, Missouri and Utah--passed laws that ban any local living wage ordinances. In 2003 the Tennessee state senate passed such a bill; however, its companion remained in a house committee.

The reluctance of state legislatures and city councils to pass living wage (or minimum wage) laws has forced proponents to mount ballot initiatives or referendums. When the Albuquerque city council refused to pass a minimum wage, ACORN coordinated a petition campaign to put the issue on the ballot. The proposal would have raised the city’s minimum wage to \$7.50 an hour and applied to businesses with ten or more employees. Opponents mounted a television and radio campaign claiming the proposal violated citizens’ privacy, and the measure failed October 2005

What is the broader importance of the living wage movement? How significant is it in the larger scheme of critical social justice issues facing the church, such as hunger, poverty, racism, sexism and the justice of the economic system itself? It may be helpful to look at the term itself: living wage.

Unlike the term “minimum wage,” which is an economic category, the notion of a “living wage” has a moral connotation. Behind it is a simple but powerful premise, namely that anyone who works full time for a living should not have to live and raise a family in poverty. But it is not yet widely recognized that living wage campaigns and the strategy driving the leading advocates of the movement embrace much more than just the aim of raising the wages of low-income workers. The movement embraces a larger vision and is basically about three things: power, the distribution of power, and the responsibility of government to ensure that fairness and justice prevail in our cities and communities (and ultimately in our nation).

The living wage movement addresses larger systemic issues--hunger, racism, sexism, economic injustice and the powerlessness of those at the bottom of the ladder, who are disproportionately people of color and women. All of these issues, needless to say, are deeply intertwined with the present tolerance of an unjust economic order.

Our faith

“My chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.” –Isaiah 65:22

“Do to others as you would have them do to you.”--Luke 6:31

Theologian Walter Brueggeman observes God’s rescue of the enslaved Israelites as told in the Exodus story: “That rescue, however, was not an easy miracle. It was accomplished through tedious, nerve-wracking negotiations led by Moses, supported and authorized by God. In some part, this emancipation of the helpless poor who became Israel is accomplished by human agency that refused to accept degrading poverty and economic injustice as a permanent or legitimate social condition.” Brueggeman's description of the prolonged facedown between Moses and the Pharaoh before the Israelites were liberated is an apt template for the growing living wage movement around the country. It is apt not only in the great effort it demands, but also in the vision of new hope that is empowering its refusal to accept degrading poverty and injustice as an ongoing social condition.

The General Convention of 2000, reaffirming a similar resolution in 1997, passed a resolution “Poverty: National Support for the Implementation of a Just Wage.” It urged bishops and leaders within their dioceses “actively to support the ongoing implementation of a living wage within the institutions of the church and continue to advocate the passage of living wage ordinances at all government levels.” In this vein the 2003 General Convention passed resolutions supporting both our involvement in living wage campaigns in our communities, and our need to pay the Church’s own employees a living wage. The same convention urged Congress to raise the federal minimum wage to at least \$8.70 an hour--the hourly

equivalent of an annual wage at the current federal poverty line, \$18,100 for a family of four.

The Diocese of Los Angeles has taken the lead on an interfaith level and within the Episcopal Church. The Diocese has pushed parishes and missions to bring their own employees into compliance with a “living wage” standard, parallel to that stipulated by the City of Los Angeles under the city’s own living wage ordinance (passed in 1997). It does recognize that in some cases of hardship there will be exceptions; the diocesan resolution is, like the national one, not binding.

In October 2005, the Episcopal Church’s Executive Council announced plans to ask the 2006 General Convention to authorize a survey of employment of lay employees, their compensation and benefits.

What can we do

1. Participate in and support local and state living wage campaigns.
2. Participate in and support living wage campaigns at local colleges or universities.
3. Oppose state legislation barring counties and cities from enacting living wage ordinances.
4. Find out if your church and diocese pays non-clergy employees a living wage.
5. Participate in studies. The Diocese of Los Angeles has done this.

Additional resources

Organizations

Episcopal Network for Economic Justice (ENEJ)
Contact Martha Gardner at e-mail: mgardner25@comcast.net
Web site: www.enej.org

ACORN
88 3rd Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11217
Phone: (718) 246-7900
Fax: (718) 246-7939
E-mail: natexdirect@acorn.org
Web site: www.acorn.org

Living Wage Resource Center
739 8th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
Contact: Jen Kern at (202) 547-2500
Web: www.livingwagecampaign.org
E-mail: naacorncom@acorn.org

Established by ACORN in 1998, it tracks the living wage movement and provides materials and strategies in living wage campaigns.

Economic Policy Institute (EPI)
1333 H Street NW
Suite 300, East Tower
Washington, DC 20005-4707
Phone: (202) 775-8810
Fax: (202) 775-0819
E-mail: epi@epi.org
Web site: www.epi.org

National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice
1020 West Bryn Mawr, 4th floor
Chicago, IL 60660
Phone: (773) 728-8400
Fax: (773) 728-8409
E-mail: info@iwj.org
Web site: www.iwj.org or www.nicwj.org

Books and videos

Living Wage Campaigns: An Activist's Guide to Building the Movement for Economic Justice by David Reynolds. 2003 Cost \$15 (make check to ACORN) Order from ACORN, 739 8th St. SE, Washington, DC 20003. This *Guide* has profiles of successful campaigns, information on building a coalition, doing research, responding to opponents, and conducting an electoral strategy. It has a draft of a model ordinance. Portions of the *Guide* are available on the Internet in a PDF format at www.laborstudies.wages.edu

The Rev. Canon Dick Gillett has several resources including a video and printed materials. Contact the Rev. Canon R. W. "Dick" Gillett, 719 N. 67th St., Seattle, WA 98103, Phone: (206) 788-1354 or e-mail: dgillseattle@yahoo.com.

Let Justice Roll Down: American Workers at the New Millennium A video, made by the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, placing the struggle of low wage workers in a larger economic justice perspective, focusing on the struggle of workers in Los Angeles and the response of the interfaith community there. The video is newly available in English and Spanish in a 10-minute version, and also in the original 30-minute version (English only). There is also 46-page printed booklet of the same title, with detailed economic analysis and religious response and resources, published in Dec. 1999.

"It's About More Than Just Wages" is a short (4-page) introduction to the concept and the significance of the rising living wage movement in the country, with special relevance for the religious community. See *The Witness* web site, www.thewitness.org/agw/gillett.

The Rev. Cn. Richard "Dick" Gillett and Verna M. Fausey
Seattle, WA and Nashville, TN

The Problem of Hunger and The Blueprint to End Hunger

What is wrong

Every year, nearly 35 million Americans, including 13 million children, are threatened by hunger. Many children rely on a free school lunch as their only meal of the day. Many elderly people eat too little to maintain good health. Working parents often skip meals so that their children may eat. Food banks have had to keep evening hours so that working poor families may have access to food contributions.

Across the state of Pennsylvania, 1.2 million people -- about one in 10 -- live in households where someone goes without enough food to eat, according to anti-hunger advocates. In Allegheny County alone, it is estimated that more than 85,000 people use food pantries to feed their families. Pennsylvania pantries reported that between 2001 and 2005, as the national poverty rate steadily increased, they saw a 23 percent increase in people needing help. The same statistics are echoed nationwide.

The decrease of adequate and affordable housing and of low-income rental assistance programs, the rising cost of utilities, expensive and often inadequate health care, lack of adequate child care subsidies for low-income working families, and a unrealistically low minimum wage all mean that working poor families simply have less and less money to spend on food.

Among industrialized countries, the United States is the only one that still tolerates widespread hunger within its borders. At the 1996 World Food Summit, the United States pledged to cut domestic food insecurity in half by 2010, but progress against hunger has been far below the rate needed to reach that goal.

Sadly, the last resort for families with hunger has been weakening as state and federal budgets cut resources for food security. Over the past several decades, U.S. leaders have worked in a bipartisan way to develop national nutrition programs such as the child nutrition programs, the Food Stamp Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). These programs are often our last line of defense against hunger. Although they are effective, today these programs are severely under-funded and fail to reach many people. By strengthening the programs and improving people's access to them, we can do much more to reduce hunger.

Our faith

[Matthew 25]

A General Convention resolution passed in 1985 (A080) called on the government to reorder budget priorities to alleviate hunger. This was echoed by the February 1995 Executive Council meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, that called on the church to support federal nutrition programs. We have been quick

to respond to human suffering and mindful of the responsibility that wealth brings. But despite our abundance and charitable spirit, we all have much work to do to assure that every American is adequately fed.

What can be done

On June 3, 2004, Hunger Awareness Day, the National Anti-Hunger Organizations (NAHO) released a working document, "A Blueprint to End Hunger." As part of the document, *The Millennium Declaration to End Hunger in America* calls upon our nation's leaders and all people to join together to end hunger in America. We are called to work together, private and public leaders, community, religious and charitable groups, so that we may achieve an America where hunger is but a distant memory and we live true to the values of a great nation.

Recommendations as we prepare to raise a strong moral voice of public support:

- We can declare the ability to purchase needed food as a basic human right. We can move toward a future where everyone enjoys that right as a realistic, affordable and morally compelling goal for the United States. We know how to end hunger and other advanced industrialized nations already have done so.
- We can remember in prayer that the common good is achieved through political will of all faithful people.
- The Episcopal Public Policy Network can join with the NAHO when immediate national public policy action is called for.
- We can encourage diocesan participation and parish engagement in the study and recommendations of "A Blueprint to End Hunger."
- We can encourage dioceses to participate in and recommend letter writing campaigns and active support for needed legislation.
- We can encourage engagement in state and local e-advocacy and a commitment to address every legislative level with the power to act to end hunger locally.
- We can support our local allies in our communities by working on locally recommended hunger advocacy, and by supporting local food banks and hunger education organizations.
- We can observe National Hunger Awareness Day (June 3) in our dioceses and parishes. National Hunger Awareness Day was first recognized in 2002, and provides a platform for American anti-hunger organizations to speak out and raise awareness about the serious problem of hunger in the United States. More than 34 million Americans - including 13 million children - depend on help each year from a national network of more than 50,000 food banks and food rescue organizations, community and faith-based charities, and government agencies. To learn more, visit www.hungerday.org.

More resources

The Blueprint to End Hunger can be accessed at <http://www.frac.org/Blueprint%20to%20End%20Hunger.pdf>

National Anti-Hunger Organizations

Feeding America www.feedingamerica.org

Bread for the World www.bread.org

Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) www.foodsecurity.org

Congressional Hunger Center www.hungercenter.org

End Hunger Network www.endhunger.com

Food Research and Action Center www.frac.org

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger www.mazon.org

RESULTS—the power to end poverty www.results.org

Share Our Strength www.strength.org

World Hunger Year (WHY) www.whyhunger.org

Wanda Guthrie
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Crisis of Working Poverty: Realities, Responses, Networking Opportunities

- Advocates for social and economic justice in the church are well aware of the existence of poverty and increasing income inequalities in the United States. Nonetheless it's useful to have some basic figures at our fingertips so we can keep challenging people to understand that they represent real lives of real working people right in our own churches and communities. So here are some data:
- As of 2006, about 36.5 million people living in the U.S. were under the poverty line, representing an annual income of less than \$20,600 for a family of four.
- A minimum "living wage" for a family of four – one barely adequate to meet real costs of food, housing, health care, transportation and other necessities – ranges from about \$35,000 to above \$40,000 annually, depending upon location. Even with the long-overdue passage and signing of a bill in 2009 to raise the federal minimum wage, it remains pitifully inadequate. The current (2012) minimum wage is \$7.50.
- The number of people without health insurance has climbed to 47 million.

In the last two years for which data are available, the Congressional Budget Office says that income inequality among households grew ore quickly than any other two-year period on records, back to 1979. Over those two years the growth of inequality transferred \$400 billion from the bottom 95 percent to the top 5 percent of the population.

We can consider three responses to address these crippling realities, assuming we want to enable and empower people:

1) Living wage campaigns

After a surge of victorious living wage campaigns in cities large and small in the early years of this century, the number of cities with living wage ordinances has leveled off at about 150. ACORN, the national community action leader in such campaigns, has refocused its actions on organizing at the political level to pass state minimum wage laws (many of which are higher than the federal law). It is also waging state or municipal campaigns to win paid sick days for workers and related benefits.

At the 2006 General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed two resolutions on these topics. One, D047, commits the church "at all levels to contract solely with union hotels at its meetings, or to obtain confirmation that local prevailing

'living wages' are paid by all hotels the church uses." While something of a step forward, in practice the determination of what a reasonable 'living wage' should be in a particular locale, as well as finding out the wages a hotel might actually be paying its employees, has proved difficult. As a general rule we recommend an hourly wage of at least \$12 for hotels where there is no union, and/or paid health care benefits of at least \$2. We need to push for dioceses to adopt policy statements establishing these norms, as well as explicit adherence to Res. D047 above. The best resource for checking out hotels is the non-profit INMEX (Informed Meetings Exchange), at www.inmex.org.

2) Advocacy and support for workers in organizing

The other 2006 resolution, C008, reaffirmed the right of workers to organize and form unions. It also affirmed "the right to organize and form unions for seasonal and migrant workers who historically have been deprived of those rights. We support the right to organize and form unions as a means to securing adequate wages, benefits, and safety conditions for all workers. We encourage all levels of the church to be informed about, and act accordingly, when rights of workers to associate is being jeopardized. Current and recent organizing campaigns that religious groups in the West Coast have participated in include hotel workers, grocery workers, janitors, home care workers and ports truckers.

3) Community benefits agreements

This is a relatively new strategy that is having striking success in reshaping how land use and economic development decisions impact the lives of ordinary working families. The CBAs are basically an organizing strategy to address workers' basic needs, such as affordable housing, living wage jobs, local hiring, and health care. The campaign participants are diverse constituencies, including community organizations, organized labor, environmental groups and interfaith organizations. Together, they painstakingly build power to change public policy decisions at the municipal and sometimes regional level. Thus, the long-practiced conventional models offering developer-friendly incentives with little or no thought to broad community welfare are rejected for more progressive people-oriented goals for the common good. The most successful victories have occurred in the Los Angeles area, with a network of community groups from Southern California, the Bay Area and Seattle beginning to share a common vision. The vehicle for this networking and community building is The Partnership for Working Families, with affiliated groups now formed coast to coast. Website for information is www.communitybenefits.org. A related website with a plethora of information and examples of collaborative successes is the LAANE—A New economy for All at www.laane.org.

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Immigration – The Saga Continues

This is intended to be an updated Issue Paper on the two previous Issue Papers on Immigration. The hope immigrant rights advocates and the immigrant communities were expressing in 2006 has been dashed over and over again. Poll after poll indicates that the majority of Americans favor comprehensive immigration reform, and time and time again, bills come before Congress, and with the divided house in this country there are never quite enough votes to get any type of positive reform bill to the floor (e.g., the dashed hope for passage of the Dream Act in December, of 2010).

The United States is stuck in one of the most regressive immigration systems in the world. Increasing deportations, highly skilled and needed workers cannot get visas, so these highly skilled workers are immigrating to Germany, Canada and Australia for example, benefiting high tech industries elsewhere.

Enforcement Only

The trend in US immigration policy over the last 6 years has gone from looking at ways to partially move forward with immigration reform, but nothing has been authorized by congress, and immigration has become a hot button issue for politicians. We have seen a few programs, but they are hardly helpful:

Secure Communities

This originally thought to be voluntary program asked local law enforcement and jails to share finger prints with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). If determined that an individual most likely is un-documented, or had previous immigration violations, an automatic hold is put on the individual, and when his/her case has been adjudicated, s/he is held for ICE. Thousands of non criminal immigrants have been deported because of the Secure Communities program (and an occasional Legal Permanent Resident or U.S. Citizen). The program theoretically was intended to deport violent criminals, but that is not what the demographics of deportees are indicating.

Washington State was “Secure Community” free (no county had voluntarily signed on to the Secure Communities Program) until April of 2012 when ICE declared Secure Communities mandatory in Washington. A few months later, New York was faced with the same issue. There is resistance in some counties; the verdict is out as of this writing.

State Bills

SB 1070, the infamous Arizona Immigration Enforcement Law, which parts are currently under consideration in the Supreme Court, started a chain of anti immigrant legislation in other states including Georgia, Alabama and Indiana. These laws basically say “it is against the law to be in the State of if an individual cannot prove legal status in the United States”. Law enforcement officers who have “reason” to suspect that an individual is out of status can ask for evidence of legal status. This has certainly set up conditions for racial

profiling. Even though Washington State does not have an anti-immigrant bill, US Border Patrol has focused predominantly on Latino/Indigenous Latin Americans in their stops. Interesting since Canadians are the highest percentage of border crossers into Washington State.

In states which have passed the anti-immigrant laws, farmers, employers from other industries have cried out for workers. The argument that US Citizens would take these jobs if wages were higher may be valid, but, the consumers in this country are not willing to pay \$10.00 per peach.

Detention

Immigration Detention Centers in many states are private for profit businesses that are getting rich off of un-necessarily detaining non-criminal immigrants. The Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington operated by the GEO corporation houses 1500 immigrants at about \$100.00 per night per person – this money is hardly being spent on providing adequate diets to detainees. Many detainees end up buying additional food from an in detention center store to supplement the food they are given – more profit for guess who. Wells Fargo Bank have become the focus of protests as one of the banks that invests in the building of detention centers, and funding anti-immigrant legislation. Several communities of faith have divested from Wells Fargo because of these investments.

A Few Steps Forward Leave Questions

Prosecutorial Discretion: As of this writing, immigration cases are being reviewed by government prosecutors to determine what cases could be closed as low priority cases. This may offer relief from deportation for some, but, it does not grant them any kind of legal status or work permit, they remain in limbo with millions of other un-documented immigrants living in the United States.

Deferred Action for Dreamers: On June 15th, 2012, President Obama enacted a two year deferred action for youth and young adults who have been in the US for a long time (since childhood), have graduated from high school, have a GED or served in the military. Deportations against individuals in these categories who are in proceedings will be temporarily halted. Young adults not in proceedings who meet the qualifications will be given the opportunity to apply for a work permit. At this writing, we are not sure what the process will be, but caution is needed that some who are not on the radar screen of immigration authorities will put themselves on that screen. We do not know what will happen in two years or under a different administration – this is only a band aid and a weak one at that. The dreamers are referred to as “having been brought to the US through no fault of their own”. This infers that their parents are criminals, criminals who are working for the survival of families. Immigrants are not to blame for the massive global and corporate economic oppression of which they have become victims . Small family farms which have sustained villages for years are driven out by corporate agricultural giants, leaving small family farmers with no choice but to migrate.

The human faces of these policies and programs call us as a church to advocate for implementation of comprehensive immigration reform. Six months ago, a man from my home parish was deported as a result of an early morning raid. His

wife returned to Mexico to join him, but the couples two older children, US Citizens and high school students have remained in the US with relatives, they simply are at an age where they could not make that shift. Their two younger siblings, also US Citizens are in Mexico with their parents, but are very homesick. Two years ago “Angel” called his family in Washington State to let them know he had just arrived in Arizona – they have never heard from him again. Well over 300 people per year are found dead in the Arizona desert.

Countless families are left in limbo for years while one member goes through “removal proceedings” Rene Martinez of Auburn, Washington (St. Matthew/San Mateo Episcopal Church) entered the US legally with a work visa every year. He fell out of status as his paperwork for legal permanent residency was being processed, and subsequently picked up in a work place raid. Out on bond and his residency petition still pending, he has been fighting his case for over five years now. Rene and his family were declared a Sanctuary Family on May 9th, 2009 – the first family in Washington State to declare Sanctuary under the New Sanctuary Movement which began in several cities across the U.S. on that May 9th date.

What Can We Do

Fair treatment of immigrants, and the practice of Sanctuary have a deeply rooted place in Scripture and through out church history. Biblical stories and sagas are filled with stories of people on the move, being led by and protected by God; Abraham, Israel during the Exodus and Mary and Joseph’s flight into Egypt. Communities of Faith have taken an active role in solidarity with people seeking safety – “The Underground Railroad” was certainly faith based, and it was religious communities that often responded to persecuted Jewish Europeans during World War II. The Sanctuary Movement of the 80’s which offered protection to fleeing Central Americans has been picked up by the New Sanctuary Movement today accompanying immigrants at risk of separation from family and community.

There are several things communities of faith can participate in to be in solidarity with immigrant communities:

Education – Host a community information evening; invite advocates, immigrants and immigration attorneys to learn the real picture of policy and impact.

Relationships – Form relationships with immigrant families and or congregations. It is especially helpful to bring youth groups together with immigrant youth communities.

Advocate – sign up for The Episcopal Public Policy Network, including the Immigrant Advocates Network. This network will keep us updated on current policy and action steps needed.

Prayers – For All Saints Day or Day of the Dead (Dia de los Muertos) remember those who have died on the dangerous journey from home communities to the

US (a list of names can be found at derechoshumanos.org and Detention Watch Network lists names of those who have died in immigration detention. Finally, a bumper sticker on my office door states "We did not cross the border, the border crossed us" - at whose expense and at whose gain is this all about.

Updated: June 25, 2012

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Racism and Economic Justice

What is the Issue?

The connection between racism and economic injustice is strong. Poverty is a form of social violence, one of many to which persons and communities of color are subjected to a greater than average degree. Worldwide, poverty is the norm rather than the exception. Our present economic system is organized for the benefit of a small minority of non-poor who make the major economic decisions that affect everyone else. Even those who benefit in small ways are still worse off than they would be if wealth and decision-making were more fairly distributed. Inequitable distribution of wealth, disparities in access to essential goods, services and relationships, and unequal access to credit, education, and employment are some of the chief forms this violence takes. To this, we should add environmental racism, in which toxic waste, poor air and water quality, and other environmental problems disproportionately affect communities of color.

Racism is part of an interlocking system of oppression and privilege and cannot be understood in abstraction from oppression based on class, sex, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. Poverty is by no means the only form of violence involved in racism and white privilege. With the end of slavery and legalized segregation in the United States, however, poverty retains a degree of social acceptability that is no longer so openly accorded to other forms of racist violence. The existence of wealthy and middle class persons of color by no means undermines this point. These children of God are still harmed by a system of privilege and dominance, of which poverty is only one of many tools. Solidarity in the struggle against class-based oppression on the part of poor whites and people of color, as well as a common struggle against racism and other forms of oppression, are inseparable elements in any effective work for justice and peace. For too long, elites have successfully played to racism among working class whites, often cloaked in coded language, in order to sustain a political economy (increasingly a global one) rife with deadly injustice.

Resources from Holy Scripture and the Church's liturgy

God creates all humankind in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:26-27). Seen in this light, all sorts of human differences are interesting facts about us, but they cannot form the basis for the kinds of oppressive violence on the basis of difference that come into play in racism. Moreover, "race" is itself a socially constructed and problematic concept, tied up with pernicious ideas about "purity." The myth of our descent from two common ancestors, Adam and Eve, points to a profound truth. All human beings share a genetic heritage despite (always partial) geographic and cultural isolation that leads to observed "racial" differences. There is plenty of sharing of genetic material across "racial" lines, not only in "bi-racial" or "interracial" persons but also in those who are identified, by themselves or others, as belonging to only one particular "race." Race is a real part of our social landscape but it is a cultural, historical, and mutable reality, and not a

difference in "natural kind." The doctrine of our creation in God's image and likeness ought to be employed to challenge these reified distinctions in a direct manner, but we should do so in a way that also celebrates difference. The diversity of the world is meant to reflect God's glorious beauty and not to become an occasion for violence (including the violence of poverty) committed against our neighbor. Through God's abundant gifts and faithful struggle, another world is possible.

The doctrine of the image of God grounds our promise in the baptismal covenant to "strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being." (BCP, p. 305) Response to this promise is insufficient to the extent that it involves merely a change in attitude. Striving and respecting are far more active than that. They involve struggle to transform unjust practices, relationships, and institutions, in which we all participate and in which some of us have vested interests. Holy Baptism entails the rejection of racism when we renounce "the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God." (BCP, p. 302). As Dr. King taught, racism, like other forms of oppressive violence, harms both the oppressed (first and foremost) and the oppressor (as well). This should form an integral part of baptismal catechesis and confirmation instruction, and it should be preached and taught publicly, especially but not only when baptismal vows are renewed.

In the Gospels and in Acts, Jesus is portrayed as the fulfillment of God's gracious and salvific will for all, seen throughout salvation history and proclaimed in Isaiah and other prophetic writings. In the liturgical year, this is especially evident in the season of Advent (see the year A readings, esp. Isaiah 2:1-5, 11:1-10 and Is. 40:3, which is used as an opening sentence for Morning Prayer and quoted by John the Baptist in Luke 3:6) and on the feasts of the Epiphany and Pentecost. At Pentecost in particular, we hear in Peter's sermon a citation from Joel 2:28-32, which speaks of God's Spirit being poured out on all flesh. As patristic theologians (both Greek and Latin) insist, in the particular man Jesus, the divine Logos is united with humanity in all its manifold diversity. In the Gospels, Luke's decision to trace the genealogy of Christ back to Adam (Luke 3:23-38) and his special concern with Samaritans and Gentiles throughout the Gospel present opportunities to preach the Gospel in connection with anti-racist struggle. In John, there is also a concern with the mission to Samaritans (Ch. 4), but it is in the transitional chapters to the so-called "book of glory," (Raymond Brown) that we observe the significance of the cross in bringing Greeks to Jesus (John 12:20ff.). In the hour of his lifting up (crucifixion-resurrection-exaltation), Jesus draws all people to himself (John 3:14-16, 12:32).

A related teaching is found in the writings of Paul and associated epistles, which take up the problem of how the Gentiles can be incorporated into the People of God without first becoming Jews. In the baptismal formula of Galatians (3:27-28), the hostile division between Jew and Gentile, which understood as such bears some similarities to theories of race, is seen to be overcome in Holy Baptism. In Ephesians, the author expands on this idea when he speaks of God creating "one new humanity out of the two" (2:15) as Jews and Gentiles come together in one flesh in the Body of Christ and of Jesus "breaking down the dividing wall of hostility" (2:14). This is confirmed by John's vision of the elders and saints

singing a new song, in which Christ the Lamb ransoms saints "from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Revelations 5:9, cp. BCP, pp. 93-94).

Racism, classism, and other forms of oppression run directly counter to the egalitarian vision present in creation, incarnation, and Holy Baptism. They also contradict the essential character of the Eucharistic assembly as a mixed body of "all sorts and conditions," which eats and drinks together in one place. In the context of the table-fellowship of Jesus, differences become gifts that enrich the community's life and the common good (1Corinthians 12-13, Romans 12), and social divisions call into question the community's discernment of the Body of Christ in the Lord's Supper (1Corinthians 11:17-34).

Actions of General Convention

Gathered in General Convention, the elected leadership of the Episcopal Church has taken action to combat racism as it affects both Church and society. It is important to realize that racism manifests itself in the Church not just as a privately held prejudice, but also as a social and institutional evil that wounds the Body of Christ and compromises our witness to the Gospel. Actions by General Convention and other official bodies do not exhaust the Church's response to racism, nor should they be allowed to become merely symbolic gestures to absolve the Church from its responsibility to make real changes at every level of the organization and in the surrounding culture. As with racial lines, the lines between Church and culture are essentially permeable and fluid (see K. Tanner, *Theories of Culture*). The doctrine of creation and the Gospel itself mandate our struggle against racism. Even if the Church took no "official action," beyond what is in the Bible and the liturgy, fighting racism and other forms of oppression would still be the responsibility of every baptized person. Again, this fact should always be stressed in catechesis and confirmation preparation, when expounding on the baptismal covenant and the significance of the Eucharistic assembly.

Some actions of General Convention seem aimed primarily at transforming the Church itself. The canons make the strongest statement in Title I, canon 17, section 5: "No one shall be denied rights, status or access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disabilities or age, except as otherwise specified by Canons." Other relevant canons concern discernment for lay and ordained ministries (III.1.2), the election of a rector (III.9.3), the acceptance of letters dismissory (III.9.4), and the granting of licenses to officiate (III.9.6).

Resolutions spell out the Church's commitment to eliminate racism from its own life through recommendations for parishes and dioceses (1982-A062, 1991-D043, 1994-A047); support for inclusion and justice in clergy deployment (1976-A064, 1991-A090, 1994-A045) and in recruiting and equipping lay leaders (1994-A046); and the specific mandates for the composition of and process used by interim bodies of the General Convention (1991-A082, 1991-A085, 1994-D135, 1997-A051). In some cases, particular processes of monitoring or institutional structures of accountability are called for (1979-D083, 1979-B059, 1985-A078, 1988-A092, 1988-A112, 1991-A199, 1991-D113, 2003-A010). The requirement

for anti-racism training for seminarians and lay leaders is particularly noteworthy (2000-B049, cp. 2006-A092), as is the Episcopal Church's call to study how we may have benefited economically from the practice of slavery (2006-A123). The Church has also called for its practices of socially responsible investing to reflect its anti-racist commitment (1982-D124) and for questions of racism to be taken into account when awarding vendor contracts (2000-B041).

Other actions of General Convention are aimed at combating racism in society. In addition to some more general statements (1991-B051, 1994-A048, 1994-D029, 1994-D136, 1997-A039, 1997-A128, 2000-A047, 2000-B006, 2003-D025), particular social ills bound up with racism are also singled out and particular policies commended to redress injustice. The Church's repeated commitment to its own affirmative action policy also contains an affirmation of the principle of affirmative action (1979-D083), which has general policy consequences and which has not been rescinded in an era when affirmative action is increasingly under assault in the courts. The Church has condemned the Klan and similar hate groups (1979-D066) and opposes discrimination in private clubs (1979-D079). The racism of our prison-industrial complex is addressed in resolutions supporting the repeal of mandatory sentence guidelines (2003-A008) and a moratorium on the construction of new maximum control prisons (1994-D010). There is a specific rejection of racial profiling and violence against Muslims and people of color (2003-D077). The Church has condemned environmental racism (2000-D005). The plight of at risk children is specifically tied to the development of anti-racism curricula (1994-B017). The Church has committed to study how racism affects our society's response to HIV/AIDS (1997-A046). Given the connection between social geography and racial injustice, affirmation of a commitment to urban ministry may serve to question suburban strategies of congregational development with racist overtones (2000-D052). Perhaps the strongest particular policy recommendations concern the Episcopal Church's support for legislation to make reparations for the economic consequences of slavery (2006-C011). The 2009 General Convention repudiated the "Doctrine of Discovery" under which the rights and cultures of Native Americans had been crushed.

General convention shows some awareness of the need for specific policies to combat racism as it affects particular communities. For example, racism sometimes takes the form of xenophobic violence and discrimination against immigrants, and the Church has expressly rejected this form of racism (1994-D132). In problematic language, the Church has also taken a stand in promoting Church wide advocacy of "Indian Rights" (1985-B007).

In some cases, the Episcopal Church has taken a position regarding struggles against racism and other forms of oppression in countries where the Episcopal Church does not have a presence but which are served by other member churches of the Anglican Communion. For example, we have expressed support for the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa (1976-D036), for minority rights in Japan (1991-D052), and, albeit somewhat cautiously, for the Palestinians (1991-D122). We have also called on the U.S. government to condemn caste-based oppression and untouchability (2000-D024).

It would be a mistake, though, to draw an overly sharp distinction between those actions designed to bring about justice in the Church and those designed to transform the world. An Anglican, incarnational ecclesiology presupposes an intimate relationship between the Body of Christ and the body politic. This perspective, albeit in a slightly different form, has survived even when we are no longer the established Church. As Gandhi and Dr. King taught us, self-purification is the necessary precondition for non-violent struggle.

R. William Carroll

The Effect of the Price of Gas on the Working Family

Over the past summer (2008), we all felt the effects of gas reaching \$4 and beyond. It was noticeable everywhere one looked. And while recent months have seen an easing of the gas price crunch (due, unfortunately, to the overall economic slowdown which is causing financial harm throughout the society), it is important to reflect on and remember that, for many people, a spike in the price of gas or other necessities is not just a pinch or a bit of a pain. These are the people for whom this is a real crisis.

I work at The House of Concern in Seneca County, New York. It is a food pantry and general assistance program. We try to provide food for a seven-day period. People are able to access the pantry once a month. We have always served a variety of people, but last summer saw a dramatic rise in the number of new clients. Prior to that summer, we served 170 families in a typical month, and out of that number we had maybe 10 new clients. Those were usually people who had something unexpected happen, such as a job loss or illness.

In July, we served 192 clients and out of that group were 32 new families. In August, we served 219 families and had 26 new families.

The newcomers all have similar stories. They work, they have families and they had a choice of filling the gas tank or buying food. If they bought food, with the rising costs at the grocery store, they had no money left for gas. If they didn't fill the tank, they couldn't go to work. If they didn't go to work they would not have the money to buy food. For the most part, these are the people who make "too much" to receive food stamps. The food stamp regulations have not changed to counter the rising cost of fuel or other necessities.

Some of you may be thinking that these people should use public transportation, but that is not an option for the most part around here. Rural areas have limited, if any, public transportation and jobs usually involve a commute, often of 20 miles or more. That is a lot of gas.

We are also seeing a group of people who have not had to come to a pantry in years but now can no longer survive without doing so. I had one such woman in this past summer. She has a full-time job that she has had for several years. She brought home \$320 a week. Out of that she paid \$110 for childcare and \$51 to fill her gas tank. That left her with \$159 with which to pay rent, utilities, food and anything else that comes up. The \$51 to fill the tank was only to pay to go back and forth to work. If she needed or wanted to go anywhere else, that cost went up. Luxuries like a phone and cable were dropped. It left little room for insurances and car maintenance was completely unaffordable. There was no cushion for any emergency. These people are coming to our food pantry.

This is one story from one day at the food pantry. I could give you many others. I could tell you that our numbers of elderly people actually went *down* over the

summer, because, as one older person explained to me, “Most of us just can’t afford a car and gas anymore.” So these people tried to carpool together, but that was not always easy. They also sometimes took the bus, but riding a bus when you are 80 and carrying bags of groceries is also not easy. Also, the bus runs only hourly, leading to long waits which were sometimes just too much for them. So they pooled their money and tried to come in together.

Our pantry is not unique. This is a situation that was and is being played out in food pantries all over, taking a toll on the food that pantries have to offer. The summer months are notorious for low donations. August is usually the lowest month of the year for donations. For many of us in that time of year, the shelves empty and funding is non-existent.

Our faith

“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:37-40)

“If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. You should open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.” (Deuteronomy 15:7)

What we can do

In his second inaugural address in 1937, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, “The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much: it is if we provide enough for those who have too little.”

The gap between the haves and the have-nots is getting wider. On July 31st of 2009 Exxon reported an 11.68 billion dollar profit for their second quarter. It was the biggest quarterly profit ever by a US corporation.

- Public awareness is key to addressing this issue. On July 31st, after hearing about Exxon’s amazing second quarter and figuring out the monthly statistics for the food pantry where I work, I wrote an e-mail that was picked up by the local paper and ran in its editorial section. I let people know just what kind of crisis we were facing with growing numbers and needs. The community response was immediate and heartfelt. To date, we have brought in \$27,000 for the pantry. This money came from individuals and groups seeing the need in their community and rising to the challenge to do what they could. They gave food and money, and they volunteered. They took the words of caring for their neighbors to heart and they acted upon them. It is important to personalize stories and make people feel ownership of the issue. Facts and figures are important, but it is people who are affected by this situation, and it is people that we need to focus on.

- Support local food banks. Know where your local food pantry is. Find out their needs. Have your parish “adopt” a pantry.
- Take up a special collection once a month for monetary donations.
- Encourage diocesan participation in letter writing campaigns for needed legislation.
- Encourage state and local advocacy towards the goal of ending hunger.
- Support hunger education organizations.
- Observe National Hunger Awareness Day (June 3) in your parishes and dioceses.
- Organize and participate in food drives.
- Make our voice heard politically. Let the politicians know that it is not all right that people have to decide between gas in their cars and food on their table. Refuse to elect those who think that it is.
- Start programs in our dioceses such as the one that was started by United Ministries in South Carolina. It was called “Our Eyes were Opened.” The program’s goal was to educate the “haves” to make wise and compassionate decisions for helping those in poverty, the belief being that helping those with wealth to better understand the reality of poverty will enable them to be better stewards of their wealth.

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Economic Impact of the War

Introduction

Like all wars, the justice or injustice of the War in Iraq may be judged on both the intentions of the warring nations and the impact of the war on the respective citizens of the warring nations. The war in Iraq failed on every ground to satisfy any claim to being a 'just' war from the perspective of intention as well as from the perspective of impact, but especially economic impact.

From the point of view of those affected in the United States, there was a perverse economic impact from the war that has at least two major dimensions:

- 1) the disproportionate burden of economic detriment placed on the most vulnerable of American society and
- 2) the loss of social cohesion and commonwealth enjoyed by all the citizens of the United States.

The issue surveyed in this brief paper, therefore, addresses the perverse economic impact of the War in Iraq in terms of economic vulnerability for specific groups and the loss of wealth in the nation as a whole.

Lost Social Infrastructure Due to the War in Iraq

\$500,000 a minute and \$750 million a day were the current estimated money costs of the war in Iraq when this paper was written in 2009. This is a war whose total costs are hidden in federal off-line budgets and 'emergency' allocations. Most observers agree that the final costs will be close to two trillion dollars.

Even were this magnitude of cost providing national security or funding an ethical national obligation, it would be questionable. That the war did neither constitutes infamy. Perhaps its most shameful domestic characteristic is the unequal burden placed on the most vulnerable in American society in terms of funding trade-offs for tax dollars to support the war.

The public financial context for the trade-off was the \$656.1 billion so far paid by American taxpayers to support the war.¹ (Remember this figure does not include other money and budget transfers and off-line allocations.) Alternative expenditures spent for society's well-being could have been:

- 193,370,980 people receiving health care for one year OR
- 679,232,570 homes with renewable electricity for one year OR

Note: The format of this paper disallows any discussion of just war theology. My stipulative definitions, viz.: intention and burden are well attested in the expansive literature and are not intended to be inclusive but rather a minimal threshold.

¹ National Priorities Project 2008, <http://www.nationalpriorities.org/tradeoffs?>

- 4,170,626 public safety officers for one year OR
- 11,251,447 music and arts teachers for one year OR
- 101,437,848 scholarships for university students for one year OR
- 5,103,740 affordable housing units OR
- 289,177,337 children with health care for one year OR
- 90,037,052 Head Start places for children for one year OR
- 10,777,823 elementary school teachers for one year OR
- 9,479,502 port container Inspectors for one year

The Disproportionate Burden of the Economic Cost of the War

This picture is stark in terms of social waste, but it is horrifying when seen within the context of the lives of those most vulnerable in American society. I focus on hunger and poverty as a joint indicator of who the vulnerable are and how they are at greater risk due to the economic impact of the war.

The Hungry

It is estimated that roughly 13 million households in America suffer from food insecurity defined by the federal government as those households who do not have access to enough nutrition to enjoy "active, healthy living." It is estimated that households with children had twice the rate of food insecurity than adult-only households. About half of these households do not have access to federally supported programs such as food stamps.²

The Poor

Poverty in America further defines vulnerability. About 15% of American families live in poverty. Children living in poverty comprise about 18% of the population. A shocking 31% of American families live at or below 200% of the "poverty level" (defined by the federal government as "a family of three with two children is considered 'poor' if they live on less than \$14,824"³). Poverty in America pre-dates the Iraq war but the vulnerability of the poor is deepened by the drain on federal funds that could have been used to address the growing crisis of need. A decade of extraordinary need was a policy result prior to the war in Iraq. Two events are representative:

1) In 1996, President Clinton and Congress eliminated the federal entitlement to public assistance.

2) Under the Bush administration's newer block grant program, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), states decide whether and how to offer benefits and must impose time limits and work requirements for recipients. States themselves are suffering reduced revenues and so the debate around

² NPP reports, "The participation in the Food Stamp Program declined after 1996 because the welfare reform law eliminated Food Stamp benefits to most legal immigrants and many able-bodied adults without dependents. Other provisions reduced the allotment a participant could receive."

³ NPP Quick Report on Poverty, 2008.

public assistance has centered largely on the 'drain' of tax dollars spent on needy families. (Spending on TANF is less than 1% of the total federal budget.)⁴

Given that approximately 93% of those on welfare are women and children, the reduction of tax-funded federal support by way of TANF limits amounts to a sentence of life-long poverty and inter-generational social and economic disability. The Bush administration created a policy option that preempted any possibility of addressing hunger and poverty by allocating federal tax dollars to war abroad instead of addressing life issues at home.

The hungry and poor represent those on the bottom of the economic-social ladder. They suffer from this war because they are vulnerable to the economic displacement of social services that governments can no longer provide due to wartime conditions. The foregone social good for American people in general due to this irresponsible war is astronomical, but there is an additional cost far beyond the dollars-and-cents calculation.

The Loss of the Common Wealth and the Christian Response

The loss of social cohesion, represented by division and despair within suffering communities of the poor and within the country as a whole, is an immeasurable cost of the war. That economic component must be estimated beyond the two trillion dollar war cost as the economic burden shifts to the poor and middle class.

When one calculates the trade-off costs in lost educational opportunities, health care provision, police and fire provision and the innumerable other lost social services, the picture is clear. Less clear is the insidious loss of the bond of sociability that we call a commonwealth. This "wealth" is not shifted to another group, nor is it recoverable. It is a dead loss. Its product is alienation and death.

As Christians, we merely need to look at Christ to know our duty in response to this harm. That response is the cross we need to pick up and carry.

Matthew 16: 24-26

Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?'

⁴ NPP also reports, "At \$17.5 billion, the cost of TANF roughly equals the amount that will be given to millionaires in the latest round of tax cuts in this year alone."

Resources

National Priorities Project
243 King St. #239
Northampton, MA 01060
Phone: (413) 548-9556
<http://www.nationalpriorities.org>

Center for Economic and Policy
Research
1161 Connecticut Ave. NW #400
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: (202) 293-5380
Fax: (202) 588-1356
Web: <http://www.cepr.net>
Email: cepr@cepr.net

Economic Policy Institute
1333 H St. NW, Suite 3000, East
Tower
Washington, DC 20005-4707
Phone: (202) 775-8810
Fax: (202) 775-0810
<http://www.corporations.org/index.html>

Institute for Policy Studies
1112 18th St. NW #600
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 234-9382
<http://www.ips-dc.org>

Friends Committee on National
Legislation
245 Second St. NE
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (202) 547-6000
Phone: 1-800-630-1330
<http://www.fcnl.org>

Human Rights Watch
392 Fifth Ave., 34th Floor
New York, NY 10118-3299
Phone: (212) 290-4700
<http://www.hrw.org>

Women's Action for New Directions
691 Massachusetts Ave.
Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: (781) 643-6740
Fax: 781) 643-6744
http://www.wand.org/wand_home.htm
Email: peace@wand.org

Rev. Dr. Elaine McCoy, PhD
Elyria, Ohio

Fresh Water and Economic Justice

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the Lord will answer them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. Isaiah 41:17

Connecting ecology and the economy enriches economic justice. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, in his “ecology and economy” 2005 lecture at University of Kent, challenged beliefs surrounding the separation or opposition of these two. Williams stated that the economy is a “wholly subsidiary of the environment and that the Earth ultimately controls economic activity.”

Today’s water problems require us to *SEE Justice* - that is, to connect social, environmental and economic justice issues. Every diocese in ECUSA should address the problems that threaten fresh water resources in the USA and in their companion dioceses around the world: increased demand for water, over-consumption, water abuse and use and privatization of water.

David L. Feldman, Ph.D., former University Tennessee Department of Political Science Chair, in his papers about faith-based stewardship of water and the case for a global freshwater policy writes: “...freshwater management is a growing global environmental challenge. According to the World Resources Institute, the world’s thirst for water is likely to become one of the most pressing resource issues of the 21st Century as demands of a growing population increase. Conflicts over water supply are likely to worsen as surface and groundwater supplies become over-stressed. A number of inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations report that developing and developed countries face a far-reaching crisis as a result of growing reliance on irrigation for crop production; rapid urbanization and attendant growth in water consumption; diminishing supplies due to stream and aquifer depletion and deteriorating and/or poorly maintained urban water infrastructure; and, internecine conflict over the control of water. “

Maud Barlow writes in her book, *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water*: “... the global water justice movement is demanding a change in international law to settle once and for all the question of who controls water.” She declares the right to water is a human right and a public trust and that a binding law to codify this right is needed. This should ensure that states have the obligation to deliver sufficient, safe, assessable and affordable water as a public service.

Barlow and other water experts tell us that many rich governments and their corporations benefit from making water a commodity. Several groups around the world are mobilizing in their communities and countries for constitutional recognition of the right to water within their borders and at the United Nations for a full treaty that recognizes the right to water internationally.

Water is becoming big business with annual revenues estimated at more than \$300 billion worldwide. Not surprisingly the United States accounts for more than half of this number, and this is expected to grow as water scarcity becomes more apparent. Water rights and municipal water supply systems are two of the fastest growing market areas.

In the past decade, large multinational corporations have assumed control of water supply systems throughout the world. Privatizing state water utilities is evoking protests. Many countries and cities have embraced this in order to attract private capital and expertise needed to build or expand expensive water systems and services. We need strong government oversight to monitor rate increases and provide environmental safeguards and quality service for remote communities. The World Bank has made privatization of urban water systems a condition for receiving new loans and debt restructuring. The benefits and loss of this condition for new loans should be carefully monitored.

Ownership of water (and water as “an economic good”) has been an uneasy one on the international scene. Private industry has tremendous resources that can help solve the water crisis. However, solutions must be placed in humanitarian, ecological and spiritual as well as economic contexts. A large part of the crisis we have now entered results from the rejection of sustainability and the universality of human rights by powerful economic interests who favor competition to decide who will win and lose in wars for dwindling resources.

The Role of the Church and Religious Communities

Roberta Savage, justice advocate in Diocese of Virginia and former Executive Director of Associations of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA) in her Sewanee 2007 Water Conference presentation stated: “Societal equity and ownership of environmental resources are pivotal to any discussion of water policy. ... People’s need for sustenance and sustainable water collide with global markets and corporate interests. This global ‘tug of war’ for water is intimately connected to modernity, social justice, democratization, private ownership versus public resources, and the fight for self-determination.” Savage thinks creating a national and ultimately a global water budget and finding the balance between need, want, fairness and survival is a role tailor-made for the community of believers.

The General Convention in 2003 resolved to advocate public policy that ensures accessible clean water for all. Environmental ministry leaders in Province IV have been tracking the implementation of the two water resolutions and have expanded the focus for scientific and ethical principles that govern a solid water ethic.¹

What Can We Do?

That the planet’s fresh water is consumed profligately is beyond doubt, particularly in the area of agriculture, which accounts for 70 percent of all water use. And half or more of that water is lost to evaporation or runoff. Getting more

¹ Some of this work can be found on the www.sewanee.edu/ENTREAT website. You may read the water resolutions at <http://eenonline.org/about/resolve.htm>

out of each drop of water is imperative, for as the world's population increases and the demand for food soars, unchecked irrigation poses a serious threat to rivers, wetlands and lakes.

Drip irrigation, which uses perforated tubing to deliver water to crops, uses 30 to 70 percent less than traditional methods and increases crop yields to boot. The first drip systems were developed in the 1960s, but even now they're used on less than one percent of irrigated land. Most governments subsidize irrigation water so heavily that farmers have little incentive to invest in drip systems or other water saving methods.

Lester Brown, in his eco-economics research, estimates the services provided by freshwater in today's markets are worth two trillion dollars! The economic value of freshwater services enables us to save wetlands, watersheds and other natural resources. Years ago, Robert Kennedy Jr. facilitated an excellent economic concession that enabled New York City to save millions on water purification equipment by increasing watershed protection around the water reservoirs. Keeping the watersheds cleaner cost much less than new man-made water purification systems. This work illustrates dynamic ecology and economy relationships. More attention should be given to economic concessions that include economic value of services provided by natural resources. This expands environmental sustainability and justice issues.

"Saving Energy by Saving Water" is new focus for several conservation groups including the Diocese of Alabama Stewardship of Creation Task Force and the Diocese of Tennessee Environmental Ministry Team. Web links to these diocesan programs are posted at <http://www.provinceiv.org/Resources.html>. Connecting energy and water issues helps saves money, natural resources, ecosystems and communities. In many places around the world, much has been written about green alternative energy, especially about energy-efficient light bulbs. Too few people know that most hot water heaters use more electricity (electricity primarily produced from coal fired power plants) than the light bulbs in our churches and homes. More people should know that a typical American home today, running a hot water faucet for *five minutes* uses as much energy as leaving a 60-watt light bulb on for *fourteen hours*.

Considering the 46 billion spent per year globally on bottled water, it is most difficult to accept that we have not funded the estimated \$1.7 billion needed per year, beyond current spending, to provide clean drinking water to everyone on earth. The amount of money spent on bottled water is just one issue of many. Each gallon of water that is bottled requires an additional two gallons of water for its processing. Bottles require more than 1.5 million barrels of oil annually, enough to fuel some 100,000 cars for a year. Bottled water is even more expensive than \$5 a gallon gas. Why pour oil and money down the drain when you can get your own reusable bottle and fill it up at home?

Actions

- Expand and support advocacy work of *Episcopal Network for Economic Justice* (ENEJ) and *Episcopal Public Policy Network* (EPPN)
- Avoid using bottled water unless absolutely necessary. Use reusable stainless steel containers and carry tap water with you when traveling. At public events and at home, offer pitchers of water. Find out where the bottled water sold in your stores comes from and its environmental and economic impacts.
- Support the water and MDG programs of *Episcopal Relief and Development* (ERD) and *Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation*. Inspire your parish to study ERD's March 22 World Water Day promotions that address serious water problems around the world. More than 1.6 million children die each year from illnesses caused by drinking contaminated water. Every day, 25,000 people die from preventable diseases such as cholera and typhoid after drinking unsafe water.
- Purchase ERD gifts that provide clean drinking water to children and their families in rural communities plagued with poor sanitation, unhealthy hygiene and polluted water sources.
- Promote programs that help women play a central part in provision, management, and the safeguarding of water and challenge privatization as well as corruption, which marginalize the voices of women and whole communities in many parts of the world.
- Learn the connections between energy and water conservation, especially watershed and warming (climate change issues). Promote sustainable building and landscape practices.
- Promote gardens and agriculture practices that reduce water consumption and tolerate droughts.
- Many water projects are connected to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially MDG #7 - Ensure environmental sustainability. Environmental issues surrounding clean, adequate water resources and sanitation are integral pieces of the MDGs. See www.er-d.org/mdg to learn how to promote these goals and make poverty history with 0.7% giving. Working on MDGs enables us to SEE Justice and be dynamic justice workers.

Resources

The three papers below were presented in *Water for Life: Conserving Water for Nature and People* the ENTREAT Sewanee conference in 2007. These can be downloaded at www.sewanee.edu/ENTREAT.

Water Rights and Dynamic Water Policies - Roberta Savage

Water and Sustainable Development – The Rev. Canon Jeffrey Golliher, Ph.D., is the program associate for Environment and Sustainable Development for the office of the Anglican Communion Observer at the United Nations.

Protecting and Healing Rivers One Watershed at a Time: Secular & Religious Collaborative Programs – Joyce Wilding. (This presentation was prepared for

International Conference and Civilization at University of WI, La Crosse June 2006 and was used in Sewanee and Province IV programs).

United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP Freshwater Site

Joyce Wilding, TSSF
Province IV Environmental Ministry Leader
Kingston Springs, Tennessee

The Millennium Development Goals

What is the Issue?

As of this writing, 26,500 to 30,000 children throughout the world die *each day* due to poverty. This number is equivalent to:

- 1 child dying every 3 seconds
- 18 children dying every minute
- A 2004 Asian Tsunami occurring every week
- Almost 10 million children dying every year
- 60 million children dying between the year 2000 and 2006

“They die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death.”¹

Nearly half of the more than 6 billion people on earth are poor. Poverty can be defined as extreme (or absolute) poverty, moderate poverty and relative poverty. Extreme poverty is defined by the World Bank as living on less than \$1 a day. Those living in extreme poverty are unable to meet the basic needs of survival, are chronically malnourished, lack safe drinking water and basic sanitation, healthcare, education, perhaps lack even a rudimentary shelter and do not possess the “basics” such as shoes or adequate clothing. Extreme poverty is defined as the “poverty that kills.” Unlike moderate or relative poverty, extreme poverty now exists only in developing countries. Moderate poverty is defined as living on \$1 to \$2 a day, a condition in which basic needs are met but just barely. Relative poverty is defined as a household income level below the national average and means lacking things that the middle class of a society take for granted.

The World Bank estimates that approximately 1.4 billion people live in extreme poverty. This estimate does not reflect the recent and ongoing global food shortages and rising costs of energy, which could bring another 100 million people into poverty.

Our Faith

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and to bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not hide yourself from your own kin? (Isaiah 58: 6-7)

¹ A spotty scorecard, UNICEF, Progress of Nations 2000

Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?.....The King will reply, Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.
(Matthew 25: 37-40)

These passages are a clarion call to care for those in need and a reminder of what our call should be as followers of Jesus, to give priority to caring for the hungry, thirsty, and needy of the world. “Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times – times in which the world boasts of breathtaking advances in science, technology, industry and wealth accumulation- that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils...Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. ...Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an action of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life...” (Nelson Mandela, 2005)

What can be done

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) goals were agreed to in 2000 by 189 heads of state and government, including the United States, to address the deepest material brokenness of the world. These measurable interwoven goals which are to be met by 2015 include: (1) Cut in half extreme poverty and hunger; (2) Achieve universal primary education; (3) Promote gender equality and empower women; (4) Reduce child mortality; (5) Improve maternal health; (6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) Ensure environmental stability; and (8) Develop a global partnership for development with targets for aid, trade and debt relief.

In 2003 the Episcopal General Convention passed Resolution D-006 which endorsed and embraced the achievement of the MDGs, challenged all dioceses and congregations to give 0.7% of their annual budget to support the MDGs, and directed the Episcopal Office of Government Relations to advocate for the US government to keep its promise to give 0.7% of its gross national income to international development programs. By the General Convention of 2006, 41 dioceses had pledged a minimum of 0.7% of their budgets to MDG ministries, with work toward that commitment happening in 24 other dioceses.

“The church has said that our larger vision will be framed and shaped in the coming years by the vision of shalom embedded in the MDGs – a world where the hungry are fed, the ill are healed, the young educated, women and men treated equally, and where all have access to clean water and adequate sanitation, basic health care, and the promise of development that does not endanger the rest of creation. That vision of abundance is achievable in our own day, but only with the passionate commitment of each and every one of us. It is God’s vision of homecoming for all humanity.” (Katherine Jefferts Schori, 2006)

When the Millennium Development Goals were adopted, the nations of the world pledged to “spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty”. We are now more than half way toward 2015 and while some progress has been made, we still have a long way to go.

What can one person do?

- Pray for the organizations we support, or issues we care about
- Pray that the church and our nation have the will to address global poverty
- Preach and teach on the MDGs on a regular basis
- Study about global poverty, invite speakers to come to our churches and community meetings who have been actively involved living and working with those living in extreme poverty.
- Write about the MDGs in your parish and diocesan newsletters, share the stories of what others are doing in your community to address poverty
- Give 0.7% of your family budget to projects or organizations that are addressing global poverty
- Encourage your church, your diocese and community organizations to commit 0.7% annually to the MDGS
- Organize a trip to a developing country and connect with a local church. Go as pilgrim, listen to the stories of joy and despair, share your lives. Find out from the people living there what they need, not what we think they need.
- Write your Congressmen and the President to remind them of the United States commitment to meet the millennium development goals
- Ask candidates for political office what their plans are to meet the challenge of global poverty
- Keep informed on government action regarding debt relief and other measures that address global poverty, lobby your representatives to do the right thing

Resources

Study

Alkire, Sbina; Newell, Edmund, What Can One Person Do?, Faith to Heal a Broken World. 2005, Church Publishing Inc

Sachs, Jeffrey; *The End of Poverty, Economic Possibilities for Our Time.* 2005, Penguin Press.

United Nations Development Programme

One United Nations Plaza

New York, NY 10017 USA

Tel: +1 (212) 906-5000

Fax: +1 (212) 906-5364

www.undp.org/mdg

www.un.org/millenniumgoals

Pray

Micah Challenge USA is a Christian campaign that is part of a global Micah Challenge campaign.

www.micahchallenge.org

Act

Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD)

815 Second Ave.

New York, NY 10117

1-800-334-7686 ext. 5129

www.er-d.org/mdg

Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation,

6209 Pershing Ave

St Louis, MO 63130

Phone: 314-348-6453

www.e4gr.org

The [ONE campaign](http://www.onecampaign.org) is a new effort to rally Americans -- ONE by ONE -- to fight global AIDS and extreme poverty. ONE will be promoted with the help of a diverse coalition of faith-based and antipoverty groups, celebrity spokespeople such as U2 lead singer Bono as well as corporate partnerships and local ONE Campaign organizers. The [ONE campaign](http://www.onecampaign.org) is a new effort to rally Americans -- ONE by ONE -- to fight global AIDS and extreme poverty. ONE will be promoted with the help of a diverse coalition of faith-based and antipoverty groups, celebrity spokespeople such as U2 lead singer Bono as well as corporate partnerships and local ONE Campaign organizers.

www.onecampaign.org

ONE Episcopalian™ is a grassroots partnership between The Episcopal Church and the ONE Campaign to rally Episcopalians – ONE by ONE – to the cause of ending extreme poverty in our world and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ONE/>

Myra Kingsley
Phoenix, Arizona

Prisons and Incarceration

What is the Issue?

My small-for-his-age 16 year old parishioner, after sitting in adult jail for three months, will be tried as an adult on felony charges. The story is that he had an unloaded gun stuffed in his waistband when he took a "friend's" empty wallet; when the police nabbed him at the Arby's, he gave his brother's name at first. (Later on it turned out there never was a gun, but this seemed to make no difference.) No kid wants more to be good than Denzel, but -- with BiPolar, ADHD, learning disabilities, borderline IQ, and the frustrations of his low-income mom who couldn't get the help she knew he needed from age 5 -- he'll likely go to prison for a few years. This time.

He has the most engaged public defender I've encountered in a long time. She paid attention to Denzel's history, was able to get a continuance and a second psychiatric evaluation before the bench trial. But, she said, "There's no place the judge can send him for the treatment you're talking about. What you need to work on is prison reform!"

Even with the best available outcome we could wish (a successful insanity plea), he would still be facing a world of few choices and many pitfalls. Denzel could not cope with learning that he was going back to jail for a month; he was escorted out shouting, crying, and struggling, by 4 officers. His mother wept, "My greatest fear has been that he'll end up dead or in prison for life."

To many US families, Denzel's story is predictable at every turn. It takes grand patterns to become the nation with the most incarcerated persons in the whole world. The USA, with 5 percent of the world's population, boasts 25 percent of the world's inmates. More prisoners than in any "authoritarian regimes" or "terrorist states". More than China. At recent counts, one in a hundred people in the US is an inmate. *

Break it out by demographics and the story is more disturbing. Incarceration is not an equal opportunity employer in this country. Currently, one out of 106 white men, one out of 36 Latino men, and one out of 15 African American men in the US is incarcerated. The imprisonment of Black males in South Africa under apartheid in 1993 was at the rate of 851 per 100,000. In the US in 2006 it was 4,789 per 100,000.

A striking majority of US inmates had school problems indicating learning disabilities, and/or did not finish high school. According to US Bureau of Justice, 56 percent of US inmates have psychiatric disabilities needing treatment. Socio-economic level and stability in the family of origin is a reliable predictor of who will go to prison.

In the Gospel according to Matthew, in the judgment scene of chapter 25, when the King says to the just, "I was in prison..." most translations go on, "... and you visited me." It is important to visit the prisoners, to remember their names, pray for them and bring the message of redemption. But the Greek verb in the text is

from the same root from which we get "*episcopus*" -- and it means *to see to, to be concerned for, to act in the interests of; to make the well-being, inclusion, and reconciliation of the prisoners our business*. The just who inherit the Kingdom are those who become pastors of the inmates; and as that scene makes clear, it is not in a disembodied spiritual sense that we are shepherds. In order to "visit" in the sense required by the Gospel, we will have to understand the unjust patterns and dismantle them.

What political choices have created this unjust pattern?

What is the pattern of social and political decisions which makes Denzel's story so normal and familiar? There are several important actions going on in recent decades which impact the story, and these are the places where **Episcopalians can join with other people of faith, using our rightful voice as citizens, to demand a more sane, reasonable, economically sustainable, and redemptive approach.**

1. The Children's Defense Fund has documented the "**cradle to prison pipeline**" and is not alone in recognizing the glaring need for change: pre-judicial intervention through early childhood and family support programs that will help children to be ready for school when they start, identification of families who need assistance to deal with mental health and other challenges so that these do not become barriers to their children's participation. Every child who is kept out of juvenile court and detention represents a major payback on the public investment in real dollars as well as social strength.
2. **Lack of diversionary and alternative programs for at-risk and troubled youth.** Add to this the trend of charging, trying, and sentencing children as adults. Children like Denzel are not going to be helped by time in prison. By the time they reach his level of emotional and behavioral disturbance (having lacked the needed early interventions), they need comprehensive long term treatment. This is expensive of course: it may approach what taxpayers pay to keep inmates incarcerated.
3. **An overloaded public defender roster dealing with a constant surge of indigent defendants.** The typical plan is to work out a plea bargain with the State even before consulting with the defendant; there is no time to investigate a plea of "not guilty" on its merits, to build a case, to examine evidence and subpoena witnesses. Poor defendants learn that they have no choice but to plead guilty to the least disastrous of a frightening range of possibilities, or they can surely expect the worst outcome.
4. **Incarceration for offenders who have not injured others;** prison rather than treatment for those whose illegal behavior is related to addiction or mental illness. In some cases this is due to mandatory sentencing laws, in others to the absence of alternatives to jail or prison within the judge's jurisdiction.
5. **Mandatory sentencing laws** which have persistently increased prison time per sentence, although this has been demonstrated to have no deterrent effect on crime or recidivism.
6. **"Persistent offender" laws** (such as "three strikes and you're out") in many states, which turn minor infractions and parole violations into decades or life in prison.

7. **Criminalization and prison time for a growing list of former misdemeanors**, with no evidence that these reclassifications deter the incidence of those actions or more serious crimes.

8. The "cost-saving" measures of **removing educational, mental health, and human services from prisons**, reflecting punitive attitudes in the political arena as "corrections" philosophy has shifted from reform to punishment. Not only is the health, retraining, and safety of inmates compromised. The chances of an ex-inmate who has served his time re-entering society successfully are further reduced.

9. The revolving door of recidivism due to **lack of re-entry assistance**, the stigma of a "record," and the extreme difficulty of finding employment with a felony in one's past.

10. Recent **legislation to criminalize and policy decisions to incarcerate undocumented immigrants** simply for being found working, or driving, or in their homes --in some cases housing them in prison camps with their families while awaiting deportation processing.

What Economic Factors are Behind these Policy Decisions?

To handle the upsurge in the prison population, counties and states either reap benefits by leasing available inmate beds to neighboring jurisdictions, or contract out their inmates at a per diem rate if they can't afford to build more facilities. In addition, the once-flagging private prison-for-profit industry, now consolidated mostly in two large corporations, has gained new contracts to build and operate prisons in many states, some of them being filled with inmates from other states. Though the evidence on the whole indicates they are no more efficient or effective than state-run prisons, they do make profits through non-union policies, understaffing, non-provision of services, and contracting out prison labor to private employers.

In Arizona, where state expenditure on prisons has gone from \$409 million/year to over \$1 billion/year since 1997, for-profit prison operators are not required to track recidivism; and in 2012 the legislature approved a bill eliminating cost effectiveness reviews and accountability altogether for this industry.

In some places, undocumented immigrants now held in prison are contracted out to work the same farms --seeing earnings as low as \$.45 an hour-- from which they would have been arrested had they been working before at minimum wage. In some states, prisoners are the workforce who produce office furniture and other items which state agencies are required to buy in order to "support local industry". Contracting for sub-prevailing wage prison labor is even touted in some corrections websites as the "local employment" alternative to outsourcing. It bypasses both union standards and prevailing wage laws, and not surprisingly has been likened by human rights groups to a new form of slave labor.

Like the cost of war in the national economy, the "war on crime" can be seen as a war on the poor at the state level. The resources most needed for the common good are diverted to the cost of the prison system; the services defunded by this transfer are those most needed by disadvantaged citizens; and these are the people most likely to end up in the prisons.

If US residents were actually so much more violent and incorrigible than all the other people of the world, if minority people were actually worse people than those of western European descent, if the huge upsurge in incarceration were actually effective in preventing recidivism or making a safer society, these

patterns might be understandable. But while a basis in reality is lacking for these political and social decisions, there is a clear link between the economic interests and the ideology guiding the policy decisions.

The two largest for-profit prison corporations, The GEO Group and Corrections Corporation of America, and another prison-for-profit: Management and Training Corporation, are among an impressive list of funder-participants (e.g., Exxon, Bell South, R.J. Reynolds, WalMart) in the **American Legislative Exchange Council**, founded in 1973 by Paul Weyrich, co-founder of the Heritage Foundation. ALEC recruits and "arms" state legislators, boasting members in nearly every state; legislator membership dues are \$50 (often paid by taxpayers), but corporate members will pay \$5,000 or much more (often written off as charitable donations) to be present at conventions and have access to the legislators. ALEC is organized in legislative task forces to write "model" legislation which is then introduced in every state to promote the following among other goals: Rolling back civil rights legislation; preventing or undoing environmental protection measures; diverting funds from social and human services; defunding public schools; tort reform to limit the ability of plaintiffs against corporations; privatization of public services; restrictive voter registration laws; "tough on crime" legislation that guarantees criminalization of more people and a growing stream of new and longer-term inmates.

Recently ALEC has gained attention for its effectiveness in promulgating criminalization of undocumented immigrants with AZ SB1070 and the various look-alike bills introduced in other states shortly thereafter. The investment relationship between Wells Fargo and both CCA and GEO Group, its own connection with ALEC, the huge immigrant detention facilities run by CCA and GEO (with all their abuses), and Wells Fargo's contributions to anti-immigrant efforts at the Federal level, are one example of the high-profit web underlying the incarceration of America.

What Can Episcopalians Do?

In 2001 ALEC boasted more than a third of state legislators as members, and was responsible for hundreds of acts passed in state legislatures. Their influence has continued to grow. ALEC's action at the state level gives Episcopalians in their dioceses the opportunity to respond as we are called, caring for those who are incarcerated. If we are to affect the future of our burgeoning inmate population, we must respond with grassroots organizing, helping our legislators to get "smart on crime," instead of letting corporations write the laws which make us the most imprisoned nation in the world.

1. Donate to and volunteer with organizations that serve former offenders and advocate for criminal justice reform in your state and comprehensive immigration reform.
2. Write to your state representative about the need for smart-on-crime, evidence-based criminal justice reform that reduces crime, lowers rates of incarceration, and saves tax dollars. For example, let them know that spending on education is more effective at preventing crime than building more prisons. Advocate for policies that strengthen public education and human services. Oppose the criminalization of undocumented immigrants and any related state legislation.

3. Encourage business leaders in your community to hire ex-offenders, helping them overcome barriers that inhibit their successful re-entry into the community.
4. Educate yourself and your community on pressing issues and opportunities for reform in criminal justice. Some resources are:

National Hire Network <http://www.hirenetwork.org/>

Public Welfare Foundation
<http://www.publicwelfare.org/Programs/Default.aspx?progid=1>

Soros Foundations Network, Open Society Institute
<http://www.soros.org/initiatives/issues/law>
Unlocking America: Why and How to Reduce America's Prison Population, 2007
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<http://www.jfa-associates.com/publications/srs/UnlockingAmerica.pdf>

* *Other countries in TEC*, prison populations per 100,000, (most recent figures available according to International Centre for Prison Studies): Colombia, 144; Ecuador 94; Honduras 161; Puerto Rico 356; Dominican Republic 147; Venezuela 79; Haiti 72; Micronesia 79; Taiwan 263, Virgin Islands 549; British Virgin Islands 488; Convocation: Austria 95; Germany 91; France 91; Belgium 93; Italy 83.

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Center for Media and Democracy, August 22, 2011
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<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/law/research/icps>

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http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/19/business/19detain.html?_r=2&pagewanted=2&oref=slogin&oref=slogin

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NPR: Prison Economics Help Drive Ariz. Immigration Law May 10, 2011
http://www.mycuentame.org/npr_prison_economics_help_drive_ariz_immigration_law

Ohio Policy and Justice Center, <http://www.ohiojpc.org/>

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<http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/One%20in%20100.pdf>

Oxford Analytical Brief "US Prison Policy Needs Reform," Forbes Magazine May 6, 2008 http://www.forbes.com/business/2008/05/05/prison-drugs-crime-cx_0506oxford.html

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The Economic Impact of the Prison Industrial Complex

What is the Issue?

The prison system is similar to the giants of big business in terms of its budget. States spend nearly \$50 billion a year on prisons, while the cost to the federal government exceeds \$5 billion. Unlike big business, however, the prison system is mainly a non-profit, tax dollar funded enterprise at both the state and federal level. In the state of Georgia alone, the Department of Corrections reported fiscal year 2006 expenditures of just over \$1 billion. Moreover, the costs far outweigh the benefits, if recidivist and crime level rates are considered. In fact, some argue that removing an inveterate criminal from the streets simply opens a 'new', albeit illicit, job position for someone else. Thus, there is no decrease in criminal activity, only an increase in tax dollars needed to house, supervise and 'reform' the incarcerated individual. Plus, more than one out of every 100 adult Americans is in jail or prison, according to a *Washington Post* article in February of 2008.

Another factor in a cost-benefit analysis relates to the loss of 'human capital'. There are many studies that evidence the loss of family and community vitality when (1) a member of the labor force is incarcerated and (2) social service dollars are needed to support dependent family members (children and single parents). Additionally, mixed conclusions have been drawn from studies of programs and specialized facilities which target changing "criminal thinking" and/or curing drug and alcohol addiction linked to criminal behavior. The increased costs attributed to these programs and/or facilities can not be justified incontrovertibly by lower recidivist rates, or the recovery of human capital.

At the local level, however, prisons do bring tax dollars into a community, if only from an increase in the median income of its residents. Likewise, small businesses benefit: the corner gas station, the local grocery store, entertainment arenas and the like. In fact, many small, rural towns view prisons as a viable local industry and part of their economic development strategy. The question is, though, do the benefits equate to the billions of tax dollars spent?

The concept of privatization was adopted as a means of stemming the tremendous outflow of state and federal tax dollars. This strategy fit with not only a very vocal public call for privatization of many governmental services, but also the need to balance popular 'Get tough on crime' policies with overcrowding in penal institutions and the bleeding of tax dollars away from other services managed by states. In other words, it was a win-win for politicians.

After almost 30 years of tracking the effects of privatization, studies by the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) show that projected fiscal savings of twenty percent were overstated. In fact, privatization accounts for only a one percent savings per year on the average. In

addition, there are hidden costs associated with privatization, such as local subsidization of capital construction and infrastructure development. Plus, state corrections departments find they have little control over administrative policies and day-to-day operations in the private facilities. For these reasons, privatization at the state level has slowed.

At the federal level, on the other hand, the use of privately operated prisons and detention centers has expanded. This phenomenon is explained, in part, by the hefty fines mandated by new legislation aimed at controlling prison overcrowding. Overcrowding has been linked to other legislation which increased the crime level (misdemeanors to felonies) of certain illegal activities committed by documented or undocumented immigrants flowing into the country.

The Politics of Criminalization and Morality of Justice

Since criminalization of any activity tends to follow the ideology of those in power, the laws enacted and their administration are politically driven, often with little attention to their deleterious effects. We want our neighborhoods and towns to be safe, so we elect 'Get tough on crime' politicians and extend the powers of law enforcement. The cost in tax dollars increases yearly; our courts are overburdened; more and more Americans are going to prison; and crime levels don't appear to be decreasing.

Politics aside, what is "just" about incarceration, the staple of the prison industrial system? How do we determine when justice has taken place? Is it "just" for a police officer to risk his or her life intervening in a domestic dispute when charges are not pressed by the victim nor picked up by the State? What sentence would a parent consider "just" for the impaired driver who killed his or her son? Is it "just" for a system to promise equality before the law when the reality could not be further from that ideal? "Criminal justice", for sure, is an enigmatic term, and an oxymoron to some.

Church and Scriptural Guidance

If we are to discern our position within the interplay of the politics of criminalization and the morality of justice with any modicum of grace, it is reasonable that we would look to the Church and Scripture for guidance.

The Church passed several resolutions in 2000 pertaining to this issue: a moratorium on maximum control unit prison construction; observance of human rights and needs of prisoners; and exploration and study of restorative justice for the nation's criminal justice system. In addition, we were urged to be active in public policy decisions affecting the growing prison industrial complex on local, state and nation levels, and asked to encourage parish visitation programs to inmates, as well as support and training to newly discharged inmates.

The Scriptures call us to visit and pray for the imprisoned. We are to be 'just' and to pray for 'just' treatment of prisoners. Above all, we are called to love God first and foremost, and to love others as we love ourselves.

What Can We Do?

Keeping in mind the resolutions of our Church and the words of the Scriptures, positioning ourselves as “angels” of solutions rather than demagogues of problems, is important, particularly where the politics of criminalization and the morality of justice blur the straight edges of cost-benefit analysis. It is essential that we avoid the pitfalls of obscuring our work with only economic considerations and/or our political biases.

Our first step might be to establish a committee of interested and committed church representatives who would facilitate the gathering of information and its synthesis into critical issues for discussion. Ways to do this might be: (1) getting to know our governmental representatives; (2) having thoughtful conversations with those in positions of power in the prison industrial complex; and (3) visiting prisons, detention centers and the like with open minds and prayerful hearts.

If we are to give wise counsel in terms of our position and an action plan, we must remember that there are many faces of justice, and there is an authenticity to simply being present and sensitive to the suffering of individuals; the sometimes odious tasks delegated to those who work in the system; and the justice of consequences.

Some possibilities we might discover in the process include: (1) we are already positioned and taking just steps; (2) we are transformed by the process of discernment, rather than by any specific rhetoric we speak or action we think prudent to take; and (3) we are being called by God to be sensitive to a complex issue and to relay this sensitivity to our parishes and parishioners.

Resources

Books and Articles

1. Cole, David (1999). *No Equal Justice: Race & Class in the American Criminal Justice System*. New Press, ISBN 1565845668 (Paperback).
2. Felson, Marcus (2002). *Crime and Everyday Life* (3rd Ed.). Sage Publications, ISBN 0-7619-8761-4 (Paperback).
3. Lanier, Mark M., and Henry, Stuart (2004). *Essential Criminology* (2nd Ed.). Perseus Books, ISBN 0-8133-4090-X (Paperback).
4. Messner, Steven F., and Rosenfeld, R. (2001). *Crime and the American Dream* (3rd Ed.). Wadsworth Publishing, ISBN 0534562779 (Paperback).
5. Natoli, Marie D., Ed. (2006). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Public Policy, Justice, and the Law*. McGraw-Hill Contemporary Learning Series, ISBN 0-07-310834-0 (Paperback).
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7. Williams, Franklin P., and McShane, M. (2004). *Criminological Theory* (4th Ed.). Prentice Hall, ISBN 0131113879 (Paperback).

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1. Department of Justice: Bureau of Justice Assistance
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA>
2. Federal Bureau of Prisons
<http://www.bop.gov>
3. Georgia Department of Corrections
<http://www.dcor.state.ga.us>
4. The Sentencing Project
<http://www.sentencingproject.org>
5. U. S. Government Accountability Office
<http://www.gao.gov>

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Health Care Policy and Economic Injustice

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.”

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

--The Baptismal Covenant, BCP, p.305

“The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being. It is not a privilege reserved for those with power, money, or social standing.”

--from the International Declaration of Health Rights

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

--Article 24, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948

What is the Issue?

The current health care system in the United States of America is characterized by the creation of barriers set up by privilege based on wealth. It is marked by major disparities in access to care, in availability of treatment modalities, and in health care outcomes, with significant differences in morbidity and mortality depending upon one’s socioeconomic status. Consider the following statistics:

- In 2007, 45 million nonelderly people in the United States lacked health coverage
- More than eight in ten uninsured people (81%) come from working families
- About two-thirds of the nonelderly uninsured are from low-income families (income below 200% of poverty, about \$42,400 for a family of 4 in 2007)
- More than one in three people (35%) living in poverty are uninsured, compared with one in twenty people (5%) with family incomes at or above four times the poverty level
- Adults age 19-54 make up the majority (71%) of the nonelderly uninsured, but nearly 9 million children lacked health coverage in 2007
- Since 2000 the number of nonelderly uninsured has grown by 8 million—with the only decline in the number of uninsured occurring in 2007, largely driven by an increase in public coverage

- Uninsured adults are five times as likely as the privately insured to lack a usual source of care (54% vs. 10%) and four times as likely to postpone care due to cost (26% vs. 6%)
- Fully half of the uninsured report paying for health care and health insurance is a serious problem ¹

Scriptural and Church Responses

Michael Moore in his documentary *Sicko* asks of Americans, “Who are we” as a society to sacrifice sound health in favor of corporate profits? This question might be rephrased, “Who are we,” The Episcopal Church, the body of Christ, to sacrifice sound health in favor of corporate profits? Is a corporate-driven health care system compatible with the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Is a corporate-driven health care system compatible with our baptismal covenant?

Jesus clearly is concerned with healing and health in scripture. In truth, a large portion of the gospels is reflective of his concern for health and healing, particularly with a preferential option for the poor and marginalized:

- The healing of Peter’s mother-in-law (Mk 1:29-31)
- The sick healed at evening (Mk 1:32-34)
- The healing of a leper (Mk 1:40-45)
- The centurion’s servant (Matt 8:5-13)
- The Healing of the paralytic (Mk 2:1-12)
- Healing of a woman with hemorrhaging (Matt 9:20-22)
- Jairus’ daughter (Matt 9:18-26)
- Two blind men healed (Matt 27-31)
- The healing of a demoniac who was mute (Matt 9:32-34)
- The healing of the man with the withered hand (Mk 3:1-6)
- Jesus heals the multitudes (Mk 3:7-12)
- The Gerasene demoniac (Mk 5:1-20)
- Healings at Gennesaret (Mk 6:53-56)
- The healing of many sick people (Matt 15:29-31)
- The healing of the deaf person with a speech impediment (Mk 7:31-37)
- The healing of the boy with a spirit (Mk 8:14-29)
- The healing of the crippled woman (Lk 12:10-17)
- The healing of a man with dropsy (Lk 14:1-6)
- The healing of ten lepers (Lk 17:11-19)
- The healing of Bartimaeus (Mk 18:46-52)

The Episcopal Church has in the past addressed health care as a Christian concern:

¹ Figures from Kaiser Family Foundation(www.kff.org/uninsured/h08_7813.cfm)

- Resolution 1988-D108, titled, “Advocate for Appropriate Health Care for All Who Are Ill:” Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That this 69th General Convention direct the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council, in light of the strains upon the health care system exerted by the AIDS Epidemic, to direct the Washington, D.C. office of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America to adopt a strategy to advocate for all persons suffering from illness by creating appropriate levels of cost-effective health care, for example, hospices and alternative health facilities.
- Resolutions A010, “Advocate Legislation for Comprehensive Health Care,” and A099, “Call for a System of Universal Access to Health Care.” Both resolutions passed by the 70th General Convention in 1991, called for universal health care as a basic right, the former calling for advocacy from agencies of The Episcopal Church, and the latter for action in the federal government.
- Resolution A057, “Adopt Church Principles on Access to Health Care,” passed by the 71st General Convention in 1994: Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That this 71st General Convention of the Episcopal Church adopt the following four principles as the position of the Episcopal Church regarding health care:
 1. That universal access to quality, cost effective, health care services be considered necessary for everyone in the population.
 2. That “quality health care” be defined so as to include programs in preventive medicine, where wellness is the first priority.
 3. That “quality health care” include interdisciplinary and interprofessional components to insure the care of the whole person—physiological, spiritual, psychological, social.
 4. That “quality health care” include the balanced distribution of resources so that no region of the country is underserved.²

In addition to the above actions of The Episcopal Church, Executive Council affirmed the right of individuals to care by the adoption of Resolution NAC 024 at its meeting on February 11-14, 2005 in Austin, Texas:

Resolved, The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, USA meeting in Austin, Texas February 11-14, 2005, reaffirms the commitment of the 70th General Convention asserting the right of all individuals to medically necessary health care, including long-term services; and be it further

Resolved, that the Executive Council calls on the President of the United States and the United States Congress to preserve and protect the Medicaid and Medicare programs as an essential national commitment to serve the needs of the least among us; and be it further *Resolved*, that the Council calls on Episcopalians and the Episcopal Church to advocate for Medicaid and Medicare coverage that ensures access to

² Scott, Marshall. “Health care Redox,” posted by Jim Naughton on Episcopal Café website on April 19, 2007. Resolution number 1994-A057 may also be viewed at http://episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution-complete.pl?resolution=1994-A057

affordable, comprehensive health care as well as long-term care for children, the working poor and elderly of this country.³

What Can We Do?

What further can The Episcopal Church, individuals, and congregations do to break down the health care barriers set up by privilege based on wealth existing in the United States?

The Episcopal Church, its dioceses, and all parishes must create task forces on health care policy for study, advocacy, and nonviolent action to bring about significant reform based on Christian morality. Barriers set up by privilege based on wealth may be broken down by love of God and love of neighbor. Christian values that inform our spiritual covenant are compassion, the common good, equitable distribution of our resources, and a preferential option for those who are vulnerable—the poor, the sick, the broken-hearted, and all who are marginalized in our society. It will be necessary to take the vows of our baptismal covenant seriously, placing these vows above the ways of a corporate profit system of health care. It is time for a single payer national health program.

The following findings are now well documented:⁴

- Administrative costs consume 31 percent of US health spending, most of it unnecessary.
- Half of all bankruptcies are caused by medical bills. Three-fourths of those bankrupted had health insurance at the time they got sick or injured.
- Taxes already pay for more than 60 percent of US health spending. Americans pay the highest health care taxes in the world. We pay for national health insurance, but don't get it.
- Despite spending far less per capita for health care, Canadians are healthier and have better measures of access to health care than Americans.
- Business pays less than 20 percent of our nation's health bill. It is a misnomer that our health system is "privately financed" (60 percent is paid by taxes and the remaining 20 percent is out-of-pocket payments.).
- For-profit, investor-owned hospitals, HMOS, and nursing homes have higher costs and score lower on most measures of quality than their non-profit counterparts.
- Immigrants and emergency department visits by the uninsured are not the cause of high and rising health care costs.

³ Accessed on 10/9/2008 at http://www.episcopalchurch.org/1866_70828_ENG_Print.html

⁴ Accessed on 8/14/2008 at http://pnhp.org/single_payer_resources/pnhp_research_the_case_for_a_national_health_program.php . Physicians for a National Health Program, 29 E Madison Suite 602, Chicago, IL 60602 (research articles supporting the findings are included at this website).

- The uninsured do not receive all the medical care they need—one-third of uninsured adults have chronic illness and don't receive needed health care. Those most in need of preventive services are least likely to receive them.
- The US could save enough on administrative costs (more than \$350 billion annually) with a single-payer system to cover all of the uninsured.
- Competition among investor-owned, for-profit entities has raised costs and reduced quality in the US
- The Canadian single payer healthcare system produces better health outcomes with substantially lower administrative costs than the United States
- Computerized medical records and chronic disease management do not save money. The only way to slash administrative overhead and improve quality is with a single payer system
- Alternative proposals for “universal coverage” do not work. State health reforms over the past two decades have failed to reduce the number of uninsured.

Resources for study, advocacy, and action include: ⁵

- VISION & VOICE: Faithful Citizens & Health Care, an adult education resource to engage people of faith in dialogue about reform, available FREE on the web at www.visionandvoice.org . It also includes video of religious leaders speaking about health care through the lens of faith values.
- COPING WITH THE COST OF HEALTH CARE: How We Pay for What We Need?, an adult discussion guide published by National Issues Forums that presents three approaches for deliberation. It is also available as a FREE download at http://www.nifi.org/discussion_guides/detail.aspx?catID=12&itemID=11480 (information also available about how to purchase).
- The National Council of Churches Health Task Force and the Committee on Children and Families have joined together to publish the 1st edition of the NCC Health Care Alert Bulletin Insert. This first edition is designed to help members of the faith community understand the magnitude of the health care problem in our country. Four different formats available to download on the NCC Health Task Force website at www.health-ministries.org . To subscribe to receive the link to the Health Care Alert Bulletin Insert with description, go to www.health-ministries.org and click on “New Articles” under the word “Syndication” on the right side of the homepage. Or, these documents may be downloaded from the Health Care Alert Bulletin Insert box on the top right of the homepage. These NCC Health Care Alert Bulletin Inserts will be published at least monthly and more often as needed.

Other resources include:

⁵ From the PA Council of Churches

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality <http://www.ahrq.gov/>
- Alliance for Health Reform <http://www.allhealth.org/>
- American Public Health Association
<http://www.apha.org/NR/rdonlyres/40E68094-E47F-465B-9F27-0ADFF161120F/0/UninsuredFactSheetFinal.pdf>
- Center for Health Care Strategies <http://www.chcs.org/>
- The Commonwealth Fund <http://www.commonwealthfund.org/index.htm>
- Galen Institute <http://www.galen.org/>
- The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/index.cfm>
- National Coalition on Health Care <http://www.nchc.org/>
- Institute of Medicine <http://www.iom.edu/?id=19175>
- Physicians for a National Health Program <http://www.pnhp.org/>
- The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
http://www.acog.org/departments/dept_notice.cfm?recno=11&bulletin=4472
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation <http://www.rwjf.org/>

The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority.

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Editor's Note: This issue paper will be updated soon.

Healthy People, Healthy Planet: Issues in Access to Fresh Local Food

What is the Issue?

Susan Klein, nutrition specialist with Iowa State Extension, addressing the Lutheran Sunday Scientist Symposium on Food and Faith in Des Moines on October 31, 2008, drew a marked contrast between the price of calorie-dense, nutrient-poor foods and lower calorie nutrient rich foods. A diet of low calorie nutrient rich foods may cost up to \$36.32 per day for 2000 calories while a comparable diet of calorie dense nutrient poor foods may be had for as little as \$3.52. Prices are increasing faster for the nutrient rich diet than the nutrient poor one, widening the gap.

While our economy was beginning its down hill tumble this fall, MacDonald's was one of the few corporations whose sales went up. CBS television news reported an eight percent increase in October for the fast food giant. All one need do is pay attention to advertisements from chain restaurants to see that the pitch has shifted from quality, or even quantity, to price. What you can get at the drive up window for \$1, or with table service for \$6.95?

Inexpensive food is inexpensive usually because it is made from the handful of food crops that are subsidized: corn, soybeans, wheat and rice. If it isn't made from one of these crops, it probably eats one of them. We produce more calories than we need in the United States - 3800 per person per day. In order to entice people to buy those excess calories, value is added to food by processing. Corn becomes corn syrup, soy becomes partially hydrogenated fats, wheat is milled, and they are combined in thousands of artful ways. This may increase convenience, important to those who work multiple low wage jobs to stay afloat and have little time to cook, but does nothing for nutritive value.

The picture which these facts point to is one of a people who are overfed and undernourished, and a land where soils and aquifers are depleted, waste streams swell with over packaging, and fossil fuels are consumed in fertilizing, herbiciding, processing and transporting food.

Current popular non-fiction (see resource list below) has brought these problems to the attention of many of us, but not always emphasized the disproportionate impact on the poor. Many of our urban areas and old suburbs are food deserts, where convenience stores sell sweet and salty snacks, soft drinks, alcohol and tobacco, but no fresh local fruits and vegetables and few healthful whole grains. Obesity and type 2 diabetes continue to rise among adults, teens and children.

The 2002 United Nations definition of adequate food is instructive here. *Right to adequate food is a human right, inherent in all people, "to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensures a physical and mental, individual and collective fulfilling and dignified life free of fear."*

The implications are that food security means not just enough calories, but good nutrition, culturally appropriate foods, and social, economic and ecological sustainability.

What are our sources for addressing this through scripture and church

Scripture's agricultural world is so different from modern industrial agriculture, or even modern sustainable agriculture, that it is impossible to find texts which provide instant solutions to the breakdown in our food system. Some broad scriptural themes we might look to are the value of diversity in creation, God's preferential concern for the poor, food as a communal experience, and freedom from anxiety.

The resolution on food systems and spirituality passed at the 2003 General Convention provides some clues as to how we might respond. It authorized our *"Office of Government Relations...* to advise elected and appointed government officials and other secular and religious bodies of its concerns about food sources, biodiversity, genetic engineering, ownership and distribution of our food sources, and related issues concerning the health and well-being of ourselves and future generations." It also lifted up the need of people to know what's in their food, where it came from, how it was processed, and how it affects planetary health.

Some progress was made in fulfilling this resolve during the recent wave of legislative action around the renewal of the Farm Bill.

What can we do?

At the same Sunday Scientists conference, Jerry DeWitt, Director of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, opined that congregations must begin to address food issues. Collecting and distributing canned goods to the poor is simply not enough: we must speak up and speak out in our communities.

DeWitt and Klein agree that the point of concern through which congregations may enter this matrix of issues is food and health. The challenge is not to get stuck in our individual or household food and health issues - a comfortable rut for middle class consumers - but to look at things systemically.

Klein pointed out that we must change the landscape of our food system. Too often major food processors and middle class folks conspire to put the blame on individuals for making poor choices about diet and exercise. Instead we need to think about making it easier for people to make positive choices. We can learn much from the anti-tobacco movement. Cigarette companies still want to portray smoking as a personal choice, but changing attitudes and access has done much more than changing individual minds to curb health impacts of smoking.

Church folk must advocate for a changed food landscape. We must not wait five years for the next renewal of the Farm Bill to turn up the heat under policy makers, to let them know we were not happy with the role food issues didn't play in our long presidential campaign, and demand continuing conversation. The Farm Bill being debated in Congress now (2012) has many flaws. It needs serious revision. Use the following link to participate:

http://act.credoaction.com/call?tg=FSTN_1.FSTN_2&cp_id=235&id=41572-1441174-mtlG8dx&t=7

Locally we can work for farm to school, farm to campus, and farm to senior center programs so that at least some of the food prepared and eaten in those places comes from local farms, strengthening sustainability and the local economy, and putting the emphasis in menus on fruits and vegetables, not commodities. We can also find out if farmers' markets in our area take SNAP cards (new name and delivery system for food stamps) and are certified for WIC. If not, we can work to make it happen.

At our churches we can join a burgeoning movement and organize community gardens. If the parish doesn't have a side yard or back acre, there may be a vacant lot nearby which the owner would be happy to lend for the purpose. Some congregations cooperate with nearby schools to have a garden. More and more congregations are recognizing that community gardens meet a need for fresh local produce and for reconnecting people in the community across generational and cultural lines.

We can start a backyard gleaning effort. Many neighborhoods have fruit trees whose fruit goes unused. What would happen if we connected older folks who have fruit trees they can no longer manage with students doing service learning by pruning and picking?

Urban and suburban churches can also partner with a nearby CSA. Often community-supported farms are willing to make a drop at a church if they have multiple shareholders there. Church members who can afford it might pay a little extra to subsidize the cost of a CSA share or half share for a low income household or individual in the church's neighborhood.

Churches are a great place to re-skill the neighborhood. Even when fresh produce is available from a nearby farmers' market, community garden, or CSA, people often don't know how to cook with fresh vegetables, let alone how to extend the season through drying or canning. We can put our church kitchens to use as places for generation-to-

generation transmission of kitchen skills that stretch our food dollars and decrease our food miles.

Resources

*There are many current books, such as those by Michael Pollan, Barbara Kingsolver, and Paul Roberts which describe our current food system. Even the President-elect read the Michael Pollan article in the fall food issue of the *New York Times Magazine*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/12/magazine/12policy-t.html>

*The Oakland Institute is critical of food system dysfunction and injustice globally and nationally. Of special interest to this issue paper is their piece on food deserts and national grocery chains. http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/pdfs/facing_goliath.pdf

*Holy Nativity Church in Westchester, California, (Diocese of Los Angeles) has a community garden and is involved in relocalization efforts, among other things. Check out their Environmental Change-Makers handbook. <http://www.envirochangemakers.org/>

*The Mennonite Central Committee cookbook *Simply in Season* has useful information as well as recipes. A comprehensive study guide to ethical issues around food systems may be downloaded from their web site. <http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/>

*WhyHunger: www.whyhunger.org (World Hunger Year is 2012)

*Visit my blog, where I aggregate many more resources and articles, and offer opinions on food news and issues. <http://www.justgleanings.blogspot.com>

Josephine Borgeson
Sonoma, California

People of Faith and Public Education

What is the Issue?

There is an education crisis in America! It affects our economy and our workforce. States calculate how many children can read at grade four to help determine how many prison cells they need a decade later. Infant mortality in some cities is higher than in some so-called third world countries.

Most of all our education record threatens our soul as a country, as a people, who profess a gospel of justice.

About 50 percent of the young people entering the ninth grade in America's fifty largest cities graduate four years later; among the poorest in those cities the rate is lower. Among the graduates, knowledge and skills often fall well below the twelfth grade level.

Based on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), only 16 percent of the nation's African American fourth graders were proficient¹ or above in mathematics in 2009 (21 percent of Hispanic students, 21 percent of those eligible for school lunches, and, among all students, still only 39 percent). The performance gap between 1990 and 2009 between white students and black or Hispanic students has not been reduced.

In reading (NAEP), the performance of American students is equally troublesome. In the fourth grade, three of every five students are not proficient; more than eight of every ten African-American students fail to achieve the proficient level, as do Hispanic children and those eligible for school lunches. Performance at the eighth grade level is even poorer.

People with bachelor degrees earn well over \$1 million more in a lifetime than those without a high school degree. Even an associate degree results in \$600,000 more. Educational attainment correlates highly with adult health, mortality, cardiovascular disease and many other indicators of well-being.

What are our sources for addressing this through scripture and church

In Matthew 25, we read, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and did nothing for you? And he will answer, I tell

¹ Some would argue that the "proficient" level of achievement is too high a standard to be an appropriate benchmark. The question we must ask is whether each of us would be satisfied with achievement for our own child below proficient. Having made that observation, it is pertinent to add that among African-Americans fully 36 percent scored below even "basic" level in the fourth grade, as did 29 percent of Hispanic students. Looking for excuses or ways around the facts achieves little.

you this; anything you did not do for one of these, however humble, you did not do for me”.

Who are the hungry among us? Disproportionately, they are the undereducated. Who are the homeless among us? Disproportionately, they are the undereducated. Or the unhealthy? Or those in prison? In every instance, the absence of a good education highly correlates with the worst of the human conditions Jesus addresses. Surely He would say to us, “What have you done about education conditions since you possess the tools to make a difference?”

God does not ordain the conditions that result in poor educational outcomes, especially for children of color, those for whom English is a second language, children who live in and out of the edges of poverty and children who have disabilities.

We citizens are responsible for the existence of those conditions!

What can we do?

The knowledge exists to change the learning conditions across America that would result in virtually all children graduating from high school with the knowledge and skills:

- To graduate from a four-year college without the need for remediation;
- To engage successfully in the next appropriate steps toward work that provides financial security and personal satisfaction; and
- To participate effectively as citizens at the local, state and national levels

These are the goals we want for our own children. Following the Lord’s admonition: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” our obligation is to provide for all children what we want for our own.

But, say some, we do not have absolute proof that promising practices can be brought to scale that ensures the results we seek. And that’s so...since it’s never been tried at scale for a sustained period of time. But, we must return to our standard as Christians. What do we demand for our own children? Only that for which there are double-blind studies guaranteeing success? Or do we insist on learning conditions for which there is strong evidence or, at least, common sense that they will work. And we surely will not tolerate for our own children continuing to endure educational practices for which there is overwhelming evidence of ineffectiveness.

There is no silver bullet in education reform. No one change alone – small schools, early childhood education, increased funding, high-stakes testing, extended time for children who need it, quality teachers – will sufficiently improve the educational outcomes for all of America’s students, especially for those with whom we have historically failed. Significant, systemic, and comprehensive change in public education is required.

Every state and district starts in a different place. Implementation will vary, but no element of the following agenda can be left out.

- **The belief that all children can learn to high standards.** Children succeed or fail according to our expectations. Ample research demonstrates that when we implement policies and practices that reflect high expectations, students – even the most challenging – succeed at high levels. Every decision related to education, from the choice of assignments in the classroom to the setting of standards and the allocation of budgets at all levels of government, must be made based on whether it contributes to all children – including poor children, children of color, children for whom English is not a first language and children with disabilities – learning to high standards.
- **Reliance on promising instructional strategies and management/governance practices for which there is a reasonable basis of effectiveness.**
Promising practices include:
 1. High standards of academic achievement for all students.
 2. Highly qualified, highly effective teachers and administrators.
 3. Instructional strategies for which there is evidence of effectiveness to improve student achievement ...or at least the absence of evidence to the contrary.
 4. Quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood programs for children beginning at age three, including full-day kindergarten at age five.
 5. Effective individualized help for students that need it, both during and beyond the normal school day and year.
 6. Safe and smaller schools and classes.
 7. Meaningful parent and community engagement.
 8. Up-to-date instructional materials, facilities, and technology.
 9. Ways to meet the health and social service needs of students and families, by connecting them to non-school providers and by acting as their advocates.
- **A results-based accountability system.**
 1. *For educators* – We need an educator accountability system with meaningful rewards for success, assistance for those who struggle, and penalties for persistent or dramatic failure based on student performance, with the school used as the unit of measurement.
 2. *For students* – We need a student accountability system that ensures that students are promoted and graduate when they have mastered the necessary skills and acquired the necessary knowledge. We must have a testing system that, unlike the current proliferation of multiple-choice tests, uses multiple sound assessment strategies to measure desirable outcomes that are worth teaching to. We must ensure that the student

accountability system reflects student work, not educator inadequacy.

3. *For citizens* – Accountability for students and teachers should not be required unless citizens meet their responsibility to provide schools and students with the support, resources and opportunities to learn and teach that are needed for students to learn to high levels.

- **Adequate resources, equitably raised and distributed.**

1. *Adequacy* means enough resources provided to create the conditions necessary for all students to know and be able to do what they must to succeed. Because some students may need more or different strategies than other students to succeed to the desired level, what is adequate will not be the same for all students and all schools.
2. *Equity* in raising and distributing funds means that low-income students should be able to enjoy the opportunities of an adequate level of funding without the citizens in their school district being required to exert more or less tax effort than fellow, more affluent citizens in other school districts.

The details of this four-part agenda may be legitimately debated. More or fewer components may be valid or satisfactory. Different configurations of implementation may be justifiable. Implementation may be phased in over longer or shorter periods of time. But **the standard of decision-making regarding the agenda for the person of faith remains the same.** What comprehensive and systemic set of changes can be reasonably expected to result in the learning conditions necessary to result in all children meeting the educational and life goals we want for our own.

What is the Episcopal Church's Stance?

Since at least 1985, General Conventions of the Episcopal Church have passed resolutions calling for support of and involvement in public education. In the most recent General Convention (2009), Resolution B025 reads:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church meeting in Anaheim, California urge dioceses to encourage every congregation to develop a partnership with a local public school; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention urge every Episcopalian to give 40 hours a year in support of public education through direct service, participation in community based educational enrichment opportunities, advocacy and/or teacher support; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention call upon the United States government to support policies and funding priorities that support equity in public education for all young people; and be it further

Resolved, That the results of these efforts be communicated to the 77th General Convention.

What next?

Brown v. Board of Education was decided in 1954. Yet schools are, arguably, more segregated than ever. Certainly the performance gaps between white and black/brown/poor remain immorally large. In 1983, *A Nation At Risk*¹ observed that if our system of education had been imposed on us by a foreign power, we would consider it an act of war. The nation's governors, business leaders and education leaders have met in four education summits since 1990. Nearly every presidential and gubernatorial candidate seeks to be identified as the "education governor or president". Resolutions at the local, state and national levels by denominations and religious traditions of every stripe have been passed to support our public schools.

Commissions, reports and resolutions will not get the job done. We must build a movement, with people of faith in the vanguard, that insists that those who make education policy at the local, state and national levels embrace an agenda that mirrors the one laid out in this paper.

The good news is that we know what needs to be done to change the education landscape. The additional good news is that our political and policy leaders will make those changes when they are clear that there is a powerful, values-based voice insisting that the changes be made.

While it is by no means the only approach to building an effective movement, there is one approach, *Prepare The Future*, already underway with leadership from Episcopalians in California and Ohio that include the Rt. Rev. Thomas Breidenthal (Southern Ohio), the Rt. Rev. John Bruno (Southern California), the Very Rev. James Diamond (Cincinnati) and the Reverends Richard Burnett (Columbus), Paula Jackson (Cincinnati) and John Paddock (Dayton).

Prepare The Future has embraced an education agenda much like the one outlined here. Moreover, it is a movement that relies directly on the commitment of lay people to give of their time and other resources in a manner called for by Resolution B-025, most notably their time, e.g. 40 hours/year.

The key principles behind the type of faith community organizing that are essential include the following:

¹ *A Nation At Risk* was a report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education to Secretary of Education T. H. Bell reporting on the quality of education in America as he had requested in forming the Commission two years earlier.

- While there are many reasons to improve public education – economic, workforce, legal, political – the bedrock reason is because it is the right thing to do within the framework of faith and scripture.
- In addition to being values-based, advocacy must have professional staff and be reasonably well-funded. A purely volunteer operation will not work.
- The effort must have a sophisticated technology base that results in successful viral campaigns. It must have outreach strategies that keep up with the newest technology while being especially sensitive to those technologies used by key constituencies (youth, young adults, middle aged and elderly).
- While a major thrust will be web-based, the initiative will have an on-the-ground component as well...for example, regular house church-like gatherings.
- Its advocacy voice must be ever-present, persistent, a tenacious reality in the lives of elected and appointed policy makers.
- Recognizing that the other key source of leadership in all successful movements over decades are youth and acknowledging that the earliest affected constituency is young people, the faith-based public education advocacy effort must have young people in positions of leadership.
- A strong, professional and comprehensive communications plan of action will be developed that encompasses radio, television, and print media.
- Every successful movement has relied on the arts, particularly music as a key mode of outreach and sustenance.
- The “business plan” for the movement must develop a way to be financially self-sustaining.

The work of *Prepare The Future* embodies most of these principles from the beginning. It intends to build the others in as opportunity arises. In addition to developing and embracing an education agenda that will result in achieving the goals laid out above, an important feature will be to work with ecumenical and interfaith partners along with others of good will in order to build as broad a base as possible.

The core element of the work in California and Ohio is the commitment of faith-based organizations to find 30 persons, each of which make four commitments:

- A commitment to the education agenda.
- A commitment to take at least one action every month in support of the education agenda (ranging from sending an email to joining a monthly prayer vigil on the steps of the capitol...a good way to meet the GC resolution urging forty hours a year in support of public education).
- A contribution to support the work (suggested amount \$20/year)
- A commitment to find three friends, family, colleagues who make these same four commitments.

Twenty-four organizations in a state fulfilling these commitments would result in almost 10,000 voices for children taking some sort of supportive action every month and

contributing nearly \$200,000 per year (at an average of \$20). Far reaching impact includes:

- A profound effect on the results of education in any state with comprehensive, systemic policy changes resulting from the exercise of aggregate power;
- Upon achieving the policy changes being in a position to monitor implementation district by district and, in many instances, school by school;
- Creation of a force for justice at the neighborhood, city and regional level. Each participating organization will have developed a cadre of 390 advocates dedicated to the well-being of children and families that can act singly or in concert with one another

God has given us the tools to act. The decision to do so is ours.

Finally, a text for the effort should be: Luke 18: 1-5. "(Jesus) spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart: 'There was once a judge who cared nothing for God or man, and in the same town there was a widow who constantly came before him demanding justice against her opponent. For a long time he refused; but in the end he said to himself, 'True, I care nothing for God or man; but this widow is so great a nuisance that I will see her righted before she wears me out with her persistence.'"

We should pray earnestly that the hearts of those elected and appointed to serve the children should change. But in the interim, we shall settle for a profound change in behavior that results in all of America's children graduating from high school with the option of choosing to pursue college and/or career training imbued with the skills and values to practice good citizenship

David Hornbeck
Baltimore, Maryland

Eco Justice in American Ports

[Episcopal News Service] The visibility and power of a national blue-green alliance, focused on labor and environmental issues at the nation's principal ports, took a big step forward last month in Seattle as almost 400 port truckers left their trucks, partially shutting down the port for several days in protest.

The truckers-mainly from East African countries-are protesting their status as "independent contractors," which deprives them of the usual benefits of employee status such as health insurance, workers comp, and social security. They want recognition as employees of the big shipping companies they drive for, and they want the companies to own the trucks, assuming responsibility for truck safety and repair conditions and paying the insurance on their loads. As compensation for the heavy responsibilities they bear, the drivers make an average of about \$28,500 a year, out of which come various expenses borne as truck owners.

The Seattle protest was the most recent of similar protests taking place over the past four years and more in the ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach, Oakland, and New York/New Jersey, all with the strong involvement of faith groups in those cities, including Episcopal clergy and lay people. The blue-green alliance, called the Coalition for Clean and Safe Ports, is pushing for a major cleanup of the air around the ports befouled by diesel fumes from the aging trucks, and for the emergence of the drivers from what has been called a "sweatshop on wheels" work environment. (For example, drivers are forbidden to exit their trucks to take a bathroom break while at work, forcing many to carry "pee bottles" in their cabs.)

As employees they would be protected under federal labor laws, and have the right to collective bargaining.

In August of last year, 17 young adult Episcopalians from around the country came to Seattle for a five-day Eco-Justice immersion experience. The group toured the port, met with port drivers, visited impacted neighborhoods, and learned from local organizers.

The port tour helped make those and other Seattle eco-justice connections clear as the young adults heard about low wages, poor working conditions, air and noise pollution, and environmental health impacts. The event was sponsored by the Episcopal Church's Office for Economic and Environmental Affairs and the Office of Young Adult Leadership and Vocations.

In early February, I was privileged to be present at an extraordinary organizing meeting of about 300 highly energized Seattle drivers, who ran the meeting themselves. The drivers, mainly from Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea and other East African countries, exhibited a notable respect for the democratic process in the way they conducted their meeting. One repeatedly disruptive person was nonetheless freely allowed to voice her views. It struck me powerfully that the leaders that night, many of whom were refugees

from brutally antidemocratic and authoritarian regimes, had early on absorbed Americans' respect for the democratic process, and were putting it into practice in their meeting, perhaps doing it better than we ourselves sometimes do.

Here in Seattle, the drivers' walkout was heavily reported by the press; and the strong support of many community, labor and religious supporters, including Muslim leaders, unexpectedly resulted in the passage of a bill late last month in the lower chamber of the Washington State Legislature to recognize the drivers as employees, thus abolishing their independent contractor status. Although the bill died in the state senate, the Port of Seattle and the large shipping companies have been sobered by the sudden emergence of the port drivers and their community allies.

As for the drivers, they returned to work after a two-week walkout without major retaliation against them by the companies, and continue to build support from the rest of the 1,500 port drivers as well as from the public. In support of the state senate bill giving the drivers employee status, Greg Rickel, Episcopal Bishop of Olympia and a steadfast supporter of the port drivers' actions for justice, in a letter to the chair of the State Senate Labor and Commerce Committee wrote: "In our church tradition, we ask newly baptized persons to take a vow to uphold 'the dignity and respect of every human being.' [This proposed law] ... seems to be the most pressing because it does, in fact, bear on the dignity and respect of human beings."

Nationally, a decisive change in the federal law that governs environmental and working conditions at all the ports is needed. We can all support the Clean Ports Act of 2011 (HR 572). Address comments to U.S. Rep. John L. Mica (R-Florida), chair of the House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, or ranking committee member U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-West Virginia).

This article, "A national blue-green alliance gets a big push in Seattle" was posted on the Episcopal News Service website, March 5, 2012.

The Rev. Richard Gillette
Seattle, Washington

Community Investing

Community Investing is the broad term referring to making loans to organizations which in turn make loans - provide credit where it has been denied - in low income communities around the world. Community investing involves deposits or loans to Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) which include community development credit unions, community development banks, or community development loan funds and microfinance funds.

Community investors usually have 2 motives in addition to needed financial return albeit at less than market rate. They also seek to personally integrate their values and their money and to change the world through social impact.

Episcopalian and social investment leader Amy Domini said "investors' money greases the wheels of finance which provide the world with food, clothing, shelter, and education". They do this by financing community owned small business, cooperatives, low-cost housing, and non profit facilities.

Community investment performances historically have been excellent even though they are defined as high risk by traditionalists.

The Calvert Foundation with \$215 million in assets in December 2008 could be called a community investment mutual fund. With investors money they have made loans to 240 of the highest quality CDFIs and their notes are now available through more than 400 brokerage houses around the country. Gradually more financial advisors are becoming familiar with community investing.

Community Investing is now for everyone ! Individuals can invest as little as \$20 on-line at <MicroPlace.com>. Individuals or parishes or dioceses can 'community invest' a portion of what they hold in traditional banks by contacting a CDFI - including federally insured banks or credit unions near to home or by providing funds for microfinance loans far away.

In 1988 The Episcopal Church set up a loan fund using \$7 million of its invested funds. This Economic Justice Loan Fund is now managed by Opportunity Finance Network which is the industry association for CDFIs. The promotion of community investing throughout TEC is a priority program of the Episcopal Network For Economic Justice (www.enej.org). Please contact us.

For complete information including contact information for CDFIs in all parts of the country go to the Social Investment Forum <www.socialinvest.org>.

Why and How of the Economic impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on Native Peoples

The “Doctrine of Discovery” is a term referring to several documents and policies of church and state that legalized the violent and unjust settlement of the Americas, giving these actions, and their long-lingering tragic consequences, the full sanction and blessing of church and state. These documents include: the papal bulls *Inter Caetera* (Alexander VI) May 4, 1493; *Dum Diversas* (Nicholas V) 18 Jun; *Romanus Pontifex* (Nicholas V) January 8, 1454; Patent Granted by King Henry VII (of England) to John Cabot and his Sons, March 5, 1496; and the U.S. policies of the Monroe Doctrine, 1823 and Manifest Destiny, 1845.¹

When we today, in the year 2012, look back to 1492 and catch some glimpse of what has happened since that time to Native peoples of the Americas in terms of economics, it may be too easy to feel good about ourselves, while failing to realize how much we have in common with those who orchestrated the injustice. “No, of course not!” would be our reply if we were asked overtly, “Is genocide in accord with the Gospel of Jesus Christ?” The deeper lesson here in terms of the economic impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on the peoples of the Americas is the kind that comes from paying attention to the more subtle ways in which the Christian tradition was and is abandoned where it actually matters most, in matters of relationship, justice, and love. In other, words, it is precisely within our economics that the Christian faith is most clearly displayed, confused and betrayed.

Rather than provide a summary of statistics on genocide, dislocations, poverty, disease, unemployment, damage to family, social, and cultural structures, high rates of teen suicide, and low rates for high school graduation, alcoholism, drug abuse, and family violence among Indigenous populations of the Americas, I will offer a very brief glimpse into the kind of theological thinking that was a necessary partner in the collaboration between church and state,

¹ Kathryn A. Rickert, Project Coordinator for: DVD, *Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery*, “Looking at Columbus Day through the Lens of our Baptismal Vows”, “The Four Directions and Magnificat” (Advent); “Seeking God’s Justice for All” (Lent). “A Lament over the Doctrine of Discovery”, General Convention 77, Indianapolis, Indiana, (July 10, 2012). For more information and resources on the Doctrine of Discovery please see <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/doctrine-discovery-resources> . Also see “Resources for Responding to the Doctrine of Discovery.” This includes actual excerpts of the documents in English translation that have come to be known as “The Doctrine of Discovery” <http://kathrynricket.com/2012/06/25/resources-for-responding-to-the-doctrine-of-discovery/>

theology and religion that allowed these events to unfold as appropriate actions and public policies, in the name of the Christian tradition.¹

A Few Disturbing Figures Pertaining to the Economic Impact of the Arrival of Europeans on Native Peoples in the Americas

1. Decline in the population of Mexico - 1518 – 25.2 million to 1623 – 700,000 97% decrease (147)
2. Spread of diseases – small pox, (1533, 1535, 1558, 1565) typhus probably in 1546) , influenza 1558, diphtheria (1614), measles, 1618 -- “ killed 9 out of 10 inhabitants of Tawantinsuyu, the (*Quechua* name for the Inka Empire(13th-16th C. (105)
3. Transfer of land from Indigenous population to Euro-American ownership:
“By 1955, the indigenous land base had shrunk to just **2.3 percent** of its original size.” See ...for a map that moves through the years to show the loss.²
<http://sunisup.tumblr.com/post/3860958336/this-is-a-series-of-maps-charting-the-shrinkage-of>
4. Number of indigenous languages no longer spoken in North America: 125 of 300³
5. Native Teen suicide rate: males 10-24 = highest of any group in the nation⁴
Native Teen High school graduation rate: 50% compared with 75% for Asian American and White students⁵

To grasp why and how Native people, and others, have been unjustly impacted on all levels by the invasions of people from Europe it is helpful to consider and reflect on the theological issues inextricably woven into these political, economic and social events. How and why were the events that came to be the known as the DOD -- the attempted economic, social, legal, and cultural destruction of Native peoples in the Americas -- blessed and sanctioned by church and state? When we look primarily at the costly and painful consequences of the DOD for

¹ So as not to skip the statistics entirely, here are a few selected examples ... as measured from the more general perspective as found in Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. New York: Knopf, 2005.

² Indian Land, Sam B. Hilliard, Louisiana State. <http://sunisup.tumblr.com/post/3860958336/this-is-a-series-of-maps-charting-the-shrinkage-of>

³ The Leadership Conference <http://www.civilrights.org/indigenous/language/>

⁴ Indian Health Service, 2008a

⁵ High School Graduation Crisis Fact Sheet

http://www.tacobellfoundationforteens.org/documents/Crisis_Fact_Sheet.pdf

Native people, without seeking to uncover the thoughts and beliefs behind these events, it becomes far too easy to point at and blame others, as though we ourselves were immune to and not also subject to similar errors in awareness, reasoning, and love. It is imperative that we begin to understand how and why such grave injustices were carried out in the name of the Gospel, so that we may participate in resisting and responding to that evil, and not do something like it again in the future. The hope for this reflection is that we might gain some insight into the past; a sort of bringing together of history along side of emotions about that history, so that we might not repeat that past, but rather gain a vision for more appropriate responses to that history, today.

Both the evils associated with the DOD -- racism, arrogance, greed, ignorance, hatred, and violence -- as well as important strategies for responding to these evils -- wisdom, compassion, justice, and love -- are identified by and woven into our tradition from the beginning. To say this, is to acknowledge that from very far back in the Christian tradition, this most unholy alliance between Christian faith and economic policy and practices became wedded so that it is difficult to carry out either Christian or economic life without that particular unholy collaboration at the core.

Elsewhere, I have worked to identify some of the problematic theological issues suggested by the DOD and then sought out strategies from within the Christian tradition to respond to those issues.¹ Thus, in this paper, I will use a similar approach and work with the ten principles of the DOD as identified by Robert Miller, in *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny*². (Given the space limitations here, I provide only Miller's term for each of the ten points. I have defined them in the source listed above, "Resources for Responding to the Doctrine of Discovery.")

In something that is little more than an annotated list, I offer a brief comment on the theological issue raised by each of the ten points of the DOD, and then suggest resources from the Christian tradition that may help to shape a more faithful and just response. When the "points" that make of the DOD are held up to even a cursory consideration the Christian values, it is very clear that the kind of thinking at work, simply paid no attention to the tradition. Not unlike our own situation, rationalizations having to do with "business" or "war" some how shut down to most basic attention to the values behind communal attitudes and actions of economic injustice.

1. First Discovery – Arrogance & Ignorance

Humility

"The last shall be first and the first shall be last..." Matt 20:16

¹ "Theological Issues and the Doctrine of Discovery" – unpublished paper prepared as part of my participation in the Anglican Delegation to the 2012 United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

² Miller, Robert J., and Elizabeth Furse. *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny*. Westport, Conn: Praeger Publishers, 2006.

The ancient world from which the Old Testament comes assumed that while other lands certainly have their “own gods”, those lands were not uninhabited. As such the idea that showing up first, e.g. “first discovery”, would in no way remove or trump the previous residents. In the New Testament, being “first” is not a Christian value by which claims of superiority are to be made; the opposite is the case

2. Actual Occupancy -- Current Possession

Letter over Spirit

I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord’, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. Jer. 31:33-34

The longing for self-determination that drew many Europeans to come to the Americas for many centuries, was not extended to the inhabitants of this land, once they arrived here. (This point and the values it ignores are linked to those of #7 *Terra Nullius*. See below.) Also, in demonstration of the arrogance which assumes that “our way” is the only way, and makes judgments without allowing for any possibility of another people having another approach. As contrasted with the powerful notion that God’s law is not external -- a law on outside that does not link up with the inside of the person – the understanding of “law” in both the Old and New Testaments calls those who live from these texts to a much higher standard that would not allow the deceptive definitions of actual vs. current possession.

3. Preemption/ European Title

Violation of Right Relations

You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. Deut 10:19

You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in their lawsuits. ⁷Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent or those in the right, for I will not acquit the guilty. ⁸You shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the officials, and subverts the cause of those who are in the right. ⁹ You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. Exodus 23:6-9

In the biblical world, right and wrong are very much indicated in terms of economic behavior. The poor, the “anawim”, are those who could not live without the financial support of the wider community. As such, claims that privilege those in power over those who struggle for economic survival -- “the poor, the “resident alien”, neighbor and “brother” -- have turned the “law” upside down. To claim any such preemption ignores the responsibility of God’s people to protect the access of those in need of the basic resources for life support.

4. Indian Title

Promise/ Covenant broken

*Dishonesty
in terms of awareness*

From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded. Luke 12:48

There very long and shameful record of how many times the promises (treaties and trusts) made by the United States to the tribes of this land is accompanied by a two-tier system that, to this day, does not allow Native people to sell their land as other citizens do. While this system came with claims of being in the best interests of Native people; that has not been the case. The actuality, is that Native peoples have been greatly frustrated in their efforts to deal responsibility with their own land and resources.

In this case the theological issue is not only to an unjust distinction between “Indian” and other Americans; but perhaps even more importantly with the grievous ways in which the promises and covenants made were not kept. More is demanded from those who have, not the other way around.

5. Tribal Limited Sovereign & Commercial Rights

“Privilege”

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, ‘Which commandment is the first of all?’²⁹ Jesus answered, ‘The first is, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one;”³⁰ you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.”³¹ The second is this, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these.’
Mark 12:28-31

Baptismal Covenant “... respect the dignity of every human being,”

The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes point to a balance of “right relations” between humans, God, (and the Creation.) Those relations are damaged when there are distinctions that have no basis in “function”. There are different gifts, etc. even different stations of life, but that does not extend so far as to morally, ethically, economically diminish those who are of low estate. Any time a community legalizes economic advantage of one group over another, and disadvantage for one, which this point of the DOD does, it should raise alarms.

6. Contiguity

Dishonesty “Cleverness”

“...for we intend to do what is right not only in the Lord’s sight but also in the sight of others.
2 Cor. 8:21

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Romans 12: 17-18

“Contiguity” sounds like a trick used by children to “win” a game. According to this legal principal, whoever, (other than the people who already lived there), got to the mouth of a river, could them claim the *entire river system* for their nation. This move was accomplished by the Lewis & Clark Expedition, and meant that the States of Washington and Oregon are part of the US, rather than Canada.

Cleverness in Scripture is valued when it serves the good of the many, especially the poor. Yes, there are examples of divine wisdom which suggest that cleverness of the Holy One shows how humans do not fully grasp all there is to know about God. Cleverness that deceives both the perpetrator by creating the appearance of right where there is none, as well as the illusion of a “legal designation” for doing the wrong thing, is not just, righteous or right.

7. *Terra Nullius* misuse of language

Definition vs. Description
words as smoke and mirrors

³³“Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ ... ³⁷Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

Matt 5:33 & 37

“*Terra Nullius*” means empty land. The term was used to legally “define”, rather than describe, the condition of the land when settlers arrived in the Americas. There is a huge distance of certitude between description and definition. Description is more in keeping with “yes, yes” and “no, no.” It does not try to go beyond what is known.

This point of “*Terra Nullius*” is further complicated by the fact that the first “explorers” who intended conquest, (not the Vikings), arrived in the 16th Century. In many cases it was more than a hundred years after the arrival of explorers before settlers arrived. Much of the destruction of disease and economic disruption was already accomplished by the time settlers arrived. So, they did not see what DeSoto had seen, and as such, may have honestly come to the conclusion that the land was empty. Most of the people had died, and their care, cultivation, and habitation in the land had been abandoned. ¹ However, the term was and is an intentionally misleading use of language which sets up a kind of logic that works only as long as the misleading language is very narrowly used. If the actual situation is described, honored, acknowledge, then the language does not fit the situation.

8. Christianity

Blindness

You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.
Exodus 22:21

¹ Mann, 112-155

The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. Lev 19:34

But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me."⁴⁷ When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." Luke 8:46-48

A MISSIONARY once undertook to instruct a group of Indians in the truths of his holy religion. He told them of the creation of the earth in six days, and of the fall of our first parents by eating an apple.

The courteous savages listened attentively, and after thanking him, one related in his turn a very ancient tradition concerning the origin of the maize. But the missionary plainly showed his disgust and disbelief, indignantly saying: -- "What I delivered to you were sacred truths, but this that you tell me is mere fable and falsehood!" "My brother," gravely replied the offended Indian, "it seems that you have not been well grounded in the rules of civility. You saw that we, who practice these rules, believed your stories; why, then, do you refuse to credit ours?"

from *The Soul of the Indian*¹
<http://www.mountainman.com.au/eastman5.html>

It may be understandable when difference or the status of "outsider" is used at first to *consider* justifying exclusion. There are, however, numerous examples in both the Old and the New Testaments where it is precisely the "foreigner" who speaks to God's people. The great tradition of valuing the "outsiders" includes: (Ruth, the Moabites), strangers, "the alien", second sons, (Jacob) barren & "unclean" women, (most of the women of the Old Testament and the Samaritan woman at the well.)

Blindness to God's presence, ways, and voice is common to every age. The overwhelming pattern by which humans do NOT get all that there is to know about God, (and probably not even just a little bit) is strongly hinted at with so many "protests about against outsiders". In other words, it ends up that those who are "outsiders" -- Samaritan Woman, Hagar, Ruth and the Women with the flow of blood -- become powerful examples of faith and play roles of prominence in the Sacred Story.

9. Civilization

Ignorance

¹ *The Soul of the Indian An Interpretation* by Dr Charles Alexander Eastman, 1911. born Ohiyesa of the Santee Sioux, in 18 Chapter 5: "The Unwritten Scripture."
<http://www.mountainman.com.au/eastman5.html> referenced June 25, 2012

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; ⁴he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” ⁵And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.”

Revelation 21:1-5

“The word civilization comes from the Latin *civilis*, meaning civil, related to the Latin *civis*, meaning citizen, and *civitas*, meaning city or city-state. ¹

The formation of “new communities”, with citizens in community is itself not the problem with a failure to recognize the civilization of the other. Rather, the problem is the failure to recognize the inherent vitality and necessity of welcoming “new” communities to form which do NOT copy in every way the old.

Those who arrived from the “Old World” seemed not to pay attention to, or appreciate the existing civilizations that were there when they arrived. In many ways -- personal hygiene—the Europeans were far behind the ways of those they “discovered” who had regular and more frequent bathing practices.

Some how, in every age it is necessary to become open to and welcome the “new” aspect of “new life” promised to *all* by the Good News.

10. Conquest

Faith is Always about relationship (mishpat/ ztudeka)

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. John 14:27

Leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Matt 5:24

God is on the side of those who cannot in any way “conquer” anyone else; for God, to “conquer” is to make life possible where it seems to be impossible. And, in the biblical world it is always God and not humans who do the conquering.

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilization>

“Conquest” becomes a kind of code language for “God is on your side when you are down and vows to help you when you are down”. But, if you misuse your success, and do not treat others who are “down”, then you will be “conquered by the same power that helped you (all) to come out of distress, suffering, and slavery. (“You” always means the whole community, never just one individual!)

Conclusion:

As strong as the forces of culture and society are that try to keep economics and faith apart, they belong in an intimate embrace that simply does not ever allow us to repeat the patterns that have sustained the damage done by the Doctrine of Discovery for centuries. That powerful pull has everything to do with God’s loving of the whole world. As attractive as it may be for us now to focus our attention on the evils of the past, we and all of God’s people and the Creation, will be far better off when we are able to learn from that very sad past, so as to dispel, heal and awaken our own arrogance, blindness, dishonesty with compassion, wisdom and love... the kind that Jesus offers us.

Kathryn A. Rickert, Ph.D.
June 25, 2012
Langley, WA

Sources

Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. New York: Knopf, 2005.

Miller, Robert J., and Elizabeth Furse. *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny*. Westport, Conn: Praeger Publishers, 2006.

Human Trafficking

Each year, criminals around the world collect billions of dollars in profits by compelling the service of other human beings through fraud, force and coercion in order to exploit their labor. Their victims are slaves, who today number somewhere between 10 million and 30 million people across the globe. The victims include people like Tola, a toddler in Southeast Asia who was sold to beggars to redeem a debt his father could not pay, and forced to beg on the busy streets of a Cambodian border town at the age of two; freckle-faced, blonde, blue-eyed American teenagers who've run away from bad home situations, only to find themselves pimped out at truck stops and street corners across America; Latin American families hoping for work who get tricked out of their property rights back home, transported to "el Norte" and trapped by debt into working for no pay in construction companies, in domestic servitude, on farms or in factories.

Worldwide, slaves harvest and process the cacao that goes into much of the chocolate we eat. They mill rice, bake bricks, mine precious metals, assemble electronic devices, labor on fishing boats and farms. They are domestic slaves, sweatshop workers, and restaurant workers. Some have been forced to become child soldiers, mail order brides, even organ donors. And multitudes have been forced into prostitution.

How did these who bear God's image become enslaved?

Some were abducted – snatched from their families or schools. Some were deceived. A reliable-seeming stranger – or even a trusted relative or friend - came with a job offer, a promise of education and better life. They took that offer, and found themselves trapped. Some were sold or sent away to help their family survive. Many were lured or taken from their own country or region by recruiters, deprived of identification papers, sold, isolated from family and community support, kept under constant watch, trapped by ever increasing debt for their food, transportation and lodging, and forced to work under threat of injury or death, for no pay and with no way of escape.

All of these people were enslaved through *human trafficking*, which the UN defines as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, or fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

Global Scope of Human Trafficking

Each year traffickers smuggle 600,000 to 800,000 people across international borders and traffick millions more within their own countries. Approximately 80 percent of those trafficked trans-nationally are female, and half of these are children. The majority of these victims are forced into the commercial sex trade. Forced or bonded labor awaits most of the males and females trafficked within their own countries' borders.

This tragedy is happening in every country in the world, including the United States. The United States is a destination country in the slave trade. About 17,500 people get trafficked into the US each year. They come largely from poor countries, mostly from Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe, with a smaller percentage coming from Latin America. There are US citizens trafficked within US borders as well. Worldwide, trafficking typically moves people from poorer countries in the global South and East, and Eastern Europe, to richer industrialized nations in the West, the Pacific and the Middle East. Within countries, traffickers typically move their victims from poor rural areas to prosperous urban areas.

If it is illegal, why does it persist?

Trafficking is illegal in every country of the world, but it persists because it is profitable. The UN estimates the slave trade generates \$32 billion in profits globally each year, bringing in more than the illegal arms trade. Because human trafficking is so profitable, there is a huge black market in human beings. They are cheap, in ready supply and endlessly renewable. Slaves cost the traffickers very little – about the price of a pair of athletic shoes. They can be resold many times, and everyone who handles them profits. Potential slaves are in ready supply because so many people around the world are desperate for work and opportunities to improve their lives. Such people are likely to migrate, and their desperation and naiveté feed the trafficking industry.

Trafficking is part of the economic systems of the countries where it operates. This is especially true of Southeast Asia, where tourism accounts for 8.2% of GDP and sex tourism is an openly promoted part of the industry. It's also true in consumer cultures like those in the West. The goods slaves make are in high demand because they are cheap. Things consumers eat and use every day, from coffee to cotton underclothing to electronics, may have involved slave labor. The demand for cheap products fuels the demand for cheap labor, incentivizing traffickers to trade in human beings.

Other factors that enable human trafficking to persist include: cultural attitudes toward girls and prejudices about minorities that make it a low priority to protect victims; community tolerance or ignorance about trafficking, and government corruption, or ineptitude - or simply lack of resources - that make it easy for traffickers to operate with impunity.

Who is vulnerable, and why?

People from all walks of life are vulnerable, but overwhelmingly it is people who are poor, desperate, undereducated and marginalized, who are in the most danger. Poverty and lack of economic opportunity make parents and young people susceptible to offers of jobs or education in faraway cities. Gender discrimination plays a role, for girls are less likely to be educated than boys and first on the list to be sold or sent off to earn money. Marginalized ethnic and religious minorities, who often live outside the protection of the law, and can't gain access to services, are easy prey for traffickers. And youth suffering from domestic abuse, parental drug use and alcoholism who are

desperate to get out of a bad situation, are vulnerable as well. Such people are easy targets for traffickers. Their lives can be destroyed, and chances are high that nobody will notice, or do anything to stop it.

What can we do?

There is a great deal faith communities can do to combat human trafficking and the damage it causes its victims. Grounding our actions in faith, we can:

- Educate ourselves about the issue of human trafficking, how it plays out in our own communities as well as around the world, what the red flags are that indicate a possible trafficking situation, how consumer choices may support trafficking, and how to report a suspected trafficking case or obtain confidential help and information (contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline, 1-888-3737-888).
- Advocate for laws that protect and restore victims and make it easy to apprehend and prosecute traffickers; urge corporations to adopt policies and practices to keep slave labor out of their supply chains; boycott products produced by slaves; use websites and smart phone apps to empower justice-based consumer choices
- Serve trafficking victims directly or through local agencies to provide medical advocacy, translation, counseling, housing, job placement and similar services; reach out to migrant communities in our area; educate doctors, nurses, hospitals and schools in our area about the signs of trafficking, and raise community awareness through op-ed pieces, events and campaigns
- Pray for trafficking victims & survivors, perpetrators, law enforcement, corporations, and governments, and for abolitionists, grassroots organizations and NGOs that work to prevent, protect and restore victims or to prosecute traffickers
- Team up with others in our communities and denomination who are working on the issue of human trafficking; work together and share resources; develop relationships with organizations doing global and / or local anti-trafficking work, including those providing services to victims; find out what their needs are, and explore partnership with them
- Give as generously as we can and raise funds to support local & global projects that combat trafficking
- Believe that God cares and is already at work, and that we are invited to join God in proclaiming release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and in letting the oppressed go free.

Resources

Human Trafficking: Freeing Women, Children, and Men, a booklet from Anglican Women's Empowerment that provides a concise overview of human trafficking, suggestions for a Christian response, and information about trafficking-focused initiatives and resources across the Anglican Communion.

www.anglicanwomensempowerment.org

Trafficking in Persons Report 2011, US Department of State – a snapshot of what’s happening related to human trafficking in 184 countries around the world, including the United States. <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2011/index.htm>

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), a service of Polaris Project, is a national, confidential, 24-hour, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls from anywhere in the United States. 1-888-3737-888 The hotline is not a government entity, law enforcement or an immigration authority. It is a safe place to call and report a tip, access resources, request training, or receive referrals. The resource center website offers downloadable materials to help individuals and groups learn how to identify, prevent and combat human trafficking in the United States. Items available include educational handouts and presentations, information on legislation, materials for public awareness raising and direct outreach to potential victims, educators, professionals, and public servants. <http://www.polarisproject.org/resources>

The *Not for Sale* campaign offers and creates tools to engage grassroots groups (including churches), businesses, and governments “in order to incubate and grow social enterprises to benefit enslaved and vulnerable communities.” One of these tools is the Community Abolitionist Network. <http://www.notforsalecampaign.org>

The *Freedom Registry*, a web resource to “share and discover what advocates and organizations are doing to address human trafficking and exploitation across the United States.” <http://freedomregistry.org/>

World Concern’s Women of Purpose Human Trafficking Resources, a list of books, films, discussion guides, training resources, prayer resources about human trafficking, its causes and solutions, and of some organizations working to combat human trafficking. For a free copy of the resource list, email womenofpurpose@worldconcern.org.

Sarah Leech
World Concern’s Women of Purpose
Seattle, WA

Community Investing Resources

Community investing directs investors' capital to poor communities and those underserved by traditional financial resources.

Organizations/Networks

Association for Enterprise Opportunity
1111 16th Street, #410
Washington, DC 20039
Phone: (202) 850-5580
Web: www.aeoworks.org

National membership organization dedicated to supporting the development of strong and effective US microenterprise initiatives to assist underserved entrepreneurs.

CERES
99 Chauncy Street, Sixth Floor
Boston, MA 02111
Phone: (617) 247-0700
Fax: (617) 267-5400
Email: info@ceres.org
Web: www.ceres.org

In November 2003 this Boston-based coalition of investors and environmental groups helped launch the Investor Network on Climate Risk (INCR).

Coalition of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI)
1331 G Street NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 393-5225
Fax: (202) 393-3034
Web: www.cdfi.org

This unified national voice of community development financial institution was formed in 1992 as an ad hoc policy development and advocacy initiative.

Community Investing Center
910 17th Street NW, #1000
Washington, DC 20006
Web: www.communityinvest.org

This is a project of the Forum for Sustainable and Responsible Investment and Green America (see below for both). The Center provides information about other community investing opportunities.

Equity Trust Inc.
P O Box 746,
Turners Falls, MA 01376
Phone: 413-863-9038
Fax: 413-863-9082
Email: info@equitytrust.org
Web: www.equitytrust.org

The loan fund of Equity Trust is capitalized by socially motivated lenders and donors. It makes low interest loans for projects that protect the affordability and use of housing and farms.

FINCA

1101 14th Street NW, 11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 682-1510
Fax: (202) 682-1510
Email: info@FINCA.org
Web: www.finca.org

Founded in 1984, FINCA is a charitable microfinance organization. Its Village Banking program provides solutions to poverty through small business loans. The fund is capitalized by donations.

First Nations OWEESTA Corporation

1010 95th St. #45
Rapid City, SD 57701
Phone: (605) 342-3770
Fax: (605) 342-3771
Email: info@ oweesta.org
Web: www.oweesta.org

OWEESTA is national intermediary loan fund. OWEESTA helps build strong Native institutions and programs and capitalizes loan funds for Native peoples. It uses professional services designed to build local capacity and provide powerful tools for Native Community development. Primary programs and services are: training, TA and counseling; capitalization; and research policy and advocacy. Its motto is “investing in Native Opportunity.”

Forum for Sustainable and Responsible Investment (USSIF).

(Formerly Social Investment Forum)
910 17th Street NW, #1000
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: (202) 872-5367
Fax: (202) 775-8686
Web: www.socialinvest.org

This trade association of SRI professionals and organizations has complete information on SRI opportunities, including mutual funds and community investing, recent trends, research and updates. It maintains a sustainable investing database.

Green America

(Formerly Co-op America)
1612 K Street NW, #600
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: (800) 584-7336
Web: www.greenamericatoday.org

This national nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization was founded in 1982. It was Co-op America until January 1, 2009. It provides strategies for socially and environmentally responsible investing.

Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)

475 Riverside Drive, #1842
New York, NY 10115
Phone: (212) 870-2023
Email: info@iccr.org
Web: www.iccr.org

Founded in 1971, this coalition of 300 faith-based institutions includes denominations, religious communities and others. The Episcopal Church's Executive Council is a member. Members promote corporate transformation from the inside by engaging and advising management toward sustainable practice while improving their environmental and social impact. Shareholder action is frequently utilized.

Investor Responsibility Research Center, Inc. (IRRC)
1350 Connecticut Avenue NW, #700
Washington, DC 20036-1702
Phone: (202) 833-0700
Web: www.irrc.org

A source of information on corporate governance and social responsibility issues affecting investors and corporations worldwide.

National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions
116 John Street, 33rd Floor
New York, NY 10038-3300
Phone: (212) 809-1850
Toll free: (800) 417-8711
Fax: (212) 809-3274
Web: www.natfed.org

An organization of community development credit unions that helps low and moderate income people achieve financial independence through credit unions.

National Housing Trust (NHT)
1101 30th Street, #400
Washington, DC 20007
Phone: (202) 333-8931
Web: www.nhtinc.org

NHT preserves affordable homes and strengthens communities through three affiliated organizations: the NHT Enterprise Preservation Corporation, the NHT Community Development Fund, and the Institute for Community Economics.

Opportunity Finance Network (OFN)
620 Chestnut Street, #572
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Phone: (215) 923-4754
Fax: (215) 923-4655
Web: www.opportunityfinance.net
Email: info@opportunityfinance.net

This is a network of 170 private sector community development financial institutions (CDFIs). OFN's CDFI locator list has information about all funds in your area, including regional and local loan funds

Socially Responsible Investing (SRI)

Individuals and congregations can invest in these funds.

Calvert Foundation
www.calvertfoundation.org
www.calvert.com

It is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation that makes below market loans to over 250 nonprofit and social justice enterprises for affordable homes, small businesses, essential community services, and job creation in communities worldwide.

Related groups

- Calvert Community Investments
- Calvert Social Investment Foundation
- Calvert Social Investment Fund

Community Capital Management, Inc
2500 Weston Road, #101

Weston, FL 33331

Email: info@comfixedincome.com

Web: www.comfixedincome.com

Established in 1998, this is a privately-held registered investment advisor which customizes institutional investment accounts for specific community and economic development initiatives and/or for low- to moderate-income and minority communities.

Community Reinvestment Act Qualified Investment Fund (CRAIX)

Web: www.crafund.org

The CRA Qualified Investment Fund was launched in 1999. In 2001 the firm expanded to include separate account management in behalf of clients such as foundations, religious organizations, pension funds and insurance companies. It invests in low-income housing.

Domini Social Investments

536 Broadway, 7th Floor

New York, NY 10012

Phone: (202) 352-9200

Toll free phone: (800) 762-6814

Web: www.domini.com

Domini offers a number of socially responsible funds based on financial, social and environmental factors.

Related group: Domini Social Money Market

This is an FDIC insured money market account.

MicroPlace

San Jose, CA

Phone: (866) 978-3229

Web: www.MicroPlace.com

It makes it possible to invest on-line in microfinance projects on a worldwide basis.

Parnassus

1 Market Street, #1600

San Francisco, CA 94105

Phone: (800) 999-3505

Fax: (415) 778-0228

Email: shareholder@parnassus.com

Web: www.parnassus.com

This is a socially responsible mutual fund.

Pax World Mutual Funds

30 Penhallow Street, #400

Portsmouth, NH 03801

Phone: (800) 767-1729

Email: info@paxworld.com

Web: www.paxworld.com

This is a socially responsible mutual fund.

Micro enterprises active in other countries:

ACCION International

56 Roland Street #300

Boston, MA 02129-7080

Phone: (617) 625-7080

Fax: (6170 625-7020

Web: www.accion.org

Established in 1961, this microfinance organization has been a leader in microfinance since 1973. It is active in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, plus the United States.

BRAC USA

11 East 44th St. #1600

New York, NY 10017

Web: www.bracusa.org

Makes microloans for self-employment and small business development in Asia, Africa, and Haiti.

Oikocredit

P O Box 2136

3800 CC, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Email: info@oikocredit.org

Web: www.oikocredit.org

In 1975 the World Council of Churches (WCC) established this faith-based microfinance and investment organization. It lends working capital to micro-finance institutions all over the world, who disburse life-changing loans to the poor and disadvantaged, with special emphasis on the poor and women looking for investments and donations for their work: funding farmers, micro-enterprises and other community economic development activities.

Shared Interest

121 W. 27th Street, #805

New York, NY 10001

Phone: (212) 337-8547

Fax: (212) 337-8548

Email: info@sharedinterest.org

Web: www.sharedinterest.org

Guarantees South African banks loans to low income communities and to their financial institutions to create businesses, jobs, affordable homes and services.

Working Capital for Community Needs (WCCN)

(Formerly Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua)

122 State Street\

Madison, WI 53703

Mailing address: P O Box 1534, Madison, WI 53701

Phone: (608) 257-7230

Fax: (608) 257-7904

Toll free: (888) 224-6422

Web: www.capitalforcommunities.org

Focused on Central America and Ecuador, it has a Capital for Communities Fund.

Other Investment opportunities for individuals and congregations

Kiva

3180 18th Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

Phone: (415) 358-7500

Web: www.kiva.org

Kiva works with microfinance institutions on 5 continents to provide loans to people without access to traditional banking systems.

Microcapital
P. O. Box 55071
Boston, MA 02205-5071
Phone: 1-617-648-0043
Fax: 1-617-648-0050
Web: www.microcapital.org

Microcapital provides candid information on microfinance: covers news, events, research and special features.

Micro Vest
7514 Wisconsin Ave #400
Bethesda, MD 20814
Phone: (301) 664-6680
Fax: (301) 664-6686
Email: info@microvestfund.com
www.microvestfund.com

This intermediary for microfinance institutions (MFIs) was founded in 2003. It manages a family of funds.

Banks/Credit Unions

Self Help Credit Union
P. O. Box 3619
Durham, NC 27702
Phone: (919) 956-4400
Web: www.self-help.org

This is one of the largest community development credit unions in the U.S. It lends to organizations and individuals unable to secure loans at mainline commercial banks.

Community Bank of the Bay
1790 Broadway
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: (510) 433-5400
Fax: (510) 433-5431
Web: www.communitybankbay.com

It has offices in Oakland, Danville and San Jose, CA.

Episcopal Community Federal Credit Union
840 Echo Park Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90026
Phone: (213) 482-2040
Web: www.efcula.org
(Diocese of Los Angeles) Opened in 1994

Urban Partnership Bank
7054 South Jeffrey Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60649
Phone: 1 (800) 905-7725
Web: www.upbnk.com

Established August 19, 2010, it took over the assets of Shorebank closed by the FDIC that year.

Publications/periodicals

Episcopal Network for Economic Justice, *Community Investing: An Alternative for Religious Congregations Seeking a Social as Well as a Financial Return*. September 1999.
Web: www.enej.org/resources

Episcopal Network for Economic Justice, *Economic Justice How-To Manual*. Episcopal Network for Economic Justice. June 2006. See Chapter 5: "Socially Responsible Investment" by Sue Lloyd
Web: www.enej.org/resources

Domini, Amy, *Ethical Investing*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1984.

Domini, Amy, *Socially Responsible Investing: Making a Difference and Making Money*. Chicago: Dearborn Trade, 2001.

Kinder, Peter, Seven D. Lydenbert and Amy L. Domini, *Investing for Good Making Money While Being Socially Responsible*. New York: Harper Business, 1993.

Schut, Michael, editor, *Money & Faith: The Search for Enough*. New York: Morehouse Publishing. 2008
Includes a study guide. See Chapter IX: "Moving Toward Jubilee--Investments and Retirement."

Seedco, *Religious Institutions as Actors in Community-Based Economic Development*. New York: Seedco, 1988.

Shabecoff, Alice. *Rebuilding Our Communities: How Churches Can Provide, Support, and Finance Quality Housing for Low-income Families*. Monrovia, CA: World Vision, 1992.

Yumas, Muhammed, *Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty*. New York: Public Affairs, 1999, 2003.

Muhammed Yumas, a native of Bangladesh, is the founder of the Grameen Bank, a microlender.

Periodicals

Business Ethics: The Magazine of Corporate Responsibility

2856 Harriet Ave. #207

P O Box 8439

Minneapolis, MN 55408

Phone: (612) 879-0695

Fax: (512) 879-0699

Web: www.business-ethics.com

Green Money Journal

P O Box 67

Santa Fe, NM 87604

Phone: (505) 988-7423

Email: info@greenmoneyjournal.com

Web: www.greenmoneyjournal.com

Published since 1992, it includes information about socially responsible investing (SRI);

Education

Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries

P. O. Box 328

Oak View, CA 93022

Phone: (805) 649-1327

Fax: (805) 649-2179

Email: inquiries@bcm-net.org

Web: www.bcm-net.org

Web, www.ChedMyers.org (Contact for resources)

From Mammon to Manna: Sabbath Economics and Community Investing. Two DVDs (three 30-minute sessions per DVD) \$27.50. Features Ched Myers and Andy Loving. Facilitator's notes are free.

Founded in 1998, Sabbath Economics collaborative is an ecumenical Christian nonprofit cooperative.