

WORKER JUSTICE

What does the Bible say?

Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness and his upper rooms by injustice; who makes his neighbors work for nothing, and does not give them their wages.

(Jeremiah 22:13)

You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land.

(Deuteronomy 24:14)

Listen! The wages of laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.

(James 5:4)



What does The United Methodist Church say?

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress. **(¶166 Social Creed)**

Throughout Scripture, God commands us to treat workers with respect, dignity, and fairness. Exploitation or underpayment of workers is incompatible with Christ's commandment to love our neighbor—a love that extends to all persons in all places, including the workplace. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #4101, "Living Wage Model")**

United Methodists will work in partnership with persons, communities, and governments everywhere around the world to bring about the creation of conditions that encompass fundamental workers' rights, fair wages, a safe and healthy workplace, reasonable hours of work, decent living standards, support for community infrastructure, and commitment to community economic development. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #4101, "Living Wage Model")**

The UMC: supports the conventions of the International Labor Organizations that advance safety in the workplace; freedom from bonded or forced labor; the elimination of discrimination in respect to employment and occupation; effective abolition of child labor; fair compensation; just supervision; and the right of collective action for employees in all nations. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #4135, "Rights of Workers")**

Since 1908, the church has advocated for a living wage in every industry (1908 Social Creed) and continues to support the rights of workers to share fully in the prosperity of society. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #4135, "Rights of Workers")**



CHURCH & SOCIETY

The United Methodist Church

Living **FAITH** Seeking **JUSTICE** Pursuing **PEACE**

WORKER JUSTICE

What do the facts say?

- There are 168 million child laborers worldwide and 21 million people coerced into forced labor.¹
- Globally, 59% of work is paid, while 41% of work, mostly inside the home, is unpaid. While the men's share of paid work is nearly twice that of women, women perform three times as much unpaid work as men.²
- According to the International Labor Organization, there are 150.3 million migrant workers worldwide.
- Over 800 million working poor live on less than \$2 (US dollar equivalent) per day.³
- In the United States, chief executives of major companies make over 300 times that of their average worker, a six-fold increase from 1980.⁴
- Among the most developed economies, the average percentage of workers belonging to a union is 16.7%, down from 34% in 1980.⁵



^{1,2,3}United Nations Development Programme, ⁴AFL-CIO, Wall Street Journal, ⁵OECD

What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

Find out if your local church has adopted a living wage model for its entire staff.

Learn more about active campaigns through our partners at the International Labor Rights Forum (**laborrights.org**) and National Farm Worker Ministry (**nfwm.org**).

Support companies that pay workers a living wage and respect their voice in the workplace. Purchase fairly traded products through cooperatives such as Equal Exchange (**equalexchange.coop**) and find out how consumers and shareholders are advocating for human rights through the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (**iccr.org**).

Advocate for workers' rights and fair pay. Support worker-led initiatives to increase minimum wage laws, pass living wage initiatives, and protect the right to organize and bargain collectively.



For more information contact:
advocacy@umcjustice.org

www.umcjustice.org

General Board of Church and Society

100 Maryland Ave, NE Washington, DC 20002

© 2022 General Board of Church and Society of
The United Methodist Church