

Religious Statements on Fair Wages

Compiled by the Coalition of Religious Communities

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints:

“For if ye are not equal in earthly things ye cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things.”

- Doctrine and Covenants 78:6

“I have not approved and do not approve of capital's weapons--the blacklist, lockouts, and grinding out of the maximum returns for the minimum of wage outlay, even the imposition of starvation wages, that too often have been capital's means of dealing with labor in the past. These have worked great injustices that must not be repeated.”

- J. Reuben Clark; Cited in Lamond Tullis, "Mormonism and Revolution in Latin America," *BYU Studies* 16 (Winter 1976): 241.

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America:

“We call for...a minimum wage level that balances employees' need for sufficient income with what would be significant negative effects on overall employment.”

- A Social Statement on Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All, 1999

Islam:

“Woe to those that deal in fraud. Those who when they have to receive by measure, from men exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure, or weight to men, give less than due.”

- Holy Qur'an 83:1-3

Jewish Council for Public Affairs:

“The JCPA (Jewish Council for Public Affairs) calls for a further increase in the minimum wage and supports the concept of linking the minimum wage to the annual Consumer Price Index to sustain a wage level that reflects changing economic conditions.” Agenda 2000-2001

“The JCPA supports state and municipal legislation creating community-based living wage ordinances that make it possible for full-time workers to earn incomes above the federally defined poverty level for their community.” -Resolution adopted at 2000 Plenum

Presbyterian:

“In light of the growing disparity in household income and the past positions of General Assemblies, the 200th General Assembly (1988):

Urges the President and Congress of the United States to raise the minimum wage to its historical level of 50 percent of the average non-supervisory, nonagricultural wage and provide for regular increases that will keep the minimum wage at an adequate level to lift people out of poverty.”

Roman Catholic:

“Work has a special place in Catholic social thought: work is more than just a job; it is a reflection of our human dignity, and a way to contribute to the common good. Most important, it is the ordinary way people meet their material needs and community obligations. In Catholic teaching, the principle of a living wage is integral to our understanding of human work. Wages must be adequate for workers to provide for themselves and their families in dignity. Because the minimum wage is not a living wage, the Catholic bishops have supported increasing the minimum wage over the decades. The minimum wage needs to be raised to help restore its purchasing power, not just for the goods and services one can buy but for the self-esteem and self-worth it affords the worker.”

- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

United Methodist Church:

“Every person has the right to a job at a living wage. Where the private sector cannot or does not provide jobs or all who seek and need them, it is the responsibility of government to provide for the creation of such jobs.”

- Social Principles 163.IV.C