



# FAITH & FACTS The Budget

## Economic and Environmental Justice

### What does the Bible say?

Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people. **(Isaiah 10:1-2)**



But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you ... and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will have your welfare. **(Jeremiah 29:7)**

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. **(Matthew 6:21)**

God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; God has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. **(Luke 1:52-53)**

### What does The United Methodist Church say?

We hold governments responsible for the... guarantee of the rights to adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care. (Social Principles ¶164.A)

We recognize the responsibility of governments to develop and implement sound fiscal and monetary policies that provide for the economic life of individuals and corporate entities and that ensure full employment and adequate incomes with a minimum of inflation. (Social Principles ¶163)

We support measures that would reduce the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. (Social Principles ¶163)

Whereas, tax laws are necessary to raise revenues to meet the minimum health, safety, educational, and welfare needs of the community, the Judeo-Christian standards of justice require that the taxes imposed be fair to poor and low-income citizens and raise adequate revenues for the society's common good. (2008 Book of Resolutions, "Establish Annual Conference State Taxation Task Force")

The government is confiscating the financial security of the vulnerable poor and elderly in order to fund the military costs of foreign conflicts. (2008 Book of Resolutions, "Negative Implications of US Deficit Spending")



### What do the facts say?

- Federal Budget Deficit in the U.S.: 2008 = \$455 billion, 2009 (estimated) \$1.2 trillion<sup>1</sup> (Federal Debt = \$9.43 trillion<sup>1</sup>) Federal Budget Deficit without Social Security "surplus": 2008 = \$638 billion<sup>1</sup>
- Other "deficits" in the U.S.: 46 million people lack health insurance<sup>2</sup>, 18% of children in the US live in poverty (13.3 million) and 11.9 million US residents suffer from hunger<sup>3</sup>
- Percent of federal budget spent on education and training programs: 2.5
- Percent of federal budget spent on the military: 20



Change in average after-tax income over the last 15 years (by income group)<sup>4</sup>:  
Lowest fifth: \$600    Highest fifth: \$48,800    Top 1%: \$395,700

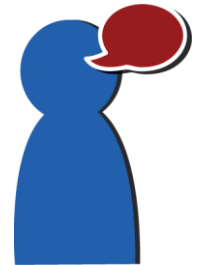
Average value of recent tax cuts (by income group)<sup>4</sup>:  
Lowest fifth: \$18    Highest fifth: \$4,845    Top 1%: \$34,948

<sup>1</sup>Congressional Budget Office; <sup>2</sup>Census Bureau; <sup>3</sup>Food Research Action Center; <sup>4</sup>Tax Policy Center;

### What do you say?

Take action for justice ...

- Make a list of your monthly expenses. How does your individual or family budget reflect on what and who you value?
- If you live in the U.S., tell your Member of Congress that budgets are moral documents and should reflect our shared values of the common good, concern for the poor and vulnerable and economic justice. Take action today at [www.umpower.org](http://www.umpower.org).
- Learn more about U.S. federal tax and spending decisions. Visit the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities ([www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org)) for the latest analysis of proposed legislation or the National Priorities Project ([www.nationalpriorities.org](http://www.nationalpriorities.org)) to see exactly how your tax dollars are spent.



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