

### 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 claim all economic systems to be under the judgment of God no less than other facets of the created order. **(Social Principles ¶163)**

We also support efforts to revise tax structures so that the wealthiest pay enough for all to have guaranteed social protections. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #4056, Greed)**

Tax laws enable us to embody our Judeo-Christian values of equal opportunity for all and care for the poor. They are necessary to provide adequate revenue that supports our shared commitment to a just society, including the maintenance of a safety net of services and opportunities for those most in need...Taxation allows us to create systems that prevent our societies from descending to the tempting sin of greed. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #4063, A Call for Just Tax Structures)**

National budgets are moral documents. They are a testament to national priorities. May it be that such budgets invest in life-giving and life-sustaining priorities, indeed, the things that make for peace. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #6129, "The United Methodist Church and Peace")**

We call upon our governments to reapportion national revenue diverted from military spending, prioritizing domestic programs that invest in the needs of a nation's people and invest in the future by providing opportunities and services to those people. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #4061, "Enabling Financial Support for Domestic Programs")**



**CHURCH & SOCIETY**

The United Methodist Church

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

### What do the facts say?

- Worldwide, health related expenses accounted for 15.5% of total government spending.<sup>1</sup>
- Military spending by the United States each year is four times greater than the next highest spending country (China) and more than the military budgets of the ten highest spending countries combined.<sup>2</sup>
- Since 1990, the number of people living in extreme income poverty has been reduced by more than one billion and yet over 20,000 children die each day due to poverty-related conditions.<sup>3</sup>
- The wealthiest eight individuals have amassed more wealth than the poorest 3.6 billion people in the world combined.<sup>4</sup>
- Governments are losing \$500 billion in revenue each year as companies shift and shield profits to low-tax jurisdictions.<sup>5</sup>
- The fifteen countries that comprise the Economic Community of West African States are losing an estimated \$9.6 billion in public revenue each year because of tax preferences given to foreign companies.<sup>6</sup>



1 World Health Organization, 2 International Institute for Strategic Studies, 3 UNICEF, 4 Oxfam International, 5 Tax Justice Network, 6 Action Aid International

### What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

**Examine** your personal and faith community's spending habits. Do these budgets reflect your values?

**Reflect** on the assets and needs in your community. Where can your spending - and the collective spending of institutions and governments - support life-giving and life-sustaining priorities?

**Learn** more about your government's tax and spending decisions. In the United States, visit the National Priorities Project ([nationalpriorities.org](http://nationalpriorities.org)) or the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities ([cbpp.org](http://cbpp.org)) for the latest analysis of proposed legislation.

**Contact** your elected officials and tell them that budgets are moral documents and should reflect our shared values by uplifting the common good, supporting the poor and vulnerable and building peace in community and among nations.



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