



MATTHEW 25

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt, is looking down at a young child with blonde hair in pigtails. The child is wearing a grey turtleneck sweater and is focused on playing with colorful geometric blocks (yellow, green, red). The woman's hands are also visible, holding a green block. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting.

The average annual cost
of infant care: **\$9,600**

US Bureau of Labor Statistics

SYSTEMIC POVERTY

Systemic poverty refers to the economic exploitation of people who are poor through **laws, policies, practices and systems** that perpetuate their impoverished status.



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POVERTY IN TOPEKA, KANSAS



- In Downtown Topeka, median household income is **\$17,130.**
- In Southwest Topeka, median household income is **\$89,842.**
- In Topeka, median household income is **\$40,342.**

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO SYSTEMIC POVERTY?

- Lack of affordable housing
- Racism, Sexism, Classism
- Mass Incarceration
- Low wages
- Access to Healthcare
- Debt (specifically, payday loans)
- Access to Education



BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR ERADICATING POVERTY



“Now if there are some poor persons among you, say one of your fellow Israelites in one of your cities in the land that the Lord your God is giving you, don’t be hard-hearted or tightfisted toward your poor fellow Israelites. To the contrary! **Open your hand wide to them.** You must generously lend them whatever they need.”

Deuteronomy 15: 7-8

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR ERADICATING POVERTY

The Lord God's spirit is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me.

The Lord has sent me

to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim release for captives,
and liberation for prisoners

Isaiah 61: 1-2



THEOLOGY BEHIND ERADICATING SYSTEMIC POVERTY

Presbyterians Believe:

- Government is God's agent when it comes to the providential care of people.
- **Creation is entrusted to our care.**
- A crucial part of our worship and mission is to stand together for the common good.



HOLDING LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABLE



- The Church is not partisan; **the church is called to hold leaders accountable regardless of political party, popularity, etc.**

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- Government has a moral imperative to care for the poor.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

- **Educate**
 - **Advocate**
 - **Participate**
 - **Donate**
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EDUCATE

- Learn about poverty in your community. Doorstep, Topeka Rescue Mission, YWCA, etc. have resources readily available.
- UNICEF, World Council of Churches are great places for information on Global Poverty.

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca



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unicef



EDUCATE

- Learn about how **Trinity Presbyterian Church**, the **Presbytery of Northern Kansas**, and the **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)** are addressing issues of systemic poverty.



www.pnks.org

www.trinitypresbyterian.net

www.pcusa.org



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbyterian Mission

ADVOCATE

- There are numerous religious and non-profits working to eradicate systemic poverty. **They need voices to get their message heard.**



PARTICIPATE

- Go to a JUMP House Meeting (One after church today, one Tuesday evening on ZOOM)
- Join the **Mission** or **Peacemaking Committees.**



PARTICIPATE

- Volunteer with an organization committed to alleviating poverty.
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- Pay attention to legislative cycles. Write your legislators.



DONATE

- **Money** and **Time** are the two biggest resources needed to eradicate poverty.

www.trinitypresbyterian.net/give



SELF-ASSESSMENT

How does your congregation relate to your local community?
What systems – political, religious, cultural or social –
are involved in this relationship?

In what way(s) is your congregation educating about,
advocating for, and participating in missions that work to
eradicate systemic poverty?



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*God sends the Church to show compassion in the world:
feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, visiting prisoners,
freeing captives, sheltering the homeless, welcoming
strangers, comforting those who mourn, and being present
with all who are in need.*



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