

Section 1: Poverty TABLE OF CONTENTS

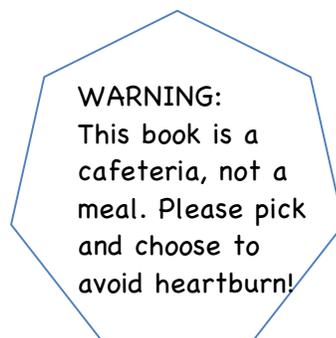
INTRODUCTION

RESOURCES

- BIBLE STUDIES
- UNITED METHODIST TEACHINGS
- BOOKS
- FILMS AND VIDEOS
- WEBSITES
- ARTICLES
- LOCAL SPEAKERS AND EXPERTS

BUILDINGS RELATIONSHIPS

APPENDIX



INTRODUCTION

Poverty is the lack of basic human needs such as clean water, nutrition, health care, education, clothing and shelter because of one's inability to afford them. Whether we are talking about local, national or global poverty, it is paramount that we educate ourselves in the hope that being better informed will equip us to make better decisions in our family, church and political lives. While there is still widespread disagreement on the causes of poverty, there are some scholars who believe they know what the issues are and how best to address them. These scholars point out that while literally millions have worked to alleviate the pain and injustice of poverty, little progress has been made and will never be made if we don't take a deeper look at the systemic issues of poverty.

We have developed this resource guide in an effort to facilitate thought-provoking conversations around the issues of poverty. These conversations will no doubt bleed over into economic policies, theology, health and many other disciplines, as one cannot talk about poverty in a vacuum. Our hope is that we might better learn how to engage in new and exciting ways in addressing the systematic causes of poverty and thus fulfill Christ's call on our lives to work toward bringing forth the harmony and peace that God has in store for us all!

While it is often easier to talk about individual stories of poverty, we experience enormous difficulty in understanding why such stories are happening or how they fit into the wider picture of poverty. In using these resources, and others that you will no doubt identify as you study together, it is our belief that we will all be better able to make sense of what we're seeing in regards to people living in poverty. Perhaps then, we can work towards systemic change so that fewer and fewer of our sisters and brothers suffer the inhumanity of living in poverty - especially in a land and world of plenty.

Godspeed!

We would value your feedback regarding how you used these resources. Please let us know what additional resources you have discovered in your studies. Please contact Rev. Dee Ivy at deecharlie@msn.com or 505-265-4123.

RESOURCES

Bible Studies

1. The Poor Will Always Be With You, Dee Ivy

This Bible study was written to help us explore Biblical teachings about why poverty exists and our responsibilities to the poor in our midst. The study can be found in the attached **Appendix**.

2. A Prophetic Faith, a Logos Bible Study (\$40)

Many church-goers steer away from controversy. They come to church to be comforted and comfortable, not stirred up. Others feel strongly about community and social issues but are afraid of causing conflict in the church. Prophetic Faith can help transform your congregation from a culture of conflict avoidance into one of respectful dialog, engagement, and even church renewal.

This is a 7-session adult study and DVD for planning and action related to social justice ministry. It supports discussion and reflection, raises awareness, and builds communication and advocacy skills.

www.logosproductions.com type in "search"

3. Justice for the Poor, a Sojourner's Bible Study (\$29.00)

This is a six-session DVD-based group study that recaptures the bible vision that links poverty with justice. Through this group study, Jim Wallis and Sojourners recapture the Biblical vision that links poverty with justice, and engages small groups to take action. Use these study tools to ignite a passion to adopt a Biblical response to poverty and make justice a reality for the poor.

http://store.sojo.net/Justice_for_the_Poor_DVD_p/both_jforp.htm

4. Additional Sojourner's Bible Studies

Many church goers do not understand poverty. Sojourners studies can be a big help. Many of these studies are theme related (Global Poverty; Poverty and Justice, etc.) Some include discussion suggestions. Some can be downloaded on your computer. They also vary in pricing starting as low as \$3.00. We feel sure that one or more of these studies will connect with your existing or newly discovered passion for the poor.

http://store.sojo.net/category_s/128.htm

UMC Teachings

1. Through education and advocacy, the Economic and Environmental Justice program helps United Methodists understand the positions of the church on a full range of issues. One will also find access to the applicable Social Principles (2008) regarding these issues. When you get to the website, use the directory tab at the very top of the page. Go to “Boards & Agencies” and click on “Church & Society.” Click on “Learn about the Issues” and click on “Economic & Environmental Justice.” www.umc.org
2. Good News To the Poor – John Wesley’s Evangelical Economics, by Theodore W. Jennings. See review under Book Section.

Books

1. The Hole in our Gospel, Richard Stearns

(Review by Rev. Tom Nagel, District Superintendent of the Albuquerque District of UMC)

I (Rev. Tom Nagel) received the book *The Hole in Our Gospel* as a gift for being part of the Willow Creek Association. It is authored by Richard Stearns, President of World Vision, U.S. Frankly, I wasn’t sure if it would be interesting. But once I started reading it, I couldn’t put it down. Stearns tells his own fascinating story of transformation from a top-level corporate executive to the leader of a movement to alleviate the suffering of the world’s most underprivileged people. His urging his readers to partner in this movement is truly compelling. A gospel that just brings us closer to Jesus is only half a gospel. We who follow the Master are called to be actively involved in ministry with the least, the last and the lost. Stearns offers a workable plan to bring healing to a world broken by poverty, disease, and injustice. This book is a must-read for anyone who believes our faith in Christ is a call to action, not an invitation to comfort.

2. Until It’s Gone: Ending Poverty in our Nation in Our Lifetime, Scott Miller

(Review from Amazon)

What I like most about Scott’s book is that it’s aimed at the middle class and wealthy allies, not people who are in poverty. It calls on those of us in the dominant culture to examine ourselves, make changes, and take action. *Phil DeVol*
<http://www.ahaprocess.com/>

3. Exodus from Hunger – We Are Called to Change the Politics of Hunger, by David Beckman, 2010, Westminster: John Knox Press, 206 pages. (Discounts are available when purchased in bulk by organizations and special interest groups. Study guides are available.) Contact <http://www.exodusfromhunger.org> or <http://bread.org>. Rev. Beckman---a minister, president of Bread for the World, and winner of the 2010 World Food Prize---issues a compelling call to action and service to Christian communities to end hunger in our time. Recent progress at both national and global

levels is threatened by the world economic crisis. He lays out a clear workable plan for effectively using political channels to make further progress. Charitable Christians are challenged to become advocates in behalf of the world's poor and hungry.

Study questions for Exodus from Hunger

1. As you think about the title of this book, what thoughts come to mind? Translating the word *exodus* into modern times, do you think God's plan for Moses was more like a charitable food drive or advocacy for political action?
2. What surprised you about the statistics and efforts to reduce hunger among the nations of the world, as presented by Rev. Beckman?
3. In addition to powerful statistics, Rev. Beckman cites powerful personal stories. Name any that especially touched you. Do you have stories that could be added to this book?
4. Why does Rev. Beckman emphasize the necessity of political action?
5. What does Rev. Beckman mean by "God is moving in our time?"
6. With God's help, where do we want to go? How do we get there?

4. Good News To the Poor – John Wesley's Evangelical Economics, by Theodore W. Jennings, Jr., © 1990, Abington Press, (Review from Amazon.com)

Mr. Jennings raises the question, "Can present-day Methodism rightly claim the name of John Wesley or even Jesus Christ?" Mr. Jennings explores topics such as the demystification of wealth, a preferential option for the poor, protest against injustice, stewardship, the theological basis of Wesley's ethics, and the relevance of Wesley today. John Wesley was concerned with the salvation of souls and with the social conditions of human beings; his is a practical theology. Mr. Jennings recently taught at the Evangelical Methodist Seminary in Mexico City. He writes as a Christian, not as a historian.

"The radical claims of the gospel that Wesley preached and practiced come alive in these pages. Absolutely required reading for all Methodists." Says Justo L. Gonzalez, visiting professor at Columbia Theological Seminary and author of Theology from a Hispanic Perspective.

5. Rich Christians in An Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity, Ronald J. Sider

(Review from Christianbook.com)

When Ron Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* first appeared twenty-eight years ago, it shook readers to the core. Informed about the issues of world hunger and poverty, they could no longer ignore the plight of their global neighbors. This thoroughly revised edition of Sider's best-selling book outlines the progress that has been made in the last three decades, and the work that is still left to do. Every day 30,000 children still die of starvation and preventable diseases, and 1.2 billion people live in relentless, unrelieved poverty worldwide.

Why is there still so much poverty? Conservatives blame sinful individual choices and laziness. Liberals condemn economic and social structures. Who is right? Who is

wrong? Both, according to Sider, who explains poverty's complex causes in this new edition and offers concrete, practical proposals for change.

6. **The Soul of Money**, Lynn Twist

(Review from Amazon.com)

As a highly successful fund-raiser and representative for the *Hunger Project*, Lynne Twist has worked with everyone from Amazon tribal members to CEOs of multi-billion-dollar corporations. Her sensitivity and willingness to listen have given her insight into the real-life consequences of our attitudes towards money (and resources in general). The money consciousness that she propounds in this book is transformative, but it's based on a breadth of experience that makes her conclusions convincing -- for instance, she's worked in real jungles, and the "law of the jungle" is NOT the way they actually operate!

Despite the many well-chosen anecdotes, this book deals primarily in generalizations. But that's appropriate: the author's purpose is to make us aware of our attitudes towards money, and suggest how changing these attitudes can transform the way we go about solving some of the world's most vexing problems. This book deserves not only to be read, but taken to heart.

Films and Videos

1. *Uprooted: Refugees of the Global Economy*, National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (28 minutes \$20). This is a compelling documentary about how the global economy has forced people to leave their home countries. It presents three stories of immigrants who left their homes in Bolivia, Haiti, and the Philippines after global economic powers devastated their countries, only to face new challenges in the United States. These powerful stories raise critical questions about U.S. immigration policy in an era when corporations cross borders at will.

<http://www.nnirr.org/shop/video.php>

2. Iqbal Quadir. This video is Iqbal's story of how his experiences as a poor child in Bangladesh, and later as a banker in New York, led him to start a mobile phone company connecting 80 million rural Bangladeshi -- and to become a champion of bottom-up development. Iqbal Quadir is an advocate of business as a humanitarian tool. With *Grameen Phone*, he brought the first commercial telecom services to poor areas of Bangladesh. www.tedtalks.com. Type into the search field "Iqbal Quadir."

Suggested questions for use with this video:

How does Iqbal answer the question "why does poverty exist"?

What does Iqbal believe will engage citizens and lift them out of poverty?

What were the obstacles to Quadir's phone idea?

What implications does this story have for our charitable giving?

Websites:

1. The *New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women* addresses a variety of issues in its articles about how poverty affects women and children in New Mexico. If you explore this site you'll learn about how violence, alcohol and drugs, teen pregnancy, and unequal pay affect those living in poverty in New Mexico. There is also a tab on the research that has been done regarding A LIVING WAGE in New Mexico.

<http://www.womenscommission.state.nm.us/Research.htm>

2. The *New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty* provides assistance in areas of public benefits, access to health care, colonias, and farm worker rights.

http://nmpovertylaw.org/WP-nmclp/wordpress/?page_id=172

3. The *General Board of Church and Society* of the United Methodist Church operates under the logo of "Educate, Empower, Engage." Its study programs, publications, and links are extensive. Topics are wide ranging and include the following: an online study and conversation about Millennium Development Goals, children's concerns, women and children's health issues, domestic violence, hunger and poverty, human trafficking, immigration, HIV/AIDS, advocacy for people of faith. There are also scriptural citations which provide a biblical foundation for social principles, quotations by John Wesley, and the UMC Social Creed.

The primary goals of the program are to restore and protect God's creation, ensure just and sustainable communities, and see economic opportunity and security for all. Use of this website is a must! <http://www.umc-gbcs.org>

4. *Cleveland State University Center for Poverty Studies*. The Center seeks to enhance the visibility of poverty as a topic of research, concern, and activity. Most notable is the link to "What the World Eats," a photo gallery of families from around the world surrounded by a week's worth of the food they would ordinarily consume.

<http://www.csuohio.edu/cps/>

5. Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health, *National Center for Children in Poverty* offers a highly interactive website with photos, statistics, and articles that give information by individual states and comparisons across states and demographic groups. This is an excellent website. <http://www.nccp.org>

6. Penn State: *Poverty in America – One Nation, Pulling Apart*. An abundance of articles are available, most of them written in 2006. Of interest are a variety of interactive tools such as Living Wage Indicator, An Atlas of Poverty in America, Community Economic Toolbox, and a Census Map of Poverty in communities.

<http://www.povertyinamerica.psu.edu/>

7. *The Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality – SCSPI*. This website is rich in publications and media as well as interactive opportunities on the web such as: *Inequality Facts* ~ 20 facts about US inequality that everyone should know; *IQ Quiz* ~ Check your "Inequality Quotient;" *Inequality Dictionary* ~ Peruse 100 selected terms;

and a variety of working papers. Stanford and Harvard Universities have launched **The Collaboration for Poverty Research (CPR)** by combining their vast intellectual resources to develop and evaluate national policy on poverty and inequality in America for the purpose of solving one of the most significant public problems of our time. <http://www.stanford.edu/group/scspi>

8. University of Wisconsin – Madison: *Institute for Research on Poverty* (IRP.) IRP is a department of College of Letters & Science at University of Wisconsin-Madison. Articles are in English and Spanish. From this site, one can find national poverty data and how to interpret it, recent publications, as well as answers to frequently asked questions; for example, how many children are poor? How is poverty measured in the United States? The IRP is a center for interdisciplinary research into the causes and consequences of poverty and social inequality in the U.S. As one of three Area Poverty Research Centers sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, it has a particular interest in poverty and family welfare in the Midwest. <http://www.irp.wisc.edu/>

(Websites focusing on World Poverty)

9. The website of *Global Issues – Social, Political, Economic, and Environmental Issues That Affect Us All* is a treasure house of statistics and articles about poverty from a global perspective. The article “Poverty Fact and Stats” provides perspectives beyond the numbers, such as the effects of globalization and global priorities in spending. For example, in 1998 the amounts in billions spent on cosmetics, ice cream, perfumes, pet foods, business entertainment, cigarettes, alcoholic drinks, narcotics and military spending greatly exceeded the amounts in billions spent toward basic education for all, water and sanitation for all, reproductive health for women, basic health, and nutrition. Another example, much of the poverty reduction of the last couple of decades comes almost exclusively from China. <http://www.globalissues.org/print/article/26>

10. *Global Issues* website offers two articles, “Causes of Poverty” and “Poverty Around the World” by Anup Shah updated 9/10/2010. It uses graphs, charts, and sharp critiques about corruption, monetary policies, world trade, and new directions in attacking poverty as they relate to the multiple facets of poverty in a globalized world. <http://www.globalissues.org/print/issue2>

11. *The World Bank* website is a vast source of statistics about poverty, research, and related articles. It describes itself as a vital source of financial and technical assistance in developing countries around the world. Its mission is to fight poverty with passion and professionalism for lasting results and to help people help themselves and their environment by providing resources, sharing knowledge, building capacity, and forging partnerships in the public and private sectors. The World Bank has its admirers and its critics, but it is definitely a powerful influence in worldwide economic development. Among its many complex studies are the “Human Development Report 2000/01 ~ Attacking Poverty” and “The Developing World is Poorer Than We Thought, But No Less Successful in the Fight against Poverty.” The World Bank is involved in the

Millennium Development Goals, originated in the United Nations.

<http://web.worldbank.org/>

12. The basic *United Nations* website provides abundant links, videos, articles in English, Spanish, French, and Middle Eastern languages, and an interactive atlas with information by country or region about the Millennium Development Goals. The choices seem endless. <http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics.shtml>

13. *The Millennium Development Goals* cut across all the social issues that bedevil the entire world: extreme poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality and empowerment of women, child mortality, maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability, and global partnerships for development. For progress reports, articles, photos, videos, and music relating to MDG read, "We Can End Poverty: Millennium Development Goals," at the UN Summit on 20-22 September 2010 in New York. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/stats.shtml>

(Websites focusing on Advocacy - Local, National and International)

14. *End Poverty*, a Christian website, supports the Millennium Development Goals. Christians in 70 countries prayed and took action for the MDG on 10/10/10. In the United States an estimated 30,000 people in 170 churches participated. Their worldwide advocacy effort can be viewed in online videos. They seek other Christians to join with them in advocating for the poor and hungry.

<http://www.endpoverty2015.org/en/node/1093>

15. *Bread for the World* is a major Christian advocacy organization that works in behalf of the poor and hungry. Its political action efforts influence policies regionally, nationally, and globally in behalf of the poor and hungry and have gained the support of many of our most esteemed legislators. In addition, it supplies annually statistics gathered from its Institute for Research, action packages, articles, stories and videos about the hungry and poor with information about ways of becoming involved with the Millennium Development goals. <http://bread.org>.

16. *Bread for the World New Mexico* serves at the local level in the cities and counties of New Mexico. It supplies information, research, speakers, publications, articles and videos concerning poverty and hunger. Area churches participate in advocacy through the annual Offering of Letters, Hunger Sunday and other special events. For local, regional, and national links contact <http://breadnm.org> or the blog operated by Carlos Navarro (NM representative of Bread for the World <http://breadnm@gmail.com>).

17. Today's Christian news presents online articles, photos, and video on current issues pertaining to poverty, hunger, disasters, and disease, and a variety of societal issues. It is engaged in and advocates for the Millennium Development Goals.

<http://www.christianpost.com/topics/poverty>

18. Through video, articles, and links, *Answer.com* quite literally answers your questions on almost any topic. The page listed below defines "social justice," provides

an overview of its history, explains theories about social justice, religious traditions pertaining to social justice, and lists pertinent periodicals and publications. Among the videos are “Social Justice in the Proper Context” and “The Meaning of Justice.”

<http://www.answers.com/topic/social-justice>

19. *Wikipedia* presents an extensive discussion of poverty, lists organizations, campaigns, documentary photography, film, references, further reading, and external links. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty>

20. *Charity Navigator* is America’s largest independent charity evaluator. Its website provides free financial evaluations of America’s charities; information online rates organizational efficiency and organizational capacity of each group in relation to income, expenses, net assets, privacy policy, leadership, and mission, plus comparison with similar organizations. www.charitynavigator.org.

(Websites providing helpful statistics)

21. The *US Census Bureau* offers interactive charts with comparisons among cities, counties, states, and national averages regarding demographics, age groups, ethnicity, languages, level of education, home ownership, income, and poverty level, based on 2000 census with 2006 updates. This page shows comparisons of Albuquerque and NM averages. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/35/3502000.html>

22. As in above reference, the same information is available for comparison between the State of New Mexico and USA averages. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/350000.html>

23. Also from the *US Census* site are charts which ranks the counties of New Mexico from highest to lowest in poverty by (1) persons of all ages, (2) children under 18, and (3) ages 5-17 in families. Focus is on children in poverty. <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/saipe/saipe.cgi?year+2006&type=county=county>

24. The “American Community Survey of 2004” on *State Master* ranks the states from highest to lowest in poverty, as reflected in the percentage of its population below poverty level. http://www.statemaster.com/red/graph/eco_bel_pov_lev-economy-percent-below-po

25. *Road Runner Food Bank* is a rich source of 2009 statistics, articles, videos, and possible local speakers. Its 15-page publication *Hunger in America 2010* plus a landmark study recently released by the New Mexico Association of Food Banks and Feeding America are an essential source for understanding the scope of food-insecurity in our state and nation. <http://www.rafb.org>

26. *Feeding America*, supported by Kraft Foods, provides extensive statistics and research on poverty, food insecurity, Emergency Food Assistance, and Federal Food Assistance programs, based on 2009 data. A variety of articles in both English and Spanish include a new study on Hispanic Children, and the Feeding America Blog “Who eats and who doesn’t?” Of particular interest is New Mexico’s identification as one of

ten states with significantly higher food insecurity rates than the national average as shown in *USDA Household Food Security in the US Report 2008*.

<http://feedingamerica.org>

Articles

1. “Reconsidering the Culture of Poverty”

You can either listen to or read this article from *National Public Radio* which discusses why poor people are poor. For years, many scholars blamed it on a culture of poverty - the idea that behavior and attitudes played a key role. Then, the concept was blasted as blaming the victim and almost universally shunned, but a new understand of the "culture of poverty" has recently emerged. www.npr.org type in the search space “Reconsidering the Culture of Poverty”

2. “Defining the Shift in the Psyche of Women at Work,” Dr. Marcia Reynolds (March 4, 2010)

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS: What's your reaction to this article and what does it have to do with poverty? What role does educating girls/women around the world play in alleviating poverty? What changes in a society when women/girls have more and more opportunities? www.huffingtonpost.com go to the LIVING section and type in the article name.

3. “Africa: Urged to Invest in Education of Girls to Reduce Poverty,” Moyaga Nduru

This article is a nice addition or follow up to Dr. Marcia Reynolds article (above) and gives data supporting educating of girls as a way of alleviating poverty and growing economies. www.twinside.org.sg/title/edu-cn.htm

4. “Finding Alternative Solutions to Social Problems,” Jon Stepanian (Oct. 29, 2010)

We know that 44 million people live below the federal poverty line, one in four Americans can't afford basic necessities, and unemployment stands at 9.6 percent. So we know that poverty is a serious problem, but how do we go about dealing with it? www.uspoverty.change.org and type name of article in “search.”

5. “The Poorer You Are, the Sicker You Are,” Brittany Shoot (Oct. 21, 2010)

We know that going without health insurance is disastrous for many, and that being poor has a marked effect on one's brain. Even Medicaid coverage can only do so much while so many struggle to keep our heads above the recession waters. But once again, it's been documented that being poor is simply bad for your health.

Suggestions for use of this article: BEFORE reading the article asks if anyone believes there is a significant correlation between poverty and health and can they describe it. After sharing the article list the “alternative indicators” in the article and brainstorm

others. Read 1Cor. 12: 12-27. Ask the group what they think Paul was talking about when he said ...”strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.”

Local Speakers and Experts

1. Roadrunner Food Bank - 247-2051

Roadrunner Food Bank will provide a speaker on their pack-back program, a school based program which provides food for the weekends for children going home to hunger and also be able to share trends with your group about poverty in the metropolitan Albuquerque community. www.rrfb.org (Road Runner Food Bank)

2. Scott Miller of Move the Mountain Leadership Center

1908 Tierra Vida Place
Albuquerque, NM 87107
505-345-1669
Toll Free at 1.888.232.9285
gena@movethemountain.org

We are so fortunate to have Scott and his family living here in Albuquerque. He is the author of “Until It’s Gone: Ending Poverty in our Nation in Our Lifetime.” (Book is noted under the BOOK section) and is most knowledgeable about issues of poverty.)

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

The following provide opportunities for you and your group to become more personally involved in this issue.

1. Imagine No Malaria is an initiative of the United Methodist Church to end malaria in Africa by 2015, by utilizing and enhancing our existing hospital and clinic network in 30 countries in Africa. Malaria goes hand in hand with poverty. It is both the cause and the result of poverty. For many African families, earnings that might be spent on food or education are diverted to pay for treatment or travel to clinics. When lost productivity is factored in, malaria’s impact on vulnerable populations amounts to an estimated \$12 Billion annually.

We suggest you show the video at this website, use the resources available to host a home party and educate everyone about this United Methodist initiative. By exploring

this site you can also learn of other ways to get involved. Imagine what we can do!
<http://www.imagenomalaria.org/site/c.4dIBILOnGalQE/b.5938999/k.C05A/Home.htm>

2. CIRCLES - An Innovative Model to End Poverty

The Crisis: 36.5 million American currently live in poverty. The United States is the richest country in the world. Yet with 12.3% of the U.S. population living in poverty, our nation is suffering through an enormous societal crisis. It's a problem that's not only measured by the intangible, personal stories of family hardship and heartache, but also by a real cost burden to society of \$500 billion per year (Center for American Progress).

It's a grim picture, but one that is slowly changing through innovations like **Circles®**, a high-impact strategy to end poverty in our nation one community at a time.
www.movethemountain.org

3. Abundant Grace Free Store 420 San Lorenzo NW Albuquerque, NM 87107

Contact: Cheri Lyon, Pastor of Harwood UMC 440-6849. Abundant Grace is more than a store - it is a place where people gather to have a cup of coffee/tea as well as look for household furniture and goods that one needs. The hope is that by setting aside an hour or so each week to volunteer, shop, join in prayer or devotion, you will participate in building community and build relationships with others once unknown! Hours: Thurs & Sat 1-5 PM.

4. Love INC of South Albuquerque is one of 148 affiliates in 30 states throughout the country. The mission of Love INC is to help churches help people. Currently Love INC has 20 churches participating and volunteers from each church helping people who live in South Albuquerque. Love INC is starting its third year and volunteers are helping people in need with furniture, minor home repairs, and yard work. This year volunteers will begin mentoring people who would like more help with finances and parenting. You can help by volunteering, donating items and or money, and praying for this ministry. www.loveincabq.org

5. Angel Food Ministries provides an opportunity to deliver food boxes to hungry families with transportation problems. To learn more, visit www.angelfoodministries.com or call Nancy Douglas de Baca at 505-299-7883 or Diann Zentner at 505-681-3518.

APPENDIX

1. BIBLE STUDY: The Poor Will Always Be With You, Dee Ivy
(It would be best to have two weeks to dedicate to this study)

- 1) Preview Jessica Jackley video Poverty, money - and Love at www.ted.com and search for Jessica Jackley
- 2) Begin by asking - Just off the top of your head, what is your perception of what the Bible has to say about the poor - the general gist?
- 3) Read a couple of examples below of scripture discussing the poor: (or choose your own to share)

Exodus 23:10-12 This passage from Exodus emphasizes the twin aspects of justice and mercy. As we can see here, God's law in the Old Testament wasn't just about keeping people from sin. It asked people to actively work to create a just and merciful society, helping those in need and refraining from corruption and dishonesty.

Psalms 82:3-4 The Bible teaches repeatedly that Christians are to work to make sure that the poor and oppressed find the justice that is their right. Elsewhere in the Bible, God states that He values this more than religious ceremonies or rituals.

Next read Mark 14:3-9. In this passage, a woman breaks a bottle of perfume over Jesus' head and the disciples are outraged because the perfume was worth a great deal of money. If they had sold it they could have helped many poor people. Jesus replied that they would always have the poor but they weren't always going to have him around. After reading the Mark scripture, ask:

Why bother working to alleviate poverty in lieu of what Jesus said?
What do you think Jesus meant? Why did he say this?

- 4) Read some or all of the articles below as time allows

“The Poor You Will Always Have With You”

from www.urbana.org (Jan. 22, 2010)

Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly. "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me" (Mark 14:3-7). For someone who speaks and writes regularly about Jesus' heart for the poor and about the powerful connection between "true religion" and our generosity toward the poor, this is an uncomfortable passage.

Was Jesus saying that our compassionate giving to the poor doesn't really make any difference in solving the problem of poverty? Was he suggesting that we resign ourselves to the permanence of poverty? Before getting too far into understanding what

Jesus may have meant, let me simply say that I believe poverty is less a failure of money as it is a failure of love. As much as I grieve the hemorrhaging of money out of poor communities and into the pockets of the rich, as difficult as it is for me to see the incredible pressure that keeps the world's lowest wages at unlivable levels, and as useful as it may be to stimulate economic growth among the poor, I simply do not believe the chief problem with poverty is money.

One of the problems exacerbating poverty, however, is most certainly greed - which has very little to do with money. Greed is a sickness. It is an itch which is never satisfied. Greed is not as much about money as it is about the "love of money," which Paul says causes us to wander from the faith and pierce ourselves with many griefs (I Tim. 6:10). Greed is the act of rejecting God as master in favor of another (Luke 16:13). Greed is spiritual, not material.

When Jesus asked the rich, young ruler in Mark 10 to sell all he had, give it to the poor and come follow him, Jesus was not attempting to solve poverty, he was attempting to cure this young man of the greed that had killed his soul. He was trying to resuscitate his spirit and give him real life. Money has the power to trap us but it does not have the power to truly free us. A solution to poverty may include the need to re-think economics, but the end of poverty will not be rooted in the growth of economies but in the growth of love. So given that poverty and greed are spiritual more than material, let's look again at Jesus' statement.

While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. The context of this passage was the fleeting, physical presence of Jesus Christ on earth just before his death and resurrection. The focus of the passage is centered on worship not poverty and wealth. If his second coming included his physical appearance at my house for dinner, and if I were privileged to pour him his first taste of wine since the last supper, I would not hesitate to spend my retirement savings for a bottle of 1945 Chateau Mouton-Rothschild Jeroboam.

His statement was in response to the berating this woman received, particularly from Judas who was greedy for the money this perfume might have fetched to line his own pockets (John 12). He was defending this woman's act of worship. Perhaps he was suggesting that our acts of worship would be to pour our alabaster jars of perfume upon the heads of the poor after his ascension, essentially saying, "This woman has done a beautiful thing to me now while I am physically present, you will have many chances to do beautiful things to me later when I am present in the form of the poor."

Jesus was quoting Deuteronomy 15. This is a stunning Old Testament passage which says both, "You should have no poor among you," v. 4, and "There will always be poor people in the land," v. 11. God set up an economic system that, if followed, would make poverty virtually unheard of. The acknowledgement in verse 11 that there would always be poor in the land is either a prophetic denouncement that Israel would never fully

obey the commands, or that the flourishing nation would be so economically solid that it would attract the poor from the nations around them. Either way, in his quote Jesus harkens to a passage that essentially says that poverty was never meant to be a thriving condition among God's people.

Just as it may not be possible to eradicate all sexual aberration from earth does not mean that child prostitution is acceptable and cannot be made a bizarre and rare occurrence, or that we should accept it and not work towards its end. Can we eradicate greed from humanity? Probably not. Can we create a world where it is hard to get into poverty and easy to get out? With God's help I believe we can. Jesus was not saying that we must accept poverty as normal and OK, he was reminding us of the primacy of worship and calling us back to the Deuteronomic blessing of living out God's commands for Jubilee, forgiveness of debt, and generosity toward those in need.

5) Show: www.ted.com. Click on Jessica Jackley: Poverty, money - and love