

## **Theological Rationale for Guaranteed Livable Income**

### **From the National United Church Network in support of a Guaranteed Livable Income.**

When the pandemic first happened, people began saying that we are all in this boat together. As deaths began to occur, we soon realized that racialized and indigenous communities were not in the same boat and in many cases - without a boat due to the economic inequities and challenges they experience. As God calls us to be an anti-racist church, we must heed the call to right these wrongs of economic injustice.

Mutual care and responsibility for one another is part of what it means to be a neighbour. "...God has so composed the body, ..that there be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together. "(I Corinthians 12: 25-26)

We share this divine imperative of care and responsibility with other major religions of the world. *Do unto others as we would have them do unto us*, The Golden Rule, is a core faith principle of Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Indigenous Spiritualities, and most other religions.

The Parables of Jesus make it clear that the God's economy is inclusive of all. The price of something does not determine its value. All labourers in the vineyard receive the same compensation no matter how great or small a contribution they are able to offer. (Matt20) God instills in every human the desire to contribute to the common good and values each contribution.

Our current Social Welfare system has failed to recognize the value of all persons, the work and contributions of all, denying the dignity of our common humanity. Instead, artists, caregivers, and workers in our precarious gig-economy struggle with inadequate incomes that suck the time, energy, and health from our neighbours. This reality contradicts the very justice and peace God envisions for the whole inhabited earth.

"they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees,  
and no one shall make them afraid; (Micah 4:4)

Poverty, in a wealthy nation such as Canada, is a judgment on the community that creates and allows the impoverishment of its people. It is morally and ethically an affront to the will of God.

A Guaranteed Livable Income replaces the systemic divide between the weak and strong, between worthy and unworthy, with a system based upon our common humanity. It replaces a system built upon "employability" - where the so called "deserving poor" have to beg for an inadequate subsistence - with a system that invests our taxes in the lives of all Canadians so that all may flourish and live with dignity.

During the pandemic certain policy measures have been implemented by the Federal Government to relieve some of the insecurities and indignities over the past year. Thus far, these measures have been interim and without the commitment to be seriously and deeply named as abidingly durable.

We thus call for a guaranteed livable income that implements a structure of justice making and justice keeping that no longer excuses, rationalizes, and tolerates people being poor. We call for a system that puts teeth into our charter of rights and liberties to express a fundamental, fair level of income security for all (as did the early band of Christians who out of their "abundance" of spirit and fact contributed to the well-being of those in "need", II Cor. 8:14).

Let us add our voices to the growing popular call for this historic movement of the spirit.