

A Common Foundation

Shared Principles for Work on Overcoming Poverty

As a people of faith, with varying theologies and traditions, we are convinced of a remarkable convergence on fundamental principles that call us to common work in combating poverty and walking with people living in poverty:

- We believe it is the Creator's intent that all people are provided those things that protect human dignity and make for healthy life: adequate food and shelter, meaningful work, safe communities, healthcare, and education.
- We believe we are intended to live well together as a whole community, seeking the common good, avoiding wide disparities between those who have too little to live on and those who have a disproportionate share of the world's goods.
- We believe we are all called to work to overcome poverty, and that this work transcends both any particular political theory or party and any particular economic theory or structure. We believe that overcoming poverty requires the use of private and public resources.
- We believe we are called to make alliances within the faith community and with others in society who share the commitment to overcome poverty.
- We believe that overcoming poverty involves both acts of direct service to alleviate the outcomes of poverty and advocacy to change those structures that result in people living in poverty.
- We believe government is neither solely responsible for alleviating poverty, nor removed from this responsibility. We believe government is the vehicle by which people order their lives based on their shared vision. We believe society is well served when people of faith bring their values into the public arena. It is this remarkable convergence around issues of poverty and the common good that leads people of varying faith traditions to unite in calling on government to make a critical commitment to overcoming poverty.
- We believe the desire to overcome poverty is not simply a human idea, but is the desire of our Creator, and that the work to create a more just and whole society will be empowered by the Creator's presence.

We invite each faith tradition to make explicit their expression of faith and how it understands this common foundation. On these shared principles, we together commit ourselves to work to ensure that no person is forced to live in poverty.

BISHOP PETER ROGNESS, SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
ARCHBISHOP HARRY J. FLYNN, ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS
DR. HAMDY EL SAWAF, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ISLAMIC CENTER OF MINNESOTA
MR. STEPHEN SILBERFARB, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA & DAKOTAS
BISHOP JON ANDERSON, SOUTHWESTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
BISHOP VICTOR H. BALKE, ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF CROOKSTON
REV. IAN D. BETHEL, SR., PRESIDENT, MINNESOTA BAPTIST CONFERENCE, NATIONAL BAPTIST CONFERENCE, INC.
REV. CONNIE BURKHOLDER, DISTRICT EXECUTIVE, NORTHERN PLAINS DISTRICT, CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
BISHOP FREDERICK CAMPBELL, AUXILIARY BISHOP, ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS
REV. PEG CEMBERLIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
REV. LARRY CHRISTIANSON, PRESIDENT, WESTERN DISTRICT OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH
REV. DIANE EHR, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL MINISTER, MID-AMERICAN BAPTISTS
MR. LAWRENCE D. GIBSON, CHAIR, JOINT RELIGIOUS LEGISLATIVE COALITION
DR. RICHARD GUENTERT, REGIONAL MINISTER, CHRISTIAN CHURCHES (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) OF THE UPPER MIDWEST
BISHOP BERNARD J. HARRINGTON, ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WINONA
BISHOP SALLY DYCK, MINNESOTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BISHOP JAMES JELINEK, EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MINNESOTA, EPISCOPAL CHURCH, USA
BISHOP CRAIG JOHNSON, MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
REV. SHARON JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER, PRESBYTERY OF NORTHERN WATERS, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA
BISHOP JOHN F. KINNEY, ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAINT CLOUD

REV. JUDITH KOLWICZ, EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER, PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA
DR. TRUETT LAWSON, EXECUTIVE MINISTER, MINNESOTA BAPTIST CONFERENCE, BAPTIST GENERAL CONFERENCE
REV. DAVID MCMAHILL, CONFERENCE MINISTER, MINNESOTA CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BISHOP JOHN C. NIENSTEDT, ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NEW ULM
BISHOP RICHARD PATES, AUXILIARY BISHOP, ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS
REV. WAYNE PURINTUN, EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER, PRESBYTERY OF MINNESOTA VALLEYS, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA
REV. CLARENCE SAINT JOHN, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT, MINNESOTA DISTRICT COUNCIL, ASSEMBLY OF GOD
DR. SHASHIKANT M. SANE, M.D., PRIEST, HINDU MANDIR OF MINNESOTA
BISHOP DENNIS M. SCHNURR, ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DULUTH
REV. GRANT STEVENSON, ISAIAH
BISHOP PETER STROMMEN, NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
REV. CHARLES TRAYLOR, EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER, PRESBYTERY OF NORTHERN PLAINS, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA
BISHOP HAROLD USGAARD, SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
BISHOP ROLF WANGBERG, NORTHWESTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA