

# **There Was Not A Needy Person Among Them The Call For A Living Wage Second Sunday in Easter, Year B**

## **OVERVIEW OF TOPIC**

### **Focus Text: Acts 4:32 -35**

“Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.”

### **Scripture Commentary by Rev. Denise Cumbee Long, Pastor, Binkley Memorial Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, NC**

“The early Christians described in Acts 4:32-35 likewise understood that a cohesive, healthy community could only happen when the basic needs of all were met and the dignity of each person respected. Only when the common good was protected could members of a community be ‘united, heart and soul.’”

### **Pastoral Reflection by Rev. Denise Cumbee Long**

“Some would say that we live in a culture which idolizes work, that today’s capitalistic society has taken the Puritan work ethic, one which praised individualism and thrift, and distorted it into a dangerous, frenzied race for ‘the top.’ Once people worked to live; now they live to work. Work is often worshipped, and one’s status, intelligence, and virtue are determined by how well that work pays. As Christians, we attempt to recapture the vision of work as related to the creating, sustaining, and transforming work of God. Our vocation is not defined simply by our paid employment. What we do at home, in churches, in our volunteer and political activities, all contribute to the “work” that embraces the whole of our lives.”

### **Personal Vignette from Not Making It: NC Voices on Jobs & Unemployment**

“After her plant shut down in 2000, Ms. Newkirk keeps a very part-time job at the Post Office....She also drives a school bus, works as a substitute teacher, and does what she can to earn enough. Still, she has no benefits and bills wait to be paid. ‘I am my children’s only provider, so I work all I can. I can’t go to the doctor to deal with things in a preventive way, so they get worse. I worry what would happen if I got sick,’ she says. ‘It’s stressful living paycheck to paycheck.’”

### **Key Fact**

On July 24, 2009, the Federal Minimum Wage increased from \$6.55 to \$7.25 per hour. Currently, four states—George, Arkansas, Minnesota, and Wyoming—have state minimum wages lower than the Federal Minimum wage. Georgia and Wyoming have the lowest minimum wage at \$5.15.