

**The 1908 Social Creed**  
Statement by the Federal Council of Churches

***We deem it the duty of all Christian people to concern themselves directly with certain practical industrial problems. To us it seems that the churches must stand—***

- For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life.
- For the right of all men to the opportunity for self-maintenance, a right ever to be wisely and strongly safeguarded against encroachments of every kind.
- For the right of workers to some protection against the hardships often resulting from the swift crises of industrial change.
- For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions.
- For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational disease, injuries and mortality.
- For the abolition of child labor.
- For such regulation of the conditions of toil for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.
- For the suppression of the “sweating system.”
- For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practicable point, and for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.
- For a release from employment one day in seven.
- For a living wage as a minimum in every industry and for the highest wage that each industry can afford.
- For the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised.
- For suitable provision for the old age of the workers and for those incapacitated by injury.
- For the abatement of poverty.

***To the toilers of America and to those who by organized effort are seeking to lift the crushing burdens of the poor, and to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor, this Council sends the greeting of human brotherhood and the pledge of sympathy and of help in a cause which belongs to all who follow Christ.***

## A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century

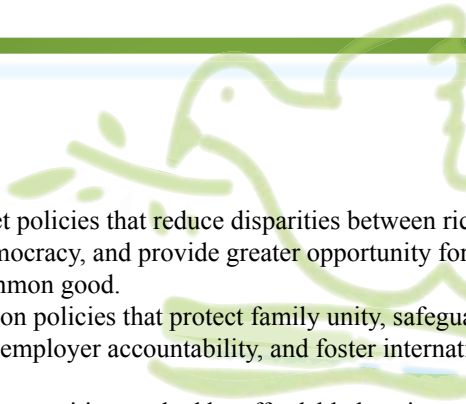
We Churches of the United States have a message of hope for a fearful time. Just as the churches responded to the harshness of early 20th Century industrialization with a prophetic “Social Creed” in 1908, so in our era of globalization we offer a vision of a society that shares more and consumes less, seeks compassion over suspicion and equality over domination, and finds security in joined hands rather than massed arms. Inspired by Isaiah’s vision of a “peaceable kingdom,” we honor the dignity of every person and the intrinsic value of every creature, and pray and work for the day when none “labor in vain or bear children for calamity” (Isaiah 65:23). We do so as disciples of the One who came “that all may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10), and stand in solidarity with Christians and all who strive for justice around the globe.

*In faith*, responding to our Creator, we celebrate the full humanity of each woman, man, and child, all created in the divine image as individuals of infinite worth, by working for:

- Full civil, political and economic rights for women and men of all races.
- Abolition of forced labor, human trafficking, and the exploitation of children.
- Employment for all, at a family-sustaining living wage, with equal pay for comparable work.
- The rights of workers to organize, and to share in workplace decisions and productivity growth.
- Protection from dangerous working conditions, with time and benefits to enable full family life.
- A system of criminal rehabilitation, based on restorative justice and an end to the death penalty.

*In the love* incarnate in Jesus, despite the world’s sufferings and evils, we honor the deep connections within our human family and seek to awaken a new spirit of community, by working for:

- Abatement of hunger and poverty, and enactment of policies benefiting the most vulnerable.
- High quality public education for all and universal, affordable and accessible healthcare.
- An effective program of social security during sickness, disability and old age.



- Tax and budget policies that reduce disparities between rich and poor, strengthen democracy, and provide greater opportunity for everyone within the common good.
- Just immigration policies that protect family unity, safeguard workers' rights, require employer accountability, and foster international cooperation.
- Sustainable communities marked by affordable housing, access to good jobs, and public safety.
- Public service as a high vocation, with real limits on the power of private interests in politics.

*In hope* sustained by the Holy Spirit, we pledge to be peacemakers in the world and stewards of God's good creation, by working for:

- Adoption of simpler lifestyles for those who have enough; grace over greed in economic life.
- Access for all to clean air and water and healthy food, through wise care of land and technology.
- Sustainable use of earth's resources, promoting alternative energy sources and public transportation with binding covenants to reduce global warming and protect populations most affected.
- Equitable global trade and aid that protects local economies, cultures and livelihoods.
- Peacemaking through multilateral diplomacy rather than unilateral force, the abolition of torture, and a strengthening of the United Nations and the rule of international law.
- Nuclear disarmament and redirection of military spending to more peaceful and productive uses.
- Cooperation and dialogue for peace and environmental justice among the world's religions.

We—individual Christians and churches—commit ourselves to a culture of peace and freedom that embraces non-violence, nurtures character, treasures the environment, and builds community, rooted in a spirituality of inner growth with outward action. We make this commitment together—as members of Christ's body, led by the one Spirit—trusting in the God who makes all things new.

## National Council of Churches of Christ Member Communions and Denominations

African Methodist Episcopal Church  
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church  
Alliance of Baptists  
American Baptist Churches in the USA  
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church  
Church of the Brethren  
The Coptic Orthodox Church in North America  
The Episcopal Church  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Friends United Meeting  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
Hungarian Reformed Church in America  
International Council of Community Churches  
Korean Presbyterian Church in America  
Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church  
Mar Thoma Church  
Moravian Church in America Northern Province  
and Southern Province  
National Baptist Convention of America  
National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.  
National Missionary Baptist Convention of America  
Orthodox Church in America  
Patriarchal Parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church in the USA  
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends  
Polish National Catholic Church of America  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.  
Reformed Church in America  
Serbian Orthodox Church in the U.S.A. and Canada  
The Swedenborgian Church  
Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America  
United Church of Christ  
The United Methodist Church

The member bodies of the National Council of Churches encompass a wide spectrum of American Christianity — representing traditions as varied as Protestant, Orthodox, Evangelical, Anglican, and African-American, historic peace churches and ethnic-language immigrant churches.

They include more than 100,000 local congregations and 45 million persons in the United States.

“A Social Creed for the 21st Century” was adopted by the NCCCUA General Assembly in November 2007. \*

\*For the 2008 centennial.



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