UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL UCC, DODGEVILLE

Justice for Workers in their Workplaces

You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns (Deuteronomy 24:14).

We know that our loving God cares about all aspects of our lives, including our work lives. Conditions and events at work absorb our energy, occupy our minds, and impact our psyches when we are both at work and home. Our work situations can be fulfilling and empowering, or demeaning and humiliating.

For many of us, our job is the main factor determining the size of our income, whether we have health insurance and a pension, whether we live in a big house or any house at all, and whether we send our children to college or to bed with an empty stomach. Some workers confront particularly unjust situations such as extremely low pay, unsafe conditions, racism, or sexism. All workers, whatever their position in the hierarchy of jobs, may suffer from indignities, large and small, that cripple their spirit and hinder their journey to greater wholeness.

One-quarter of all jobs in the U.S. pay wages so low that a full-time worker cannot keep a family out of poverty. For some, the biggest problem is no job at all. Even when the economy is considered to be "strong," millions of people who want to work cannot find a job or can only find a part-time one.

God's reign does not stop at the door to the workplace. The Church, the body of Christ, is called to seek out and accompany people wherever they are. So the church must also be in our offices, factories, stores, farms, schools, and all the places where people work. Follow this link to read the rest of the article on the UCC website https://www.ucc.org/justice_worker-justice

Why People of Faith Support Labor Unions

Sometimes we wonder: why do people of faith support workers? Why support unions? Christians are called to accompany people wherever they are and especially through the rough places of their lives. So we must be in offices, factories, stores, farms, schools, health care facilities, and all the places where people work and, particularly, where low-wage workers are employed.

The reign of God does not end at the door of the workplace. People of God stand with workers as they seek dignity on the job, a voice at work, safe

workplaces, and fair and adequate compensation for their labor. The right to form, organize, or join a union is a fundamental, internationally-recognized human right listed in the 1948 United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights. But our nations' laws provide weak protections for workers' right to form a union. Laws are frequently violated, penalties are minimal and do not serve as a deterrent, and redress is often delayed or inadequate.

We are called to stand with workers in this in-between space: between what is and our vision of God's reign where all workers are treated with justice and dignity.