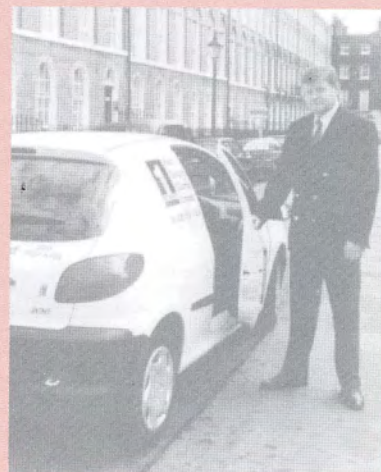
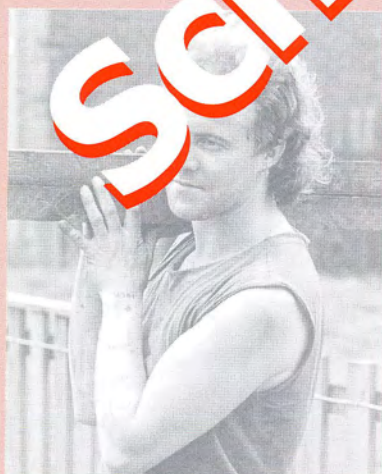
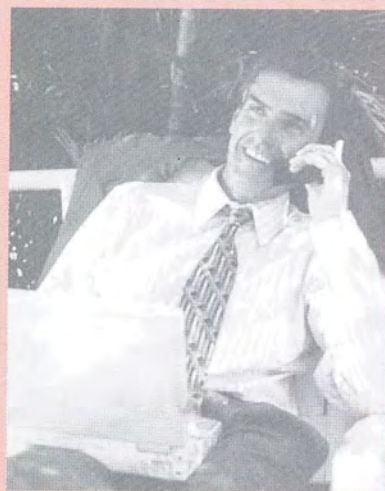




CHURCH ACTION
ON POVERTY

For RE and PSE

A Living Wage: Life in all its fullness?



A teaching/study resource for secondary
schools, sunday schools and youth groups

Living Wage: A pack for schools & youth groups - Contents

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Notes on Classroom approach

Any work on poverty should be approached with sensitivity as there may be students in your class or group who are themselves materially poor. Be up front about the fact that these topics can be sensitive and let the students know that you are aware of this. Occasionally, students may raise personal issues in class or want to confide in you afterwards. It is always good to start by saying that if students wish to talk about any issues further or in private, they can see you or a member of staff afterwards. Always stress confidentiality. This note of caution may make you feel a little anxious about embarking on the topic of poverty in the UK. However, it is really a case of being aware and not putting individuals on the spot. It is essential that these issues are discussed if ignorance of the causes, extent and effects of poverty in the UK is not to continue.



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Getting started: Who is affected

"I believe in greater equality. If the next Labour Government has not raised the living standards of the poorest by the end of its time in office it will have failed."

Tony Blair MP, prior to becoming Prime Minister

Poverty is linked to a lack of possessions and an inability to do what is considered "normal" by the rest of society.

What about the Minimum wage?

Since its introduction in 1998, the National Minimum Wage (currently £4.10 per hour) has improved the living standards of lower-paid workers - but many still remain in poverty. Young people aged 18-21 are only entitled to a lower rate (£3.50 an hour). Anyone aged under 18 is not protected by the National Minimum Wage at all. There is some evidence of employers choosing to take on younger workers simply to avoid paying the full minimum wage.

In practical terms, many people living on the minimum wage have to do without a healthy diet as their low income does not allow for the purchase of enough cereals, milk or vegetables. The purchase of a warm, winter coat would also be deemed a luxury by many people on low incomes.

A very real consequence of living on a low income is the likelihood of debt. *The less you earn, the more likely you are to be in debt.* For those on low wages for long periods, it is very difficult not to get into debt and thus fall behind with the bills.

Who is affected by low pay?

The minimum wage affects all of us. When you have your hair cut, are served coffee at a café or visit an older relative at a care home, the chances are that the workers who serve you are on low pay. The worst paid jobs include catering, cleaning, care work, clothing, hairdressing, warehouse, security, shop work and driving jobs. Approximately 11 million people are defined as low paid.

The issue of low pay affects all parts of the United Kingdom. However, certain areas have a higher proportion of low paid workers than others. In the North East for example, nearly one in eight of all jobs are low paid. Whilst wages are generally higher in the South-East, London also has a huge informal job market. The majority of workers employed by private contractors are not protected by national employment conditions, such as overtime pay, sick pay, pensions or compassionate leave.

Job Vacancy Job Vacancy

Job Title: Head Housekeeper
Hours: 40 on average
Wage : £170 per week or £4.25 an hour
Duration: Permanent

Description – required for a prestigious city centre hotel. Duties include managing a team of 25-30 staff, ensuring the smooth running of the hotel to required standards. Must have previous hotel experience, recruitment and be willing to work hands on as required. Age 25+ (recent advert in Manchester job centre)

How much is a Living Wage?

It is notoriously difficult to define a 'Living Wage' in precise monetary terms, since every household's circumstances are different, and the cost of living varies across the country. However, TELCO, a community organisation campaigning for a Living Wage in East London have commissioned research which identifies £6.30 as a Living Wage for London. An approximate figure for outside London would be £5.80 (which also roughly equates to 60% of average earnings).

The worst paid jobs...

A survey of jobs in Greater Manchester found that the jobs least likely to pay a living wage are:

Occupation	Average hourly rate	% paying less than £4 per hour	% of jobs which are part time
Clothing	£3.96	78%	15%
Cleaning	£3.97	72%	86%
Care work	£3.98	71%	54%
Shop work	£4.00	66%	67%
Catering	£4.01	73%	57%
Hairdressing	£4.06	69%	34%
Security	£4.11	65%	17%

Source: Greater Manchester Low Pay Unit, Jobwatch 2000, 2001.

Activity 1: How do we value work?

Purpose: To help young people explore whether the way in which jobs are paid reflects their value to society.

You will need:

Two sets of the 12 Job Cards made by photocopying and cutting up the cards on page 5. If you are working with a large class, you may want to make four sets and do the exercise in four groups rather than two.

Time: 20 minutes

What to do:

1. Divide the class into two groups and give each group one set of the 12 Job Cards. Ask one group to sort the Job Cards according to how well they think that each job is paid, with the highest paid job at the top, and the lowest paid at the bottom. Ask the other group to rank the Job Cards according to how valuable they think the job is to society.
2. Each group should then feed back to the whole class saying how and why they chose their particular ranking of jobs.
3. The class can then discuss the choices. The teacher should stimulate the discussion by highlighting and exploring any difference in the two rankings. For example, 'if care workers do such important jobs, why are they so badly paid?'

Job Vacancy Job Vacancy

Job Title – Security Officers
Hours 60 hours per week on average
Wage £3.70 per hour
Duration Temporary

*Description – ** urgent vacancy** patrolling the doors of a newly built retail store.
 Experience preferred but not essential.
 Accommodation will be provided. (when investigated the job centre could not give details of the accommodation provided)
 (recent advert in Manchester job centre)*

4. As an optional extra stage to the exercise, you could ask the group to estimate how much they think each job is actually paid, and then to discuss whether they think these wages are appropriate/justified. The approximate annual full time salaries for each job are below:

Shop worker (18-21 year old)	£6,900
Cleaner	£7,500
Hairdresser	£7,500
Catering assistant	£9,200
Care worker	£10,500
Classroom assistant	£11,000
Newly qualified nurse	£15,500
Newly qualified teacher	£17,000
Minister of religion	£19,000
Primary school headteacher	£41,000
Member of Parliament	£49,000
Consultant doctor	£58,000
Accountant	£100,000
Premiership footballer	£500,000
Top 100 company director	£1,000,000

Activity 2: Images of low pay

Purpose: To explore young people's perceptions of poverty and low pay.

You will need:

Copies for each group of the photos on page 6 plus any other photos of high and low paid work that you can provide. You could use photos from newspapers, weekend colour supplements, magazines and catalogues. It doesn't matter if groups have different photos.

Time: 20-30 minutes

What to do:

1. Put people into small groups and give each group a copy of the photos. Ask them to choose one that represents low pay and one that represents wealth.
2. Each group should then feed back to the whole class saying why they chose particular photos.
3. The group can then discuss the choices. Stimulate discussion by offering other photos for discussion, asking questions such as 'Why could this show wealth?'

Job Cards for Activity 1

Accountant	Care worker	Classroom assistant
Minister of religion	Catering assistant	Primary school headteacher
Consultant doctor	Cleaner	Hairdresser
Member of Parliament	Newly qualified staff nurse	Premiership footballer
Shopworker (18-21 year old)	Newly qualified English teacher	Top company director



Activity 3:

Role play – Jackie's story

Purpose: To encourage young people to explore some of the difficulties faced by young people working for low pay.

You will need:

Set out a table in the middle of the room, with 2 chairs on 1 side and 1 chair on the other, in an interview format. Photocopy and cut out the Profiles for the three people in the role play on to separate sheets (see below).

Time: 30-40 minutes

Method:

1. The setting for the role play is an interview in which the Area Manager of a chain of stores (Mr Rudlin) and the local shop manager (Ms Jones) are asking Jackie for her response to their offer: To stay on her present rate of pay (£3.00 an hour) for another year until she is 19, and the company will train her as a supervisor, or to leave. Some of the background is in the case study on page 8.
2. Ask three people to volunteer for the role play (or pick them yourself), and allocate each of them one of the Profiles. Ask them to spend 2-3 minutes reading through the Profile and getting into character.
3. Introduce the 3 characters to the rest of the group, and give a brief introduction to the situation (see 1 above).

4. Do the role play, with the rest of the group standing/sitting well to one side. The role play should start with Ms Jones and Mr Rudlin sitting at the table, inviting Jackie to come and sit down. The role play should last up to 6-7 minutes, or until it reaches a natural conclusion.
5. Ask the 3 role players to come out of character and re-arrange the room.
6. The class can then discuss their reactions to the role play, giving space for each player to explore their own thoughts and feelings about the situation in turn. Ask the class to consider what they would have done in Jackie's situation, and what they think they would have done if they were in Ms Jones' or Mr Rudlin's situation.

Five reasons for a Living Wage

In a modern, wealthy economy such as Britain, no-one working full-time should live in poverty.

- ☒ A living wage would help to tackle child poverty in Britain
- ☒ A living wage would improve the standard of living for millions of workers
- ☒ A living wage would improve the quality of service provided
- ☒ A living wage would improve staff morale and motivate staff
- ☒ A living wage would increase spending power and be good for businesses.

Jackie

You are 18 and have been working as a shop assistant for a chain of stores for the past nine months. You enjoy the work and think that you have been doing well. Last week your manager (Ms Jones) offered to train you as a supervisor, provided you agree to stay on your present rate of pay (£3.00 an hour) for another year. However, the local Citizens Advice Bureau has told you it is illegal not to be paid the Minimum Wage (£3.50 for 18-21 year olds). You take home £110 a week, from which you give your mother £90 for board and lodging, leaving just £20 for yourself.

Ms Jones

You are 25 and have been the manager of a shop for a high street chain for the past 3 years. You like Jackie and can see that she has potential to develop. Last week you offered to train Jackie as a supervisor, but know that there is no more money in your budget to increase her wages for at least a year. One option you could offer is to increase her hourly rate to £3.50 (the Minimum Wage) and reduce her hours, so that her overall wage remains the same.

Mr Rudlin

You are an ambitious 28 year old Area Manager for a chain of stores. You know that it is illegal to pay less than the Minimum Wage (£3.50 for 18-21 year olds), but the company is losing money. Your main priority is to keep costs down. You know that there are plenty more young people who would take Jackie's job if she doesn't accept the deal offered to her.

Activity 4: What is it like to live on low pay?

Purpose: To deepen understanding of the different consequences of low paid work for young people.

You will need: A copy of the case studies below for each participant. Sheets of paper and pens.

Time: 45 minutes

Procedure:

1. The case studies below are from a range of young people directly affected by poverty and low pay. Distribute copies and ask the young people to read them carefully.
2. Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to identify how Jackie, Steven and Jenny
3. Ask each group to identify from their list the three worst aspects of poverty and low pay.
3. Discuss with the class/whole group their choices. Was there much agreement? Which kinds of consequences were chosen as worst aspects? Is damage to pride and dignity worse than having to do without things?
5. As an optional extra, ask the group in pairs to produce webs of consequences of poverty and low pay. Put low pay in the middle and add various effects in branches coming out of it.

Jackie, Newcastle on Tyne

'Jackie' was employed as a shop assistant by a chain of stores in September 1997. She worked a 37½ hour week at £2 an hour. At the beginning of April 1999 her supervisor informed her that she had two choices; she could stay on her present rate of pay for another year until she was 19 and the company would then train her as a supervisor or she would have to leave. The company was not prepared to pay her £3 an hour at present and they wanted her to give them an answer straight away.

She said she felt quite frightened by what she had been told and was worried about talking to the Area Manager who was visiting the shop that week. The CAB advised Jackie that it was illegal for the employer to sack her because she claimed the National Minimum Wage or because she was over 18. Her supervisor's first response when she said that she should be paid £3.50 an hour was to offer her a reduction in hours so that her overall wage remained the same, but she said this was not what she wanted and eventually her employers agreed to pay her the Minimum Wage.

Later she was told that the company would not be employing anyone over 18, except in supervisor posts. Staff who had started in her shop had been 16 and 17 and Jackie thought that this was to avoid paying the Minimum Wage. She was only able to manage on the Minimum Wage because she was living with her parents. She took home £110 a week, and gave her mother £90 for board and lodging, leaving £20 for herself. She could not afford to get her own flat and live an independent life.

Steven, Cardiff

Steven is 19 and from Llanrumney in Cardiff. He left school at 15, going straight on to a youth training programme where he earned £29.50 a week working at a garage. Despite the hardships, he was glad of work and regretted being laid off when he became ill. At 16, Steven became unemployed for eight months and faced considerable problems. He was forced to leave home, his family unable to keep him. Steven stayed with his sister and found work earning £60 for a 40 hour week. He was made redundant after six months. After another 10 months out of work, Steven found a factory job making trellises. Despite better pay of £100 a week, he was made redundant again after seven months. He is now on Job Seekers' Allowance for the first time. The frustrations are immense, after so much insecurity and without any work in the area.

Jenny, St Albans

Jenny is 20 and lives with her family. She has been out of full-time work since leaving school at 18. She studied Media Studies and Information Technology up to sixth form, hoping to pursue a career in surveying. However, she was only able to work part-time, and then faced redundancy due to cut-backs in the business. After roughly a year in various part-time jobs (often in local factories) Jenny dislikes the difficulty of sustaining work and regrets the lack of any form of career. Being without work, she finds it very difficult to manage on Income Support of £40 a week. She feels that people are very prejudiced against unemployed people. With little work available, there is an atmosphere of great despondency.

Activity 5: Faith reflection the parable of the workers

Purpose: To examine how the Bible can help explore attitudes to poverty and low pay.

You will need: Copies of the Bible reading, Matthew 20: 1-15 (right) or a Bible to read it from.

Time: 20-30 minutes

Procedure:

1. Read the parable of the workers in the vineyard. Ask the group/class for their immediate reaction, which may well be that it wasn't fair giving the same wages to those who started work in the afternoon as to those who had started in the morning.
2. Explain to the students that in Jesus' time employment was extremely insecure. Men would wait in the market place, hoping to be hired. The farmer trying to get in the grape harvest had to keep returning to hire extra workers. Then comes the explosion: "It's not fair!" And it isn't. What is the message of this story? Is it yet another instance of Jesus turning worldly values on their head? In God's eyes all the workers were of equal worth.
3. Ask students what would happen if we tried to apply this principle today? Would everyone join in with the outrage of those workers? What impact would a stronger notion of sharing money have on the whole of our economy and wider society?
4. Follow the discussion with a few moments of silent reflection. Light a candle at the front of the class/group if you like. Then you could ask each person to write on a slip of paper one thought they would like to keep or action they are going to take as a result of listening to and reflecting on the messages. If appropriate ask them to bring their thoughts to put round the candle.
5. As an alternative, you could adapt the parable of the workers in the vineyard into a whole class role play. You could act as the landowner, and divide the class up into five groups, corresponding to the workers hired at the first, third, sixth, ninth and eleventh hours.

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard Matthew 20: 1-15

THE kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the market-place doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

WHEN evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

BUT he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

(New International Version)

For many people, to live in poverty is to live permanently in Lent; struggling to meet essential needs, without the solace of other distractions to make the fight easier. Christians should not feel comfortable that this type of existence continues.

Worship resources:

Life in all its fullness

Invocation

In the days
when there is
no paid work

In the days
when no one is
willing to hire me

In the days
when the system
grinds me down

Remind me, God
you love me
and you need me

Intercession

For all people who work in oppressive conditions
whose work is not fairly paid
whose wellbeing is entirely expendable to
the profit motive

Hear our prayer

For all people whose bleak circumstances lead
them to even bleaker remedies

Hear our prayer

For all people whose poverty, unemployment or
form of work exposes them to ridicule,
contempt or holier-than-thou patronage

Hear our prayer

For all women, black and Asian Britons, people
with disability, older people who routinely
experience discrimination, harassment and
unequal treatment in the job market

Hear our prayer

For all whose poverty, unemployment or personal
circumstances makes them vulnerable to loan
sharks, fraudulent practices, & poor services

Hear our prayer

For all people who suffer anguish because they
see the opportunities their children are
excluded from, and are powerless to affect it

For all people whose redundancy or
worklessness has made them feel surplus to
requirements in the human community

For all people who take their market valuation as
a true reflection of their worth, and despair

Hear our prayer

For all whose fragile identities, limited
imaginings or stunted capacity for
compassion leads them to substitute over-
inflated salaries, corporate greed and social
irresponsibility for justice, kindness & integrity

Hear our prayer

No job, no ties and in a strange town,
All my walls had come tumbling down.
Searching, seeking, questioning too,
What was I going to do ?

Life with all its structure and rules,
Watched on as I my heels cooled.
Job Centre, Paper, national and local,
Never felt like being so vocal.

CVs and application forms by the dozen I sent,
Yet applications never seemed to relent.
Occasionally an interview would come,
Then I'd have to do my sums,

How far ? How much when and where,
If I missed it, would they really care ?
I would, 'cos I want a job,
To prove I'm not just another yob.



Lord of Heaven and Earth,
Lord of all we survey,
Help us to watch out for others,
Less fortunate than us today.

Help us to work at friendships,
Even where barriers exist.
Pride, hurt and misunderstandings,
Often force them to resist.

Help us to understand each other, Lord
To offer a discreet hand.
To share with one another,
And come under Your command.

For Jesus loved the sinners,
He loves each one of us.
He shares our joys and sorrows,
He never makes a fuss.

He spoke against injustice,
He raised the widows plight.
With him around and on their side,
No one fell out of sight.

So, help us to raise awareness,
Of unemployment and its effects.
Amongst our friends and neighbours,
In God's eyes – There are no rejects!

Acknowledgements: Suzanne Skrimshire (graphic); Ruth Burgess (Invocation), Kathy Galloway (Intercession), JEG (remainder).

Activity 6: Researching low pay on our doorstep

Purpose: To find out whether anyone within the school/church is being paid less than a Living Wage.

Materials: Powers of investigation!

Time: This is a 'homework' exercise which will need to be carried out over a week or two.

Procedure:

1. Get the group to draw up a list of the different kind of people who are employed by the school, church or any associated projects. This may include cleaners, classroom assistants, lunchtime organisers, secretaries, caretakers as well as teachers and clergy.
2. Agree within the group how you are going to find out what the various people are paid – this may be by asking the workers themselves, or by approaching someone who has responsibility for money/pay (eg the treasurer, secretary or

Head!). Make sure you collect the information in a way in which you can calculate their *hourly* rate of pay – ie you will need to know what their weekly income is and how many hours a week they work.

3. Get the group to bring back what they have found out, and discuss the findings. Discuss whether people are being paid more or less than you thought. Use this information to identify if anyone is being paid less than a Living Wage (which CAP defines as being between £5.80 and £6.30 an hour).
4. Encourage the group to discuss whether it is appropriate to argue for a higher wage, and if so, how they might go about doing so.
5. One action might be to encourage the Church Council (or equivalent) or School Governors to sign up to the Living Wage Pledge (see below).

The Living Wage Pledge Action for life in all its fullness

1. Ask your Church or school to sign up to the Living Wage Pledge (on the back of this pack).
2. Organise a public signing of the Pledge by local clergy, churches or other groups, and invite the press along. Use the press release provided to publicise the event.
3. If your church, school (or any project connected with it) employs anyone on low wages (eg a cleaner or caretaker), try to encourage the employing body to make sure that they are paid a Living Wage.
4. Organise a Living Wage meeting in your church. CAP will be pleased to provide a speaker and discuss the issue of wages within a church context. Members of your local congregation may be employers. Invite them to speak at the meeting.
5. Raise the Living Wage within the Diocese, District or other appropriate church body (depending on which denomination you belong to). Try to get a resolution passed to support the Living Wage Pledge.
6. Ask the Diocese, District etc to conduct an employment audit, to identify anyone employed by the Church (or any agencies associated with it) who are not being paid a living wage.
7. Ask your MP and/or local councillors to sign the pledge, commit themselves to campaign on the issue of low pay and support legislation to increase the level of minimum wage.

Please let us know about what you are doing!

Whenever you get someone or some group to sign the Pledge, please let us know, and send us a copy!

If you haven't already, join CAP's mailing list. Ring 0161 236 9321 or write to Janet Ashton at CAP, Central Buildings, Oldham St, Manchester, M1 1JT to receive CAP's quarterly newsletter for updates on the Living Wage campaign and other aspects of CAP's work.

Visit our website for updates on the campaign at:
www.church-poverty.org.uk



Taking Action: Living Wage Pledge

Taking life in all its fullness



The Living Wage Pledge

We believe that

- No one working full time should live in poverty
- A living wage is good for families, businesses and the country

Further, we pledge

As a Church/school to

- pay our employees a wage that reflects the true cost of living in our community
- pay our employees (lay or ordained) a living wage of between £5.80 and £6.30¹ per hour, to ensure that they are able to live "life in all its fullness"
- publicly support living wage campaigns in our locality

As investors to

- begin a dialogue with our investment advisors and fund managers to ensure that our investments are only with companies that actively promote living wage practices

As citizens to

- urge our Members of Parliament to support legislation to increase the level of minimum wage.
- raise issues of low-wage workers in our community, churches and other local groups.

Signed: _____

Church/group: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

This Pledge has been signed in support of Church Action on Poverty's Living Wage campaign. *That all may have life, life in all its fullness.* (John 10:10)

1. The higher rate is based on the additional costs of living in London. With thanks to TELCO, the East London Community Organisation, on whose Pledge this has been based