

# Just Purchasing?

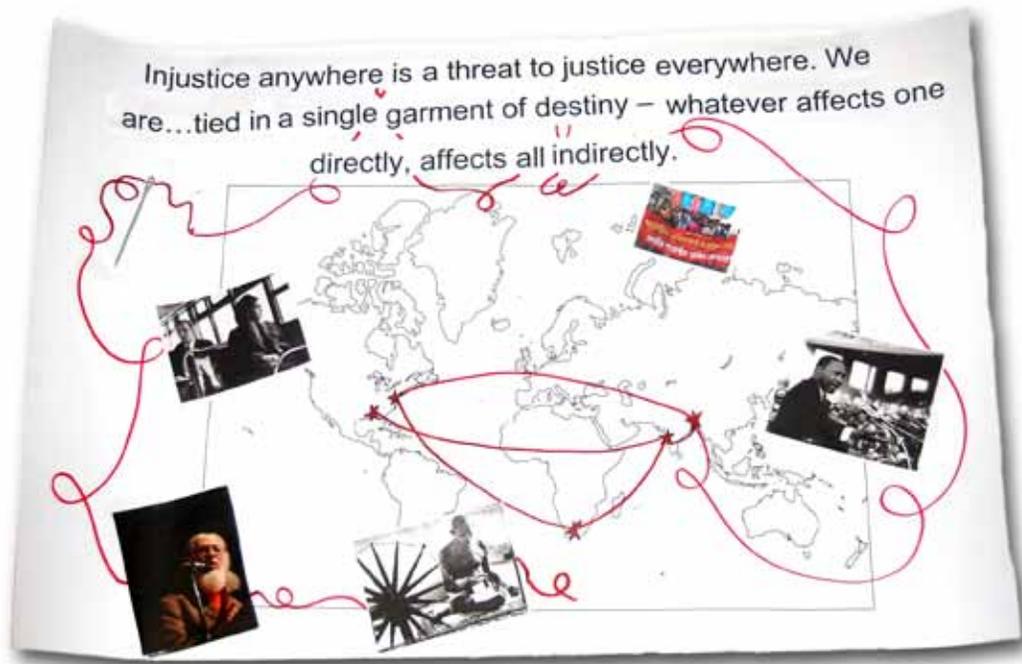
Practicing Our Faith at the Market



*A Guide for Presbyterian Camps, Conference Centers and Congregations*



General Assembly Mission Council



*“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are tied together in the single garment of destiny, caught in an inescapable network of mutuality. And whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”—Martin Luther King Jr.*

Poster made by Bangladeshi garment workers

We wish to thank the many Presbyterians in congregations, camps and conference centers that gave of their time. We also wish to acknowledge the following people for their help in shepherding this vision from a General Assembly Overture in 2008 to the manual that you have in your hands today.

Deb Milcarek, Associate for Mission and Justice, Presbytery of Baltimore  
Bjorn Claesen, Executive Director of SweatFree Communities  
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*Photo credits: Sweat Free Communities & Presbyterian Hunger Program*

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General Assembly Mission Council

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Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

There is a growing awareness that our effort to drive down prices has made things cheaper – but at a terrible price. In so many different parts of the world folks work for pennies an hour so that we can buy an inexpensive T-shirt or put on some highly marketed and very expensive sport shoe. Some of these folks are children and are essentially indentured servants of ours.

Our Christian values rightly squirm when we hear about the terrible conditions and the paltry wages that people must accept in order to meet our desires. It is this struggle that led the Presbytery of Baltimore to Overture the General Assembly in 2008 and to partner with other ethical people to deal with this dilemma.

This Guide to Just Purchasing not only provides the rationale for our efforts to bring justice into the economy and lives of the poorest of the poor, but also provides us the tools we need to be more ethical consumers. Many of us in our churches, camps, and conference centers find ourselves buying products that are routinely made by those our economic system oppresses.

You will find a wide variety of vendors who will provide you and me with the goods we need in our ministries and with the assurance that these good were produced justly. In many cases you will also be able to buy locally.

Christ calls us to live out our faith. This is one way we can do this in our ministries. I commend this guide and its efforts to you – and invite you to join the Sweat-free community and engage in Just Purchasing so that together we can practice our faith in the marketplace.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Nord". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

The Rev. Dr. Peter K. Nord, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Baltimore

*“We are not Christ, but if we want to be Christians, we must have some share in Christ’s large-heartedness . . . by showing a real sympathy that springs . . . from the liberating and redeeming love of Christ for all who suffer. Mere waiting and looking on is not Christian behavior. The Christian is called to sympathy and action, not in the first place by his own sufferings, but by the sufferings of his brethren, for whose sake Christ suffered.”*

~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

## **Dear Friends in Christ,**

In 2008, our General Assembly Responsible Purchasing action [see Appendix 3] committed our denomination to accompany workers like Moises and Norma in improving conditions in the factories where they work by practicing our faith in the marketplace. By demanding non-sweatshop garments and other products we can demonstrate love for our neighbors working in *maquiladoras* (assembly factories) on the U.S.-Mexico border, in Honduras, and anywhere else people’s labor is exploited and their dignity stripped away with forced overtime, dangerous working conditions, low wages, abuse and intimidation.

This guide will assist Presbyterians in buying sweatfree garments, and should be especially useful to PC (USA) camps and conferences, which purchase significant amounts of T-shirts. The translated testimony below is that of Moises Montoya and Norma Mejia, President and Vice President of the union at the Russell Corporation’s Jerzees de Honduras factory. Their story is not uncommon. Let us listen to their words and respond to the call for justice.

We began organizing a union in June 2007. From the start, the company opposed us and took measures to eliminate the union. They followed us and had people take pictures of our legal meetings and assemblies from cars with tinted windows—a complete intimidation tactic. Management verbally threatened us to not continue organizing, and warned that the factory would close if we continued. But we endured in our efforts, and it brought about changes in our working conditions.

For example, before we had a union in the factory, the only water available for us to consume in the factory was contaminated. But we successfully fought for access to purified water—a basic right. Additionally, verbal harassment from management diminished. We also brought about improvements in the safety and hygiene of the factory. The aisles of the factory leading to fire exits, once heavily cluttered, were cleared, and the conditions of bathrooms available for our use improved.

We asked for pay raises. Our salary was 1,200 lempiras per week, roughly \$60. They offered us a pay raise of just 4 lempiras per week. (overall, a 0.31% raise) This was an absolute insult to us, after we had worked so hard to meet rising production quotas. We had looked out for the interest of the company and not let our work suffer, even when it meant unpaid overtime, but they did nothing but take antagonistic actions toward us. Management told us to consider their offer very carefully, and that we should know that we had been warned.

Just five days after we had stalled in negotiations, on October 8, 2008, the factory announced that the plant would close. People were hugging and crying, not knowing what the future would bring. How would we take care of our families?

The company claimed the factory closed because consumers were not buying the styles we made. This is a complete lie, a smokescreen. Not only were we in full production until the time of closing, but now in the U.S., we see the styles of sweatshirts, sweatpants and T-shirts we made being sold in university bookstores and see students on campuses wearing them. They claim we were only making one product, a fleece, but that’s not true. We have the capacity to make a wide range of products with the same equipment, and have handled whatever orders they had given us in the past, and done them well. If a product was not selling as they claimed, why didn’t they give us other orders?

Management placed all of us from Jerzees de Honduras on blacklists throughout Honduras. When we try to get jobs at other factories, our names come up in the computer and they tell us we're not qualified for the position for having organized a union. We found out that management at other factories in Honduras made us an example to their workers, and told them what would happen if they organized a union too.

Most seriously, we union leaders have received death threats and threats of violence. People have written threats on the walls of bathrooms in the factory threatening to kill us. Anonymous notes have been left near our worksites threatening us. Someone told me that they know where I live and where I walk. I had to change all the paths I took and kept my children home from school, for fear that they would be targeted as well.

On January 30, 2009, Jerzees de Honduras closed, sending 1,800 workers onto the streets without jobs, access to education for our children or essential medicines--all because we fought for our basic right to have a union.

Fortunately, Moises' and Norma's story has a happy ending. After a year-long student solidarity campaign which persuaded more than 90 colleges and universities to sever or suspend their licensing agreements with Russell, the company decided to the right thing. Russell committed to rehire and compensate Jerzees de Honduras' 1,200 dismissed workers, open a new unionized factory in Honduras, and take steps to respect and recognize its workers' rights to freedom of association at the company's seven existing Honduran plants. This victory is the result of workers' struggling and consumers caring.

This guide will help express our caring in our daily lives. We commend it to you and, as we attempt to extend God's justice and love to our sisters and brothers who produce our clothes, to the glory of God.

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Gradye Parsons  
Stated Clerk, PC(USA)



Bruce Reyes-Chow  
Moderator, PC(USA)



Linda Valentine  
Executive Director,  
GAMC, PC(USA)

# Part I – Introduction

## Context and History of Sweatfree Purchasing

In 1917, U.S. Secretary of War Newton Baker warned, “The Government cannot permit its work to be done under sweatshop conditions, and it cannot allow the evils widely [associated with such production] to go uncorrected.”<sup>1</sup> Since 1931, the federal government requires payment of prevailing wages and prohibits unsanitary, hazardous, and dangerous working conditions in federal construction projects.<sup>2</sup> In 1936, the federal government extended the prevailing wage protection to employees of contractors manufacturing goods for government agencies, and in 1965 to employees of contractors and subcontractors providing services to federal agencies.<sup>3</sup>

In 1994, Baltimore became the first city in the country to require businesses that receive city service contracts to pay a “living wage” above the federal or state minimum wage. Nationwide, over 140 cities and counties have enacted living-wage bills. In 2007, the State of Maryland became the first state to require employers with state contracts to pay a living wage to their employees.<sup>4</sup> In 2008, The Presbytery of Baltimore played a major part in advocating for and with the group United Workers toward their victory in obtaining a living wage for workers at Oriole Park at Camden Yards. It is fitting that Baltimore Presbytery introduced Overture #51 to the 218<sup>th</sup> PC (USA) General Assembly entitled “Responsible Purchasing”, which passed with overwhelming support.

With the globalization of supply chains, public purchasing also impacts social conditions in other countries. Anti-Apartheid purchasing policies may be the first and most strikingly successful examples of states and local governments amassing their procurement power to further international human rights. Twenty-five states and 164 local governments either avoided purchasing from or investing in companies doing business in South Africa.<sup>5</sup> Today, fair trade, elimination of child labor, and sustainable development issues are increasingly public purchasing concerns in the United States and internationally.<sup>6</sup>

The current U.S. sweatfree movement may be dated to 1997, when North Olmsted, Ohio, became the first city in the country to adopt a sweatfree procurement ordinance in the wake of a wave of media revelations linking major apparel brands and stars like Kathy Lee Gifford and Michael Jordan to sweatshops and child labor.

“I am sure you have heard over the past year about clothing made under sweatshop conditions,” North Olmsted Mayor Ed Boyle announced. “Apparently many of the items produced in third world nations are done so through the exploitation of workers, under unsafe and unfair conditions and through the utilization of child work forces. The City of North Olmsted will not be a party to this.”<sup>7</sup>

Nationwide an inspired grassroots sweatfree movement emerged in a variety of places led by community organizations, people of faith, labor unions, high school students, and others. In 2001, Maine became the first state to commit to ending public purchasing from sweatshops as legislators joined a broad “clean clothes” coalition of human rights groups, small businesses, laid off shoe workers, and others. In 2003, sweatfree campaigns from around the country founded a new organization, SweatFree Communities, to support and coordinate this national movement. To date, seven states, 39 cities, 15 counties, four Catholic dioceses, 118 public school districts, and three individual high schools have committed to purchase only sweatfree apparel and other products.<sup>8</sup>

Internationally, the sweatfree procurement movement may be dated to 1949 when the International Labor Organization (ILO) established the Labor Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention (No. 94) to ensure that public purchases of goods and services did not have the effect of depressing working conditions, an issue of high importance in the context of the massive publicly financed rebuilding efforts after World War II.

In its preparatory work for Convention 94, the ILO studied the U.S. Federal Public Contracts Law, specifically referencing the labor standards criteria in contracts for procurement of imported materials. According to the ILO, the U.S. Government included a fair employment contract clause because of: “The belief that men and women who work under decent conditions produce more per person than those who work under less desirable conditions; that work stoppages and labor shortages are less likely under better working conditions and that loss of man hours from accident or occupational disease is reduced by a program of safety and sanitation.”

In 2008, the ILO affirmed the continued relevance of Convention 94. The combination of a highly globalized economy and procurement practices that promote

“competition at all costs among potential contractors” results in “bidding enterprises [that] compress labor costs which most often results in reduced wages, longer hours, and poorer conditions,” said the ILO in its analysis of government purchasing. “Governments should not be seen as entering into contracts involving the employment of workers under a certain level of social protection, but, on the contrary, as setting an example by acting as model employers.”<sup>9</sup>

In the United States, public entities have recently begun working collaboratively to enforce sweatfree procurement policies. In November 2005, San Francisco’s Mayor Gavin Newsom was the first public leader to call for a “consortium of public jurisdictions to...better assure that anti-sweatshop policies achieve their intent.”<sup>10</sup> In February 2006, Governor John Baldacci of Maine invited fellow governors to join a collaborative effort for sweatfree purchasing, calling for a Governors’ Coalition for Sweatfree Procurement and Worker Rights.<sup>11</sup>

There is now a widespread and growing interest in pursuing the goals of sweatfree procurement and independent monitoring as a collective effort among governmental entities. The purpose of the recently formed Sweatfree Purchasing Consortium is to ensure that taxpayer dollars are not spent on products made in sweatshops. The Consortium intends to help public jurisdictions act with combined strength and resources, allowing each to share the costs and benefits of obtaining information and expertise, and of monitoring and enforcing respective sweatfree requirements.

### **PC(USA) Involvement**

Our biblical tradition tells story after story of the ethical imperative to stand on behalf of those who are voiceless and who find themselves on the economic margins of society. International partners of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in different parts of the world have expressed concern that multinational corporations move production facilities to areas where labor is cheapest and environmental safeguards are weakest. Production facilities may not stay for long as



industry competition and higher profits compel them to shift to other countries. While primarily young women may find temporary employment, local communities often experience negative influences, such as child labor, insufficient or un-enforced worker protections, forced overtime labor, lack of freedom of association, and short and long-term environmental degradation and health impacts.

In response, as far back as the 192nd General Assembly in 1980, the Presbyterian Church has been developing practices that support a safe and just working environment for the workers of the global factory, and has continued to develop policy on the growing sweatshop economy.

During the last decade, many U.S. and European-based multinational corporations have worked to implement codes of conduct as an expression of their ethical commitment as corporate citizens. They have done this in response to increasing concerns from their customers and shareholders that their products and services represent humane and environmentally sound production processes throughout the supply chain. But voluntary codes have the disadvantage of being voluntary, and cut-throat competition often results in cutting corners on implementation.

Many Presbyterians work within and have leadership positions in multinational corporations, offering the PC(USA) a unique opportunity to encourage the use of standards of conduct that can offer clear guidance to companies desiring to be good corporate citizens in the global community.

Additionally, the PC(USA) and its members are consumers of the goods and services of the global economy. Since 2001 the denomination has taken an active role in encouraging and supporting congregations, entities, individuals and families to be more responsible consumers. The Presbyterian Hunger Program has led these efforts through its Enough for Everyone and Just Living ministries, which offer programs, materials and support for those interested in responsible consumption, simple living, Fair Trade, energy efficiency, micro-credit financing and more. Education and action components help Presbyterians practice faith in all aspects of daily life, understanding that the “little” decisions about what we buy, how we get places and ways we celebrate and live all add up and impact people and the planet. The Presbyterian Hunger Program also worked with the Bangor Clean Clothes Campaign to develop a public disclosure and code of conduct for Sweat-Free Ts. The Responsible Purchasing policy adopted by the 218th General Assembly (2008) supports and calls on the expansion of this work, as well as bolsters the work being

done by the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Committee to encourage independent monitoring of compliance with business codes of conduct.

The formation of the Sweatfree Consortium, coordinated by SweatFree Communities, will increase the ability to identify and monitor truly sweatfree factories and vendors. The Presbyterian Hunger Program has been active on the SweatFree Communities (SFC) board of directors since its establishment in 2003. SFC is widely respected in the United States and around the world among those working on improving conditions in export processing zones and assembly factories. The Sweatfree Consortium is an important next step in creating greater demand for sweatfree products and ensuring that conditions for workers improve in identified factories.

The Sweatfree Consortium will identify and screen potential sweatfree supplier factories using the Designated Suppliers Program as the model. Over 30 public and private universities have issued official policy statements in support of the Designated Suppliers Program. According to the rules of this program, university logo apparel must be sourced from a set of designated supplier factories that have demonstrated full and consistent respect for the rights of their employees.

In addition to respect for the standards currently included in university codes of conduct, these factories are required to meet two additional standards: payment of a living wage - once they receive prices sufficient to make this feasible - and demonstrable respect for the right of association. The latter can be evidenced by the presence of a legitimate, representative union or other representative employee body, or by proactive steps to create an environment in which workers can make a genuinely free choice about unionization. University licensees must pay these factories sufficient prices to allow them to pay living wages to workers and achieve other fair labor standards; licensees are also expected to maintain long-term relationships with these factories in order to create a reasonable degree of financial stability and job security. The factories will produce primarily or exclusively for the university logo goods market. For more information: [www.workersrights.org](http://www.workersrights.org)

In short, this GA policy and actions by PC(USA) entities translates our words and beliefs into actions that demonstrate our Christian values and our individual and corporate attempts to live the Gospel in our everyday lives.

# Part II – When it is Time to Buy

## Purchasing that Makes a Difference

### Where your T-shirt comes from

Where does your favorite screen-print T-shirt come from? According to the U.S. International Trade Commission, approximately 90% of T-shirts sold in the U.S. were imported. That adds up to about 1.7 billion shirts valued at \$2.7 billion. Over 50% of those imports were from Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean, with Honduras accounting for 22% and Mexico not far behind.<sup>12</sup> Many major brands maintain their headquarters in North America, but their shirts are made abroad, where the labor-intensive job of cutting and sewing is performed by sweatshop workers at low cost.

Once the shirt is assembled, most blank T-shirts are shipped to giant T-shirt bodegas known as “super suppliers” located throughout the U.S. These super suppliers warehouse hundreds of thousands of T-shirts in a wide variety of colors, styles, and sizes. Examples include Alpha/Broader, San Mar, and Imprints Wholesale. The super suppliers are the banks of the T-shirt industry, accumulating huge reserves and controlling the flow of shirts around the country.

When you call your local screen-printer to place an order for custom printed shirts, it is unlikely they have more than a few sample T-shirts in stock. More likely, your screen-printer takes your order and relays it to their supplier. Most screen-printers work almost exclusively with one super supplier, who can usually fill orders within a couple days. Most super suppliers also offer free shipping and can provide the shirts on credit. This way your screen-printer only pays for the shirts after they have been printed and delivered to you, and after you have paid for them. With this arrangement, the screen-printer invests very little money up front, while still offering you a wide variety of colors and styles.

### The real costs of your shirt

While cheap and efficient for screen-printers and distributors, this business model contributes to global exploitation of garment workers. A relatively small number of brands and super suppliers control huge portions of the market. Their enormous buying power allows them to demand very low prices for huge quantities on tight deadlines. To compete, factories force workers in Central America and Asia to toil for as little as a dollar or two a day at long hours to meet

production quotas. If workers exercise their legal right to organize a union and demand better conditions and pay, or local communities demand compliance with environmental or labor laws, the brand can simply move production elsewhere.

While estimates vary based on product and country of production, research suggests that the cost of labor only accounts for between one and three percent of the retail price of a typical garment. The rest of the money you spend goes to fabric, shipping, import/export costs, and of course the brand and super supplier. Studies show that workers’ wages could be doubled by raising the retail price by as little as 1.5%.<sup>13</sup>

Another cost of this system is the diminished range of products easily available to the consumer. While you may be able to choose from a wide variety of colors and styles from the super supplier, you are probably hard-pressed to find the same variety of union-made, sweatfree, or organic T-shirts brands. These options have been squeezed to the margins of the global economy, only marketed by businesses seeking a special “niche” of conscientious consumers.

Some increase in cost can be expected when paying for fair labor conditions because the whole supply chain is set-up to benefit the current super supplier, super retailer system. When you buy sweatfree you pay the true price of the T-shirt because workers are not forced to absorb part of the cost by enduring poverty wages and going hungry. Another reason sweatfree often costs more is the proportionally higher distribution cost. By shipping in huge volumes, the major brands and super suppliers pay less per T-shirt for distribution than a smaller company. Since union-made, fair-trade, and organic T-shirts are produced and distributed in much smaller quantities, you pay a disproportionately high price for their delivery. As demand for these products increases, the cost of “sweatfree” T-shirts should become more competitive.

### Making a difference

With every purchase, Presbyterian congregations, camps, conference centers and other entities can positively impact the workers who make the shirts. By buying union or cooperative-made products, you support workers who are organizing for and negotiating a fair wage and decent working conditions. You help ensure that workers receive a fair share of the sale

price for their labor. You also support businesses that choose to do the right thing by respecting labor laws and freedom of association. Finally, by valuing T-shirts made by workers receiving decent wages, you end up with a high quality product created with care and pride.

You may have to plan your order a little earlier in advance each year, and you may have to choose from just two or three shades of green when ordering your shirts rather than the 12-14 greens offered by the largest brands. You may end up paying more for your T-shirts. Yet with some advance planning and careful budgeting, your purchase can be an important contribution to humane and decent working conditions, and fair wages. You will also be joining a growing movement to make a sweatfree option widely available. Working for justice is a rich part of the Presbyterian heritage, and your T-shirt order can reflect these values!

### **Ready to go sweatfree?**

- 1. Buy union.** See the vendor listing on page 13 for information on screen-printers around the country who specialize in union-made T-shirts. You can also ask the screen-printer you do business with if they offer any of the union-made T-shirt brands in appendix 1. If your screen-printer does not work with these brands, encourage them to do so.
- 2. Plan ahead and report back.** Use our handy sweatfree shopping list template to help you plan ahead. Then send us your feedback form so that we can measure our cumulative impact and evaluate this purchasing guide.
- 3. Pool purchasing power.** Talk with other Presbyterians who are purchasing similar products, and consolidate your purchasing into one large order if possible. Many retailers offer wholesale discounts. This can be a way to save money while supporting a socially responsible brand you can believe in.

## **Why do we promote union and coop-made products?**

We promote clothing produced by democratic unions and worker-owned coops for three basic reasons:

First, these kinds of workplace organizations offer the best chance that workers will have an effective, collective voice in determining their wages, benefits, and working conditions. Workers' voices in the workplace have been largely muted in a global economy that often pits workers against one another and forces them to choose between keeping their jobs and working for less. By connecting unionized workplaces and worker-run cooperatives with Presbyterian shoppers, we provide some shelter from this race to the bottom.

Second, these worker organizations play a vital monitoring role, letting us know if employers are shifting back toward sweatshop strategies. Consumers and anti-sweatshop organizations, including Presbyterian camps and conferences, can then bring pressure to bear on those employers to get them back on the sweatfree track.

Last but not least, democratic unions and worker coops are a vital force for expanding the share of total production that is sweatfree. They do this in two basic ways: first, by organizing more unions and coops in their sector; and second, by providing an important part of the political base that will encourage their governments to pursue more worker-friendly economic and social policies.

By directing our clothing dollars to these particular producers, we support existing sweatfree operations, and also help to increase the number of sweatfree producers, creating more options for Presbyterians and others looking to buy faithfully.

*Adapted from Shop with a Conscience Consumer Guide, [www.sweatfree.org/shoppingguide](http://www.sweatfree.org/shoppingguide)*

## Sweatfree Purchasing Resources

### Sweatfree T-shirt Vendors

*Vendors that specialize in providing union or coop- made T-shirts. Some carry other items including sweatshirts, totes, sportswear, hats, scarves, mittens, caps, and outerwear. Listed by geographic region, but all vendors can ship anywhere in the country.*

### Midwest

#### American Advertising

*Boonville, Indiana*

#### Union-made in U.S.A.

American Advertising offers union-made T-shirts printed with modern equipment. The company employs a full time staff person to research union products made in the U.S.

**Brands:** Lifewear, Platinum Sportswear, Unionline, and Bayside Union Made (see brand list for more details)

**Turnaround:** 4 weeks

**Minimum order:** 72 shirts

#### For more information or to order:

Visit: [www.everything-usa.net](http://www.everything-usa.net)

Call: 800 995-5415

Email: [info@everything-usa.net](mailto:info@everything-usa.net)

### Contemplat8 T-shirt

*Minneapolis, Minnesota*

#### Union-made/ Eco-friendly / Certified Organic

Contemplat8 T-shirt is an eco-friendly water-based screen printer specializing in environmentally friendly printing practices. They will print what you want on shirts.

**Brands:**\* Lifewear, Platinum Sportswear, Unionline, Bayside Union Made, King Louie, Unionwear (see brand listing for more details)

**Turnaround:** 3 weeks, depending on brand ordered and shipping.

**Minimum order:** 12 shirts

#### For more information and to order:

Visit: [www.contempl8.net/custom-screen-printing.htm](http://www.contempl8.net/custom-screen-printing.htm) Call: 1-877-847-4478

Email: [Custom@CONTEMPL8.NET](mailto:Custom@CONTEMPL8.NET)

\* Contemplat8 offers a wide range of brands, so be sure to ask specifically for union-made!

### North Country Fair Trade

*Saint Paul, Minnesota*

Coop-made / Organic

North Country Fair Trade is a family business and a member of the Fair Trade Federation, Co-op America and the Minnesota Fair Trade Association. North Country specializes in offering fair trade products from Maquiladora Dignidad y Justicia—a worker-owned cooperative in Mexico.

### Brands:

#### Justicia

Coop-made organic products

- T-shirts, hemp and organic sweatshirts and hoodies, and tote bags
- T-shirt colors: 6 cotton, 3 certified organic
- T-shirts: 100% organic cotton
- T-shirt weight: 6 oz.
- T-shirt sizes: S-2XL

**Turnaround:** 10 days for orders of blank T-shirts, more for printed shirts.

**Minimum Order:** No minimum

#### For more information and to order:

Visit: <http://00674e0.netsolhost.com/index.htm>

Email: [northcountryfairtrade@comcast.net](mailto:northcountryfairtrade@comcast.net)

### Northeast

#### Donnelly / Colt Progressive Resources

*Hampton, Connecticut*

Union-made / Made in USA Certified Organic T-shirts  
Donnelly/Colt Progressive Resources is a family owned and operated mail-order business founded in 1975. Donnelly/Colt offers union-made and union printed T-shirts and certified organic . made in U.S.A. T-shirts, including a complete line of custom union printing services.

**Brands:** LifeWear, Windjammer, Bayside, Rubin Brothers, and Platinum

Union-made in the U.S.A.

Products: T-shirts, apparel

- T-shirt colors: 11 colors available
- 100% cotton, crew neck, tapered shoulder-to-shoulder
- T-shirt weight: 5.4 oz fabric, although other weights and styles also available on request
- T-shirts sizes: S-4XL

### Buy Sweatfree and Buy Green!

The General Assembly action also calls on us to purchase products that are ecologically sound. The National Green Pages make that easy. The Green Pages is a directory listing nearly 3,000 businesses that have made firm commitments to sustainable and socially just principles. These businesses adopt principles, policies, and practices that improve the quality of life for their customers, their employees, communities, and the environment. Businesses listed have passed a screening process that qualifies them for membership in their Green America's Green Business Network. <http://www.greenamericatoday.org/pubs/greenpages/>

**Turnaround:** Normally allow 10-15 working days from when your order is received to when it is shipped. Shipping times and costs vary with distance and how quickly you need to receive product. Ask for a quote.

**Minimum order:** 6 shirts

**For more information and to order:**

Visit: [www.donnelycolt.com/catalog/customt.html](http://www.donnelycolt.com/catalog/customt.html) for more information about pricing and product availability.

Call: 860-455-9621 or fax 860-455-9597

Email: [clay@donnellycolt.com](mailto:clay@donnellycolt.com)

## Ethix Merch

*Milford, Massachusetts* (representatives on the east and west coasts)

Union-made / Made in U.S.A. / Organic

Ethix Merch offers a wide array of made in U.S.A merchandise and custom screen-print T-shirts, including a number of union-made, and certified organic T-shirts. Ethix Merch representatives will work with you to understand the different brand options for your needs.

**Brands:\***

### Unionwear Apparel

- Union made in the U.S.
- Union Products: T-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, hats, bags and jackets.
- Colors: over 20 T-shirt colors available
- 100% cotton and 50/50 T-shirts
- T-shirt weight: 5 oz and 6 oz fabric
- T-shirts sizes: youth XS-L and adult sizes, S-6XL

### Bayside / Union Made

- Some union made in U.S.
- Union Products: T-shirts
- Offers some Certified Organic Products
- Colors: 30 made in U.S. colors, 12 union made colors
- 100% preshrunk cotton T-shirts
- T-shirt weight: 6.1 oz high quality heavy weight fabric
- T-shirts sizes: S-4XL

**Turnaround:** 2 to 4 weeks for printing and shipping.

**Minimum Order:** No minimum

**For more information and to order:**

Visit: <http://ethixmerch.com> for information about products and availability.

Call: to order: 1- 877-709-3845, Dial 0 for east coast and 9 for west coast.

Email: [Sales@ethixventures.com](mailto:Sales@ethixventures.com).

\*Ethix Merch offers a wide range of brands, so be sure to ask specifically for union-made!

## Justice Clothing

*Bangor, Maine*

Union-made in U.S.A. and Canada

Justice Clothing is a family owned internet-based distributor of union-made and sweatshop free products. Justice Clothing offers a variety of men's and women's styles, as well as offering custom screen-printing.

**Product information:** T-shirts, sportswear, hats, scarves, mittens, caps, outerwear, and men's and women's styles.

**Brands:**

### Unionwear Apparel

- Union-made in the U.S.A.
- Union Products: T-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, hats, bags and jackets.
- Colors: over 20 T-shirt colors available
- 100% cotton and 50/50 T-shirts
- T-shirt weight: 5 oz and 6 oz fabric
- T-shirts sizes: youth XS-L and adult sizes, S-6XL

### Bayside / Union Made

- Some union-made in the U.S.A.
- Union Products: T-shirts
- Offers some Certified Organic Products
- Colors: 30 made in U.S. colors, 12 union made colors
- 100% preshrunk cotton T-shirts
- T-shirt weight: 6.1 oz high quality heavy weight fabric
- T-shirts sizes: S-4XL

**Turnaround:** 2 to 4 weeks for printing and shipping.

**Minimum Order:** No minimum

**For more information and to order:**

Visit: <http://www.justiceclothing.com>

Email: [info@justiceclothing.com](mailto:info@justiceclothing.com)



## Windjammer Inc.

*Bangor, Pennsylvania*

### Union-made in U.S.A.

Windjammer owns its own manufacturing facility affiliated with Workers United Local #234. Windjammer manufactures T-shirts and sportswear, in addition to offering custom screen-printing.

**Product information:** From T-shirts and sportswear to quilt lined jackets.

### Windjammer T-shirts

- 100% preshrunk cotton and 50/50 T-shirts
- 13 colors (5.5 oz cotton), 4 colors (7 oz cotton)
- Fabric weight: 5.5, 7 oz
- Sizes: Adult S—4XL

**Turnaround:** 2-4 weeks

**Minimum order:** No minimum. Orders of less than \$100.00 will be charged a \$5.00 service charge

### For more information and to order:

Visit: <http://www.windjammerinc.com/>

Call: 800 441-6958 | 610-588-0626

Email: [windjammer525@netzero.net](mailto:windjammer525@netzero.net)

## South

### Unionmaid Screen Printing

*Houston, Texas*

Union-made in U.S.A.

Unionmaid screen printing is affiliated with Communications Workers of America (CWA) local 6222 and specializes in providing union-made T-shirts and custom union screen printing using eco-friendly printing supplies.

**Brands:** \*

### Platinum T-shirts

- 100% preshrunk cotton and 50/50 T-shirts
- Colors: 26 depending on style
- Fabric weight: 5.3 oz (50/50) and 5.6 oz (100% cotton)

- Sizes: Youth XS—L, Adult S—6XL, depending on style

**Turnaround:** 10-17 days for standard orders, including Platinum Sportswear

**Minimum order:** 24 shirts

### For more information and to order:

Visit: <http://www.unionmaidscreenprinting.com/> for more information.

Call: 713-923-9796

Email: [unionmaidscreen@att.net](mailto:unionmaidscreen@att.net)

\*Unionmaid Screen Printing offers a wide range of brands, so be sure to ask specifically for union-made!

## Nueva Vida Fair Trade Zone

*Managua, Nicaragua*

(available from Nicaragua or from Presbyterian Distribution Service in Louisville, Kentucky)

Made in Nicaragua / Worker owned, cooperative made T-shirts

Nueva Vida is worker-owned, with the goal of improving the socioeconomic conditions of the women who work in the cooperative. The co-op was created with the assistance of the Center for Development in Central America, with some seed money provided through the Presbyterian Hunger Program by the One Great Hour of Sharing.

### Product Information:

Nueva Vida offers high quality T-shirts, totebags, clothing and baby onesies, as well as screen-printing services. Please see their website or contact them for full product information.

The Presbyterian Hunger Program makes available a limited number of the cooperative's products, specifically Sweat-Free T-shirts. These are available from Presbyterian Distribution Service (PDS) in Louisville, KY.



- \* 100% organic cotton
- \* Colors: White, Natural, and Royal Blue (“Presbyterian blue”)
- \* Fabric weight: 5.6 oz
- \* Sizes: Child S - L, Adult S - 3XL
- \* Sweat-Free T logo pre-printed in black on the sleeve

**Turnaround:** For orders through PDS, expect to receive your shipment in 2 weeks (screen printing is arranged with your local screen printer). For orders placed directly with the Nueva Vida cooperative in Nicaragua, leave at least 3-4 weeks for delivery, as long as you order a fabric color Nueva Vida already has in stock. Bulk purchasing is encouraged, and will cut down on shipping and import/export fees. Contact the cooperative for more information.

**Minimum order:** When ordering from Nueva Vida there is a minimum order of 300. When ordering from PDS, any quantity can be ordered.

**To order from PDS:**

Call (800) 524-2612 or order online at <http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace/item.search.quick.order.jsp>.

Have the following information ready:

- \* The quantities and sizes you need.
- \* The address where you would like the shirts shipped (shirts can be shipped to your local screen printer).
- \* The date by which you need your shirts.

Request the PDS Item Number corresponding to the colors and sizes you want:

White: PDS #74360-03-332 + size

Natural: PDS #74365-05-332 + size

Royal blue: PDS #74365-06-332 + size

Be sure to follow your PDS number with the correct sizing codes:

Child Small = CS

Child Medium = CM

Child Large = CL

Adult Small = S

Adult Medium = M

Adult L = L

Adult XL = XL

Adult 2XL = XXL

Adult 3XL = XXXL

For example: To order Natural shirts in Child Large, you would order PDS Item # 74365-05-332-CL.

To order directly from the Nueva Vida Cooperative:  
Call 011-505-269-8023 or email [FairTradeZone@gmail.com](mailto:FairTradeZone@gmail.com) (English or Spanish).

Remember Nueva Vida has a minimum order of 300 t-shirts, but they can make any color or style, in either conventional or organic cotton. They also manufacture totebags, baby onesies and a variety of garments.

**For more information:**

Nueva Vida Cooperative website: <http://www.nuevavidafairtradezone.org/>

**More information on Nueva Vida** at the PC(USA) Sweat-Free Ts website: <http://www.pcusa.org/sweatfree/workers>

**West**

See listing for Ethix Merch, who has representatives on the West Coast.



## Shopping List Template

### Planning Ahead

Being organized and planning ahead helps the small businesses that offer union-made and coop-made shirts. Here is a shopping list template to help you plan. Remember to fill in the feedback form on page 18 when you have completed your purchase so that we can measure our combined impact.

If you are still undecided about some parts of your order, we suggest that you make a deadline for having all your decisions made. Check with your vendor to ensure that this deadline will allow them enough time to complete the order.

Keep in mind that if you change the order just before this deadline, your vendor may run into difficulties if the item(s) you request are out of stock, forcing them to turn to a super supplier for a sweatshop brand that is always available. A good rule of thumb is to have all of the order information and screen-printing design to the vendor four weeks before you need your order. If possible, your initial call should be six to eight weeks before you need the order.

*Originally created for the 2009 Progressive Jewish Alliance Buying Guide*

Basic information	Style 1	Style 2
What type of item(s) (t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.)?		
How many?		
Which color(s)?		
Which sizes would you like? It is especially important to mention if you will need children's sizes or XL sizes.		
Would you like a specialized style? (One example would be a women's cap-sleeve t-shirt instead of a basic t-shirt. You can ask more about these options when you are speaking with the vendor.)		
Screen Printing		
Would you like screen-printing on your items?		
Do you have your design ready, or would you like help making your design?		
Would you like screen-printing on the front, back, or both? (Screen printers often charge by the color. Often, printers charge double for both front & back).		
About how many colors would you like on the front of your item?		
On the back?		
<b>When would you like your item(s) to be ready?</b>		

**SweatFree Purchasing Feedback Form**

**Help us track and expand the Presbyterian community's impact on sweatfree market demand.**

Name of your organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person in charge of purchasing: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (if different than above): \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your organization's purchases in [fill in year and/or month]:**

Name of Vendor: \_\_\_\_\_

Items purchased: (Type of Garment & Quantity) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Screen printed?  Yes  No If yes, by whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Rate experience w/ vendor: (1= poor, 5= excellent) \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Feedback on Experience with Vendors:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill out and return to the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Fax: (502) 569-8963, email: [php@pcusa.org](mailto:php@pcusa.org)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Originally created for the 2009 Progressive Jewish Alliance Buying Guide.

# Part III – When is it time to Educate and Organize

Your group will need approximately 60-90 minutes in total to do the following study. If you don't have that much time, it can be done in two sessions, or you may choose to do only certain sections. The study comes from **Globalization You Can Grasp** ([www.pcusa.org/trade/acpra](http://www.pcusa.org/trade/acpra)) and was produced by the North American Working Group of the Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

## Faithful Purchasing and the Global Sweatshop Economy

### Reading the Signs of the Times

Every time we purchase an item produced, assembled or laundered in a sweatshop, we become accomplices to the exploitation of employees working under oppressive conditions. Most of us do this daily, often without even knowing it!

In manufacturing plants around the world and in Canada and the United States, workers are employed in harsh, demeaning, and dangerous conditions: 16-hour days, slavery and bonded labor, sexual harassment and rape, dangerous equipment and toxic chemicals, child labor, poverty wages, violations of basic labor laws, threats to and even the murder of workers who seek to form a union, and all sorts of degrading and humiliating treatment.

In our globalized economy, the products we buy and their component parts originate from around the globe. Giant retail corporations search worldwide for manufacturing firms that will produce the products they desire at the lowest possible cost. Some have called this the “race to the bottom” as multinationals leap from one low-wage country to another, seeking the lowest cost producers. For many items such as food, clothes, footwear, and electronics, the “bottom” where production is cheapest is a low-wage country such as China, Cambodia or Bangladesh. The factories producing these products that are usually destined to be sold in other countries like the United States and Canada are known as sweatshops due to their poor treatment of workers.

A sweatshop is a plant or facility with a very difficult or even dangerous working environment. Typically, workers have few rights or means by which they can address their situation. Sweatshop workers are often forced to work long hours for

little or even no pay despite laws mandating overtime pay and a minimum wage. Children may be employed in violation of child labor laws. Workers may be exposed to harmful materials, hazardous situations, or extreme temperatures. They may suffer physical, emotional, or sexual abuse from employers. Though often associated with Third World countries in the global South, sweatshops can exist in any country and are also commonly found in the United States, Canada and other major industrialized countries. In fact, investigations by the U.S. Department of Labor have found that 100 percent of all poultry processing plants in the United States violate basic labor laws, as do 60 percent of nursing homes, and over 50 percent of Los Angeles, California, garment factories. These workplaces are sweatshops.

Fortunately, we can help change this reality.

This video introduces the State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium ([www.sweatfree.org/sweatfreeconsortium](http://www.sweatfree.org/sweatfreeconsortium)), a bold initiative spearheaded by the U.S.-based SweatFree Communities ([www.sweatfree.org](http://www.sweatfree.org)). The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recently endorsed the Sweatfree Consortium at their 2008 General Assembly and other denominations in the United States and Canada also work to end sweatshops. Many faith groups encourage congregations and individuals to purchase non-sweatshop, green (ecologically-sound) products as much as possible. As you watch the video, think about how you and your faith community could get involved through changes in personal and institutional purchasing and support for the consortium or similar efforts.



View the video “Sweatfree Communities: Make Your Community Sweatfree” (9:45 minutes) *vidego*.  
[multicastmedia.com/player.php?v=u0wm9w50](http://multicastmedia.com/player.php?v=u0wm9w50)

### Discussion questions:

- Are there rights that every worker should have? What are they?
- What responsibilities do large, multinational companies have regarding their suppliers? What oversight should multinational firms provide for the workers employed by their suppliers?
- Should poor workers in poor countries be appreciative of any job they can get? Should these workers have a right to a decent wage, benefits, and fair treatment?
- Should poor workers in the United States and Canada be appreciative of any job they can get? Should these workers have a right to a decent wage, benefits, and fair treatment?
- What responsibility or obligation does a consumer have if the product she buys and uses is made under sweatshop conditions?

### Confessing Our Faith

*Matthew 22:15–22 (NRSV)*

*Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.*

### Reflection

The Jews of Jesus’ day lived in the Roman Empire under the domination of the Roman military, Roman political system (rule by a small elite that evolved into a dictatorship), and Roman emperor (Caesar). The Roman elites used the Jews—and other conquered peoples—for their own purposes. They could (and did) command the Jews to pay money to them (taxes), give them portions of their agricultural products, or work for little or no pay in the service of the Empire’s building

projects. When the Jews resisted, they were crucified and left hanging in very visible locations as a vivid sign of the Empire’s power. Jews in Israel would have been very familiar with these “signs” of the Roman Empire and its power over the Israelites.

One sign of the Empire was the centurions, the Roman soldiers who embodied its threatening, absolute power. Their presence as the occupying army in Israel made them a target for resentment and disdain. Their bright metal helmets and breastplates were a menacing reminder of Empire.

Another sign of the Empire was Jewish tax collectors. They were regarded as traitors to Israel because of their cooperation in collecting the very taxes that kept Israelites impoverished and in a servile position to the Roman Empire. They made their livings by extorting whatever extra money they were capable of getting.

Herodians—including their most recognized member, Herod the Great—were a group of Jews who collaborated in the domination of Israel by Rome. They served the Empire’s interests, not the interests of their own people, and Rome rewarded them for this. But many Jews regarded them as traitors. They recognized Jesus as someone who opposed the Roman Empire and so they tried to undermine him (also see Mark 3:6).

Roman coins, another sign of the Empire, featured the image of Caesar and proclaimed him a god. This was a double violation of the Ten Commandments: “You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3); “You shall not make for yourself an idol” (v. 4).

Colonized territories like Israel were used as a source of tax revenue, raw materials, and specialized goods to serve the Roman Empire. The Jews were forced to provide these things to the Romans, even when it meant they were left with inadequate resources for themselves. The dominated people could also be used as forced laborers to build the things the Empire wanted such as fortresses, new cities or ports.

In the Roman Empire coins were visible signs of Rome’s domination. Centurions, Herodians, and tax collectors all served the Empire including its need to keep subjugated people under control and provide money and goods to the Roman rulers.

Today we seldom use the term *empire*. However, in some countries small factions hold great power over other residents. In other cases nations dominate entire other nations. The reasons for the domination are similar to those in the days of

the Roman Empire: the desire by the elites to extract wealth and goods from the dominated peoples. And just like in Jesus' day, dominated people wonder how to resist. The signs of Empire are very apparent to oppressed people. They may not be so obvious to those who are not oppressed.

### **Bible study questions**

- Why do you think there was any question about the rightness of paying taxes?
- What would have been the everyday reminders to Jesus' people that they were living under the Roman Empire?
- Can you imagine that Jesus' words about the coin might have been said in a cleverly rebellious way?
- Who would be the equivalent of the centurions in our world (within the United States, Canada or other countries)? What is the role of modern-day centurions?
- Consider the Herodians of Jesus' day. Can you think of examples of similar factions in today's global politics?
- There were many symbols of the Roman Empire (images, flags, pictures on coins, etc.). What are today's symbols of empire? (Hint: Think about military symbols, national flags, corporate logos, ubiquitous trademarks, advertising songs, and cultural images.)
- Today how do some nations extract money, raw materials, or labor from other nations? (Hint: Think about resource extraction, cheap labor, and large-scale agriculture.) How does this happen within a country?
- Look at the tag on one of the garments you are wearing. Where was it made? If Jesus held up currency during a rally in that country today, what kind of money would it be? What would Jesus say?

Adapted from *Challenging Empire: A Call to Community*, Mandate: The United Church of Canada's Mission Magazine, May 2007

### **Covenanting for Justice**

In the absence of a legal and/or regulatory framework to effectively eliminate abusive sweatshop conditions, consumers have turned to other means: buying sweat-free and fairly traded products.

**Build the demand for decent working conditions.** Roughly 2 million apparel workers located in 150 nations make products for American and Canadian retailers. Some 80 percent of these are working in sweatshops under conditions that systematically violate international or local labor laws. Nearly all retail stores carry goods made in sweatshops. Most apparel is made in a sweatshop. We can create the demand for decent working conditions by purchasing union-made clothes and by buying through manufacturers certified to be sweatfree. This guide provides options for purchasing sweatfree T-shirts. Sweat Free Communities offers a sweatfree Shopping Guide ([www.sweatfree.org/shopping](http://www.sweatfree.org/shopping)). In the United States, Coop America's National Green Pages ([www.coopamerica.org/pubs/greenpages/](http://www.coopamerica.org/pubs/greenpages/)) contain a huge listing of companies selling sweat-free, union-made, and environmentally-friendly items. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) sells sweat-free T-shirts ([www.pcusa.org/sweatfree](http://www.pcusa.org/sweatfree)) made by a women's sewing cooperative in Nicaragua. In Canada the Maquila Solidarity Network ([en.maquilasolidarity.org](http://en.maquilasolidarity.org)) documents sweatshop abuses and advocates for buying sweat-free products.

**Buy fairly traded goods.** Fair trade is an equitable exchange between the people who make products and the people who buy them. It empowers low-income and marginalized farmers and artisans around the world. It eliminates many of the "middle men" and directly pays artisans, farmers, democratically run cooperatives, and other producers a living wage for their products, appropriate for their country and location. It encourages producers to engage in environmentally-sustainable practices, respects cultural identity, often provides much-needed credit, and promotes healthy, safe, and humane working conditions.

In the United States, the Interfaith Program ([www.equalexchange.com/interfaith-program](http://www.equalexchange.com/interfaith-program)) established by Equal Exchange ([www.equalexchange.com](http://www.equalexchange.com)) has "Coffee Projects" (partnerships between Equal Exchange and many denominations and faith bodies) that facilitate the use of fairly traded coffee, tea, chocolate, and other products by congregations and people of faith. There are many other companies selling fairly traded coffee also. In Canada and the United States, Transfair ([transfair.ca](http://transfair.ca) & [www.transfairusa.org](http://www.transfairusa.org)) is a certification and public education organization promoting Fair Trade Certified products to improve the livelihood of developing world farmers and workers. Ten Thousand Villages ([www.tenthousandvillages.com](http://www.tenthousandvillages.com)), with roots in the Mennonite community, has outlets in Canada and the United States and sells a wide variety of fairly traded products. Global Exchange ([www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org)) is an advocacy and educational group that also sells fair trade goods.

## Confessing Our Faith

*Excerpted from the Accra Confession: Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth*

We believe that God calls us to stand with those who are victims of injustice. We know what the Lord requires of us: to do justice, love kindness, and walk in God's way (Micah 6:8). We are called to stand against any form of injustice in the economy and the destruction of the environment, "so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24).

Therefore we reject any theology that claims that God is only with the rich and that poverty is the fault of the poor. We reject any form of injustice that destroys right relations—gender, race, class, disability, or caste. We reject any theology that affirms that human interests dominate nature.

We believe that God calls us to hear the cries of the poor and the groaning of creation and to follow the public mission of Jesus Christ, who came so that all may have life and have it in fullness (John 10:10). Jesus brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry; he frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind (Luke 4:18); he supports and protects the downtrodden, the stranger, the orphans and the widows.

Therefore we reject any church practice or teaching that excludes the poor and care for creation, in its mission; giving comfort to those who come to "steal, kill and destroy" (John 10:10) rather than following the "Good Shepherd" who has come for life for all (John 10:11).

By confessing our faith together we covenant in obedience to God's will as an act of faithfulness in mutual solidarity and in accountable relationships. This binds us together to work for justice in the economy and the Earth both in our common global context as well as our various regional and local settings.

## Closing Litany

Since our mothers and fathers cried out,  
since you heard their cries and noticed,  
since we left the brick production in Egypt,  
since you foiled the production schedules of Pharaoh,  
we have known your name,  
we have sensed your passion,  
we have treasured your vision of justice.

And now we turn to you again  
whose precious name we know.  
We turn to you because there are  
still impossible production schedules,  
still exploitative systems,  
still cries of pain at injustice,  
still cheap labor that yields misery.  
We turn to you in impatience and exasperation,  
wondering, "How long?" before you answer  
our pleading question,  
how our petition,  
since you are not a labor boss and do not set wages.  
We bid you, stir up those who can change things;  
do your stirring in the jaded halls of government;  
do your stirring in the cynical offices of corporations;  
do your stirring amid the voting public too anxious to care;  
do your stirring in the church that thinks too much about  
purity and not enough about wages.  
Move, as you moved in ancient Egyptian days.  
Move the waters and the flocks and the herds  
toward new statutes and regulations,  
new equity and good health care,  
new dignity that cannot be given on the cheap.  
We have known now long since,  
that you reject *cheap grace*;  
even as we now know that you reject *cheap labor*.  
You, God of injustice and dignity and equity,  
keep the promises you bodied in Jesus,  
that the poor may be first-class members of society,  
that the needy may have good care and respect,  
that the poor earth may rejoice in well-being,  
that we may all come to Sabbath rest together,  
the owner and the worker,  
the leisure class and the labor class,  
all at peace in dignity and justice,  
not on the cheap, but good measure,  
pressed down,  
running over...forgiven. (Luke 6:37–38). Amen

—by Walter Brueggemann, *Prayers for the New Social Awakening*

## Additional Resources

There are many sources for additional information on sweatshops in the United States, Canada and around the globe.

The **International Labor Rights Forum** ([www.laborrights.org](http://www.laborrights.org)) filed a lawsuit on behalf of workers in China, Nicaragua, Swaziland, Indonesia, and Bangladesh against Wal-Mart. They charged the company with knowingly developing purchasing policies that the manufacturers they contract could not possibly meet while also following the Wal-Mart code of conduct.

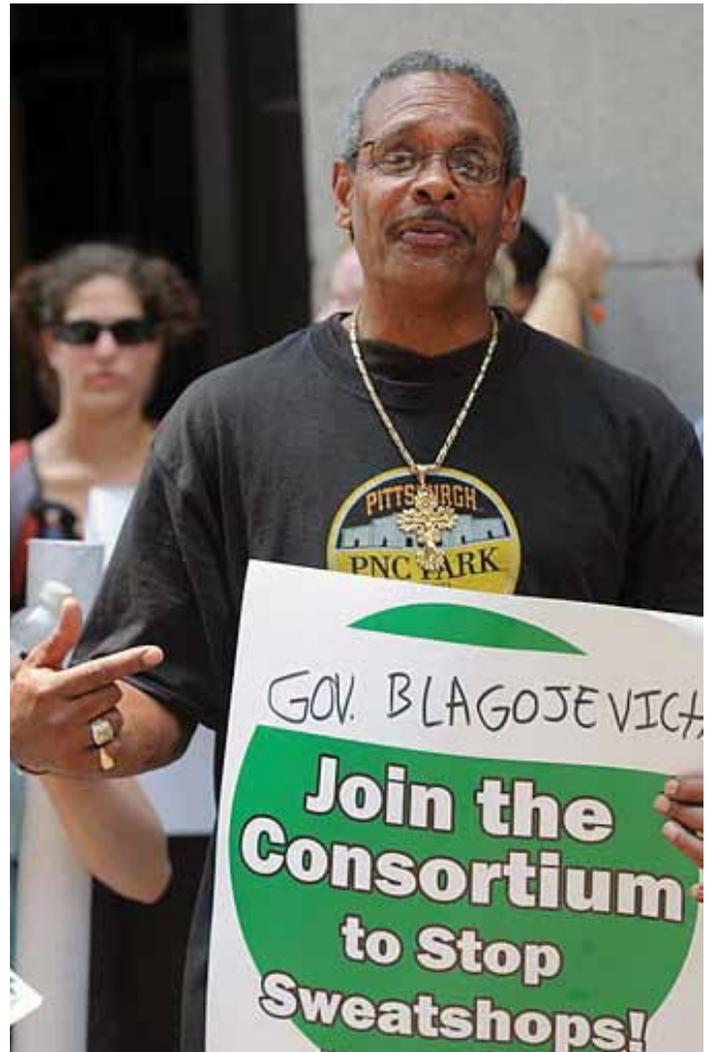
North American labor unions have helped support the anti-sweatshop movement out of concern both for the welfare of people in the developing world and for workers in the North who have lost or are at risk of losing jobs in the global race to the bottom.

The **National Labor Committee** ([www.nlcnet.org/index.php](http://www.nlcnet.org/index.php)) is involved in many struggles around the world. NLC's video about sweatshops, "Hidden Face of Globalization," is excellent. (9:48 minutes) [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Bhodyt4fmU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Bhodyt4fmU)

In Canada groups like the **Maquila Solidarity Network** ([en.maquilasolidarity.org](http://en.maquilasolidarity.org)) work in solidarity with women's and labor rights organizations in Mexico, Central America and Asia, promoting respect for workers' rights through corporate engagement, coalition building, and policy advocacy.

### Groups active in the United States:

**SweatFree Communities** ([www.sweatfree.org](http://www.sweatfree.org)) in the United States shares resources and information to assist campaigns to convince school districts, cities, states, and other institutional purchasers to adopt "sweatfree" purchasing policies and stop tax dollars from subsidizing sweatshops and abusive child labor. SFC is building a national sweatfree movement with the unity and political strength to generate significant market demand for products that are made in humane conditions by workers who earn living wages.



**United Students Against Sweatshops** ([www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org](http://www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org)) is active on college campuses and established the **Worker Rights Consortium** ([www.workersrights.org](http://www.workersrights.org)) to conduct investigations of working conditions in factories around the globe.

## Going Sweatfree in your Congregation

Becoming a “sweatfree congregation” can be a faithful and influential first step! Individual members may decide other groups they are involved with should also go sweatfree... camps they go to in the summer, sports teams, organizations they donate money to, and at work the possibilities are numerous.

Here are types of faith-based institutions that make purchases:

- camps and conference centers
- health-related institutions (clinics, hospitals)
- elderly care facilities and retirement communities
- educational institutions (preschools, afterschool programs, colleges, seminaries)
- social service organizations (community ministries, soup kitchens)
- denominations, middle governing bodies and event purchasing
- congregations (and special programs such as bible schools and mission trips)

**Starting with your congregation, form a core group and seek allies.** Find individuals around you who realize the importance of living out one’s faith in this way. A few people will become the core group or task force. Try to include people with diverse backgrounds, such as clergy and businesspeople.

**Discuss the connections** between biblical teachings and justice for workers. Pull in clergy or theologians if needed. Make the theological or moral framework the foundation of your efforts. Make sure each of you can articulate the rationale. Practice with each other.

**Define the scope.** The resources in this guide make the purchase of sweatfree T-shirts easy to do. This is a good place to start, but you may be interested in creating a comprehensive policy that covers all purchases. In any case, take on what you can accomplish and build on success.

**Research.** Identify what products are purchased by the congregation. Use the resources here to find sweatfree T-shirts. For other products, you may wish to consult Green America (formerly Coop America) [www.greenamericatoday.org/programs/sweatshops/sweatfreeproducts.cfm](http://www.greenamericatoday.org/programs/sweatshops/sweatfreeproducts.cfm)



**Plan and make your case.** Meet with and persuade – ideally in person – connectors, leaders, and eventually with the appropriate church committee/council or session. When presenting to the committee, come well prepared with answers to anticipated questions. If you are lucky, a decision to proceed will be made. Then again, this may be the beginning of a long process. If the committee pushes back, do more education in the congregation to gain more support.

**Educate.** Contact the Presbyterian Hunger Program for educational resources on sweatshops. Work with the worship committee to weave responsible purchasing and justice themes into sermons. Organize video showings and workshops. Invite knowledgeable people to speak about the issues and their experiences. Nothing compels like real-life stories.

**Take the sweatfree purchasing pledge.** Use the sample sweatfree pledge in Appendix 2 as a template and modify it to make it fit your congregation. Run it by the Hunger Program staff if you'd like feedback. Then, celebrate its adoption!

**Sweatfree purchasing – doing it!** Your task force will need to follow through to ensure the policy is implemented. The church's office staff may need support or guidance. Feel free to consult with the Baltimore Presbytery, the Presbyterian Hunger Program and SweatFree Communities whenever needed.

## Going Sweatfree in Your Community

Governments are the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world and have the purchasing power to influence corporate behavior. City governments purchase police, fire, and public works uniforms, and state governments buy uniforms and other apparel for the state prison system and public safety, transportation, and conservation departments.

Your tax dollars may be supporting sweatshops and child labor through these purchases. Instead of being part of the problem, our local governments could be part of the solution.

*Towns and cities, state by state, we can create a more just global economy.*

Here are some organizing steps.

### Research: Where Do Your Tax Dollars Go and Who Decides?

Find out which agencies and departments have uniform or work clothing requirements.

Find out what products the government buys, and how the

procurement process works. Is purchasing centralized or does it take place at the departmental/agency level? Who makes purchasing decisions? Does the government give preference to certain products? Are the unions for uniformed city or town workers involved in the procurement decisions?

Find out if the government has rental contracts for uniforms or work clothing.

Request copies of current government contracts for all relevant products.

Learn as much as you can about the companies, factories and regions where the products are made.

### Evaluate the Political Climate

Find a contact person for selected members of the legislature or city council and talk with them informally to learn about concerns they may have. When meeting with lawmakers:

Reassure them that sweatfree purchasing is not radical. It reflects community values and affirms community consensus.

Appeal to civic pride. Your community can set a moral example for others to follow.

Listen. This is your opportunity to hear their concerns, so you can build a stronger campaign.

When you know who is supportive and who is not, find sponsors of your legislation from across the political spectrum.

### Educate, Organize, and Mobilize

In most cases the merits of your ideas are not enough to win. If you do not have money and high-level political connections on your side, you need the power of the masses: lots of committed volunteers, a large and broad coalition of groups, powerful stories and personal testimonies, a large number of bodies at public hearings and events, and a continuous public presence. Here are a few things you can do:

- Organize a petition drive.
- Write letters to the editor and get on radio talk shows.
- Hold a press conference.
- Organize a "sweatfree fashion show," a benefit concert, or other educational event.
- Do presentations and workshops with classes, church groups, and civic organizations.

## **Build a Relationship with Legislators and Government Staff and Make Your Case**

Gather two to four people to meet with the city or town manager, the purchasing director, department heads, your legislative sponsor, or equivalent people on the state level. Present a draft of your sweatfree purchasing policy and talk about how you would like to see it implemented. Listen to their questions and concerns. Establish a process to develop a mutually acceptable policy if possible.

The stronger your community support, the easier it will be to work with staff and legislators. You will probably be asking a money-strapped and strained department to change the way they do business and develop a new administrative protocol. They will be more motivated and accommodating if: 1) you have done your homework well; 2) you show that you are interested in and understand their rules and constraints; and 3) they know the public is behind you and that this issue simply will not go away.

## **Mobilize for the Public Hearing**

Spread the word in as many ways as you can. Tell your friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers. If you know supportive

teachers or ministers, ask them to make announcements. Use email, facebook, and other web-based organizing tools. Activate a phone tree if you have it, or do a mailing if you can. Consider contacting a local newspaper or radio-station to see if they will do a story before the hearing and cover the hearing itself. Write a letter to the editor.

The hearing is a public performance. Prepare for it! A few brief and concise testimonies are usually better than longer and repetitive testimonies from lots of people. Try to fill the hearing room to capacity. Everyone may not be able to speak, but everyone can show their support by standing up or holding signs at a given point.

If possible, prepare an information package for councilors or legislators. You can include:

A summary of the proposed policy.

Supporting testimony from key groups and individuals and evidence of widespread community support in the form of petition signatures or newspaper articles.



Opposition viewpoints (if any) and your responses.

Background information on sweatshops, e.g. testimony of a sweatshop worker, testimony of local (possibly displaced) workers, and basic facts about sweatshops.

### **Celebrate!**

Make sure to celebrate all your victories, both large and small. Recognize that you are doing groundbreaking exciting work. Make sure everyone in your group feels appreciated and takes credit for the successes.

### **Build on Your Successes**

A new law or policy is a tool to be used. While administrators are responsible for implementing policy, your group should make sure they really do use this tool to improve conditions for workers and create a level playing field for ethical businesses. Monitor contracts, research possible code violations, and make sure that your state or municipal government pressures violators to correct problems.

Finally, consider building on your momentum to get the policy adopted by other institutions. Once you have convinced one legislative body to adopt a policy, other neighboring bodies may follow suit with just a little persuasion.

*If you are planning to start a campaign or if your campaign is well under way, please contact SweatFree Communities. They can offer organizing assistance. For a list of local governments with sweatfree policies, see [www.sweatfree.org](http://www.sweatfree.org).*

*Adapted from Sweatfree Toolkit: How Your Community Can Help End Sweatshops, available at [www.sweatfree.org/toolkit](http://www.sweatfree.org/toolkit)*



## **Educational and Organizing Resources**

Many resources exist to aid your education and promotion efforts regarding sweatshops and sweatfree. The following resources and links are provided as suggestions as you and your group learn and grow in faith, understanding and action.

### **Talking with Children & Youth about Sweat-Free Ts**

[www.pcusa.org/sweatfree/pdf/lesson-sample.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/sweatfree/pdf/lesson-sample.pdf)

### **Sweat-Free T Web site of the PC(USA)**

[www.pcusa.org/sweatfree](http://www.pcusa.org/sweatfree)

### **Find Labor-Religion / Interfaith Worker Justice Groups**

Find a group near you [www.iwj.org/template/page.cfm?id=3](http://www.iwj.org/template/page.cfm?id=3)

### **Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility**

(212) 870-2295 [www.iccr.org](http://www.iccr.org)

### **Ten Things You Can Do to Build Religion-Labor**

**Partnerships:** Join the growing numbers of such partnerships.

[www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/faith/lip.cfm/10things](http://www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/faith/lip.cfm/10things)

### **Selected biblical passages on justice for workers**

[www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/faith/upload/pg31.pdf](http://www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/faith/upload/pg31.pdf)

## **PC(USA) Policy**

### **Hope for a Global Future: Towards Just and Sustainable Human Development (1996 General Assembly)**

Addresses global poverty and environmental degradation, overpopulation and overconsumption, theological and ethical foundations, and policy recommendations. Study guide included. PDS #OGA96013, \$2.50

(order at [www.pcusa.org/marketplace](http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace) or call 1-800-524-2612)

### **God's Work in Our Hands: Employment, Community, and Christian Vocation (1995 General Assembly)**

A theological exposition concerning the vocation and work of every Christian. Affirming that all work, both paid and unpaid, is an integral part of the believer's response to God's call to vocation in God's world. Good work should reflect the principles of justice on which the church's witness is based and is described as full, fair, participatory, and sustaining. Twelve principles on vocation and work are presented with an action and implementation plan to challenge the whole church.

#### **Study Paper**

PDS #OGA95012-\$2.00

#### **Video**

PDS #6860096006 -\$5.00

## Reports and Guides

**Guide to Ending Sweatshops by Green America.** In-depth consumer guide helps individuals use their economic power to address sweatshops. Includes Retailer Scorecard, 10 Ways to End Sweatshops, and Resources for Buying Sweatshop-Free. [www.coopamerica.org/PDF/GuideSweatshops.pdf](http://www.coopamerica.org/PDF/GuideSweatshops.pdf)

**Sweatfree Toolkit: How Your Community Can Help End Sweatshops.** 68-page toolkit produced by Global Exchange and SweatFree Communities. Contains all you need to know to start and win a sweat-free campaign in your community to ensure that clothes, uniforms, and other garments bought by city and state governments are not made in sweatshops and to guarantee that taxpayers are not complicit in factory abuses by allowing tax dollars to underwrite worker exploitation.

**PC(USA) Worship Guide on Trade and Globalization.** Everything you need to raise critical issues and encourage Christian discipleship in a globalized world, including a complete order of worship, Bible readings, theological reflection, sermon ideas, children's activities, prayers and songs, stories of people affected by economic globalization and more. Colorful 16-page Worship Guide available in black and white (1.25 MB) or color (4.7 MB). Download the guide's promotional flyer.

**Educational Resource List on Economic Globalization**  
Compiled by the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

***Between a Rock and a Hard Place.*** Online virtual tour of the Smithsonian Exhibit on Sweatshops.

***Consumers Guide to Fairly Traded Products*** by the Fair Trade Federation.

**Freedom at Work Toolkit by International Labor Rights Forum**  
[www.laborrights.org/freedom-at-work/resources/12095](http://www.laborrights.org/freedom-at-work/resources/12095)

## Videos

### China Blue—88 minutes

Following a pair of denim jeans from birth to sale, *China Blue* links the power of the U.S. consumer market to the daily lives of a Chinese factory owner and two teenaged female factory workers.

[www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/china.html](http://www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/china.html)

Made in L.A.--70 minutes, 2007

Follow the remarkable story of three Latina immigrants

working in Los Angeles sweatshops as they embark on a three-year odyssey to win basic labor protections from a trendy clothing retailer. In intimate verité style, the Emmy-award winning **Made in L.A.** reveals the impact of the struggle on each woman's life as they are gradually transformed by the experience.

[www.madeinla.com/buy](http://www.madeinla.com/buy)

### Maquilapolis (City of Factories), 68 minutes, 2006

Carmen Durán works the graveyard shift in one of Tijuana's 800 *maquiladoras*; she is one of six million women around the world who labor for poverty wages in the factories of transnational corporations.

[www.newsreel.org/nav/title.asp?tc=CN0192](http://www.newsreel.org/nav/title.asp?tc=CN0192)

### What Would Jesus Buy

STOP the SHOPOCALYPSE!

Sho•po•ca•lypse [shah PAW kuh lips] n.

The end of mankind from consumerism, over-consumption and the fires of eternal debt!

In theaters – [wujbmovie.com/theaters.html](http://wujbmovie.com/theaters.html)

### Threads of Justice – 27 minutes, 1997

United Church of Canada; Call: 416-231-7680 x4056

Threads of Justice draws attention to the exploitation that takes place in the Canadian garment industry. It uses interviews and footage to illustrate the conditions in factories and the abuse that homeworkers face. Good resource on the garment industry and home work. Includes footage of a sweatshop fashion show.

### From The Mountains To The Maquiladoras

A Tennessee Industrial Renewal Network (TIRN) Educational Video. (865) 637-1576. 25 minutes. Documents a trip by factory workers from Tennessee to maquiladoras in Mexico. Educational and inspiring!

### Maquila Solidarity Network films and publications

[en.maquilasolidarity.org/resources](http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/resources)

### National Labor Committee films and publications

[www.nlcnet.org/nlshop.php](http://www.nlcnet.org/nlshop.php)

## Appendix 1

### Union-Made and Coop-Made T-shirt Brands

The vendor list on page 13 may be most helpful when you are looking to purchase items. This short list of brands may also come in handy. There are several ethical T-shirt options. Please note that most of these brands only work with distributors and screen printers. See the vendor list for screen-printers that carry these brands, or ask your local screen printer if they carry or would consider offering some of these brands.

#### Justicia

##### Made in Mexico / Coop-made and Organic Certified

Made in Piedras Negras, Mexico, by Maquiladora Dignidad y Justicia (Dignity and Justice Assembly Shop), a worker managed cooperative. Justicia is an apparel production business established to employ workers who lost their jobs when corporate brand name producers closed the large apparel production facilities they operated in Piedras Negras.

**Products:** T-shirts, tote bags, and hemp or organic sweatshirts and hoodies.

##### T-shirts:

T-shirts: 100% organic cotton

T-shirt colors: 6 cotton, 3 certified organic

T-shirt weight: 6 oz.

T-shirt sizes: S-2XL

**More information:** [http://00674e0.netsolhost.com/maquiladora\\_dj.htm](http://00674e0.netsolhost.com/maquiladora_dj.htm)

#### King Louie America

##### Union-made in U.S.A.

Made in Baxter Springs, Kansas by members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local # 409G. King Louie has been in business for over 60 years. King Louie offers a large line of union-made or made in U.S.A. apparel. Its primary business is in corporate and organizational logo gear.

**Union-made products:** Sports shirts, polos, slacks, jackets.

**More information:** [www.kinglouie.com](http://www.kinglouie.com)

*King Louie manufactures many non-union products, so be sure to specifically ask for their union-made line.*

#### Lifewear Inc.

##### Union-made in U.S.A.

All products are cut and sewn by members of Workers United Local #1148 at Lifewear's wholly owned factory in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Lifewear is a family owned and operated manufacturing facility since 1997, employing less than 30 workers. All garments are made of 100% U.S. components.

**Products:** T-shirts, long sleeve shirts, and sweatshirts.

##### T-shirts:

100% preshrunk cotton

Colors: 14

Fabric weight: 5.5 or 7 oz

Sizes: Youth S—L, Adult Extra Small—4XL

**More Information:** [www.lifewear.net](http://www.lifewear.net)

#### Nueva Vida Fair Trade Zone Cooperative

##### Made in Nicaragua / Worker owned / coop-made

Incorporated in 2001, Nueva Vida is owned and operated by the workers who sew the T-shirts. The workers at Nueva Vida formed the cooperative to improve the socioeconomic condition of the women of their neighborhood after Hurricane Mitch struck in 1999.

**Products:** T-shirts and apparel.

##### T-shirts:

100% certified organic cotton or non-organic tees

Colors: 2 (white and royal blue)

Sizes: Youth S—L, Adult S—3XL

**More information:** [www.nuevavidafairtradezone.org/](http://www.nuevavidafairtradezone.org/)

#### Platinum Sportswear

##### Union-made in U.S.A.

All products are made by members of UFCW Local # 1996 at Platinum's wholly owned factory in Tignall, Georgia.

**Products:** Short sleeve and long sleeve T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, golf shirts, tank tops, and gym shirts.

##### T-shirts:

100% preshrunk cotton and 50/50 T-shirts

Colors: 26 depending on style

Fabric weight: 5.3 oz (50/50) and 5.6 oz (100% cotton)

Sizes: Youth XS—L, Adult S—6XL, depending on style

**More information:** <http://www.platinumswear.net>

#### Union Made by Bayside

##### Made in U.S.A. / Union-made

Union Made T-shirts are sewn by members of the Graphic Communications Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (GCIU) local 197M. Bayside Union Made is sewn at the Eagle Apparel factory in Tazewell Tennessee for distribution by AST Sportswear in Anaheim CA. Many screen-printers offer Bayside Union Made.

**Union products:** T-shirts and long sleeve shirts

##### T-shirts:

100% preshrunk cotton

Colors: 12

Fabric weight: 6.1 oz

Sizes: Adult S--4XL

**More information:**

[www.astswear.com](http://www.astswear.com)

*AST Sportswear carries many non-union products by Bayside, so ask specifically for the Bayside Union Made brand.*

### **Rubin Brothers / UnionLine / Graybear**

#### **Union-made in U.S.A.**

Rubin Brothers T-shirts are made by members of UFCW Local # 1541 at the Rubin Manufacturing facility in Chicago, Illinois.

**Products:** T-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, knits, denims, fleece and outerwear.

#### **T-shirts:**

100 % cotton

Colors: 22 depending on style

Fabric weight: 5.4 and 6.2 oz

Sizes: Adult S—5XL

**More Information:** [www.unionmadeclothing.com](http://www.unionmadeclothing.com)

### **Unionwear**

#### **Union-made in U.S.A.**

T-shirts made in Georgia and Chicago by UFCW members. Unionwear was founded in 1992 as an online distributor to promote union-made products.

**Products:** T-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, hats, bags and jackets.

#### **T-shirts:**

100% cotton and 50/50 T-shirt

Colors: 26 depending on style

Fabric weight: 5 oz and 6 oz

Sizes: Adult S—6XL, depending on style

**More information:** [www.unionwear.com](http://www.unionwear.com)

### **Windjammer Inc. / Universal Sportswear**

#### **Union-made in U.S.A.**

All products are made by members of Workers United Local #234 at Windjammer's wholly owned factory in Bangor, Pennsylvania. Windjammer has over 25 years of experience in the garment industry.

**Products:** From T-shirts and Sports Bras to Quilt Lined Jackets.

#### **T-shirts:**

100% preshrunk cotton and 50/50 T-shirts

Colors: 13 colors (5.5 oz cotton), 4 colors (7 oz cotton)

Fabric weight: 5.5, 7 oz

Sizes: Adult S—4XL

**More information:** [www.windjammerinc.com/](http://www.windjammerinc.com/)

**For more information** on organic and eco-friendly T-shirt manufacturers, please visit Green America's National Green Pages: [www.coopamerica.org/pubs/greenpages](http://www.coopamerica.org/pubs/greenpages) and search for the product of your choice.

## Appendix 2—Sample Sweatfree Purchasing Pledge

Camps, conference centers, presbyteries and congregations may wish to adopt sweatfree resolutions, and can use the pledge below or adapt it. Please send a copy to Enough For Everyone, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville KY, 40202 or [enough@pcusa.org](mailto:enough@pcusa.org)

**Remember:** A vendor isn't sweatfree just because they *say* they don't sell sweatshop products. The vendor must be able to tell you where and in what factories the products were made. According to the standards in this guide, those products must be made by workers who are organized in unions or cooperatives.

### *Sweat-Free Pledge*

\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (City, State) commits to:

- A. Buy from vendors that do not sell products made in sweatshops, whenever a SweatFree vendor can be found.
- B. Whenever possible, print the "Sweat-Free T" emblem on our shirts as a sign of our commitment.
- C. Ask local retailers to carry SweatFree products.
- D. Educate the people involved in our ministries about sweatshop realities and why it's important to purchase SweatFree products.
- E. Explore ways to get active in local SweatFree campaigns ([www.sweatfree.org](http://www.sweatfree.org))
- F. Re-visit this pledge once annually to review our progress and consider additional steps.
- G. Finally, as a SweatFree Congregation/Camp/Conference Center, we agree with following SweatFree Principles and Practices:
  - 1. No forced labor
  - 2. No child labor
  - 3. No discrimination
  - 4. The right to organize and bargain collectively
  - 5. A living wage that lifts workers and their families out of poverty
  - 6. Safe and healthy working conditions
  - 7. No abusive treatment
  - 8. Public disclosure of factory locations
  - 9. Independent verification of compliance with international labor standards, local laws, and codes of conduct
  - 10. Commitment by companies to work with suppliers to achieve compliance

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor / Clerk of Session / Camp Director

### **Appendix 3—General Assembly Action On Responsible Purchasing—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.**

The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Affirm the work of the PC (USA) and Presbyterian Women in their efforts to become responsible consumers in the global economy by occasional procurement of sweatshop-free (sweatfree) and fair trade products, despite the lack of a PC (USA) purchasing policy related to sweatshops.
2. Affirm the existing PC (USA) ethical purchasing policies which prioritize procurement from racial ethnic minority and women-led vendors and suppliers.
3. Request that the General Assembly Council formally endorse the formation of the State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium ending taxpayer support for sweatshops.
4. Request that the General Assembly Council encourage congregations and presbyteries to actively lobby their respective State and Local Governments to join the Sweatfree Consortium.
5. Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to make a good faith effort to purchase products sourced from vendors and manufacturers that observe internationally accepted labor standards, respect internationally established health and safety standards, and provide benefits in accordance with local law or the industry standard (whichever is higher), and a nonpoverty wage. Apparel will be the initial focus since it is known for child labor and sweatshop conditions, and accordingly it is a closely studied industry, and should be extended to other products as non-sweatshop sources become available. The Sweatfree Consortium once formed, will generate resources that will help PC (USA) implement and enforce its sweatfree policy.
6. When information assuring compliance with these standards is not readily available from the supplier or independent monitor, request that the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council not contract for goods and services unless the provider is able to demonstrate active pursuit of compliance with the above practices. SweatFree Communities and the Sweatfree Consortium will maintain a list of non-compliant suppliers that fail to meet the criteria. Termination of relationships with vendors or manufacturers should be used only as a final option after thorough efforts to correct violations have failed. At the same time, brands or manufacturers who are unwilling to work towards compliance with such standards should not continue to supply goods to affiliates. Therefore, the Consortium will assist affiliates in identifying brands and manufacturers that repeatedly refuse to take appropriate corrective action in response to Consortium recommendations. Affiliates may require that bidders for applicable contracts not use companies or facilities on this list to supply goods.
7. Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to, whenever possible, purchase from factories and vendors whose production adheres to U.S. or country-of-origin environmental standards. The National Green Pages and the Responsible Purchasing Network's purchasing guide provide lists of screened and approved 'green' suppliers.
8. Request that the General Assembly Council encourage congregations, presbyteries, camps, conferences and other entities of the PC (USA) to adopt the responsible purchasing policy or design one of their own that upholds these principles.
9. Request that all Presbyterians practice responsible consumerism, beginning with simplicity and non-acquisition whenever possible and responsible purchasing, including sweatfree and ecologically sound products where purchase is necessary. This would include a preference for locally-produced products and food.

#### **Rationale**

Our biblical tradition tells story after story of the ethical imperative to stand on behalf of those who are voiceless and who find themselves on the economic margins of society. International partners of the

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in different parts of the world have expressed concern that multinational corporations move production facilities to areas where labor is cheapest and environmental safeguards are weakest. Production facilities may not stay for long as industry competition and higher profits compel them to shift to other countries. While primarily young women may find temporary employment, local communities often experience negative influences, such as child labor, insufficient or un-enforced worker protections, forced overtime labor, lack of freedom of association, and short and long-term environmental degradation and health impacts.

In response, as far back as the 192nd General Assembly 1980, the Presbyterian Church has been developing practices that support a safe and just working environment for the workers of the global factory, as evidenced in Theological Affirmations on Labor Relations from Biblical Perspectives, The Principles of Vocation and Work that are a part of “God’s Work in Our Hands” affirmed by the 207th General Assembly (1995), and the Call for a Workplace Code of Conduct by the 209th General Assembly, (1997).

The General Assembly also has been a consistent and strong voice for protecting creation. This resolution is in line with that history, as evidenced by documents like the “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” of the 202nd General Assembly (1990), and “Hope for a Global Future: Toward a Just and Sustainable Human Development” in the 208th Global Assembly (1996).

During the last decade, many U.S. - and European-based multinational corporations have worked to implement codes of conduct as an expression of their ethical commitment as corporate citizens. They have done this in response to increasing concerns from their customers and shareholders that their products and services represent humane and environmentally sound production processes throughout the supply chain.

Many Presbyterians work within and have leadership positions in multinational corporations, offering the PC (USA) a unique opportunity to encourage the use of standards of conduct that can offer clear guidance to companies desiring to be good corporate citizens in the global community.

Additionally, the PC (USA) and its membership are significant customers of the goods and services of the global economy. The church has already established an effective program called “Enough for Everyone” that encourages Presbyterian entities to be conscientious consumers of responsibly produced products. The Presbyterian Hunger Program of the PC (USA) has worked with Enough for Everyone to develop a public disclosure and code of conduct for the Sweat-Free T component of Enough for Everyone, and this resolution calls on the expansion of this work. This resolution would also support the work already being done by the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to encourage independent monitoring of compliance with business codes of conduct. Good work is already being carried out in this area by many faith communities. For good counsel, refer to Cherokee Presbytery, which has passed a similar sweatfree resolution, or to several Catholic dioceses across the country and in Canada

that have already or are developing similar standards to inform their purchasing of school uniforms.

In short, this resolution translates our words and beliefs into actions that demonstrate our Christian values and our individual and corporate attempts to live the Gospel in our everyday lives.

### **Independent Monitoring**

There are excellent, truly independent monitoring organizations, such as COVERCO in Guatemala, which PC (USA) missionary Dennis Smith has been intimately involved. The formation of the SweatFree

Consortium, in particular, by SweatFree Communities will advance work in this regard. The Presbyterian Hunger Program has been active on the SweatFree Communities (SFC) board of directors since its establishment in 2003. SFC is widely respected in the United States and around the world among those working on improving conditions in export processing zones and assembly factories. The Sweatfree Consortium is an important next step in creating greater demand for sweatfree products and ensuring that conditions for workers improve in identified factories.

The SweatFree Consortium will identify and screen potential SweatFree supplier factories using the Designated Suppliers Program as the model. Over 30 public and private universities have issued official policy statements in support of the Designated Suppliers Program. According to the rules of this program, university logo apparel must be sourced from a set of designated supplier factories that have demonstrated full and consistent respect for the rights of their employees.

In addition to respect for the standards currently included in university codes of conduct, these factories are required to meet two additional standards: payment of a living wage - once they receive prices sufficient to make this feasible - and demonstrable respect for the right of association. The latter can be evidenced by the presence of a legitimate, representative union or other representative employee body, or by proactive steps to create an environment in which workers can make a genuinely free choice about unionization. University licensees must pay these factories sufficient prices to allow them to pay living wages to workers and achieve other fair labor standards; licensees are also expected to maintain long-term relationships with these factories in order to create a reasonable degree of financial stability and job security. The factories will produce primarily or exclusively for the university logo goods market. For more information: [www.workersrights.org](http://www.workersrights.org)

## End Notes

1. Cited in Madland, David, and Michael Paarlberg, "Making Contracting Work for the United States: Government Spending Must Lead to Good Jobs," Center for American Progress Action Fund, December 2008.
2. See the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA) and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (CWHSSA), available at [www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages/govtcontracts.htm](http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages/govtcontracts.htm), accessed February 17, 2009.
3. The Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act (1936) covers manufacturing workers and the Service Contract Act (1965) covers service workers. See Madland, David, and Michael Paarlberg, *ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
4. Greehouse, Steven, "Maryland is First State to Require Living Wage," *The New York Times*, May 9, 2007, available at [www.nytimes.com/2007/05/09/us/09wage.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/09/us/09wage.html), accessed February 17, 2009.
5. Harrison Institute for Public Law, Georgetown University Law Center, "Procurement & Decent Work," Draft of May 30, 2008, version 1a.
6. Christopher McCrudden, "Corporate Social Responsibility and Public Procurement," in *The New Corporate Accountability: Corporate Social Responsibility and the Law*, (Doreen McBarnet, Aurora Voiculescu and Tom Campbell, eds.) (2007), available at <http://papers.ssrn.com/>, accessed June 21, 2008) p. 2.
7. "Our administrative policy," memo from Ed Boyle to all directors and division leaders, January 20, 1997. On file with SweatFree Communities.
8. Parallel to the sweatfree movement in communities, students on college and university campuses have led an increasingly effective movement to ensure that university logo apparel is made in good working conditions. Over 180 universities have formed a consortium, called the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), which has monitored and investigated university licensee apparel contractors for over eight years.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
10. Mayor Newsom's letter, sent to several dozen mayors including mayors of all cities that have adopted sweatfree procurement policies, is available at: <http://www.sweatfree.org/consortium/lettertomayors.pdf>
11. Governor Baldacci's letter to the nation's governors is available at: <http://www.sweatfree.org/consortium/baldaciletter.pdf>
12. U.S. Trade Commission, U.S. Census Bureau. 2007
13. Worker's Rights Consortium, *The Impact of Substantial Labor Increases in Apparel Retail Costs*, [www.workersrights.org/dsp/Labor\\_Cost\\_Increases\\_and\\_Apparel\\_Retail\\_Prices.pdf](http://www.workersrights.org/dsp/Labor_Cost_Increases_and_Apparel_Retail_Prices.pdf) (accessed September 4, 2009).

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