

“For thus says the Lord concerning Shallum son of King Josiah of Judah, who succeeded his father Josiah, and who went away from this place: He shall return here no more, but in the place where they have carried him captive he shall die, and he shall never see this land again. Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice; who makes his neighbors work for nothing, and does not give them their wages; who says, ‘I will build myself a spacious house with large upper rooms’, and who cuts out windows for it, paneling it with cedar, and painting it with vermilion. Are you a king because you compete in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not this to know me? says the Lord.”

- Jeremiah 22:11-16

The Mission and Social Justice Division of Heartland Presbytery asks Heartland Presbytery to endorse Proposition B, an initiative on the Missouri ballot for the election on November 6, 2018. Proposition B would raise the minimum wage in Missouri by 85 cents per hour until 2023, when the minimum wage would be \$12 per hour. At that point, increases would be tied to increases in the consumer price index.

Proposition B has earned our support because:

- God is deeply concerned with workers and wages, so much so that it is a constant theme in Scripture (Jeremiah 22:11-16, James 5:4, Malachi 3:5, 1 Timothy 5:18, etc.).
- Missouri’s minimum wage, earned over the course of a forty-hour work week, is not sufficient to support a family. No one who works full time or more should struggle to support their family.
- Increasing the minimum wage rewards workers and their initiative, and reduces dependence on government programs for support. We do not shame those who need to rely on those programs, but as a society, we seek to adequately reward hard work.
- This minimum wage increase is gradual and thoughtfully applied. It will not place an undue burden on employers or consumers. Even if all the costs of this increase are passed on to consumers, it will increase prices by a scant 1%.
- To employers who say that their business model depends on paying a wage less than \$12 an hour, we humbly ask them to seek a new business model.
- Other faith organizations, like Metropolitan Congregations United and Missouri Faith Voices, have found this proposition to be in line with their values.
- It is hard to think about higher things—about God, about Christ, about one’s soul—when a person is struggling to make ends meet. We believe increased wages make for a better life, and that when people lead better lives, they may renew their relationship with God.

For these reasons, the members of MSJ believe Proposition B has earned our presbytery’s support. With your affirmative vote, we will communicate this endorsement to our relevant local legislators, to other supporters of the proposition, and to our congregations.