

Recommended Resources

of the Wealth and Poverty Committee

1. Half the Sky by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

In 2009, with the acclaimed bestselling book, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* (already in its 24th printing in hardback alone), Pulitzer- Prize award-winning journalists Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn took on the the fight against the oppression of women and girls worldwide and encouraged readers all over the world to join the burgeoning movement for change. Now a landmark transmedia project— inspired by Kristof and WuDunn’s work and also entitled *HALF THE SKY*— promises to amplify the book’s impact. Visit www.halftheskymovement.org for more details.

2. Invisible Neighbors by John Ashmen.

Invisible Neighbors tells the story of the desperate and destitute in our midst and reiterates Jesus’ instructions. With a unique combination of printed word, videos, website, and social media, the campaign is designed to motivate believers to engage with the poor in a way that will impact their communities, their churches, and their own lives. It is an all- inclusive six-session study series designed for individual or group use. Each 120- page full-color book is designed for use with a separate companion teaching DVD that will serve as a storytelling discussion starter that will illuminate the key points of each session while interacting with the study guide. Find a preview at www.invisibleneighbors.org.

3. Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America by Barbara Ehrenreich.

Millions of Americans work for poverty-level wages, and one day Barbara Ehrenreich decided to join them. She was inspired in part by the rhetoric surrounding welfare reform which promised that any job equals a better life. But how can anyone survive, let alone prosper, on \$6 to \$7 an hour? To find out, Ehrenreich moved from Florida to Maine to Minnesota, taking the cheapest lodgings available and accepting work as a waitress, hotel maid, house cleaner, nursing home aide, and Wal-Mart salesperson. She soon discovered that even the "lowliest" occupations require exhausting mental and physical efforts. And one job is not enough; you need at least two if you intend to live indoors. *Nickel and Dimed* reveals low-wage America in all its tenacity, anxiety, and surprising generosity -- a land of big boxes, fast food, and a thousand desperate strategies for survival. Instantly acclaimed for its insight, humor, and passion, this book is changing the way America perceives its working poor. Find a reading group guide and additional resources at www.barbaraehrenreich.com/nickelanddimed.htm.

4. When Helping Hurts: Alleviating Poverty Without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett.

When Helping Hurts combines sound theology, solid research, foundational principles, and proven strategies that prepare you for Christian transformational ministry among the poor, whether in the local community or abroad. Churches and individual Christians often have faulty assumptions about the causes of poverty — assumptions that many times lead to ministry strategies that do considerable harm to poor people as well as to themselves. Pastors, deacon boards, mercy ministry teams, home and foreign missions committees, missionaries, and donors will all benefit from reading When Helping Hurts. It is also appropriate for an individual or for a group such as a Sunday school class, a ministry team, and a small group Bible study. Find a study guide, webinars, and additional information at www.whenhelpinghurts.org.

5. Will Jesus Buy Me a Double-Wide?: ('Cause I Need More Room for My Plasma TV) by Karen Spears Zacharias.

Author Karen Spears Zacharias believes Christians have been paying good money for a false doctrine—the Cash and Cadillac Gospel. With humor and wit in *Will Jesus Buy Me a Double-Wide?*, Zacharias unpacks story after story of those who use the name of God as a means to living their own “good life,” as well as some unlikely folks whose genuine faith has led them to a different understanding of wealth. Find out more about the author at www.karenzack.com.

6. What Every Church Member Should Know About Poverty by Bill Ehlig and Ruby Payne.

Churches are often perceived as open, welcoming environments and many times that's true. But congregations, without even realizing it, sometimes make themselves inhospitable to people from poverty. For those situations, Dr. Ruby K. Payne and Rev. William Ehlig wrote *What Every Church Member Should Know About Poverty*. They use stories to help illustrate the way people from poverty view middle-class churches and how to change those perceptions. They also provide solutions and tactics to teach church members and leaders some of the special considerations that can be afforded the disadvantaged. Find out more about their process at www.ahaprocess.com.

7. A New and Unsettling Truth: Reigniting Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign by The Poverty Initiative at Union Theological Seminary

The civil rights work of Martin Luther King, Jr. is well known. Yet the deeper King journeyed into issues of civil rights, the more aware he became of economic disparity. His work turned increasingly toward organizing against systems that hurt the poor and for an economic bill of rights. The Poor People's Campaign of 1968 was a central effort within King's work to end poverty. *A New and Unsettling Truth* tells the history of this movement and King's commitment to issues of wealth and poverty. It includes chapters on

the history of the Poor People's Campaign, the role of religion and the Bible, and the importance of Art and Culture in the struggle to end poverty, along with an interview of Bertha Burris (Queen of the Mule Train) and sixteen essays submitted by those currently working for the rights of poor persons. The book works well in the context of a Bible Study, Sunday School class or small group as it includes lesson plans and resources for group study. Visit <http://povertyinitiative.org/anewandunsettlingforce> for more information.

8. Same Kind of Different as Me: A Modern Day Slave, an International Art Dealer, and the Unlikely Woman Who Bound Them Together by Ron Hall and Denver Moore

This is a powerful autobiographical story about the unlikely relationship between two men with completely opposite ethnic, cultural, educational, and economic backgrounds. One (Moore) is black, homeless and illiterate. The other (Hall) is white, rich and educated. With the help and example of Hall's wife Deborah, their relationship develops to one of mutual life long support and unconditional love. As the title suggests, Hall and Moore discover that are really not different from each other. The story is the authors' honest account of their struggles with themselves, their histories, weaknesses and the strength found in their purpose together.

9. The Weight of Mercy: A Novice Pastor on the City Streets by Deb Richardson-Moore.

In this book, the author describes her experiences as a newly ordained minister in charge of a large homeless shelter in Greenville, S.C. Her experiences occur as a late career following several years as a journalist. The stories are poignant and illustrate the "messiness" of ministries to the homeless; especially the unfortunate realities, challenges, and disappointments. Rev. Richardson-Moore tells how she came to understand the paradox of how good intentioned helping might actual enable destructive behavior. She explores the challenges of helping others which can be heart-breaking, requires acts of tough love, make take more time than expected, yet are intermingled with unconditional compassion. In several instances she punctuates her disillusionment and disappointments with stories of success and hope.