

'EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY' MATERIALISM & CONSUMERISM

PROPER 13, YEAR C

Lectionary Texts: Hosea 11:1-11 Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23 Psalm 107:1-9, 43; 49:1-12
Colossians 3:1-11

Focus Text: Luke 12:13-21

¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me."
¹⁴But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" ¹⁵And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."
¹⁶Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' ¹⁸Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'
²⁰But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

NRSV

ADDITIONAL TEXTS

Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, I will testify against you. I am God, your God. Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me. I will not accept a bull from your house, or goats from your folds. For every wild animal of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the air, and all that moves in the field is mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and all that is in it is mine. Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High. Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.

Psalm 50:7-15

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.... You cannot serve God and wealth. Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly [Parent] feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will [God] not much more clothe you – you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" ...But strive first for the kingdom of God and [God's] righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:19-21, 24-34

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs... Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

I Timothy 6:6-9, 17-19

All that is in the world – the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches – comes not from God but from the world. And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.

I John 2:16-17

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

BY REV. KYM LUCAS, RECTOR,
ST. AMBROSE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, RALEIGH

The twelfth chapter of Luke's gospel is filled with warnings for Christ's followers. Two themes dominate these warnings: loyalty and trust. Luke 12:13-21 is one of two passages in the Gospel which speaks of the dangerous lure of wealth. The other, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, is found in Luke 16. The passage in Luke 12 begins with a man in the crowd asking Jesus to settle a dispute over inheritance. Because Jesus was a teacher of the law, it was assumed that he would weigh in regarding such legal disputes. Jesus refuses the bait and instead uses the man's obsession with his family fortune to caution his disciples against greed. The example given involves a wealthy man whose wealth was increased due to a bumper crop. The question that plagues the man is not "What do I do with this abundance?" It never occurs to him to do anything but keep it for himself. Rather, his only concern is how to store it. Trusting that his newly increased wealth will be all he needs, the man quotes a popular saying, "Let us eat, drink and be merry," but leaves off the standard conclusion, "for tomorrow we die" (Isa. 22:13). Ironically, that very night the man is confronted by God, who demands the return of that which belongs to the Divine, the man's very life. The parable concludes with Jesus' admonition that nothing good can come of trusting in one's possessions more than trusting in God. Eugene Peterson's interpretation of Luke 12:21 is particularly biting: "This is what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."

PASTORAL REFLECTION

BY REV. KYM LUCAS

When I read the phrase, "Eat, drink and be merry" in Luke's Gospel, I am immediately reminded of the refrain of a song by the Dave Matthews band. In the song "Tripping Billies" Matthews chants, "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die; we're tripping billies." To my ears, the song is fairly ironic. It invokes an ancient saying condoning the carefree enjoyment of excess, but it does so with melancholy overtones. The great irony is that excess doesn't lead to feelings of joy and a carefree existence. Many people today have more than some can even fathom, yet our world is filled with more fear and anxiety than ever.

Look at the faces of the people you encounter in the grocery store, on the sidewalk, or in board rooms. It is amazing how much energy we spend on worry and anxiety in today's modern world. In a country that consumes much of the world's resources, in a society that has more and more material goods at its disposal, most of us walk around worried. We are concerned about whether we have enough and how we can get more. We work longer hours, often without a Sabbath rest, and we raise the achievement bar higher and higher, and for what? Security? Peace of mind? A moment of freedom from care?

In Luke 9, a man in the crowd approached Jesus about settling an inheritance dispute. He wanted some assurance that his livelihood would be secure. Like most of us, he was only looking for his fair share of the pie. Jesus seizes upon this man's desires in order to teach his disciples a lesson about the dangers of greed. The disciples probably found it hard to imagine that they should be concerned about greed. As laborers, many of them were just getting by and lived a disaster away (a sudden illness, family death, etc.) from being destitute. They might have found it odd that Jesus would use a seemingly reasonable question about inheritance issues to admonish them against greed. Like those early disciples, most of us don't think of ourselves as greedy. Greed conjures up images that are far removed from us: pictures of gluttons and Ebenezer Scrooge, robber-barons and Emelda Marcos' shoe closet. Greed, like most sins, is much more apparent in others than in ourselves. It is hard for us to fathom that our need for security and desire for stability may, in fact, be rooted in greed.

The parable that Jesus uses in Luke underscores the subtle ways in which greed affects our thinking. In the parable, a man receives a blessing in the form of a bumper crop. The man's first response speaks volumes about his spiritual life. Instead of gratitude or thanksgiving, the rich man can only think of how to hoard his fortune. His thoughts are of himself, but, like the person worried about his inheritance, his good fortune actually had very little to do with him or his own efforts. The man may have planted his fields, but he did not bring about the rain and seasonable weather that increased the yield. He could have just as easily been faced with a drought or a plague of insects. The excellent crop the man reaped was a blessing, a gift from God, yet he doesn't acknowledge it as such. He tells himself, "Eat, drink and be merry."

Those listening to Jesus would have heard in this phrase an echo of Isaiah 22:13 which depicts God's people refusing the call to repent and saying to themselves, "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die." Ironically, in the rich man's case, that very evening God appeared before him. Calling him to account for his life, the Creator asks, "And as for the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" Jesus concludes his parable saying, "So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God." One of the great problems with greed is that it narrows our focus, making "self" our primary concern. In *The Message*, Eugene Peterson interprets Jesus' conclusion this way: "This is what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."

Jesus' challenge to his disciples is one involving trust. Where have they placed their trust— in money, in inheritance, in the stuff they've saved, or in God? It is difficult to be a faithful disciple when one is primarily concerned with creating one's own security. It is difficult to think of others, to have a thankful heart, and to bear the fruit of repentance, when all our time is spent worrying about whether we have enough and trying to figure out how to get more.

The irony of our lives is that our consumer culture has taught us that we have to have more of everything, but it hasn't suggested how much is enough. In today's terms, nothing is ever enough. God's question of the rich man in the parable is the same challenge that is placed before us: what accounting will we give for the gift of life we've been given? It is easy to become preoccupied with amassing money, things, and prestige to the neglect of one's relationship with God. The way to have the elusive happy life we are seeking is not by acquiring more things and building bigger barns. The one who trusts God in all things, who sees life as a gift and blessings around every corner, the one who believes that her life is worth more than what she owns, that is the one who can truly "be merry."

WORSHIP AID - 'EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY'

RESPONSIVE READING

For the beauty of the earth, Creator God,

We give you thanks.

For the rich abundance of the natural order, Lord,

We give you thanks.

For the many ways that you provide for all creation, Sustainer,

We give you thanks.

For the material things that enable our survival and provide for our comfort, gracious God,

We give you thanks.

Yet we have betrayed your trust and abused the good gifts you have given us.

Forgive us, Lord.

We have forgotten that the whole earth belongs to you; we have grasped at resources beyond our rightful share.

Forgive us, Lord.

We have built for ourselves towers of Babel; we take pride in the many things we have acquired.

Forgive us, Lord.

We have consumed at a rate that robs from our sisters and brothers around the world.

Forgive us, Lord.

We name our greed and materialism as sin.

Teach us to pursue the work of justice.

We live in a world that has the resources to satisfy everyone's hunger, if only we will share our food.

Teach us to love kindness.

We long to live lives characterized by reckless generosity and hospitality.

Teach us to walk humbly with you.

We commit to sharing all that you have entrusted to us with all people,

That in so doing, we might be transformed into more faithful followers of Jesus Christ. Amen.

(by Chris Liu Beers)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus, we come before you with the sincere desire to be faithful. Yet we are often misguided and fail to reflect your image in us. We confess we are seduced by the lure of greater wealth and the accumulation of things; help us find true contentment in your presence and your grace. We know you are the Creator and called all of creation good; we confess our hard hearts in the face of the destruction of your creation. Fill our hearts with your love for all things. We confess that we are sometimes overwhelmed with the disparity between rich and poor and that we do not know how to respond. Help us to build your kingdom of peace and justice. We praise you for your mercy and your power and ask your forgiveness. May we have the strength to repent, to turn around. Heal us, we pray. In your name, **Amen**.

(adapted from "Prayers of Confession," www.creationcare.org/resources/sunday/worship.php)

SUGGESTED HYMNS

- ❖ *God of Grace and God of Glory* UMH 577/BH 395/LW 398/PH 420/TH 594/
MW 751/AM 62/CH 464/NCH 436
- ❖ *The Church of Christ in Every Age* CH 475/NCH 306/MW 694/PH 421/
BH 402/UMH 589
- ❖ *When the Church of Jesus* MW 651/CH 470/BH 396/UMH 592
- ❖ *We Give Thee But Thine Own* CM 535/LW 405/PH 428/BH 609/MW 657/
CH 382
- ❖ *Not by Bread Alone* GA 517

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

A Litany of Remembrance and Salvation

From the marginalization of poverty,

Save us, O Lord.

From the ruthless thirst for power and profit,

Save us, O Lord.

From the despair of homelessness,

Save us, O Lord.

From demonic structures of sin,

Save us, O Lord.

From economic exploitation,

Save us, O Lord.

From the culture of death,

Save us, O Lord.

From the lure of materialism,

Save us, O Lord.

From greed for money,

Save us, O Lord.

From covetousness of possessions,

Save us, O Lord.

From material wealth and power,

Save us, O Lord.

From alienation and anger,

Save us, O Lord.

From the demand for instant gratification,

Save us, O Lord.

From the cruelty of transnational corporations,

Save us, O Lord.

From the cruelty of our own hearts,

Save us, O Lord.

From our denial of human dignity,

Save us, O Lord. Amen.

(adapted from "Prayers of Justice and Peace for Various Occasions," www.share-elsalvador.org/25anniv/dec2/litany.pdf)

Offertory Prayer

Gracious God, as we come alive to your call to us, we are aware that this time of response is profoundly countercultural. The consumer religion coaches us to believe that we are the center of the universe, that all things were created for us and our pleasure. We are taught to hoard our resources, to keep for ourselves, to value personal comfort above service and accumulation over sacrifice. Yet you have shown us another way in the life and teachings of Jesus, in his death and resurrection. As we reclaim our Christian heritage, we remember that all things were created for your pleasure, and we celebrate the invitation to participate in your work. May we commit ourselves to you fully, making this offering not merely a token, but a guiding principle for our lives. We pray this in Jesus' name. **Amen**.

(adapted from E. Ann Bell, "Worship Service," *The Center for Christian Ethics at Baylor University*, www.baylor.edu/christianethics/index.php?id=15338)

♦ *Hymnal Legend* ♦

- † **AM** – African Methodist Episcopal
- † **BH** – Baptist Hymnal
- † **CH** – Chalice Hymnal (Disciples of Christ)
- † **CM** – Christian Methodist Episcopal
- † **GA** – Gather Hymnal (Roman Catholic)
- † **LW** – Lutheran Worship
- † **MW** – Moravian Book of Worship
- † **NCH** – New Century Hymnal (UCC)
- † **PH** – Presbyterian Hymnal
- † **TH** – The Hymnal 1982 (Episcopal)
- † **UMH** – United Methodist Hymnal

A Prayer of Confession

Holy God,

You are the giver of life, the provider of all good things. In you we find the Creator of mountain and forest, river and lake. You hold the key to life, in plant and in animal. You offer resources of astonishing worth for all to enjoy in stewardship. We praise you for your generosity to us and to all creatures on this your good Earth. Forgive us, Creator God, for the many ways in which we harm your Earth through our greed. We are sorry for those conscious decisions which lead us, so comfortably, to despoil the planet.

And we are sorry for the many ways in which our easy lifestyle brings such suffering: through our needless burning of fossil fuels; through our pursuit of pointless materialism; through our culture of waste and destruction. Lord, we ask your forgiveness and your grace to guide us into a just future. You have heard our prayers. Now lead us to your truth, we pray.

We remember our planet: in all its beauty, in all its glory.

We remember its lands: rich in plants and animals.

We remember its seas: with shoals of fish, and hidden secrets.

We remember its people: stewards of God's creation.

We are sorry for all that we waste in life.

We are sorry that our greed is so great in the face of the world's needs.

We are sorry that we keep on polluting our planet, wasting its energy.

We are sorry that we find it so hard to live more simple lives.

May we seek God's guidance in our living as individuals.

May we find God's wisdom as we grow together in community.

May we never take the easy choice which leads to unfair comfort.

In Christ's name, Amen.

(adapted from "Family Liturgy of Bells to Mark the G8 Summit," www.ecen.org/g8liturgy.pdf)

A Litany of Confession

In mercy, O God, you confront us and expose our sin.

May we respond in spirit and in truth, confessing our failure, reclaiming our hope.

Even as we lift up your name, we offer allegiance to the patterns of this world.

In passive and in active ways, we yield our souls to what is false.

In our lust for lifeless objects and our relentless pursuit for more,

We cross the line between innocent desire and masked idolatry.

We dismiss our inner protests and slowly displace our faith with commercial philosophy and promises.

We begin to seek salvation in spiritless things, to worship you for our own gratification,

To see ourselves and each other as mere consumers and commodities.

We treat people as expendable products and place ultimate significance in manufactured objects.

In our avoidance of human vulnerability, we deny our creation in your image.

We, your people, have swallowed a subtle poison.

We have invested ourselves in the religion of our culture, and our substance has wasted away.

We have become a valley of dry bones.

Forgive us, O God, for we have sinned.

In your mercy, raise us from the dead.

Breathe new life into your people.

Empower us to be a prophetic community, living the gospel of Jesus.

Create in us a consuming passion to love and serve you. Amen.

(adapted from E. Ann Bell, "Worship Service," The Center for Christian Ethics at Baylor University, www.baylor.edu/christianethics/index.php?id=15338)

ADDITIONAL HELPS

▪ QUOTES ▪

We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Our life on earth is, and ought to be, material and carnal. But we have not yet learned to manage our materialism and carnality properly; they are still entangled with the desire for ownership.

Edward M. Forster

For greed, all nature is too little.

Seneca

It is the bread of the hungry you are hoarding, the clothes of the naked that hang in your wardrobe, the shoes of those who go barefoot that fall to pieces in your house, the money of the poor that you possess and do not use. You commit as many injustices as there are things you could give away.

St. Basil the Great

Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed.

Mahatma Gandhi

The gap in our economy is between what we have and what we think we ought to have - and that is a moral problem, not an economic one.

Paul Heyne

▪ PERSONAL VIGNETTE ▪

THE DANGERS OF "STUFF"

BY SANDY IRVING, NC COUNCIL OF CHURCHES EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEMBER OF WESTERN BOULEVARD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RALEIGH

I have so much stuff – stuff that consumes me, consumes my time, and consumes my energy! As I've struggled in my faith journey with what to buy, how much to pay for it, and where to store it, I've come to realize that "stuff" may not be a gift to enjoy but an obsession that begins to become all-consuming. The day becomes ordered around time to clean, store, maintain, update, paint, repair, and on and on. Once I buy a new computer (which I find extremely useful), I begin to wonder if I need a Blackberry, a new desk, or a new monitor. Then, I find myself frustrated with all the bells and whistles on the new cell phone and the new computer that I don't understand or know how to use. More of my time is needed to complete the fulfillment of the "purchase". There is no end in sight!

As a young adult I once went to a midnight madness sale to buy "two for the price of one" and came home with two skirts. Suddenly, I realized I didn't even have room for one in my closet, and I wondered why I wasted my time buying something (actually two somethings!) I didn't need and had no place to store. As a parent, I've found toys or games I bought my children stored in closets with the wrapping still unbroken years later. Why did I buy them in the first place? We live in a consumer culture and are faced daily with hundreds of ads for things we cannot live without. Our consumerism can begin to become a god. We may find ourselves spending not just our money, but also scheduling our time around sales events that have convinced us of items that must be purchased.

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(continued from prior page) I ask myself if I have bought in to a God of Scarcity (promoted by all the ads in our media and print) and a God of Must Have, rather than the God of Abundant Life, the One who offers good gifts with no strings attached. I must put aside the messages of mass media and invest more time with the poor and the oppressed, with Biblical reflection and faith-filled people, in order to reorient my thinking and maintain my pursuit of justice and faithful living. My goals have changed. I will turn off the TV, cancel the worldly magazines, refuse to look at so many ads, and stop going to the mall unless I have a “real” need. I am trying to focus less on the missing merchandise in my life, and reorient myself toward Godly pursuits. It’s not always easy, but it is making a difference. I find myself much more thankful for the abundance with which I have been blessed.

▪ CONTACTS AND OTHER RESOURCES ▪

- ✦ www.sabbatheconomics.org - *The Sabbath Economics Collaborative* is a new national collaborative network that seeks to facilitate cooperation among faith-based people and organizations committed to economic justice, and to serve as a resource to congregations and movements involved in the struggle for sustainable economics and poverty reduction.
- ✦ www.newmonasticism.com – *New Monasticism* is an emerging nationwide movement to reclaim the Church’s historic emphases on community life and the pursuit of justice. Central in this paradigm is the renunciation of our society’s rampant materialism and greed. Sustainability, generous sharing and open hospitality are the core values espoused by New Monasticism.
- ✦ www.newdream.org - *The Center for a New American Dream* is a membership-based nonprofit organization to help Americans consume responsibly to protect the environment, enhance quality of life, and promote social justice.
- ✦ www.schumachersociety.org - *The E. F. Schumacher Society*, named after the author of “Small Is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered” is an educational non-profit organization founded in 1980. Their programs demonstrate that both social and environmental sustainability can be achieved by applying the values of human-scale communities and respect for the natural environment to economic issues. Building on the rich tradition of decentralism, the Society initiates practical measures that lead to community revitalization and a transition toward an economically and ecologically sustainable society.
- ✦ www.simpleliving.net – *The Simple Living Network* brings together numerous study guides and tools for evaluating and implementing a more simple lifestyle, one that rejects society’s destructive forms of materialism. Of particular note are their resources “The Web of Simplicity” and “Your Money Or Your Life.”
- ✦ www.pcusa.org/enough – *Enough for Everyone* is a series of partnerships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other local and international organizations designed to engage Christians on four main topics: fair trade, sweatshops, debt and credit, and energy efficiency. Their resources offer practical ways for churches to help disentangle themselves from the grasp of overconsumption and materialism.
- ✦ www.coopamerica.org – *Co-op America* is a non-profit membership organization whose mission is to harness economic power – the strength of consumers, investors, businesses, and the marketplace – to create a socially just and environmentally sustainable society. They provide numerous publications and action alerts, as well as detailed reports about environmental and social abuses carried out by large, multinational corporations.
- ✦ www.yesmagazine.org – *Yes! Magazine* is a quarterly publication of the Positive Futures Network, a non-profit organization committed to sustainable living in a more just, compassionate society. Their numerous articles provide informative and educational material in addition to outlets for taking action on the issues surrounding overconsumption and materialism.
- ✦ www.ministryofmoney.org - *Ministry of Money* helps people deepen their faith and explore their relationship to money from biblical, psychological, and sociological perspectives. The national organization publishes a newsletter, offers weekend retreats, and leads trips to developing nations

The Freedom of Simplicity: A Christian Response to Consumerism by Richard Foster¹

Contemporary culture is plagued by the passion to possess. The unreasoned boast abounds that the good life is found in accumulation, that “more is better.” Indeed, we often accept this notion without question, with the result that the lust for affluence in contemporary society has become psychotic: it has completely lost touch with reality. Furthermore, the pace of the modern world accentuates our sense of being fractured and fragmented. We feel strained, hurried, breathless...

Christian simplicity frees us from this modern mania. It brings sanity to our compulsive extravagance, and peace to our frantic spirit.... It allows us to see material things for what they are – goods to enhance life, not to oppress life. People once again become more important than possessions. Simplicity enables us to live lives of integrity in the face of the terrible reality of our global village.

Christian simplicity is not just a faddish attempt to respond to the ecological holocaust that threatens to engulf us, nor is it born out of frustration with

technocratic obesity. It is a call given to every Christian. The witness to simplicity is profoundly rooted in the biblical tradition, and most perfectly exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ. In one form or another, all the devotional masters have stressed its essential nature. It is a natural and necessary outflow of the Good News of the Gospel having taken root in our lives.

While it is important to stress that Christian simplicity is more than a reaction to the modern crisis, it should also be underscored that simplicity is keenly relevant to the massive problems of our world. We are witnessing poverty and starvation on a scale unprecedented in human history. By the time we fall asleep tonight another ten thousand individuals will have died of starvation – over four hundred per hour. Many more millions live on the brink of extinction – malnourished, aimless, desperate....

Simplicity is both a grace and a discipline.... What we do does not give us simplicity, but it does put us in the place where we can receive it.

KEY FACTS

- ❑ Wealth is distributed unevenly among North Carolina’s citizens. North Carolina has a large and growing gap between the state’s wealthiest 20 percent of families and the poorest 20 percent. In the early 2000s, the richest 20 percent of families had an average income (\$110,180) that was 7.4 times greater than the average income of the poorest 20 percent of families (\$14,884). This is up from a ratio of 5.3 in the early 1980s. North Carolina’s gap between richest and poorest is the 10th worst in the nation.²
- ❑ In North Carolina, almost 9,000 households go without heat in the winter; and more than 13,000 homes still lack indoor plumbing.³
- ❑ Almost 1.5 million North Carolinians lack any kind of health insurance—about one sixth of the population. Of these, more than 75 percent either work full-time or live in households with a full-time worker.⁴
- ❑ According to the 2006 United Nations’ “Human Development Report,” almost 2 million children die every year “for want of a glass of clean water and adequate sanitation.” Globally, 1.2 billion people lack access to safe water and 2.6 billion lack access to adequate sanitation.⁵
- ❑ For an additional \$13 billion each year, basic nutrition and health care needs could be met around the world. Each year, Americans and Europeans spend \$17 billion on pet food.⁶

1. Richard J. Foster, *Freedom of Simplicity*, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1981).

2. North Carolina Justice Center, “The Rich and the Rest: Income Inequality Accelerates in NC,” www.ncjustice.org/headlines/details.php?id=614.

3. North Carolina Housing Coalition, “Housing Facts and Statistics in NC,” www.nchousing.org/research_publications/facts_stats/index.html.

4. North Carolina Institute of Medicine, “Covering the Uninsured,” www.nciom.org/projects/uninsured/overview.pdf.

5. United Nations Development Programme, “Human Development Report 2006,” <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006>.

6. JustGive, “Hunger & Poverty,” www.justgive.org/guide/subcategories.jsp?catId=14.