

1                    **Statement of the John Knox Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (USA)**  
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3     As Christians, we are well aware that difficult economic times call for hard choices on the part of  
4     our elected representatives. The State of Wisconsin, like many states, is facing significant  
5     financial challenges and difficult decisions in balancing its budget. The decision to reduce or  
6     eliminate the state’s projected budget deficit, however, does not nullify the moral obligation of  
7     the elected leaders of Wisconsin to respect the legitimate rights of workers, including public  
8     employees, to organize and collectively bargain.  
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10    The 207<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1995) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) adopted as policy the  
11    paper “God’s Work in our Hands: Employment, Community and Christian Vocation.” It affirms  
12    a longstanding Presbyterian principle that vocation is a lifelong response to God in all aspects of  
13    one’s life, and that work is an integral part of our response to God’s call. Therefore, all aspects  
14    of the workplace, including wages, benefits, working conditions, and labor-management  
15    relationships, are of concern to God and thus of concern to the church.  
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17    The 1995 General Assembly statement specifically provides:

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19    *Justice demands that social institutions guarantee all persons the opportunity to participate*  
20    *actively in economic decision making that affects them. All workers...have the right to choose to*  
21    *organize for the purposes of collective bargaining.*  
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23    Therefore, The Presbytery of John Knox, meeting on February 19, 2011 in Muscoda, Wisconsin,  
24    calls upon Governor Scott Walker and Wisconsin’s other elected representatives to enter into  
25    good-faith negotiations with Wisconsin’s public employee unions to deal with Wisconsin’s  
26    current budget issues and to respect the rights of all workers to collectively bargain for wages  
27    and benefits.  
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29    We encourage peaceful dialog and discussion to reach consensus for the benefit of all the people  
30    of Wisconsin. Further, we call upon Presbyterians to continue to monitor the state budget  
31    process in Madison and to join with other Christians of good will in advocating and praying for a  
32    just resolution to Wisconsin’s current budget issues.  
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