

Poverty – More than Numbers

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Eastminster Presbyterian
Faith Formation
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Agenda

- Welcome
- Poverty defined
- Self sufficiency standards
- Funds of knowledge
- Personal Experiences
- 3 Levels of addressing poverty
- 5 Words
- Wrap up

Definitions of Poverty



“Having insufficient resources to meet what are typically seen as basic need in that place and time whether those needs stem from our animal (physical) natures or not.”

by Charles Karelis*

Non-physiological needs might include: needs for standing, respect, and social inclusion.

**The Persistence of Poverty: Why the Economics of the Well-Off Can't Help the Poor, Yale University Press, New haven and London, 2007*

The official measure uses three times the cost of a minimum food diet in 1963 in today's prices.

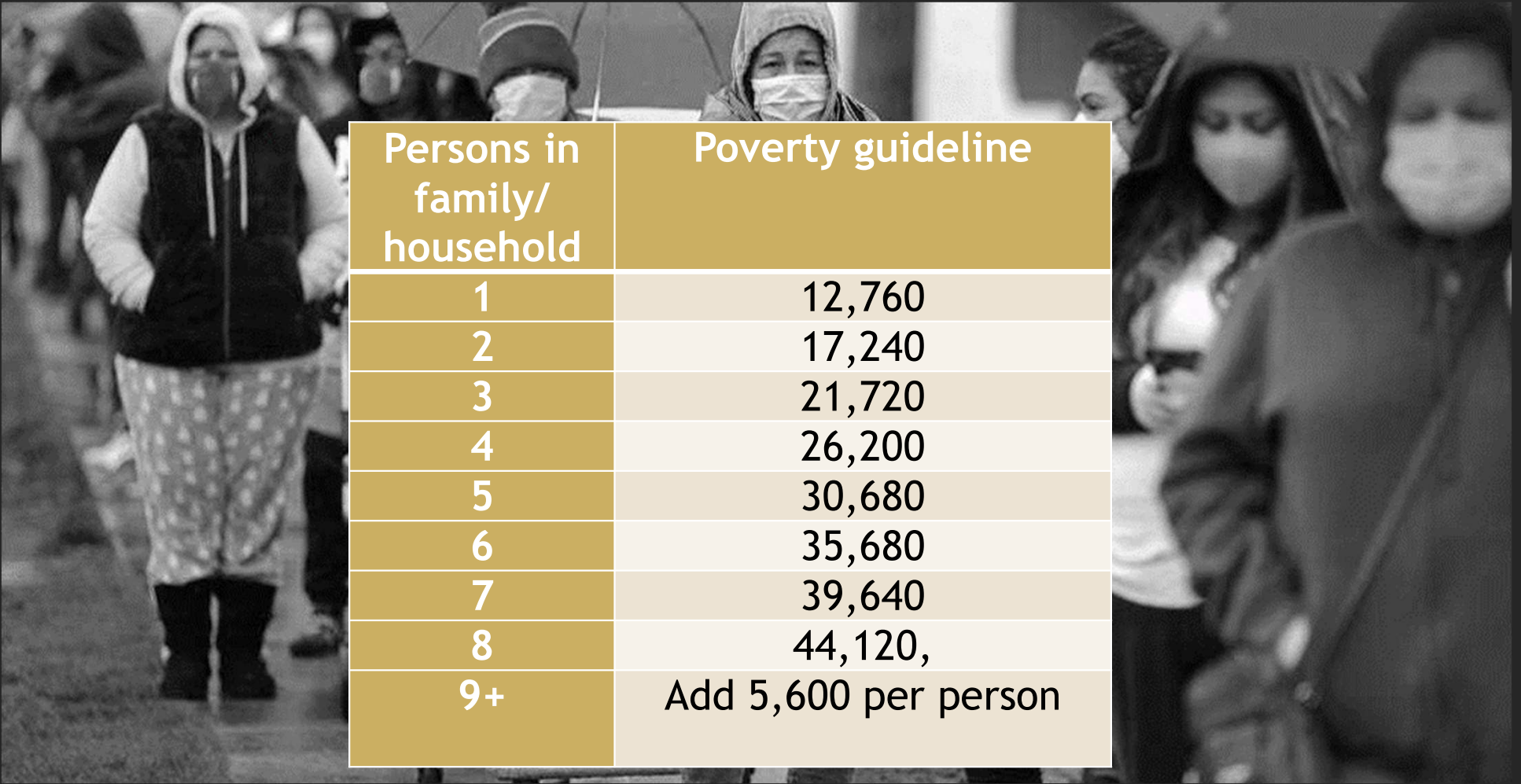


The SPM uses information about what people spend today for basic needs—food, clothing, shelter, and utilities.



How is Poverty measured?

- Determine the amount of money needed to buy the lowest-cost nutritionally adequate diet identified by the United States Department of Agriculture and multiply by 3 and then account for the number of people in the household.
- Estimate the amount of money needed to provide basic housing, clothing, food, and utilities adjusted by the consumer price index, and account for the number in the family.



| Persons in family/ household | Poverty guideline |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 12,760 |
| 2 | 17,240 |
| 3 | 21,720 |
| 4 | 26,200 |
| 5 | 30,680 |
| 6 | 35,680 |
| 7 | 39,640 |
| 8 | 44,120, |
| 9+ | Add 5,600 per person |

Poverty is...

- having no assurance that tomorrow will be even as good as today.
- wondering who will be your friend today.
- believing that hard work is hardly worth the piddling money earned.
- using other people's clothes, furniture, towels, and shampoo because you don't have any of your own.
- having few dreams.
- being invisible...until "they" need someone to blame.
- feeling frightened deep inside...all the time.



Poverty is...



- being hungry...at least one or two days a month.
- walking everywhere...for miles sometimes.
- knowing that the doctor you see today will not be the same doctor you see next week.
- laughing...and crying...when neither makes sense.
- being consumed with the daily grind rather than the national scene.
- not having toilet paper...or even a functioning toilet.
- having no bookcase because you have few, if any books.
- anger and frustration and anxiety and hopelessness and resignation.

Funds of Knowledge



Personal Experiences

What Experiences Have You Had?

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We may take for granted the experiences we've had that have allowed us to become the people we are and enjoy the lives we do.

Put a check mark in every box where you've had experience, no matter how long ago it may have been.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Lost your car keys | Played around on the computer | Had your grammar corrected by your parent or grandparent | Opened a checking account |
| Purchased a home | Gotten a high school diploma or GED | Received a scholarship | Been encouraged to pursue a specific career |
| Played organized sports | Had your own room | Not missed a day during a school year | Eaten a lobster |
| Been helped with homework by a family member | Been on a swim team | Gone to summer camp away from home | Had more shoes than you had room in your closet |
| Your mother had her high school diploma or GED | One of more of your <u>parents</u> <u>had</u> some post high school education or certification | Been told you are special | Had a family friend or acquaintance give you a job or a recommendation |
| Received an allowance not tied to chores | Gone to a football game at a <u>university</u> <u>or</u> <u>college</u> | Visited the same doctor for at least two years | Enjoyed a park or green space near your home |
| Taken music or art lessons | Eaten at a restaurant with cloth <u>table cloths</u> | Written a thank you note | Learned table manners |
| Had parental help with a special school event | Participated in extracurricular activities | Volunteered in a program that served poor people | Had a party for your birthday |
| Attended live theater | Had your own library card | Had money left at the end of the month | Never been told you were stupid or a failure |
| Been able to get medications that you needed | Had clothes appropriate for any occasion | Traveled beyond the state in which you were born | Flown in an airplane |
| Enjoyed support for | Never been spanked | Gotten the exact | Been the teacher's pet |

Personal Experiences

Checking Assumptions

Worksheet Adult version

How Prepared Are You?

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We often suppose that we deeply understand what someone who is living in poverty is going through. Please place a check in the box where you have experience.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Spent the night in the home of someone who had significantly less money than you. | Eaten the last two cans of food in your pantry. | Lived without electricity for more than 48 hours. | Moved at least three times in one year. |
| Been without transportation to get to an appointment. | Taken a ride on a public bus. | Had only one coat. | Seen someone die. |
| Seen a different doctor every time you need medical care. | Not seen a dentist for at least three years. | Used a check cashing business. | Walked everywhere you needed to go for a week. |
| Lived with only five books in the house. | Had all your possessions thrown out on the side of the road. | Been the only person of your race in a meeting. | Worked three jobs at the same time. |
| Asked your child to be the primary cook for at least a month. | Received financial help from your church. | Had a family member with a serious life-threatening disease. | Had a car that was at least nine years old. |
| Lived with at least three generations in the same house. | Shared a bedroom with more than one person. | Had only one bathroom in your house. | Never been more than 10 miles out of town. |
| Washed your family's clothes in a public laundromat for at least six months. | Been without food for at least 36 hours. | Known someone who doesn't speak English. | Known someone who was not born in the USA. |

3 Levels of Addressing Poverty



5 Words

Dependency

Apathy

Disease

Dishonesty

Ignorance

Wrap Up

Poverty -
More than Numbers

Beth Templeton

Beth Lindsay Templeton is among other things a writer, poverty advocate, workshop/retreat/small group leader, Presbyterian USA minister, daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, friend, neighbor, reader, rearranger of home décor, and porch sitter. She is the author of eleven books and lives in Greenville, SC.

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