

Called to Honor the Dignity of Labor



In the wake of the tragic accident that took the lives of 12 coal miners at the non-union Sago Mine in West Virginia, it is important that we pay attention to the conditions under which mine workers labor in an increasingly non-union coal industry.

John Bennett, son of one of the miners killed in the accident, said on NBC's Today Show shortly after the disaster, *"We have no protection for our workers. We need to get the United Mine Workers back in these coal mines to protect [against] these safety violations, to protect the workers."*

- o Peabody's 8,300 employees mined 215 million tons of coal last year. The company's total revenue in 2005 was \$4.6 billion, making it the world's largest private sector coal company (Source: Peabody Energy, www.peabodyenergy.com).
- o Coal miners in Peabody's non-union mines in Kentucky, Illinois, West Virginia and Indiana are currently struggling for the freedom to choose whether to be unionized by asking Peabody to remain neutral and not use pressure tactics, such as mandatory meetings on unionization, threats to close mines or any other form of interference or intimidation.
- o Over 23,000 workers each year are illegally fired or penalized for union activity. Employers spend more than \$300 million per year to prevent workers from forming unions to improve wages, benefits and working conditions. (Source: Dr. Craig Mehta and Dr. Nik Theodore, University of Illinois at Chicago and Dr. Kate Bronfenbrenner, Cornell University,)

Attend the Workers' Rights Board Hearing
Sunday, September 17, 2006
4:00PM – 6:00PM
Zion United Church of Christ
437 First Street
Hendersonville, KY

Called to Act

"They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the Lord, they and their descendants with them." **Isaiah 65:21-23**

God calls us to look not only to our own interests, but to those of others and to love, not in word or speech, but genuinely and in action.

What can people of faith do?

- 1) Pray for the coal miners and their families. Pray for employers and elected leaders who make decisions that affect the workers in the coal industry.
- 2) Tell someone about the struggles of the coal miners and how the freedom to organize should be protected for all workers.
- 3) Organize a union where you work. Labor unions are organizing to address injustices facing workers in all professions.

www.JusticeatPeabody.org

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