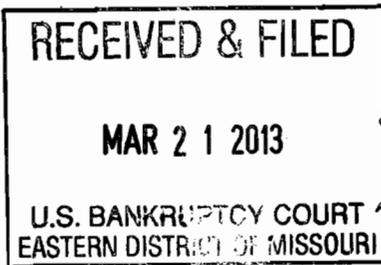


3-20-13

Your Honor,

Please find enclosed an article written by one of our local clergy concerning the Patriot Coal Co. bankruptcy case filed in your court.



Respectfully  
Raymond E. Montgomery  
Member Local 1148  
District 12 UMW

# From the Pulpit

**By Rev. Donna Blythe  
Sunfield United  
Methodist Church**

I grew up with an understanding that God values our labor. I grew up with the understanding that God cares about working people and understands well the demands on our lives to provide for our families. I grew up understanding that there were times when workers had to stand together to receive fair wages, safe working conditions and health care benefits. Growing up in a small Southern Illinois community, I saw my neighbors and faith community rally around workers who were out on strike and in need of help to feed their families during those times. I have watched others picket and I definitely grew up with the understanding that you don't cross a picket line or undermine the efforts of those seeking to improve their lives through collective bargaining. And I have been a co-owner of a union print shop and understood my responsibility to care for the needs of employees.

Peabody Coal's spin-off of Patriot Coal jeopardizes retiree pensions and health care via Patriot's bankruptcy action. Actions taken by Arch Coal to shed itself of its promised health and retirement benefits through corporate schemes will also hurt coal retirees' pensions and health care. Imposing the Peabody and Arch legacy costs onto Patriot Coal, all under the direction of former Peabody executives implicates all three corporations in these acts of injustice.

This is an injustice that requires the community to stand with those persons at risk of great loss. 22,000 are potentially impacted nationwide and thousands in our area are a portion of that number. The impact upon Southern Illinois will

sorrow awaits the unjust judges and those who issue unfair laws. They deprive the poor of justice and deny the rights of the needy among my people. They prey on widows and take advantage of orphans."

As a United Methodist clergyperson, I support fully the statements of our denomination taken from our Book of Discipline and Book of Resolutions. "Corporations are responsible not only to their stockholders, but also to other stakeholders: their workers, suppliers, vendors, customers, the communities in which they do business, and for the earth, which supports them. We support the public's right to know what impact corporations have in these various arenas, so that people can make informed choices about which corporations to support." And "Legislative and judicial mechanisms, including a strong, just criminal justice system, must deal with graft and corruption at every level of society."

The 2008 Book of Resolutions states under the resolution for The Rights of Workers, "The concern of the United Methodist Church for the dignity of workers and the rights of employee's to act collectively is stated in the Social Principles. Both employer and union are called to 'bargain in good faith within the framework of the public interest...'" Historically, The United Methodist Church has been concerned about the plight of working men and women in the United States, we were among the first supporters of the labor movement where both lay and clergy members played leadership roles in supporting garment workers, textile workers, farm workers and factory workers and advocating passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the National Labor Relations Act. From our beginnings and



**Rev. Donna Blythe**

facing and bracing for the possible loss of contractually agreed upon promised pensions and health care benefits.

These folks are your neighbors, your family members and friends. Let them know you are standing with them and standing for justice. Join the "Fairness at Patriot" movement. "Like" them on Facebook, sign the petition at [fairnessatpatriot.org](http://fairnessatpatriot.org), follow their live event blog, be sure to view the videos on their Youtube channel or even come out to the next rally and march.

It has been a few decades since I have found myself in a protest march but I plan to gather with retirees and surviving spouses to march at Kiener Plaza in St. Louis, Tuesday, March 19 at 10:00 a.m. I plan to stand with members of my congregation and others from our local communities. May we all strive to answer God's call through the prophet Micah, "The Lord God has told us what is right and what he demands: 'See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God.'"

*Rev. Donna Blythe is from Sunfield United Methodist Church. They are located at 7785 School St., Du*

help to feed their families during those times. I have watched others picket and I definitely grew up with the understanding that you don't cross a picket line or undermine the efforts of those seeking to improve their lives through collective bargaining. And I have been a co-owner of a union print shop and understood my responsibility to care for the needs of employees.

Peabody Coal's spin-off of Patriot Coal jeopardizes retiree pensions and health care via Patriot's bankruptcy action. Actions taken by Arch Coal to shed itself of its promised health and retirement benefits through corporate schemes will also hurt coal retirees' pensions and health care. Imposing the Peabody and Arch legacy costs onto Patriot Coal, all under the direction of former Peabody executives implicates all three corporations in these acts of injustice.

This is an injustice that requires the community to stand with those persons at risk of great loss. 22,000 are potentially impacted nationwide and thousands in our area are a portion of that number. The impact upon Southern Illinois will be devastating if the miners' battle in court is lost.

I am hopeful those hearing this case in St. Louis might be wise and fair judges and I am hopeful that they heed the words God spoke to Israel in Isaiah 10:1-2, "What

right to know what impact corporations have in these various areas, so that people can make informed choices about which corporations to support." And "Legislative and judicial mechanisms, including a strong, just criminal justice system, must deal with graft and corruption at every level of society."

The 2008 Book of Resolutions states under the resolution for The Rights of Workers, "The concern of the United Methodist Church for the dignity of workers and the rights of employee's to act collectively is stated in the Social Principles. Both employer and union are called to 'bargain in good faith within the framework of the public interest...' Historically, The United Methodist Church has been concerned about the plight of working men and women in the United States, we were among the first supporters of the labor movement where both lay and clergy members played leadership roles in supporting garment workers, textile workers, farm workers and factory workers and advocating passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the National Labor Relations Act. From our beginnings and across the globe, we have led the way in seeking improved conditions and stronger unions for workers."

I know the gains that have been made by workers historically. I know personally retirees and widows that are

agreed upon promised pensions and health care benefits.

These folks are your neighbors, your family members and friends. Let them know you are standing with them and standing for justice. Join the "Fairness at Patriot" movement. "Like" them on Facebook, sign the petition at fairnessatpatriot.org, follow their live event blog, be sure to view the videos on their Youtube channel or even come out to the next rally and march.

It has been a few decades since I have found myself in a protest march but I plan to gather with retirees and surviving spouses to march at Kiener Plaza in St. Louis, Tuesday, March 19 at 10:00 a.m. I plan to stand with members of my congregation and others from our local communities. May we all strive to answer God's call through the prophet Micah, "The Lord God has told us what is right and what he demands: 'See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God.'"

*Rev. Donna Blythe is from Sunfield United Methodist Church. They are located at 7785 School St., Du Quoin, IL 62932. They can be contacted by phone at 618-542-6726. Their service times are: Sunday School 9:15 a.m.; Sunday Worship at 10:30 a.m.; Sunday evening worship at 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday Bible Study at 6:30 p.m.*

The views expressed in this column are solely those of the writer. The Perry County ADvantage may or may not share the views above.

**Questions or Comments about the column featured in this week's ADvantage? Email your letter to the preacher, 'From the Pew' to shea@pinckneyvillepress.com, or bring one by the office at 111 S. Walnut St., Pinckneyville.**

**Would your church like to be involved in the weekly column? Email Shea@Pinckneyvillepress.com today for more information!**

Case 12-51502  
Manigault Farms  
5320 Snapdragon Rd.  
Coulterville, IL 62237

Doc 3369

Filed 03/21/13

Entered 03/22/13 18:42:10

Pg 4 of 5



Equality  
FOREVER

Main Document

The Honorable Kathy A. Surrat-States

Re: Case No 12-51502

Thomas F. Eagleton US  
Courthouse  
111 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
St. Louis, MO

63102

RECEIVED+FILED

2013 MAR 21 AM 10:12

CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI - MR