

## Micah Challenge

- Is a **global** Christian campaign that will raise a prophetic and powerful voice for and with the poor.
- It challenges **US** to deepen our engagement with the poor.
- And challenges political **leaders** to fulfil their public promise to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and so halve absolute global poverty by 2015.

## Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

For more information on the MDGs see [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

## Act

**Sign:** Sign the Micah Call at

[www.micahchallenge.org](http://www.micahchallenge.org)

**Challenge:** Take this back to your churches and networks, and challenge others to sign the Micah Call

**Pray:** Join the international community in praying at 9am local time, each Friday [www.micahchallenge.org/prayer\\_resources/](http://www.micahchallenge.org/prayer_resources/)

## The Micah Call

This is a moment in history of unique potential, when the stated intentions of world leaders echo something of the mind of the Biblical prophets and the teachings of Jesus concerning the poor, and when we have the means to dramatically reduce poverty.

We commit ourselves, as followers of Jesus, to work together for the holistic transformation of our communities, to pursue justice, be passionate about kindness and to walk humbly with God.

We call on international and national decision-makers of both rich and poor nations, to fulfil their public promise to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and so halve absolute global poverty by 2015.

We call on Christians everywhere to be agents of hope for and with the poor, and to work with others to hold our national and global leaders accountable in securing a more just and merciful world.

## Micah Challenge New Zealand

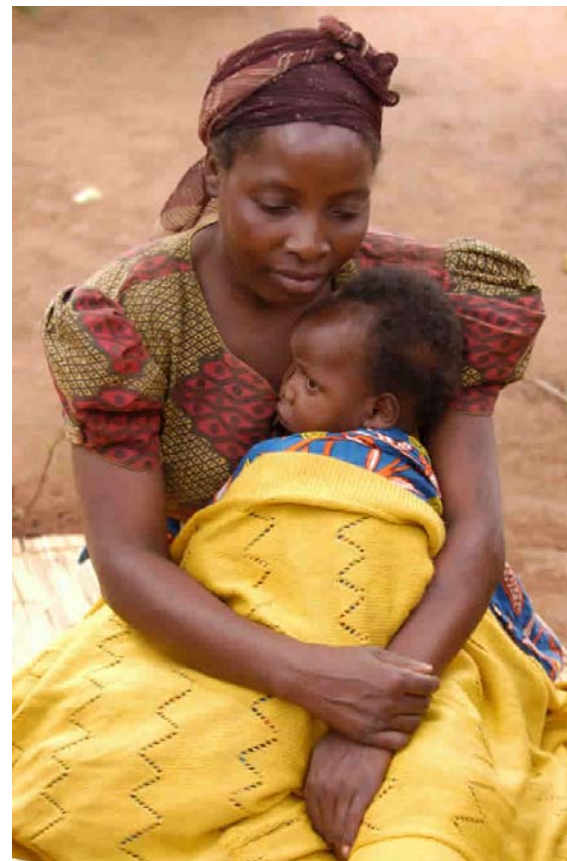
A wide range of Christian leaders and organisations support Micah Challenge.

**Website:** [www.micahchallenge.org.nz](http://www.micahchallenge.org.nz)

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# CHALLENGED by the Prophets



# MICAH challenge

**"Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.'"**

**Deuteronomy. 15:10-11 (NRSV)**

## The call

All humanity was made in the image of the triune God (Genesis 1:27). We, as followers of Christ, are called to care for the needy. As beneficiaries of God's loving providence, grace and mercy, we show our gratitude by loving both God and our neighbours. Jesus taught in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) that neighbour is defined by need, not geography.

Such a commitment extends beyond compassion to embrace the themes of both justice and mercy.

**"But if anyone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need and refuses to help—how can God's love be in that person?**

**Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions."**

**1 John 3:17-18 (NLT)**

## God's heart

A central theme of scripture is God's care for the vulnerable. Through verbs like love, protect, give and nurture, God's heart for the poor is shown. God's people are repeatedly exhorted to reflect a similar care and concern.

**"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"**

**Isaiah 58:6-7 (NIV)**



## Governments

God doesn't just require individuals to care for the poor. God tells governments and political leaders to take a stand against injustice; it

**"For he [the King] will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death."**

**Psalms 72: 12-13 (NIV)**

is one of their most important roles.



Yet the governments of our time are failing to take action on behalf of the poor. In 2000 the General Assembly of the United Nations pledged:

*"We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanising conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected."*

All 191 United Nations member states, including New Zealand, have agreed to this, pledging to keep a set of Millennium Development Goals (see back page).

However, they have not yet actioned it.

**"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."**

**Proverbs 31:8-9 (NIV)**

This is not a campaign of philanthropy or advocacy; it is an **act of justice and mercy.**

## Speak up

Just as Jesus and the Old Testament prophets voiced God's heart for the poor in their nations, we can be that voice to our leaders in our time.

**"...And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."**

**Micah 6:8 (NIV)**