

Interfaith Religious Leaders' Pledge

A wide array of the nation's faith leaders came together on the occasion of Pope Francis' visit to the United States to commit ourselves to encourage our communities to work for the end of hunger by 2030 and, toward that end, for a shift in U.S. national priorities.

We were deeply pleased to welcome Pope Francis to the United States. The pope has repeatedly urged people around the world to address the problems that contribute to the persistence of hunger and poverty. He has called us all to pray and work to end hunger. We were pleased that he summoned our nation to end the hunger in our midst and support global efforts to overcome hunger.

U.S. faith communities are deeply engaged with many sisters and brothers who struggle with hunger and poverty, and we have become increasingly active in urging our nation's elected leaders to do their part – defending low-income people in the national budget debate, for example. Our experience of God's mercy and compassion for all people moves us to engage in God's work of overcoming hunger and human misery, and our sacred traditions include visions of the world transformed.

We are convinced that God has anointed this a special time for action. The world as a whole has been making unprecedented progress against hunger, poverty, and disease, so we know that it is possible to make further progress against – perhaps even end – hunger and extreme poverty.

The nations of the world also gathered at the United Nations to commit themselves to global development goals that focus on ending poverty and hunger by 2030. Around the world and within our own country, we see movements of change and popular organizations organizing to address poverty and injustice. Pope Francis spoke to the United Nations, to a joint session of the U.S. Congress, and to the people of this nation. He has consistently proclaimed the love of God for all people, including people who struggle with hunger and poverty.

We gathered in light of these important events to reflect from our own perspectives on hunger and poverty and to publicly commit ourselves – as leaders from across the religious spectrum – to help end hunger by 2030.

Ending hunger will require action by all sectors of society and by all the nations of the world. Yet a shift in U.S. national priorities seems crucial to ending hunger in our country and internationally. People of goodwill can disagree about policy strategies. But ending hunger by 2030 seems unlikely unless we can achieve a shift in U.S. national priorities by 2017, so that our government helps to put our nation and the world on track toward ending hunger.

This special time in our nation could open many hearts to God and to God's loving purposes for the world. That is why the leaders of many of this nation's diverse faith communities gathered in the nation's capital to make this pledge. We pray that our collective witness will help to make this a turning point in the history of our nation and the world.

We made this pledge together on September 21, 2015.

The following leaders have affirmed their support for the above statement. Organizational affiliations are included for reference only:

Bishop John Bryant

Senior Bishop

African Methodist Episcopal Church

Imam Mohamed Magid

Executive Imam

All Dulles Area Muslim Society

Ambassador Tony Hall

Executive Director Emeritus

Alliance to End Hunger

Bishop Michael Frencher

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Ms. Ruth Messinger

President & CEO

American Jewish World Service

Bishop Denis Madden

Archdiocese of Baltimore

Cardinal Donald Wuerl

Archdiocese of Washington

Dr. Robert Parham

Executive Director

Baptist Center for Ethics

Rev. David Beckmann

President

Bread for the World

Rev. Dr. William J. Shaw

Past President

National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

Msgr. John Enzler

President & CEO

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington

Sister Donna Markham

President & CEO

Catholic Charities USA

Dr. Carolyn Woo

President and CEO

Catholic Relief Services

Rev. Carlos L. Malavé

Executive Director

Christian Churches Together

Bishop Lawrence Reddick

Senior Bishop

Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

Dr. Matthew Myer Boulton

President

Christian Theological Seminary

Mr. Stanley Noffsinger

General Secretary

Church of the Brethren

Mrs. Marilyn Lariviere

National President

Church Women United, Inc.

Mr. John L. McCullough

President & CEO

Church World Service

Mrs. Suzii Paynter

Executive Coordinator

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Dr. Shirley Hoogstra

President

Council for Christian Colleges & Universities

Bishop Richard Pates

Diocese of Des Moines

Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori

Presiding Bishop

Episcopal Church

Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr.

President

Esperanza

Rev. Gary Walter

President

Evangelical Covenant Church

Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Mr. Marv Baldwin

President & CEO

Foods Resource Bank

Dr. Carroll A. Baltimore, Sr.

Global Leader & CEO

Global Alliance Interfaith Networks

Rev. Dr. James Perkins

President

Progressive National Baptist Convention

Dr. Carlos S. Morán

Director

Hispanic Ministries and Editorial Evangélica

Mr. John Carr

Director

Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life

Dr. Stephen Schneck

Director

Institute for Policy Research & Catholic Studies

Mr. Rudy Lopez

Executive Director

Interfaith Worker Justice

Mr. Anwar Khan

CEO

Islamic Relief USA

Mr. Sayyid Syeed

National Director

Islamic Society of North America

Mr. Eric LeCompte

Executive Director

Jubilee USA Network

Ms. Hyepin Im

President & CEO

Korean Churches for Community Development

Dr. David Goatley

Executive Director

Lott Carey Foreign Missionary Convention

Ms. Charlotte Haberaecker

President & CEO

Lutheran Services in America

Mr. Daniel Speckhard

President

Lutheran World Relief

Mr. Gerry Lee

Executive Director

Maryknoll Office of Global Concern

Mr. Josh Protas

Director of Government Affairs

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Dr. Galen Carey

Vice President of Government Relations

National Association of Evangelicals

Fr. Kenneth Taylor

President

National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus

Mr. Jim Winkler

President

National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA

Rev. Dr. Samuel Rodriguez

President

National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference

Rev. Gabriel Salguero

President

National Latino Evangelical Coalition

Sister Simone Campbell

Executive Director

NETWORK

Mr. Doug Seebeck

President & CEO

Partners Worldwide

Ms. Jean Duff

President

Partnership for Faith & Development

Dr. Heath Rada

Moderator

Presbyterian Church USA

Dr. Iva Carruthers

General Secretary

Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference

Rev. Jim Wallis

President

Sojourners

Dr. Charles Steele, Jr.

President & CEO

Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Rev. Gary Walter

President

The Evangelical Covenant Church

Rabbi Steve Gutow
President
The Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Commissioner David Jeffrey
National Commander
The Salvation Army

Mr. Shane Claiborne
Founder
The Simple Way/Red Letter Christians

Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon
General Superintendent
The Wesleyan Church

Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President
United Church of Christ

Bishop Monroe Saunders
Presiding Bishop
United Church of Jesus Christ (Apostolic)

Bishop Warner H. Brown, Jr.
President of the Council of Bishops
United Methodist Church

Dr. Sandra Joireman
Chair
Bread for the World board of directors

Rev. Peter Morales
President
Unitarian Universalist Association

Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky
Executive Director
Women of the ELCA

Mr. John Lyon
President
World Hope International

Mr. Stephan Bauman
President & CEO
World Relief