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
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<td>President</td>
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<td>Dr. Stephen Schneck</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Institute for Policy Research &amp; Catholic Studies</td>
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<td>Director of Government Affairs</td>
<td>MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger</td>
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<td>Rev. Gary Walter</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>The Evangelical Covenant Church</td>
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*President*  
The Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Commissioner David Jeffrey  
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The Simple Way/Red Letter Christians

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Women of the ELCA

Mr. John Lyon  
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World Hope International

Mr. Stephan Bauman  
*President & CEO*  
World Relief