

# A Time of Reflection and Hope for Health Care for All

March 27, 2012

Hosted by:  
Faithful Reform in Health Care  
Washington Interreligious Staff Community Health Care Working Group



Video format of picture above: [For PC computer](#) [For MAC computer](#)

*Reflection while waiting for the call to begin:*

Lord of justice, Lord of life, help us to do what you know is right.

Lord of justice, Lord of life, guide us through the day and night.

To the stranger may we give welcome; to the hungry may we give bread.

To the naked may we give clothing; to the homeless a place to lay their head.

To the wounded may we give healing; the voiceless may we give words.

To the captives may we give freedom; to the tortured a release from all the hurt.

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Lord of justice, Lord of life, guide us through the day and night.

# A Time of Reflection and Hope for Health Care for All

March 27, 2012

Teleconference

12:00 noon

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## Silent Meditation before the call begins

**Greetings and Introductions** [Linda Walling]

**Call to Prayer** [Linda Walling]

**Prayer of the people** [all speakers, led by Sandy Irving]

In the sacred bonds of our common humanity, we give thanks for the life that we share and for our calling to care for each other. We acknowledge that we have failed to care for very member of our human family, and have not ensured that all may receive the health care they need for the life that you intend. We pray for forgiveness for hearts that have been slow to feel another's pain, for hands that have been still when a caring touch was needed, and for voices that have remained silent while millions suffer for lack of health care. And we pray with thanksgiving that transformation is at hand – and that we as a nation are taking steps into a more just health care future. Amen.

## A Litany of Thanksgiving<sup>1</sup>

**Reader #1** [Sameer Siddiqi]: We are the 5 million children in our national community whose lack of health insurance sets up a barrier to good health. We are children in a nation that works to make sure we each have a basic education. We are children in a nation which ignores that we need a similar guarantee for health care.

**Response** [all speakers]: **We give thanks that because of health care reform, children can no longer be denied insurance because of pre-existing conditions and that more children in low-income families will have comprehensive insurance through the extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program. We pray for them, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters.** (Moment of Silence)

**Reader #2** [Jeanne Christensen]: We are the 4 million people in our national community who celebrated a 19th birthday last year. Before health care reform, when we blew out the candles on the cake, we may have marked the loss of our health insurance.

**Response** [all speakers]: **We give thanks that young adults through age 26 may now be covered by their parents' health insurance policies. We pray for them, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters.** (Moment of Silence)

**Reader #3** [Sameer Siddiqi]: We are the 30 million workers between the ages of 18 and 64 who earn less than \$9 an hour. Those of us who work full-time earn \$18,800 a year. Many of us are the store clerks, mechanics, dry cleaners, and restaurant workers you meet. Our nation relies

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from "Readings from the Uninsured" in "Vision and Voice: Faithful Citizens and Health Care," Session 1, accessed at <[www.visionandvoice.org](http://www.visionandvoice.org)> Permission granted for printing with this citation.

on our work to keep American humming along. We typically have no health insurance. We make too much to get health care from public health programs. We often end up in emergency rooms for care because we have no other place to go.

**Response [all speakers]: We give thanks that the Medicaid expansions in the Affordable Care Act will provide access to affordable health care for working families whose employers do not provide insurance or whose low wages have made purchasing affordable insurance impossible. We pray for them, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters. (Moment of Silence)**

**Reader #4 [Jeanne Christensen]:** We are the millions of men and women in our national community who—for a variety of reasons: downsizing, outsourcing, restructuring—remain uninsured because we no longer have a job. Added to the stress of finding a new job, we also have to figure out how to continue to provide health care for our families. If we are fortunate to have health insurance, we are faced with paying more at a time when we are trying to make do with less.

**Response [all speakers]: We give thanks that, when the new marketplaces in the Affordable Care Act are established, persons will no longer be dependent upon the status of their employment for affordable health insurance. We pray for them, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters. (Moment of Silence)**

**Reader #5 [Sameer Siddiqi]:** We are the owners of small businesses, work places with less than 100 workers. We employ 38 million people in communities across the country. We support the local little league team and sponsor civic events. Because of the high cost, we often have been unable to provide the protection of health insurance for our employees.

**Response [all speakers]: We give thanks that because of health care reform, many small businesses are now able to provide health insurance for their workers. We pray for them, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters. (Moment of Silence)**

**Reader #6:** We are the six of every 10 people in the United States who are lucky enough to have jobs that offer health insurance for our families. And yet, each year, we find that we are paying more. Deductibles and co-payments keep going up. More and more things are not covered by our insurance, which means we have to pay for them. As a result, many of us—people who own homes, who had full-time employment and insurance before getting ill—will declare bankruptcy because of our medical bills.

**Response [all speakers]: We give thanks that, because of the Affordable Care Act, all of us with health insurance will be protected from coverage limits and cancelled policies that compromise financial well-being. We pray for them, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters. (Moment of Silence)**

**Reader #7 [Sameer Siddiqi]:** We are the uncounted millions for whom preventive health care and a healthy lifestyle are a struggle. We live in the inner city where fresh fruit and vegetables are not available in our markets. We live in rural communities with no doctors. The color of our skin or our gender disproportionately impacts the diagnosis and treatment of a medical condition.

**Response [all speakers]: We give thanks that, because of health care reform, greater attention will be given to public health and prevention, and to the disparities that impede access to high quality care. We pray for them, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters." (Moment of Silence)**

## **Reflections from the Supreme Court Prayerful Witness** [Several speakers]

### **Prayer of Discernment** [all speakers – led by Barbara Baylor]

Oh God, you have called us from east and west and north and south. We gather together on this day to lift up our concerns about health care. We gather to lift up a society where each person is afforded health, wellness and human dignity. Today, we specifically come together to pray for the Supreme Court that they may reason together about the concerns before them regarding the Affordable Care Act. Grant that their hearts be open to the leading of your Spirit. Give them ears to hear the deeply felt yearnings of everyone in our beloved country. Invoke in them compassionate spirits to love their neighbors as themselves and to value their neighbor's health as their own. Create in them a concern for the most vulnerable in our communities. Let them be faithful in their deliberations. Let them speak truth in love. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

### **Response of the people** [all speakers, led by Cynthia Abrams]

In hope let us continue our journey toward transforming a broken health care system; to challenge our elected leaders with the moral call for compassionate for all who are ill, urging them to stand up with courage to fight the dangers of the status quo; to transcend the sins of greed and of profits earned at the cost of denying needed care; and to create a health care future that includes everyone and works well for all of us. Amen.

### **Conclusion** [Linda Walling]

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted by Barbara Baylor from Prayer of Discernment, General Synod United Church of Christ