



ACTION ALERT

DREAMS FOR AMERICA

The votes have been counted, and women cast ballots in record numbers. The historic victory of President-elect Barack Obama now challenges us to express more concretely our vision for change in America, and our hope for new values to guide our global actions.

What are your DREAMS for America? What are the values you hope are at the forefront of the decisions made by the President-elect and his team, as they craft the nation's policy agenda?

Our country's economy is in serious trouble and millions are suffering from the financial meltdown. Across the country those who thought they would never need food assistance are seeking help at food pantries. The largest and oldest food bank in Indiana reported a 25% percent increase in calls to its helpline between 2006 and 2007

While a stimulus package that will create jobs for average Americans is talked about, the banks and other financial institutions get a bail out.

“The recession has forced more struggling families onto the Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP) which provides an average \$1 per person per meal. And, at the same time the cost of eggs increased 24% between fiscal year 2007 and 2008 and bread 13.5%.

Unemployment skyrocketed to 6.5% in October and since the beginning of the year the country lost 1.2 million jobs.

While waiting for help the most vulnerable will bear the pain of cuts in access to health care, education and other public services.

According to a report last week from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 41 states in the country are facing or have already faced budget shortfalls this year. California's budget shortfall is estimated to grow to \$28 billion over the next 18 months. And, Wisconsin lawmakers now find themselves in a \$5 billion budget hole, with some 24,000 jobs lost in the state over the last year. Governors and State Legislators are calling on the Federal government for aid.

While our economy is under stress will our policymakers find ways to draw on our untapped human potential to develop the just technological solutions we need?

The League of Women Voters has noted “we are already feeling the impacts of global warming across our nation and the world -- intensifying hurricanes and floods in some areas, increasingly severe heat waves and droughts in others, disappearing glaciers and more wildfires.” Studies have shown that natural disasters shorten women's life expectancy significantly more than men's as well as contribute to reproductive and maternal health problems. 1997 Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams has said, “If you don't deal with development and climate, you will have an increasingly insecure world,” Williams said. “But if you're going to deal with it, you need to deal with it in terms of climate justice.”



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At this crucial time in American history, let us recall the words of poet Langston Hughes from “Let America be America Again.” “I’m the one...who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true, that even yet its mighty daring sings...” What do you dare to dream for America?



Challenging times offer opportunities for big visions and bold action!

Take Action to share your DREAM for women and families, for climate change and the environment, for healthcare and the economy, for education and racial justice. Tell the President-elect your vision for America.

Before **January 20th**, send an email message describing your vision for America to umwanet@gbgm-umc.org. Insert DREAMS on the subject line.

We will make sure to get your message to the President-elect. Let him know you are a United Methodist Woman!

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