

# A Call to Care

## FOR OUR NATION'S UNINSURED PEOPLE

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People of faith are invited to join thousands of Americans across the country in

**Cover the Uninsured Week**  
**May 10 - 16, 2004**

*Cover the Uninsured Week* is the nation's largest coordinated effort to promote the goal of affordable health coverage for all Americans. Led by some of the most influential organizations in the United States, including 19 national partners and more than 800 national and local organizations, this weeklong series of national and local activities is part of a year-round, nonpartisan effort to make it a national priority to find solutions for the nearly 44 million Americans who have no health care coverage.

Before and during the *Week* thousands of activities will take place in communities across the country to make more Americans aware of this critical issue, how this issue affects every American, not just those who are uninsured, and about various approaches to solving the problem. The *Week*, which includes activities such as health and enrollment fairs, interfaith activities, health coverage seminars for small businesses, press conferences and campus activities, is a focal point within an ongoing, year-round effort to solve this problem.

*Cover the Uninsured Week* interfaith outreach is guided by a National Interfaith Advisory Board that includes Roman Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders with divergent theological and social convictions but with a common concern for the needs of those without health care coverage.

### Why are we called to care?

- Because nearly 44 million Americans, eight out of 10 of whom are in working families, have no health care coverage
- Because people without health care coverage live sicker and die younger than those who are covered
- Because it is estimated that 18,000 adults in America die each year because they are uninsured
- Because 8.5 million children have no health care coverage
- Because rising health care costs continue to undermine the ability of individuals and small businesses to purchase health care coverage

We are called to care because each of our great religious traditions holds up the value of human life, calls upon us to assist those in need, and encourages justice and compassion. We can't afford to remain silent when millions of Americans can't afford health care coverage.

## How can you participate in *Cover the Uninsured Week*?

Learn more about the Week. Log on to [www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org](http://www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org) for an up-to-date listing of local activities, to read the campaign's *Health Care Coverage in America: Understanding the Issues and Proposed Solutions* to find questions to help you assess proposed solutions and to sign up for e-mail updates including the latest news on the Week and on the issue.

Plan special prayers, sermons and activities for your place of worship before and during *Cover the Uninsured Week*. Order or download the Interfaith Action Kit at [www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org](http://www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org). The Kit includes Christian, Jewish, and Muslim prayers, readings, and resources for sermons and other addresses. It also contains reproducible bulletin inserts and fliers, and action steps to engage your faith community.

Encourage volunteerism at activities during *Cover the Uninsured Week*. Ask your members to plan faith activities and participate in local *Cover the Uninsured Week* activities such as health and enrollment fairs.

Share the Call to Care. Download a copy of the Call to Care statement issued by the *Cover the Uninsured Week* National Interfaith Advisory Board. Use the Call to Care for a responsive reading or to raise awareness and gain support for people who are uninsured. The Call to Care may also be used in a newsletter or bulletin, or posted in your buildings.

Reflect on your faith's teachings. Visit [www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org](http://www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org) to order or download the study materials that are available in Christian, Jewish, and Muslim versions to engage your place of worship in learning more about the needs of uninsured Americans and reflecting on your faith tradition's teachings on how we are to respond.

## Questions?

Contact:

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### NATIONAL INTERFAITH ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Rev. Eileen W. Lindner, National Council of Churches  
Chairperson, National Interfaith Advisory Board
- Bishop Cecil Bishop, Senior Bishop, AMEZ/Baptist
- Lt. Col. Paul Bollwahn, ACSW, CSWM, Salvation Army, National Social Services Secretary
- Rabbi Marla J. Feldman, Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism
- Dr. Richard Land, Southern Baptist Convention, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission
- Ms. Garland Pohl, National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers
- Ms. Hannah Rosenthal, Jewish Council for Public Affairs
- Dr. Mary Ruth Stone, Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee
- Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed, Islamic Society of North America
- Bishop Melvin Talbert, United Methodist Church
- Ms. Nancy Wisdo, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops