

**September 1, 2008**

Dear Jubilee Friends,

Greetings from Jubilee USA! We hope that this letter finds you rested and ready for the busy months to come. It has been a great year for Jubilee so far, a major highlight being the passage of the Jubilee Act by the U.S. House of Representatives last April. This could never have happened without the advocacy of people of faith across the country. **Never doubt your ability to make a difference!**

The remainder of the year promises to be just as exciting. As I write, Congress is about to return from its August recess for a short 3-week session. It is likely that the Jubilee Act will be up for consideration in the Senate during this time. Keep your eyes on [www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org) and your email inboxes for the latest updates and action suggestions.

As the Senate considers the Jubilee Act this month, the presidential campaign enters the home stretch. No matter who wins, this time of decision and transition is a prime opportunity to reach the next administration with our Jubilee call for economic justice and abundant life for all people. Whether the Jubilee Act passes Congress this year or not, it is the next presidential administration that will ultimately have to take the lead in negotiating a new international agreement on debt cancellation.



This fall presents two major opportunities to engage your faith community, send a message to the presidential candidates, and make a difference in the lives of millions around the world:

### **STAND UP & TAKE ACTION WEEKEND**

**October 17-19, 2008**

Last year, over 43 million people around the world Stood Up against poverty and for the Millennium Development Goals, demanding that world leaders keep their promises to end poverty and inequality. This year, during the **Global Week of Action on Debt**, Jubilee USA is partnering with the UN Millennium Campaign to help break that record and send an even louder message to our elected leaders. We urge Jubilee Congregations to incorporate a "STAND UP" into their worship service on the October 17-19 weekend. All you need to do is have the congregation stand together for 1 minute and provide them with an opportunity to take action. If you'd like, you can read the enclosed STAND UP pledge or another reading or prayer of your choice as you stand together.

As the "action" component of your STAND UP, Jubilee suggests that during the STAND UP members of the congregation hold a sign or banner reading "Picture an End to Global Poverty, Cancel Debts! More and Better Aid!" If you'd like, you can have the children of the church decorate the sign or banner. Take a picture of the congregation as you stand together and send it to us at Jubilee. You can also have members of the congregation sign the enclosed petition. We will deliver the petitions and photos to the offices of the presidential candidates this fall. In order for your STAND UP to be counted toward the Guinness world record for the number of people standing together against poverty, register the number of folks participating at the STAND UP website: [www.standagainstopoverty.org](http://www.standagainstopoverty.org). See the enclosed material or the STAND UP website for more information.

**JUBILEE SATURDAY/SUNDAY**  
**December 13-14, 2008**

For many Christian congregations, the scripture reading for December 14 is a classic Jubilee text — Isaiah 61 — in which the prophet proclaims the “year of the Lord’s favor” or the Jubilee Year. Enclosed you’ll find worship resources to help you plan your Jubilee Sunday/Sabbath celebration, including special sermon notes and prayers. To give you an idea of what a Jubilee service can be like, we’ve enclosed the liturgy used last year by St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Portland, Oregon. Many thanks to Rev. Chris Laing for sharing it with us!

Of course you’re not limited to these two weekends. Feel free to use the enclosed resources to organize a Jubilee service and participate in the “Picture New Leadership” campaign anytime between now and the end of the year. We’ve enclosed sample “Picture an End to Global Poverty” palm cards that can be passed out or included in the bulletin to help you engage and raise awareness in your congregation. Additional palm cards are available at no charge from Jubilee — just let us know how many you can use!

Many congregations plan a Jubilee worship service as a step along the way towards becoming an official Jubilee Congregation. The Jubilee Congregations program provides congregations with a way to put their faith into action by engaging with issues of economic injustice, challenging harmful economic policies, and advancing a prophetic vision of fairness, equality and hope for impoverished countries and people. The four commitments that Jubilee Congregations make are to:

- Pray for justice and an end to the economic bondage of debt
- Designate a contact person to be a liaison between the congregation and Jubilee USA
- Contact decision makers and elected officials about issues related to debt and global economic justice.
- Help sustain the Jubilee Congregations program by making a financial contribution as a congregation *(for example through a special collection once a year or an annual donation of \$1 per member)*

In order to enroll as a Jubilee Congregation, you would need to get approval from the appropriate congregational leaders/structures and fill out the enclosed registration form. Jubilee Congregations receive special worship resources and a colorful banner to hang in their worship space. Thank you and please let us know how we can support you as you work in your congregation!

Finally, on a more personal note, I know you’ll join me in wishing Godspeed to Nathan Fishman as he completes two years as Jubilee’s outreach and congregations fellow. Nathan will be spending the next six months at a monastery in Ethiopia where he will be delving more deeply into his Ethiopian Orthodox faith and studying Amharic. I know that Nathan would appreciate your prayers as he embarks on this new chapter in his life!

In the meantime, please welcome Carly Pildis, our new outreach and congregations fellow. Carly comes to us through the Brethren Volunteer Service. She is a recent graduate of Bennington College in Vermont where she studied political theater. Carly recently volunteered with the American Jewish World Service in Ghana where she worked to build a community center. You can reach her at [carly@jubileeusa.org](mailto:carly@jubileeusa.org).

We look forward to being in touch with you in the coming weeks. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if there is anything we can do to help or support you 202-546-4470 or [carly@jubileeusa.org](mailto:carly@jubileeusa.org).

Wishing you peace and all good things,



Kristin Sundell  
Director of Advocacy & Organizing

