

Misinformation and Distortion of YouTube Video
A Statement from Ann Smith, President of the Gamaliel Foundation
October 2, 2009

Several media outlets and bloggers, including Lou Dobbs and Glenn Beck are using a YouTube Video to spread misinformation. Some one added an inaccurate text over a video with poor audio quality and posted it on YouTube, falsely claiming that Gamaliel leaders are praying to Obama, not God, and accusing us of “idol worship” and praying to a “golden calf.”

After making this illegitimate claim, some have backtracked and admitted they couldn't hear what was being said.

The facts are that on December 4, 2008, 500 leaders from 35 interfaith organizations affiliated with Gamaliel from across the United States led a New Orleans style funeral march to the Washington offices of UnitedHealthcare to demonstrate the need for comprehensive healthcare reform that provides medical coverage for every American citizen.

A call and response prayer was part of the event. A taped clip of the event, with poor audio is being misinterpreted by some. The following is what was said during this prayer on the clip:

“A Litany for the Healing of the Nation

With the prophet Jeremiah, we cry out, “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?”

Hear our cry, oh God!

With the prophet Martin Luther King, Jr., we cry out, “Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.”

Hear our cry, oh God!

From health care systems and industries that place profit over people,

Deliver us, oh God!

From lobbying efforts that block access to quality health care for all,

Deliver us, oh God!

From greed and fear that replace the reality of God's abundance and the power of community with the myths of scarcity and isolation,

Deliver us, oh God!

From scapegoatism of immigrants, from blaming the poor, from all sinful attitudes, which deem health care as a right of the privileged rather than as a basic human right,

Deliver us, oh God!

Protect all those who face illness without good health care insurance..."

Gamaliel leaders, from many denominations, are devout followers of their faith. As a faith-based organization, it is customary for Gamaliel Foundation affiliates to include prayer in our gatherings.

Our prayers to God are sincere expressions of our personal faith. At no time would we pray to an elected official.

We are surprised that conservative critics, who usually profess respect for Christianity, would make fun of our interfaith gathering and ridicule our worship.

We call on Lou Dobbs, Glenn Beck and others to apologize to the clergy and congregation members.

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