

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Getting to Zero

1. **Cover Letter** *Ann Jones and George Kerr*
2. **Getting to Zero in the Midst of Advent** *Emily Rose Proctor*  
Worship resources and sermon notes for the lectionary readings for Advent 2011
3. **Sample Sermon** *Emily Rose Proctor*  
A World AIDS Day sermon preached on December 5, 2010.
4. **Planning Services of Worship that Lift Up World AIDS Day**  
*Emily Rose Proctor*
5. **“Hazmat Suits and a Funeral”** *Erin Donovan*  
The Executive Director of Hope Springs, a faith-based organization in Baltimore, addresses the World Aids Day theme “Getting to Zero” with a focus on how congregations can get involved.
6. **Top Ten Reasons to “Know Your Status”** *Emily Rose Proctor and Bob Schminkey*  
A sample flyer for organizing HIV testing in a presbytery.

## AIDS 2012

Three flyers to raise awareness about XIX International AIDS Conference, the premier meeting for those working in the field of HIV / AIDS, as well as policymakers, people living with HIV / AIDS and others committed to ending the epidemic. It takes place July 22-27, 2012 in Washington D.C.

7. **“Save the Date” Flyer**
8. **AIDS 2012 FAQs flyer**
9. **AIDS 2012 one page summary**
10. **Flyer, *The Changing Face of HIV/AIDS* DVD**  
This DVD, in six 3-minute segments, empowers the viewer to make faithful decisions and the church to take faithful actions as well as helping to reduce the stigma.
11. **Flyer, *Becoming an HIV and AIDS Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action***  
Social witness policy adopted by the 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2010) Includes study guide.
12. **Flyer, Faith in Action Award**  
Information about the PAN Faith in Action Award, and how to make nominations
13. **Press Release, “Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) seeks nominations to recognize ministries of social justice.”**  
September 29, 2011 press release soliciting nominations for seven ministry awards.
14. **Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) Network Leadership Team**  
Introducing the PAN Network Leadership Team members





# PRESBYTERIAN AIDS NETWORK

Dear PAN Members and Friends,

December 1, 2011, World AIDS Day (WAD), is a day of awareness and action in the struggle to eradicate AIDS. The theme this year is **Getting to Zero** and our dream is Zero new infections, Zero discrimination, and Zero AIDS-related deaths. We must continue to be sacred activists against a deadly epidemic that still infects 2.7 million new people and claims two million lives annually. While these global numbers are sobering, World AIDS Day this year notes some positive changes. At least 56 countries have either stabilized or reduced new HIV infections by more than 25% in the last decade. New infections among babies have dropped by 25% and now more than 4 million people are on antiretroviral therapy.

Recently a series of highly publicized scientific advancements have fundamentally altered future possibilities and equipped us to turn the tide on HIV and AIDS. In May 2011, researchers announced a breakthrough that proved treating HIV positive people with antiretroviral therapy can reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to uninfected partners. We now know for certain that treatment is prevention.

Despite emerging opportunities, we also know that public concern about HIV and AIDS has plummeted significantly since 1995. We are greatly alarmed that global AIDS spending fell in 2010 and among nine states in the U.S. there are now over 8,500 persons on waiting lists for treatment.

Also, what makes this WAD and Presbyterian AIDS Awareness Sunday so significant is that it will begin the run-up to the International AIDS Conference to be held in Washington, DC in July 2012. This biannual conference is the premier gathering for thousands working in the field of HIV or living with the disease.

The 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2010) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) called upon all our congregations to become HIV and AIDS Competent Churches: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/becoming-an-hiv-and-aids-competent-church/>. This involves providing relevant educational activities as well as advocacy, fund raising, direct service and partnering. We hope that this packet will help in those endeavors as you plan for AIDS Awareness Sunday near World AIDS Day. PAN members would welcome an invitation to work with your congregation or presbytery in bringing together information and activism.

If you are not yet a part of Presbyterian AIDS Network, we encourage your membership and involvement. Within the context of faith we are called to transform public attitudes and policies. We invite HIV testing and encourage everyone to know his/her status. We believe it takes faith to believe in humanity in the face of what appear to be insurmountable problems. In your congregations, commit to build bridges between the world that is and the world that could be. Give of your time and your funds because it is one way the human spirit triumphs. Give because it is a privilege to support people working so hard in the world of AIDS. Give with courage - with heart - with faith.

Sincerely,

Ann Jones and George Kerr,  
Co moderators for Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN)

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**PAN is a network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA)  
A ministry of the Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministry, General Assembly Mission Council  
100 Witherspoon Street, Room 3228, Louisville, KY 40202-1396  
Phone: 888-728-7228 ext. 5800 Fax: 502/569-8034 [www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan)**

# “Getting to Zero” in Advent

*By the Reverend Emily Rose Proctor,  
Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church  
Baltimore, Maryland*

At first, I thought World AIDS Day couldn't come at a worse time—how can pastors and worship leaders be expected to talk about HIV and AIDS at a time when our heads and our worship services are typically filled with the texts and themes of Advent?

But what are the themes of advent? Waiting. Hope, Peace, Love, Joy. These are all relevant to addressing the HIV epidemic in our nation and the pandemic globally. As people of faith, we wait for the coming of God's kingdom—for a time where there are no tears, no poverty, no HIV—but we do not wait passively. Instead we strive to live holy and godly lives and to work for justice and peace, that “thy will be done ON EARTH as it is in heaven.” As people of faith, we live in hope in the midst of HIV. We recognize the impact that HIV can have on the peace and security of families and nations. We ask what it means to love in an HIV+ world—both in individual sexual relationships and as a community or as global neighbors. And together, we embrace the joy that comes from knowing that our God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and promises us a new heaven and a new earth, where new HIV infections will cease, and discrimination will be no more, and the number of AIDS related deaths will be zero. Oh, the joy to participate in God's movement toward that day! Could there be a better time to talk about HIV and AIDS than Advent?

## Litany of Thanksgiving/Prayers of the People<sup>1</sup>

Leader: For the more than 50 countries that have either stabilized  
or reduced new HIV infections by more than 25% in the last decade,

**People: O Lord, we give you thanks.**

Leader: For the 7000 people who will likely be infected this year,

**People: O Lord, hear our prayers.**

Leader: That new HIV infections among babies have dropped by 25%,

**People: O Lord, we give you thanks.**

Leader: For the 2.5 million children living with HIV,

**People: O Lord, hear our prayers.**

Leader: That the number of people in middle and low income countries  
receiving antiretroviral treatment increased from 700,000 to 5.2 million  
between 2004 and 2009,

**People: O Lord, we give you thanks.**

Leader: For the 10 million people who still need access to treatment,

**People: O Lord, hear our prayers.**

Leader: For all those who had the courage and the prudence  
to get tested and know their status,

**People: O Lord, we give you thanks.**

Leader: For the 20% of all those living with HIV in the United States who still don't know their  
status, and for all people who are reluctant to get tested,

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<sup>1</sup> *Statistics are drawn from the following sources:*  
<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/basic.htm> and  
[http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123\\_FS\\_Global\\_em\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123_FS_Global_em_en.pdf).  
Presbyterian AIDS Network | [www.pcusa.org/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/pan)

**People: O Lord, hear our prayers.**

Leader: For all those who have taken the time to educate others about HIV prevention and treatment and offer opportunities for testing, especially for organizations like \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_,

**People: O Lord, we give you thanks.**

Leader: That these organizations and advocates might get the support they need from us and the community, and that we might all be educated about important issues of health and safety,

**People: O Lord, hear our prayers.**

Leader: For all those friends and family members, volunteers and those in helping professions who care for those living with HIV,

**People: O Lord, we give you thanks.**

Leader: For all those caregivers who are weary and heavy burdened, that they might get the support they need from the community and be strengthened and restored by the power of your Holy Spirit,

**People: O Lord, hear our prayers.**

Leader: For all who spend their time researching new ways to prevent and treat HIV infection,

**People: O Lord, we give you thanks.**

Leader: That we might one day live in a world free of new HIV infections, discrimination, and AIDS-related deaths,

**People: O Lord, hear our prayers, and empower us to be the change we wish to see in the world.**

## **First Sunday of Advent, Year B – November 27, 2011**

**Lectionary Texts:** Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

### **Litany of Confession**

Leader: More than 33 million people are currently living with HIV worldwide, and more than 30 million have already died from HIV-related causes,<sup>2</sup> yet we want HIV to be someone else's problem and someone else's responsibility.

**People: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

Leader: Every 11 minutes, someone in the United States of America is newly infected with HIV. Twenty percent of those infected are unaware of their status,<sup>3</sup> yet many of us are reluctant to use protection and get tested, perpetuating the stigma that keeps us from getting to zero new infections.

**People: Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

Leader: There are two new HIV infections for every one person starting HIV treatment, and ten million people worldwide still do not have access to treatment,<sup>4</sup> including over 8,500 persons on waiting lists for treatment in nine U.S. states.<sup>5</sup> Yet global AIDS spending fell in 2010.<sup>6</sup>

**People: Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123\\_FS\\_Global\\_em\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123_FS_Global_em_en.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/basic.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123\\_FS\\_Global\\_em\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123_FS_Global_em_en.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nastad.org>.

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.results.org/uploads/files/the\\_beginning\\_of\\_the\\_end\\_of\\_aids\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.results.org/uploads/files/the_beginning_of_the_end_of_aids_fact_sheet.pdf).

Leader: May these statistics for us have faces that bear your image, O God, that our confession might be transformed into concrete efforts to prevent new infections, reduce stigma, and care for those infected and affected both in our own communities and around the world.

**Note:** The refrain for this litany comes from the lectionary reading Psalm 80; one could also substitute the refrain “Have mercy on us, O Lord” or “Create in us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us” (Psalm 51). You should feel free to do your own research and use statistics that you think would be most impactful and/or relevant for your congregation. Using statistics for your particular city, zip code, and the countries where you have global mission partnerships can be powerful and eye opening.

## Sermon Ideas for Isaiah 64:1-9

“O that you would tear open the heavens and come down!” Isn’t this a natural response to our most grim HIV statistics? How many people have to be denied access to treatment, how many children have to lose their parents, how many more people have to be infected, how many millions more have to die before God intervenes? Lament is an appropriate and a deeply faithful response to the suffering of the world. Why is it that with so many stories of God’s powerful intervention to save and to heal God’s people, the AIDS epidemic continues to rage into its fourth decade—disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable among us?

The cry for God’s saving presence leads the psalmist into the territory of sin. For him, sin and God’s absence are inextricable, though it is not entirely clear which is the chicken and which is the egg. Notably, the psalmist does not shy away from the topic of sin and its consequences, as many mainline Protestant preachers do today. This part of the text provides an opportunity for the preacher to speak the truth that sometimes our choices have deadly consequences—infidelity, drug use, sex outside of the context of a committed monogamous relationship. But the psalmist refuses to let anyone off the hook, and the preacher would be wise to follow his lead: “We have all become like one who is unclean...we all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.” No one is without sin, and those who are infected with HIV are not more sinful than others. In fact, many sins other than the ones already mentioned are part of the spread of HIV. These include individual lifestyles and national and global economic policies, systems, and trade agreements that perpetuate global poverty and the widening gap between the rich and the poor. They also include judgmental attitudes that always locate risk for HIV with “the sinful other” in such a way that even seeking an HIV test is in many communities its own confession of sin. I have heard countless stories of people who were discouraged from being tested because their doctor assumed that they weren’t engaging in any of the sinful “risk behaviors” based on stereotypes that had more to do with race and class than with any real knowledge of their actual behaviors. With 33 plus million infected worldwide, AIDS is something that affects us all, and we all bear some responsibility for its continued presence among us.

There are at least two directions the preacher might go with this lament to a God who has “delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.” One is to place our hope in a God who could no more abandon us than a Father could abandon his children. The other is to put our hope in a God who has formed and shaped us as a potter forms clay. In other words, the God who lets us suffer the consequences of our wrong choices has also given us the tools we need to make the right choices, as individuals, but more importantly as a community. Recent studies have shown that early

treatment with antiretrovirals can reduce transmission to partners up to 96%,<sup>7</sup> and the estimated \$27 billion needed to provide AIDS services to all those in need worldwide<sup>8</sup> is only a fraction of what our nation spends on war. There are enough resources to get the numbers of new infections and the number of AIDS-related deaths down to zero—it's a matter of priorities and political will. Perhaps God's next miracle will look more like millions of tiny ones, as God's people lift their voices together to demand that we make the investments and the decisions necessary to end this pandemic.

## Second Sunday of Advent, Year B – December 4, 2011

**Lectionary Texts:** Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

### Litany of Confession (based on 2 Peter 3:8-15a)

Leader: O, God of the Ages, as we enter our fourth decade in a world ravaged by HIV and AIDS, it is easy to wonder if you have forgotten your promise to be with us always, and to initiate a reign of peace and justice over all the earth.

**People: Forgive us, Lord, and transform our waiting.**

Leader: We long for new heavens and a new earth, where justice and righteousness are at home, but we do not always make the pursuit of justice a priority here and now, and we often pursue our own comfort, safety, and success rather than pursuing holiness and godliness.

**People: Forgive us, Lord, and transform our waiting.**

Leader: Forgive us, Lord, and help us to see time as a gift, as an opportunity for repentance and for working for justice and healing. By your Spirit, empower us to be the change you wish to see in the world. In the name of your son Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

## Sermon Ideas for Isaiah 40:1-11

Second Isaiah is a word of comfort and hope spoken to a people who have suffered devastation and decades of exile and had that suffering interpreted by many as punishment deserved. Here, finally, God's own voice declares that the suffering is disproportionate. While the prophet does not deny that the suffering and sin are related, there has been an injustice here, and it is one that God intends to correct. What a word of comfort for those who have disproportionately suffered the slings and arrows of HIV! All have sinned (see the discussion of Isaiah 64 above), but not all have suffered equally. More than 60% of those living with HIV reside in sub-Saharan Africa, the world's poorest region.<sup>9</sup> In America, African Americans are disproportionately affected, with one in sixteen Black men expected to be diagnosed with HIV at some point in his lifetime.<sup>10</sup> Last year, the Center for Disease Control released an analysis that revealed that "2.1 percent of heterosexuals living in high-poverty urban areas in the United States are infected with HIV," and that poverty was "single most

<sup>7</sup> Treating HIV-infected People with Antiretrovirals Protects Partners from Infection (May 12, 2011), <http://www.niaid.nih.gov/news/newsreleases/2011/pages/hptn052.aspx>.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123\\_FS\\_Global\\_em\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123_FS_Global_em_en.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> "Fact Sheet: Poverty and AIDS," United Nations Population Fund (2009), <http://www.unfpa.org/public/site/global/lang/en/pid/3849>.

<sup>10</sup> "HIV among African Americans, Center for Disease Control (Sept 2010), <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/aa/pdf/aa.pdf>.

determining factor.”<sup>11</sup> While HIV infects people of all races, nationalities, genders, classes, and sexual orientations—some suffer more than others, and this text encourages the preacher to name this truth.

God not only sees our suffering, God sees the injustice of it. And part of what it means to prepare the ground for God’s arrival, for God’s leading of God’s people out of despair, out of exile, out of oppression, is to level the playing field. In our current context, perhaps this is a call to reduce the gross disparities between the rich and the poor, between Black and White, gay and straight, between wealthy nations and poor ones. But this doesn’t mean increasing the infection rates of the privileged—it means embracing the World AIDS Day theme of 2011: “Getting to Zero”—zero new infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS-related deaths. The vision is one of unity—of all people catching the vision and experiencing the presence of God.

With verse six, the task of speaking out, of breaking the silence, is passed on to the prophet Isaiah, but the message is at first a strange one. “All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.” Surely those who struggle under the burden of HIV and AIDS already know this—how vulnerable we all are, and how quickly the interest of politicians, corporations and world leaders can wither and the promises fade. But one thing can be relied on—the Word of God. In the Word, there is the command to love one’s neighbor as one’s self. There is the command to do justice, to care for the widow, the immigrant and the orphan. Over and over we hear the God who is slow to anger and abiding in steadfast love say, “Do not be afraid.” It is the Word that reveals to us the Christ who heals the sick, speaks truth to power, restores the outcast to community, and calls all to repentance. In the Word, we have the promise of the Holy Spirit that empowers us to follow Christ’s lead. Finally, there is the commandment to not be afraid, and the vision of a world where there are no more tears, and the leaves of the trees are for the healing of the nations. This is all good news for a people looking for hope as we enter the fourth decade of HIV and AIDS, and the text ends with a final transfer of the messenger/prophet role to the whole people—O Zion—and to the very city—Jerusalem—that had suffered the most. This is perhaps the most powerful movement of the text—that the “victims” are empowered with the life-saving message of hope. This is a movement that happens even today, as those infected with HIV become the loudest and most effective advocates for prevention and treatment.

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<sup>11</sup> “New Study in Low-Income Heterosexuals in America’s Inner Cities Reveals High HIV Rates,” July 19, 2010, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/newsroom/povertyandhivpressrelease.html>.  
Presbyterian AIDS Network | [www.pcusa.org/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/pan)

# 2010 World AIDS Day Sermon

**Second Sunday in Advent –December 5, 2010**

*By the Reverend Emily Rose Proctor*  
Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church  
Baltimore, Maryland

## **Rom 15:4-13**

<sup>4</sup>*For whatever was written in former days  
was written for our instruction,  
so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.*

<sup>5</sup>*May the God of steadfastness and encouragement  
grant you to live in harmony with one another,  
in accordance with Christ Jesus,*

<sup>6</sup>*so that together you may with one voice  
glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

<sup>7</sup>*Welcome one another, therefore,  
just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*

<sup>8</sup>*For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised  
on behalf of the truth of God in order that  
he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,*

<sup>9</sup>*and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.  
As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,  
and sing praises to your name";*

<sup>10</sup>*and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people";*

<sup>11</sup>*and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,  
and let all the peoples praise him";*

<sup>12</sup>*and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come,  
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;  
in him the Gentiles shall hope."*

<sup>13</sup>*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

## **Isaiah 11:1-10**

<sup>11</sup>*A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*

<sup>2</sup>*The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.*

<sup>3</sup>*His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;*

<sup>4</sup>*but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;*



*he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.*

<sup>5</sup>*Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.*

<sup>6</sup>*The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.*

<sup>7</sup>*The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*

<sup>8</sup>*The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.*

<sup>9</sup>*They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.*

<sup>10</sup>*On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples;  
the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.*

Now, I'm aware that AIDS wasn't on Isaiah's mind when he uttered these words of prophecy in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE. But I wouldn't put it past God to orchestrate an Advent lectionary in which Isaiah can speak as powerfully to us in the week of World AIDS Day as he did then to a people facing division and war.

World AIDS Day is often a time for lifting up alarming or depressing statistics, and this year was no exception. 33 million people infected with HIV worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Over 29,000 people known to be infected in Maryland, with the Baltimore-Towson having the fourth highest rate of reported AIDS cases of any metropolitan area in the US. And this zip code that our church is in still has the highest numbers of current and new infections in this area.<sup>2</sup> Add to that the fact that an estimated 21% of all those infected don't know their status,<sup>3</sup> and that as of Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4,369 people in nine states have been put on waiting lists to receive AIDS drugs because state assistance programs are running out of funds.<sup>4</sup>

But it is into this darkness and into these statistics that Isaiah speaks a two-pronged message of hope, or as one pastor put it, presents us with a hinged pair of paintings.<sup>5</sup>

On the first canvas is the portrait of a leader full of the Spirit of the Lord, a spirit of wisdom and understanding. Given all the stigma and misinformation that still surrounds HIV, leaders with wisdom and understanding are sorely needed.

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<sup>1</sup> The latest statistics of the global [HIV](#) and [AIDS](#) epidemic were published by UNAIDS in November 2009, and refer to the end of 2008; <http://www.avert.org/worldstats.htm>. Accessed by author on 11/29/2010.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.dhmh.state.md.us/AIDS/Data&Statistics/statistics.htm>. Accessed by author on 11/29/2010.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Knox, "Many Americans With HIV Don't Know They Have It," NPR, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97315837>

<sup>4</sup> National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD), "The ADAP Watch," (Dec. 3, 2010) [http://www.nastad.org/Docs/Public/InFocus/2010123\\_ADAP%20Watch%20update%20-%202012.3.10.pdf](http://www.nastad.org/Docs/Public/InFocus/2010123_ADAP%20Watch%20update%20-%202012.3.10.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Paul Simpson Duke, *Feasting on the Word*, Year A, Vol. 1 (Westminster John Knox, 2010), p. 27.

I think about all the damage that was done in South Africa when their president Thabo Mbeki questioned the link between the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and AIDS. And I think about all the damage that happens more surreptitiously and more commonly when we fail to use the influence and opportunities we do have to become informed ourselves, educate others, reach out to those who are on the margins, and encourage all people who are sexually active to be tested routinely.

The leader that Isaiah envisions is both an example to others and a person of deep faith. He fights the battle against evil with the breath of his lips and the rod of his mouth. He breaks the silence, and speaks truth to power.

The leader that Isaiah envisions has powers of discernment crucial for fighting AIDS. This leader would be able to separate the facts from the myths. She would be able to weigh the statistics about which groups are most affected against the reality that all are at risk. This leader would be able to maintain confidentiality when requested, while working to create environments where it is safe to disclose one's status. And she would be able to emphasize the responsibility we have for our actions while acknowledging and working to end the inequalities, ignorance and outside circumstances that can impact our ability to make good choices.

Many scholars think that Isaiah was setting his hope on a rising star in Judah, the soon-to-be King Hezekiah. Others detect a shift towards a larger, more messianic hope, and many Christians accordingly see Jesus as the embodiment of this leader. But seeing Christ in this portrait of a longed-for leader does not mean that we have to abandon all hope for earthly leaders who will follow his example. In fact, as Christians—we have a mandate to be the body of Christ in the world—to use our voices to educate, welcome, and care for one another, and to live as though the walls of hostility between us really have been broken down.

On Wednesday, World AIDS Day, I saw a whole team of young leaders in the making— young women at St. Timothy's, including our own Greta Finney, educating themselves and their peers about HIV and AIDS and calling them to solidarity and action.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that in the second portrait of hope, Isaiah features, over and over, the young. "The calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, and their young shall lie down together." It is the children who are brave enough to play with snakes. Our hope for the future lies both in new leadership and in reconciliation, and perhaps Isaiah is suggesting that it is our youth who will lead the way.

When I was in Cape Town, South Africa, on a Watson fellowship to study the church's response to AIDS, I had the opportunity to work with two youth groups from very different communities. One was a group of high schoolers and young adults from a Black African Xhosa Township called Khayelitsha. The other was a group of middle school students in a colored area called Bridgetown.

If you cringed at my use of the word "colored," let me explain. In South Africa, and especially in the Western Cape, they use the word "colored" like we use the words "black" and "white," descriptively, for a racially mixed group of South Africans who

mostly speak Afrikaans and have their own unique history and culture. It is not a derogatory term.

During Apartheid the White government went to great lengths to ensure that Black people and colored people saw each other as competition and enemies rather than potential allies in the struggle for equality.

Even today, there is still a lot of tension and mistrust between all the racial groups...the calf and the lion and the fatling are no longer separated by law... but they continue to be separated by geography, culture, language, and the deep legacy of Apartheid...

When I told the colored youth that I was thinking about bringing some older youth from Khayelitsha to help me get them thinking about HIV/ AIDS and the Bible, they started freaking out. Why was I bringing murderers and robbers and rapists to their church? "I am not picking these people up off the streets," I explained. "These are youth in from a Presbyterian Church, just like yours." But they were not convinced.

And to my surprise, on our way to Bridgetown the Khayelitsha youth let loose their own ugly stereotypes of colored people. I began to wonder if I had not fallen into the trap of the naïve young American do-gooder and gotten in over my head. I forgot momentarily about the power of the Holy Spirit.

Because when we got to Bridgetown Presbyterian, and everyone was introduced, it was a totally different story. All the stereotypes and suspicions took a back seat to the task at hand and the real live human beings and personalities that suddenly found themselves face to face.

The junior high youth at Bridgetown kept trying to impress the older youth from Khayelitsha. And the Khayelitsha youth were gentle and affectionate in return. We divided up into groups, each of which read a Bible passage and then came up with a skit relating it to HIV/ AIDS. As we were leaving, the youth from Khayelitsha said, "We need to do that with our own Sunday school!" And not long after, they did.

I left that day with a vision of people of all different ages, races, nationalities, and religious beliefs coming together to tackle the problem of HIV and AIDS. A vision not unlike Isaiah's.

That vision of the peaceable kingdom was reignited for me earlier this year, when the sessions of Central Presbyterian and Govans, two churches that often find themselves on the opposite sides of issues coming before our Presbytery for a vote, stood together to present an overture encouraging all Presbyterians to get tested for HIV and work to reduce the stigma that still surrounds even testing. I don't know who was the wolf and who was the lamb, but there they were together, passionate about the Church's role in fighting stigma and encouraging testing.

Leadership and reconciliation—apparently for Isaiah they go hand in hand. And to conquer AIDS, both are needed. We need courageous leaders who are willing to break the silence about HIV and the importance of getting tested. And I'm not just talking about clergy. We need courageous doctors and patients and parents and siblings and

students and friends and partners and co-workers. We need leaders like Greta and her friends at St. Timothy's.

We need leaders like a friend of mine who works for Grace Fellowship Church and Hope Springs, a local AIDS non-profit. She told me about asking her doctor for an HIV test, which shouldn't have been a big deal since two years ago the CDC recommended routine testing for all people ages 13-65, regardless of perceived risk. But her doctor looked at this well-dressed, White, married woman and said, "You don't need to do worry about that."

Thankfully, my friend knew better, and she told her doctor that as a married woman, she was sexually active and not using protection, and that the only person whose behavior she could be absolutely certain of was her own, and so she was at risk and would take an HIV test, thank you very much.

We need leaders like that. And we also need leaders who are willing to reach across barriers of race and class and age and theology and sexual orientation. Because AIDS does. All the time.

The question for us is will we follow? Will we follow AIDS as it impacts every sector of society here and around the world? And will we follow Christ, who broke every barrier for the sake of healing and reconciliation? Will we join with the lambs and the goats and the lions and the wolves and even the snakes, until we have blasted every stereotype and broken every silence born of judgment or shame?

When we have eaten the bread of life and drunk from the cup of salvation, how will we be the body of Christ to a world infected by HIV and a world at risk of infection? Will the shoots of hope—the shoots of leadership and reconciliation—continue to spring up through us?

## Planning Services of Worship that Lift Up World AIDS Day

Worship is central to the Reformed tradition. Engage your congregation in the issues related to HIV and AIDS through the prayer of confession/assurance of pardon, the lighting of the Advent candle, the children's moment, the sermon, a minute for mission (see the entry for December 1, World AIDS Day, in the 2010 *Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* at [www.pcusa.org/missionyearbook](http://www.pcusa.org/missionyearbook)), the prayers of the people and a work of art or a bulletin insert. Here are some descriptions and examples.

### Bulletin Inserts

If you are exploring an area of darkness each Sunday, try creating bulletin inserts that are both educational and inspiring. For each Sunday, include in the insert some statistics and news stories that illuminate the prevalence and depth of the "darkness" you are highlighting (HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, and so forth.) and its relevance to your community or global mission partners. Balance the section on "Naming the Darkness..." with one entitled, "Signs of Light..." which highlights efforts at addressing that issue and statistics that reveal some progress that is being made, again making every effort to choose statistics and stories that are particularly relevant to your congregation.

Create your own, using the most recent statistics for your own community and global mission partners. Remember, the more relevant the information is to your particular congregation and ministry context, the more meaningful it will be. The Centers for Disease Control website at [www.cdc.gov/hiv/](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/) contains a wealth of information.

### Art/Visual Displays

**Visual Images and Banners:** One very effective way to engage people in HIV/AIDS awareness is to use a visual symbol, such as the AIDS Ribbon or a panel of the AIDS Memorial Quilt ([www.aidsquilt.org](http://www.aidsquilt.org)). If you are exploring a different area of darkness each week, it can be powerful to have some kind of banner that represents that darkness and the hope, peace, joy, and love that Christ brings to it. Order HIV and AIDS pins from International Peacemaking, <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/international-aids>

**Slide Show:** If your congregation is technologically savvy, you could create a slide show that offers relevant visual images to "enflesh" what might otherwise be some pretty abstract ideas.

**Bulletin Covers:** Design a different bulletin cover image each week that pertains to that week's theme, or create one design for the whole season that incorporates all four themes.

**Bulletin Boards and Displays:** If your congregation has a bulletin board or other display areas, change those each week to reflect the themes. Display information, books, objects or brochures that might be of interest to your congregation. Order a poster *AIDS: "It's a Matter of Faith"* from [www.pcusa.org/aids](http://www.pcusa.org/aids). Play to your congregation's strengths and interests. If you have art students, professional artists or graphic designers, art teachers or other people with experience relating to the topic at hand, seek them out and get their help!



The pastor of Eastridge Uniting Church standing in front of his congregation's HIV/AIDS information table on the First Sunday of Advent in Mitchells Plain, South Africa in 2003. Photo by Emily Rose Proctor

### **An example of what one church did to incorporate Advent themes and World AIDS Day**

During the 2009 season of Advent, Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church of Baltimore, Maryland, incorporated the idea of focusing on an aspect of darkness each Sunday. Each week during the silence between the prelude and the call to worship, someone marched in carrying a paper banner representing that week's "darkness". The banner hung vertically from a pole that was placed in a stand (you might find some other way to hang the banner that suits your congregation's space and props).

During the congregational response to the Assurance of Pardon, the liturgist pulled from behind the banner a sign. On the sign was printed that Sunday's theme (hope, peace, joy, love) in big bold letters. The sign was suspended by string in front of the phrases expressing the week's "darkness." At the end of the fourth Sunday in Advent, all four banners were hanging in the sanctuary with the corresponding signs with the themes of Advent.

If your congregation already has banners with some kind of positive graphics or images that correspond with the four themes of Advent, or if the congregation or worship leader wants to create some, the paper banners of darkness can be placed over those banners and ripped down at an appropriate point in the Christmas Eve service (such as when the Christ candle is lit or after the last reading ends). The "Hope," "Peace," "Joy," and "Love" signs can then be re-attached above the underlying banner (if appropriate). This helps provide a sense of unity and a culminating experience for your congregation's worship during Advent. This idea of having some sort of visual representation can be as elaborate or as simple as suits your congregation.

- Written by the Rev. Emily Rose Proctor, associate pastor, Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church, and co-moderator of the Presbyterian AIDS Network, a Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA).



# HopeSprings

equipping to eradicate HIV



## Note from the **pan** Leadership Team:

Hope Springs, a faith-based organization based in Baltimore, MD, received an honorable mention for their application for PAN's Faith in Action Award in 2010. Even for those who do not live in the Baltimore area, they provide a great example of an organization that surveyed existing HIV service providers to identify gaps and then shaped their mission to meet those needs. Here, their new Executive Director, Erin Donovan, addresses the World Aids Day theme "Getting to Zero" with a focus on how congregations can get involved. They demonstrate how the efforts of one or two churches to become "HIV Competent" can end up impacting many more churches and HIV service providers.

### Hazmat Suits and a Funeral

*The Scenario: It is 1984 and a pastor is asked to conduct his first funeral service . . .*

"Everyone at the funeral home was wearing hazmat suits as they handled the body . . . the casket was closed and sealed to prevent the spread . . . during the service, the mother of the young man sat in the back row and would not come closer to the front out of fear and would not communicate with the partner . . . the partner was mourning the loss but also concerned that he had the virus as well . . ."

I sat in a meeting with a well-respected chaplain at a hospital and a pastor from one of our church partners and heard this moving story. It made me think about both how far we have come in 30 years of HIV/AIDS, but it also made me think about how far we still have to go when we see the stigma associated with this disease.

We have learned so much in these 30 years, especially when we consider where we have come from (hazmat suits and all). In July alone, 2 different studies gave us exciting news, confirming the notion that treatment of HIV is prevention of HIV:

- 1) The early introduction of antiretroviral treatment resulted in a 96% reduction in HIV transmission to uninfected partners; and
- 2) The other found that a once-daily pill containing two anti-HIV drugs reduced the risk of acquiring HIV infection by about 63% in a study population of healthy, heterosexual men and women.<sup>i</sup>

Although we have come far, especially in medical advances, we still have SO far to go in fighting stigma associated with this disease, especially within the church. HopeSprings is helping to fight this stigma.

HopeSprings, faith-based nonprofit organization working with a conglomeration of churches from the Baltimore region, exists to eradicate the spread of HIV/AIDS and its stigma and to provide hope and healing to those infected and affected by the virus. We believe God has called the Church, as a unified body of believers, to engage in this pandemic, the worst humanitarian crisis the world has ever seen. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is too big for an individual entity to effectively address. Only as the unified Church in partnership with our communities will we defeat this giant.

## HopeSprings seeks to:

1. *Awaken* the Church to the HIV / AIDS pandemic, both locally and globally;
2. *Equip/Empower* the Church (both corporately and individually) to respond. We accomplish this through education and the building of authentic relationships; and
3. *Engage* the Church in corporate and individual acts of mercy and justice in partnership with local AIDS Service Organizations in the communities we serve.

In simple words: HopeSprings is equipping volunteers from churches to eradicate HIV. We provide a volunteer training course called "The Journey!," which prepares individuals to engage in volunteer opportunities both in their communities and through HopeSprings' existing partnerships with local HIV / AIDS Service Organizations like Moveable Feast, JACQUES Initiative, and AIRS. Our volunteers are involved in HIV testing and counseling services, workforce development services, meal delivery, HIV education, and the list goes on!

We believe that we can "Get to Zero" by working together to mobilize the church to take action – so that we don't need to see another 30 years of HIV / AIDS. Become a supporter, follower, or volunteer of HopeSprings, and use every opportunity to combat the stigma and gain knowledge about the disease.

## Use World AIDS Day to:

- Host a training for the congregation on HIV / AIDS and the impact in your city;
- Hold a conference that brings together local service organizations and churches in your area;
- Hold a health fair and include testing and linkage to care services ;
- Participate in the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS;
- Invite people that are HIV positive to speak to the congregation about Living Well with HIV and how we are all infected/affected;
- Hold a prayer meeting on a regular basis;
- Incorporate a prayer in your service on a monthly basis;
- Get involved with national seminars on HIV / AIDS;
- Get involved with the local/state Faith Based Community Initiative Office;
- Get involved with local/State health department;
- Have your fine arts department create a service designed around holistic ministry of Jesus – his healing work physically, mentally, socially and emotionally – and weave in HIV / AIDS;
- Have an education booth on a regular basis;
- Create an action plan for reaching those infected and affected by HIV; and
- Take a special offering for faith-based groups that are working in HIV.

**Will you get involved or are you still stuck in 1984 and sitting in the back row?  
Give us a call, shoot us an email, or check us out through our website, Facebook or Twitter.**

Erin Donovan, Executive Director of HopeSprings

[www.hopesprings.org](http://www.hopesprings.org)

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/HopeSpringsHIV>

[info@hopesprings.org](mailto:info@hopesprings.org)

410-323-0005

<sup>1</sup>[http://blog.aids.gov/2011/08/models-tools-to-improve-decision-making-about-hiv.html?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+aids%2Fgov+%28Blog.AIDS.gov%29](http://blog.aids.gov/2011/08/models-tools-to-improve-decision-making-about-hiv.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+aids%2Fgov+%28Blog.AIDS.gov%29)



**Presbyterian AIDS Network**

A Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA)

[www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan)

Presbyterian AIDS Network | [www.pcusa.org/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/pan)





# Top 10 Reasons to “Know Your Status”



1. **You care** about stopping the spread of HIV—you love your neighbor and yourself!
2. More than 1 million people in the US are infected with HIV and 21% don't know it.
3. The 2010 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA encouraged “all Presbyterians, especially ministers of Word and Sacrament and church leaders, to be tested in order to be a visible example to all people and help eliminate the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS testing.”
4. It's easier to talk to someone else about getting tested if you've done it yourself.
5. Individuals infected through heterosexual contact account for 31% of annual new HIV infections and 28% of people living with HIV.
6. No one is perfect. Few are risk-free.
7. The CDC recommends that everyone ages 13-64 be tested for HIV at least once, and broad-based (opt out) testing in health care settings.<sup>1</sup>
8. An oral HIV test quick, painless, more than 99% accurate and often free at a location near you.
9. Everyone who gets tested also learns about HIV prevention.
10. Everyone whose test results in a preliminary positive is linked to care.



## Organize HIV Testing in Your Presbytery!

**Target a Location!** Plan to do HIV Testing at a Presbytery meeting at a congregation located in a city or a high risk area, or one that has a health related ministry.

**Contact an HIV/AIDS Service Organization or local Health Department.** You will need to identify an organization that does HIV testing to partner with you and provide the testing materials. Your local Health Department or AIDS service agency can help.

**Pick a Date!** World AIDS Day (Dec 1) or National Testing Day in June (<http://aids.gov/awareness-days/national-hiv-testing-day>) are perfect times, but any time your Presbytery approves will work.

**Advertise/Educate your Presbytery.** At least one meeting before your HIV Testing, announce it to the Presbytery and share with them reasons for doing testing at this time. The “Top Ten” reasons are on this flyer!

**Open to the Community.** On the day of your Presbytery meeting, have the HIV Testing open to the community if possible. Provide some food or refreshments as an incentive.

<sup>1</sup>Sources for the Top 10 list include <http://www.cdc.gov>; OraQuick ADVANCE® Rapid HIV-1/2 Antibody Test Package Insert, and <http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/aids-policy.pdf>.



**Presbyterian AIDS Network**  
A Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA)

[www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan)



**JULY 22 - 27**  
**WASHINGTON DC USA**

**WWW.AIDS2012.ORG**

**GET INVOLVED IN AIDS 2012!**

**REGISTRATION**

Open 1 December 2011  
Standard fee deadline 23 February 2012  
Late fee deadline 3 May 2012

**GLOBAL VILLAGE AND  
YOUTH PROGRAMME SUBMISSIONS**

Open 1 December 2011  
Close 10 February 2012

**ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS**

Open 1 December 2011  
Open late breakers 19 April 2012

**WORKSHOPS APPLICATIONS**

Open 1 December 2011  
Close 8 February 2012

**SATELLITE SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Open 1 December 2011  
Close 31 March 2012

**EXHIBITION SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Open 1 December 2011  
Close 25 May 2012





## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q: What is the International AIDS Conference?**

A: The International AIDS Conference is the premier meeting for those working in the field of HIV/AIDS, as well as policymakers, people living with HIV/AIDS and others committed to ending the epidemic. The conference features abstract-driven breakout sessions; daily plenary sessions; professional development workshops; and components such as the Global Village and the Youth Program.

### **Q: What is the official name of the conference?**

A: XIX (19<sup>th</sup>) International AIDS Conference or AIDS 2012

### **Q: When is AIDS 2012?**

A: July 22 – 27, 2012

### **Q: Where will AIDS 2012 take place?**

A: At the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. located in downtown DC

### **Q: Who is the host/organizer of AIDS 2012?**

A: AIDS 2012 is convened by the Geneva-based International AIDS Society in partnership with the following international, regional and local partners:

- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO)
- Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+)
- International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW)
  
- The Black AIDS Institute
- District of Columbia Department of Health (DOH)

- HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA) of the Infectious Diseases Society (IDSA)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP)
- US Positive Women's Network (USPWN)
- Sidaction

### **Q: How many participants does the conference typically attract?**

A: This conference typically attracts between 20,000 – 25,000 delegates from nearly 200 countries. The delegates are scientists, researchers, community leaders, advocates and activists, government and business leaders.

### **Q: Why has it been 22 years since the United States has been chosen to host the International AIDS Conference?**

A: The IAS Governing Council voted to hold AIDS 2012 in Washington, DC, following U.S. President Barack Obama's October 2009 announcement that the nation would end its entry restrictions on people living with HIV effective January 4, 2010. The conference was last held in the U.S. in 1990 in San Francisco, California. The removal of entry restrictions on people living with HIV by the U.S. allows for the return of this global conference to the United States after a 22-year absence.

### **Q: I would like to register to attend the conference? How do I register?**

A: Visit [www.aids2012.org](http://www.aids2012.org) and click on the 'Registration' link to register online. Offline registration details will also be available on the registration webpage. We urge all delegates to register early. The registration fee for regular delegates, students/post-docs and youth delegates includes entry to all conference sessions, the exhibition and poster area, and the opening and closing session. Registration will open December 2011.



**Q: How much does a conference registration cost?**

A: Conference registration fees vary based on your classification and also based on the time when registered (cheaper if registered before mid-February 2012), but range between USD\$150 - \$1,045. To determine what your registration fee is visit [www.aids2012.org](http://www.aids2012.org) and click on the 'Registration' link on the left navigation bar.

**Q: Can I pay the registration fee in US dollars, rather than Euros?**

A: Registration fees can be paid online with a credit card (VISA, MasterCard, EuroCard and Amex) or by bank transfer. While we would prefer payment in Euros, if you are unable to do so and are paying by transfer, your bank will determine the equivalent amount to be paid in US Dollars.

**Q: How do I register a group?**

A: Group registration is applicable to the registration of 10 persons or more. The registration fees are the same as for individual delegates.

**Q: I can not afford to pay for a conference registration. Is there financial aid available?**

A: The conference organizers are committed to making AIDS 2012 accessible to people from resource-limited settings and communities, researchers, young people, community activists and civil society representatives. Eight-hundred scholarships will be awarded to applicants from around the world through the conference International Scholarship Program. For more information visit [www.aids2012.org](http://www.aids2012.org) and click on the 'Scholarships' link on the left navigation bar. Delegates interested in this program can apply online from December 8, 2011 – February 15, 2012.

**Q: How do I apply for a scholarship, and what kind of funding will I receive?**

A: Applicants are able to request all or some of the following aspects of the scholarship to attend AIDS 2012:

- Registration to the conference
- economy-class travel (pre-paid ticket at the lowest fare available)
- accommodation (shared in hotel twin rooms for the days of the conference)
- modest living allowance for the conference duration (22-27 July 2012, the equivalent of EUR 30 per day)

Please note that the level of support requested may not be the level of support granted. Full scholarships will only be awarded in a limited number of cases. Partial scholarships will also be awarded.

In all cases individuals will be required to cover the cost of their hotel incidental expenses, meals and any optional extra expenses.

**Q: Who decides who is awarded a scholarship?**

A: The criteria for scholarship selection have been decided by the Conference Coordinating Committee. The criteria change from one conference to another, as the epidemic changes. The available budget is divided by region, and generally, those regions most affected by HIV are allocated the largest portion of the budget.

Fully completed applications are then scored according to these criteria established by the committees, and the highest scoring applicants are awarded a scholarship.



**Q: I would like to book a hotel room for my time spent in Washington, DC for the conference. What hotels have the best rates?**

A: A large number of hotel rooms in various price categories have been secured at negotiated rates for conference delegates. Online booking for accommodations will be available on the conference website beginning December 1, 2011.

**Q: I need to apply for a Visa to enter the United States. What is the process?**

A: The conference organizers strongly recommend that potential AIDS 2012 delegates make contact with the U.S. embassy/consulate in their country as soon as possible to enquire about the specific U.S. immigration processes and timing that will apply to them.

Visit the conference website for more information, including U.S. embassy contact information and Visa categories.

All visa applications should be made no later than 90 days before travelling to the U.S. (i.e. no later than mid-April 2012 for conference delegates).

**Q: What are conference hubs?**

A: Conference hubs are “mini conferences” hosted by local organizations worldwide active in the AIDS response, where several conference sessions are screened and followed by moderated local discussions to examine how the session content can be used to strengthen the local AIDS response.

**Q: Who can organize a conference hub?**

A: Non-governmental organizations/charities, PLHIV networks, faith-based organizations, clinics and hospitals, universities and medical schools, government entities and UN bodies are welcomed to host a hub.

**Q: How can I organize a conference hub?**

A: Organizing a hub is easy but needs some human and financial resources, as well as time and leadership. Applications to become a hub organizer will open in 2012 and require you to enter information about your hub's target audience, the date of the event, potential venue etc. Registration for Hubs opens in March 2012.

**Q: What is the process to secure a booth in the AIDS 2012 Global Village?**

A: Global Village information will be available on the conference website in December 2011.

**Q: I would like to serve as a volunteer for AIDS 2012. How do I apply?**

A: Volunteer application information will be available on the conference website in April 2012.

**Q: I would like to explore Washington, DC while in town for the conference. Where can I find tourist and visitor information?**

A: Participants are encouraged to visit the Visitor's Center at the nearby DC Chamber of Commerce or the Visitor's Helpdesk at the conference venue. There will also be a link on the conference website listing things to do in the Washington, DC area.

Day tours and post conference trip packages will also be made available to purchase. Please visit [www.aids2012.org](http://www.aids2012.org) for more information.

**Q: How can I find more information on AIDS 2012 including announcements and program updates?**

A: To ensure you receive the latest AIDS 2012 updates visit [www.aids2012.org](http://www.aids2012.org) and follow the conference on Facebook and Twitter.



**Conference Coordinating Committee:**

Elly Katabira, Uganda  
*AIDS 2012 International Chair & IAS President*

Diane Havlir, United States  
*AIDS 2012 U.S. Co-Chair*

**International Partners for AIDS 2012:**

- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO)
- Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+)
- International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW)

**Local & Regional Partners for AIDS 2012:**

- The Black AIDS Institute
- District of Columbia Department of Health (DOH)
- HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA) of the Infectious Diseases Society (IDSA)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- The White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP)
- US Positive Women's Network (USPWN)
- Sidaction

The International AIDS Society (IAS), the world's leading independent membership association of individuals working professionally in HIV around the world; and its partners will host the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) July 22 – 27, 2012 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC.

The return of the biennial International AIDS Conference to the United States represents a significant victory for public health and human rights. The selection of Washington, DC as the site for the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) is the result of years of dedicated advocacy to end the nation's misguided entry restrictions on people living with HIV.

The International AIDS Conference is regarded as the premier gathering for those working in the field of HIV, as well as policymakers, people living with HIV and others committed to ending the epidemic. It will be an important opportunity for researchers from around the world to share the latest scientific advances in the field, learn from one another's expertise, and develop strategies for advancing all facets to treat and prevent HIV/AIDS.

The conference is slated to be the largest global gathering that Washington, DC has ever hosted.

Below are some AIDS 2012 highlights:

- More than 25,000 delegates from nearly 200 countries, including scientists, researchers, community leaders, advocates and activists
- More than 2,500 journalists
- More than 240 plenary and workshop sessions focusing on the latest scientific advances in the field
- The Global Village: this unique space, accessible for free to the general public, is where communities from around the world will interact with researchers, artists, policymakers, business leaders, clinicians, politicians and the general public. The Global Village will host panel discussions, networking zones, a video and ICT lounge, a literary lounge, meeting rooms, a performance stage, youth pavilion, NGO marketplace, and much more!

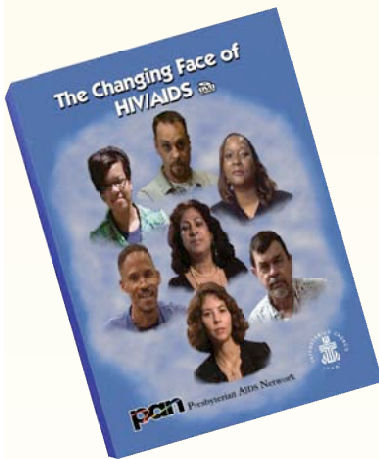
For more information on AIDS 2012, visit [www.aids2012.org](http://www.aids2012.org) or call (202) 442-8391

Also, follow us on Facebook and Twitter

# The Changing Face of HIV/AIDS

## A NEW DVD by the Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN)

Available FREE  
of charge from  
The Church Store  
([www.store.pcusa.org](http://www.store.pcusa.org))  
PDS # 24-354-10-003  
OR  
View it online at:  
[www.pcusa.org/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/pan)



In the United States, the face of HIV and AIDS has changed dramatically in the 30 years since the start of the pandemic. Communities are living with increased rates of infection and more and more Americans are affected by HIV.

This DVD, in six 3-minute segments, explores "The Changing Face of HIV/AIDS," telling the story of ministries of compassion and support as the church and our communities respond. The segment, "What People of Faith Need to Know about HIV/AIDS" offers a basic primer for the church living in an HIV Positive world. By discussing the facts about HIV and AIDS, the video empowers the viewer to make faithful decisions and the church to take faithful actions, as well as helping to reduce the stigma attached to this devastating illness.

The Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN), a network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA), is available to assist a congregation in becoming an HIV and AIDS Competent Church.

*A memorial to Jack Deckard, this DVD was made possible through the generosity of the Jack Deckard Memorial Advised Fund, Presbyterian Foundation.*



**Presbyterian AIDS Network**

A Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare  
Association (PHEWA)

[www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan)

Presbyterian AIDS Network | [www.pcusa.org/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/pan)





# BECOMING AN HIV AND AIDS COMPETENT CHURCH

**PROPHETIC WITNESS AND COMPASSIONATE ACTION**



Approved by the 219th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)



**pan**  
Presbyterian AIDS Network

**2010**



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
Office of the General Assembly  
100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202  
502-569-5424 ~ gradye.parsons@pcusa.org  
www.pcusa.org



THE REV. DR. GRADYE PARSONS  
STATED CLERK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Fall 2010

Dear Members and Friends of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

The 219th General Assembly adopted the resolution, "Becoming an HIV and AIDS Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action," in exercise of its responsibility to help the whole church address matters of "social righteousness." As a social witness policy statement, it is presented for the guidance and edification of both church and society, and determines procedures and program for the ministries and staff of the General Assembly. It is recommended for consideration and study by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and commended to the free Christian conscience of all congregations and members for prayerful study, dialogue, and action. This letter confirms that this social witness resolution satisfies the rules that govern the formation of social policy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

We commonly speak of AIDS and the HIV virus as a tragedy and wonder when the public health resources mustered against the disease will succeed in pushing it back everywhere, rather than simply restricting its spread in some areas. As the background study part of this report shows, the roadblocks are both cultural and economic, and differ in the U.S. and abroad. In the global context this disease is primarily spread today by heterosexual encounters and intravenous drug use by persons in situations of poverty and inadequate medical care. Our medical mission personnel and many development specialists, in fact, consider HIV/AIDS to be a "disease of poverty" complicated by matters of belief, gender and race. Thus, while AIDS from unprotected sexual activity—whatever the relationship status and orientation of the victims—carries a stigma factor that can prompt denial and avoidance of testing and treatment, its prevention needs to address economic and social as well as educational factors.

From the first identification of cases in 1981, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has responded primarily with compassion and this remains an essential keynote. While most Presbyterians advocate responsible sexual behavior in the monogamous context of marriage and covenanted relationship, we are also aware that a judgmental approach often makes prevention and treatment more difficult. This report helps us know the most healing approaches and is to guide our public policy witness, our practice in the mission field, and our interfaith coordination. This report does something that is not done enough: combine Christian hope and care with a clear-eyed social analysis that avoids overly-simple moralism. *The addition of concern for Hepatitis B & C (see Addendum) reflects some of the social complexity.*

"Truth is in order to goodness" begins one of the "historic principles" near the start of the Book of Order. It goes on, "we are persuaded that there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice..." I close with these quotes as I know this issue will remain difficult but that we have a responsibility to address it and can make a difference.

Yours in Christ,

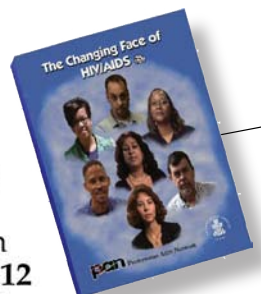
Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk

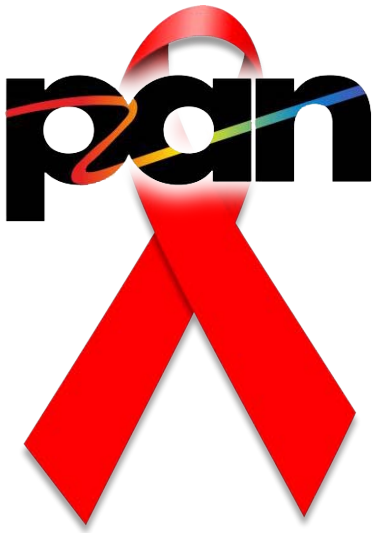


**Presbyterian AIDS Network**  
A Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare  
Association (PHEWA)

**Copies are available**  
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# Faith in Action Award

## Call for Nominations

The Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN), one of the 10 social justice networks of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA), part of the Compassion, Peace and Justice ministry of the General Assembly Mission Council, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is now accepting nominations for its second *Faith in Action Award*.

The *Faith in Action Award* recognizes a PC(USA) congregation that, through its prayerful actions and through its ministry, calls its faith into action by walking alongside sisters and brothers who are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. The selected congregation will be one that has responded to the HIV/AIDS pandemic by initiating or supporting activities within the United States in meaningful and lasting ways. Activities can vary but should result in increased sensitization to the issue and demonstrated impact on those affected. The recipient congregation for this award will be one that shows God's unconditional love for all people by striving to break down the walls of stigma and discrimination around HIV/AIDS.

The awardee will be selected by a committee of the Presbyterian AIDS Network and celebrated at the PHEWA Ministry Awards Reception in July, 2012 at the 220th General Assembly in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

To nominate a congregation for this award, please submit the following information, no later than February 15, 2012: Name of the congregation being nominated, the contact person for the nomination with addresses, phone numbers, email addresses for both and a two page description of the ministry, including why they are deserving of this recognition. Self-nominations are accepted.

Electronic submissions are preferred. Send email to Susan Stack at [susan.stack@pcusa.org](mailto:susan.stack@pcusa.org). Nominations sent by mail will also be considered. Send to:

**PHEWA**  
100 Witherspoon St., Rm. 3228  
Louisville, KY 40202-1396





## PRESS RELEASE

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**Date:** September 29, 2011

**Contact:** Susan Stack

Trina Zelle

[susan.stack@pcusa.org](mailto:susan.stack@pcusa.org)

[trinazelle6@gmail.com](mailto:trinazelle6@gmail.com)

(888) 728-7228 ext, 5800

(602) 796-7477

### **Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) Seeks Nominations to Recognize Ministries of Social Justice**

The Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) is seeking nominations for seven ministry awards that will be celebrated during the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, July 2012.

PHEWA, part of the Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministry of the General Assembly Mission Council, is a voluntary membership organization dedicated to social welfare and justice ministries. Ten networks are currently part of PHEWA, organized for grassroots implementation of General Assembly policies in the areas of community ministries and faith-based community organizing, addictions, domestic violence, HIV and AIDS, reproductive options, specialized pastoral ministries, child advocacy, disabilities, health and wholeness, and serious mental illness.

We ask you to call to our attention the remarkable work being done across the denomination with those who find themselves marginalized or forgotten. These awards recognize and celebrate those ministries and, by doing so, help to remind of us of God's call to do justice and to love kindness as we walk humbly with God.

#### **PHEWA seeks nominations of:**

- PC (USA) congregations that, either through ecumenical or interfaith community ministry, or through a special project of the congregation, have been faithful, creative and effective in their ministry to and with the community. The **COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION AWARD** is presented by PHEWA's Presbyterian Association for Community Transformation (PACT).
- Persons, congregations, or PC (USA) entities that are exemplary in their affirmation, support, and advocacy for the gifts, rights, and responsibilities of persons with disabilities in the total life of the church. The **NANCY JENNINGS AWARD** is presented by PHEWA's Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC).

- PC (USA) congregations or church professionals that have contributed significantly in the field of addiction prevention, intervention and recovery. The **DAVID HANCOCK AWARD** is presented by PHEWA's Presbyterians for Addiction Action (PAA).
- PC (USA) lay persons who, as volunteers or activists, have been instrumental in getting their church and community involved in issues related to drug and alcohol abuse through education, awareness or treatment. The **MARGARET A FUAD AWARD** is also presented by PAA.
- PC (USA) congregations that have demonstrated outstanding leadership in their ministry with those who have a serious mental illness and with their families. The **FLORENCE IVERSEN KRAFT AWARD** is presented by PHEWA's Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN).
- PC(USA) congregations that, through prayerful action and through their ministry, walk alongside sisters and brothers who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS, initiating or supporting activities within the U.S. in meaningful and lasting ways. The ministries should result in increased sensitization to the issue and demonstrated impact on those affected. The recipient congregation of The **FAITH IN ACTION AWARD**, presented by PHEWA's Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) will be one that shows God's unconditional love for all people by striving to break down the walls of stigma and discrimination around HIV/AIDS.
- PC (USA) congregations or individuals from that congregation who continue to demonstrate a commitment to eliminating domestic violence, through education, advocacy, and other intervention efforts should be nominated for the **BREAKING THE SILENCE AWARD**, presented by PHEWA's Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network (PADVN).

**Learn about past recipients of PHEWA's awards by going to:**

<http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/awards.htm>.

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**To nominate a ministry, congregation or individual for the 2012 awards, please submit the following information by February 15, 2012:**

Name of person/congregation being nominated, the contact person for the nomination with addresses, phone numbers, email addresses for both, and a two-page description of the ministry, including why they are deserving of this recognition.

**Electronic submissions are preferred, but nominations sent by mail will also be considered. Send to: [susan.stack@pcusa.org](mailto:susan.stack@pcusa.org) or to: PHEWA, 100 Witherspoon St., Rm. 3228, Louisville, KY 40202-1396**

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# PRESBYTERIAN AIDS NETWORK



## Leadership Team



**Ann Jones, co-moderator**, retired three years ago after 40 years of professional employment in maternal child health, community health nursing, nursing education and with addictions issues. For the last 16 years she worked as a marriage and family therapist with a pastoral counseling center integrating psychology and spirituality and is part of the Network for Spiritual Progressives. Ann has master's degrees in community health nursing and marriage and family therapy. Her interest in Habitat for Humanity took her to Africa, and over the past ten years she has returned to learn about the impact of HIV/AIDS and to work in various clinic and social service settings. With a passion for HIV/AIDS advocacy, she started a local AIDS action group for grandmothers in solidarity with African grandmothers caring for children orphaned by AIDS. She has also worked with Bread for the World, an Indiana Department of Peace group, the Columbus, Indiana Peace Fellowship, and the Columbus Inclusive Community Coalition, an advocacy group for GLBT issues. An elder in First Presbyterian Church of Columbus, Ann continues her interest in Habitat by working yearly at the Jimmy Carter Work Project.



**George Kerr, co-moderator**, exemplifies the spirit of collaboration necessary to meet the evolving challenges of HIV/AIDS. A nationally renowned community activist and grassroots non-profit executive, Kerr has been a staple in the fight against HIV/AIDS in the Greater Washington, DC, Metropolitan Area for more than 18 years. George serves as Executive Director of the Westminster Presbyterian Church Syringe, Training, Advocacy, Resources, and Treatment (START) at Westminster program, with a long and committed history of effectively working with some of the most prominent health service providers in the District. Under his stewardship, the START at Westminster program has served thousands of active and recovering drug users—linking them to recovery, treatment and harm reduction services, offered seniors invaluable HIV/AIDS prevention education services, and provided HIV testing, counseling and referral to over 2,000 DC residents within the last two years. Kerr also continues to work on national advocacy efforts like the Campaign 2 End AIDS to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS housing, harm reduction programs and treatment funding needs of those living with HIV and AIDS.



**Emily Rose Proctor (formerly Emily Martin)**, grew up Dothan, Alabama, graduated from Williams College in 2003 and from Columbia Theological Seminary in 2009. Her encounters with HIV began on a year-long Thomas J. Watson Fellowship to explore the Church's response to HIV and AIDS in South Africa, and inspired her to get involved in raising awareness about HIV in the United States. She joined the PAN leadership team in 2005, serving as co-moderator from 2007 to 2011. Emily currently serves as associate pastor at Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, MD, where she also volunteers as a community-based HIV tester with Hope Springs and the Shalem Project of the University of Maryland.



**Audra Cain Grogg** is from Louisville, Kentucky, where she lives, plays and works today. Since 2007, she has been the volunteer Assistant Director of Camp Heart to Heart, a week-long summer camp for children affected by HIV/ AIDS. The children and their families have been a tremendous asset to Audra's life. She feels very fortunate to be a part of an organization that fosters acceptance, care and the opportunity for social growth for children facing adversity. Audra serves Covenant Community Church as an elder and a member of the Worship Planning Team. She and her husband, Doug, enjoy cooking, boating, home improvement projects and playing with their two year old springer spaniel.



**Donna Stroup** is an epidemiologist and public health professional who has worked in the area of health education and HIV/AIDS prevention, first domestically with surveillance at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She currently directs her own company (Data for Solutions, Inc.). In that role, she serves as a senior advisor to UNAIDS and WHO for issues related to populations most at risk for HIV and AIDS. She is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association and an honorary member of the Epidemic Intelligence Service. She has been a member of PAN's Leadership Team since 2009.



**Timothy Jessen**, the son of a Presbyterian minister and a seminary-trained mother, served pastorates in Buckhorn, Prestonsburg, and Ashland in Eastern Kentucky for more than thirty years. He helped establish the first health clinic in Buckhorn in a region that had had no medical services at all for many decades. In Floyd County, with some of the worst public schools in the state, he worked for the reform of the public education system. In Ashland, he worked with a soup kitchen and other cooperative social service entities. In 2001, Tim moved to Indiana to serve a small parish, later retiring in Bloomington where he and his wife are involved in musical activities associated with Indiana University. In the Presbytery

of Ohio Valley where Tim has served as pulpit supply, he has been involved in AIDS awareness. He has also served as a chaplain for a hospital, a nursing home and a prison. Currently he teaches philosophy and philosophy of religion for Ivy Tech Community College.



**Bob Schminkey** is a former co-moderator of PAN and now serves as chair of the PAN Advisory Committee. He is a community organizer, consultant and fundraiser. A former PCUSA Mission Worker in South Africa, he has led more than 20 travel/study groups to southern Africa. As senior vice-president of the investment company RISA and executive director of the RISA Charitable Trust, Bob worked to invest in small, medium and micro enterprise development in South Africa. He has also worked for Bread for the World, Church World Service and as director of a local social service agency in Tallahassee, Florida. He is a Ruling Elder at the Presbyterian Church of Chestertown, Maryland. Bob currently serves as Executive Director of Meeting Ground ministries in Elkton, Maryland. Meeting Ground is a community working to help meet the basic human needs of people who are experiencing homelessness and to address the root causes that perpetuate the cycle of poverty and homelessness.



## PRESBYTERIAN AIDS NETWORK

PAN is a network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA)  
A ministry of the Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministry, General Assembly Mission Council  
100 Witherspoon Street, Room 3228, Louisville, KY 40202-1396  
Phone: 888-728-7228, ext. 5800 • Fax: 502/569-8034

[www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan](http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/pan)