

HIV/AIDS RESOURCE TOOLKIT FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Compiled by the International Alliance for the Prevention of AIDS (IAPA) and our University Service Learning Students from Arizona State University

This toolkit contains links and resources to enable religious organizations to incorporate the topic of HIV/AIDS into their messaging and outreach. Also highlighted are examples of how some churches are currently supporting their congregations in this effort.

The toolkit is comprised of 5 sections:

1. HIV Prevention Education Modules Link
2. Examples of how Churches are teaching about HIV/AIDS
3. What to include in a church bulletin to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS
4. Sermon examples
5. Resource links

1. HIV Prevention Education Modules

The HIV Prevention Education Outreach Program teaches through online modules in 30 minutes an introduction and science of HIV, transmission, prevention, progression, testing & treatment and supporting those living with HIV. <https://iapaid.org/education-modules/>

2. EXAMPLES OF HOW CHURCHES ARE TEACHING ABOUT HIV/AIDS

The **United Church of Christ** teaches a curriculum called “Our Whole Lives” which is considered to be the gold standard for comprehensive sexuality education, and includes education and information for prevention of sexually transmitted HIV and other STD’s. You will find more information from the United Church of Christ about their Our Whole Lives program here. [www.ucc.org]

The United Church of Christ has also been giving out condoms and inviting people into conversation about healthy sexuality and safe sex for many years. You will find those resources here: PDFs of the brochures are available in Spanish and English. There are also large print English and large print Spanish editions.

The United Church of Christ has also been using the SAVE Toolkit in the U.S. The SAVE Toolkit creators have developed some worship helps.

In addition, various denominations offer worship resources for HIV/AIDS online. Here is the Google search.

The **Unitarian Universalist Association** also offers a version of the “Our Whole Lives” program which is a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education curriculum for use in both secular settings and communities. You can find it here: [www.uua.org/re/owl]

3. WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A CHURCH BULLETIN TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT HIV AND AIDS

State the facts:

- 36 million people in the world living with HIV
- 1.2 million living with HIV are in the United States
- Less than half of all people living with HIV are getting treatment
- HIV does not discriminate- anyone can get it
- UNAIDS has a 90-90-90-0 by 2030 initiative: 90% HIV tested, 90% on medication, 90% undetectable, and zero stigma

Leverage global activities to include the topic, such as World AIDS Day on December 1st

- Recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of only eight official global public health campaigns
- <https://www.worldaidsday.org/>
- Include how wearing a red ribbon is the universal symbol to show support and awareness for people living with HIV, especially on World AIDS Day

Create your own specific event such as World AIDS Sunday

- Dedicate a Sunday to raising awareness in your faith community about the HIV/AIDS crisis
- This can mean dedicating a service to those affected by HIV, hosting a speaker, and offering red ribbons for everyone to wear.

Provide contact information for local organizations and encourage the community to get involved as volunteers or donate. Examples:

- Aunt Rita’s Foundation: Dedicated to promoting HIV prevention and testing and hosts several fundraising events.
<https://www.auntritas.org/>
- Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS: Created by and for people infected with HIV/AIDS.
<https://www.swcenter.org/>

Include a prayer

- Example: This is a prayer from the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa (Malawi):

*“God of all compassion,
Comfort your sons and daughters who live with HIV. Spread over us all your blanket of Mercy,
Love and Peace. Open our eyes to your presence reflected in their faces. Open our ears to your
truth echoing in their hearts.*

*Give us strength to weep with the grieving,
walk with the lonely, and stand with the depressed.
May our love mirror your love for those who live in fear, who live under stress and who suffer
rejection.*

*God of life, help us to build a world in which no one dies alone and everyone lives accepted,
wanted and loved. Amen”*

Examples of how other churches are doing it:

- **Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN):** This network offers services to the faith-based communities who wish to have an impact on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. These services can include educational tools and fund raising resources. They provide a list of resources that are free to use. This can be found at <http://www.phewacomunity.org/panaidsnetwork.html>.

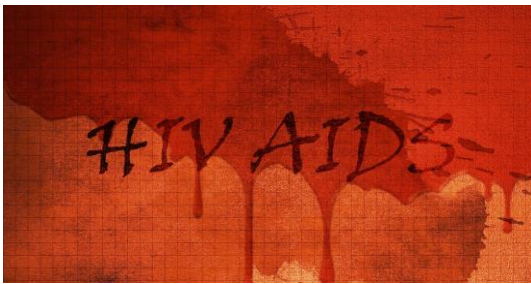
An example of a church bulletin insert they provide can be found here:

http://www.phewacomunity.org/images/bulletin_insert_WAD.pdf

- **United Church of Christ HIV and AIDS Network (UCAN):** Provides care, education, and prevention resources in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Their website is filled with videos, resources, and information on how the faith-based community can get involved. <http://www.ucc.org/ucan>

- Free clipart to use:





4. SERMON EXAMPLES

- ❖ **Christian Sermon Guide (Children and HIV):** https://ovcsupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2017.3.9_sermon-guide_web_tagged.pdf
- ❖ **World AIDS Day 2015 – Rev. Miak – Free Community Church (27 min):** <http://www.freecomchurch.org/sermon/world-aids-day-2015-rev-miak/>
- ❖ **What Would Jonah Do? An HIV/AIDS Advocacy Sermon:** <http://justiceunbound.org/carousel/what-would-jonah-do/>
- ❖ **HIV/Aids and the Church: A Compassionate Response:** <http://www.samaritancentral.org/wp-content/uploads/ChristianResponsetoAIDS.pdf>

Here is a sample sermon:

When going through serious life changes people often turn to the church. We all can choose to live in grace and truth when it comes to situations that seem outside the bounds of the church. HIV is a chronic illness. People living with HIV need help or support dealing with life challenges and ensuring that they receive dignified medical care. Hearing that a loved one has tested positive for HIV, friends or family may respond with shock, fear, guilt, disbelief, anger, and sadness, even depression. The truth is that HIV is a virus, and not a

moral issue. People who are affected by HIV need our help, not our condemnation. It is also important for everyone to understand evidence-informed HIV prevention methods and the importance of HIV testing, counseling, treatment, and care. The H in HIV is for human – everyone needs to hear this information.

2 Kings 5:1-14

The story of Naaman has great parallels to the HIV and AIDS situation today.

1. Naaman had a disease that was incurable in those days. As with HIV, there was no known cure for leprosy.
2. Leprosy at the time was feared as highly contagious and debilitating.
3. There was a lot of stigma related to leprosy. Those infected were excluded from the society.

It took the help of his friends and servants to convince him to go through with the “treatment.” They supported him through it, and he got healed.

Although HIV has no cure, an individual living with HIV that is taking their anti-retroviral treatment routinely can live a long, healthy productive life and bring blessings on our communities.

Supporting our Brothers and Sisters (Matthew 25:31-40)

HIV continues to be a challenge, not only to the scientific world and our society, but also to us as Christians. This virus touches the lives of children and families globally, with over two million children under 15 years of age living with HIV.

The Bible mandates us to provide timely support, as seen in Matthew 25:31-40. Here is what the scripture tells us:

³¹When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne.

³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

³³He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.

³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,

³⁶I need clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?”

³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?

³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?”

⁴⁰The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

Adapted from:

Strengthening High Impact Interventions for an AIDS-free Generation (AIDSFree) Project. 2017. Christian Sermon Guide: Children and HIV. Arlington, VA: AIDSFree Project.

5. RESOURCE LINKS

BASICS OF HIV / AIDS

What are HIV and AIDS?

<https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/about-hiv-and-aids/what-are-hiv-and-aids>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/whatishiv.html>

How is HIV Transmitted?

<https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/about-hiv-and-aids/how-is-hiv-transmitted>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/transmission.html>

Living with HIV

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/stigma-discrimination.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/newly-diagnosed.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/telling-others.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/protecting-others.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/mental-health.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/healthy-living.html>

Treatment for HIV

<https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/about-hiv-and-aids/symptoms-of-hiv>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/treatment.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/livingwithhiv/opportunisticinfections.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng22Ucr33aw>

UNAIDS

90-90-90 Treatment

<http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/909090>

Human Rights

<http://www.unaids.org/en/topic/rights>

Fast Track-Cities Initiatives

<http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/campaigns/cities>

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE PREVENTION OF AIDS

<https://iap aids.org/>

Education – 7 video modules that cover the ways HIV is transmitted, prevented and treated to how to be healthy living with HIV.

<https://iap aids.org/education-modules/>