

December is HIV/AIDS Awareness Month

HIV/AIDS Awareness Month provides an opportunity to raise awareness around HIV/AIDS, commemorate those who have passed on, and celebrate victories, such as increased access to treatment and prevention services.

Faith communities can get involved by:

- Offering educational opportunities with guest speakers from local HIV service organizations.
- Including information about the HIV epidemic and the importance of getting tested in congregational newsletters, social media and other communication outlets.
- Participating in fundraising or advocacy activities.
- Speaking out against HIV stigma.
- Assisting with onsite or mobile testing events by being a greeter, registrar, health educator or HIV tester.
- Volunteering at a local HIV service organization, providing administrative support, such as filing, data entry or answering phones, helping with special events, providing language skills, and offering professional services, such as legal assistance or medical care, if licensed.

STAND UP TO STIGMA



- ✓ **Talk openly** about HIV and stigma
- ✓ Choose **supportive language** that is not stigmatizing
- ✓ Speak out to **correct myths** and **stereotypes**
- ✓ **Educate** yourself and others



Prayer: *Keep us mindful of our sisters and brothers nearby and around the world who are living with HIV and AIDS. We ask that they feel your healing presence. Fill us with hope as we develop new therapeutics and await a cure.*



The words we use matter. When talking about HIV, certain words and language may have a negative meaning for people at high risk for HIV or those who are living with HIV.

Consider using the preferred terms below to avoid promoting stigma and misinformation around HIV.

	<p>Problematic word or phrase: AIDS (when referring to the virus, HIV)</p>	→		<p>Preferred word or phrase: HIV, HIV and AIDS (when referring to both)</p>
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Why: AIDS itself is not a condition. It is a range of conditions, or a syndrome, that occurs when a person's immune system is weakened by the HIV infection.

	<p>Problematic word or phrase: To catch AIDS, To catch HIV, To pass on HIV</p>	→		<p>Preferred word or phrase: To be diagnosed with HIV, To acquire HIV, To transmit HIV</p>
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Why: AIDS cannot be caught or transmitted. People become infected with HIV. HIV can be transmitted, but it is not hereditary.

	<p>Problematic word or phrase: Body fluids</p>	→		<p>Preferred word or phrase: Blood, amniotic fluid, semen, pre-ejaculate, vaginal fluids, rectal fluids, breast milk</p>
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Why: Only some body fluids transmit HIV. "Body fluids" covers all fluids coming from the body and not just those involved in HIV transmission. Be specific if you can.



Find HIV events, resources and much more at hiv.gov.