

Closing Prayer

Loving God, we thank you for giving us opportunities to support communities near and far away who are serving your people who suffer from HIV. Let us never forget our mission and ministry to those who need support and care. May we live our call to be one body in Christ by including those with HIV as a priority. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Closing Song: *We Live in Hope*

We live in hope for God is always present despite the hurt and pain we have suffered long.

We live in faith, that God will not abandon the precious child to whom we all belong.

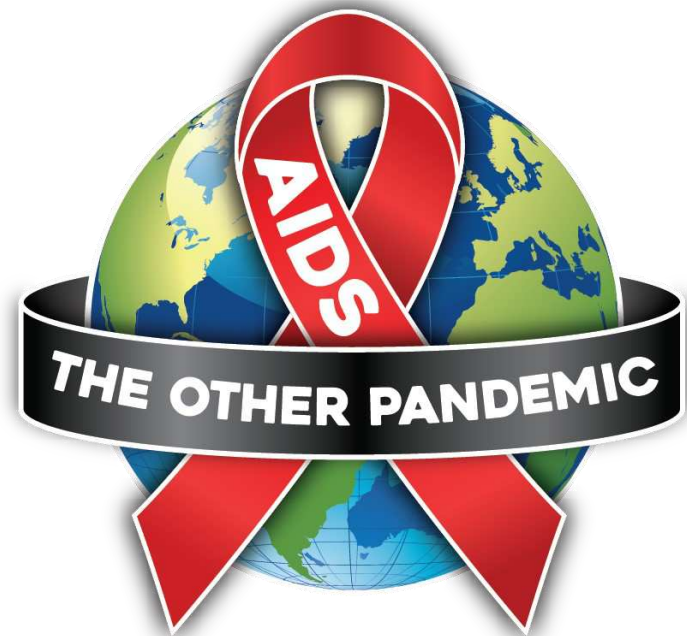
We live in love, with grace and peace enduring as God renews, our spirits are made strong.

Do not lose heart, for God so loved the world that life and hope are touched with healing grace.

God reconciles, restores, redeems the broken and reunites our hearts in love's embrace.

O God of hope, our prayers we lift to you. O spread your love on all within this place.

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***IHM Prayer Service
for and with all who suffer
from **HIV/AIDS*****

Dec. 1, 2023

Let communities lead

WORLD AIDS DAY PRAYER 2023

LET COMMUNITIES LEAD

Opening Song: *Christ Be Our Light* by Bernadette Farrell # 590

Lighting of the AIDS Candle

Introduction: Sue Rakoczy, Chairperson of the HIV-AIDS Committee

Opening Prayer

Loving God, as we gather to celebrate World Aids Day, we pray for local communities all over the world who are taking the lead to support those living with HIV. We depend upon the guidance of your Holy Spirit to empower caring people everywhere to respond to the needs in their own neighborhoods and towns. May we build bridges with one another, knowing that your love for each person will sustain our outreach and deepen our sense of common humanity. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Reading: Excerpts from First Letter of John, Acts of the Apostles, Galatians, First Letter of Peter and the Gospel of John

Reader 1

Sisters and brothers, our love cannot be an abstract theory that we only talk about, but a way of life demonstrated through our loving deeds." (1 John 3:18)

Reader 2

...We must exert ourselves to support the weak. (Acts 20:35)

Reader 1

Carry one another's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal. 6:2)

Reader 2

Finally, all of you, be like-minded and sympathetic; love one another; be compassionate and humble. (1 Peter 3:8)

Reader 1

This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. (John 15:12-13)

For Reflection: How aware are we of the number of persons suffering from HIV-AIDS, in the United States, Africa, Haiti and Asia?

What are I/we doing to alleviate their struggle?

Song: *Who Will Speak?*

by Marty Haugen

Who will speak if we don't if we/you don't?
Who will speak if we don't if we/you don't?
Who will speak so their voice will be heard?
Oh, who will speak if we/you don't?

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Response

L. God open our eyes to the systems around us that oppress, hold down and disadvantage the most vulnerable in society,

Refrain:

So that we may let communities lead, may we increase and abound in love for one another and all people.

L. God, open our ears to the myths, stereotypes and lies that keep these systems going. **R.**

L. God, open our mouths to challenging conversations about race, sexual orientation and differences. **R.**

L. God, open our hearts to the understanding that we are all affected, by HIV-AIDS. **R.**

L. God, open our eyes to see how communities affected lead and show us how to support them. **R.**

Together we pray:

Side A. O Creator, our world is large, yet the global community is fragile. We glimpse the needs of our sisters and brothers and those are great.

Side B. We want to turn away but you call us back. We want simple solutions but you want us to help solve complex problems.

Side A. Through your Church, you call us to listen, to learn, to reflect and to act. Give us a sense of our place in this web of creation.

Side B. Give us wisdom of mind and generosity of heart to seek your will in the world today. Inspire us to respond to the call to live in solidarity with impoverished countries of the world.

All: So that all children of God might live in dignity and peace.