

**LEADERSHIP**

**STOP AIDS – KEEP THE PROMISE**



**WORLD AIDS DAY  
2007**

## **Background on World AIDS Day themes**

The overall purpose of the World AIDS Campaign from 2005 to 2010 is to ensure that leaders and decision makers deliver on their promises on AIDS, including the provision of Universal Access to Treatment, Care, Support and Prevention services by 2010. Within that five-year mission, annual campaigning themes are selected which are timely, relevant and adaptable to a number of different regions and issues. The World AIDS Campaign has determined the theme for World AIDS Day since 1997.

As with past World AIDS Day themes, leadership has been chosen as a loose global campaigning concept. The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance consulted with faith-based constituents about the theme for World AIDS Day 2007 and gave feedback to the Global Steering Committee of the World AIDS Campaign.

The Global Steering Committee selected the theme of leadership during their fifth steering committee meeting held in Geneva in February 2007.

## **Introduction to World AIDS Day 2007**

The World AIDS Campaign chose "Leadership" as the theme for World AIDS Day 2007 and 2008. This theme will continue to be promoted with the campaigning slogan, "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise."

"Leadership" as a theme replaces the 2006 theme of "Accountability." The World AIDS Campaign hopes that making leadership the theme of the next two World AIDS Days will help encourage leadership on AIDS within all levels of society and inspire and foster champions with a range of different groups and networks at local and international levels. Faith-based organisations will have a special responsibility to encourage and highlight religious leadership in the response to HIV/AIDS.<sup>1</sup>

## **Theological Reflection**

If we accept the call to lead, will we lead the right way? The scriptures remind us that if one of us shall cause a vulnerable one to stumble, it will be as if a millstone were tied around our neck and be cast into the depths (Luke 17:2).

Yet, despite the dangers inherent in our eagerness or reluctance to lead, God calls us to lead, and to lead boldly! The Bible contains a long litany of men and women called by God to lead: Moses, Gideon, Kings Saul, David, and Solomon,

---

<sup>1</sup> "Keep the Promise: HIV and AIDS Campaign Action Alert," 06 March 2007, from the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, Geneva, Switzerland.

Esther, the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ and his disciples, the Samaritan woman at the well, and the Apostle Paul.

Some are called to leadership by example and some to proclamation. For Jesus Christ, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, there was little or no distinction (Hebrews 12:2). The Bible makes clear that Christian leadership is not so much about heroics as it is about faithfulness. As the life and death of Jesus Christ makes abundantly clear, Christian leadership is not necessarily about success either. When our efforts as humans fail, God will intercede and make them more than sufficient.

How are we as Christians called to be leaders against this pandemic that is HIV/AIDS? We understand from our scriptures that leadership requires radical thinking, unsettling examples, and divine inspiration. Orthodox habits of religion have failed us in the fight against the contamination of our bodies by HIV/AIDS as much as they failed the Sadducees and Pharisees in their fight against the contamination of the people of God by sin. In Southern Africa, a radical new Christian leadership is called by God to chart a new course, to enable healing, and to invoke acceptance of those infected into the kingdom of God. The following liturgy suggests a need for more 'shepherd' leadership. A shepherd leads by example, provides protection, and is ever-present. Many biblical leaders were first shepherds, many parables related to the shepherd's role, and Jesus is the penultimate shepherd leader! Let us in our worship and action be shepherd leaders.

## **Suggestions to Communicate Our Faith**

- ❖ Provide red ribbons for the congregation - the red ribbon is the international symbol of compassion for people affected by HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Place a red ribbon on the altar or in some other prominent place.
- ❖ Light a special candle.
- ❖ Deliver a special sermon related to HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Sing and pray relevant hymns and prayers, respectively.
- ❖ Display posters about HIV/AIDS in your church and have information available that people can take home.
- ❖ Invite a person living positively and faithfully with HIV, someone with AIDS, or someone who is working in the health care sector such as a nurse, doctor, or caregiver to address the congregation during a service.
- ❖ Visit a hospice or a related centre that cares for people or children affected and infected with HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Visit a child-headed household as a build-up or follow-up to the worship service.
- ❖ Include information on AIDS programmes and resources in your pew leaflet or on the notice board.

- ❖ Develop an AIDS ministry in your parish.<sup>2</sup>

## Psalm 23

or

### A Psalm for those in need

Roman Catholic, Pope Paul VI declared:

“that it’s an intolerable scandal,  
when so many of us are hungry;  
with hospitals, clinics and classrooms needing to be built,  
with states or individuals squandering money on ostentation”!

“A scandal, when so many are sick and dying,  
when so many are in such great need,  
to spend billions upon billions on weapons of war”.

*Ah, but that was long, long, ago,*  
back in 1967,  
two dear, and now dead, children ago-  
and good Pope Paul, he’s also dead-  
and this sick child of mine,  
will also soon be dead.

Dying in my arms,  
but once blue eyes  
now the colour of pain.

There’s no doctor in our village,  
no medicine or health care for miles.

My poor country’s pocketbook  
is now bone-bare for medical care  
and we’re heavily in debt.

No money for medicine,  
or doctors to train or hire;  
our resources used  
to buy from your credit catalogues  
more machines for war.

---

<sup>2</sup> Diakonia Council of Churches, “World AIDS Day Liturgy, 2006: ‘Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise!’”  
2006, 1.

Why are weapons, agents of death,  
more necessary for peace  
than food, shelter and medicine,  
agents of life?

No answer!

Nor do I have one,  
and, see, my child's dead:  
please forget I even dared to speak.<sup>3</sup>

## Praise and Worship

1. As'amben' somdumisa  
As'amben' somdumisa  
As'amben' somdumisa  
As'amben' somdumisa (x2)

Let us go and praise the Lord  
Let us go and praise the Lord  
Let us go and praise the Lord  
Let us go and praise the Lord (x2)

2. Because God lives, we can face tomorrow  
Because God lives, all fear is gone.  
Because we know, yes, we know, God holds the future  
And life is worth the living just because God lives.

3. Shine, Jesus, Shine,  
Fill this land with the Father's glory  
Blaze spirit blaze  
Set our hearts on fire  
Flow river flow  
Flood the nations with grace and mercy  
Send forth your word, Lord and let there be light.

## Call to Worship

Leader: Draw near to the light of God's love;  
flock to the One who leads us by the still waters.

**People: The Lord is our shepherd; we shall not want.  
God is light for all who are stumbling in darkness.**

---

<sup>3</sup> Edward Hays, *Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim: A Personal Manual for Prayer and Ritual*, (Leavenworth, KS: Forest of Peace Books, 1989), 165.

Leader: Awake, all who are sleeping through God's wonders;  
look around you and observe the light Christ gives.

**People: We gather in the name of Jesus Christ,  
Who is the light of the world and our light.**

Leader: The God revealed in Jesus Christ is our host.  
We are guests of One who feeds and heals us.

**People: We have come to worship the God of mercy.  
We are here to be fed and enlightened.<sup>4</sup>**

## Opening Hymn

### Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant

Tune: Servant Song

- 1 & 6 Won't you let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you?  
Pray that I may have the grace  
to let you be my servant, too.
- 2 We are pilgrims on a journey,  
we are travellers on the road.  
We are here to help each other  
go the mile and share the load.
- 3 I will hold the Christ light for you  
in the shadow of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.
- 4 I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
'till we've seen this journey through.
- 5 When we sing to God in heaven  
we shall find such harmony,  
Born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Lavon Bayler. *Fresh Winds of the Spirit, Book 2: Liturgical Resources for Year A*, (Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1992), 60.

<sup>5</sup> "The New Century Hymnal," (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1995), 539.

## Opening Prayer (Praise and Adoration)

We do indeed bow down before you and sing you our praises,  
O God, you are the shepherd who tends to our needs.  
You gather us from among different races and cultures  
and blend us into a people who radiate your love.  
You show deference toward us as you stoop to bear our pleas and our praise.  
We wear proudly the mantle of your grace and mercy  
as we worship you humbly in thought, word and deed. Amen.<sup>6</sup>

## Call to Confession

The Great Shepherd, Jesus Christ,  
sacrificed his own life for ours.  
Like lost sheep, we have wandered away  
following not our Shepherd's voice.  
We are hungry; we are thirsty.  
Amongst the hard and unforgiving rocks,  
we are in peril.  
Let us cry out to our Shepherd,  
acknowledging that we have strayed.  
The Shepherd, though saddened by our carelessness,  
will welcome us back.  
Let us confess our sins to God  
so that we might allow ourselves to be found.<sup>7</sup>

## Prayer of Confession

We pray that you, O God, will bring our hearts and minds, our plans and actions, our hopes and prayers, to a greater love for all people. We confess to that we have favoured some and not others, and thus left the hundredth to be lost. O God, break the silence of prejudice. We confess to you that we have not trained ourselves properly, so that we have not the skills to face the dangers that confront us. Oh God, break the isolation of ignorance. We confess that, despite the proximity of need and the ease by which we can encounter it, we have cocooned ourselves in our own homes. Break the false sense of security in earthly fortresses, and erase the fear that prevents communication. Equip us to be leaders, who are spirit-filled and faithful. Amen.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> James G. Kirk. *When We Gather: A Book of Prayers for Worship for Years A, B, and C*, Rev. Ed. (Kentucky: Geneva Press, 2001), p. 47.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. Scott Couper, United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, Bethel Congregational Church, Durban, South Africa, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Inspired by Paul B. Robinson. *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*, eds. Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi, (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1990), 205-206.

## Prayer of Assurance

God promises us that in the midst of our brokenness and our failures,  
there are signs of wholeness, hope, and resurrection.  
The stories we share with one another in faith tell of God's work in us –  
changing despair and depression into awareness,  
breaking down the walls that divide,  
healing wounds of the Spirit,  
creating the power to live in new ways  
and the joy to live fully.  
In gratitude for this great love, let us stand and sing of our hopes.<sup>9</sup>

## Second Hymn

### There is a Balm in Gilead

Tune: Balm in Gilead, irr. With refrain

**Refrain**        There is a Balm in Gilead, to make the wounded whole,  
                      There is a Balm in Gilead, to heal the sin-sick soul.

Sometimes I feel discouraged, and think my work's in vain,  
But then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again. **Refrain**

Don't ever feel discouraged, for Jesus is your friend,  
Who, if you ask for knowledge, will never fail to lend. **Refrain**

If you cannot preach like Peter, if you cannot pray like Paul,  
You can tell the love of Jesus who died to save us all. **Refrain**<sup>10</sup>

## Scripture Readings

Hebrew Scriptures: I Samuel 17:12-37

Gospel:                John 21:15-19

Epistle:              Romans 12:6-8

---

<sup>9</sup> Mary Anne Morefield. *Flames of the Spirit: Resources for Worship Like Bread for the Journey*, (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 1985), 81.

<sup>10</sup> *The New Century Hymnal*, (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1995), 553.

## Sermon Reflections<sup>11</sup>

### I Samuel 17: 12-37

From the Hebrew scriptures, many themes, all dealing with leadership, may be explored. Hence, the reading selected is long, allowing the preacher to include as many of the leadership themes as desired. First, David was a young shepherd (17:15, 20, and 34). It was as a shepherd that David developed his nascent leadership skills. Addressing himself as Saul's servant, David implores him to allow his challenging of Goliath. David's CV as a shepherd is convincing. David had fought successfully against lions and bears, rescuing the lambs from their mouths (17:34-36)! David, though small and young, was brave and dedicated.

We read that David was the youngest, and therefore considered to be the least, of Jesse's sons (17:12-14). David served his brothers, and hence Saul's army against the Philistines as a servant (17:15-18). In many senses, David was a home-based care worker, as an itinerant servicing his brothers' needs such as bringing food and medicine to them. By bringing food and supplies to his brothers and their commander, David was supporting the 'front-line' troops. In many ways, this form of leadership is servant leadership. In the fight against HIV/AIDS, churches and members of churches can support the front-line workers in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In this manner, churches and members need not start ministries 'from scratch' but rather provide desperately needed aid and material to the soldiers in the trenches.

Saul clothed David with his armour, a helmet, and a suit of metal (17:38-39). David must have looked a strange sight with the helmet below his eyes, awkward and oversized clothes, and a sword that was likely longer and heavier than he was! David walked in an ungainly fashion and finally said, "I can't wear this stuff. I am not used to it" (17:39) and so he removed the armour. Many times as Christians, we see the resources and strategies of well-heeled NGOs; we see the vehicles belonging to the Department of Health and the salaries they are able to pay professionals; we see the enormous administrative capacities of the Department of Education and the amount of equipment they have at their disposal. Therefore, as individuals and churches we feel puny and small – overwhelmed by the scale of the pandemic and the resources that will need to be brought to bear. We feel inadequate. David is an example of how we can use what we have effectively. We do what we know how to do and we use what we know how to use. Let us try not to be someone we are not. We may just discover that we are far more capable of bringing health and wholeness than all the professionals put together.

---

<sup>11</sup> Reverend Scott Couper, United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, Bethel Congregational Church, Durban, South Africa, 2007.

Finally, Goliath seemed invincible. So, does HIV/AIDS. The negative ramifications of HIV/AIDS are massive (unemployment, orphans, poverty, malnutrition, loss of education, marginalization caused by stigma, and death). How are we, ordinary Christians, going to battle so many problems? Our response to HIV/AIDS is to be the same as David's response to Goliath: "You come to me with disease and heartache. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of armies of Israel, whom you have defied...who does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hand" (17:45 and 47).

### **John 21: 15-19**

This scripture is one of the most emotional of all the scriptures found in the scriptures. Peter, the one who denied Jesus three times, was the recipient of grace, three times, from Jesus, thus forgiving him. Knowing Peter's failures, repentance and forgiveness are offered in the form of Jesus' heart-wrenching question, "Simon, Son of John, do you love me?" Each time, Peter is successively more hurt by the question. Each time Peter responds in the affirmative, Jesus repeats his refrain, "Then feed my sheep." Let's face it: the church has failed those suffering with HIV/AIDS. We, as the church, have denied Jesus, not three times, but tens of thousands of times. As a faith community, we have denied we know Jesus in those suffering from HIV/AIDS. And, we have abandoned them to their deaths. The church, thanks be to God, is beginning to wake-up. Jesus offers us, his servants, a new opportunity to know him, to claim him, to follow him! Jesus asks us as ministers and lay people, "Do you love me!" Let us respond, "Yes, Lord, you know we love you!"

But the story ends not there. Jesus confides to Peter that the road following him will not be easily travelled, and his own life will likely be taken as a consequence. Jesus prophesies that Peter's leadership will come at a cost. Leadership is not all about battles and victory, but more often than not losses and sacrifice – both require bravery. As shepherd leaders, who feed God's sheep, we are expected to sacrifice. There is nothing glamorous, sexy or materially rewarding about fighting HIV/AIDS. It is often monotonous, draining, deeply saddening, and impoverishing. Yet, if we answer, "Yes, Lord, we love you," so we must feed his sheep.

### **Romans 12: 6-8**

The Apostle Paul speaks of the gifts of leadership. None is prioritised over any other. Rather, they are to be gathered and seen as a collective to the glory of God. To fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic many gifts are required: financial, healing, preaching, and teaching. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is in many ways the great 'leveller.' For in our struggle to combat this disease and bring health to those who are infected, the mundane becomes vital. To feed, to wash, to transport, to

hug, to talk, to clean – they all become remarkable and desperately required. Within the context of HIV/AIDS simply ‘doing’ becomes a prophetic demonstration of leadership! No courses, seminars, MBAs, workshops, or degrees are prerequisites. To be a living example is to be a leader. Paul exhorts us to be cheerful in our compassion (12:8). Perhaps this is the greatest leadership challenge we can possibly face.

## **Chorus**

### **Prayer of Intercession, Hope and Promise**

#### **The Bidding**

At the beginning of this new millennium, many families are disrupted by poverty, unemployment, crime, family breakdown and other negative factors. For millions, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is an additional and growing threat.

We are gathered today with people all over the globe to express our solidarity with those infected with and/or affected by HIV/AIDS. We celebrate our sense of belonging to one world family. As we pray together, we share our pain and hurt.

#### **Prayer**

Lord, we know you hear the prayers of your people.  
We turn to you in our need, O God.  
We pray for strength to share the burden of illness  
with those who suffer in the AIDS crisis.  
Help us to see that in sharing one another’s grief,  
we grow in strength and compassion.  
We pray for those who suffer from AIDS or any grief related to it,  
that they may be strengthened to come to you for help.  
Give us, your servant leaders, hearts to respond,  
willing hands to help, and discerning ears to hear your voice.  
We pray for people all over the world.  
Enable them to make wise choices in their lives  
to protect themselves and their loved ones from the HIV infection,  
patience to endure and wisdom to lean on you for strength and courage.  
We pray for families and friends of those who suffer from AIDS. Amen.<sup>12</sup>

or

---

<sup>12</sup> United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, “Responding as Christians to HIV and AIDS,” November, 2003, 6.

## Litany

Leader: Gracious God,  
You are merciful and loving,  
Hear our prayers  
on behalf of all who suffer from AIDS:  
For all who live in fear of the disease,

**People: Grant them peace in their hearts,  
Wisdom in the choices they make,  
And courage to face the days ahead.**

*The congregation may offer petitions for persons for whom prayers are desired.*

Leader: For all who live with the disease of AIDS,

**People: Grant them the gift of your love,  
hope for the future,  
friends to comfort and sustain them,  
the will to live,  
and a faith that resurrection is a promise for *now*  
as well as for eternal life.**

*The congregation may offer petitions for persons for whom prayers are desired.*

Leader: For all who minister to the needs of persons with AIDS,

**People: Grant them compassionate hearts,  
tenderness and patience in their daily tasks,  
and dedication in their ministry to all who suffer.**

*The congregation may offer petitions for persons for whom prayers are desired.*

Leader: For all whose loved ones are affected by AIDS,

**People: Grant them hope each day,  
an awareness that love is forever binding,  
the knowledge that Christ shares their suffering.**

*The congregation may offer petitions for persons for whom prayers are desired.*

Leader: For all who have died of AIDS,  
may light perpetual shine upon them,  
may we always remember them in our hearts.

*The congregation may offer petitions for persons for whom prayers are desired.*

Leader: O God of love, whose mercy has always included those whom we have forgotten, those whom we have isolated, and those who suffer: bless we beseech you all who are afflicted with AIDS.

Comfort them in their pain, sustain them by your Holy Spirit in their days of hopelessness that they may engage in living. Receive them into the arms of your mercy in their dying.

Open our hearts to provide their needs, to take away their isolation, to share their journey of suffering and sorrow as well as hope and joy, and to be present with them in their dying, that no one need suffer alone.

Strengthen all who care for those who are ill, that their service may be filled with the tenderness of your compassion and the fullness of your love, that their words and deeds may make your presence a living reality for those whom they serve.

Bless those who mourn the death of their friends and lovers, that they may not be overwhelmed by death but may receive comfort and strength to meet the days ahead with trust and hope in your goodness and mercy; in Jesus' name we pray.

**People: Amen.**<sup>13</sup>

## **Closing Hymn**

### **For Healing of the Nations**

Tune: Westminster Abbey

For healing of the nations,  
God, we pray with one accord;  
for a just and equal sharing  
of the many things that earth affords;  
to a life of love in action  
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom;  
from despair your world release,  
that, redeemed from war and hatred,  
all may come and go in peace.  
Show us how through care and goodness  
fear will die and hope increase.

---

<sup>13</sup> Vienna Cobb Anderson, *Human Rights: Worship Services for an Age of Change*, eds. Hannah Ward and Jennifer Wild, (Mowbray: London and New York, 1995), 156-157.

All that kills abundant living,  
let it from the earth be banned;  
pride of status, race, or schooling,  
dogmas that obscure your plan.  
In our common quest for justice  
may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator God, have written  
your great Name on human kind;  
for our growing in your likeness  
bring the life of Christ to mind,  
that by our response and service,  
earth its destiny may find.<sup>14</sup>

## Closing Prayer

Creator God, you are beautiful in your created world;  
You are beautiful in the trees that swing and in the wind that blows;  
You are beautiful in the stars that shine and in the sun that rises and sets;  
You are beautiful in the animals that creep and roar;  
You are beautiful in the faces of our families, friends – in all people;  
We see your beauty in all the forms of creation;  
The earth and the heavens tell of your beauty, love and goodness.  
We thank you for the gift of life, for the sacred touch and spark in all life;  
Help us to celebrate it, to live it, to protect it, to maintain it;  
Help us to be good custodians of life; to be good stewards of your resources;  
Help us to fight against all the social injustices that mar the beauty of your  
creation;  
Help us to fight HIV/AIDS and its plunder on life and the quality of life;  
Creator God, grant us another day, another season, another year of life,  
So we can live in praise of your loving touch and creative hand of life.  
This we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.<sup>15</sup>

## Benediction

Leader: Go out into God's pastures; they are everywhere;  
there is food enough for all to share.

**People: A table is prepared for us and all people;  
we will invite others to God's feast.**

---

<sup>14</sup> *The New Century Hymnal*, (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1995), 576.

<sup>15</sup> Musa W. Dube. "Africa Praying: A Handbook on HIV/AIDS Sensitive Sermon Guidelines and Liturgy," ed. Musa W. Dube, (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2003).

Leader: Let the still waters run deep within you.  
God has promised an abiding presence.

**People: We will listen for the Shepherd's voice.  
We will trust God to guide us.**

Leader: Go out to live courageously and give abundantly;  
Christ's life and love empower you.

**People: Surely goodness and mercy will follow us;  
we will dwell with God and serve humanity.**

**All: Amen.**<sup>16</sup>

## **Recessional**

Compiled and distributed by  
Diakonia Council of Churches  
P O Box 61341  
Bishopsgate  
4008  
Phone: 031 3103500  
Fax: 031 3103502  
Email: [the.director@diakonia.org.za](mailto:the.director@diakonia.org.za)  
Website: [www.diakonia.org.za](http://www.diakonia.org.za)

---

<sup>16</sup> Lavon Bayler. *Fresh Winds of the Spirit, Book 2: Liturgical Resources for Year A*, (Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1992, 83.