

# 2012

## Planning Guide

**NATIONAL  
WEEK OF  
PRAYER  
FOR THE  
HEALING  
OF AIDS**

A Vision of  
Unity and Faith  
from

**THE  
BALM  
IN  
GILEAD**  
INC.  
HEALING THROUGH PRAYER,  
EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & SERVICE



# The End Of The AIDS Epidemic Is In Sight

With Prayer, Education,  
Testing & Treatment

**MARCH 4-10, 2012**

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## What is

## The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS?

### Purpose

The purpose of **The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS** is to bring national attention to the AIDS epidemic in the United States and the extraordinary role faith communities *can and are playing* in AIDS prevention, education, service and advocacy.

*The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS* will promote the continuous national mobilization and education of faith communities to take an even greater role in the implementation of AIDS education and services within their local communities and across the nation.

### Program Goal & Objectives

The goal of the campaign is to strengthen the capacity of our nation's faith communities to influence social norms and thereby contribute to the prevention of HIV disease and provide compassionate support to those who are affected.

Program objectives are:

1. To promote a week of AIDS awareness activities through faith institutions to educate the people of the United States about HIV/AIDS
2. To raise awareness of faith communities to support HIV testing, health education, prevention interventions and give unconditional love and support to all those who are affected by HIV/AIDS
3. To bring national, regional and local attention to the critical role faith communities *are playing* in the AIDS epidemic in the United States

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## Components of

### The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS

1. *National Mobilization:* Faith communities are asked to make HIV/AIDS education the focus of their worship experience on Sunday, Friday or Saturday during the Week of Sunday, March 4 - Saturday, March 10, 2012. Congregations are asked to convene at least one AIDS awareness activity during the week.

National, renowned religious leaders of diverse faith communities will be asked to lend their images and influence to bring the nation to prayer and education for the healing of AIDS. The campaign's website will also allow for local leaders to participate in the national discussion, thereby, allowing faith leaders from rural and economic depressed areas of our country to lend their voices.

National faith organizations, AIDS Service communities, civic organizations and public health sectors across the nation will be asked to support the campaign by working to engage local faith communities in **The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS**.

A cyberspace network, including a campaign website, Face Book, My Space and Twitter, will be created and utilized to engage the nation's faith communities in the campaign.

2. *Educational and Prayer Resources:* The Balm In Gilead will translate some of its existing liturgical resources and HIV/AIDS faith-based educational material for a broader audience. New materials and resources will be developed for specific and targeted communities. All materials will be downloadable from the campaign website, including components of the 2012 Toolkit. Toolkit includes suggestions for congregational and community-wide educational activities, AIDS facts and how to get noticed in the local press.
3. Liturgical materials such as worship service bulletin covers with the logo of *The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS* as well as other theological resources will be available from The Balm In Gilead.

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## All People of Faith are invited to Participate!

All faith communities across the nation are asked to participate in the following FOUR ways.

### March 4-10, 2012:

1. Make prayer, education, advocacy and service for the healing of AIDS the focus of the weekly worship service during the week of March 4-10, 2012.
2. The leader of the congregation delivers a sermon or message on HIV education and the role of faith communities in addressing the AIDS epidemic in the United States during the weekly worship service.
3. Offer a special prayer during the worship service for the healing of AIDS.
4. Disseminate HIV educational material to the congregants and to the community during the worship service and throughout the week.

### Additional Ways to Participate:

- Invite persons affected by HIV/AIDS to speak before the congregation about their experience for the purpose of educating and engaging others to take action in HIV prevention, treatment and compassionate care.
- Invite persons who have been involved with HIV/AIDS issues and services to worship with your congregations.
- Invite elected officials and civic leaders to worship with your congregation.
- Distribute red ribbons, or other items, to your congregation to wear during the worship service and throughout the week.
- Partner with your local Health Department or AIDS service organization to support the development and implementation of activities hosted by your congregation during the week of March 4-10, 2012.
- You can customize your activities during the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS to suit the specific unique traditions and culture of your faith community.

**A selection of prayers and liturgical resources  
will be available on line!**

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## Planning Your Activities!

### Community Mobilization Activities!

In addition to your weekly worship service, your congregation is encouraged to host at least one educational program during the *National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS*. The purpose of this activity is to educate your community about the facts of HIV/AIDS; how each individual can prevent the further transmission of HIV; and to inspire everyone to consider how they can provide care, compassion and support to people living with the disease.

Your educational program should:

- Have the ambiance of a worship experience.
- Include a speaker who is living with HIV and/or someone who is affected by the disease.
- Provide the opportunity for AIDS information to be distributed on AIDS prevention and treatment.

### Listed Below are Suggestions for Community Education Forum:

- ❖ HIV/AIDS 101: The Basics
- ❖ Women and HIV/AIDS
- ❖ "Love Me Through It" Video Party
- ❖ Nutritional Needs of People Living with HIV
- ❖ HIV/AIDS and People over 55
- ❖ Pastoral Care for People affected by HIV/AIDS
- ❖ Who Should Get Tested for HIV?
- ❖ Clinical Trials: What Do They Mean for Your Community?
- ❖ How to Advocate for HIV prevention our prison system
- ❖ HIV Treatment Education
- ❖ Holistic Therapies Like Massage, Yoga and Stress Reduction
- ❖ Substance Abuse & HIV: Medical and Spiritual Challenges
- ❖ STDs, HIV and America's Teenagers
- ❖ How to Create an AIDS Ministry
- ❖ Creating a Compassionate Faith Response to HIV/AIDS
- ❖ Calling All Men to get the Facts on HIV

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## Other Suggested Activities:

### ❖ **The Lighting of A Candle**

Open the doors of your place of worship during the Week of Prayer and invite individuals to come and light a candle and have a moment of silence for the healing of AIDS.

### ❖ **Bell Chime Memorial**

Coordinate with faith communities throughout your city or region to ring their bells at a given hour for a certain number of times to commemorate the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.

### ❖ **Music/Gospel Concert**

A gospel concert is a powerful way to bring the community together and to distribute HIV/AIDS information.

### ❖ **A Community Service of Remembrance and Hope**

This activity is a worship experience that commemorates the AIDS epidemic and the lives that have been taken by the disease. The program should also offer hope for those who are affected and empowerment for each person to teach one about HIV/AIDS prevention. Do not forget to distribute Red Ribbons and HIV information.

### ❖ **Prayer Vigil**

A prayer vigil offers the congregation and the community the opportunity to spend even more time in prayer for the healing of HIV/AIDS. The vigil should last at least six hours.

### ❖ **HIV Testing Service**

Partner with your local health department or AIDS service organization to provide HIV testing during the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.

### ❖ **A Poetry Slam**

One of the many ways to include young people in the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS is through the Arts.

### ❖ **Meditation**

Coordinate a silent retreat (one day or a few hours) or retreat to chant for the Healing of AIDS.

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## Faith Community: Suggestions for Planning Your Activities

The following is a list of tasks and suggestions that you need to consider in planning your faith institution's participation in the *National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS*.

- ❖ **Assemble a planning committee.** You may select members from existing groups in your congregation, e.g., members from the AIDS Ministry, Health Ministry or Prison Ministry, the youth department, women's department, etc.
- ❖ **Create a preliminary plan,** including program activities, guests, space/equipment needs and expenses.
- ❖ **Designate members of your planning to complete specific tasks.** Be sure to set realistic deadlines for tasks.
- ❖ **Identify guest speakers,** workshop leaders, artists and musicians.
- ❖ **Assemble a list of local media** and send them a press release on your faith institution's letterhead regarding your activities; (see media section).
- ❖ **Develop a flyer** about your activities and mailing list to people and organizations in the community who will want to know, including:
  - Other faith institutions
  - Community and business leaders
  - Elected officials
  - Community-based organizations
  - AIDS service organizations
  - Corporate community relations executives

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## Community at Large: Suggestions for Planning Your Activities

The Following is a list of tasks and suggestions that you may consider in planning your community-wide participation in the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.

- ❖ **Invite a representative** from all faith communities, civic and AIDS service organizations to participate on the planning committee for the development and implementation of activities or regional-wide activities.
- ❖ **Create a preliminary plan**, including community wide activities; location, equipment needs, sponsors, etc.
- ❖ **Ask your Mayor**, Governor or local elected official to submit a statement of recognition of the national week of prayer for the healing of aids on behalf of the people of your town, city or state.
  - The official's statement can be uploaded to the campaign website!
- ❖ **Follow the suggestions** listed for faith communities.

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## Every Home: Suggestions for planning your family activities

The following is a list of suggestions that you may consider in planning your families participation in the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.

- ❖ **Plan a specific time(s)** during the week of March 4-10, 2012 to gather the family to pray for the healing of AIDS.
- ❖ **Plan specific times to discuss** HIV prevention, treatment and care facts with family members.
- ❖ **Consider ways of involving all members of your family**, including extended members, in HIV prevention information sharing activities and discussion.
- ❖ **Support your congregation and community-wide activities** by participating on the planning committee (if possible) and attending the planned activities.

## REGISTER YOUR FAITH INSTITUTION

AND

## YOUR ACTIVITIES AT

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## **Worship Resources**

### **SAMPLES**

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## Sample Christian Liturgical Resources

### Texts:

Genesis 9:8-17  
Psalm 25:1-7, 19-22, 139:1-6, 13-18  
Mark 1:9-15

### *Introduction to scripture reading*

“Lent, our time of preparation for the joy of Easter, begins with covenant, God’s covenant with every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”

### *Before worship*

Pass out rainbow ribbons or stickers to each worshipper. Hang large rainbow banner in/near front of sanctuary, or prepare it to be carried in during processional. Prepare signs or banners to be used during prayer time, saying: Is it true? Can it be? Jesus is alive and living with AIDS.”

### *Assurance of Safe Space*

In the name of God who has created us, redeemed us and sustains us moment by moment, I declare this to be safe space and invite all to come, just as you are, knowing that you will be honored and respected in this hour. Here, your experiences will be validated; your hopes and fears will be heard. The promise of God’s rainbow is over us all this day. Together we will worship as sisters and brothers, as friends and lovers of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

### Responsive Readings:

One: Show us your ways, O Lord.  
**All: Show us YOUR ways, O Lord.**  
One: Teach us your paths.  
**All: Teach us your path of covenant love.**  
One: Guide us in your truth and teach us.  
**All: Teach us, O God, YOUR truth.**  
One: For you are God our Savior.  
**All: You alone are God. Save us.**

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## *The Everlasting Covenant*

One: In the midst of the clouds, God sets a rainbow.

**All: We will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.**

One: In the midst of the storms of our lives, God sets a rainbow.

**All: We will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh.**

One: In the midst of our fears, our anger and our silences, God sets a rainbow.

**All: We will see it and remember the everlasting covenant.**

One: Whether we feel we have escaped the flood or been overwhelmed by the tide of pain and death, God sets a rainbow.

**All: We will see it and remember.**

One: We see the rainbow. We remember God's love for all.

**All: We remember God's covenant with all. Thanks be to God.**

## **Prayers:**

### *For a Safe Space*

Left: O God, God of the joyful and God of those who mourn,

**Right: God of the healthy and God of the sick,**

Left: God of the wealthy and God of the poor,

**Right: God of the gay and God of the straight,**

Left: God of the weary and God of the strong,

**Right: God of the sober and God of the addicted,**

Left: God of the fearful and God of the trusting,

**Right: God of the abused and God of the abuser,**

All: God of us all,

Left: Bring us each and all into the safe space of your presence

**Right: For we need safe space in order to heal.**

Left: Bring us into safe space, free from our judgments of others and of ourselves.

**Right: Bring us into safe space, free to live without requiring lies of each other.**

Left: Teach us to advocate for and protect each other.

**Right: Teach us to hold each other up and calm each fear.**

Left: Heal the wounds of distrust and betrayal.

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**Right: Heal the wounds of rejection and shame.**

Left: Grant that we may be a people who trust in you

**Right: And embrace each other in the name of Jesus the Christ.**

Left: Grant that in this space, in our lives, and in our community,

**Right: The healing may begin.**

Left: Grant that in this safe space the silence will be broken

**Right: So that the healing of HIV and AIDS may begin.**

All: We pray in the strong name of Jesus who lives among us and in us and through us all. Amen.

## *A Lament For All The People of God In The Time of AIDS*

All: What will it take, O God,

**Left: for us to see the vision fulfilled in the land of the living?**

All: What will it take, O God,

**Right: for the change to come in our community, in our lives?**

All: What will it take, O God,

**Left: for the scattered to be gathered that all may praise and dance together?**

All: What will it take, O God, to free our sisters and brothers from HIV and AIDS?

All: What will it take, O God,

**Right: for us, your church to be free from ignorance and fear?**

All: What will it take, O God,

**Left: for us to recognize your Word become flesh living among us with AIDS?**

All: What will it take, O God, for the dance to begin and the deaths to end?

## *Call to Commitment*

One: Church, we are the Body of Christ

**All: The Body of Christ, living with AIDS**

One: If we choose, we can make a difference.

**All: If we choose, we can contribute to the healing of AIDS.**

One: In our homes, in our church, in our community.

**All: In our bodies, in our minds, in our spirits.**

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One: Our sisters and brothers, our parents and children are infected with HIV.

**All: Our community is living and dying with AIDS.**

One: If we choose, the blocks to healing can be removed.

**All: We choose compassion.**

**We choose to respond.**

One: Will you respond with your money, with your time, with your love?

**All: We are the Body of Christ. We choose to respond that AIDS may be healed. We pray and act for the healing of AIDS.**

## *Sending Forth*

**All: We hear again the promise of our God for all.**

One: Then go forth, confident in the trustworthiness of the One who placed the rainbow in the heavens, that we may see and remember.

**All: We hear again the promise of our God for all.**

One: Go forth, strengthened by hope from the One who sent Jesus the Christ, knowing that our hope will not disappoint us.

**All: We hear again the promise of our God for all.**

One: Go forth by faith. The One who placed the rainbow and sent the Christ has sent the Spirit, so we know that God is with us always.

**All: Amen.**

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# NATIONAL WEEK OF FOR THE HEALING OF AIDS



**The End**  
Of The  
**AIDS Epidemic**  
**Is In Sight**  
With Prayer, Education,  
Testing & Treatment

**MARCH 4-10, 2012**

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

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A Vision of  
Unity and Faith  
from



Celebrating over 23 years of service, The Balm In Gilead develops educational and training programs specifically designed to meet the unique needs of African American and African congregations that strive to become community centers for health education and disease prevention.

The Balm In Gilead is known throughout Africa and the United States for its insightful understanding of religious cultures and values and extraordinary ability to build strong, trusted partnerships with faith communities. With these unique partnerships, The Balm In Gilead has been entrusted to build the capacity of national faith structures to utilize their existing tentacles that reach into every urban center and rural village to deliver comprehensive health services.

The Balm In Gilead, Inc. is an international NGO based in Richmond, VA (USA) and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Skyway Building).

## Our Vision

Faith institutions serving people of the African Diaspora are fully engaged in preventing diseases and improving the health status of those they serve and eliminating diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, cervical cancer, diabetes and other health disparities.

## Our Mission

The mission of The Balm In Gilead is to prevent diseases and to improve the health status of people of the African Diaspora by providing support to faith institutions in areas of program design, implementation and evaluation which strengthens their capacity to deliver programs and services that contribute to the elimination of health disparities.

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**THE Balm**  
**IN GILEAD**  
HEALING THROUGH PRAYER INC.  
EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & SERVICE

## Our Guiding Principles

- We believe that all people facing health challenges are welcome at the table of grace by the unconditional love of God and that their voices must be heard and respected.
- We believe that faith leaders are a powerful voice for change and must be intentionally at the forefront of addressing the health challenges of the people they serve.
- We believe that faith institutions are uniquely positioned to play a major role in efforts to improve the health status of people living in the communities they serve.
- We believe in the Power of Prayer and its role in lives of all people of faith.

## History of The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS

**The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS** is the inclusive, expansion of the highly successful Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS, which concluded its 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary in 2009. The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS was the nation's FIRST national mobilization campaign that specifically focused on HIV/AIDS. The campaign has provided AIDS information to well-over 5 million African Americans through the engagement of Black congregations of every sector across the United States.

The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS was the expansion of a community-wide initiative in New York City known as The Harlem Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS. The successful engagement of Harlem's Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and traditional faith communities brought national attention to the critical and urgent need to engage faith communities in addressing HIV/AIDS, especially in the African American community. Pernessa Seele, Founder/CEO of the Balm In Gilead, is also the visionary and founder of the Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.

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**The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS** in 2012 is calling America's faith communities of all races, creeds and cultures to prayer and to educate their congregations and others about the ever-alarming AIDS epidemic in the United States.

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