

February 26, 2010

I commend Balm in Gilead for the leadership it exhibits in calling us all together for the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS. It's hard to imagine places more in need of healing prayer than places touched by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Its devastating force is disproportionately felt by African American and Latino communities and especially by women and girls. The Department of Health and Human Services tells us that AIDS is now the leading cause of death for Black women ages 25 to 34. Compassion and hope are intertwined as we stand together to call for healing through education and compassionate care. As people of faith, our call is to be a balm to those in need. This means standing sturdy, strong, hopeful with those living with the disease and those caring for friends and family who are doing so. They must not be forgotten.

The many affiliated congregations and communities of Balm in Gilead and all congregations around the nation and the world have an opportunity to unite their faith with embodied action in providing services, care, and compassion to the children, women, and men who bravely continue the fight against HIV/AIDS. May our prayers and our actions provide strength for those struggling, hope and healing to those in need, and empowerment to all who work tirelessly for the prevention and the treatment of the disease. You are the balm in Gilead and your work is never in vain. May the grace of God embodied in all our prayers abound.

Sincerely,



Serene Jones
President