



CABSA



Celebrates Twenty Years of equipping and supporting faith communities!

Guidelines for World AIDS Day Worship Service

First Sunday in Advent: 28 November 2021

Focus text: Jeremiah 33:14-16

End inequalities. End AIDS. End Pandemics.

Background and Preparation

What is World AIDS Day?

Each year, on 1 December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day. People around the world unite to show support for people living with HIV and to remember those who have died from AIDS-related illnesses.

Each World AIDS Day focuses on a specific theme, which this year will be [End inequalities. End AIDS. End pandemics.](#) This year's theme joins a growing list of challenges that World AIDS Day has alerted people to globally.

On World AIDS Day United Nations agencies, governments, churches, and civil society join to campaign around specific themes related to HIV.

- Awareness-raising activities take place around the globe.
- Many people wear a red ribbon, the universal symbol of awareness of, support for and solidarity with people living with HIV.
- People living with HIV make their voice heard on issues important in their lives.

- Groups of people living with HIV and other civil society organizations involved in the AIDS response mobilize in support of the communities they serve and to raise funds.
- Events highlight the current state of the epidemic.

World AIDS Day remains as relevant today as it's always been, reminding people and governments that HIV has not gone away. There is still a critical need for increased funding for the AIDS response, to increase awareness of the impact of HIV on people's lives, to end stigma and discrimination and to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV.

This is a four-minute video that appeals to leaders everywhere to end HIV related stigma, to end inequalities that makes marginalized people even more vulnerable in order to work towards ending

AIDS. https://endinequalitiesendaids.unaids.org/?utm_source=UNAIDS%20Newsletter&utm_campaign=fe7c9f4c0b-20210701_PR_40_film&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e7a6256e25-fe7c9f4c0b-114143925

The Role of the Church

Many faith communities and churches participate in the commemoration of World AIDS Day. Diaconia, in partnership with CABSA and the Western Cape Task group for Gender Justice, also support this day and encourage faith leaders and churches to use this day to add Christian voices to the call for the end of inequalities, the end of AIDS and the end of pandemics. We believe that we can make a valuable contribution to raise awareness about HIV, address stigma, provide support to people who are living with HIV, but also advocate for equal access to services for all people who are living with HIV.

For 20 months the entire world was traumatised by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it became almost impossible not to notice how this pandemic also runs on the fault lines of our societies. This means that the already vulnerable are even more vulnerable in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. And this is off course also true for people who are living with HIV or diagnosed with AIDS.

This year the UNAIDS theme for World AIDS Day is: [End inequalities. End AIDS. End pandemics.](#)

This is also the season of Advent. This signifies a time of anticipation. We celebrate the birth of Jesus, while in anticipation of Jesus' return. The birth of Jesus reminds us of his unfathomable gift of reconciliation.

As people of faith, we are also called to love our neighbours as ourselves and to seek community with one another. This implies that we are also called to speak out against injustice in order to uphold and restore the dignity and worth of every human being.

LITURGY GUIDELINES

1. Words of Welcome

Welcome to our World AIDS Day Worship Service. World AIDS Day reminds us that HIV has not gone away. There is still a vital need to increase awareness; fight prejudice, stigma and discrimination and increase access to testing. May the service of today challenge us to commit anew to combatting the impact of HIV and AIDS.

Call to Worship

Leader:

In you, Lord my God, I put my trust.

Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths,

Guide me in your truth and teach me,

For you are my God my Savior,

And my hope is in you all day long

(Psalm 25)

Leader:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord through the working of the Holy Spirit, Amen

Lightning of candle

One of the congregation members will tie the red ribbon around the AIDS candle.

Leader: The Red Ribbon is the international symbol of AIDS awareness; a symbol of respect for HIV positive people and people living with AIDS. It reminds the Church of the continued need to respond to this pandemic in a comprehensive and compassionate way.

AIDS Candle

One of the congregation members will light the AIDS candle:

Leader: We light this candle to demonstrate the fire of hope that burns within us. We light this candle as a symbol of the fire of God's Spirit that hovers over our lives. We light this candle in memory of those who have lost their battle with AIDS. We light this candle to honor those who continue to live courageously with HIV and AIDS

Prayer

Dear God, as this candle burns, so do the prayers of our hearts go forth to bless this world that continues to know the fear and destructive power of AIDS. Relieve our fears, renew our hope, and bless all who suffer because of AIDS, with your healing love. Amen.

Songs:

1. "To God be the Glory"
2. May we be a shining light

https://youtu.be/dwZIO_Hks1o

Confession:

In Mark 2, Jesus says that people who are healthy do not need a doctor, but people who are sick do. He also says that He came to call sinners. We are all sinners; God is calling us. Even though we are all saved by grace and righteousness before God, we still sin. This is what we as a congregation confess together before God this morning:

Leader: We confess that ignorance, prejudice, and denial linger in the hearts of many.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: We confess that we are still stigmatizing people who are living with HIV and AIDS.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: We confess that we insufficiently demonstrate the love of God towards people living with the realities of HIV.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: We confess that we want to serve our own interests rather than be moved by the needs of others

Congregation: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: We confess that we are afraid that if we associate ourselves with people living with HIV and AIDS, we will lose our prestige.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: In Mark 1, a leper confesses, "If You will, You can heal me." This is also our prayer this morning: "Lord, heal us as a congregation of our prejudices and carelessness towards people affected by HIV and AIDS."

Congregation: Lord, have mercy.

Dedication:

Leader: We long for You, Lord

Congregation: My God, I trust in You.

Leader: Lord, make your paths known to us and teach us your ways

Congregation: Guide me through your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me; I wait for you all day long.

Leader: Remember your mercy and your faithful love, Lord

Congregation: because it has always been there

Leader: Remember me in your faithful love, for you are good, Lord.

Congregation: The Lord is good and righteous; therefore, He teaches sinners the way.

Leader: Forgive me my sins, Lord, for they are many.

Congregation: Lord turn to me and have mercy on me.

- From Psalm 25 (adapted)

Song: Lord have mercy - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYZY78hwLM8>

Proclamation of Grace:

In Mark 1, Jesus answers the leper with the words: "I will. Get well!" These are also his words for us as a congregation and our attitude this morning. For us, there is healing and recovery. From our restored lives, let us see one another as God's image bearers and participate in God's healing work by loving one another unconditionally.

Leader: No one who waits on the Lord will be ashamed.

Congregation: May innocence and sincerity guard me, for You have set me free.

Leader: Amen

1. Prayer

God of Hope

All of us are in some way knowingly or unknowingly affected by HIV.

At this time of Advent Hope,

As we prepare for the coming of your son into this world

We give thanks for signs of hope.

For growing understanding

For medical advances

For changing attitudes and behavior

For greater awareness and concern in your church.

God of Unity

Bind us together with strong ties of love

That this church community may be a place where

All can find acceptance,

May it be a place of welcome for all affected by HIV/AIDS.

May it be a place where care is provided and received, especially

for affected children and youth,

Where stories are told and heard,

Where fear is overcome by love,

Where You are to be found.

This we pray especially now that we are about to read from Scripture, and we pray that you will enlighten us anew to discern your will and follow You in obedience.

Amen. (Adapted from The Diakonia Council of Churches in South Africa)

1. **Scripture Reading:** Jeremiah 33: 14-16
2. **Sermon**

Commitment by congregation. Leader can read on behalf of congregation

Lord,

We commit ourselves to show love and compassion towards all people living with the realities of HIV and we wish to do that by:

- offering counseling and support to all who experience pain and heartache.
- transforming congregations into safe havens where all are welcomed and at liberty to exercise and express their Christianity without fear of being judged.

We commit ourselves to address the negative circumstances which encourage the spread of HIV infection. We wish to do all in our power to:

- strengthen the family lives of our members in terms of Biblical principles
- root-out all forms of sexual violence and rape and help establish a culture in which people respect one-another
- make available correct and comprehensive information on HIV

We declare that, in this important undertaking, we will seek and support co-operation and partnership with the authorities and other appropriate role-players.

Prayer

Dear God, we turn to you,

Grant us the mercy to seek your wisdom and courage to find the words to speak out against all forms of injustice.

Grant us the mercy to find the wisdom and courage to specifically address the inequalities that make marginalised people even more vulnerable.

Dear God, may the words of our prayers translate into action.

Let your will be done. Let your kingdom come. On earth as it is in heaven.

Amen

Benediction

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. Amen (1 Thess 3:12-13).

This Liturgy will be available in more languages by Monday 22 November. Please check the CABSAs website or write an email to CABSAs.

With acknowledgement to the contributions and support of the Combined AIDS Task group of Diaconia and the Gender Justice Task Group (DRC Western Cape Synod).

- Please consider a donation or church collection to support the services CABSAs offer to faith and marginalised communities.

To register for a weekly Bible Message on HIV write to Meloney, admin@cabsa.org.za

