



## Greetings from Bishop Julius Trimble, UMGAC Chair

We're in the midst of winter in the midwestern United States where some hunker down in our homes especially when snow and ice are abundant. It can be a "quiet" time of year in some respects, which gives us time to reflect on the past and plan for the future while living our daily lives.

As we go about our work and play, let us remember those living with HIV or AIDS around the globe. Let us reclaim any lost energy around our advocacy and gear up once again to be a voice for the voiceless and help for the marginalized. Let us commit ourselves to eradicate stigma against people living with HIV and against our LGBTQ brothers and sisters. Let us live out the Gospel in new and exciting ways – ways that take us from our coziness to places where we may feel uncomfortable, yet called by God to be present. Let us claim hope and courage as our mantras!

Thank you for your commitment and love for all God's people!

Be encouraged!

Bishop Julius C. Trimble, UMGAC Chair



## Breaking Barriers Attendees Visit with Mother of Ryan White

Several *Breaking Barriers* attendees visited the Indianapolis Children's Museum to meet with Jeanne White-Ginder, mother of Ryan White, to learn about Ryan's struggle with AIDS. The exhibit is part of the "Power of Children's" gallery and was launched in 2007. Ryan died from AIDS at the age of 18 in 1990.

Ryan White's bedroom has been recreated at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis.

*"I was astounded by the courage of Ryan and his mother in the face of a life-threatening illness and the prejudice that isolated them from the community of faith and the community at large. The exhibit makes it possible for us to continue learning (from them and others) to overcome the stigma that keeps so many from knowledge, testing, treatment and from an equal place in society."*

..Kathy Griffith, Global Ministries

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## Breaking Barriers Attendees Taking Action on HIV

**We invited Breaking Barriers Conference attendees to share stories about their personal reflections and/or actions taken on HIV/AIDS since the October 2018 conference, and here are some responses:** As a long-term survivor of 32 years, the UMGAC was extremely GREAT! It has taken YEARS to put GOD in conversations around HIV/AIDS. I was extremely healed standing with Bishops of the UMC [at the conference]. What a gift to be included with people around the globe & see the 'little progress' in other countries. We're so blessed to live in the U.S.A., but we must look globally to stop AIDS, TB, & violence against women & children. I have brought information & other stories back to Ohio & plan on addressing numerous faith-groups. There is an unforgivable need to give people "SELF-ESTEEM" to make decisions about their lives & their choices. I will continue to pass what I learned on to agencies & groups. - Sharon Thomas, Cleveland

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## Dr. Narasappa Mathew Samuel presented UMGAC AIDS Leadership Award in India

Dr. Samuel is no stranger to the challenges of HIV and AIDS. He is the professor and past president of the AIDS Society of Asia and the Pacific and addresses these issues daily. Dr. Samuel is the first Indian to serve on the International AIDS Society's governing council and was the regional representative of Asia and the Pacific. He organized several HIV/AIDS training programs in different cities in India. He served as the member of the conference organizing committee of several international conferences and served on-DAIDS Asia Data and safety Monitoring board of NIH USA.

Dr. Samuel saw a serious need to educate and care for people infected with HIV and organized a not for profit organization called "Concern for AIDS Research and Education" (C.A.R.E) in a rural district of south India. The C.A.R.E health center serves women and children affected and infected with HIV. Interns from University of Denver visit the clinical sites in Namakkal and Kolli hills to teach, undertake research and participate in international living.

During the October 2018 Breaking Barriers AIDS Conference, Dr. Samuel was given an AIDS Leadership Award in abstentia by the UMC Global AIDS Committee. Dr. Donald Messer, UMGAC member, recently traveled to India to hand deliver the award. Congratulations, Dr. Samuel! Keep up your good and faithful work!

[Watch Video](#)

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## Intersections between HIV/AIDS and Opioids ~ New Report Released



The United States is in the midst of an opioid crisis. An estimated 2.1 million Americans had an opioid use disorder in 2016. The rate of opioid overdose deaths has increased by 500% since 1999, and each day an estimated 115 Americans die from opioid overdose. Despite the proven effectiveness of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorders, the opioid mortality rate has now surpassed that of the AIDS epidemic during its peak in the early 1990s — a time when there was no effective treatment for HIV/AIDS.

January 3, 2019  
N Engl J Med  
2019; 380:1-3  
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## Upcoming Observance Days



### February 7 – National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness and Information Day

Why should we get tested? ...because 1 in 2 people with HIV have had the virus at least 3 years before diagnosis. ...because about 40% of new HIV infections come from people who don't know they have HIV. Let's encourage friends and family to get tested at least once and people at high risk should be tested at least once a year.

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### March 10 – National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

Every year on March 10 — and throughout the month of March — local, state, federal, and national organizations come together to show support for women and girls impacted by HIV and AIDS. National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NWGHAAD) sheds light on the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls. This year marks the 13th annual observance.

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## Educational Resources

***Stories of Hope and Perseverance*** ~ Testimonies and stories about projects funded by the UMC Global AIDS Fund. This resource was produced by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. Please spread the word and support!

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## Newly Released Resource on UMC Annual Conference AIDS Ministries

An updated resource contains information from all the Annual Conferences in The United Methodist Church on AIDS ministries along with contact persons. It's a wonderful networking tool for local churches and Annual Conferences. Find out how your Annual Conference is addressing HIV. If little is being done, explore how you could light a fire for AIDS ministry!

[Download Report Here](#)

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### Did you know that...

- Dr. Don Messer, UMGAC member, has recently written a chapter in the book "Urban Ministry Reconsidered"? The title of Don's chapter is: "Theological Listening and Learning in an HIV/AIDS World". We invite you to read Don's [contributions](#). ♣
  - An astonishing 18.8 million girls and women are living with HIV? And, every 90 seconds, HIV is transmitted to another young woman. How can we stop this epidemic? Click [here](#) for Toolkit! ♣
  - Our words matter when addressing stigma and HIV? Find out more [here](#).
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## What does The United Methodist Church say about HIV & AIDS?

We realize all our readers are not connected with a faith organization, but every now and then we like to publicize the official statements of the UMC with which this newsletter is affiliated. Below are key statements you might find interesting to read. Let us know what you think! ♣

**Social Principle on HIV/AIDS:** ¶162.U - *Persons Living with HIV and AIDS*  
*Persons diagnosed as positive for Human Immune Virus (HIV) and with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) often face rejection from their families and friends and various communities in which they work and interact. In addition, they are often faced with a lack of adequate health care, especially toward the end of life. All individuals living with HIV and AIDS should be treated with dignity and respect.*

We affirm the responsibility of the Church to minister to and with these individuals and their families regardless of how the disease was contracted. We support their rights to employment, appropriate medical care, full participation in public education, and full participation in the Church.

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## Prayer for those living with HIV or AIDS

God of love and peace, fill with hope all those who are living with HIV or AIDS. Surround each one with a company of supportive and caring persons who want to dance in faith. Amen.

~ Bishop Fritz and Etta Mae Mutti



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