



Bishop Julius Trimble, Chair UMGAC

## Word from Bishop Trimble

Greetings to all of you in this new year! We hope you are energized as you move into a new decade ready to create a better world for all God's people.

Thank you for your work and ministry on HIV & AIDS. We appreciate you and, are grateful for your commitment to Jesus's commandment to love God and neighbor.

UMGAC is sponsoring a one-day conference on HIV & AIDS May 4th in Minneapolis, MN. This event takes place one day prior to the opening of the 2020 UMC General Conference. We hope you can be with us! We'll be examining the issue of stigma which is a critical factor in the spread of HIV. Please read the article below and make your reservation.

Be encouraged!  
Bishop Julius Trimble

## TACKLING STIGMA

Since the beginning of the HIV & AIDS crisis, stigma has kept people from being tested or acknowledging their status if they were infected. This reality has fueled the epidemic resulting in alarming numbers of infections and deaths. We can break through this barrier by Tackling Stigma.

UMGAC is sponsoring the one-day conference, Breaking Barriers: Tackling Stigma. This event is a forum for storytelling and healing through listening and action, with a special emphasis on stigma eradication.

Three panels will provide insight and resources on the issue of Stigma and how we can work toward its eradication.

Ambassador Deborah Birx, US Global AIDS Coordinator Washington, DC will deliver the 2nd Bishop Fritz and Etta Mae Mutti Lecture during the Conference Luncheon.

Bishop Karen Oliveto will preach at the free-admission closing Worship Service at 3pm. All are welcome.

This conference will also inform the United Methodist Global AIDS Committee on its work next quadrennium and how to engage more participation around these issues.

[Event Schedule](#)

[Event Flyer](#)



Please join us for this exciting one-day conference!

**Monday, May 4, 2020**  
**8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Closing Worship at 3pm  
Bishop Karen Oliveto, Preacher

Hennepin Avenue UMC  
511 Groveland Avenue,  
Minneapolis, MN  
(612) 871-5303

Free transportation from Minneapolis Convention Center to Hennepin Avenue UMC

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Bales Todd at [joylab47@yahoo.com](mailto:joylab47@yahoo.com) or 703.282.6254.

[Register Here](#)



Bishop Karen Oliveto,  
Closing Worship  
Preacher

## A Reflection Question

Bishop Karen Oliveto has chosen Deuteronomy 30:15-20 as the scripture for the *Closing Worship* of the Breaking Barriers AIDS conference. What are your thoughts on the question she is inviting us to ponder?

*How does the mandate in Deuteronomy 30:15-20 to "choose life" help eradicate stigma against those who are living with HIV or AIDS?*

## Deuteronomy 30:15-20 (NRSV)

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in God's ways, and observing God's commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses.

*Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*



Monte Norwood of *Bible Way*

*Ministries* in southeastern Atlanta with an H.I.V. testing van from the AIDS Healthcare Foundation. **The van pulls up in the church parking lot on the second Wednesday of the month to offer testing.** Credit...Raymond McCrea Jones for The New York Times

*"In the South, black houses of worship are reducing the social suffering of H.I.V. with an approach that recalls Dr. King's teachings."*

## How Churches Fight the Stigma of H.I.V.

By Keren Landman  
The New York Times, Nov 21, 2019

ATLANTA — The second Wednesday of the month is always crowded in the parking lot of Bible Way Ministries. That's the day the church offers its community food bank — and as of this year, it's also the day when an AIDS Healthcare Foundation mobile testing unit rolls up to provide H.I.V. testing to anyone who wants it.

*Bible Way* had already been offering H.I.V. testing some Sundays and at special events for five years, said the senior pastor, the Rev. Dr. Monte Norwood, his voice barely audible over gospel music blaring from the black testing van. The testers have made one new diagnosis here, but even if they hadn't, the van's presence would have value, he said. "It's a symbol that we're interested in addressing this issue, people knowing their status and being connected to care and treatment if they need to," he said, to "kind of remove the stigma."

The message appears to be registering: The unit routinely tests more than 30 people per visit. Dr.

[Read More](#)

Norwood himself was tested in front of his congregation.

## SAVE the DATES

March 10, 2020

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 21, 2020

National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

May 4, 2020

Breaking Barriers, Tackling Stigma AIDS Conference

July 4-5, 2020

USA - Faith Pre-Conference to the 2020 International AIDS Conference.

The event is sponsored by the World Council of Churches.

July 6-10, 2020

International AIDS Conference, San Francisco

## Did you know that...

there is a cyclical relationship between stigma and HIV; people who experience stigma and discrimination are marginalised and made more vulnerable to HIV, while those living with HIV are more vulnerable to experiencing stigma and discrimination

myths and misinformation increase the stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV and AIDS?

roughly one in eight people living with HIV is being denied health services because of stigma and discrimination?

adopting a human rights approach to HIV and AIDS is in the best interests of public health and is key to eradicating stigma and discrimination?

[Read More from AVERT](#)



**Global AIDS Committee**  
The United Methodist Church

The United Methodist Global AIDS Committee...

*Faithfully works to engage annual conferences and local churches in HIV/AIDS education and advocacy and loving and compassionate outreach by raising awareness and providing faith-based resources and training. By doing this, we aim to eliminate deaths from HIV and AIDS, reduce stigma and advocate for and affirm persons living with and affected by HIV and AIDS around the world.*