



Bishop Julius Trimble, Chair  
UMGAC

## Word from Bishop Trimble

Greetings during these times of uncertainty. Our prayer is that each of you is safe and healthy and hanging onto hope as we move into Holy Week. We encourage you to take good care of yourselves during these coming days and weeks.

The UMC Global AIDS Committee has had to postpone its Breaking Barriers Conference which will, in all likelihood, be rescheduled sometime in 2021. We will include updates in our newsletters as soon as they emerge.

Our hearts are heavy but, yet, we are called to claim our love for one another and for the risen Christ who brings hope and joy to our hurting world. God be with each of you.

Be encouraged!  
Bishop Julius Trimble

Read Bishop Trimble's Facebook Message to his  
Episcopal Area

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## Scripture for the Journey

### Mark 1: 4-11 (from the Message)

John the Baptizer appeared in the wild, preaching a baptism of life-change that leads to forgiveness of sins. People thronged to him from Judea and Jerusalem and, as they confessed their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River into a changed life. John wore a camel-hair habit, tied at the waist with a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild field honey.

As he preached, he said, "The real action comes next: The star in this drama, to whom I'm a mere stagehand, will change your life. I'm baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. His baptism—a holy baptism by the Holy Spirit—will change you from the inside out."

At this time, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. The moment he came out of the water, he saw the sky split open and God's Spirit, looking like a dove, come down on him. Along with the Spirit, a voice: "You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life."

### Questions for Reflection

- What does baptism mean to you?
- In our effort to eradicate stigma of those infected with HIV or AIDS, how does this passage assist us or inform us in that effort?
- What hope to you glean from this passage?  
Or, do you?



Stay Tuned for Updates on  
the Rescheduling of this  
Event!



Bishop Karen Oliveto

Bishop Karen Oliveto was scheduled to deliver the sermon during the closing worship service for UMGAC's Breaking Barriers Conference which had to be postponed. Bishop Karen was to use **Mark 1: 4-11** as the scripture for her sermon. We want to share it for your reading and reflection.



Fran Quigley,  
Editor of *Faith In  
Healthcare*  
interviewed  
UMGAC  
Consultant, Linda  
Bales Todd

regarding her journey with UMGAC, the challenges she and others face as advocates and the importance of eliminating stigma and discrimination. The eradication of stigma discrimination has been a centerpiece of the work of UMGAC for a number of years and was to be the focus of the recently postponed Breaking Barriers Conference. Stigma and discrimination continue to fuel the epidemic and, as a result, takes lives.

In addition to serving as Editor of *Faith in Healthcare*, Fran is also the Director of the Health and Human Right Clinic at Indiana University McKinney

## Five-Question Interview: Linda Bales Todd of the United Methodist Global AIDS Committee

By Fran Quigley: *Editor, Faith In Healthcare Editor*

Linda Bales Todd is a longtime leader of the United Methodist Global AIDS Committee, a ministry that has been the AIDS-focused initiative in The United Methodist Church for 15 years. We are grateful that she is the latest faith-motivated health advocate to join us for a Five-Question Interview.

### What are the biggest challenges you and those you advocate for face? Three

factors are uppermost in the ongoing battle against HIV & AIDS: complacency, stigma and discrimination. Complacency: The UMC is an international denomination with most members residing in the United States. Life spans of those living with HIV in the United States have significantly increased due to the availability of drug treatment. HIV is now considered a "manageable disease" by the medical community and society in general. This shift has lowered the level of urgency in the minds of many



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people; therefore, support for AIDS efforts has diminished both in society and in the UMC itself as evidenced, in part, by diminished financial support for UMGAC's ministry.

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## COVID-19 Advice for People With HIV From the Experts Who Know

Interim guidance from HIVMA and AIDSinfo covers lab visits, opioid treatment programs, pregnant women and other HIV-related topics

March 24, 2020 By Trenton Straube, POZ Magazine

As more data surface regarding COVID-19, the potentially fatal respiratory disease caused by the novel coronavirus, HIV specialists offer advice tailored to the HIV population.

AIDSinfo, a federal clearinghouse of HIV-related information, published "[Interim Guidance for COVID-19 and Persons with HIV](#)" on March 20. It's available online for free and offers general advice to all people living with HIV, guidance for specific populations (such as children and pregnant individuals who have HIV as well as health care workers) and more.

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## Prayer and Responsive Reading for Those Affected by Coronavirus

by the Rev. Dionne P. Boissière, Chaplain  
Church Center for the United Nations.

**ONE:** Holy One, we come to you in this moment of uncertainty and uncharted territory – facing this unprecedented global pandemic. Amid universal fear, panic, confusion and anxiety, please remind us that you are the God that calmed the storm and made the winds to cease. We cry out to you!

**MANY:** Hear us O God of peace.

**ONE:** Benevolent Savior, you have called us to be your hands and feet in this world. As we face this crisis together, help us remember to be mindful of how we speak to, live with and treat one another. May we truly seek to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

**MANY:** Hear us O God of compassion.

**ONE:** Master Physician, there are millions now in desperate need of your healing touch. Look now upon those who are at highest risk – the immunocompromised, the elderly, those who have existing chronic health conditions, cancer patients, transplant recipients, dialysis patients, those who have been exposed to COVID-19 and are seeking testing or immediate medical attention.

**MANY:** Hear us O God our healer.

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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.*