

## HIV/AIDS Church Outreach: Faith Community Covenant



**Whereas**, we, the leaders of the faith community, recognize that the Black church is perhaps the oldest and most beloved institution in the African American community. The church has historically been a spiritual anchor of the African American community and the primary resource for the survival and progress of its people;

**Whereas**, historically the Church has been the catalyst within the Black community for initiating social change and higher learning, championing the cause of justice and equality, and providing a place of sanctuary and refuge;

**Whereas**, we as clergy have been charged with demonstrating love, compassion, and care for the health of the whole person, and as leaders to educate, develop and mobilize our members to serve others;

**Whereas**, African Americans are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, a disease that is 100% preventable and yet in the United States African Americans accounted for 50 % of the estimated new HIV/AIDS cases and 51% of deaths due to AIDS but only 13% of the population, and in Seattle and King County African Americans represent 15% of the new HIV/AIDS cases and only 6% of the population;

**Whereas**, stigma remains virtually unchanged after 25 years of HIV/AIDS due to factors such as fear, silence, lack of accurate information, cultural and religious beliefs, economic conditions, poverty, lack of access to health care and insurance, inadequate health information, mistrust, high risk behaviors, racism, and lack of leadership;

**We** do hereby resolve that we will participate in collaboration with other churches, community and agency health providers to develop church-based mentor programs for peer education, AIDS ministry and the integration of HIV/AIDS education into existing outreach programs;

**We** do hereby resolve that we will provide HIV/AIDS training from a spiritual, cultural, medical, public health and ecumenical point of view to our congregations and communities;

**We** do hereby resolve that we will provide other churches with HIV/AIDS educational resources and contacts that will focus on HIV/AIDS from a spiritual, cultural, medical, public health and ecumenical point of view to our congregations and communities;

**We** do hereby resolve that we will inform those in our faith communities about the importance of getting tested and refer them to the appropriate health care resources that offer confidential HIV testing and counseling;

**We** do hereby resolve to genuinely pursue and maintain the *HIV/AIDS Church Outreach: Faith Community Covenant* as a living document and testimony to the mission to which we are called as keepers of the faith;

**We** do further resolve that to heighten the awareness of HIV/AIDS and develop sensitivity to the issue, we will dedicate a minimum of three Sunday services a year to HIV/AIDS. To help congregations retain the message of the sermon, church sensitive prevention materials will be provided following every HIV/AIDS service and HIV/AIDS materials will be available at our churches on an ongoing basis.



We, the undersigned commit to abide by and implement the *HIV/AIDS Church Outreach: Faith Community Covenant* in our churches and communities

*Please sign your names and your church affiliation*

Rev. Carl Livingston, Jr.  
Grace United Methodist

Rev. Dr. Amos Landry  
Peoples Institutional Baptist Church

Rev. Gwendolyn Hall  
Sojourner Truth Ministries

Rev. Gwendolyn Coates  
God Answers Prayer Ministries

Rev. Robert L. Manaway, Sr.  
Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church

Rev. Herbert J. Carey  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Baptist Church

Rev. Carey G. Anderson  
First A. M. E. Church

Rev. Zachary K. Bruce, Sr.  
Freedom Church of Seattle

Rev. Reginald Diggs  
Sanctuary Ministries

Rev. Mary Digg-Hobson  
African Americans Reach and Teach Health Ministry