

Prayer stations

Responding to HIV, AIDS and poverty

Use these kinaesthetic prayer stations to help people engage with prayer in response to HIV, AIDS and poverty. Each one details what if any equipment you need to get together in advance, instructions for setting up, and the text for the instruction signs you will need to display – (simply copy and paste these into a word document, enlarging the font so that the instructions are clear enough to read).

They can be used as a stand-alone resource, but obviously work best in the context of response to a sermon, seminar, or other exploration of how our faith relates to these issues.

Used together, the stations should take approximately 30-40 minutes to work round, but if you have less time you can obviously leave out a couple. You can use them within an intercessions slot, have them set up as an installation for a special service or day of prayer (perhaps on World Aids Day – 1 December) where people can come and go independently and/or use them individually as prayer or intercession responses. If you are using them all together, they should be worked round in order.

You might also like to use mp3 worship tracks of songs whilst people work round the stations (although 'Silenced' works best with no music or a recording of 'Unheard song') – (You can find our songs, and use our 'Outward focussed song index' to find more at www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-songs)

1. Asking the big questions

Equipment needed: Flip chart and pens, and a print out of the signs you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. **In advance:** Enlarge and print out signs using the text in the 'For display' section
2. **On the day:** Set up the flip chart, and write the word 'WHY?' in the middle in large letters in a bubble (as if you were beginning a spider diagram). Display the signs you have made.

For display:

Reading the big numbers

- More than 35 million people in the world are living with HIV/AIDS today – and two-thirds of these live in sub-Saharan Africa
- In 2012, there were 2.3 million new infections (but this is 33% less than in 2001) – for children, there were 260,000 new infections (which is 52% less than in 2001)
- There were 1.6 million AIDS-related deaths in 2012, but this is 30% less than in 2005 as more people have access to anti-retroviral drugs.
- 2 million children are infected with HIV, and more than 15 million children alive today have been orphaned by it. *

(* 2009 www.tearfund.org/hiv/student and 2013 www.un.org/en/events/aidsday)

Asking the big questions

- What is your reaction to these statistics and/or the stories you have heard?
- Offer your questions and feelings about the injustices of HIV/AIDS to God.
- If you find it helpful, write your questions or struggles on the flip chart, as a way of getting them into the open, and giving them to him.

2. Finding a place of praise

Equipment needed: A cross (lit if possible), a computer or equivalent to play the annual World AIDS Day film from UN AIDS (e.g. http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/multimediacentre/videos/20131125_wad/), and a print out of the signs you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. **In advance:** Enlarge and print out signs using the text in the 'For display' section
2. **On the day:** Place the cross at this station, along with a computer set-up to play the film. Display the sign you have made.

For display:

Finding a place of praise

- Although today's statistics are painful to read, there have also been huge advances in controlling HIV AIDS and getting treatment to those who need it over the last 5-10 years:
 - The new infection rate in 2012 was 33% less than the rate in 2001
 - The new infection rate in children for 2012 was 52% less than the rate in 2001
 - The number of AIDS-related deaths in 2012 was 30% less than in 2005
 - By the end of 2012, 9.7 million people in low and middle-income countries had access to anti-retroviral therapy, which was a 20% increase compared to 2011. *
- (* 2013 www.un.org/en/events/aidsday)
- Consider these advances against the big questions you have been asking.
- As you look at the cross, think about how "nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37 NLT).
- Give thanks for all that God has done so far – and pray for these statistics to keep on improving year-on-year until the UN AIDS goal of zero new infections is reached.

3. Silenced

Equipment needed: a few copies of the print out of the words to the poem 'Unheard song' – provided at the end of this document (this poem is actually a song, so if you want to provide a way for people to listen to the song using headphones as well as read the words, you can download an mp3 file of the song at www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-songs), and the sign you have created using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out the sign using the text in the 'For display' section, and a few copies of the words to the poem 'Unheard song' (along with a way to play the song if you want to include this – if so, adapt the "For display" sign below to tell people to listen to the song as well as reading the words).
2. On the day: Lay out the copies of the poem and display the sign you have made.

For display:

- Read the poem "Unheard song".
- This poem song was not inspired by a single person, but by numerous stories the writer had heard about child-headed families orphaned by AIDS related deaths – many of whom never have a chance to tell their stories.
- Take a few minutes to process your reactions before moving on to the next station.

4. Confronting stigma

Equipment needed: Print outs of the stigma cards, and scriptural truth cards provided at the end of this document, blue tac, and a print off of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section, and print off the two sets of cards – one set of stigmas and one set of bible verses (if you think you might have a few people using the station at once, it would be a good idea to print off multiple sets depending on how many people you think you'll have).
2. On the day: Cut out the two sets of cards, and blue tack a stigma card over each scriptural truth card (it doesn't matter which stigma goes over each bible verse, though some do sit more naturally together), so that people can peel them off easily to see what is below. Lay the stuck together cards out, and display the sign you made.

For display:**Confronting stigma**

- Think about how you and others view people affected by HIV. Is this how God sees them?
- If it helps you, peel off the stigma card to reveal God's truth below. (Stick the cards back together afterwards ready for others to use.)
- Pray for forgiveness for wrong attitudes and freedom for those affected.

5. Speed your love

Equipment needed: Matches, and enough candles and red ribbons (preferably pinned as per the standard HIV/AIDS ribbon) for each person to have one of each, a large cross made out of stiff paper or card, a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below, and (optional) a photo or story of children who have been orphaned by HIV and AIDS. (Visit www.christianaid.org.uk or www.tearfund.org.uk to find up to date images and stories)

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section. Then source everything you need, including any stories and images you want to display in order to help people connect with what they are praying about.
2. On the day: Lay out everything you need. (Place the cardboard cross in the middle of the station, and everything else to one side, so that the candles are kept clear of everything else.) Then display a copy of the sign you have made.

For display:**Speed your love**

- An estimated 15 million children alive today have lost one or both parents to AIDS – many of these children are having to head up their family and care for siblings, and/or have no livelihood. (In Rwanda alone there are thought to be more than 100,000 child-headed families.)*
- For some countries, there is a 'missing generation' which means that there is a real struggle to pass on skills and trades to emerging generations.
- Sometimes it is hard to know what to pray for, and what to do. But God hears our cries of anguish for these children.
- Pray that they would know his love, and also the compassion that many around the world feel for them. Pray also for those caring for them – whether family, friends, or organisations.
- If it helps you, light a candle of hope and place it on the cross as you pray for love to surround these children.
- Take and wear a ribbon to show you are standing in solidarity with them.

(*UN AIDS)

6. Repentance

Equipment needed: basin full of water, towel, cross and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.
2. On the day: Lay out everything that is needed, and display the sign you have made.

For display:**Repentance**

- Much of the Church has not responded to the HIV crisis with the compassion it should have done.
- Ask for God's conviction and forgiveness and pray that the Church would repent where it needs to.
- Pray that God would help the Church to be his hands and feet in this situation.
- If it helps you – use the water provided to wash your hands as a symbolic act of receiving God's cleansing forgiveness.

7. Sharing the burden

Equipment needed: Stories from organisations and projects around the world working with people suffering with HIV AIDS, either printed out or shown in film (e.g. This film clip from Christian Aid about Frie from Ethiopia: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=At_POK271_s), and a print out of the signs you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out the sign using the text in the 'For display' section
2. On the day: Lay out the stories you have printed off (along with a computer set-up to play any films you want to show). Display the sign you have made.

For display:

Sharing the burden

- Read the stories about people working with those affected by HIV AIDS.
- Give thanks for these particular individuals and organisations – and pray that God would fill them with his compassion and strength as they minister hope and healing to those in such need.
- Pray too that he would help governments, NGOs, medical professionals and pharmaceutical companies to work together for the good of those suffering from HIV AIDS, either personally or because of impacts on their family.

8. Reach out and touch someone

Equipment needed: pens, paper, scissors, and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.
2. On the day: Lay out everything that is needed, and display the sign you have made.

For display:

Reach out and touch someone

- Take a few minutes to consider whether there is anything you feel led to be doing as a result of this time praying.
- Ask God to help you to reach out by loving, praying, acting and giving as he leads – whether that is with organisations in your local area, or in relation to global poverty and those affected by HIV and AIDS.
- If it helps you, take a pen and paper and draw round your hand, and then cut out the hand shape. Now write down a prayer of commitment onto the hand in response to what is on your heart.

Below are the words for the poem 'Unheard song' which are needed for station '3. Silenced' and the stigma and truth cards for station '4. Confronting stigma'.

Unheard song

I am my brother's keeper
I am my sister's mother
I am my daughter's fading hope
I was my father's treasure
I share my mother's smile
It's all that's left us now of her

**Will anyone hear my prayer for life
Will anyone hear my song of praise?
Will anyone mourn my lost youth now
Or comfort my daughter when it's her turn to cry. (She will cry.)**

I said goodbye to childhood
It left me in the night
I play at houses now for real
The burdens that I carry
Heavier than my womb
The life inside me – will she live?

I am an inconvenience
Distraction on your ipod
Don't worry I will be gone soon
Cos I am forgotten stories
I am injustice still unseen
There are a million more of me – disposable.

(© 2008 Liz Baddaley)

<p>“When you are broken-hearted, I am close to you” Based on Psalm 34:18</p>	<p>“My thoughts towards you are as countless as the sand on the seashore” Based on Psalm 139:17-18</p>
<p>“You were made in my image” Based on Genesis 1:27</p>	<p>“I will never stop doing good to you” Based on Jeremiah 32:40</p>
<p>“You were not a mistake” Based on Psalm 139:15-16</p>	<p>“You are my treasured possession” Based on Exodus 19:5</p>
<p>“I am not distant or angry, but am the complete expression of love” Based on 1 John 4:16</p>	<p>“I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles” 2 Corinthians 1:3-4</p>
<p>“My plan for your future has always been filled with hope” Based on Jeremiah 29:11</p>	<p>“One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes, and I’ll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth” Based on Revelation 21:3-4</p>

FEAR	PREJUDICE
JUDGEMENT	GUILT
SORROW	DESPAIR
ANGER	ISOLATION
SHAME	ANXIETY