

Written prayers

Responding to HIV, AIDS and poverty

For those living with HIV or AIDS

Triune God – our creator, healer and comforter,
We lift to you all who are living with HIV or AIDS;
We pray for your peace and love to flood their hearts.
Give them comfort and courage where they are scared,
Assurance of their true identity when they face stigma
And acceptance and support from their communities.
Bring relief and healing,
Easy access to antiretroviral drugs, counselling and care,
And above all – grant them hope.
Triune God – our creator, healer and comforter,
We ask these things because of your love and power.
Amen.

For those who have been bereaved

Leader: Spirit of God, you draw near to the broken hearted

All: Spirit of God, draw near.

Leader: Counsel all who grieve.

Mourn with those who mourn,

And grant a crown of beauty in exchange for their ashes.

Spirit of God, draw near to all those who have lost family members to AIDS related illnesses.

All: Spirit of God, draw near.

Leader: We ask that you would give them hope

And provide for those who have lost their income.

We especially lift to you all the children who have lost parents, grandparents and siblings,

Those taking on responsibilities bigger than their years or their means,

And those amongst the grieving who are also HIV positive —

Strengthen, equip and empower them for all that lies ahead

And move us all to respond with generous love to their needs.

All: Spirit of God, draw near we pray.

Amen.

For an end to stigma

Leader: Lord, your church has stigmatised those living with HIV and AIDS.

**All: All-seeing, truth-loving God, open our eyes to see our sin.
Teach us and lead us
So that love would defeat fear
And compassion would silence our judgement.**

Leader: Lord, we pray for all those families and communities who have isolated members living with HIV and AIDS.

**All: All-loving, truth-revealing God, open their hearts to seek reconciliation.
Teach them and lead them
So that love would defeat fear
And compassion would silence their judgement.**

Leader: Lord, we are all so quick to reduce each other to something less than ourselves when we are scared, ignorant, or deceived.

**All: All-creating, truth-giving God, open our minds to understand that your image is carried by all.
Teach us and lead us
So that love would defeat fear
And compassion would silence our judgement.**

Leader: For the sake of your precious son – who loved the leper, the prostitute and the tax collector – because he saw you in all of them.

All: Amen.

For HIV and AIDS orphans

Father of the fatherless,
If our hearts break for these your children,
How much more does yours?

We are angry, confused and afraid
But we bring all our emotions to you, knowing you understand them,
And that your heart is full of anguish for the orphans' pain.

Father of the fatherless,
Come as only you can –
Speed your love to them,
To comfort, counsel and restore their hearts.

We pray for those caring for orphans,
Give them wisdom, strength, love and financial security.

And we pray for communities and countries who are struggling to pass on skills and knowledge to young people because of a missing generation of parents.

We ask that you would bridge the gap, and give them creative solutions for taking trade, industry and education forward.

Father of the fatherless,
If our hearts break for these your children,
How much more does yours?

We trust you, we honour you, we choose to praise you even in this.
Father of the fatherless – we too are children and so we surrender to you.
Have mercy, because of your great love.

Amen.

For miraculous change

Almighty God, who is all powerful, just and loving,
In your sovereign name, we dare to pray big prayers.

Lord, we thank you for the progress made with anti-retroviral drugs, but we want to see complete healing.
Be with all who are working to find potential vaccines and cures for HIV.
You know all the body's secret defences — reveal the solution to them quickly.

Lord, we thank you for the politicians, who have spoken out already, and the policies and subsidies which have led to drug provision for the poorest communities, but we want to see more justice for the poor.
Convict governments and international bodies to make drugs available to all – and work in their hearts and minds so that they honour their promises.

Lord, we know that many people living with HIV and AIDS are doing so because of poverty.
And that this poverty also worsens their chances of coping, and increases the impact on their communities.
Inspire us to act, governments to listen, and systems to be changed so that unjust systems and practices will be changed.

Lord, we thank you for the increase in preventative education, and the impact it has had on decreasing the rate of new cases in countries such as Ghana, but we want to see a complete end to this virus.
In your mercy, end the spread of HIV, and protect and deliver the poor who are suffering so unjustly.

Almighty God, who is all powerful, just and loving,
In your sovereign name, we dare to pray big prayers.
We believe you act today – we trust you for the timing,
And thank you for the breakthroughs you will provide – whether they come through science or signs and wonders.
All that is good is sourced from you, and we praise you for the miracles you already have in store.

Amen.

A prayer of thanks for huge progress in the big picture, and a renewed commitment to pray and act for an end to HIV/AIDS (inspired by the hymn *Lord of all hopefulness)**

Inspired by reports of breakthrough from UNAIDS around World AIDS Day 2013 – see our blog article from the day it was written for more context - <http://journey.thesanctuarycentre.org/2013/11/29/this-is-why-we-pray-and-act-on-injustice/>

Lord of all hopefulness,
Lord of all joy
whose trust, ever child-like,
no cares could destroy,
You were there when we woke up
to HIV's stigma and endemic spread,
And you gave us the hope, Lord,
to face that dark day and imagine a new tomorrow.

Lord of all eagerness,
Lord of all faith,
whose strong hands were skilled
at the plane and the lathe,
You enable our work
and keep giving us still
your strength in our hearts, Lord,
To keep going in this long fight.

Lord of all kindness,
Lord of all grace,
your hands swift to welcome,
your arms to embrace,
You've inspired our scientists
And changed people's minds.
You've filled us with courage, Lord
And moved through us in love.

Lord of all gentleness,
Lord of all calm,
whose voice is contentment,
whose presence is balm.
We stand on the breakthroughs
And ask for determination not complacency.
Give us the means to pray and work for more,
Till we celebrate the end of HIV's day.

*Jan Struther (1901-1953)

A blessing for those working with people living with HIV or AIDS

On carers, nurses and doctors,
Counsellors and friends.
On those providing homes for orphans,
And those offering jobs or training.
On campaigners, policy shapers and church leaders,
Aid agencies and peer educators.
On those providing funding,
And those speaking out for change.
We ask your blessing God.

May the Father's love strengthen them,
Christ's healing touch flow freely through them,
And the Spirit's fruits of hope, peace and joy be seen in them,
As they pour out their hearts of compassion every day.

Amen.

For us as we seek to respond

**All: Father of all,
 Move in us as we seek to respond to the reality of HIV and AIDS in our world today.
 Give us your love to overcome our fear,
 That we might reach out to those in our community.
 Give us your courage to speak out against prejudice,
 That we might help others hear those who have been silenced.
 And give us your power
 That we might reach out in generosity, practical service, and prayer
 To see lives and hearts healed.
 Amen.**