

Center for the Church and Global AIDS Action Newsletter

For more information:
Center for the Church and Global AIDS
Action Newsletter

www.churchandglobalaids.org

Fall, 2009

TAX-EXEMPT GIFTS

As a government recognized 501(c)(3), gifts to the Center are tax-exempt. All Center contributors will receive receipts.

Send donations to:
Center for the Church and Global AIDS
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Centennial, CO 80112

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\$800,000 OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT SHIPPED TO TWO AIDS CENTERS IN INDIA

Donors to the Center have raised funds to ship an estimated \$800,000 of medical supplies and equipment to two AIDS centers: a clinic in rural Namakkal in South India and a Manipur hospital in Northeast India.

Working with Project C.U.R.E., each shipment is valued at about \$400,000. Unused new materials are collected from hospitals and clinics in Colorado. Each shipment costs \$20,000 plus \$3,000 for an on-site assessment of what is needed and can be used.

Gifts were received through golf tournament receipts and grants from the Bacon Family Foundation, Armstrong Foundation, United Methodist Global AIDS Fund, and St. Luke's UMC, Indianapolis.

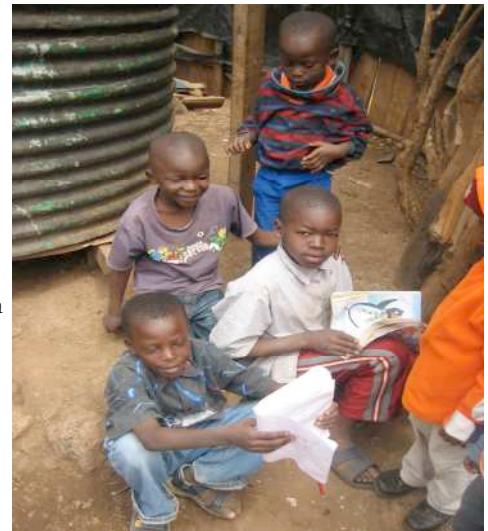


120 KENYAN AIDS ORPHANS BENEFIT FROM THE "GIFT OF HOPE"

Keeping children with family and community rather than in orphanages is the goal of the Meru, Kenya, Gift of HOPE (*Helping Orphans by Providing Essentials*) program. Center friends support 120 vulnerable AIDS orphans through yearly contributions of \$150. Grandparents and guardians play a special role along with health workers.

During a 2009 trip to Kenya, a team of nine volunteers from the Center met these children and program supervisors. A special challenge is that 1,000 more children have been identified as being vulnerable. A church in Texas is supporting another 100 kids, but more resources are needed.

Special thanks to individuals who are annually giving \$150 or more. Other sources of support are income derived from the 2009 Valentine's Celebration, sales of the book *Cherishing Life and Love: Reflections of Paul Murphy*, and when Paula Murphy on her 75th birthday asked friends to not give her presents but help support a needy child.



Each container shipped has about 400,000 worth of medical supplies and equipment.

HELP SEND KENYA \$400,000 OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT —Maua Methodist Hospital desperately needs help. Currently they are treating 1400 patients and caring for another 2500. The hospital employs four HIV persons to fight stigma and teach prevention. **Can you make a contribution to make this possible in 2010?**

RESPONDING TO THE CRY OF THE AIDS ORPHAN

Donald E. Messer, Executive Director

The ancient theological question of theodicy—"why does a good God permit evil?"—is being faced anew in contemporary Africa. The poignant plea of a nine-year-old girl in a Nairobi, Kenya, slum echoes in my heart and mind. Surrounded by poverty, suffering, and death caused by HIV and AIDS, she asked:

*"God, why did it have to be us?
Are we the ones who sinned or our parents?
Why did you have to take away our parents?
Are orphans and vulnerable children part of your creation?"*

In Kenya alone there are an estimated 990,000 to 1,400,000 AIDS orphans. One in eleven children is an orphan. Worldwide the number exceeds 5 million. An estimated 130,000 to 180,000 children in Kenya are living with HIV. Two-thirds of the HIV-positive Kenyan children do not have access to life-giving antiretroviral treatment. Forty thousand children are expected to die in the next two years because medicine is not available. Half of the HIV infected infants will never celebrate their second birthday.

Caring for Vulnerable AIDS Orphans

Christians have a divine mandate to care for vulnerable AIDS orphans. Scripture clearly calls people of faith to "care for the widow and the orphan." When the disciples tried to shoo away the children, Jesus insisted they come to him. He raised a little girl from the dead and repeatedly instructed his followers to "heal every disease and every sickness."

In rural Meru, Kenya, for \$150 a year the Center for the Church and Global AIDS supports a community-based orphan care program for 120 children. This gift of HOPE ("Helping Orphans by Providing Essentials") program keeps children with grandparents and guardians, helping with education, school uniforms, safety, and psychological support. One thousand more vulnerable children, however, have been identified by name, age, and gender. They wait for someone to respond with care. If the church does not care for orphans, we know who in the world may: exploitative pedophiles and recruiters of child soldiers.

Engaging in Orphan Prevention

Christians are called to engage in orphan prevention. HIV and AIDS are preventable diseases, yet the disease has caused over 15 million orphans worldwide. One way to promote orphan prevention is by keeping HIV-positive parents alive. Thanks to major efforts initiated by the United States through PEPFAR and internationally through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis, anti-retroviral medicines are being distributed free throughout the world.

Another key to promoting orphan prevention is to ensure people never get infected by the virus in the first place.

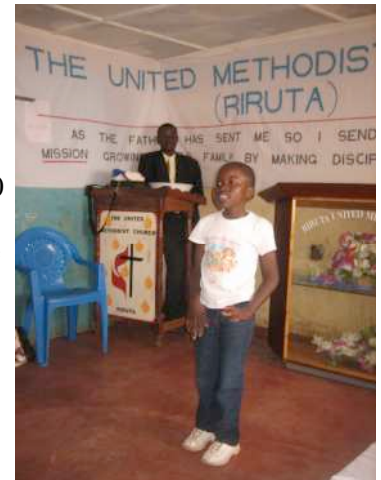
With no cure or vaccine in sight, prevention must be a primary concern of the church. Too often churches shy away from taboo topics like sexual health, however, leaving children, youth, and adults at great risk. The church has a special responsibility to emphasize the "ABC's" (abstinence, being faithful, and condoms) of prevention. In Kenya 450,000 married couples reportedly are discordant, i.e., one of the partners is HIV positive. Florence Murugu, director of the Meru AIDS ministry, says "if Christians want to save lives and prevent more orphans, we must recommend 'zero grazing' among married couples, as well as teaching correct and consistent use of condoms."

Creating Economic Opportunities: School Uniforms and Malaria Nets

Christians are challenged to develop economic opportunities so HIV positive parents and children can not only survive but have sustainable incomes. Countless initiatives have relegated women to making beads and other trinkets. The HEART program provides a viable alternative to women selling their bodies or making beads. Vicki Winkler has helped HIV positive women sew and sell 2,588 school uniforms and 21,427 malaria nets.

Christians are raising millions of dollars to fight malaria through programs like *Nothing But Nets*. What if some of this money empowered HIV persons to make malaria nets, rather than only using the money to purchase from major manufacturers? To paraphrase an old saying, maybe "we could kill two diseases with one gift."

Together let us find ways to respond to the cries of AIDS orphans around the world.



NEW BOOK PUBLISHED: *52 WAYS TO CREATE AN AIDS-FREE WORLD*

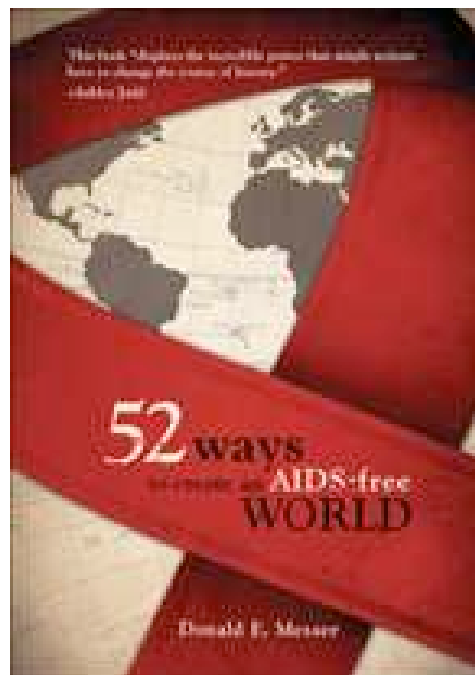
By Donald E. Messer

A popular Hollywood actress and AIDS activist, and a well-known evangelical leader, have endorsed the new book written by the Center Director, Donald E. Messer. Included are photos of the Center's work around the world.

Ashley Judd says the book *"displays the incredible power that simple actions and awareness have to change the course of history. This fine little book gives a comprehensive yet highly accessible overview of the balanced, holistic, and practical approach--the only approach that can work--to preventing the further spread of HIV, the plague of our time that disproportionately preys on the vulnerable and the poor, especially girls and women."*

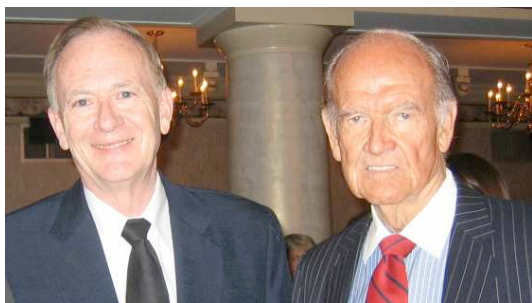
Kay Warren of Saddleback Church HIV/AIDS Initiative notes *"It's easy to assume it's all up to the scientists and doctors and people infected. But it's not. For us to have an HIV and AIDS free world, it's going to take you and me. I applaud Don Messer for his practical, creative, and even fun approach to tackling HIV and AIDS prevention. While I cannot heartily endorse all 52 ways in the world of HIV/AIDS prevention there is no such thing as 100% agreement. This book will open interesting discussions among those who are seeking realistic steps of engagement in the effort to end AIDS."*

Copies can be secured through Amazon.com and other book stores. Or order through the Center's website: www.churchandglobalaids.org



YOUTUBE VIDEO

52 Ways is featured in a new video produced by Fresh Air Books. View it on YouTube or on Center's website!



SEN. GEORGE MCGOVERN SPEAKS

Former Senator George McGovern, Chair of the Center's International Advisory Board, visited Denver and spoke at a special luncheon co-hosted by the Rocky Mountain Farmer's Union and the Center.

On a national tour promoting his new book, *Abraham Lincoln*, he shared his ideas on health care legislation, hunger, and AIDS.

JOIN HAITI AIDS TRIP
April 5-9, 2010

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION ADDRESSED IN BALI, INDONESIA

At the invitation of the 9th International AIDS Congress for Asia and the Pacific, Center representatives spoke on "The Role of Religion in Encouraging and Discouraging HIV and AIDS Prevention." The inter-faith event included Dr. Youngsook Kang, Dr. Donald E. Messer, and N. M. Samuel, M.D.



TAKE A LOOK . . . NEW WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK!!!

Thanks to the creative vision and talent of the Rev. Christian Robbins, Cheyenne, Wyoming, the Center now has a **Facebook** page plus a rejuvenated website. Photo to left shows him playing with AIDS orphans.

See: www.churchandglobalaids.org

**Center for the Church
and Global AIDS**

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**3rd ANNUAL “SWINGING AGAINST AIDS”
NETS \$47,000 FOR AIDS PROJECTS**

Thanks to donors, sponsors, almost 100 golfers, and more than 20 volunteers, the 2009 “best ball” golf tournament & silent auction at the Denver Wellshire Golf Club proved to be an outstanding success.

Led by Claudia Svarstad and Marla Petrini, \$47,000 was raised to support the Center’s work, including support of the rural Women and Children’s Clinic in India, the Hispanic “Sisters of Color” HIV outreach program and the African-American “It Takes A Village” project, both in Colorado. Plans are underway for the 4th event in August, 2010. Plan to participate—we need your help!

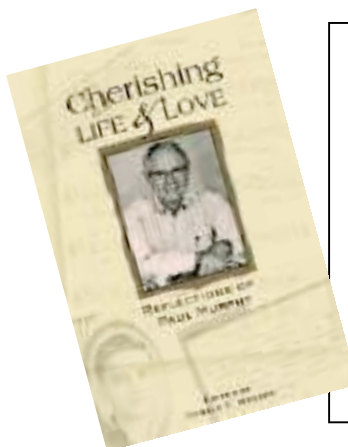


**OBSERVE WORLD AIDS DAY
DECEMBER 1**

Check out local events planned for World AIDS Day. This year’s theme is “Universal Access and Human Rights.”

Dr. Messer speaks in Nashville and Chicago during World AIDS Day week in December.

What are you and your church doing for World AIDS Day? Let us know!



***CHERISHING LIFE AND
LOVE: REFLECTIONS
OF PAUL MURPHY***

“Cherishing Life and Love: Reflections of Paul Murphy” edited by Donald E. Messer is available for \$20 by contacting the Center or via Amazon.com. Funds from sales support AIDS orphans in Kenya. Paul was a Center founder and Board vice chairperson.

