



SpiritNET an edition of the United Methodist Reporter

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“Spread an Epidemic of Giving” for the Global AIDS Fund

Many of us know the song, “It only takes a spark to get a fire going.” That is what persons supporting the UMC’s Global AIDS Fund are hoping for by launching efforts to “*Spread an Epidemic of Giving.*”

According to Donna Costa, co-convenor of our conference’s Global AIDS Committee, the 2004 General Conference gave overwhelming support to creating a Global AIDS Fund. However, she believes that the effort to incorporate ways to effectively raise the \$8 million proposed was not sufficient to help meet this goal; the Global AIDS Fund was not added to the list of Special Sundays, nor made an official fund.

This year’s theme for World AIDS Day, December 1, was “Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise.” Thus far, based on a goal of only \$1 per member, New England Conference churches have raised less than \$20,000 towards an anticipated \$97,000. Over the next 10 months, individuals and churches within the New England Annual conference will have more opportunities to support the Global AIDS Fund, so that we reach our goal by the end of 2008. Resources, liturgical suggestions, and stories of local church



efforts will be shared to help encourage increased participation.

“Many of the laity and clergy around the conference have already taken action, held special services, and hosted guest speakers,” stated Ms. Costa, as she expressed her appreciation on behalf of the Global AIDS Committee for these efforts. She suggests easy steps that United Methodists in New England can take over the next several weeks to join in “Spreading an Epidemic of Giving”:

- Wear Red, in honor of the red AIDS ribbon.
- During Lent, sacrifice the purchase of coffee, donuts, soda or bottled water, and donate the savings.
- Find out if your local church has contributed yet. If not, set a date for a special service or fundraiser. Have the children and youth make posters for the event.
- Send a postcard to a lay or clergy colleague, asking if their congregation has contributed yet.
- Send checks to the Conference Treasurer, made out to the New England Conference, UMC, with a notation for Advance Special #982345.

To contact the committee with ideas, stories or questions, e-mail to: chcomafterschool@verizon.net.

***“Churches cannot conquer AIDS alone, but it will not happen without us.”
--Bishop Felton May***