

The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Fights the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in the Black Community as a Social Justice Issue

WHEREAS, there are over 21,000 Black Churches across the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, of the 39,000,000 Blacks living in the U.S. 53% attend church weekly, which leverages the power of 20,000,000 to end new HIV infections; and

WHEREAS, if Black America were its own country, it would rank 16th in the world for people living with HIV; and

WHEREAS, African Americans represent 12% of the population but account for 44% of the new HIV infections in the United States; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control, 1 in 32 Black women and 1 in 16 Black men will be infected with HIV during their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death among Black women 25-34 years of age and the second leading cause of death of Black men 35-44 years of age; and

WHEREAS, Black women are disproportionately affected, representing over 50% of new infections nationally because the female's anatomy makes them more susceptible to HIV infection; and

WHEREAS, the HIV/AIDS crisis is rising among youth and seniors over the age of 50; and

WHEREAS, for definitive change, interventions must occur at the societal, community and individual levels for the greatest impact;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church will endorse the Black Church and HIV: The Social Justice Imperative initiative as a core priority at Annual Sessions to reduce stigma, discrimination, myths, and shame around HIV/AIDS; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church will partner with the NAACP national health department staff to provide technical assistance to pastors in support of strategic programs that promote regular HIV testing and prevention education in their respective communities in order to raise awareness about HIV as a social justice issue; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, beginning 2018, increase pastoral engagement by 10% each year to partner with the NAACP to intentionally communicate HIV as a social justice issue or the disproportionate way it is impacting the Black community during the Day of Unity; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the local churches of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church will engage in the fight to prevent new HIV infections by hosting HIV faith leader trainings and partnering on the annual Day of Unity.

On behalf of the College of Bishops, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, this 21st day of May, 2018



Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, Secretary
Bishop Lawrence Reddick, Senior Bishop