



## KEEPING THE PROMISE IN LOVE – AN ORDER OF WORSHIP

L = Leader

A = All

### Greeting

L God is love,  
and those who abide in love abide in God

**A and God abides in them.**

L There is no fear in love,

**A but perfect love casts out fear**

L For fear has to do with punishment,

**A and whoever fears**

has not reached perfection in love.

L In this is love, not that we loved God,

**A but that God loved us and sent God's Son  
into the world that we might live through him.**

(John 4:16b, 18, 10a, 9b)

### Hymn

#### Action

Everyone is invited either to pin a red ribbon on their neighbour's coat or tie a red cord round their wrist to demonstrate our unity in Christ and our solidarity with all people living with HIV. As we do so, we say to the other: God has loved you with an everlasting love.

### Forgiveness

L Before the fear of HIV  
we ask forgiveness for our cowardice,  
praying that compassion may triumph over hysteria,  
reason over hatred, joy over despair.

**A We ask for courageous love, Lord.**

L In the presence of HIV  
we ask forgiveness for just not noticing,  
praying that the bonds of kinship and friendship,  
the bonds of humanity, may prove  
strong and true against all odds.

**A We ask for persevering love, Lord.**

L In the reality of HIV  
we ask forgiveness for our denial,  
praying for the healing of the body and the spirit,  
the healing of a blighted future  
for individuals and communities.

**A We ask for healing love, Lord.**

L In the extremity of AIDS, even in the face of death,  
we give thanks for those whose lives speak love,  
whose acts dispel stigma and discrimination,  
whose joy overcomes fear,  
whose hope speaks of eternal life.

**A We give thanks to you, Lord,  
in the promise of this Advent season.  
Amen.**

### Hymn

#### Dialogue

*Could be read by a young people's group*

**Psalmist** How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?

**Reader 1** People avoid me and talk behind my back.

**Reader 2** They treat me like I'm different.

**Reader 3** They think of me as being a loser. I'm excluded.

**Reader 1** I don't dare tell anyone that I'm HIV positive, because  
I don't know how they'll react.

**Reader 2** I'm so sick and tired of all the questions!

**Reader 3** I've got desires too: to have a husband, to have children.

**Reader 1** I'm so afraid of being rejected or disappointed. I don't  
dare fall in love.

**Reader 2** I'm sick of people seeing only the virus. They don't see me!

**Reader 3** I'm looking for someone who can help me to accept I have HIV.

**Reader 1** I'm hoping to meet people who don't condemn.

**Reader 2** I didn't find them in church. So it's been lonely.

**Reader 3** I'm searching for a God who loves me, who doesn't judge me.

**Psalmist** How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?

*The South African song Woza Nomthwalo could be sung before and after the dialogue - music, words and recording available on the World AIDS Day page at <http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/hivaidz>*

**Bible Readings** Psalm 13 and John 8: 1-11

## Sermon

## Hymn

**Offering** for the work of the HIV/AIDS Project

## Prayer of dedication

L Receive these our offerings, Almighty God;  
and as you have opened our hearts in giving,  
so open us to greater expectancy,  
that we may recognise the signs of your coming  
in those living with HIV;  
and so be restored in faith, hope and love,  
to be shared with a waiting world.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

**A Amen**

## Prayers of intercession

L God our loving Father, your son Jesus chose to be vulnerable  
in order to understand and identify with us.  
We are wounded in many ways.  
We implore you to heal us and make us healers with you,  
to help heal our broken world.  
Lord in your mercy,

**A Hear our prayer**

L We pray for political and faith leaders around the world.  
Give them courage and strength to take a lead in  
working to prevent the further spread of HIV  
and to care for those already infected or affected.  
Lord in your mercy,

**A Hear our prayer**

L We pray for families who are wounded or broken by HIV.  
Help them to bear one another's burdens  
and to reach out in healing to others.  
Lord in your mercy,

**A Hear our prayer**

L We pray for young people, in their vitality and idealism.  
Bless them with good friends and mentors  
to help them accept themselves in full humanity  
and challenge them with high ideals.  
Lord in your mercy,

**A Hear our prayer**

L We pray for those who are sick and in pain,  
especially those living with HIV and AIDS:  
may they experience your love through each one of us;  
may they find meaning and purpose in their lives  
and inspire others who suffer.  
Lord in your mercy,

**A Hear our prayer**

L We pray for all those who work for development and justice;  
may they not be discouraged as they struggle to create a  
healthier world at peace with itself.  
Lord in your mercy,

**A Hear our prayer**

L Lord, we thank you that you have embodied us  
in your own image and likeness.  
Help us to be sensitive to one another  
and to build just and caring communities in your world.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A Amen**

## Hymn

### A Benediction

L Go out into the world and take with you:  
The hope of God our creator  
who in love created a world where all would be whole  
and longs for that wholeness to be restored.

**A Amen**

L The hope of Jesus  
who touched and ate with the broken  
and offered them healing as he offers us now.

**A Amen**

L The hope of the Spirit  
who inspires and guides and energises us  
in times of apathy and despair  
to work to bring all God's people into oneness and health.

**A Amen**

L So may God's threefold majesty bless and embrace you always.  
**Amen**

*Greeting Et Action – Adapted from Bangkok Worship (Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance)*

*Forgiveness – Adapted from Africa Praying (World Council of Churches)*

*Dialogue – Adapted from Liturgy on being One Body (Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance)*

*Dedication – Douglas Galbraith (Church of Scotland)*

*Intercession – Adapted from Ashakiran, Secunderabad, India*

*Benediction – Adapted from Eildon Dyer (Christian Aid)*



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