

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Don Messer Will Speak in Upper Room Chapel to Observe World AIDS Day

NASHVILLE, Tenn., November 8, 2007/GBOD/ -- The Rev. Dr. Donald Messer, author of "Breaking the Conspiracy of Silence - Christian Churches and the Global AIDS Crisis" and executive director of the Center for the Church and Global AIDS, will be the keynote speaker for a special worship service in observance of World AIDS Day, Wednesday, November 28 at 8:30 a.m. in The Upper Room Chapel, 1908 Grand Ave. A reception will follow the service.

Messer, a United Methodist theologian, author, and former college and seminary president, is widely known for his work in combating world hunger and HIV/AIDS. He has traveled to over 30 countries across the world as a speaker and workshop leader.

"Don Messer is one of the most significant Christian leaders in the English speaking world when it comes to the subject of HIV/AIDS and the church. We are delighted to have him with us at GBOD and as our preacher for The Upper Room Chapel service in anticipation of World AIDS Day Observance, December 1," said the Rev. Tom Albin, dean of Upper Room Chapel.

The purpose of World AIDS Day is to raise awareness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the grim global statistics associated with the 46 million people infected worldwide.

Messer's discovery of two copies of *The Upper Room daily devotional guide* in the waiting room of Maua Methodist Hospital (MMH) in Kenya, led to Upper Room Ministries publishing of "Prayers for Encouragement: Hope for Persons Living with HIV & AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis, and Other Serious Diseases."

Though the guides were over ten years old, people had repeatedly read these torn pages seeking biblical counsel and strong spiritual advice. This reality inspired Don to contact the Upper Room about publishing a book for persons seeking God's healing presence while living with stigma, discrimination and rejection from family and friends.

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Persons participating in the worship service will receive a copy of “Prayers for Encouragement and Hope for Persons Suffering with HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Diseases.”

The 32-page book contains meditations, scriptures and prayers written by persons who have HIV and people who minister with people with HIV/AIDS from around the world.

While a plethora of health and service organizations offer information and support regarding prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, resources from a Christian spirituality perspective are scarce.

Upper Room Ministries, a ministry of the General Board of Discipleship, in conjunction with the Center for the Church and Global AIDS compiled the booklet for those suffering with AIDS and other life threatening diseases.

Upper Room Ministries is an ecumenical organization that produces resources for encouraging deeper spiritual formation, including “The Upper Room daily devotional guide,” five other magazines, and a line of books and programs for youth and adults. More information about Upper Room resources can be found online at www.upperroom.org. For more information about *Prayers for Encouragement* contact, Dale Waymack at 877-899-2780, ext. 7236.

The General Board of Discipleship’s mission is to support annual conference and local church leaders for their task of equipping world-changing disciples. An agency of The United Methodist Church, The General Board of Discipleship is located at 1908 Grand Avenue in Nashville, Tenn. For more information, call the Media Relations Office toll free at (877) 899-2780, ext. 7017.

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