



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
HIV & AIDS NETWORK

UCAN News

Volume 4, Issue 1

UCC General Synod 27 Edition, June 2009

Special points of interest:

- UCAN activities at the UCC's 27th General Synod
- UCAN 2008 Annual Report

Inside this issue:

General Synod 27	2
National HIV Testing Day	2
UCAN 2008 Annual Report	3-5
Community of Hope UCC, Tulsa, OK	6
EAA Action Framework	7
UCAN Founding Gift Appeal	8



Are You an HIV Competent Church?

The HIV and AIDS pandemic is one of the most serious health crises the world has ever faced. UNAIDS estimates there are now 33 million people living with HIV worldwide and 5 million people die each year from AIDS related illnesses (June 2008).

International HIV and AIDS response organizations have recently called for the scaling up of HIV prevention efforts, especially among faith-based organizations.

The message of our faith is clear when it comes to compassion and care, and for being ready and alert. Preventing disease does indeed play as important a role in our faith story as caring for the sick does.

The United Church of Christ has been a part of this struggle. From the local church to the General Synod, from World AIDS Day observances to comprehensive HIV and AIDS outreach programs, there have been and continue to be important and significant responses

from a variety of settings of the UCC. However, the scale of these responses has not yet reached a level equal to the need.

We already have the capacity to realize the vision of stopping AIDS. The question is whether we share this vision and will we do what it takes to achieve it. Such an effective response will indeed take the efforts of *all of us*. It will require an honest assessment of each of our actions and intentions.

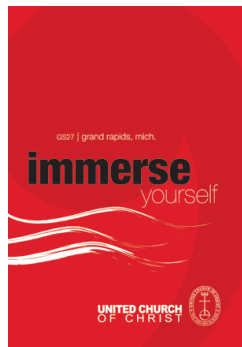
When assessing your local church's HIV competency, consider these questions:

- Do you actively try to create new partnerships with and among local churches and the community for collaboration, increased effectiveness and accountability?
- Do you advocate for and support the development and implementation of a national HIV and AIDS plan that includes a significant increase in programs and funding for comprehensive HIV prevention in the United States?

For more information and ideas, check out the proposed General Synod 27 resolution: "Calling for Comprehensive HIV Prevention in Church and Community."

On the web at: www.ucaninc.org

- Have you developed and implemented a plan of action for your local setting, which includes comprehensive HIV prevention strategies?
- Do you build and share your models of best practices, using the internet and other effective communication vehicles?



Join UCAN at General Synod 27

Join UCAN at the UCC's 27th General Synod in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 26-30. UCAN is sponsoring several events to raise awareness and stop the spread of HIV:

"Church Positive Space" Exhibit

Wider Church Ministries Exhibit, Exhibit Hall, Convention Center

UCAN will be providing a safe space for **everyone** affected by HIV and AIDS to gather during General Synod, in order to relax, network, and provide one another with support. Look for the comfy chairs, healthy snacks and welcoming faces in the Church Positive Space in the Wider Church Ministries display area!

"Will All Those Affected by HIV Please Stand Up?" Workshop

River City Saturday, June 27, 3:30—5:00 pm,
Governors Room, Amway Grand Plaza Hotel

HIV continues to be one of the most daunting diseases the world has ever faced. We have the opportunity to stop this disease if we all stand up and do our part. Participants will learn the current trends, how to become an HIV competent church and identify ways to respond to HIV.

"An Ounce of Prevention" Health Luncheon

Monday, June 29, 12:00 pm—2:30 pm, \$18.00
Heritage Hill Room, Amway Grand Plaza Hotel

From theology to policy, from HIV to diabetes, during this luncheon we will look at the state of health, address gaps and barriers in health services, lift-up collaborations that work, and identify planning and implementation strategies that make a difference. This lunch will also feature a **Key-note by Dr. Carolyn P. Parks-Bani**, CDC Research Fellow for HIV Prevention in Communities of Color.

"Immerse Yourself in Healthy Living" Health Fair

Monday, June 29, 10:30am—7:00pm
Convention Center, Grand Gallery F

With the help of local health care providers, the Health and Wholeness Advocacy office and UCAN, Inc. will host a health fair at Synod, which will include free information and tests, such as cholesterol, HIV, blood pressure, etc. Door prizes included! Come find out more about the status of your own personal health!



Grand Rapids, Michigan

National HIV Testing Day—June 27, 2009

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 250,000 of the one million people living with HIV and AIDS in the United States are unaware of their status.

With early diagnosis, individuals who know their HIV-status can begin to receive appropriate treatment and care, before it's too late.

On June 27th, local organizations across the nation will recognize these struggles and engage with communities to promote early diagnosis and HIV testing.

On National HIV Testing Day thousands of community-based organizations, businesses, health departments, elected officials, media, and individuals will partner to-

gether to encourage routine HIV-testing and to promote culturally-appropriate messages for those affected by and living with HIV and AIDS. Join in and find out your status! Now is the time!

For more information:
<http://www.napwa.org/programs/nhtd.shtml>



UCAN, Inc. 2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Report of the Executive Director Rev. Michael Schuenemeyer

One of the things I share in nearly every opportunity I have to speak about HIV is that whether we recognize it or not we are all on a journey with this disease. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to share this journey as Executive Director and celebrate this, our first Annual Report, under our new nonprofit corporation, UCAN, Inc.

2008 was a momentous year for our organization. Anytime you undertake the establishment of 501(c)(3), there are a lot of administrative details to attend to, including the necessary filings with government entities, such as the IRS and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, all of which we accomplished with the able services of legal counsel, Richard "Dick" Osterberg and his assistant Tina Leung.

The ability of organizations to achieve their mission is dependent on strong Board members who understand their role and provide strong leadership for good organizational governance and clear fiduciary accountability. The UCAN Board of Director's first meeting was in January of 2008 in a retreat setting which focused on Board development and strategic planning. The Board adopted a basic mission plan, focused on HIV prevention, care and support and efforts to build the capacity of the United Church of Christ and UCAN's network to respond.

Programmatically, UCAN has continued to develop. Through the work of the UCAN Leadership Team, workshops and training events have occurred across the UCC at national, conference and local events to help leaders develop their plans for response. UCAN works with leaders, churches and organizations wherever they are in their journey, helps them to identify the need, plan their next steps and walks with them as they

move forward. UCAN participated in the UN High Level Review of progress on HIV commitments, co-sponsored the interfaith exhibit at the International AIDS Conference in Mexico City and was a major sponsor of the World AIDS Day observance in New York City, hosted by Riverside Church.

In the fall of 2008, the Leadership Team, and the UCAN Board worked with the Health and Wholeness Program Committee of Wider Church Ministries (WCM) to draft a resolution calling for comprehensive HIV prevention which was adopted by the WCM Board and will be considered by the 27th General Synod of the UCC. We have continued to develop and promote our resources, including a Spanish language version of "Why Give Out Condoms" and creating a UCAN presence on social networking sites, such as Facebook.

The capacity of UCAN to do this work well is tied to the financial resources we are able to access. The Board has been instrumental in creating a development plan including grant funding from private foundations, as well as public sources. We are also working diligently to develop relationships with individuals who share our passion to provide critical presence where HIV is concerned. At the very end of 2008, a special appeal was issued for the "Founding Gift Fund" and gifts will begin to be received throughout 2009.

Because of the hard work of the Board, Leadership Team and many others, much has been accomplished in our first year as UCAN, Inc. and we are poised to do even greater things in the days and years ahead. We all must do our part on this journey if we are to be successful at stopping HIV and provide the care and support all those affected. UCAN is a great place for us to work together to make it happen!



Report of the President

Oliver W. Martin, III



On behalf of the entire Board of Directors for the United Church of Christ HIV and AIDS Network, we are delighted to play a small part in the advancement of HIV prevention and care in the United States as well as abroad.

With the formal 2008 rejuvenation of the United Church of Christ HIV and AIDS Network, (UCAN, Inc.) under the umbrella of the Health and Wholeness Ministry of UCC, we look forward to providing guidance to UCAN to fulfill its mission to:

Provide capacity building and technical assistance to local congregations and their community partners to build and develop local UCC community HIV & AIDS programs.

The Board also signs onto the proposed General Synod 27 resolution, "Calling for Comprehensive HIV Prevention in Church and Community," particularly because we believe that HIV Prevention begins with knowing one's own HIV Status.

The Board vision is aligned with the Obama administration's HIV & AIDS vision that says:

"We are all part of the solution; we are all leaders."

- **As people of faith, we should:**
 - Protect ourselves and others from HIV;
 - Educate ourselves and others about HIV.
- **As a faith community, we should and we must:**
 - Mobilize to overcome the challenges and barriers to HIV prevention;
 - Fight ignorance and complacency related to HIV;
 - Increase awareness about the severity of pandemic and the continued impact that HIV has on our communities;
 - Implement the programs that scientific evidence tells us are most effective; and
 - Come together to intensify efforts and to stop this pandemic.

Together, we have the power to change the course of HIV and AIDS in the United States and abroad!

UCAN Board of Directors

Oliver W. Martin, III
President

Leslie Penrose
Secretary

Ann Kiernozek
Treasurer

Leonard Conner
Assistant Treasurer

Loyce Newton-Edwards
Member

Deborah Blood
*Moderator,
Wider Church Ministries*

Cally Rogers Witte
*Executive Minister,
Wider church Ministries*

Michael Schuenemeyer
Executive Director



2008 Financial Statement

January 1 - December 31

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
REVENUE:			
Contributions	\$ 2000	\$ 977	\$ (1,023)
Grants from WCM	20,000	20,000	
Other Grants	20,000		(20,000)
Membership Dues	5,000		(5,000)
In-kind Donations		1,623	1,623
Other Income	500		(500)
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 47,500	\$ 22,600	\$ 24,900
OPERATING EXPENSES:			
Board Meetings		\$ 9,860	\$ (9,860)
Office & Other Supplies	\$ 1,500		1,500
Dues and subscriptions	500		500
Legal, Consulting & Other	10,000	13,972	(3,972)
Promotional Costs	5,000	2,090	2,910
Educational Resources	10,000	9,007	993
Central Services	3,000	1,497	1,503
Direct Charges			
Miscellaneous Expense	3,000	122	2,878
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 33,000	\$ 36,549	\$ (3,549)
Program / Grants	\$ 20,000	\$ 3,311	\$ 16,689
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 53,000	\$ 39,860	\$ 16,689
BUDGETARY SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$ (5,500)	\$ (17,260)	\$ (11,760)
BEGINNING NET ASSETS	\$ 7,000	\$ 21,133	
ENDING NET ASSETS	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,873	



News from UCAN Network Partner: Community of Hope, UCC — Tulsa, OK

written by Rev. Lizette Merchán

Every month at our local church, Community of Hope, UCC in Tulsa, Oklahoma, a delivery is made to one of our many HIV and AIDS ministries.

One project that receives many deliveries is called "Tables to Go," funded by the Kaiser Family Foundation and members' matching funds. Because of this support, this year we were able to provide many Easter baskets for kids of parents with HIV or AIDS.

The Easter baskets made the little ones of those HIV and AIDS Easter Basket recipients happy campers for a change!

Our church, with nearly a dozen devoted volunteers, delivered nine "Tables to go" Angel Food Baskets to families, totaling 23 individuals. The youngest is 3 and the eldest is 68. They are black, brown, white, gay, straight, single and married couples. English as a second language is spoken in 3 of the homes.

One Angel Food Basket is supposed to feed a family of 4 for a

week. There is probably enough meat to do so, but not necessarily enough of the other items.

Most of these families are on Social Security or Disability. Some of them don't have the privilege of being able to even apply for these benefits and they are the ones who could really use our support.

Everything that is donated to this ministry by members of our church provides items that so many of us take for granted every day, and are truly appreciated by each one of the recipients!

~~~~~

We also host a long-time survivors retreat which includes participants from one year old to 30 years old, diagnosed with HIV or AIDS.

This year we had 18 participants and had the very first 2 Hispanic/Latina women, with simultaneous interpretation provided!

Survivors look forward to this outing as their only time on vacation. Stories, love, experiences, and speakers' knowledge is shared and cherished. No matter who they are or where they are on life's journey, all survivors were welcome at this retreat!!!

~~~~~

As Spring and Summer are in full swing, Fall will be approaching soon, which will bring two wonderful events to give relief, create

awareness and stop the stigma that HIV and AIDS still is causing too many people.

One day is called a "Day of Pampering," where survivors are taken to get hair cut, massages, manicures, pedicures, etc. One wouldn't think that this would be too complicated, but what we face as planning team is the challenge for providing not only a group day of pampering for English speakers but many more days for Spanish speakers. Many of them would rather not know or get to know who else is living with HIV or AIDS in the Latin@ community due to stigma and discrimination from within. One survivor at a time is our hope!

Our other major event this fall will be a play about true life stories woven into a theatrical piece. Two of these stories will actually be about the struggles of being HIV positive and the triumph of overcoming the complications of living with their disease rather than succumbing to it.

May we all find time to empower our communities to speak out, to learn from one another and to know of God's extravagant welcome with or without any kind of diagnosis in our lives.

We thank those inside and outside our walls for making this ministry a life-giving ministry for all, regardless of where recipients worship, the color of their skin or the language spoken at home.

Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance Framework for Action on HIV & AIDS

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) is a global network of churches, church-related agencies and Christian organizations seeking to live out faithfully the vision of being effective advocates for a just, peaceful and sustainable world. The EAA believes that through sharing our strengths we can enhance and broaden our own capacity, and increase our collective impact in advocacy.

Since its founding in 2000, the EAA has always focused part of its campaigns on HIV and AIDS. At the EAA's assembly in November 2008, delegates determined that joint advocacy (including awareness raising, campaigning and policy engagement) on HIV and AIDS should continue for the next four years. The EAA believes that this calling to engage in advocacy is not a task we take up when it is convenient, but is a fundamental requirement of living out our faith.

In order to give focus to this work, the EAA recently produced a 19-page "Framework for Action on HIV and AIDS: 2009-2012." This document is designed to provide a framework or "road map" for the shared advocacy of EAA members in the fight against HIV and AIDS. The strategies included in the Framework reflect actions that could be taken by members collectively through the EAA or through the leadership of one or more member organizations. This Framework calls members of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance to new and renewed commitment, action and solidarity in response to the pandemic.

It focuses on four goals, in particular:

1. Addressing the root causes of vulnerability to HIV;
2. Achieving universal access;
3. Eliminating stigma and discrimination; and
4. Ensuring accountability and resources.

The goals, objectives and strategies in this revised framework reflect the commitment

and actions of the EAA and its members, working together and individually. Through this continued focus on HIV and AIDS, the EAA and its members, working with other faith-based organizations and civil society at-large, deepen its advocacy, develop resources, strengthen leadership, build capacity and facilitate collaboration in our efforts to turn the tide on HIV and AIDS.

Throughout the past nine years, the EAA has campaigned vigorously on HIV and AIDS and great strides have been made. For example, much has been accomplished in the engagement of religious leaders and communities on issues such as stigma and discrimination and in the scale up of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The focus on access to medicines for all, particularly for children, has intensified attention to treatment for the most vulnerable. In addition, the visibility and respect for the faith-based response to the HIV pandemic have been due largely to coordinated efforts through the EAA at the last three International AIDS Conferences, and notably through Ecumenical Pre-Conferences.

The complete Framework for Action is on the EAA website: www.e-alliance.ch. This site also contains a wealth of information, news and resources on all of the EAA's work with HIV and AIDS.

UCAN's Executive Director, Rev. Michael Schuenemeyer, is a member of the HIV Strategy Group of the EAA.



Advocacy is not a task we take up when it is convenient, but is a fundamental requirement of living out our faith.



UCAN, Inc.

Leadership Team

Barbara Baylor

Minister for Health Care Justice
Justice and Witness Ministries, UCC

Leonard Conner (Chair)

City of Refuge UCC—CA

Rodney Johnson

Trinity Church UCC—IL

Adora Iris Lee

Washington, DC

Lizette Merchán

Community of Hope—OK

Loyce Newton-Edwards

Oklahoma City, OK

Rose Wright Scott

Franklinton Center, NC

Oliver W. Martin III

Riverside Church, NY

Staff

Mike Schuenemeyer

Executive Director

Lori Tisher

Intern

Next Issue:

Fall-Winter 2009-2010

Please support

UCAN's Mission

Contributions may be made
online or sent to **UCAN, Inc.**
at the addresses below.

UCAN, Inc.
700 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115
Phone: 216-736-3218
Fax: 213-736-3203
E-mail: ucan@ucc.org

ucaninc.org

UCAN News, a newsletter of the United Church of Christ HIV & AIDS Network

UCAN's Founding Gift Appeal

UCAN is providing significant leadership and programs toward living into a world without AIDS. The relationships we have built and the partnerships we are fostering are key to that future.

Now we need your help - your partnership - to realize them. Join in keeping the promise to stop AIDS by making a financial gift to UCAN today!

A gift in any amount will make a difference, but gifts of \$600 or more, given from December 1, 2008 through December 1, 2009, will be considered a "Founding Gift". A plaque will be created for display at the UCAN office to acknowledge those who give at the Founding Gift level.

We thank you for your time and consideration in making a gift to UCAN! We look forward to your part-

nership as we offer compassion and hope, and together create a world free of HIV and AIDS.

Donate online:

www.ucaninc.org

Or, send checks to:

UCAN, Inc.,
700 Prospect Ave E,
Cleveland, OH 44115-1100



**Keep up with the latest
news and information about UCAN!**

SUBSCRIBE to:

UCAN Stop AIDS E-News

<http://www.ucc.org/ucan/ucan-stop-aids-e-news.html>

UCAN's Mission Statement

The mission of the United Church of Christ HIV and AIDS Network (UCAN) is to build a network of people, congregations and organizations within and beyond the United Church of Christ for care giving, education and prevention in response to the HIV and AIDS pandemic by:

- Providing technical assistance to help congregations and other settings of the church start and build their capacity and programs;
- Offering training in the use of the UCC's comprehensive HIV and AIDS curriculum, *Affirming Persons, Saving Lives*, as well as other HIV and AIDS educational resources;
- Giving leadership for education and information on public policy concerns; and
- Prioritizing its work to bring critical presence to those most affected by HIV and AIDS in the United States and throughout the world