

KEEPING THE FAITH ON THE PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY PLAN FOR AIDS RELIEF



Dear Members of Congress,

We are unlikely allies from every corner of America. What do a Los Angeles poet and emcee, a Texas house-church movement pastor, an African diaspora lay leader in Atlanta, a Nazarene pastor in South Dakota, a megachurch mission's pastor in South Carolina, and a multi-Grammy-winning artist have in common? We all share a passion for God and a passion for helping end global extreme poverty and preventable disease. Along with our fellow faith leaders from across the US, we are joining together in support of PEPFAR, the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, and urge you to support its reauthorization.

In 2003, before PEPFAR was created, nearly 30 million Africans – many of them children – were infected with HIV. Antiretroviral drugs were available in wealthy countries, where an AIDS diagnosis was no longer a death sentence, but only 50,000 people on the continent were being treated with these life-saving pills. An unprecedented intervention of American leadership was required to get essential treatments and testing to everyone, everywhere that needed it. President George W. Bush launched PEPFAR during his 2003 State of the Union address, written by speechwriter, fellow architect of PEPFAR, and our close friend at the ONE Campaign, the late Mike Gerson, with this call to action: "Seldom has history offered a greater opportunity to do so much for so many."

The story of PEPFAR is a story of medical miracles and mercy, of faith and fierce advocacy. Faith-based organizations were at the frontlines of the communities most affected by the HIV/AIDS crisis, and faith leaders knew the challenge at hand and the scale of intervention that was required. They joined together with unlikely allies – bipartisan lawmakers, celebrities, and scientists – to help get PEPFAR across the legislative finish line and win the support of the American public. PEPFAR has helped turn the tide in our fight against AIDS, and the results have been incredible: 20 years later PEPFAR has saved 25 million lives and resulted in 5.5 million babies being born HIV-free.

Faith-based organizations and ministries have been central to this success, representing the largest provider of HIV services outside the government in many of the countries with which PEPFAR partners. Faith communities have a deeply rooted and trusted community presence. A trusted messenger with access to those most in need of care is an essential prerequisite to effective delivery of life-saving messages about HIV prevention, care, and treatment. "PEPFAR is not any one president's program, not any one party's program," said Mike Gerson. "This was a response to a grave human need that we had within our power to address. Addressing grave human needs abroad is ultimately a moral and religious commitment to a viewpoint about universal human rights and dignity. This really is about the American people coming together to do something amazing in the world."

In a time when there is too much emphasis on what divides us, it's important to rally around the tenets of faith that bring us together to do good for our fellow brothers and sisters. That's why we faith leaders from all 50 states, representing different denominations and traditions, are coming together in unity to ask Congress to fully support the reauthorization of PEPFAR.

Signed

Propaganda, Billy Schiel, Kenny Kamson, Joe Hauer, Jodi McCall, Michael W. Smith

The following faith leaders give their "Amen" to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Dean Collins, College President

Lanett, Alabama

Every person matters to God and it must matter to us as well.



Will Johnson, Brother

Anchorage, Alaska

God is ♥, therefore, it is essential for our Faith to reflect the glory of God!



Paul Artino, Pastor

Gilbert, Arizona

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
~ Isaiah 40:29



Tyler Hudgins, Pastor

San Tan Valley, Arizona

To whom much is given, much is expected. Jesus has given me everything and now I can no longer unsee the injustice He sees in the world.

The following faith leaders give their “Amen” to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Katie Sexton-Wood, Reverend

Glendale, Arizona

God calls us to stand with those on the margins.



Sean Warren, Pastor

Gilbert, Arizona

Because Jesus cares for the least, last, and lost. He is with the poor.



Preston Clegg, Pastor

Little Rock, Arkansas

I support PEPFAR because I believe the good news of Jesus begins by uplifting the most vulnerable people in society.



Jason Petty aka Propaganda, Artist

Los Angeles, California

There is more than enough to go around so it's just unthinkable to continue in matter that abundance of some comes at the cost of many.

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Jason Janz, Pastor

Denver, Colorado

It is our joy and responsibility to help those in need.



Kathy Maskell, Pastor

Denver, Colorado

Ending preventable disease everywhere demonstrates our collective shout of shared humanity.



Danny Moss, Rabbi

Madison, Connecticut

We all share in equal human dignity and worth.



Joshua Anthony Williams, Pastor

New Haven, Connecticut

We are all made in God's image, and Jesus wants healing for all of us.

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Laura Viau, Pastor

Wilmington, Delaware

As long as our siblings anywhere in the world are hungry, we can never be truly satisfied; as long as any of our siblings know oppression, our liberation is incomplete; as long as any child is raised in poverty, our abundance cannot be named among our blessings.



Amanda Chidzikwe, Youth Leader

Orlando, Florida

Poverty reduction is an act of justice and protection of fundamental human rights.



**Dennis McGavock,
Church & School COO**

Lake Mary, Florida

With one insignificant exception, the world is composed entirely of other people.



Johnny Scott, Pastor

Trinity, Florida

Matthew 25:36 "When I was sick you looked after me".

The following faith leaders give their “Amen” to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Michael Chaney, Priest

Savannah, Georgia

As people of God we are called to respect the dignity of every human being.



Chukwuebuka Nwafor, Pastor

Atlanta, Georgia

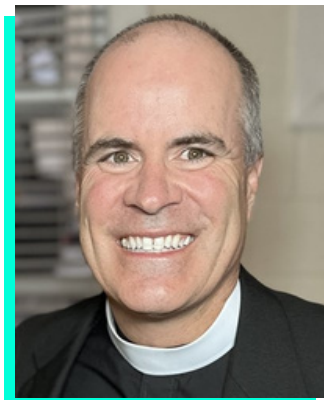
Born and raised in Nigeria, I have friends and have seen the extreme poverty of numerous individuals on the continent due to an irresponsible government that is unable to handle the economy. The lack of clean water, proper housing, free healthcare, and other basic social needs are also absent. These factors have led to extreme poverty and preventable diseases in Africa as a whole. Ending these things would cause me great contentment.



Shawn Ringer, Pastor

Richmond Hill, Georgia

Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

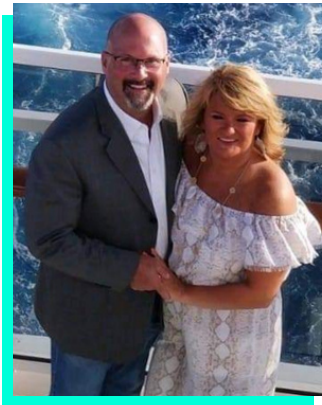


Craig Stephens, Reverend

Savannah, Georgia

I have seen the desperation and need in Africa. We can help.

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Amy Waddell, Lay Leader

Savannah, Georgia

Jesus said Love, this is my way to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves.



Shawn Withy-Allen, Pastor

Kapolei, Hawaii

That all may experience His love...



Andrew Burns, Pastor

Idaho Falls, Idaho

Poverty and hunger are terrible tragedies around the world and my intent is to help and support causes that minimize this.



Antonio Penn, Pastor

Carbondale, Illinois

All walks of life deserve to live life more abundantly. I believe that when we help the least of these we do it unto Him, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And God is not a respecter of persons. He blesses us all, in all kinds of ways. The biggest way He blesses us is by using people. Loving our neighbors as ourselves is definitely what we are doing, not only in our own communities but also globally.

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Jon Weatherly, Pastor

Urbana, Illinois

"Any man`s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind." -- John Donne



Jim Littlejohn, Pastor

Carmel, Indiana

The term "good Samaritan" is still a much-used term in America. I believe we are still called to help those less fortunate; those in extreme poverty and suffering from preventable diseases.



Bronis Perteit, Pastor

Iowa City, Iowa

Everybody is somebody.



Rick Bartlett, Pastor

Wichita, Kansas

I have traveled and taught in countries all over the world, and I know firsthand the benefits of American aid to needy people, many of whom are former students and colleagues in ministry.

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Daniel Jackson, Pastor

Georgetown, Kentucky

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.



Terry Phillips, Pastor

Covington, Kentucky

As the world becomes more globalized, it isn't enough to only put our focus on people in close proximity - but rather we need to look at where we have the responsibility to help and offer aid for the good of others and mankind across the now accessible world.



Stephen Skaggs, Director

Campbellsville, Kentucky

I have seen the life-saving and life-changing effects of PEPFAR on the ground in Africa in partnership with the faith community – this is a worthy initiative!

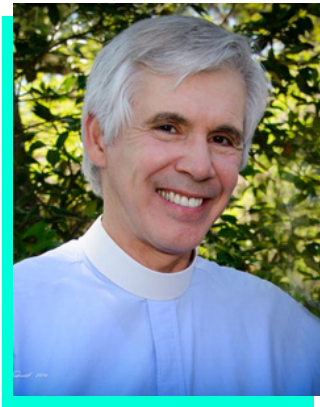


Peter Johnston, Reverend

Lafayette, Louisiana

Praise God for PEPFAR!

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Kirk Duffy, Deacon

Portland, Maine

Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.



Carol Cropp, Lay Leader

Bethesda, Maryland

"No insignificant person was ever born." - Mike Gerson/George W. Bush



Scott Valasquez, Pastor

Germantown, Maryland

I care about ending preventable disease like AIDS everywhere because people everywhere are important to God.

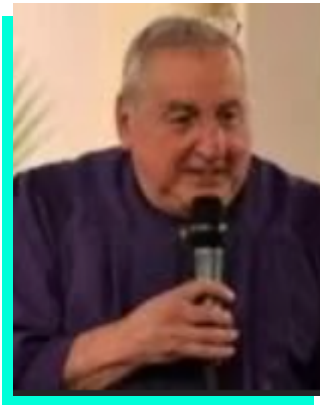


Trey Faull, Lead Minister

Mansfield, Massachusetts

May we honor the Lord by sharing our resources — Proverbs 14:31 — Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.

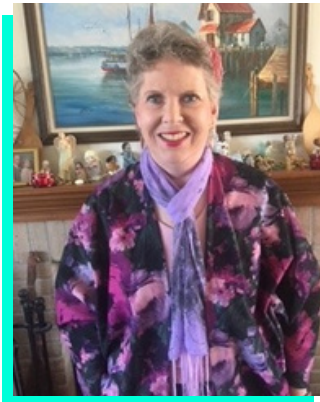
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Joseph Stella, Director of Music

Salem, Massachusetts

"If you want peace, work for justice"
- Pope Paul VI



Miriam M. K. Bunge, Reverend

Lansing, Michigan

My life's passion is "justice" for everyone, not for "just-us" (those of who are privileged).



Ellen Schoepf, Pastor

Williamston, Michigan

As we are for the most vulnerable in this world, supporting PEPFAR is essential!
Please support this effort!



Clay Mitchell, Pastor

Fergus Falls, Minnesota

Whatever you do to the least of these, you do unto me. -Jesus

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Jeff O'Roarke, Pastor

Saint Paul, Minnesota

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9



Jason Coker, Reverend

Jackson, Mississippi

I worked in Kenya for a while with orphans from the AIDS/HIV epidemic. Those kids had nothing but they were full of promise and represented the best for Kenya's future. When you care for the least you care for everyone. This gives those who live on the margins a chance to be part of the future in a positive way.



Joe Mason, Christian Nonprofit

Nixa, Missouri

I've seen extreme poverty and its devastating effects firsthand. Through smart development programs, we can give millions of people the chance to not just survive but thrive.



Russell Epperson, Pastor

Lewistown, Montana

I want to live out the words of Micah 6:8, "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

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Andrew Wood, Professor

Lincoln, Nebraska

I believe human beings are the most important resource on planet Earth. We need to maximize the ability of all people on the planet to pursue life, liberty, and happiness. To pursue these things only for ourselves is tribalism. To care for one another is one of the things that makes us truly human.



William Ledford, Director

Reno, Nevada

As a Christian organization, Lutheran Engagement and Advocacy in Nevada supports any efforts to protect the "least of these" from poverty, hunger, or illness, no matter where they are.



Paul Block, Pastor

Henderson, Nevada

Which one acted like a neighbor? Go and do likewise.



Jonathan Hopkins, Pastor

Concord, New Hampshire

We need to love our neighbors, and this is one way to live that out.

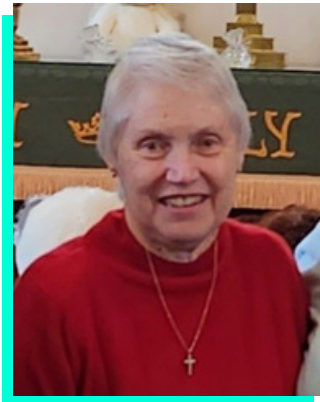
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Ayn M. Masker, Reverend

Woodstown, New Jersey

Jesus gave us the command to bring the good news to every corner of the world. What better news other than we're all in this together!



Shellie K. Pinner, Reverend

Runnemede, New Jersey

Jesus calls us to "love our neighbor as ourselves" which calls us to reach out to our world".



Nate Bush, Pastor

Albuquerque, New Mexico

"Social responsibility becomes an aspect not of Christian mission only, but also of Christian conversion. It is impossible to be truly converted to God without being thereby converted to our neighbor." — John Stott



Pat Bumgardner, Reverend

New York, New York

Quality healthcare and prevention are important to me.

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Daniels Akpan, Pastor

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Growing up in a rural community in Nigeria gave me the opportunity to experience first-hand how the potential of children from low income families in Africa is underutilized for community development and this is why I believe that ending poverty and preventable diseases in Africa is a smart investment for global leaders.



Tony & Kimberly Merida, Pastors

Raleigh, North Carolina

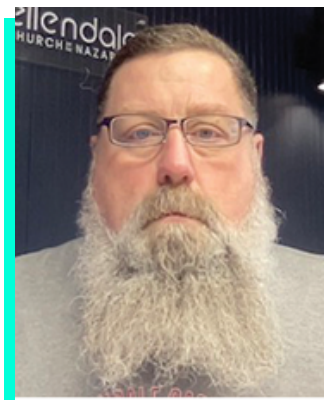
We believe that all people regardless of their age, race, class or background are made in the image of God, and are therefore worthy of dignity, love and care. Regarding the pandemic, we believe that people everywhere should have access to the same health resources that we have in more fortunate contexts.



Ashley Randall, Pastor

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

God calls us to love one another through practical acts of concern, care, and service.



Kelly Riggan, Pastor

Ellendale, North Dakota

In Matt 25:40, Jesus said that when we take care of the least of these, we are doing it for Him and the folks in the regions we are talking about would quantify the least of these.

The following faith leaders give their “Amen” to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Dick Alexander, Pastor

Cincinnati, Ohio

Africa is the center of global extreme poverty where many people live in sub-standard conditions, and the US has the capacity to turn this around.



Clifton Bailey, Reverend

Cincinnati, Ohio

“Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we must be saved by love.” -Reinhold Niebuhr



Greg McElfresh, Pastor

Cincinnati, Ohio

To whom much is given, much is required. We must act for those who cannot act for themselves.



Matt Reeves, Pastor

Chesterland, Ohio

The life of every person is precious to God.

The following faith leaders give their "Amen" to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Jon Middendorf, Pastor

Edmond, Oklahoma

Hope and healing begin in the heart of God because God's love knows no bounds or boundaries!



Kurt Barnes, Pastor

Silverton, Oregon

Loving God and Loving People - that's our calling.



Neil Johnston, Pastor

Eugene, Oregon

This action would powerfully demonstrate loving our neighbors as we love ourselves.



Steve Tipton, Pastor

Silverton, Oregon

Because Jesus cares.

The following faith leaders give their “Amen” to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Matt Staniz, Pastor

Chesterbrook, Pennsylvania

My faith calls me to actions that express God's desire for every person, everywhere, to experience a meaningful and healthy life.



Benjamin Lefkowitz, Rabbi

Warwick, Rhode Island

People need to be helped in trying to overcome a cruel disease.



Don Brock, Pastor

Irmo, South Carolina

Please make a difference for those who do not have the resources to care for themselves.



Jodi McCall, Pastor

Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina

As a Christian, I believe that we are called to care for the poor and most vulnerable. Faith and the fight to end extreme poverty should go hand in hand.

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Joe Hauer, Pastor

Aberdeen, South Dakota

We were created to do life together in community in this crazy adventure we call life and our faith walk was not meant to be done alone.



Stephen Cook, Pastor

Germantown, Tennessee

Love for God is bound tightly to love for neighbor and the two cannot be separated.



**Jonathan Haskell,
Faith-Based Nonprofit**

Knoxville, Tennessee

Every human bears the image of the Creator and deserves every opportunity to fulfill God's own dream for them.



Tim Timmons, Artist

Franklin, Tennessee

That we would be known as peace makers, life givers, and hope dispensers to our world.

The following faith leaders give their “Amen” to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Mike Hogan, Artist

Austin, Texas

As believers we are called (directed, even!) by the Bible to look after and care for the poor and suffering. Extreme poverty, preventable disease, and famine are wholly avoidable.



Billy Schiel, Pastor

Tomball, Texas

We need to care for the most vulnerable among us because that is what it means to appropriate the Grace that Jesus has given us.



Monica Dobbins, Reverend

Salt Lake City, Utah

Relieving suffering and supporting health are the most important call we can hear.



Micah Thompson, Reverend

Hinesburg, Vermont

Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me - Matthew 25:40

The following faith leaders give their “Amen” to this and are asking Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR.



Robert & Wendy Griffith, Pastors

Manassas, Virginia

The love of God compels us to pray for hope and healing around the world



Robert Weyrick, Pastor

Tacoma, Washington

Concern for the needy.



Billy & Jamie Williams, Pastors

Morgantown, West Virginia

We care about ending extreme poverty and preventable disease in Sub-Saharan Africa because we are parents and we want families everywhere to have opportunities to thrive and watch their children grow healthy and strong.



Jim Gates, Pastor

Schofield, Wisconsin

Please make a difference for those who do not have the resources to care for themselves.

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Shane Carr, Pastor

Casper, Wyoming

To take care of those less fortunate than me.