



## Church Policy HIV and AIDS

The New Apostolic Church will welcome those with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) and their families with love and acceptance. The Christian response to a person with HIV/AIDS must be compassionate, helpful, and redemptive. Jesus, as our example, cared for those with disease with a personal demonstration of God's love (Luke 5:12-16).

Therefore, we the people of the New Apostolic Church stand together in the following:

- We believe in the value of human life as a gift from God, thus we believe that all people, healthy and diseased, are loved by God.
- We do not believe that those who have tested positive for HIV or have AIDS have incurred punishment from God.
- No one with HIV will be excluded from the activities and fellowship of the New Apostolic Church.
- We understand that since this virus is not spread by casual contact, there is no risk of contacting the AIDS virus from any infected adult or child in the church setting.

And therefore:

- We welcome all children and adults who are HIV+ to join us in the divine services, Sunday School, Youth, and special events and all church activities.
- We suggest that those affected make a confidential disclosure to a member of the Church Leadership so that we might assist in seeking Godly direction and provide support.
- We commit to educate and teach God's values! AIDS is preventable!
  - It can be prevented by avoiding sexual contact before marriage and by maintaining a faithful, monogamous relationship with an uninfected person. Anybody who is not prepared to align themselves to this, becomes responsible for the consequences, which in some instances can be severe. Although the Church does not agree with such actions, it still feels responsible to recommend that such people adhere to safe means by using a condom if they cannot abstain.
  - It can also be prevented by avoiding harmful traditional practices (such as female genital mutilation, scarification), by ensuring properly sterilised materials are used during medical care and by avoiding intravenous drug abuse.

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Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber