

May 27, 2009

News media calls to David Hass at (630) 682-7979, ext. 7374.

Free HIV testing June 7 during special event 'LEAD BY EXAMPLE' at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Wheaton

Health department partners with church to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Wheaton has planned a special event, LEAD BY EXAMPLE, to increase awareness in the fight against HIV/AIDS. St Paul's is sponsoring an HIV screening event along with the DuPage County Health Department and the Mosaic Initiative from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on June 7.

On that same day, St. Paul's is welcoming Bishop Wayne N. Miller of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Metro Chicago Synod and Bishop Ndanganei Phaswana, from their companion synod in Central South Africa. They also will be screened as the congregation shows solidarity with Africa in this war against HIV.

The health department is providing HIV test counselors from the HIV/STD Program for this event. There is no cost for the HIV screening. The screening consists of a finger stick or a swab of the gums and inner cheek.

The LEAD BY EXAMPLE event was initiated by Lois Johnson, a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. In March, Ms. Johnson spoke to the congregation and shared how HIV affected her family. Ms. Johnson has been an active volunteer and advocate in the local HIV/AIDS community. In following months, other congregation members are sharing why they believe HIV screening is important for their lives and for others, as well as why they are willing to be screened. The health department applauds these efforts and is thrilled to partner with St. Paul's and the Mosaic Initiative at this event.

The LEAD BY EXAMPLE event is open to the public. Come to LEAD BY EXAMPLE and get tested!

St. Paul's is located at 515 S. Wheaton Ave. For information, call (630) 668-5953 or visit www.stpaulwheaton.org.

(More)

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In Ms. Johnson's talk she said: "St. Paul, Wheaton, has LED BY EXAMPLE in many ways. With open arms we have received people from other countries into our lives. We have led the way in our stewardship. We were, I believe, one of the first to have a woman intern from the seminary. We led in becoming an open and affirming congregation. We have had pastors go on to become bishops. Pastor Eastman has just received a wonderful honor from our synod. And, now, we are being a model by opening our doors to our community to join us in being united against the war on HIV."

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