

The Presbytery of Ohio Valley

Indiana

In 2006, the 217th General Assembly of the PC(USA) passed an overture that provided funding opportunities to address HIV/AIDS. This adventure to overture began with one person in the Presbytery of Ohio Valley.

When Ann Jones, an elder at First Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Indiana, visited Africa she was astounded at what living with HIV/AIDS meant for the people she met. She came home to her church family in search of help for what she had seen and was dismayed to discover how few dollars Presbyterians spent to address this long-standing, worldwide epidemic.

Ann joined the Witness Committee of First Presbyterian, which voted to make HIV/AIDS a primary focus for one year. During that year, the church hosted a nationally recognized speaker on global AIDS, helped fund a community exhibit of photos and stories of HIV/AIDS patients, and supported a student in Africa. The committee also began creating an overture to the General Assembly.

One person became several as the Witness Committee and Session of First Presbyterian drafted the overture. Several became hundreds with the endorsement of the Mission/Social Justice Committee of the presbytery and the presbyteries of the Ohio Valley, Cayuga-Syracuse, and Eastern Oklahoma. In addition, 256 Presbyterians across the United States pledged to consider doubling their contributions to the Peacemaking Offering to fund work on HIV/AIDS. Then thousands potentially became millions when the General Assembly passed the overture, which urged congregations, presbyteries, and synods to give their share of the Peacemaking Offering to combat HIV/AIDS. The PC(USA) Web site, www.pcusa.org/aids-international, provides opportunities for involvement with HIV/AIDS ministries and links to Extra Commitment Opportunities. The Peacemaking Offering, one of the four special offerings in the PC(USA), is another way to respond to this worldwide disaster.

The Presbytery of Ohio Valley is home to 8,488 members in 83 congregations serving the southern part of Indiana. Within its boundaries are Hanover College and Pyoca Camp and Conference Center.

Prayer

God of one and two and more, despite our different life experiences we all come together to give you thanks. Gather us now to give and work to stop this worldwide disaster. In Jesus' name. Amen.