

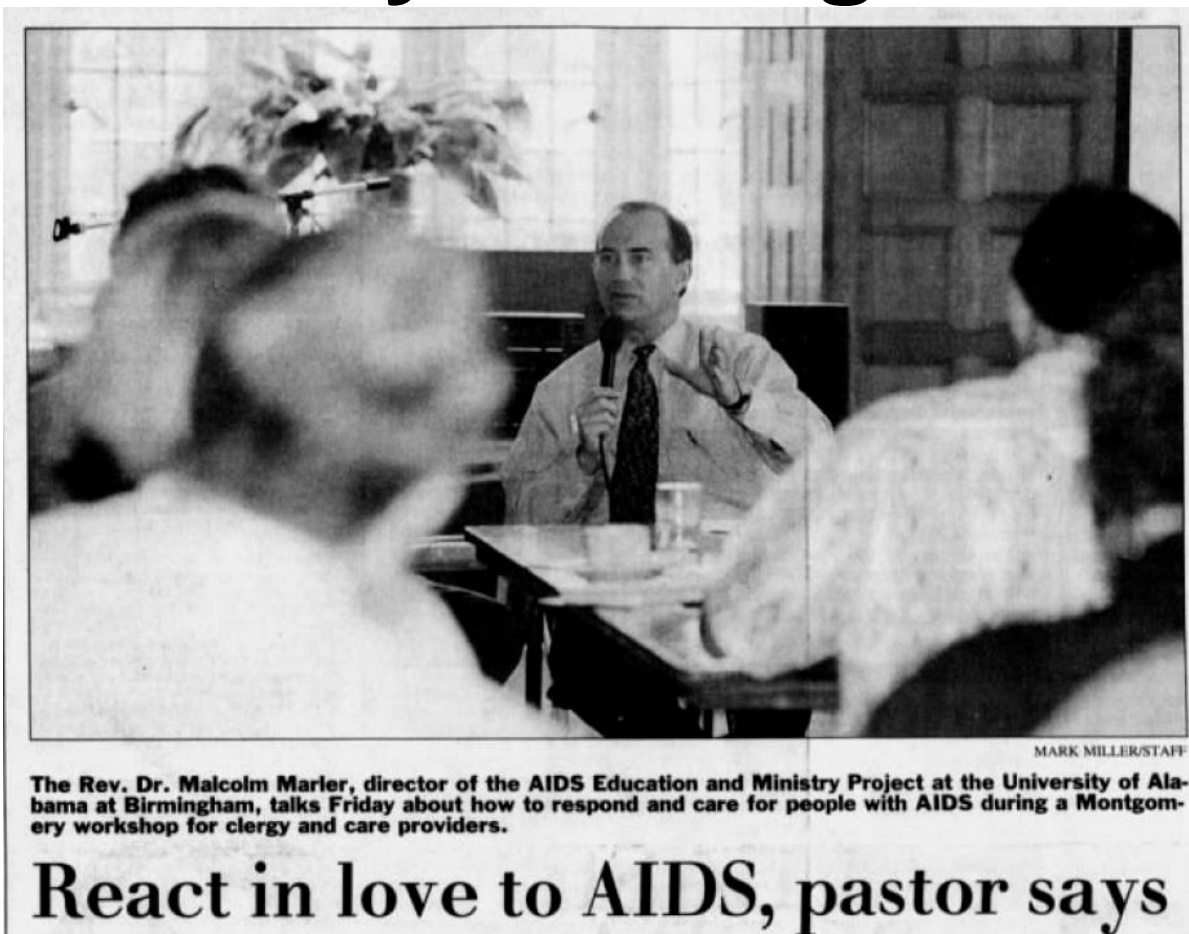
Called to Care: Faith-based AIDS Responses in 1980s and 1990s Alabama

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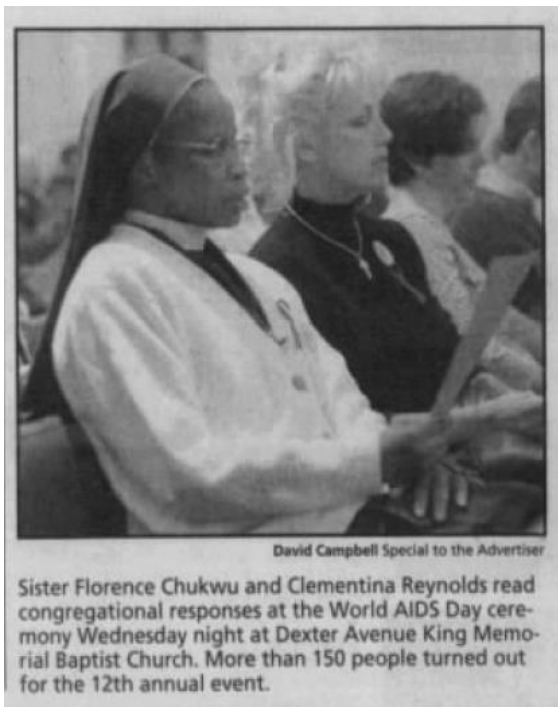
During the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 1990s, the response from religious communities varied significantly. While some churches turned their backs on those affected by the disease, many more in Alabama embraced and supported AIDS patients with compassion and care.

Key Findings



An education session hosted by the AIDS Education and Ministry Project at UAB in 1995
The Montgomery Advertiser

Many churches implemented care programs even before anyone in their community was affected by AIDS. They viewed caring for the sick—no matter how they contracted the disease—as a key part of their Christian faith.



Attendees at an Interfaith AIDS Service in 1999
The Montgomery Advertiser



World AIDS Day 1994
The Montgomery Advertiser

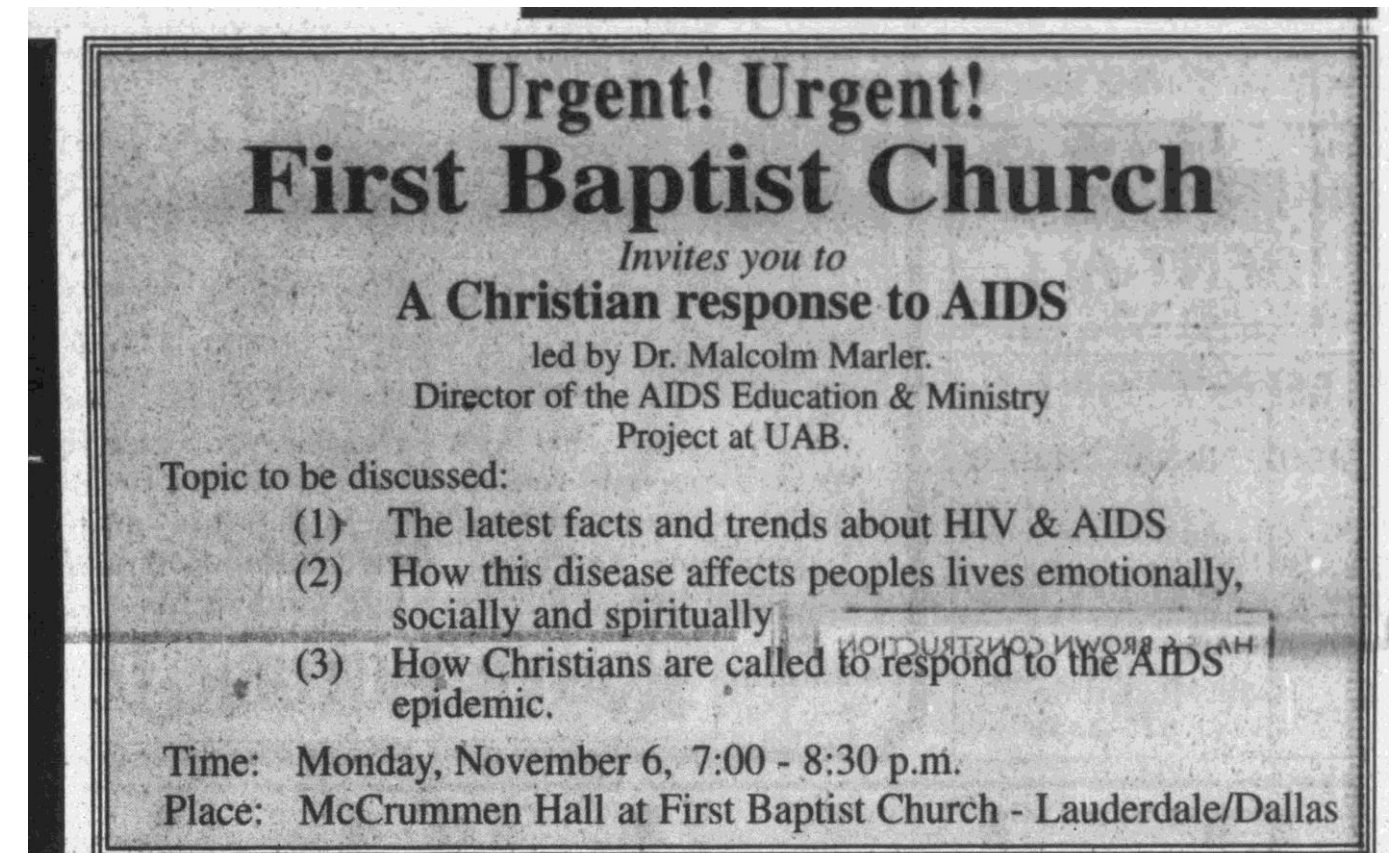
"When people are sick and suffering, my faith calls me to respond."

Rev. Malcolm Marler



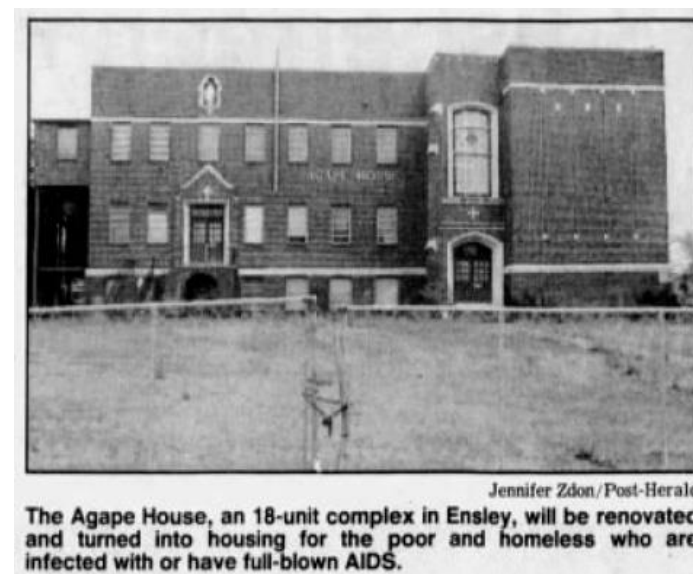
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Conclusions



An education session about AIDS held in 1995
The Selma Times

Faith-based organizations in Alabama focused on *caregiving* responses to the AIDS epidemic, rather than *activist* responses. They chose to care for individual people and support them through their illness.



The Agape House before its renovation in 1995 to house people with AIDS
The Birmingham Post-Herald



A Baby's Place was a foster home for children with AIDS in the 1990s
The Birmingham Post-Herald

AIDS Caregiving Responses Fell Into Four Key Categories:

Spiritual Support



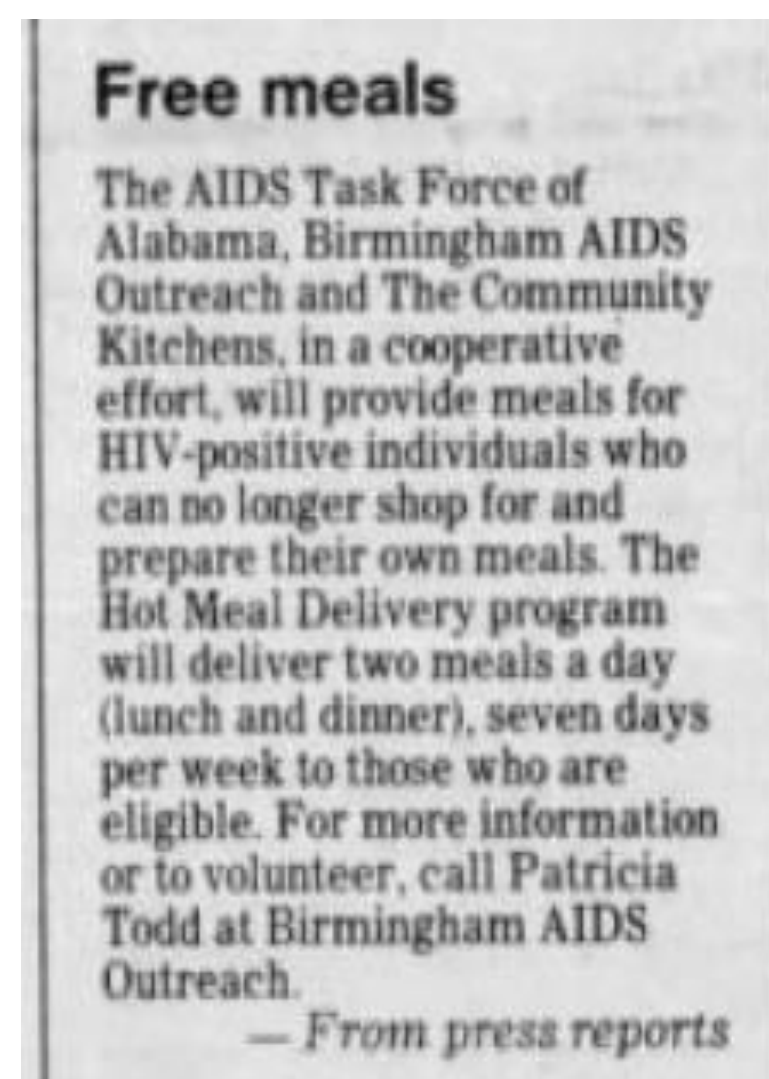
An interfaith church service and memorial held for World AIDS Day 1999
The Montgomery Advertiser

Education

AIDS program
MOUNT SINAI Missionary Baptist Church at noon Saturday is opening a one-day program on "The Impact that AIDS and Teen-age Pregnancy Have on the Vanishing Black Family." It is being held in the fellowship hall of the church and is open to the public. Edith Mitchell, a nurse with the American Red Cross, will cover the medical aspects of the program. Working with her on the psychological aspects is Dr. Brenda Kennedy. The Rev. Artis Pruitt who holds bachelor and masters degrees in theology will deal with the sociological and the Biblical areas of interest. Visual aids are being provided by the Red Cross and counseling will be available to any who want help. Refreshments will be served following the program. This program is being sponsored by the young committee at the church, located at 707 Alvarez Ave., Whistler.

A church-sponsored AIDS education session held in 1988
The Mobile Press

Physical Care



Faith-based organization The Community Kitchens partnered with Birmingham AIDS Outreach in 1996
The Birmingham Post-Herald

Housing

Catholics donate building to AIDS fight
BIRMINGHAM (AP) — The Catholic Diocese of Birmingham donated its former Agape House retreat and the buildings of St. Anthony's parish at Ensley to the AIDS Task Force of Alabama. The task force for three years had paid \$1,000 a month to lease the property, which has an appraised value of some \$200,000. The diocese chose to donate the property instead of sell it as a sign that the church backs "this kind of apostolate," Bishop David Foley said. The church can't build a housing facility like the one the task force has, but wants to show the church supports efforts to help those infected with the virus that causes AIDS, Foley said Friday. He handed the property deed to the task force board chairman, Thomas E. Baddley Jr., "with God's blessings and our prayers for every success." The donation will allow the task force to free up \$12,000 a year in unrestricted money for other services, said director Randy Russell. It also gives the task force greater control over the way it uses the property, he said. The task force has its headquarters in the church's old rectory and has renovated the St. Anthony's school to use as apartments for those infected with HIV and their families. It is building a second apartment complex.

A press release about the Diocese of Birmingham donating the Agape House to the AIDS Task Force of Alabama in 1998
The Selma Times Journal

Acknowledgements

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