

# FAITHFULLY PREVENTING THE FLU: REACHING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS *TOGETHER*



## WHO:

THE CENTER FOR FAITH AND COMMUNITY HEALTH TRANSFORMATION  
&  
ILLINOIS MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH COALITION  
&  
*LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITIES LIKE YOURS*

## WHAT:

A partnership for faith communities who care about vulnerable populations' health...  
To claim the call to faith-based healthy living  
To share clear tips about flu prevention  
To increase access to information and vaccination  
To build relationships among area faith leaders and health promoters

## WHY:

The influenza virus is a leading cause of lost work time, school absences and hospitalizations. Each year, an average of 220,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 people die from this serious contagious disease.

Vulnerable populations experience special risks due to health disparities and barriers to care, such as language difference, economic circumstances, and cultural norms.

Faith community leaders are trusted messengers about stewardship of life, health and community.

*Together, we can accomplish things we cannot accomplish alone.*

## WHEN:

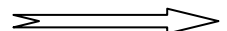
November 2011-February 2012

## WHERE:

Lake, DuPage and Cook Counties... with emphasis on vulnerable populations



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## WHAT DOES FAITH HAVE TO DO WITH FLU? A CALL TO COMMITMENT

People of all faith backgrounds understand the importance of these three gifts: power, love, and self-discipline. Each faith tradition also has a calling to help its members define and work toward healthy lives and communities. When we think about the consequences of contagious diseases – suffering, contributing to others' suffering, loss of school and work time, unnecessary hospitalizations, complications and death – *we can affirm that power, love and self-discipline would make a positive difference for safeguarding communities! We don't need to be fearful, but in faith we CAN exercise power, love and self-discipline.*

### Information is POWER:

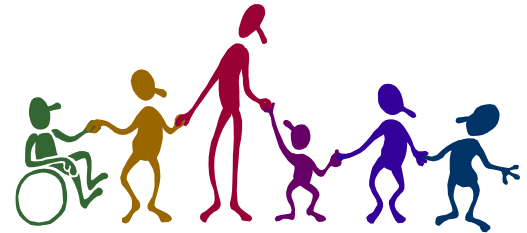
Enclosed are the facts (vs. myths) about the flu and its dangers.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends flu vaccination as a first line of defense, and we share here WHERE to receive it.

Understanding the impact of vaccination and other wise health choices -- in simple and accessible language – empowers people to make healthy choices for themselves and their loved ones.

### In LOVE, we reduce suffering and health disparities:

Faith communities are trusted messengers who can support a broad view of health AND help members make practical connections to resources.



Faith communities are charged to have a special interest in protecting the vulnerable. Some people, like the very young and the elderly and others with health conditions, are especially vulnerable to the flu. Others are vulnerable because of lack of access to care or information due to economic or language barriers.

### To improve health and prevent flu, we need DISCIPLINE:

Faith communities naturally nurture individual responsibility, and can influence healthy lifestyle choices like rest, stress management, nutrition and immunization.

In partnership with public health promoters, faith communities can partner to work for more just and equal access to resources like flu information and vaccines.

Churches can use these strategies to promote health and prevent flu: sermon illustrations, bulletin inserts, health education and even immunization clinics.

### PROJECT PARTNERS

**The Center for Faith and Community Health Transformation** is a joint project of Advocate Health Care and the Neighborhoods Initiative of the University of Chicago. The Center is a catalyst for congregations, communities, leaders and connections who are building health ministries and working in partnerships for health promotion. A project of the Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition, the **Chicago Area Immunization Campaign (CAIC)** is a broad-based coalition of more than 100 Chicago area public and private sector organizations working together to increase immunization rates and prevent diseases by promoting the delivery of safe, effective and timely immunizations. Visit [www.chicagofaithandhealth.org](http://www.chicagofaithandhealth.org) and [www.ilmaternal.org](http://www.ilmaternal.org) for more information.