

## Sharing Breast Health Awareness in the Faith Community



Nancy G. Brinker promised her dying sister, Susan G. Komen, she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen and launched the global breast cancer movement. Today, Susan G. Komen is the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists fighting to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all and energize science to find the cures. Thanks to events like the Komen Race for the Cure, Komen has invested more than \$2.5 billion to fulfill that promise, becoming the largest source of nonprofit funds dedicated to the fight against breast cancer in the world.

In keeping with the mission of Susan G. Komen, Komen Charlotte designed "Pink Sunday" across the it's 13-county service area to raise breast cancer awareness by distributing breast cancer educational materials to local churches or faith based organizations.

Today, we have partnered with Komen Charlotte to open the lines of communication about breast health, promote breast cancer education, and celebrate the lives of those who have fought breast cancer.

After today's service, we will be handing out breast cancer educational material. Once you have read this material, please pass along these life-saving messages to a friend or family member. Together we can end breast cancer forever. Thank you for participating. If you are interested in learning more about Komen Charlotte, please access their website at [www.komencharlotte.org](http://www.komencharlotte.org).

### **Breast Cancer Facts**

- ✚ Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States, other than skin cancer. One in eight women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.
- ✚ All women are at risk for breast cancer. The most proven and significant risk factors for getting breast cancer are being female and getting older. Most women diagnosed with breast cancer do not have any risk factors other than being female and getting older.
- ✚ Approximately five to ten percent of breast cancers are due to heredity factors. The majority of women with breast cancer have no known significant family history.
- ✚ The five-year survival rate for breast cancer, when caught early before it spreads beyond the breast, is 99%.

- ✚ With respect to age, race, religion and socioeconomic status, breast cancer knows no boundaries.
- ✚ While death rates continue to decline in Caucasian women due to improvements in early detection and treatment, 32 percent more African American women die of breast cancer even with 13 percent lower rate of incidence (getting breast cancer).
- ✚ African American women are more likely to be diagnosed with later stage breast cancer, thereby underscoring the importance of awareness and early detection in saving lives.

### **Early Detection Plan**

The best way to find breast cancer in its earliest stages, when it is most curable, is to routinely check your breasts for signs and symptoms of the disease. Komen recommends the following:

- ✚ **Know your risk:** Talk to your doctor about your personal risk factors. Talk with your family to learn about your family health history.
- ✚ **Get screened:** Have a mammogram every year starting at age 40, and clinical breast exams at least every 3 years starting at age 20 and every year starting at 40. Ask your doctor which screening tests are right for you if you are at higher risk for breast cancer.
- ✚ **Know what is normal for you:** Know how your breasts look and feel. Report any changes to your doctor. If you notice any lumps, redness, warmth, dimpling, or puckering, tell your doctor.
- ✚ **Make healthy lifestyle choices:** Be sure to eat healthy foods, exercise regularly, maintain a healthy weight, and limit your alcohol intake.

Breast cancer occurs mainly in women. However, although rare, men can get it too. The most common symptoms of male breast cancer include a lump in the chest area, skin dimpling or puckering, or nipple changes.

**Early Detection is Critical to Survival!** We will be passing out breast health educational information provided by Komen Charlotte. Please share the information you learned today with your family and friends.

For more information, please contact Komen Charlotte at [www.komencharlotte.org](http://www.komencharlotte.org) or (704) 347-8181. Together, we will make a difference in the fight against breast cancer.