

## **Daphne Walker-Thoth, MEd**

As a newspaper reporter in the late 1970s, Daphne Walker-Thoth witnessed the devastation caused by alcohol and other drug addiction on families and communities. God placed in her heart the desire to do more than write about the anguish and despair caused by this disease. She sought opportunities to prevent substance abuse. As the director of the Community Partnership of University City for the Prevention of Substance Abuse, she and her team brought together parents, youth, police officials, elected officials, media representatives, neighborhood associations, schools, and businesses to develop and implement a community-wide plan to prevent substance abuse. Subsequently, she was selected by the MO Department of Mental Health's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse to serve as project manager in St. Louis of a federal Target Cities initiative designed to improve the substance abuse treatment delivery system. She formed the St. Louis Substance Abuse Faith Initiative Committee which eventually spread throughout the state and became Committed Caring Faith Communities (CCFC).

Daphne has received numerous awards for her work in establishing MO's statewide substance abuse faith initiative. Daphne was eventually employed as a faculty research associate for the MO Institute of Mental Health where she continued her work with the faith community for the 10 years until she retired. In August 2013 the title of Retired Substance Abuse Counselor Emeritus was bestowed upon Daphne by the MO Substance Abuse Professional Credentialing Board. One of the highlights of her career was being invited to speak at the White House in 2008 as part of a national panel on building the capacity of faith and community-based organizations to address social service issues.

Daphne is the proud mother of two adult children - Aaron Walker of Dallas, Texas and Candace Thoth of Honolulu, Hawaii. She holds a Master of Education from the University of Missouri – St. Louis and a bachelor's degree from Truman University.

Daphne has always believed that it only takes a handful of people to make things happen. Her favorite quote is by Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

