



***Fayron Epps, PhD, RN, FAAN***

**Assistant Professor**

**Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing  
Emory University**

***Malcoma Brown-Ekeogu***

**Care Partner**





- **Faith-based community program**  
(2019)
- **Purpose:**
  - To encourage culture change, shift perceptions of dementia, and strengthen supportive services within African American churches.
  - To establish partnerships with churches to create a supportive environment for African American families affected by dementia.



**ALTER**<sup>TM</sup>  
INSPIRING AND EQUIPPING FAITH COMMUNITIES

## The Problem

Many families living with Alzheimer's disease & other dementias consider not attending church.



Social isolation is a major source of stress for people with dementia.

Alzheimer's is 2x more prevalent among African Americans than whites.

Source: Alzheimer's Association



**4th**

Alzheimer's is the 4th leading cause of death among older African Americans.

Source: UsAgainstAlzheimer's

While overall membership may be dropping, People over 65 are the fastest-growing group of church members.



## Our churches are more than just a place of worship.

*They're our safe haven, our community, and our second home.*

*The spiritual needs of families living with dementia are the same as everyone else.*

*The impacts of dementia can push members away from their church for all the wrong reasons.*

**Alter works to preserve access to churches for families living with dementia.**



**Fayron Epps, PhD, RN**

Founder of Alter  
Assistant Professor  
Emory University

Alter is a faith-based program with the aim to give churches and faith leaders of predominantly African American churches the resources and tools they need to ensure that members affected by dementia are welcome, supported, and accepted—whatever their burdens might be.

Some of the resources and tools we provide include:

- Training sessions, materials, and videos for church leaders
- In-person and virtual support for members with dementia and their families
- Education sessions for all members on becoming more dementia-friendly
- Tools and techniques for addressing the cultural taboos associated with dementia

**Are you ready to become a part of our growing,  
trailblazing dementia-friendly faith community?**

**Our  
Solution**

**Alter your faith  
community today.**



**(770)686-7730**




**outreach@alterdementia.com**



**[www.alterdementia.com](http://www.alterdementia.com)**

# Partnerships

- Memorandum of Understanding
  - 2 years
- Welcome Kit
- Financial Contribution
- Partnership Initiatives
  - 8 core activities
  - 8 additional activities
  - Opportunities to create & customize activities



**Alter Partnership Checklist**

Below are suggested activities and modifications that can be done in person or virtually to implement within your faith-based organization. Please choose items or activities to implement in your faith-based organization that you feel will be helpful:

**Core Partnership activities and modifications**

- ☐ Assign dementia-friendly initiative to a ministry
- ☐ Ensure building is well-lit and handicap accessible
- ☐ Display proper, large print signage (Ex: restrooms, exits)
- ☐ Ministry leaders and ushers/greeters to wear name badges
- ☐ Provide physical assistance to enter church and other buildings
- ☐ Reserve a quiet room within in church for people living with dementia
- ☐ Create easily accessible pathways to navigate to your sanctuary and quiet room
- ☐ Host and register ministry leaders and senior pastors to attend the "Dementia-Friendly Workshop for Church Leaders" or similar workshop

**SUPPORT**  
**Offer support resources for care partners and persons living with dementia**

Options include: (Please select at least 3 options)

- ☐ Organize a Memory Café
- ☐ Develop a dementia specific support group
- ☐ Build a resource library online or within the church
- ☐ Develop a respite program(Ex: offer at least 2 hours respite, twice per month)(does not have to be traditional-could offer scholarships to families to pay someone they are comfortable.
- ☐ Offer a caregiver/care partner education program (Ex. self-care, The Great Village)
- ☐ (Connect with a )Implement a social service coordination program (referral program; partnership includes a 6-month free subscription to SageNavigator, Inc.)
- ☐ Other or opportunity for customization \_\_\_\_\_





# Checklist & Guidebook



## EDUCATION



- Virtual Education
- Memory/Purple Sunday
- Website/Church Bulletin
- Virtual Dementia Experience

## SUPPORT



- Memory Cafe
- Dementia Support Group
- Resource Library
- Respite Program

## WORSHIP



- Length of Service
- Visual Aids
- Memory Support Staff
- Order of Worship



## Church Partners

Amanda Flipper AME Church <i>Georgia</i>	Journey to the Cross Ministries <i>Illinois</i>	Big Bethel AME Church <i>Georgia</i>	Saint Philip AME Church <i>Georgia</i>
Turner Monumental AME Church <i>Georgia</i>	House of Hope Atlanta <i>Georgia</i>	South Fulton Ministerial Alliance <i>Georgia</i>	Tranquil AME Church <i>Georgia</i>
Pan African Orthodox Christian Church <i>Georgia</i>	New Tabernacle of Faith Baptist Church <i>Illinois</i>	Light of the World Church International <i>Georgia</i>	Allen Temple AME Church <i>Georgia</i>
In His Great Name Worship Center <i>Georgia</i>	Conspired Destiny Ministries <i>Georgia</i>	Greater Turner Chapel AME Church <i>Georgia</i>	Destiny Christian Center International <i>Georgia</i>
St. James United Methodist Church <i>Georgia</i>	The Beloved Community Church of Atlanta <i>Georgia</i>	Pleasant Word Christian Center International <i>Georgia</i>	Ben Hill United Methodist Church <i>Georgia</i>
	Stockbridge Grace Tabernacle SDA Church <i>Georgia</i>	Bellview AME Church <i>Georgia</i>	



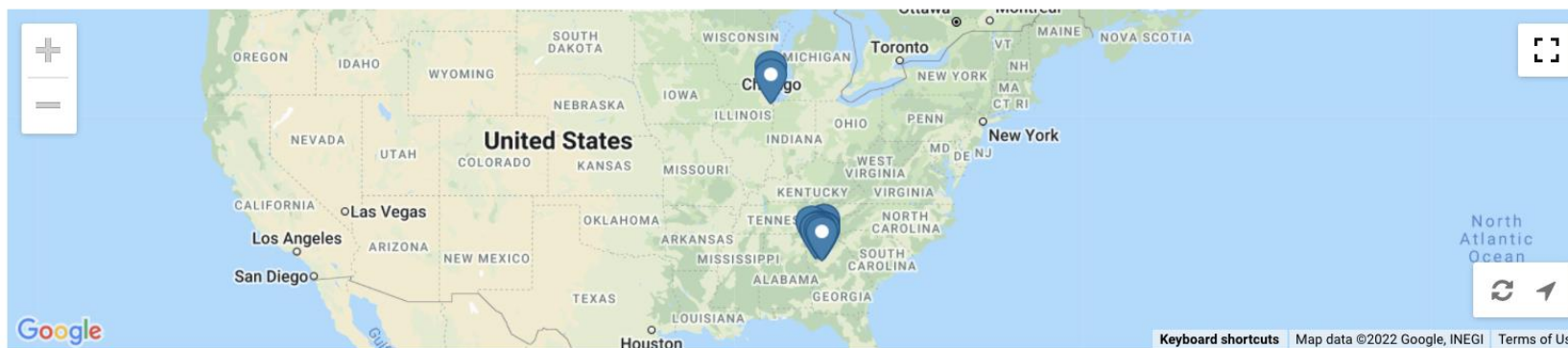
# Find an Alter Church

## Inspiring and Equipping Faith Communities

Search by city or zip

Distance

50 mi ▼

☐ African Methodist Episcopal (AME)☐ Baptist☐ Multi-Denominational☐ Nondemoninational☐ Pan African Orthodox☐ Seventh-day Adventist☐ United Methodist Church



# Next Steps

# Publications



## HHS Public Access

Author manuscript

*J Appl Gerontol.* Author manuscript.

### Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Dementia in Predominantly African American Congregants

Fayron Epps,

Emory University, Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing

Kimberly Foster,

Georgia State University, School of Nursing

ORIGINAL PAPER



## Designing Worship Services to Support African-American Persons Living with Dementia

Fayron Epps<sup>1</sup> · Jenny Choe<sup>1</sup> · Karah Alexander<sup>1</sup> · Glenna Brewster<sup>1</sup>

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International Journal of  
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Article

## A Mixed-Methods Formative Evaluation of a Dementia-Friendly Congregation Program for Black Churches

Janelle Gore<sup>1,\*</sup> , Jamilla Toliver<sup>1</sup>, Miranda A. Moore<sup>2</sup>, Dawn Aycock<sup>3</sup> and Fayron Epps<sup>1</sup>

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POPULATIONS AT RISK ACROSS THE  
LIFESPAN – PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

WILEY

Promoting dementia awareness in African-American faith communities

Fayron Epps PhD, RN, Assistant Professor<sup>1</sup> | Karah Alexander MPH, Research Assistant<sup>1</sup> | Glenna S. Brewster PhD, RN, FNP-BC, Assistant Professor<sup>1</sup> | Lauren J. Parker PhD, MPH, Assistant Scientist<sup>2</sup> | Mia Chester MA, Project Coordinator<sup>3</sup> | Audrey Tomlinson BS(c), Research Assistant<sup>3</sup> | Aisha Adkins MPA(c), Research Assistant<sup>4</sup> | Sabrina Zingg BSN, Research Assistant<sup>1</sup> | Jacque Thornton MSA, CEHA, Population Health Director<sup>5</sup>

Article

## A dementia-friendly church: How can the African American church support families affected by dementia?

Fayron Epps

Emory University, Atlanta, USA

*Nurs Admin Q*

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## The Alter Program

A Nurse-Led, Dementia-Friendly Program for African American Faith Communities and Families Living With Dementia

Fayron Epps, PhD, RN;  
Miranda Moore, PhD;  
Mia Chester, MA;  
Janelle Gore, MPH;  
Mayra Sainz, MPH;  
Aisha Adkins, MPA;  
Carolyn Clevenger, DNP, GNP-BC, AGPCNP-BC;  
Dawn Aycock, PhD, RN

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Dementia  
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# Acknowledgements





# Contact Us

[www.alterdementia.com](http://www.alterdementia.com)

678-723-8188

[outreach@alterdementia.com](mailto:outreach@alterdementia.com)

[Fepps@emory.edu](mailto:Fepps@emory.edu)



AlterDementia  
Faith Village Connections



@village\_faith  
@AlterDementia  
@QOL4olderadults

