

**2009 Prematurity Awareness Month House of Worship
Cover Letter, Announcements and Script**

House of Worship cover letter inviting participation

September, 2009

Dear (name religious leader):

(Use the following sentence only if applicable)

(Thank you for participating in last year's Prematurity Awareness Month®. We hope we can count on your support again this November.)

A healthy pregnancy and baby are a blessing. But some families have their hopes and dreams crushed when their baby arrives too soon, too small and very sick.

Every year, more than half a million babies are born prematurely in our country, including (XX,XXX) in (STATE). November is Prematurity Awareness Month®. It's when the March of Dimes focuses everyone's attention on the impact premature birth has on babies and families.

We are leading a national effort to help give every baby a healthy start. With your support and the support of your congregation, we can do more.

We have included some ideas that you may incorporate in your congregational activities.

Thank you for participating and helping us give all babies a fighting chance.

Sincerely,

NAME
Prematurity Campaign Chair
(Congregational membership, if appropriate)

NAME
Program Services Chair
(Congregational membership)

2009 Prematurity Awareness Month®

House of Worship Sample Announcements

November is Prematurity Awareness Month®, and November 17 is Prematurity Awareness Day®. One way for your faith community to participate is to place these announcements in your weekly bulletin or monthly newsletter. Be sure to ask your editor about four weeks before you want the announcements to appear.

For 2009, the March of Dimes is asking everyone to visit marchofdimes.com/fightforpreemies. (Web site will go up September 15)

#1

Premature birth is more common than you think. Since 1990, the rate has gone up by 20 percent. One in every eight babies is born too soon in our country. It's a serious problem. More newborns die from premature birth than any other cause.

November is Prematurity Awareness Month®. It's when the March of Dimes focuses everyone's attention on the impact premature birth has on babies and families.

Help give every baby a fighting chance. Visit marchofdimes.com/fightforpreemies.

#2

More than half a million babies are born too soon in our country each year. These tiny babies often face serious problems. And some don't make it.

November is Prematurity Awareness Month®. Support the March of Dimes and the fight for preemies. Help us find the causes of premature birth.

Please visit marchofdimes.com/fight for preemies. Create a virtual band to celebrate, honor or remember a baby you love. Your donation helps give other babies a fighting chance.

#3

A healthy pregnancy and baby are a blessing. But some families have their hopes and dreams crushed when their baby arrives too soon, too small and very sick.

November is Prematurity Awareness Month®. It's when the March of Dimes focuses everyone's attention on the impact premature birth has on babies and families.

Help give every baby a fighting chance. Visit marchofdimes.com/fightforpreemies.

#4

Every parent wants a healthy baby. But it doesn't always happen that way. Too many babies die each year because they were born too small and too soon.

One in every eight babies is born too soon in our country. The rate is even higher for African-American women. We need to change this. We need to fight, because babies shouldn't have to.

November is Prematurity Awareness Month®. Please visit marchofdimes.com/fightforpreemies. Create a virtual band to celebrate, honor or remember a baby you love. Your donation helps give other babies a fighting chance.

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2009 Prematurity Awareness Day®/Month®

House of Worship Prematurity Awareness Month Script

You may use the following script to share with a faith community. The script can be modified with local information on prematurity. Work with your local March of Dimes chapter for assistance with prematurity statistics or visit marchofdimes.com/peristats.

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November is Prematurity Awareness Month. Today, I want to share with you some of the hard facts of premature birth in this country.

Each year, 543,000 babies are born prematurely. That’s more than half a million babies or one in every eight babies. Despite better medical advances that give even the tiniest babies a chance of survival, for many babies, premature birth remains a life-threatening condition.

When a baby is born weeks, or even months, too soon, the lungs, brain and other important organs haven’t had time to fully develop. These babies often need help breathing or can’t digest food on their own. Some are so small and so sick they spend months in the newborn intensive care unit. And some never make it home.

Babies shouldn’t have to fight for their life. We need to fight for them.

The March of Dimes is leading a national effort to help give every baby a healthy start. We can all get involved at marchofdimes.com/fightforpreemies.

Thank you.

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