

International AIDS Candlelight Memorial 2026

Tonight, as we do each year, New Zealanders join people around the world to remember, grieve, and honour those we have lost to HIV.

Friends, whānau, community members, and loved ones whose memories live on with us. They are the reason this movement exists, and the reason so many attend the Candlelight Memorial each year.

We stand with those living with HIV today. It takes courage to live openly and advocate loudly, often in the face of stigma. This courage has moved our country forward.

Alongside those living with HIV are the community organisations, advocates, and healthcare workers who continue this mahi. It is vital work, and Labour is committed to supporting it.

Aotearoa has made real progress, but there is still further to go. We must keep working to lower transmission rates, improve healthcare access, and challenge stigma so every New Zealander can access the care and support they need, free from judgment.

To everyone attending the Candlelight Memorial 2026 – thank you. We gather to remember, to stand in solidarity, and to keep moving forward for the generations to come.



Chris Hipkins

Leader of the Labour Party