



Purpose

The purpose of *The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS* is to bring national attention to the AIDS epidemic in the United States and the extraordinary role faith communities can play in AIDS prevention, education, service and advocacy.

The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS will promote the continuous national mobilization and education of faith communities to take an even greater role in the implementation of AIDS education and services within their local communities.

Program Goal & Objectives

The goal of the campaign is to strengthen the capacity of our nation's faith communities to influence social norms and thereby contribute to the prevention of HIV disease and provide compassionate support to those who are affected. Program objectives are:

1. To promote a week of AIDS awareness activities via faith institutions to educate the people of the United States about HIV/AIDS;
2. To raise awareness of faith communities to support HIV testing, health education, prevention interventions and give unconditional love and support to all those who are affected by HIV/AIDS.
3. To bring national, regional and local attention to the critical role faith communities *are playing* in the AIDS epidemic in the United States.

History of The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS

The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS is the inclusive, expansion of the highly successful Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS which concluded its 20th year anniversary in 2009. The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS was the nation's FIRST national mobilization campaign that specifically focused on HIV/AIDS. The campaign has provided AIDS information to well-over 5 million African Americans through the engagement of Black congregations of every sector across the United States. The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS was the expansion of a community-wide initiative in New York City known as The Harlem Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.

The successful engagement of Harlem's Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and traditional faith communities brought national attention to the critical and urgent need to engage faith communities in addressing HIV/AIDS, especially in the African American community. Pernessa Seele, Founder/CEO of the Balm In Gilead, is also the visionary and founder of the Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.

The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS in 2010 will call America's faith communities' of all races, creeds and cultures to prayer and to educate their congregations and others about the ever-alarming AIDS epidemic in the United States.

Components of the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS

1. *National Mobilization:* Faith communities will be asked to make HIV/AIDS education the focus of their worship experience on Sunday, Friday or Saturday during the Week of Sunday, March 7-Saturday, March 12, 2010. Congregations will also be asked to convene at least one AIDS awareness activity during the week.

The leaders of national denominations and non-denominational faith communities will be asked to lend their images and influences to bring the nation to prayer and education for the healing of AIDS. The campaign's website will also allow for local leaders to participate in the national discussion, thereby, allowing faith leaders from rural and economic depressed areas of our country to lend their voices.

National faith organizations, AIDS Service communities, civic organizations and public health sectors across the nation will be asked to support the campaign by working to engage local faith communities in **The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS**.

A cyberspace network, including a campaign website, Face Book, My Space and Twitter will be created and utilized to engage the nation's faith communities in the campaign.

2. *Educational and Prayer Resources:* The Balm In Gilead will translate some of its existing liturgical resources and HIV/AIDS faith-based educational material for a broader audience. New materials and resources will be developed for specific and targeted communities, such as the Latino and Muslim communities.

Materials will be downloadable free from the campaign website. Resources will include a downloadable tool kit outlining how to participate in **The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS**. The tool kit will include suggestions for congregational and community-wide educational activities, AIDS facts and how to get noticed in the local press.

3. Liturgical materials such as worship service bulletin covers with the logo of *The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS* as well as other theological resources will be available from the Balm In Gilead.

