

Christian Leaders to Help Reduce Infections

Co-chaired by T.D. Jakes, the first-ever conference to help end HIV/AIDS in the black community was recently held.



On Oct. 8 and 9 the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, a committee consisting of clergy, scholars, government officials and health officials, gathered for the first-ever conference to help end HIV/AIDS in the African-American community. Co-chaired by Bishop T.D. Jakes and the Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III, the committee hopes to develop a five-year plan to strategically and significantly reduce cases of HIV/AIDS infections among African-Americans. Jakes also noted that African-Americans are 10 times more likely than whites and three times more likely than Hispanics to be infected with the deadly disease. "While the struggle with HIV/AIDS in any community is tragic and devastating, the battle within the African-American community is a unique one," said Jakes, senior pastor at Dallas megachurch The Potter's House. "African-Americans wrestle with socioeconomic issues, a lack of education, delays in early detection, treatment and prevention, and insufficient access to affordable care and medications. These factors contribute to a rapid and startling ascent of African-Americans who contract and are dying from the disease," he said.