

## **(Talking Points) for National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS**

### **March 4 – 10, 2012**

**What and When is NWOP:** The National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS, March 4-10, 2012, is a powerful week of prayer, education and action. This national awareness campaign, in its 10<sup>th</sup> year in Austin, and is hosted by the Black Faith-based Health Initiative. BFHI engages and encourages Pastors to support, encourage and empower Faith-based congregations to take action toward stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS in Austin/Travis County and surrounding areas.

### **What are the activities for NWOP:**

The City-wide service will be held Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at Simpson United Methodist Church located at 1701 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street at 7pm. Pastors Testing day is: Tuesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>. Eleven Churches have agreed & confirmed to speak a sermon dedicated to HIV/AIDS on Red Ribbon Sunday which is the beginning of the NWOP Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. Daily prayer will be held Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup> -Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at: New Hope Missionary Baptist Church 2405 E. 16th Street 12N-1pm.

**Why Do We Host the NWOP:** HIV/AIDS continues to spread out of control in our community. We succeed by forming partnerships with Churches, HIV/AIDS service organizations, Health organizations and Community based organization; this allows us a broad based support network to succeed in a project so broad in scope. We have got to shed this weight of shame surrounding HIV/AIDS. Most of us have been affected by this disease in some way.

### **Austin/Travis County:**

- African Americans are less than 8% of the Austin/Travis County population, but 50% of all reported HIV/AIDS cases
- African American females account for 10% of the county's total female population and 54% of all females living with HIV infection (including AIDS)
- African American males account for 9% of the county's male population, but 21% of all males living with HIV infection (including AIDS)

### **State of Texas:**

- Over the past 5 years, there has been a 30% increase in HIV/AIDS cases.
- African American females are 65% of all newly diagnosed HIV cases in Texas.

### **United States:**

- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that 72% of all new HIV infections among women in the US were African American
- AIDS is the #1 cause of death for African American adults aged 24-44, before Heart disease and Cancer.
- African American Senior Citizens represent more than 50% of HIV cases among persons over the age of 55.
- African American teenagers 13-19 represent 69% of all young women diagnosed with HIV

Because the spread of HIV/AIDS is so devastating to the African American community, the Black Faith Based Health Initiative for Austin/Travis County was created to help educate and prevent the spread.

### **What is the Black Faith Based Health Initiative (BFBHI) and What is our role:**

The Black Faith-Based Health Initiative is a Faith-based non-profit organization that was created in 1998. Our vision is to utilize historically Black Churches and other Faith-based organizations to help stop the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Black community. It is imperative that leaders in the Faith community encourage their congregations on how to respond to the people in our community infected/ affected by HIV/AIDS with prayers of healing and compassion. BFBHI was founded to support in the education, dissemination of information and empowerment of the Churches to lead the war on a crisis that is devastating our community. We are available to offer support in numerous activities such as providing information for Pastors to use during Sunday morning worship service, workshops, HIV testing, forums, creating education resource centers to be used by your congregation and community members and many other activities.

### **How Do We Succeed in the NWOP:**

This is the coming together of all people of faith to unite with purpose, compassion and hope. Through the power of God's love we will educate about HIV facts; encourage and support HIV testing; advocate for the availability of compassionate care and treatment for all those living with the disease in every community in

Austin/Travis county; and love unconditionally all persons living with & affected by HIV/AIDS. Together, we will boldly, with lifted hands and hearts, take action and affirming with prayer, education, testing and treatment, we will SEE the end of AIDS and witness an AIDS-FREE Generation!

**What Can You Do:** Commit to become a partner and leader in 2012 and host activities at your Church and become a part of the growing crusade to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. Churches in the community can take simple steps like talking about HIV with family & friends, volunteer at an HIV/AIDS organization or event, support people living with HIV or AIDS, set up a resource table with HIV/AIDS information, provide HIV testing for congregations to find out their HIV status, pass out HIV/AIDS information with Church bulletins, wear a Red Ribbon to restart the conversation and raise awareness for HIV/AIDS.

*For More Information: Contact Sam Price at (512) 784-1670, Sr. Advisor - Faith Based Health Initiative*