

Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen: The Role of the Church and Other Black Community Based Institutions in Addressing Homelessness in American

2025 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
ENDING HOMELESSNESS



June 30–July 2, 2025 🌅 Washington, D.C. 🌅 #NAEH2025

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Despite being only 13% of the U.S. population, Black people represent 40% of all people experiencing homelessness. Historical, social, economic and systemic racism are all major players, and for centuries, Black faith-based institutions (such as the Black church and other Black community organizations) have been key in buffering such blatantly sanctioned discrimination. Hear from Black leaders across the country on how they are addressing Black homelessness in their communities and bridging those gaps of inequity.



The left side of the slide features three vertical decorative elements. The first is a vertical band with a repeating pattern of teal diamonds outlined in white, set against a mustard yellow background, all enclosed within a red border. The second is a thin, wavy vertical line in red and yellow. The third is a large, stylized arrow pointing to the right, composed of multiple concentric layers in yellow, red, white, and teal.

**Nobody Knows the
Trouble I've Seen: The
Role of The Church and
Other Black Community
Based Institutions in
Addressing Homelessness
in America**

Purpose of Today's Dialogue

- Examine the state of Black homelessness in Chicago
- Reignite the Black Church's role in community service
- Ask hard questions about accountability, capacity, and calling
- Brainstorm actionable ways to re-engage the faith community



The State of Black Homelessness in Chicago

- Black people: 60% of homeless, 30% of population
- Black families, especially single mothers, overrepresented
- Structural racism and disinvestment are key factors

The Historical Role of the Black Church

- Shelter, food, moral guidance, mutual aid
- Center for Civil Rights organizing
- Critical partner in Faith-Based Initiatives





What Happened to Faith-Based Initiatives?

- Decline due to funding cuts and bureaucracy
- Shift in church priorities
- Growing divide between churches and government

Re-enrolling the Church in Homeless Response

- Start small: adopt one family or reentry individual
- Use existing resources: kitchens, land, vans
- Form faith-based coalitions
- Include homelessness in sermons and outreach

What Else Can Black Institutions Do?

- Fraternities/sororities: mentorship, drives
 - Barbershops/salons: resource hubs
 - Black-owned businesses: hiring pipelines
 - Faith-based schools: host warming centers
- 
- The bottom of the slide features a decorative graphic consisting of several horizontal, wavy lines in dark blue and red, creating a layered, abstract effect.

Questions to Spark Conversation

- Why isn't the Church more active on this front?
- Have we normalized Black suffering?
- What are we willing to risk for justice?



Call to Action

- Form a Faith & Housing Coalition
- Host community conversations at churches
- Identify 5 churches ready for direct service
- Advocate for renewed faith-based funding

Closing Reflection

"Whatever you did for
one of the least of
these... you did for
me." – Matthew 25:40

Let's not just preach
transformation—let's
be it.

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National Alliance to
END HOMELESSNESS

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Meet Kimberly M. Speights, a beacon of resilience, purpose, and grace, shining her light across the globe. As a devoted Wife, nurturing Mother, and Ordained Elder, she travels the world, passionately sharing her life's story to emancipate hearts and minds. With unwavering determination, she fearlessly embraces her divine calling, embarking on an unapologetic journey of self-discovery and growth.

As a devoted community activist and advocate, she wholeheartedly embraces the philosophy of transformative change from within. Her unwavering dedication knows no bounds as she tirelessly strives to eliminate negative stigmas that afflict women, children, and the broader community. Whatever positive measures are required, she fearlessly takes on the challenge, empowering and uplifting those around her with unyielding determination. As a licensed clergywoman in the State of Alabama, her faith and scriptural knowledge brings hope and fuel to those in need of light and peace.



- In 2022, the United Nations estimated the world population at 8 billion with 2,545,579,000 professing Christians.
- In 2020, the U.S. Religion Census reported 356,739 religious congregations.
- 161 million adherents of some faith.
- **47%** of Americans are members of a church today.
- **76%** of Americans were church members in 1947, the highest membership rate ever recorded by Gallup.
- **79% Black**
- 77% Latino
- 70% White



The Crisis

Black American make up 13% of the U.S. population & nearly 40% of the homeless population.

- We can't keep putting a band-aid on an open wound!
- Homelessness and poor housing are destroying lives, undermining families, hurting communities, and weakening the social fabric of our nation.
- Is the church really Christ's hands and feet in the earth?



The Calling

- The Black church has the infrastructure, the trust, and the spiritual mandate to act!
- The Black church must practice what we preach! The Great Commission tells us to “go”.
- Encounters must be humanizing and transformative!
- Transformative meaning seeing, conversing, eating together, and building relationship.
- Through these embodied encounters is birthed fertile ground for people to experience, share, & respond to divine hospitality.



The Hope

Nonprofits, Black churches, Fraternities & Sororities, HBCU's, and our grassroots organizations MUS come together in a united front.

We must pool our resources and effectively strategize on how to attack homelessness.

Together we can!

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." Nelson Mandela



Right Now Strategies

Inside the Church

- Teach workshops that highlight homelessness as a moral and social justice issue.
- Encourage church members to advocate for policy changes that address systemic causes of homelessness.
- Organize volunteer teams to assist at shelters and outreach centers.
- Organize donation drives for essential items like hygiene products and clothing.
- Place a section "homeless ministry" on donation envelopes and website and identify a different shelter to donate funds to each month.

Outside the Church

- Build partnerships with existing initiatives within your community.
- Establish church-led shelters or transitional housing.
- Act as a warming/cooling station during temperature lows/highs.
- Host town hall meetings to discuss solutions to homelessness with local officials.
- Partner with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to involve students in service projects.
- Partner with local Divine 9 Chapters to create service projects.

Ending Homelessness is Possible.



KIMBERLY M. SPEIGHTS

SPEAKER | AUTHOR | COMMUNITY ADVOCATE | KINGDOM LIAISON



WHO IS KIMBERLY M. SPEIGHTS?

When you add resilience to purpose, multiply it with grace, and plant it in the Word of God - you have Kimberly M. Speights.

Wife, Mother, and Ordained Elder, she travels the world to share her story and set people free. Her approach is bold, her call is sure, and her journey is unapologetic. She's penned her autobiography, entitled, "From Dangerous Disastrous Dysfunction to Destiny" and holds nothing back in sharing her story.

FEATURED MEDIA & IN PERSON APPEARANCES



TOPICS OF EXPERTISE

Renowned for her genuine commitment to truth and transparency, audiences are empowered through Kimberly's refreshingly straightforward approach. She sparks transformations from within through her diverse topics, including:

- Overcoming Your Past
- Embracing a "YES" from God
- From Broken Girl to a Healed Woman
- Eliminating Health Disparities in Communities w/ Proper Education & Communication

INTERESTING FACTS

- Licensed Clergy (State of Alabama)
- American Public Health Association
- Int'l Christian Coaching Association Member
- NAACP Outstanding Community Service Medal

C-SUITE EXECUTIVE & ENTREPRENEURIAL ENDEAVORS

EMPOWERED TO OVERCOME, INC.
Founder & Executive Director

- L.A.M.P. (Leadership and Mentoring Program)
- THE END (Geared to break toxic cycles and bad habits for women 18+ years of age.)

THE COMMUNITY KITCHENS OF BIRMINGHAM
Executive Director

- Providing healthy meals for the community, feeding the hungry from 2 location.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- Bachelor of Science
Christian Counseling
(Liberty University)
- Masters Degree in Human Services
Marriage & Family Counseling
(Liberty University)
- PhD (in progress)
Community Health Promotion
(University of Alabama at Birmingham)

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Ending Homelessness is Possible.





SAVE THE DATE

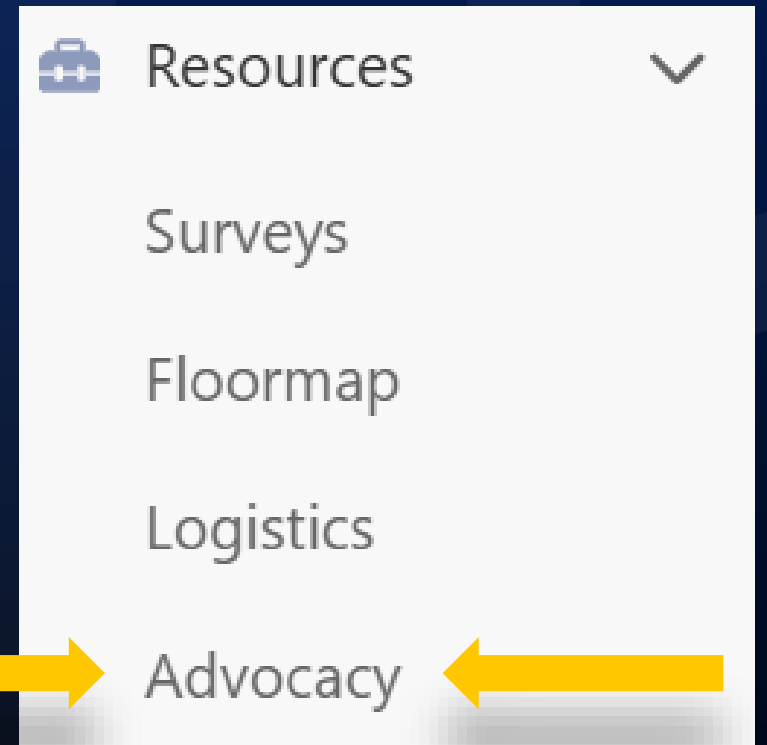
***Virtual* Capitol Hill Day: September 17**



[ENDHOMELESSNESS.ORG](https://endhomelessness.org)

WHOVA > RESOURCES > ADVOCACY

Engage with our advocacy resources on Whova.



TAKE ACTION TODAY

Prepare to take
action and sign
up for our
Advocacy Alerts.



ENDHOMELESSNESS.ORG

TAKE ACTION TO ADVANCE A SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED BUDGET

FY2026 Federal Budget Resource Series

Help the Alliance advocate for increased federal funding — and reject cuts to vital programs — using the resources below.

Alliance Resources

Budget Impact Spreadsheets

Take Action



National Alliance to
END HOMELESSNESS

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