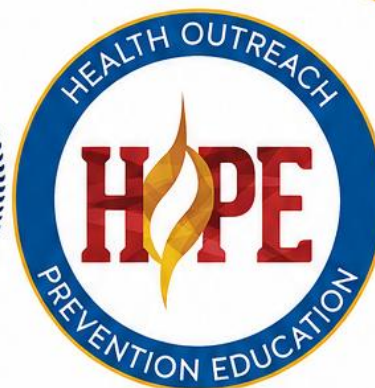




NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, USA, INCORPORATED

2026

SICKLE CELL DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

SICKLE SABBATH SUNDAY

TOOLKIT

KNOW THE FACTS • SHARE HOPE • INSPIRE ACTION

Faith in Action for Health, Healing & Justice

Dr. Boise Kimber,
PRESIDENT

Dr. Michael O. Minor,
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CENTER FOR FAITH-BASED HEALTH LEADERSHIP
A MINISTRY OF THE NBCUSA H.O.P.E. HHS PARTNERSHIP

WELCOME

A 2026 Toolkit for Faith, Facts, and Action

Helping congregations observe Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month and Sickle Sabbath Sunday with compassion, accuracy, and practical ministry.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

Dr. Boise Kimber, President

Dr. Michael O. Minor, National Director, NBCUSA H.O.P.E. / Executive Director, National Baptist Center for Faith-Based Health Leadership

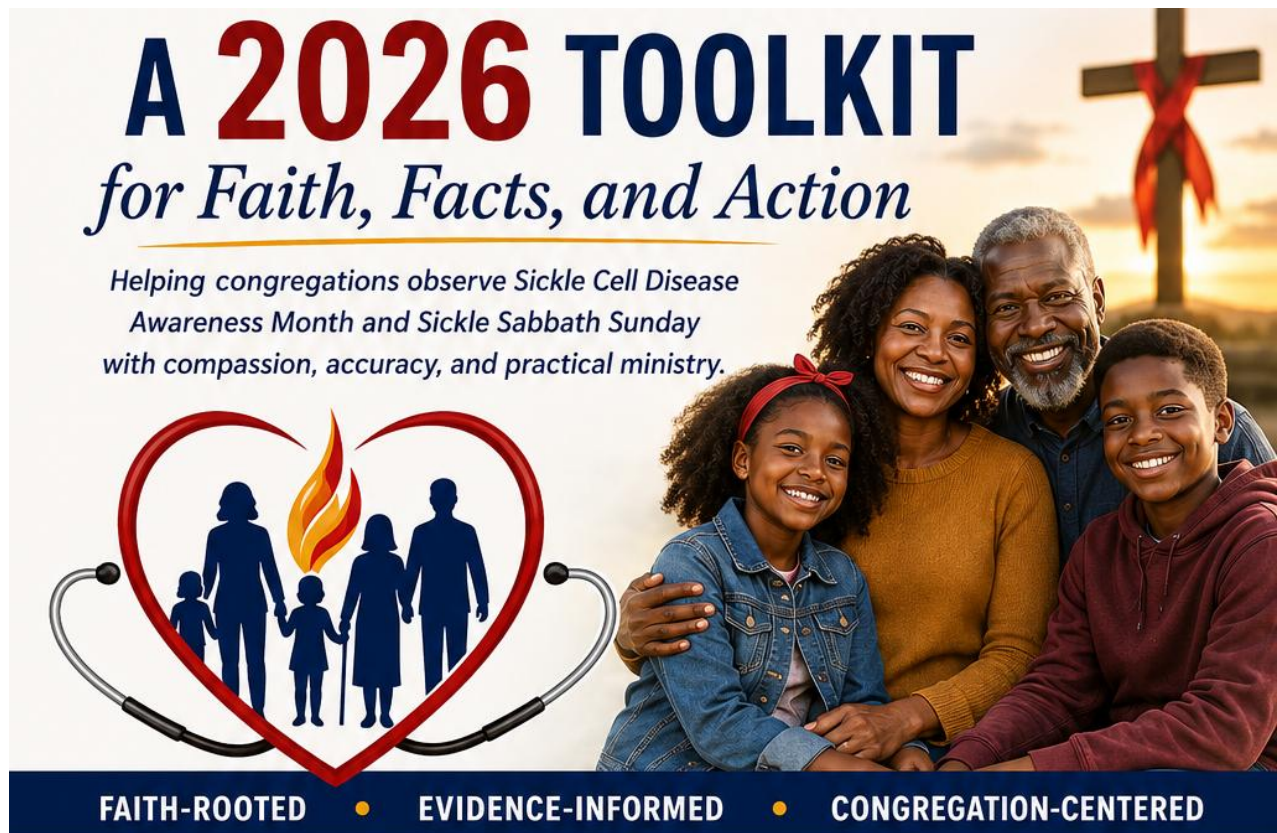
Dr. Genice Nelson, National Sickle Sabbath Sunday Chair

Sickle Sabbath Sunday is a national faith day that invites churches to raise awareness about sickle cell disease, encourage informed conversations about sickle cell trait, support people and families living with SCD, and connect congregations with blood donation, specialty care, research, and community resources.

This 2026 edition updates the earlier toolkit in four important ways: current medical facts, current treatment advances, the September 20, 2026, observance date, and alignment with the new National Baptist Center for Faith-Based Health Leadership.

- Use these worship resources in Sunday services, midweek gatherings, health ministry events, or community programs.
- Share these educational pages in church bulletins, e-updates, social media, and small groups.
- Invite local hematologists, pediatricians, nurses, community health workers, blood centers, or sickle cell organizations to partner with your church.
- Encourage members to know their sickle cell trait status and discuss personal health questions with qualified healthcare professionals.

Support individuals living with SCD without stigma, blame, or assumptions about pain.



2026 FOCUS: KNOW • SHARE • SUPPORT • ACT



SICKLE CELL DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

FAITH IN ACTION FOR HEALTH, HEALING & JUSTICE



Bear one another's burdens,
and in this way you will
fulfil the law of Christ.

GALATIANS 6:2



KNOW THE FACTS
SHARE HOPE
INSPIRE ACTION



**TOGETHER WE CAN
MAKE A LASTING
DIFFERENCE.**



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Learn the facts.
- ✓ Know your trait status.
- ✓ Encourage family and friends.
- ✓ Support blood donation.
- ✓ Partner with local organizations.
- ✓ Pray and participate.



COMPASSION
Sees the whole person.



CHURCH
Leads with love and truth.



COMMUNITY
Stronger together.



RESEARCH
Drives better tomorrows.



HOPE
Changes everything.



**SICKLE SABBATH
SUNDAY**
SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

A special day set aside for worship,
awareness, education, and
compassionate outreach.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sickle cell disease affects
thousands of families.
Awareness leads to early
detection and better care.



“Is there no balm in Gilead,
is there no physician there?
Why then is there no recovery
for the health of the daughter of my people?”

JEREMIAH 8:22



DONATE BLOOD
Save Lives



VOLUNTEER
Give Your Time



SUPPORT RESEARCH
Fuel Progress



RAISE AWARENESS
Share the Message

THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CENTER
FOR FAITH-BASED HEALTH LEADERSHIP

A Ministry of the NBCUSA H.O.P.E. HHS Partnership

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LOVE IN ACTION. **FAITH** IN MOTION. **HOPE** FOR EVERY GENERATION.



SECTION 1

Sickle Cell in 2026: What Every Church Should Know

Awareness becomes ministry when knowledge leads to compassionate action.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

~100,000 people in the United States are estimated to be living with sickle cell disease.	1 in 365 Black or African American babies is the long-used CDC estimate for SCD birth prevalence.	1 in 13 Black or African American babies is born with sickle cell trait.
Inherited SCD is caused by changes in hemoglobin genes; it is not contagious.	Lifelong SCD can affect pain, organs, infection risk, stroke risk, and daily quality of life.	Progress Stem cell transplantation and FDA-approved gene therapies have changed the treatment landscape for eligible patients.

Source note: CDC data and statistics; CDC MMWR birth prevalence reporting; FDA/NHLBI treatment updates. See Resource Directory.

Why this matters in Black congregations

Sickle cell disease affects people of many racial and ethnic backgrounds, but it disproportionately affects Black communities in the United States. Churches are trusted places where families can learn without judgment, find support, connect to care, and organize practical action. Our role is not to replace clinicians; our role is to help people reach trustworthy information and compassionate care.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ Sickle cell disease affects thousands of families.
- ✓ Awareness leads to understanding.
- ✓ Understanding leads to early detection and better care.
- ✓ Better care leads to stronger, healthier lives.
- ✓ Stronger lives build stronger families.
- ✓ Stronger families build stronger communities.

“ Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Why then is there no recovery for the health of the daughter of my people? **”**

JEREMIAH 8:22

**BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS,
AND IN THIS WAY YOU WILL FULFILL
THE LAW OF CHRIST. GALATIANS 6:2**

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE.

SECTION 2

Sickle Cell Disease and Sickle Cell Trait

Clear language for congregational education. Understanding the difference between sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait helps congregations communicate clearly and compassionately.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

What is sickle cell disease?

Sickle cell disease (SCD) is a group of inherited blood disorders. Affected red blood cells can become hard, sticky, and crescent- or sickle-shaped. These cells may block blood flow, reduce oxygen delivery, break down early, and contribute to pain and other complications.

What is sickle cell trait?

Sickle cell trait (SCT) means a person inherited one sickle cell gene. SCT is not the same as sickle cell disease. Most people with SCT do not have the symptoms of SCD, but they can pass the sickle cell gene to their children. Knowing trait status can help families make informed decisions.

How is it diagnosed?

- All U.S. states and territories include sickle cell disease in newborn screening.
- People who do not know their status can ask a healthcare professional about a blood test for hemoglobin variants.
- Parents should keep and understand newborn screening results and discuss them with their child's clinician.

Common complications may include

- Episodes of severe pain (vaso-occlusive crises)
- Anemia and fatigue
- Acute chest syndrome and breathing complications
- Stroke risk
- Infections
- Organ damage
- Vision, kidney, or bone complications
- Mental and emotional stress related to living with chronic illness

PAIN IS REAL. LISTEN FIRST. SUPPORT WITHOUT JUDGMENT.

SICKLE CELL DISEASE & TRAIT

SICKLE CELL DISEASE (SCD) Affects red blood cells. Can cause pain, infections, organ damage, and other serious complications.		SICKLE CELL TRAIT (SCT) Carriers usually do not have symptoms. Two carriers can have a child with SCD.
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KNOW YOUR STATUS • PROTECT YOUR FAMILY • EMPOWER YOUR FUTURE

SECTION 3

What Has Changed: Treatment and Hope in 2026

Treatment options for SCD have changed significantly in recent years. Here is what churches should know in 2026.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

The 2025 toolkit contained treatment statements that are no longer current. So, the 2026 edition reflects major advances in SCD care and removes outdated medication counts and a single life-expectancy figure.

Ongoing comprehensive care	Routine medical care, vaccination, infection prevention, pain management, hydration, and individualized specialist care remain foundational.
Disease-modifying therapy	Hydroxyurea remains an important therapy for many patients; other treatments may be considered based on age, genotype, symptoms, and clinical circumstances.
Stem cell transplantation	Allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation can be curative for some people with SCD when an appropriate donor and treatment plan are available.
Gene therapy	In December 2023, FDA approved Casgevy and Lyfgenia for certain patients with SCD. In July 2026, FDA expanded Casgevy to eligible patients age 2 and older with recurrent vaso-occlusive crises.
Shared decision-making	These advanced therapies involve complex benefits, risks, eligibility requirements, conditioning, and long-term follow-up. They require consultation with an experienced sickle cell treatment center.

Medical information changes. Encourage patients to discuss current treatment options with a hematologist or comprehensive sickle cell center.

TREATMENT & HOPE

- 

Comprehensive care improves quality of life.
- 

Advances in treatment include medications, transplants, and **gene therapy**.
- 

Research brings hope for a brighter future.



Hope is Real. Help is Available.

SECTION 4

Staying Well with Sickle Cell Disease

Practical support for people living with SCD and the congregations that care for them.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

- Keep regular appointments with a healthcare team experienced in sickle cell disease.
- Stay current on recommended vaccinations and infection-prevention guidance.
- Learn an individualized pain-management plan and know when urgent care is needed.
- Drink enough fluids and avoid dehydration as advised by the care team.
- Take prescribed medications consistently and discuss side effects or concerns before stopping therapy.
- Prioritize sleep, nutrition, appropriate physical activity, and emotional well-being.
- Know warning signs that require urgent medical attention, including chest pain, trouble breathing, signs of stroke, severe fever, or uncontrolled pain.
- Build a support system that includes family, church, peers, and healthcare professionals.
- People with SCD should avoid extreme heat or cold when possible.

Church Support Checklist

People living with SCD benefit from consistent care and supportive environments. Churches can reinforce these wellness practices.

- ☐ Believe people when they report pain or fatigue.
- ☐ Offer practical support during hospitalization or recovery: meals, transportation, childcare, and prayer.
- ☐ Protect privacy; do not disclose health information without permission.
- ☐ Include people living with chronic illness in ministry leadership and service opportunities according to their gifts and capacity.
- ☐ Avoid spiritualizing medical decisions or suggesting that illness reflects weak faith.



CHURCH SUPPORT CHECKLIST

Compassion in Action. Faith in Motion.

-  Believe people when they report pain or fatigue.
-  Offer practical support during hospitalization or recovery: meals, transportation, childcare, and prayer.
-  Protect privacy; do not disclose health information without permission.
-  Include people living with chronic illness in ministry leadership and service opportunities according to their gifts and capacity.
-  Avoid spiritualizing medical decisions or suggesting that illness reflects weak faith.

LOVE LIKE JESUS. SUPPORT LIKE FAMILY.
Together, we can make a lasting difference.

COMPASSION IS CLINICALLY HUMBLE AND SPIRITUALLY STRONG.

SECTION 5

What Can My Church Do?

From awareness to measurable ministry action.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED		
1	KNOW	Invite members to learn their sickle cell trait status and keep newborn screening information.
2	TEACH	Share accurate, stigma-free education in worship, Bible study, newsletters, and social media.
3	DONATE	Partner with a blood center to promote blood donation and explain why a diverse donor pool matters.
4	PARTNER	Build relationships with sickle cell organizations, clinics, hospitals, schools, and community health workers.
5	SUPPORT	Create practical support pathways for families facing hospitalizations, pain crises, transportation needs, or caregiver strain.
6	ADVOCATE	Promote equitable access to specialty care, research participation, pain treatment, and health resources.

WHAT YOU CAN DO



LEARN
Learn the facts about sickle cell disease and trait.



DONATE
Support blood donation for sickle cell patients.



SUPPORT
Partner with local organizations and health professionals.



VOLUNTEER
Serve at events, camps, and health fairs.



ADVOCATE
Raise awareness and eliminate stigma.



PRAY
Lift up individuals and families affected by sickle cell disease.



TOGETHER, FAITH MOVES. HOPE HEALS. LIVES CHANGE.

SECTION 6

Sickle Sabbath Sunday Worship Planning Guide

Sunday, September 20, 2026

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

SUGGESTED THEME:

“FAITH IN ACTION: KNOWING, SUPPORTING, AND HOPING TOGETHER”

Suggested Worship Flow

ELEMENT	PURPOSE / NOTE
Prelude / Opening Music	Use music centered on hope, healing, endurance, and God’s presence.
Call to Worship	Affirm God as Creator, Sustainer, and source of wisdom for faithful care.
Sickle Cell Awareness Moment	Offer a 2-3 minute overview of SCD, SCT, and why September matters.
Responsive Reading	Use the original litany on the next page.
Prayer of Intercession	Pray for patients, caregivers, clinicians, researchers, blood donors, and families.
Sermon / Health Message	Connect Scripture with compassion, health stewardship, and community action.
Action Invitation	Invite members to know their trait status, donate blood, volunteer, or support a local sickle cell organization.
Offering / Mission Support	If appropriate, designate a gift for a sickle cell organization or local family support ministry.
Benediction	Send the congregation out to learn, lead, live, and love.

This flow can be adapted for congregations of any size or worship style.



SECTION 7

Responsive Reading and Prayer

Original worship resources for 2026.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

Responsive Reading: “We Will Walk Together”

Leader: God of life, You formed us with dignity and called us beloved.

People: Teach us to honor every body, every story, and every family.

Leader: When pain is unseen and suffering is misunderstood,

People: Make us people who listen, believe, and respond with compassion.

Leader: For those living with sickle cell disease and those who carry sickle cell trait,

People: Grant wisdom, strength, knowledgeable care, and faithful support.

Leader: For physicians, nurses, researchers, blood donors, and caregivers,

People: Renew their strength and guide their hands in service.

Leader: For churches seeking to become centers of wellness and hope,

People: Give us courage to learn, partner, advocate, and act.

All: We are one body in Christ. We will bear one another’s burdens, share trustworthy knowledge, and walk together in hope. Amen.



KNOW THE FACTS • SHARE HOPE • INSPIRE ACTION



Prayer for Sickle Sabbath Sunday

Gracious God, we lift before You every person and family touched by sickle cell disease. Be present in moments of pain, uncertainty, treatment, hospitalization, and hope. Strengthen caregivers, guide healthcare professionals, inspire researchers, and multiply generous blood donors. Give our churches wisdom to reject stigma, courage to tell the truth, and compassion to walk beside those who suffer. Help us use knowledge as a tool of love and ministry as an instrument of healing. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

SECTION 8

Sermon Outlines for Sickle Sabbath Sunday

Preaching emphasis: We do not need to understand every medical detail to practice compassionate discipleship, but we should be willing to learn enough to serve responsibly.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

1. “Bearing One Another’s Burdens” (Galatians 6:2)

1. See the burden - Chronic illness can be physically painful, emotionally exhausting, and socially misunderstood.
2. Share the burden - The church can offer prayer, presence, transportation, meals, advocacy, and practical support.
3. Transform the burden - Faithful community turns isolation into belonging and awareness into action.

2. “The Body Has Many Members” (1 Corinthians 12:12-26)

1. Every member matters - No person living with chronic illness is a lesser part of the body of Christ.
2. Pain should be shared - “If one member suffers, all suffer together.” Compassion requires attentiveness.
3. Health ministry strengthens witness - Churches can become places where spiritual care and practical health support work together.
- 4.

3. “Hope That Moves Us to Action” (James 2:14-17)

1. Faith listens - Learn the lived experience of people with SCD.
2. Faith responds - Connect people with resources and support.
3. Faith acts - Test, donate, partner, advocate, and pray.



SECTION 9

Congregational Q&A: Sickle Cell Facts Without Stigma

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

Q: Is sickle cell disease contagious?

A: No. SCD is inherited through genes. You cannot catch it from another person.

Q: Is sickle cell trait the same as sickle cell disease?

A: No. SCT means a person carries one sickle cell gene. SCD involves inherited gene combinations that cause the disease.

Q: Can people with sickle cell disease live full lives?

A: Yes. Outcomes vary, but comprehensive care, disease-modifying therapies, supportive care, and new treatment options have improved possibilities for many people.

Q: Why does blood donation matter?

A: Some people with SCD need blood transfusions. A diverse donor pool can help blood centers meet patient needs, including closely matched blood for people who receive repeated transfusions.

Q: Should a church tell members what medical treatment to choose?

A: No. Churches should share trusted education, encourage questions, and connect people with qualified clinicians. Treatment decisions belong to patients and their healthcare teams.

Q: How can a church respond to a pain crisis?

A: Believe the person, follow their emergency plan when known, help them access appropriate medical care, and avoid minimizing or moralizing their pain.

Q: What is one thing every family should know?

A: Know your own and your children's sickle cell trait status and keep newborn screening information available.

KNOW THE FACTS

SHARE HOPE • INSPIRE ACTION

- ✓ Sickle cell disease is inherited.
- ✓ One in 13 Black babies is born with sickle cell trait.
- ✓ Know your trait status.
- ✓ Encourage family and friends to get informed.
- ✓ Early detection and quality care improve lives.



SECTION 10

Blood Donation, Transplantation, and Advanced Therapies

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

Blood Donation

Blood transfusions are an important part of care for some people living with SCD. A diverse donor pool helps ensure compatible blood for patients who require repeated transfusions. Churches can partner with reputable blood centers, host donor drives, and encourage consistent donation. When promoting donation, use the blood center's eligibility guidance rather than creating your own screening rules.

Stem Cell Transplantation

A hematopoietic stem cell transplant can be curative for some patients, but it is not appropriate or available for everyone. Donor matching, health status, age, treatment risks, and center expertise all matter.

Gene Therapy

FDA-approved gene therapies now offer additional advanced treatment options for eligible patients. These therapies require specialized centers, stem cell collection and processing, conditioning chemotherapy, and long-term follow-up. Churches can help by sharing accurate information and supporting families through demanding care journeys - not by oversimplifying the decision. Gene therapy is not appropriate for all patients; eligibility varies.

GIVING TODAY. HEALING TOMORROW.
Hope for Life.

Blood Donation, Transplantation, and Advanced Therapies

BLOOD DONATION	TRANSPLANTATION	ADVANCED THERAPIES
Every drop counts. Your blood donation can provide hope and life for someone living with sickle cell disease. BE A LIFELINE. DONATE BLOOD.	For some, a stem cell or bone marrow transplant can be a cure. Your willingness to be a donor can change a life forever. BE A MATCH. GIVE HOPE.	Innovation is opening new doors of hope. Gene therapy, novel medications, and clinical trials are transforming lives. SUPPORT RESEARCH. SHAPE TOMORROW.

SUPPORT THE PATIENT. RESPECT THE PROCESS. SHARE TRUSTED RESOURCES.

SECTION 11

Family and Caregiver Ministry

Practical ways to make your church a place of belonging.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

- Create a confidential care-team process so families can ask for help without repeatedly explaining their situation.
 - Offer transportation to specialty appointments, especially for rural or underserved families.
 - Provide meals and household support after hospitalization or during severe pain episodes.
 - Support parents navigating school plans, absences, and fatigue-related needs.
 - Include mental and emotional wellness in chronic disease ministry; grief, stress, and anxiety deserve attention.
 - Train ushers, youth leaders, and ministry volunteers to respond calmly when a medical issue occurs during church activities.
 - Use flexible participation options: livestream, hybrid meetings, phone check-ins, for members whose health limits in-person attendance.
 - Remember caregivers in prayer and practical support; chronic illness affects entire households.
- Caregiver ministry is an extension of congregational love and shared responsibility.

“The church does not have to be a clinic to become a community of care.”



FAMILY AND CAREGIVER MINISTRY

Practical ways to make your church a place of belonging.

† FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED



Create a confidential care-team process so families can ask for help without repeatedly explaining their situation.



Offer transportation to specialty appointments, especially for rural or underserved families.



Provide meals and household support after hospitalization or during severe pain episodes.



Support parents navigating school plans, absences, and fatigue-related needs.



Include mental and emotional wellness in chronic disease ministry; grief, stress, and anxiety deserve attention.



Train ushers, youth leaders, and ministry volunteers to respond calmly when a medical issue occurs during church activities.



Use flexible participation options – livestream, hybrid meetings, phone check-ins – for members whose health limits in-person attendance.



Remember caregivers in prayer and practical support; chronic illness affects entire households.



TOGETHER, WE
MAKE ROOM
for Every Family.



“ The church does not have to be a clinic to become a community of care. ”



SEE THE PERSON.
Not the diagnosis.



SUPPORT THE FAMILY.
Strengthen the whole.



SHARE HOPE.
Faith in action.



BUILD COMMUNITY.
No one walks alone.

SECTION 12

September 2026 Ministry Calendar

A simple four-week pathway to Sickle Sabbath Sunday and beyond.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED		
WHEN	FOCUS	ACTION
Week 1: Sept. 1-5	Launch Awareness	Share SCD/SCT basics; post the toolkit; invite healthcare partners. Identify a church Sickle Cell Champion.
Week 2: Sept. 6-12	Know Your Status	Encourage members to locate newborn screening results or speak with a clinician about trait testing; promote blood donation.
Week 3: Sept. 13-19	Prepare to Act	Rehearse the litany, prepare bulletin inserts, collect local resources, and promote Sickle Sabbath Sunday.
Sunday, Sept. 20	Sickle Sabbath Sunday	Worship, educate, pray, invite action, and connect members with resources.
Week 4: Sept. 21-30	Keep the Work Going	Share follow-up resources, collect testimonies, thank partners, and identify year-round ministry opportunities.

This calendar is a suggested pathway; churches may adjust based on local needs.

30 DAYS OF FAITH, FACTS & ACTION

BUILD AWARENESS. INSPIRE ACTION. TRANSFORM LIVES.

- Week 1: Sept. 1-5**
Launch Awareness
- Week 2: Sept. 6-12**
Know Your Status
- Week 3: Sept. 13-19**
Prepare to Act
- Sunday, Sept. 20**
Sickle Sabbath Sunday
- Week 4: Sept. 21-30**
Keep the Work Going

TOGETHER, OUR FAITH CAN HEAL,
OUR KNOWLEDGE CAN SAVE, AND OUR ACTIONS CAN CHANGE LIVES.

EDUCATE | EQUIP | EMPOWER | ENGAGE

SECTION 13

Digital Ministry: Posts and TempleCare in 60 Seconds

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

Sample Social Media Posts

Awareness: September is **Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month**. Learn the facts. Know your trait status. Support families living with SCD. Join NBCUSA churches for **Sickle Sabbath Sunday**, September 20, 2026. #SickleCellMatters #NBCUSAHOPE

Sickle Sabbath: Faith in action means learning, listening, and walking together. This Sickle Sabbath Sunday, our church is raising awareness, supporting families, and sharing trusted sickle cell resources. #SickleSabbath #FaithInAction

Blood Donation: Your blood donation may become part of someone's treatment journey. Ask your local blood center how you can donate and help strengthen the blood supply for people living with sickle cell disease. #DonateBlood #SickleCellAwareness

Trait Status: Sickle cell trait is not sickle cell disease, but knowing your status matters for family health. Talk with a qualified healthcare professional about testing and newborn screening results. #KnowYourStatus

TempleCare in 60 Seconds: "Three Things Every Church Can Do"

1. **EDUCATE** - Share one accurate sickle cell fact this week.
2. **ENCOURAGE** - Invite families to know and understand trait status.
3. **ENGAGE** - Connect with a blood center, sickle cell organization, or healthcare partner.



SICKLE CELL DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

— FAITH IN ACTION FOR HEALTH, HEALING & JUSTICE —

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- LEARN**
Learn the facts about sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait.
- KNOW YOUR STATUS**
Get tested and know your trait status. Share what you learn.
- ENCOURAGE**
Encourage family, friends, and your church community to get informed.
- SUPPORT**
Support blood donation for sickle cell patients.
- PARTNER**
Partner with local sickle cell organizations, clinics, and community groups.
- PRAY & PARTICIPATE**
Lift up individuals and families impacted by sickle cell disease. Participate in Sickle Sabbath Sunday and related church activities.

SICKLE SABBATH SUNDAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2026



A SPECIAL DAY SET ASIDE FOR
WORSHIP • AWARENESS • EDUCATION
COMPASSIONATE OUTREACH
Mark Your Calendar!

OUR MISSION

To equip churches and communities with faith-rooted education, compassionate support, and practical resources that promote awareness, early detection, quality care, and hope for all individuals and families impacted by sickle cell disease and trait.

KEY FACTS

- About 100,000 Americans are living with sickle cell disease (SCD).
- 1 in 365 Black or African American babies is born with SCD.
- 1 in 13 Black or African American babies is born with sickle cell trait (SCT).
- SCD is inherited. Two carriers can have a child with SCD.

SCD CAN CAUSE:

- Pain episodes
- Infections
- Anemia
- Organ damage
- Other serious health complications

THERE IS HOPE

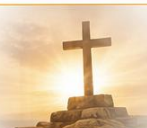
- Comprehensive care
- New treatments
- Gene therapy advances
- Research brings hope for a brighter future

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA)

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP
NBCUSA H.O.P.E. partners with the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA) to strengthen awareness, education, research, and advocacy for individuals and families impacted by sickle cell disease.
Together, we advance hope and health through faith and action.

THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CENTER FOR FAITH-BASED HEALTH LEADERSHIP
A Ministry of the NBCUSA H.O.P.E. HHS Partnership

"Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Why then is there no recovery for the health of the daughter of my people?"
JEREMIAH 8:22





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Dr. Michael O. Minor, National Director
Dr. Genice Nelson, National Sickle Sabbath Sunday Chair

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youtube.com/@nbcusahope
instagram.com/nbcusa_hope



SCAN TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE & RESOURCES

LOVE IN ACTION. FAITH IN MOTION. HOPE FOR EVERY GENERATION.

SECTION 14

How NBCUSA H.O.P.E. Supports Sick Cell Ministry

Aligned under the National Baptist Center for Faith-Based Health Leadership.

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

The National Baptist Center for Faith-Based Health Leadership is the unified national framework for H.O.P.E. programs, training, research, digital ministry, partnerships, and health initiatives. Its mission is to cultivate faith-rooted health leaders who transform congregations into centers of wellness, justice, and whole-person healing.

National Health Initiatives Division

Sickle cell disease is housed within the Chronic Disease and Prevention Unit. The division develops national campaigns, ministry toolkits, screenings, and congregation-centered health programs.

H.O.P.E. Training Institute

Provides an eight-module leadership pathway and continuing education so pastors, ambassadors, and health ministry leaders can implement evidence-informed, biblically grounded programs.

Center for Congregational Health and Trinity Wellness Research

Evaluates national initiatives, builds research partnerships, develops evidence, and helps translate findings into practical ministry.

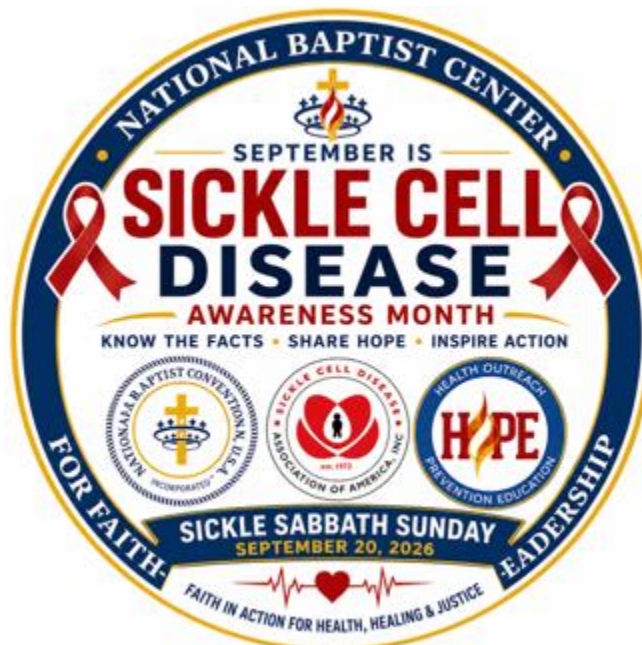
Digital Ministry and Innovation Lab

Produces TempleCare Matters, e-learning, digital toolkits, hybrid ministry models, and social media content that extend health ministry beyond church walls.

National Partnerships and Community Engagement Office

Builds relationships with healthcare, academic, government, and community partners and supports regional and congregational implementation.

BUILDING HEALTH LEADERS FOR A HEALTHIER NATION



SECTION 15

Trusted Resource Directory

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

CDC - Sickle Cell Disease

Data, statistics, complications, trait information, and communication resources. [Visit resource](#)

NHLBI - Sickle Cell Disease

Patient education, treatment information, staying-well resources, and research. [Visit resource](#)

FDA - Cellular and Gene Therapy

Current FDA-approved cellular and gene therapy products and safety information. [Visit resource](#)

Sickle Cell Disease Association of America

National education, advocacy, local member organizations, and community resources. [Visit resource](#)

ClinicalTrials.gov

Search current clinical studies related to sickle cell disease. [Visit resource](#)

NBCUSA H.O.P.E.

National Baptist health resources, training, webinars, and national initiatives. [Visit resource](#)

2026 Medical Update Sources

- CDC Data and Statistics on Sickle Cell Disease (updated public data page).
- CDC MMWR: Birth Prevalence of Sickle Cell Disease and County-Level Social Vulnerability, 2016-2020.
- FDA: First gene therapies for SCD (Casgevy and Lyfgenia) and 2026 pediatric expansion of Casgevy.
- NHLBI: Sickle Cell Disease Treatment and Cure Sickle Cell Initiative.

Hope IS REAL
Compassion MAKES IT POSSIBLE.

For every person living with sickle cell disease, there is **strength**.
For every family, there is **hope**.
For every church, there is a way to **help**.

Together, we can
LOVE, LIFT, HEAL.
and Leave No One Behind.

BELIEVE
See the person. Not the disease.

SUPPORT
Offer practical help and encouragement.

PRAY
Faith brings comfort and strength.

ADVOCATE
Raise awareness. Fight stigma. Promote health.

BUILD COMMUNITY
No one should walk this journey alone.

TOGETHER, WE BRING HOPE TO LIFE.

CLOSING

Toolkit Use, Medical Disclaimer, and Ministry Evaluation

FAITH-ROOTED • EVIDENCE-INFORMED • CONGREGATION-CENTERED

Medical Disclaimer

This toolkit is for health education, ministry planning, and community engagement. It does not provide diagnosis, treatment, or individualized medical advice. Medical information changes over time. People with sickle cell disease or sickle cell trait should discuss personal questions, symptoms, medications, transfusions, transplantation, gene therapy, pregnancy, exercise, and other health decisions with qualified healthcare professionals experienced in sickle cell care.

Ministry Evaluation - After Sickle Sabbath Sunday

- ☐ Did we include accurate SCD/SCT education?
- ☐ Did we provide a clear action step?
- ☐ Did we partner with a healthcare or community organization?
- ☐ Did we protect the dignity and privacy of people living with SCD?
- ☐ Did we promote blood donation or trait awareness?
- ☐ Did we collect feedback or testimony?
- ☐ What will we continue beyond September?

NBCUSA H.O.P.E. • National Baptist Center for Faith-Based Health Leadership

Sickle Sabbath Sunday • September 20, 2026

Know Your Status. Know the Facts. Support the Fight.

www.hopenbc.com





SICKLE CELL DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

KNOW THE FACTS • SHARE HOPE • INSPIRE ACTION



OUR MISSION

To equip churches and communities with faith-rooted education, compassionate support, and practical resources that promote awareness, early detection, quality care, and hope for all individuals and families impacted by sickle cell disease and trait.

FAITH IN ACTION FOR HEALTH, HEALING & JUSTICE

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Learn the facts about sickle cell disease and trait.
- ✓ Know your trait status and share what you learn.
- ✓ Encourage family and friends to get informed.
- ✓ Support blood donation for sickle cell patients.
- ✓ Partner with local sickle cell organizations and clinics.
- ✓ Pray for individuals and families impacted by sickle cell disease.
- ✓ Participate in Sickle Sabbath Sunday and related activities.

SICKLE SABBATH SUNDAY



Mark Your Calendar!

**SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 20, 2026**

A special day set aside for worship, awareness, education, and compassionate outreach. Together, we can make a lasting difference.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Sickle cell disease affects thousands of families.
- Awareness leads to understanding.
- Understanding leads to early detection and better care.
- Better care leads to stronger, healthier lives.
- Stronger lives build stronger families.
- Stronger families build stronger communities.



NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

NBCUSA H.O.P.E. partners with the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA) to strengthen awareness, education, research, and advocacy for individuals and families impacted by sickle cell disease. Together, we advance hope and health through faith and action.



THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CENTER
FOR FAITH-BASED HEALTH LEADERSHIP
A Ministry of the NBCUSA H.O.P.E. HHS Partnership

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SCAN TO VISIT
OUR WEBSITE &
RESOURCES

DISCLAIMER

This toolkit is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. Always consult a qualified healthcare professional for medical questions, diagnosis, or treatment.