

'High-Church Penecostal' leader J. Delano Ellis II dies at 75

by [Adelle M. Banks](#) in the [October 21, 2020](#) issue



(Photo courtesy of the Joint College of African-American Pentecostal Bishops)

J. Delano Ellis II, a Black church official who started Pentecostal organizations and emphasized ecumenism, died on September 19 following a recent hospitalization. He was 75.

Ellis was also among a group of “High-Church Pentecostal” clerics who in the 1990s became known for wearing Roman collars, wearing priestly garments with links to their African heritage, and reciting the Nicene Creed. They were part of a trend that reshaped a portion of American Black religion.

Ellis's ecumenical work included several visits to the Vatican during St. John Paul II's papacy, including one in 2000 in which he led 160 delegates on a pilgrimage in hopes of building closer ties with the Catholic Church.

About two weeks before his death, Ellis made his last public appearance in Cleveland, at a dedication ceremony naming a portion of an avenue in his honor. His family said he was hospitalized less than 24 hours later, a local Fox News station reported.

"I've got one thing to say," he told the crowd at the September 6 ceremony: "To God be the glory." —Religion News Service