

MASSACHUSETTS COMMEMORATES 400 YEARS OF BLACK RESILIENCY

September 20, 2019

Greater Framingham Community Church Framingham MA







Friday September 20, 2019

Dear Church,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the One who calls us to be one, Jesus Christ. Hear these words from Psalm 102, verses 18-22:

"Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord; that he looked down from his holy height, from heaven the Lord looked at the earth, to hear the groans of prisoners, to set free those who were doomed to die; so that the name of the Lord may be declared in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem, when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the Lord."

Let this be recorded for a generation to come, that on this date, the faithful of Massachusetts gathered to worship the Lord and give praise for God's liberation particularly in the lives of Black Christians. Together, we mark the arrival of enslaved Africans to these lands in 1619 and together, we testify to power of Black resiliency over these 400 years.

Over 400 years, the Black Church has been a testimony to Resurrection. We cannot be the Church without it.

We know the story of liberation has been whitewashed, a freedom trail that only tells part of the story and remembered only some of the names. This day, we gather together to worship God and tell the whole truth. We gather to testify to Black resiliency, in every corner of Massachusetts and in every generation. We worship a God who hears the groans of those imprisoned and longs for all held captive to be set free.

Thank you for joining in this worship. May Jesus Christ, who draws all people to himself, be glorified in our work and witness.

In hope,

Rev. Jennie Barrett Siegel, Board President

Rev. Laura Everett, Executive Director

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ORDER OF SERVICE

Friday, September 20, 2019 7:30 pm

Greater Framingham Community Church Host Pastor: Rev. Dr. J. Anthony Lloyd

Mistress of Ceremony: Rev. Dr. Cheryl Townsend-Gilkes

Call to Worship

Rev. Dr. Jay Williams, Union United Methodist Church, Boston MA Massachusetts Council of Churches Working Board member

Praise and Worship

Min. Michael Bradley, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Boston MA

Processional

"We've Come This Far by Faith"

Invocation

Rev. Dr. Alice Brown-Collins, Intervarsity

Greetings & Occasion

Rev. Kenneth Young, Massachusetts Council of Churches

City & State Officials

Negro National Anthem

"Lift E'very Voice and Sing"

Rev. Dr. Emmett G. Price III, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Litany

7 Stations of Resiliency

Intro: Rev. Carrington Moore, Massachusetts Council of Churches

- **1. Boston**: Rev. Art Gordon, St. John Missionary Baptist Church, Boston MA
- 2. Cambridge & North: Rev. Bernadette Hickman-Maynard, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Lynn MA
- 3. Cape & Islands: Rev. Philomena Hare, The Federated Church of Hyannis, Hyannis MA
- 4. New Bedford & South: Rev. Dr. John Page, The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, Groton MA
- **5. Worcester & Central**: Rev. Dr. Esau Vance, Mt. Olive Pentecostal Church, Worcester MA
- 6. Springfield & Pioneer Valley: Rev. Catharine Cummings, Wesley United Methodist Church, Springfield MA
- 7. Pittsfield & Berkshires: Rev. Sloan Letman, Second Congregational Church, Pittsfield MA

Conclusion: Bishop Robert Brown, Zion Church Ministries, Everett MA

Prayer for Repentance

Rev. Laura Everett, Executive Director, Massachusetts Council of Churches Rev. Jennie Barrett Siegal, President, Massachusetts Council of Churches

Elder Terrence Haynes and D.M.J. United Voices of Praise

Song

ORDER OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

Friday, September 20, 2019 7:30 pm

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Song Elder Terrence Haynes and D.M.J. United Voices of Praise

Church, Boston MA

Prayer for EldersBishop Orlando Harris, New Life Christian Church, Brockton and Taunton MA

Song Elder Terrence Haynes and D.M.J. United Voices of Praise

Prayer for Youth Rev. Dr. Atu White, *Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Springfield MA*

Offering Rev. Dr. Emmett G. Price III, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Sermonic Solo Elder Terrence Haynes and D.M.J. United Voices of Praise

Sermon Bishop Claude Alexander, *The Park Church, Charlotte NC*

Prayer for Shalom Rev. Dr. Leslie Callahan, St. Paul's Baptist Church, Philadelphia PA

Song Elder Terrence Haynes and D.M.J. United Voices of Praise

Benediction Rev. Dr. J. Anthony Lloyd, *Greater Framingham Community Church*,

Framingham MA





PROCESSIONAL HYMN

We've Come This Far by Faith

We've come this far by faith, Leaning on the Lord;
Trusting in His Holy Word, He's never failed me yet.
Ohhh, can't turn around, we've come this far by faith.
Don't be discouraged with trouble in your life.
He'll bear your burdens and move all misery and strife,
That's why...

We've come this far by faith, Leaning on the Lord;
Trusting in His Holy Word, He's never failed me yet.
Ohhh, can't turn around, we've come this far by faith.

Just the other day I heard a man say he didn't believe in God's Word;
I can say God has made a way. He's never failed me yet,
Thank God...

We've come this far by faith, Leaning on the Lord; Trusting in His Holy Word, He's never failed me yet. Ohhh, can't turn around, we've come this far by faith.

- Albert A. Goodson

NEGRO NATIONAL ANTHEM

Lift E'very Voice and Sing

Lift every voice and sing, Till earth and heaven ring Ring with the harmonies of Liberty; let our rejoicing rise, High as the list'ning skies, let it resound loud as the rolling sea sing a song full of faith that the dark past has tought us, sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us; facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on till victory is won. Stony the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning rod, felt in the day that hope unborn had died; yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet, come to the place on witch our fathers sighed? we have come over a way that with tears has been watered, we have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered, out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last where the white gleam of our star is cast. God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, thou who has brought us thus far on the way; thou who has by thy might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray lest our feet stray frm the places, our God, where we met thee, least our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee, shadowed beneath the hand, may we forever stand, tru to our God,

Tru to our native land.

- James Weldon Johnson



FOR BLACK RESILIENCY IN MASSACHUSETTS

Rev. Carrington Moore:

Although Massachusetts was one of the first states to end slavery during the 1780s, it was also the first colony to establish slavery within its 1641 "Body of Liberties." Within this complex history, there is so much to celebrate of the power, practice, and persistence of Black Resiliency in Massachusetts.

As we begin, we acknowledge with humility the sacred ground under our feet, and that we are on the traditional lands of the Wampanoag people, proximate to both Nipmuck and Narragansett native lands. We honor the native people who have stewarded this land for generations and offer our respect to the elders past and present. In many places, Native and African peoples found common cause in the march to freedom. We are especially mindful of elders like Crispus Attucks, of Native and African decent, born here in Framingham in 1723, the first person killed in the Boston Massacre and later an icon of the abolitionist movement.

In the prayers that follow, we strive to honor the ancestors, those names caved into monuments and those names known to God alone. From every corner of Massachusetts, African Americans have tread a path through the blood of the slaughtered, stood firm, and marched forward. And in every corner of Massachusetts, the Black Church has been a beacon of hope and a way station in the storm.

Each petition will give thanks for black resiliency from a different region of Massachusetts, led by a pastor from that region. At the end of each petition, the church leader will say "May we forever stand" and you will respond "True to our God, True to our native land."

Let us pray...

Holy One, in every generation, you have been our North star, guarding and guiding your people. Over 400 years, you never leave nor forsake us. In each generation, the bondage has changed. In each generation, you provided for us with faithful women and men who blazed a trail towards freedom. "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

Rev. Art Gordon:

We pray for Boston. From this city, we see the signs of black agency and self-determination. We honor the children who rode bravely in busses to unfamiliar school districts, and the young adults who marched defiantly down Mass. Ave to protest police brutality. Bless this legacy of education and activism, the organizing of Tent City and Mothers for Adequate Welfare. We honor black creativity in Phillis Wheatley of Old South Church, first published African American writer in North America. We pray for black home ownership, invoking the name of Zipporah Potter Atkins, the first woman of African descent to purchase a house in Boston, in 1670. We call the name of Sgt William Carney, the first black medal of honor recipient and all of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry who gathered at Camp Meigs in Readville, Boston. Grant to us, the faithfulness and tenacity of those first parishioners of the African Meeting House. "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING FOR BLACK RESILIENCY IN MASSACHUSETTS (Cont'd)

Rev. Bernadette Hickman-Maynard:

We pray for Cambridge and North. From these towns, we see the signs of black education and ingenuity. Cultivate in us the intellectual rigor of Maria Baldwin, first black woman appointed as principal of a predominately white public school in Cambridge. We are humbled by those whose labor created the wealth that would endow Harvard Law School, the school that would educate our first black President. Call forth Belinda Sutton, formerly enslaved at the Royall House and Slave Quarters in Medford, who petitioned the Massachusetts General Court again and again for her back pay. We honor the ingenuity of Jan Matzeliger of Lynn, inventor of shoe lasting machine who left his fortune to North Congregational Church. We reclaim the black valor of Prince Estabrook, who though enslaved, enlisted and fought in the Revolutionary War with the Lexington Militia. We praise the resourcefulness Lucy Foster of South Church in Andover, who in her freedom ran a tavern and a stop on the Underground Railroad. Grant us the courage of abolitionist fundraiser Dr. Sarah Parker Remond and oyster businessman Prince Farmer of Salem who risked their own safety to shelter those fleeing on the Underground Railroad.

"May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

Rev. Philomena Hare:

We pray for the Cape and the Islands. From these shores, we see the signs of black artistry and recreation. We honor Mrs. Anderson of Hyannis, who, discouraged from worshipping with neighboring white Christians, founded Zion Union Chapel. We name "Ma" Harriet Grace, who pastored the church though rejected as a female pastor. For all the black domestic workers and immigrants who have found respite and refuge in black Cape churches, we give thanks. We rejoice in the life of Captain Absalom Boston of Nantucket and the all-black crew of the whaleship Industry, and the captain's commitment to his African Baptist Church as a trustee. We praise You for the artists, entrepreneurs, and vacationers who found freedom in Provincetown and the Inkwell of Martha's Vineyard. We remember Senator Edward Brooke, first African American elected to the US Senate after Reconstruction, who ran a campaign office from his home on the Vineyard. We call forth Dorothy West of Oak Bluffs, the last living member of the Harlem Renaissance. Send the power of your Holy Spirit that blew through those old revival meetings, an integrated Christian Community at praise and at play. Grant to us the creativity and rest of those who found refuge in these places. "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

Rev. Dr. John Page:

We pray for the New Bedford and the South. From these ports and stations, we see the signs of black collaboration and vitality. We praise You for the thick network of the Underground Railroad. We claim the remarkable resiliency of black New Bedford, a place so dedicated to collective liberation that, as Frederick Douglas made his home here, he praised the black community "determined to protect each other from the bloodthirsty kidnapper, at all hazards." We hear the clarion call to protect one another in the sound of the Liberty Bell, rung to warn of US marshals chasing those on the road to freedom.

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING FOR BLACK RESILIENCY IN MASSACHUSETTS (Cont'd)

We marvel at the innovation of devout Quaker and Sea Captain Paul Cuffe of Westport, who envisioned a return to Africa. We taste the goodness of God and the practice of black hospitality in Bishop Charles Manuel "Sweet Daddy" Grace who arrived in New Bedford in 1903 on a ship called Freedom and the founding the first United House of Prayer for All People, in West Wareham. We give thanks for soul food evangelism and shout bands. May we forever praise and "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

Rev. Dr. Esau Vance:

We pray for Worcester and Central Massachusetts. From these hills, we see the signs of black hospitality and strength. We honor Quock Walker who sued for his own freedom, argued slavery was contrary to the Bible and the new Massachusetts Constitution, winning for himself and others. We lift up the ethnically diverse Beaver Brook neighborhood of Worcester and the black residents who lived side by side with many new immigrants. We cheer alongside the Worcester Whirlwind, Major Taylor, the first African-American world champion in cycling, who kept his faith and dignity, even as others would try to sabotage his victories. We praise You for the established black community of Worcester who helped set up a Freedmens' Office for the newly emancipated. We aspire to open our hearts and homes like Elizabeth Mowbray, president of the Colored Freedmen's Aid Society, who housed southern refugees in her Worcester home. God help us to build our own Liberty Farm. "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

Rev. Catharine Cummings:

We pray for Springfield and the Pioneer Valley. From these mountain tops and city streets, we see the crossroads of black intersectionality and solidarity. We honor the ways black institutions shaped strategies of resistance in every fight for liberation. We give thanks for Rev. William Apess of Colrain, a black, Pequot Methodist preacher educated in schools for African children, who ministered with the Mashpee Indians during the Mashpee Revolt in 1833. We honor the labor of Sojourner Truth, who moved to Northampton in 1843 to join a communal farm and silk-factory, and her unwavering commitment to liberation as a black woman. We hold up the strategic collaboration of John Brown and Thomas Thomas, as the emancipated Thomas housed the formerly enslaved and fleeing black kin in his Springfield restaurant. We claim the bedrock foundation of black faithfulness in this region, in the Sanford Street Free Church that lives on in St. John's Congregational Church today. We admire the continuing care for black children in the historic ministry of Camp Atwater in North Brookfield. We aspire to the black philanthropy of real estate developer Primus Mason of Monson, who use his fortune to found Springfield's first "Home for Aged Men." When our feet are in two worlds, "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING FOR BLACK RESILIENCY IN MASSACHUSETTS (Cont'd)

Rev. Sloan Letman:

We pray for Pittsfield & the Berkshires. From these borders lands, we see the wide horizons of black integrity and independence. We revere the sacrifice of Elizabeth "Mum Bett" Freeman, who took the blow of the enslaver's wrath to protect another woman, and then walked out the enslaver's door in Sheffield. We applaud Freeman's ingenuity to use the Massachusetts Constitution to argue in court for her own freedom. We praise the community of Great Barrington that raised W.E.B. DuBois to become a scholar, speaker, and founder of the NAACP. We honor Rev. Samuel Harrison of Pittsfield, Congregational minister and chaplain to the 54th Massachusetts who demanded he receive the same pay as white colleagues. We marvel at the heights of astronaut Stephanie Wilson of Pittsfield, only the second African American woman in space. We feast on the beauty of Jacob's Pillow in Beckett, first an Underground Railroad farmhouse station and then a venue for dance where Asadata Dafora premiered in the inaugural season. And from his writing shed in Great Barrington, we can hear the James Weldon Johnson's words ring out. As we lift every voice, "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

Bishop Robert Brown:

True to you, our God and true to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we come humbly before you with the names of the unnamed. We remember the unnamed black men who stormed a Boston courthouse to free Shadrach Minkins, the first escaped slave seized in New England under the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law. And we remember the names of our mothers and fathers, aunts and uncles, godparents and cousins, mentors and teachers.

We invite you to name aloud now those you hold dear, those saints of black resiliency across Massachusetts who paved the way for us:

Oh God, you who know every name even before we speak it, Receive all our gratitude and praise. May our names be named by those who come after us. As the day of judgment approaches, "May we forever stand,"

ALL:

"True to our God, True to our native land."

AMEN.

We invite you to use this litany in your own community. The Litany can also be found online at www.masscouncilofchurches.org/400years

STORIES OF RESILIENT BLACK CHURCHES

We invite you to submit the story of black resiliency in your community to council@masscouncilofchurches.org

St. John's Congregational Church, Springfield

The historic St. John's Congregational Church is one of the oldest and active Black Churches in New England. St. John's has a rich history of positive community influence by its pastors, members, and ministries. In 1848 the church was known as "Free Church" and its first pastor, the Rev. Leonard Collins vigorously defended Blacks' right to organize their own churches in a public debate against the legendary abolitionist, Frederick Douglass. The debate appeared in the printed pages of Douglass' North Star Newspaper. Douglass eventually came to accept the importance of establishing Black churches and attended services at the "Free Church."

Throughout St. John's history, it has maintained relationships with other nationally known human rights advocates. In fact, Abraham Lincoln knew one of the founding members of the church personally. Other honored guests and visitors to the church have included Sojourner Truth, James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Jesse Jackson, and Deval Patrick, just to name a few.

St. John's continues to build the kingdom of God in the congregation and in the community by offering weekly worship services, two weekly bible study classes, visitation to the infirmed, free meals to the hungry and hope to the hopeless. God is doing a new work in the life of St. John's. We work with anticipation of defining the next exciting chapters of the rich history of St. John's Congregational Church.

Calvary Baptist Church, Haverhll

Calvary Baptist got its humble beginnings in 1866 in an Elm Street barn in Bradford, Massachusetts (a sub-section of Haverhill) with a small group of black individuals from Virginia.

32 years after the Anti-Slavery/Abolitionist movement began in Haverhill, Mr. Thomas Jones came to Bradford and continued the southern tradition of holding prayer meetings with the group, which were a vital source of support that strengthened their lives in Virginia.

As the group grew in number, they relocated from homes to Thomas' barn and began referring to the barn as the "Prayer Cottage". On December 18, 1871, the group was formally organized as a church and was then named the "First Baptist Colored Church of Bradford". In 1874 the congregation officially change its name to "Calvary Baptist Church", the first black church in the city of Haverhill. In 1883 the church moved to its current location – 13 Ashland St., Haverhill Ma.

Throughout Calvary's 147 plus years of history, the church has overcome many hardships.

On November 10, 1977 arsonists set fire to the Calvary Baptist Church. The church had sustained over \$100,000 worth of damages. The Universalist Unitarian Church offered its house of worship to Calvary Baptist so that Calvary could hold worship services. Services were held at the Universalist Unitarian Church from November 1977 to January of 1981.

In February of 1981, Calvary's members were once again able to worship at 13 Ashland Street. It is evident that from its very beginning, God had His hand on Calvary Baptist Church. As the fire of 1977 proved, what made and continues to make this church resilient, are the people who serve and worship God at Calvary Baptist Church.

STORIES OF RESILIENT BLACK CHURCHES

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John Street Baptist Church, Worcester

The independent church movement that began among blacks during and following the Revolutionary War saw several independent black congregations established in the South as well as in the North.

Early records of the Boston churches indicate that blacks worshiped with whites in various churches. However, blacks were not treated equally with whites. They were generally assigned seats in the galleries and other less desirable areas. Unwilling to tolerate discrimination, a number of blacks began to meet in homes while they searched for a suitable place of worship.

On August 8, 1805, the First African Baptist Church was organized with twenty members. The newly-organized Church proceeded to erect its house of worship. The three-story building called the African Meeting House was dedicated December 6, 1806.

The African Meeting House, housing New England's first black church and the first black Baptist Church in the North, soon became a real influence in Boston's black community. It was the only sizable meeting place in Boston controlled by blacks and it quickly became a center, not just for religious worship, but for various community activities. It served as the first school for black children until 1834 when the City constructed the Abiel Smith School next to the Meeting House. The school is presently the home of the Museum of African American History. The Meeting House also became the meeting place for political and anti-slavery meetings. In January 1832, William Lloyd Garrison founded the New England Anti-slavery Society at the Meeting House.

Our story began in 1884, when a few families who had migrated from the South to Worcester, Massachusetts, decided to come together to worship God. They held prayer meetings in each other's homes, and on February 4th, 1885, the 16 founders chose the name Mt. Olive Baptist Church. Although the 1st anniversary celebration was held in September of 1886, the church decided to take 1884 as the founding date since that was the year the mission of JSBC was formed.

JSBC worshiped at 34 Front Street until they raised money to purchase the deed and land on January 1st, 1887 for the current location on John Street. The name of the church eventually changed from Mt. Olive Baptist to John Street Baptist Church (JSBC) due its location. In 4 years, JSBC's members paid off the mortgage of \$1,500 for the house that was on the land that would later be used as the parsonage for JSBC's pastors and families. In 1891, the current church building was built for \$4,500. In 1910, the members paid off the mortgage and had the church's first pews were installed.

Throughout the years, a number of individuals have passed through the doors of JSBC and served as members. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. preached at JSBC when he was a student at Boston University. Marshall W. "Major" Taylor, the famous cyclist, whose statue is erected at the Worcester Public Library, was a member as well as his sisters. JSBC has had generations of families become and remain members for over 130 years

STORIES OF RESILIENT BLACK CHURCHES

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Charles Street A.M.E. Church, Boston

The Historic Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church is interwoven with the history of African Americans in Boston. In 1818, a small group of free African Americans began gathering in a small house on Beacon Hill to give birth to the First African Methodist Episcopal Society. The Reverend Noah Caldwell W. Cannon, a firebrand itinerant preacher who traveled throughout New England, was the leading force in the creation of this new church and in 1833 he began serving as its first pastor. The young church met at several locations on Beacon Hill during its early years. In 1838, the First A.M.E. Society was received into the membership in the New York Conference. In the same year, the church, led by Reverend Cannon, submitted a petition for incorporation to the Massachusetts Legislature. From this modest beginning, the congregation moved to several temporary locations on Beacon Hill. The Reverend Henry J. Johnson was assigned to the Church in 1843, and he led the effort to purchase the first permanent edifice for the congregation on Anderson Street.

In the years leading up to the Civil War, the church served as a major gathering place for abolition meetings and rallies led by such individuals as William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Wendell Phillips, Charles Summer and David Walker (a Charles Street member). The Church led the local fight against the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law and other forms of oppression against people of African descent. The church was a haven for former slaves and a transit point on the freedom trail for runaway slaves fleeing to Canada. With each succeeding pastor, the church grew in size and prominence in the political and civic affairs of Boston. The dramatic growth led to the need for a larger building to serve the spiritual and social needs of the African American community.

Under Reverend Groover's leadership, Charles Street has increased its involvement in the Greater Boston community. The church has been instrumental in bringing together public school officials, teachers, community leaders, parents and clergy in the planning and the development of the Black Ministerial Alliance (BMA).



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Special Thanks to:

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All checks should be made out to "Mass Council of Churches"

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please use the hashtag #MassBlackResiliency and connect with us @MassChurches.

To learn more about the Massachusetts Council of Churches, visit

www.masscouncilofchurches.org

