

The First Night of Kwanzaa December 26, 2019

Pastor: We begin in the Name of the One, Eternal Love, Creator of all, and of The Only Begotten Son Christ Jesus, and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: AMEN

Leader 1: Bless us, O God, as we come together to give you thanks and praise. Tonight we begin our congregation's celebration of Kwanzaa. We dedicate these short worship services to you as we explore and embrace the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

Veronica Floyd: (words of introduction) These are the seven principles of Kwanzaa:

There are many symbols of Kwanzaa. The Kwanzaa candleabra is called a kinara. The straw mat that the kinara is placed on is a mkeka. Ears of corn are also placed on the mat, one to represent each child in the household. They are called the vibunzi (or muhindi). A fruit basket is placed on the mkeka, and is called the mazao. The unity cup is also placed on the mkeka, and is called the kikombe cha umoja. The seven candles that are placed in the kinara are called the Mishumaa Saba. Finally, all the gifts are called the zawadi and are traditionally given on Imani - the last day of Kwanzaa."

First Night	Umoja (oo-MO-jah)	Unity
Second Night	Kujichagulia)(koo-jee-chah-GOO-lee-ah)	Self Determination
Third Night	Ujima (oo-JEE-mah)	Collective Work and Responsibility
Fourth Night	Ujamaa (oo-jah-Mah-ah)	Cooperative Economics
Fifth Night	Nia (NEE-ah)	Purpose
Sixth Night	Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah)	Creativity
Seventh Night	Imani (ee-MAN-nee)	Faith

Leader 1: Each night we will look into Scriptures for some guidance on how to apply the principle to our lives. Our reading tonight is Ephesians 4:1-13

Walk in Unity

4 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of

peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Spiritual Gifts

7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore He says:

"When He ascended on high,

He led captivity captive,

And gave gifts to men."

9 (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 **till we all come to the unity of the faith** and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;..

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemini saying: "O God, may they all be one, as You are in Me, and I am in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me." John 17:21

Discussion follows.

Veronica Floyd: Closing prayer : O Ancient of Days, we invoke Your holy presence as we identify, recall, and relay the first

principle of Kwanzaa: UMOJA, the principle of unity. "Behold how good and pleasant it is for

your people dwell together in unity." (Psalm 133) Help us to be a unified people while interacting

with various communities: family, neighbors, friends, believers, nations, and races, as unity is a

blessing from God. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord.

ALL: UMOJA! May we employ the gift of unity as we continue to acknowledge your love, Oh God.

May we strive to maintain the true spirit of unity as we walk as your people around the world.

Umoja!

Pastor: May Almighty God Bless us.....

(** The closing prayers and responses for each Kwanzaa event are based on information found on this web site:
http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PDF/Kwanzaa_WR_Dec2808.pdf **)