

The Fifth Night of Kwanzaa December 30, 2018

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 are pleased and grateful to continue our celebration of Kwanzaa. This is the fifth night of our celebration and our theme tonight is Nia (NEE-ah) which is Swahili for Purpose. We dedicate these short worship services to you as we explore and embrace the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

Veronica Floyd: (words of introduction for the fifth principle.)

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 John 15: 9-17

Love and Joy Perfected

⁹“As God has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept God’s commandments and abide in God’s love.

¹¹“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. ¹²This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for their friends. ¹⁴You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from God I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask God in My name may be given you. ¹⁷These things I command you, that you love one another.

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: PRAISE TO YOU LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Pastor: Jesus said: Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. God will honor the one who serves me. (John 12:26). Joshua the Prophet said: Be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to God, to keep

God's commandments, to hold to God and to serve God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Joshua 22:5)

Discussion follows.

Veronica Floyd: Closing prayer: O, Loving and Life-giving Good and Gracious God, we call and relay the fifth principle of Kwanzaa: NIA, which means purpose. We exist for the purposes of worship, ministry, evangelism, fellowship, and discipleship. Ecclesiastes 12:13b (KJV) says, Fear God, and keep God's commandments: for this is the whole duty of humanity.

ALL: NIA! We will keep God's commandments! This is our purpose. We will love God and our neighbor as ourselves; this is our purpose. We will live as a beacon to the world; we will live as those who give light to the world; and as salt that gives flavor to the world. This is our purpose. Nia!

Pastor: May Almighty God Bless us in the Name of the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

ALL: AMEN

Pastor: We go forth in peace, glorifying the Lord by our lives.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

(** 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 **)

=====**Further Reading and Information**=====

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."

These are the seven principles 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