



THE BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH LAY ORGANIZATION DEVOTIONAL | DECEMBER 2024

501 West Orange Avenue | Tallahassee, Florida
The Reverend Michael B. Price, M.Div., Senior Minister

Sunday, December 1, 2024

“A Righteous Descendant!”

“In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David’s line. He will do what is just and right throughout the land.” – Jeremiah 33:15 NLT

Less than a month ago, the first Black woman to break the intersectional glass ceiling of gendered racism in a major American political party presidential nomination process, Vice-President Kamala Harris, was defeated by the twice-impeached, convicted felon, and 45th president, Donald J. Trump. Although polls leading up to the election forecasted a “toss up,” Trump decisively won the 271+ electoral college votes (a political process originally enacted to support racist slaveholders), to become the 47th Commander-In-Chief of the United States of America. Trump led a fear-mongering, fascist presidential campaign where he demonized, among others, immigrants, African Americans, women, Palestinians and LGBTQIA+ people. He is currently selecting his cabinet to direct, revive and refuel America’s original sin of controlling, ostracizing and exploiting persons, who are not White AND rich AND male. Those who do not meet the previously mentioned description are increasingly under attack via the promised and emboldened tax cuts for the wealthy; rising mortgage rates; gentrification/displacement; Eurocentric “western-canon” K-20 public school curricula and pedagogy; unfair employment practices; state-sponsored hyper-surveillance; and criminal “injustice” systems. Donald Trump and “MAGA Republicans” did not save any punches during the campaign, and they are conducting figurative “exercises” in view and in earshot of BIPOCs, which will be more overt in the upcoming weeks and months. In a country where the majority of Black Christians have been taught the white-centered, toxic theological framework of “suffering and waiting patiently for heavenly redemption and rewards,” it seems like the demonic forces of racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia may overrun this country...and they very well may. However, during this liturgical season, the Prophet of Jeremiah provides an appropriate response: spiritual guidance, strategic preparation, hope and restoration.

The first Sunday in December is also the First Sunday of Advent on the Christian Liturgical Calendar. The concurrent Hebrew reading is Jeremiah 33:14-16, in Year C of the “Lectionary” found on page 795 of the *African Methodist Episcopal Church Hymnal*. In this prophetic chapter, the imprisoned Jeremiah provided hope and encouragement. Although Jerusalem and the surrounding areas had been colonized by the Babylonians due to idolatry, God promised to raise up a righteous descendent of David, who would administer justice and restore the land. This righteous Davidic descendant would be Jesus Christ of Nazareth. In order to experience this restoration, Jeremiah specifically asked the people to strategically prepare by seeking God, identifying destructive patterns of the enemy and executing His righteous plans, despite the evident desolation and calamity throughout Israel.

Clark-Atlanta University Professor of Africana Studies, Dr. Daniel Black, successfully published *The Coming: A Novel* in 2015. In this book, Dr. Daniel Black recounted the traumatic experience of The Middle Passage, while reinforcing lessons of defeat, regret, despair, hope and restoration for the Black race across the Diaspora. In “Part III” of Black’s text, he wrote, “We mumbled regret for having ignored so many proverbs. We shook our heads about lessons we’d deemed useless. We wept for having disregarded, that fateful day, the sense of danger lingering in the air. We pleaded for forgiveness for having assumed ourselves invincible. It was the only reason they overtook us. We were simply off guard. And when a community is off guard, it welcomes disaster. We knew this. We’d had warrior traditions for centuries. We’d also had gatekeepers posted at the edges of our villages, intercepting anything or anyone potentially dangerous. They warned of the pale man’s presence, his love for deceit, his willingness to destroy life to get life, but his innocuous introduction betrayed us. We’d been impressed by what he had. Now we wanted none of it.”

In the book of Jeremiah, the Israelites were drawn to the “shiny objects” (cultural principles and practices) of the enemy. Consequently, they were colonized. After the 2024 presidential election, voter data showed that over half of Latino men voted for Trump. More Black people voted for Trump, than any other Republican president in the past 48 years. There will be “consequences” due to negotiating Whiteness. However, just like God promised a righteous descendant to restore Israel – Jesus Christ; during this 2024 Advent Season, be the promised “righteous descendant” of Jesus, who will spiritually prepare by strategically organizing communities, identifying and resisting tyranny, and unapologetically protecting and holistically restoring the historically underserved in America. We can restructure this country. Be A Righteous Descendant! - Brother Kyle Harris, Ph.D., Contributor and Local Lay President