

The Seventh Night of Kwanzaa January 1, 2021

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: Good evening. My name is _____ and I am speaking to you from the City of _____ in the State of _____. I will be giving the opening prayer. Please pray this prayer silently as I say it aloud. 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. We have enjoyed and renewed our commitment to seven principles called the Nguzo Saba in Swahili. This is the seventh night of our celebration and our theme tonight is Imani (ee-MAN-nee) which is Swahili for Faith. We dedicate this short worship service to you as we have each of the other services as we have explored and embraced the seven principles, the Nguzo Saba of Kwanzaa.

Veronica Floyd: Good evening. My name is Veronica Floyd, and I am speaking to you from the City of Johns Creek in the State of Georgia. I will be sharing with you some words of introduction for the seventh 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 Hebrews Chapter 11, verses 1 through 3, with a narration, and then Chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. All of this is a short summary of the so-called "Faith Chapter" in the Book of Hebrews chapters 11 and 12.

Leader 2: Good evening. My name is _____ and I am speaking to you from the City of _____ in the State of _____. Here is the reading and narration.

11 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ²For by faith the elders obtained a good testimony, that is their salvation.

³By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

From verses 4 through 38 the chapter goes through Biblical heroes of faith, including Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Sara, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Israel, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, "and the prophets" – verse 32, "still others" – verse 36, and more.

Verse 39: ³⁹ And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Chapter 12, Verses 1 and 2

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the ^[a]author and ^[b]finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: John 5:24 Jesus said: I tell you the truth, the one who hears My Word and believes in God who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life already.

Libations

Libation (**The following is from this source: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/598056/posts> **)

One of the first activities of Kwanzaa is the pouring of libation (tambiko) for the ancestors. The "unity" cup is used and must be administered by either an "elder or priest."² Why is the libation part of this ceremony? Karenga considers this a very important ritual and actually quotes from an ancient Egyptian religion book called Ani (also known as the Egyptian book of the Dead) when he says the following:

"Ani says, "pour libation for your father and mother who rest in the valley of the departed. God will witness your action and accept it. Do not forget this even when you are away from home. For as you do for your parents, your children will do likewise for you. 56" ³

So here is Karenga quoting from an Egyptian religion to give his first reason why libation should be poured for relatives: **"to remember and honor those who walked and worked before us and thus paved the path down which we now walk."**⁴

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More information from the same web site: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/598056/posts>

Although strongly denying that there is no ancestor worship and that Africans worship only God, Karenga's description of the honoring of the ancestors resembles very closely to that of ancestor worship practiced by many religions. Here is Karenga's description of that portion of the ceremony (See Links section for examples of libation prayers and Kwanzaa ceremonies):

"Thus, their profound respect for the ancestors, which admittedly has a spiritual dimension, is best called veneration. The ancestors are venerated because they are:

- A source and symbol of lineage
- Models of ethical life, service and social achievement
- Because they are spiritual intercessors between humans and the Creator."

Spiritual Intercessors?

Spiritual intercessors sounds very similar to the teachings of the Catholic Church where it is taught that the saints are the intercessors between God and men. This is not only an obvious example of the Kwanzaa ceremony taking upon similarities of a religion, but another attempt of Karenga making Kwanzaa more than just a cultural celebration.

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Hebrews 12:1,2 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Our Ancestors: let's talk about this, our founders, foundresses, great people of our lives.

Find Us Faithful song by Steve Greene

Imani Temple African-American Catholic Congregation
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imani_Temple_African-American_Catholic_Congregation)

The **African-American Catholic Congregation** and its **Imani Temples** are an African-centered Catholic expression of the Christian faith. The congregation was founded in 1989 by the Reverend George Augustus Stallings, Jr., a former Catholic priest.

(http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PDF/Kwanzaa_WR_Dec2808.pdf)

- We now observe a moment of silence out of respect for our ancestors (living and dead) and our heritage (past, present, and future).

Leader 3: Good evening. My name is _____ and I am speaking to you from the City of _____ in the State of _____. We will now light the candles on the kinara. Please light the first candle the black candle for Unity, Umoja (oo-MO-jah). Light the second candle, the outside red for Kujichagulia (koo-jee-chah-GOO-lee-ah) Self Determination. Light the third candle the outside green for Ujima (oo-JEE-mah) Collective Work and Responsibility. Light the fourth candle the second red candle Ujamaa (oo-jah-Mah-ah) Cooperative Economics. Light the fifth candle the second green for Nia (Nee-ah) Purpose. Light the sixth candle the third red for Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah) Creativity. Finally we light the seventh candle, the third green for Imani (ee-MAN-nee) Faith.

Pastor:

- Next: Ministers or other designated persons (a total of four) will come to the front of the church and into a large bowl, pour libations (water *and* oil), **after** reciting each of the following lines:

- o For our ancestors (*We pour libations*)
- o For the dying (*We pour libations*)
- o For the glorious cloud of witnesses (*We pour libations*)
- o For life, health, and strength (*We pour libations*). Amen.

Veronica Floyd: Closing prayer: O, Loving and Life-giving Good and Gracious God, your Word tells us “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) As we call and relay the seventh principle of Kwanzaa: IMANI, the principle of faith, help us to be greater people of faith “for without faith it is impossible to please you. “(Hebrews 11:6b)

ALL: IMANI! We have come this far by faith. We affirm the values and customs of our ancestors and give thanks for their sojourn as we seek to emulate the best of what they have bequeath to us. We have faith in God, faith in one another, faith in our ancestry, faith in our selves, and faith in humanity. Imani!

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 and in love, 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

Founder of Kwanzaa from Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maulana_Karenga
Maulana Ndabezitha Karenga,^{[1][2][3]} previously known as **Ron Karenga**, (born **Ronald McKinley Everett**, July 14, 1941) is an American professor of [Africana studies](#), activist and author, best known as the creator of the [pan-African](#) and the African-American holiday of [Kwanzaa](#). Modelling the holiday after the African "[first fruit](#)" traditions, Karenga created [Kwanzaa](#) in 1966. The rituals of the holiday promote African traditions including the "seven principles of African Heritage".