

The First Night of Kwanzaa December 26, 2022

Pastor: We begin in the Name of the One God, and of The Only Begotten Son, 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) There are many symbols of Kwanzaa. The Kwanzaa candelabra 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

Leader 1: On this first night we the first principle: Umoja. Each night we will look into Scriptures for some guidance on how to apply the principle to our lives. The reading for Umoja tonight is Romans 15, verses 5 and 6.

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Leader 2: Please light the first candle now, the black candle for Unity, Umoja (oo-MO-jah).

Discussion on Unity.

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. Help us to be a unified people while interacting with various communities: family, neighbors, friends, believers, nations, and ethnicities, as unity is a blessing You give us, O God.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

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

ALL: Amen.

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