

## The First Night of Kwanzaa December 27, 2020

**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) .... 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 are celebrating the first TWO principles: Umoja and Kujichagulia. 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 Ephesians 4:1- 6  
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 all.

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).

Leader 3: Now for our second reading for the second principle Kujichagulia we have Romans 15:1-2.

**15:1** We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup> Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

Leader 2: Please light the second candle, the outside red now for Self Determination Kujichagulia (koo-jee-chah-GOO-lee-ah).

**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 from God. And, with the second principle Kujichagulia, Self Determination, may we identify and follow your direction and grace in our lives and encourage others to find you in their lives.

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) \*\*)