

The Seventh Night of Kwanzaa January 1, 2019

**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. 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:** (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 1 John 4: 11- 15

This is the testimony that God has given about the Son, Jesus.

<sup>11</sup> This is the testimony that God has given about the Son, Jesus: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. <sup>12</sup> Those who have the Son have life; those who do not have the Son of God do not have life. <sup>13</sup> These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God.

Confidence and Compassion in Prayer

<sup>14</sup> Now this is the confidence that we have in Jesus, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. <sup>15</sup> And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**ALL: PRAISE TO YOU LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

**Pastor:** John 1:11-13 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

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."<sup>2</sup> 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" <sup>3</sup>**

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."**<sup>4</sup>

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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, <sup>2</sup> looking 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](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](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).
- Next: Candles are lit by clergy or other designated persons at the altar. A speaker says: "We now each light a candle in silence in celebration of our ancestors." A total of seven (7) candles are then lit.
- 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.

**Discussion follows.**

**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](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