

The Gospel At Colonus
A Casebook Project

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PRODUCTION HISTORY

The Gospel At Colonus was originally produced in 1983 by The Brooklyn Academy of Music as a part of their New Wave Festival. The musical was nominated for the 1985 Pulitzer Prize in Drama (ibdb). The production opened on Broadway on March 24, 1988 and ran for 61 performances. The original Broadway cast included Morgan Freeman, Karl Lumbly, Reverend Earl F. Miller, Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama. The production featured a book and lyrics by Lee Breuer, with music and direction by Bob Telson. (Playbill)

In 1985, PBS aired the original Brooklyn Academy of Music production at Philadelphia's American Music Theater Festival. The NY Times review of the film said "'The Gospel at Colonus' survives the transformation with its unique spirit remarkably intact. Like the audience in Philadelphia, viewers may find it difficult not to clap along" (O'Connor).

The Gospel At Colonus features a soundtrack of original songs performed by Sam Butler Jr, J. J. Farley and the Soul Stirrers, and The Institutional Radio Choir. The original Broadway cast recording was made in 1988 and is now available on amazon.com.

In 1990, under Lee Breuer's direction, *The Gospel At Colonus* was co-produced at the American Conservatory Theater with The Oakland Ensemble Theatre as part of San Francisco's Multicultural Festival 2000 (act-sf.org). Most recently, the play was produced by WSC Avant Bard (formerly Washington Shakespeare Company) in March 2017. Recent criticism shows *The Gospel At Colonus* has stood the test of time, "it's fairly unusual for a 30-plus-year-old experimental theater piece to remain trenchant, affecting and exhilarating at the same time" (Presley).

SCRIPT SUMMARY

The Gospel At Colonus is a modern adaptation of *Oedipus at Colonus*, retold during an African-American Pentecostal church service. *Oedipus at Colonus* is one third of the Theban Plays by Greek playwright, Sophocles.

The roles in Oedipus myth are performed in *The Gospel At Colonus* by the clergy and congregation as follows:

- Preacher Oedipus – A visiting Preacher who narrates the role of Oedipus and preaches the role of the Messenger as a sermon
- Singer Oedipus – A blind gospel Singer who, with his Quintet, sings portions of the role of Oedipus
- Evangelist Antigone – An Evangelist who present the role of Antigone and selected choral material
- Pastor Theseus- The Pastor of the church, who takes on the role of Theseus
- Singer Ismene- A soloist who, with her Quartet, sings the role of Ismene
- Deacon Creon- A Deacon of the church who presents the role of Creon
- Testifier Polyneices- A member of the congregation who takes on the role of Polyneices
- Choragos Quintet- A visiting gospel Quintet whose leader performs the role of Choragos or choral leader and whose soloist takes the part of The Friend.
- Balladeer- A singer/guitarist with the gospel band who narrates the story of Polyneices
- Choir- A Church Choir and its director, which performs the role of the Greek Chorus
- Child- A member of the choir
- Soloists (Breuer xviii).

As is customary in the Pentecostal faith, music plays a large role in the telling of the Oedipus story. *The Gospel At Colonus* features an elaborate soundtrack of gospel music.

Song List

"Live Where You Can"

"Fair Colonus"

"Stop; Do Not Go On!"

"Who Is This Man?"

"How Shall I See You Through My Tears?"

"A Voice Foretold"

"Never Drive You Away"

"Come Back Home"

"Evil Kindness"

"You'd Take Him Away"

"Numberless Are The World's Wonders"

"Lift Me Up (Like A Dove)"
"Evil"
"Love Unconquerable"
"Sunlight Of No Light"
"Eternal Sleep"
"Lift Him Up" Listen
"Now Let The Weeping Cease" (Wikipedia).

THEMES, SYMBOLS AND MOTIFS

- Redemption/Grace

"Will my soul rest satisfied?" (Breuer 16).

"Grant me then, Goddesses, passage from life at last, a consummation, as the unearthly voice foretold, unless indeed I seem not worth your grace-slave as I am to such unending pain as no man had before" (Breuer 23).

"Mourn no more. Those to whom the night of earth gives benediction should not be mourned. Retribution comes" (Breuer 51).

- Gods Will/Fate

"Oedipus! Damned in his birth, in his marriage damned, damned in the blood he shed with his own hand!" (Breuer 5).

"Be compassionate! For you will never see in all the world a man whom God had led escape his destiny" (Breuer 21).

- Curses

"I am the accursed. I am Oedipus" (Breuer 14).

"A curse on you I know invoke! You shall never see your native land again. You'll go down all bloody and your brother too. Yes, you shall die by your brother's hand. And you shall kill the man who banished you. For this I pray and I cry out to the hated underworld that it may take you home. Justice still has a place in the sight of God. Go! We abominate you! We disown you!" (Breuer 42).

- Mystery

"You must never tell any man. For these things are mysteries, not be explained. You will understand when you alone will come on it" (Breuer 46-47).

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST OF
The Gospel At Colonus AND Oedipus at Colonus

	<i>Oedipus at Colonus</i>	<i>The Gospel At Colonus</i>
STATUS QUO	Oedipus, who is blind and wandering in exile with his daughter Antigone, arrive in an area outside of Athens.	“The Welcome and Quotations” The Preacher welcomes the congregation and says the evenings text will be taken from the Book of Oedipus
INCITING INCIDENT	A townspeople arrives and tells Oedipus that he must leave the land they are on because it is holy.	“The Invocation: Live Where You Can” A Singer and The Preacher share the role of Oedipus as they, and Evangelist Antigone, meet The Friend who sings “Fair Colonus.”
COLLISION FACTOR	Oedipus does not want to leave the land and asks what God the land belongs to. The townspeople tells him Eumenides and Oedipus shares that an oracle told him that this is where he was going to die. Oedipus insists the townspeople go get Theseus, the King of Athens.	As Oedipus and Antigone venture to head into Colonus, The Choragos Quintet and Balladeer sing “Stop Do Not Go On.”
CRISIS/CLIMAX	-The Chorus arrives, and Oedipus is forced to identify himself and defend his name or The Chorus will force him out of Colonus. He tells them his version of his story and the prophesy that good luck will befall the city that he is buried in. -Oedipus’ other daughter, Ismene arrives and tell them that Eteocles, Oedipus’ youngest son, has overthrown his oldest son Polynices. Polynices is now waging war on Eteocles and Creon. Creon is now searching for Oedipus to bury him back home for good luck. - The Chorus tells Oedipus he must perform a ritual to the Gods for staying on their land. Ismene agrees to go do this. -Theseus arrives and agrees to protect Oedipus against Creon and allow him to be buried in Colonus	-The Choragos begs Oedipus to identify himself. As he does, his daughter Ismene arrives attended by the Ismene Quartet. In the “Narrative of Ismene,” she explains her brother’s fighting. She begs Oedipus to ask the God’s forgiveness, so her father can come home and end the fighting. - In “The Rite,” Antigone describes the ritual Oedipus must perform. He begins to speak as if in tongues as he recounts his life’s follies. Oedipus pleads his innocence with The Choragos maintaining he is a victim of fate. - “A Voice Foretold,” Oedipus sings and preaches about the resting place that he was told of by the oracles. Again, he begs for sanctuary and offers “advantage” for grace.

	-Creon arrives and tries to persuade Oedipus into coming home. When he refuses, Creon kidnaps Antigone and Ismene blaming Oedipus' actions for the kidnapping. -Theseus arrives, is told of the kidnapping, and sends soldiers to go retrieve the daughters. Creon vows vengeance on Theseus and Oedipus. - Antigone and Ismene return and Theseus tells Oedipus that his son Polynices has arrived and wants to speak with him. Theseus promises to protect Oedipus and he agrees to see Polynices. - Polynices apologizes for exiling his father and tells him about the war that is coming, but Oedipus refuses to speak to him. Finally, after The Chorus insists, Oedipus curses Polynices to die by his brother's hand as punishment for banishing him. Polynices begs his sisters to convince him and Antigone begs him to call off the war. Polynices' pride is too strong, and he leaves	-The Pastor appears as Theseus and offers Oedipus grace and the Choragos sings the jubilee, "No Never" - The Deacon arrives as Creon, passing himself off as an emissary to welcome Oedipus home. During a call-and-response section, while Oedipus vehemently refuses to go with Creon, Creon seizes Antigone and Ismene. - The Pastor returns to the pulpit to speak of the wonders of the world that are less wonderful than man. Despite man's wonder, he cannot escape death. Then Pastor Theseus vows to return Oedipus' daughters. - While waiting for his daughters return, the blind and thus immobile Oedipus sings "Lift Me Up" begging to be taken away by the Lord. - A member of the congregation steps in as Oedipus' son, Polyneices and acknowledges that he has been evil towards his father. - Pastor Theseus returns with his daughters and Polyneices begs them to encourage their father to speak to him. Oedipus curses and disown Polyneices.
RECOGNITION SCENE	There is a large thunder crash that Oedipus announces is the signal of his impending death. Theseus, Antigone and Ismene take him to a location where he will die and to perform the rituals that Oedipus has outlined.	"Preaching with Tuned Response" The Preacher, as Oedipus, at the pulpit speaks again of bitterness and burdens of life. A crash of lightning splits the stage and rolling thunder underscores as Oedipus leads Theseus alone to where he will die.
OBLIGATORY SCENE	A messenger arrives and tells The Chorus the story of Oedipus' death and ascent.	The Choragos Quintet sing "Eternal Sleep" about Oedipus' decent into hell
CLIMAX	Antigone and Ismene return and vow to wander alone forever.	In a monologue, Antigone attempts to make sense of her father's death.

	Theseus arrives, they beg him to know where their father is but instead he only grants them safe passage back to Thebes to stop the war between their brothers.	She begs Theseus to show her to her father's grave, but he promised Oedipus he would not.
DENOUMONT	The Chorus tells the Antigone and Ismene that they shouldn't cry because these events were prescribed by the Gods.	A child comes to the alter and asks, "By God's mercy, was his death a painless one?" The Preacher proceeds with the Sermon about Oedipus' death. How his daughter bathed and clothed him, how he freed them from the burden of caring for him and how they shared moments of love before Oedipus perished. The Preacher tells that it is unclear whether Oedipus went to heaven or hell but instructs the congregation, "let the weeping cease. Let no one mourn again. These things are in the hands of God" (Breuer 55).

COUNTER TEXT

ARTIFACT 1: Pentecostal Church Origins

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pentecostalism>

**Particular attention to be paid to highlighted text*

Pentecostalism, charismatic religious movement that gave rise to a number of Protestant churches in the United States in the 20th century and that is unique in its belief that all Christians should seek a postconversion religious experience called baptism with the Holy Spirit. Recalling the Holy Spirit's descent upon the first Christians in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, or Shabuoth (Acts of the Apostles 2–4), this experience appears to have been common in the Christian movement during its first generations.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit is also believed to be accompanied by a sign, the gift of tongues. This “speaking in tongues” occurs as glossalalia (speech in an unknown language) or xenoglossy (speech in a language known to others but not the speaker). Speaking in tongues is considered one of the gifts of the Spirit described by St. Paul the Apostle (1 Corinthians 12), and Pentecostals believe that those baptized by the Holy Spirit may receive other supernatural gifts that purportedly existed in the early church: the ability to prophesy, to heal, or to interpret speaking in tongues. Faith healing is also part of the Pentecostal tradition, which reflects patterns of faith and practice characteristic of the Baptist and Methodist-Holiness churches—the Protestant denominations from which most of the first generation of Pentecostals came. Like them, Pentecostals emphasize conversion, moral rigour, and a literal interpretation of the Bible. However, Pentecostals never formed a single organization; instead individual congregations came together to found the various denominations that constitute the movement today.

The Origins Of Pentecostalism

Although Pentecostals trace their origin to the Apostles, the modern-day Pentecostal movement has its roots in the late 19th century, a time of mounting indifference to traditional religion. Denominations that were known for revivalistic fervour became subdued. Emotional modes of religious expression—enthusiastic congregational singing, spontaneous testimonies, prayer in unison, and extemporaneous sermons on simple biblical themes by lay preachers—gave way to ordered, formal worship services that were conducted by “reverends,” ministers trained in homiletics (preaching skills), who were influenced by higher biblical criticism. Lecture centres and elegant sanctuaries replaced camp meetings and crude wood-frame tabernacles.

As the large popular Protestant denominations became the churches of the upper-middle class, people of limited means began to feel out of place. They yearned to return to a “heart religion” that would satisfy their spiritual desires and their emotional, psychological, and physical needs. Pentecostalism, like its precursor, the Holiness movement (based on the belief that a second work of grace following conversion would “sanctify” Christians and remove the desire to sin), fulfilled these needs for churchgoers and nonchurchgoers alike. Moreover, Pentecostal churches, though open to all levels of society, spoke to the special needs of the disaffected.

Notwithstanding the charismatic outbursts in some 19th-century Protestant churches, the watershed of contemporary Pentecostalism came in the early 20th century at Bethel Bible College, a small religious school in [Topeka](#), Kansas. The college's director, Charles Fox Parham, one of many ministers who was influenced by the Holiness movement, believed that the [complacent](#), worldly, and coldly formalistic [church](#) needed to be revived by another outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He instructed his students—many of whom already were ministers—to pray, fast, study the Scriptures, and, like the Apostles, await the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

On January 1, 1901, Agnes Oznam became the first of Parham's students to speak in an unknown tongue. Others soon had the same experience, and Parham claimed that glossolalia was the "initial evidence" that one had been truly baptized with the Holy Spirit. Parham and his students understood these recurrences of Pentecost prophetically, interpreting them as signs of the imminence of the last days, or Endtime. Imbued with this sense of urgency, they set out.

Their initial efforts were unsuccessful, and the movement nearly collapsed as it encountered disbelief and ridicule. In 1903 its fortunes were revived when Parham returned to the practice of [faith healing](#). Borrowed from several Holiness churches, notably the [Christian and Missionary Alliance](#), faith healing became a hallmark of Pentecostalism. Parham was the first in a long line of Pentecostal evangelists (Mary B. Woodworth-Etter, Charles Price, [Aimee Semple McPherson](#), and, more recently [Oral Roberts](#), Kathryn Kuhlman, and Benny Hinn) who taught that [Christ's atonement](#) provides deliverance from sickness and is, therefore, the privilege of all who have the requisite faith. Attracting new converts, the movement enjoyed success in the American South and Southwest, especially in Texas, Alabama, and Florida. In Texas alone, 25,000 people had embraced the Pentecostal faith by 1905, according to Parham. Kansas and Missouri also became hotbeds for Pentecostalism.

Wider national and international expansion, however, resulted from the Azusa Street revival that began in 1906 at the [Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission](#) at 312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles. Its leader, [William Seymour](#), a one-eyed Holiness church pastor and former member of the African Methodist Episcopal church, had been exposed to Parham's teachings at a Bible school in Houston, Texas. Under Seymour's guidance, the old frame building on Azusa Street became a great spiritual centre that for many years attracted rich and poor, blacks and whites, Anglos and Latinos, as well as many preachers whose own [ministry](#) had become staid.

Spiritually energized and convinced that they had been charismatically endowed, scores of men and women from Azusa and other Pentecostal churches began extolling the reality of speaking in tongues. Pentecostal Christians were linked only by an [amorphous](#) "spiritual union," in part because no thought was given to forming a separate "Pentecostal" branch of the Christian church. As members of the historic Protestant churches embraced Pentecostal beliefs and practices, they did so without any intention of withdrawing from their own churches. They merely wanted to be agents of reform and revival, helping to rid their churches of formalism and worldliness. They strove to transform their congregations into Spirit-filled [communities](#) like those described in the New Testament book [Acts](#) of the Apostles. Moreover, they fully expected the prophetically promised "latter rain" (from the [Book of Joel](#), an outpouring of the Spirit of God before the final judgment) to fall upon their churches and make them wholly Pentecostal.

In one or two cases churches did sever their mainstream ties and become Pentecostal (e.g., the transformation of the Christian Union to the [Church of God](#), headquartered in Cleveland, Tennessee). But the triumphant conquest of the Protestant churches by Pentecostal ideas during those early years never materialized. In fact, the movement became the object of widespread opposition. Pastors who endorsed Pentecostal practices were relieved of their pulpits; missionaries who were sympathetic toward the charismatic movement lost their financial support; and parishioners speaking in tongues were expelled from their churches. Resolutions were passed and anathemas (the harshest form of excommunication) were pronounced against Pentecostals in traditional churches. Charismatic Christians found it increasingly difficult to practice their faith within the institutional framework of conventional Protestantism; consequently, many Pentecostals withdrew from their churches to form new ones.

By the beginning of [World War I](#), new congregations had emerged as storefront missions, small tabernacles in sparsely populated rural areas, and upper-story lofts in squalid urban neighbourhoods. These modest dwellings, found across [North America](#), housed poor but lively groups of Pentecostal believers under such names as the Pentecostal, Apostolic, Latter Rain, or Full Gospel churches. Although many Pentecostals were wary of administrative institutions and unwilling to subject themselves to external ecclesiastical control, various divisive issues drove them into denominational fellowships.

In 1913 a new doctrine challenged the consensus theology that Pentecostals had inherited from their Protestant forebears. R.E. McAlister, following the formula for baptism found in Acts of the Apostles rather than that in The [Gospel According to Matthew](#), taught that water baptism in the early church was not done according to the familiar Trinitarian formula (i.e., in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) but in the name of Jesus Christ alone. McAlister's teaching led to the emergence of the Apostolic, or "Jesus Only," movement. Among the Pentecostal churches that adhere to this non-Trinitarian theology are the United Pentecostal Church International and the [Church of the Lord](#) Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith. As the movement spread, however, Trinitarian Pentecostals banded together to prevent the spread of what they considered heresy.

Even before McAlister's teaching, the issue of Holiness divided members of the new faith. Parham, Seymour, and other early Pentecostals came from the Holiness tradition that taught Christians to seek "sanctification." They built upon that heritage and taught that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was for people who had already experienced sanctification. On the other hand, Pentecostals from Baptist backgrounds disagreed and taught that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was for every believer. This doctrinal division drove Pentecostals into two warring camps. The Holiness Pentecostal belief is represented by such groups as the International Pentecostal Holiness Church; among the groups that emerged from a Baptist background are the Christian Church of North America and the [International Church of the Foursquare Gospel](#).

Although Pentecostal fellowships generally emerged as the result of doctrinal differences, nonreligious factors, such as the outbreak of World War I, also contributed to their development. For example, the majority of Pentecostals were pacifists when the war started, but they and even those who were not pacifists found themselves without a voice in Washington, D.C., on matters of armed service. The [Assemblies of God](#), an organization of independent Trinitarian Pentecostals,

was founded in [Hot Springs, Arkansas](#), in 1914 in response to the need for better relations between the churches and the government. Racial issues also affected the Pentecostal movement. For instance, the Azusa revival was led by an [African American](#) minister who welcomed worshipers regardless of their race, and the first formal Pentecostal denomination, the [Pentecostal Assemblies of the World](#), was organized as an interracial fellowship (and remained such). This liberal racial attitude bred controversy, however, and as Pentecostalism spread into the Deep South the movement became segregated along the same racial lines as had the older denominations.

ARTIFACT 2: Race in the Pentecostal Church

<https://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/060400sack-church-side.html>

**Particular attention to be paid to highlighted text*

In 1905, when William J. Seymour attended Charles F. Parham's Bible school in Houston, Mr. Parham required him to sit in the hallway and listen to lectures through an open door. Mr. Seymour was black, the son of former slaves, and the mores of the times in Texas dictated that he could not sit with his white counterparts.

But Mr. Seymour, a short, stocky man who had been blinded in one eye by smallpox, was willing to endure that humiliation in order to learn the radical new theology being taught by Mr. Parham. It was Mr. Parham who had first theorized, only a few years earlier, that glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, provided the "Bible evidence" that a Christian was infused with the Holy Spirit, a doctrine that became the central tenet of Pentecostal thought.

The next year, Mr. Seymour began to preach the new Pentecostal creed in a ramshackle former stable on Azusa Street in downtown Los Angeles, and he quickly attracted an avid multiracial audience. The Azusa Street revival, the first institutional practice of Pentecostalism, would endure for three years, drawing curious Christians from around the world. And while its multiracial character scandalized much of Los Angeles, many worshippers saw the revival's racial integration as a sign of God's presence. One participant famously proclaimed that the color line had been "washed away in the blood."

Today, Mr. Parham and Mr. Seymour are considered the fathers of Pentecostalism, which now has an estimated 400 million adherents and is considered the world's fastest growing Christian movement. It is an emotional, expressive practice of faith, marked by its beliefs in supernatural healing, the power of prayer and God's direct involvement in the lives of the saved.

While the initial collaboration between Mr. Parham and Mr. Seymour has come to symbolize Pentecostalism's interracial origins, the denomination would not survive for long as an integrated movement. And as it happened, the coming racial split was foreshadowed by a schism between the two founders.

When Mr. Parham came to visit his former student's revival in October 1906, he was dismayed to find scenes of ecstatic praying and frenzied dancing. A Ku Klux Klan sympathizer, he was particularly displeased by the mixing of the races at services that he derided as "Southern darky camp meetings."

The two men dissociated, and not long after the revival ended the Pentecostals split along racial lines into two major denominations, one black, the Church of God in Christ, and one white, the Assemblies of God, with which the Tabernacle in Atlanta affiliated in the 1940's. The Pentecostal faith spread like fire, most rapidly in the deeply segregated South, but white Southerners were far from ready to embrace the multiracial ethic of Azusa Street.

With few theological distinctions, the two denominations and other Pentecostal groups thrived independently through much of the 20th century. While the Assemblies of God placed a heavy

emphasis on missionary work overseas, including in Africa, it remained almost thoroughly segregated at home.

Cecil M. Robeck Jr., an authority on Pentecostal history who teaches at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., wrote in a 1994 paper that the Assemblies of God "record on racial issues has been unequivocally abysmal." With a very few exceptions, the denomination did not ordain black ministers until 1962. And in 1964, when pressed to take a stand on integration, the group's executive presbytery adopted a statement leaving such positions up to individual churches. Some movement began in the mid-1960's. In 1965, the Assemblies passed a resolution discouraging "discriminatory practices wherever they may exist." In 1989 it declared that it opposed "the sin of racism." And in 1995, its governing body acknowledged that racism had separated white Pentecostals from their black counterparts and it resolved to "repent of racism and ask our black brothers and sisters for forgiveness."

That resolution came one year after a remarkable meeting, known as the miracle in Memphis, at which black and white Pentecostal leaders came together to adopt a racial reconciliation manifesto. In a moving and apparently spontaneous moment, a white Assemblies of God pastor washed the feet of one of his black counterparts and a black bishop then did the same to Thomas E. Trask, the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God. Black and white Pentecostal leaders also formed a new umbrella group.

The Assemblies of God today is seeing notable growth in black, Hispanic and Asian membership, both in single-race congregations and in multiracial churches like the Tabernacle. But its membership remains overwhelmingly white, as do its clergy and its seminarians. Its homogeneity is not unique within American Christianity, of course. Recent research by Mark A. Chaves, a sociologist at the University of Arizona, concluded that more than 90 percent of all congregations in the United States are at least 80 percent one race.

Clearly, theological differences are not the primary obstacle, though there are important racial variations in church governance, music, preaching, and liturgical structure. A larger issue may be control. "The only way we can include minorities in a significant way," said the Rev. David J. Moore, the Assemblies of God's director of intercultural ministries, "is for white people to surrender power, and that's tough." Any change may have to start at the top. It was striking at the Assemblies' biennial General Council last August that Dr. Trask did not mention diversity in a keynote address about the seven challenges facing the church in the 21st century. In an interview, he said he never considered using last year's forum to spread the spirit of Memphis to his own constituents. Instead, he spoke of the need for evangelism, fasting, prayer and Pentecostal passion. "I was addressing spiritual vitality," he said of his speech. "If the church has spiritual vitality, these other things will take care of themselves."

ARTIFACT 3: The Rise of Pentecostalism: Christian History Timeline

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-58/rise-of-pentecostalism-christian-history-timeline.html>

Holiness Roots

- 1867 National Holiness Association forms in Vineland, New Jersey
- 1879 Isaiah Reed forms the largest holiness association in America, the Iowa Holiness Association
- 1887 A. B. Simpson founds the Christian and Missionary Alliance to promote the Holiness "Fourfold Gospel"
- 1895 B. H. Irwin teaches a third blessing "baptism of Fire," splitting the Iowa Holiness Association and forming the Iowa Fire-Baptized Holiness Association
- 1896 Schearer Schoolhouse Fire-Baptized Holiness revival experiences tongues
- 1897 Charles H. Mason and C.T. Jones form the Church of God in Christ in Lexington, Mississippi
- 1898 First congregation of the Pentecostal Holiness Church in Goldsboro, North Carolina

Pentecostal Birth

- 1901 Agnes Ozman speaks in tongues in Topeka. Charles Parham calls tongues the "Bible evidence" for baptism in the Spirit
- 1902 First congregation of the Church of God formed at Camp Creek, North Carolina
- 1905 William Seymour accepts Pentecostal doctrine from Parham in Houston, Texas
- 1906 First General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.)
- 1906-1909 Azusa Street Revival; Pentecostalism becomes global under Seymour's leadership
- 1907 T. B. Barrett opens Pentecostal meetings in Oslo. Begins Pentecostal movements in Scandinavia, England, and Germany
- 1907 G. B. Cashwell spreads Pentecostalism in the South
- 1908 John G. Lake begins South African Apostolic Faith Mission
- 1908 Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.) accepts Pentecostalism under A. J. Tomlinson
- 1909 Luigi Francescon and Giacomo Lombardi begin Italian Pentecostal movements in the U.S., Italy, Argentina, and Brazil
- 1909 German evangelicals condemn Pentecostals in the "Berlin Declaration"
- 1909 Florence Crawford founds the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon

Maturing Movement

- 1910 W. H. Durham begins "Finished Work" movement in Chicago
- 1912 Maria Woodworth-Etter becomes a popular Pentecostal preacher in Dallas
- 1914 The Assemblies of God formed in Hot Springs, Arkansas
- 1916 The Oneness Movement splits the Assemblies of God
- 1919 Pentecostal Assemblies of the World incorporated
- 1923 A. J. Tomlinson forms the Church of God of Prophecy
- 1927 Aimee Semple McPherson forms International Church of the Foursquare Gospel in Los Angeles
- 1928 Mary Rumsey opens first Pentecostal missions to Korea and Japan
- 1943 American Pentecostal churches accepted as charter members of the National Association of Evangelicals
- 1945 Several mergers produce the United Pentecostal Church (Missouri)
- 1948 Healing crusades begin under William Branham and Oral Roberts

ARTIFACT 4: Black & White Pentecostals

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2014/february/black-and-white-pentecostals-mend-assemblies-of-god-upcag.html>

**Particular attention to be paid to highlighted text*

Some good news to mark Black History Month: In 1917, a black Pentecostal from Chicago approached the newly formed Assemblies of God (AG) with a request. Alexander Howard wanted the denomination to send him as a missionary to Liberia. But AG leaders refused to let him go because of his race.

The incident led Howard to join with African American churches in New England and form the United Pentecostal Council of the Assemblies of God (UPCAG) in 1920. The denomination soon sent Howard to Liberia, and recently welcomed 18 Liberian churches as the newest of its six districts.

It also remained separate from the AG, which grew to become the world's largest Pentecostal denomination, for nearly 100 years—until now.

Recent efforts have resulted in a new partnership between the two organizations, beginning four years ago when Thomas Barclay of the UPCAG reached out to George O. Wood, general superintendent of the AG, after feeling "stirred to connect the two fellowships and mend the divide," according to a joint announcement.

The *Pentecostal Evangel* recounts the reconciliation process. It also notes how the AG ironically ended up endorsing its first African American missionaries to Liberia the same year that Howard cofounded the UPCAG.

"We have now been on a four-year journey with the United Pentecostal Council of the Assemblies of God, which was birthed in 1919 because of racism in the Assemblies of God," said Wood. "Now, the Lord has brought us together again in a more formal partnership, to hold high the name of Jesus and advance His mission in the power of the Spirit."

Barclay and Wood signed an agreement of cooperative affiliation last week at the AG national office in Springfield, Missouri. The agreement (full text below) provides that "any UPCAG church that so desires will be welcomed into local AG districts, as well as all national AG programs and missions while maintaining their own credentialing practices and autonomy," according to the release.

With ethnic minorities now accounting for more than 40 percent of the AG's current membership in the United States, the leaders hope to create a more unified church through this agreement.

"God has put us together, and there is something about to happen," Barclay said in his sermon. "No longer will we be separated from you. We came to lock arms with you."

CT regularly reports on African Americans, segregation, and racism, including recent research on how church diversity remains a dream as well as the growing gap in how black and white Christians think about race. CT also examined whether or not evangelicals are doing a good job at reconciliation.

CT also regularly reports on the Assemblies of God and Pentecostalism, including how AG membership has surged while speaking in tongues has slumped.

Here is the full agreement:

WHEREAS, The General Council of the Assemblies of God (GCAG) and the United Pentecostal Council of the Assemblies of God (UPCAG) have resolved through prayer and relationship building to cooperate more fully to carry out the Great Commission as given by Jesus Christ our Lord; and

WHEREAS, we seek a relationship together that honors God and is established in Christian love and fellowship, serving one another and allowing the body of Christ to become more united and effective before a watching world; and

WHEREAS, the United Pentecostal Council of the Assemblies of God will retain their own governance and credentialing process, but will be partnered with the General Council of the Assemblies of God as a network of cooperating churches, including:

1. Access to all General Council and district council ministry events and programs for children, youth, and adults, including children's and youth camps.
2. Auditor privileges for two representatives to attend the annual GCAG General Presbytery meetings as cooperative fraternal delegates.
3. Use of AG World Missions and AG U.S. Missions resources, such as AG Newsbreak, annual missions convention resources, prayer guides, and the like.
4. Membership in the AG Credit Union.
5. Access to the GCAG Convention Services Group for assistance with the UPCAG annual Council meeting.
6. Use of GCAG outreach campaigns, such as Nothing's Too Hard for God, Believe, iValues, and the like.

7. Access to My Healthy Church resources at discounts comparable to GCAG churches.

8. Participation in GCAG Junior Bible Quiz, Teen Bible Quiz, and Fine Arts Festivals, from the local to national competitions.

9. Participation in missions giving through Boys and Girls Missionary Challenge (BGM), Speed the Light (STL), and Light for the Lost (LFTL). If the UPCAG chooses to participate in these giving ministries, at least one project from each will be a UPCAG project, upon approval of the appropriate missions committee.

10. Participation in local, district, and national Ambassadors in Mission (AIM) trips.

11. Sponsorship of a Convoy of Hope outreach that includes financial assistance from the GCAG.

12. Introduction of the UPCAG churches to local and district GCAG churches and people.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the General Council of the Assemblies of God and the United Pentecostal Council of the Assemblies of God agree to adopt the guidelines as stated above and affirm a cooperating church relationship on this day, Tuesday, February 11, 2014.

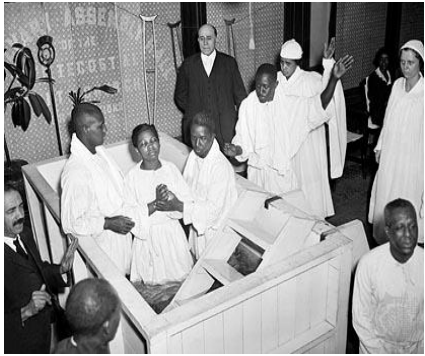
Signed,

Dr. George O. Wood General Superintendent The General Council of the Assemblies of God

Rev. Thomas A. Barclay International Presiding Elder United Pentecostal Council of the Assemblies of God

ARTIFACT 5: Pentecostal Church visuals

[Source: Google image search]



Harlem, 1934



Pentecostal Church of God



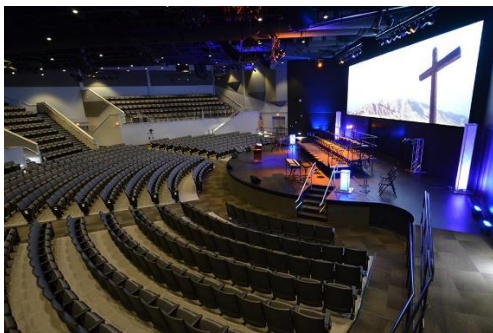
Pentecostal Church, Little Rock



Church in Chicago



Jubilee Christian Center



Black Rock Congregational



Azusa Street Mission

ARTIFACT 6: Analysis of *Oedipus at Colonus*

http://www.ancient-literature.com/greece_sophocles_oedipus_colonus.html

**Particular attention to be paid to highlighted text*

At the time that “*Oedipus at Colonus*” was written, Athens was undergoing many changes, in the wake of the military defeat by the Spartans and the brutal and dictatorial rule of the Thirty Tyrants, and both the writing of the play and its reception by the Athenian audiences of the time would have been influenced by this historical context. The Athens of the play is seen as the apogee of democracy and jurisprudence as Theseus, King of Athens, unconditionally allows Oedipus sanctuary. The Athenian suburb of Colonus, which is the main setting for the play, is where Sophocles spent a good part of his own boyhood years.

There is much less action and more philosophical discussion in this play than in King ”and Sophocles’ other plays. Written, according to some reports, when Sophocles was approaching his ninetieth year, he treats the aged protagonist with great respect throughout the play. The cheerful hope with which the care-worn Oedipus looks forward to his death - as a release from the troubles and sufferings of life - almost certainly has some personal application and reflects to some extent the feelings of the aged poet.

The play follows Oedipus’ transition from beggar to a kind of hero, and it can be seen as a kind of meditation on the fallibility of humans and the possibility of their redemption. Life is presented as a journey or learning process and, throughout the play, Oedipus moves from a peaceful resignation and defeatism at the beginning, through a fiery passion reminiscent of his younger days in the central portion, to a serenity and inner peace (and even a new-found assertiveness and dignity) at the end.

The play explicitly addresses the theme of a person's moral responsibility for their destiny, and whether or not it is possible to rebel against fate (Oedipus repeatedly claims that he is not responsible for the actions he is fated to commit). Sophocles suggests that, although a ruler’s limited understanding may lead him to believe himself fully innocent, this does not change the objective fact of his guilt.

However, there is also the suggestion that, because Oedipus sinned unknowingly, his guilt may in some way be reduced, allowing his earthly sufferings to serve as sufficient expiation for his sins, so that in death he may be favoured (as Apollo’s prophecy has predicted). Despite being blinded and exiled and facing violence from Creon and his sons, in the end Oedipus is accepted and absolved by Zeus and comes to accept the inevitability of divine will and prophesy.

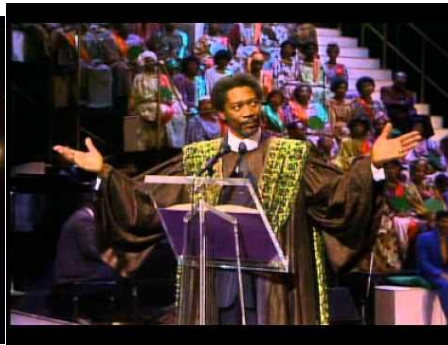
Perhaps the most famous quote from the play comes in line 880: “In a just cause, the weak overcome the strong”.

ARTIFACT 7: Relevant Production images from *The Gospel at Colonus*

[Source: Google image search]



Avant Bard, 2017



Original Broadway Cast



BAM Production



Edinburgh International Festival



Ebony Rep, 2015



Original Broadway Cast

ARTIFACT 8: Relevant images from *Oedipus at Colonus*

[Source: Google image search]



Jean-Antoine-Theodor Giroust, 1788



Death of Oedipus



1962 Performance, Athens, Greece



Shakespeare Theater, 2001



"Oedipus at Colonus," Fulchran-Jean Harriet (1798)



University of Cambridge, 1950

ARTIFACT 9: Noh & Kabuki Theater Narration

/www.britannica.com

Kabuki, traditional Japanese popular drama with singing and dancing performed in a highly stylized manner. A rich blend of music, dance, mime, and spectacular staging and costuming, it has been a major theatrical form in Japan for almost four centuries. The term *kabuki* originally suggested the unorthodox and shocking character of this art form. In modern Japanese, the word is written with three characters: *ka*, signifying “song”; *bu*, “dance”; and *ki*, “skill.”

Kabuki’s highly lyrical plays are regarded, with notable exceptions, less as literature than as vehicles for actors to demonstrate their enormous range of skills in visual and vocal performance. These actors have carried the traditions of Kabuki from one generation to the next with only slight alterations. Many of them trace their ancestry and performing styles to the earliest Kabuki actors and add a “generation number” after their names to indicate their place in the long line of actors.

Noh theatre, Noh also spelled **No**, traditional Japanese theatrical form and one of the oldest extant theatrical forms in the world. Noh—its name derived from *nō*, meaning “talent” or “skill”—is unlike Western narrative drama. Rather than being actors or “representers” in the Western sense, Noh performers are simply storytellers who use their visual appearances and their movements to suggest the essence of their tale rather than to enact it. Little “happens” in a Noh drama, and the total effect is less that of a present action than of a simile or metaphor made visual. The educated spectators know the story’s plot very well, so that what they appreciate are the symbols and subtle allusions to Japanese cultural history contained in the words and movements.

Noh developed from ancient forms of dance drama and from various types of festival drama at shrines and temples that had emerged by the 12th or 13th century. Noh became a distinctive form in the 14th century and was continually refined up to the years of the Tokugawa period (1603–1867). It became a ceremonial drama performed on auspicious occasions by professional actors for the warrior class—as, in a sense, a prayer for peace, longevity, and the prosperity of the social elite. Outside the noble houses, however, there were performances that popular audiences could attend. The collapse of the feudal order with the Meiji Restoration (1868) threatened the existence of Noh, though a few notable actors maintained its traditions. After World War II the interest of a larger audience led to a revival of the form.

Accompaniment is provided by an instrumental chorus (*hayashi*) of four musicians—who play a flute (*nōkan*), small hand drum (*ko-tsuzumi*), large hand drum (*ō-tsuzumi*), and large drum (*taiko*)—and by a chorus (*jiutai*) consisting of 8–10 singers. The recitation (*utai*) is one of the most important elements in the performance. Each portion of the written text carries a prescription of the mode of recitation—as well as of accompanying movement or dance—although application of this may be varied slightly. Each type of dialogue and song has its own name: the *sashi* is like a recitative; the *uta* are the songs proper; the *rongi*, or debate, is intoned between chorus and *shite*; and the *kiri* is the chorus with which the play ends.

ARTIFACT 10: Elements of Styles in Black Preaching

<http://thefrontporch.org/2014/07/elements-of-styles-in-black-preaching/>

**Particular attention to be paid to highlighted text*

Over the past couple months, I've had the privilege to talk with a couple of seminarians concentrating on preaching. In both cases, they've wanted to talk about the distinctives of African-American preaching and what it contributes to our understanding of effective proclamation.

Those conversations have forced me to dig around in some books I'd forgotten I'd read as well as some new volumes. I've been reminded that there's a fairly healthy academic debate about how best to understand Black preaching. Should we think of it primarily in terms of various elements and techniques, or should we think of its functions, whether prophetic, priestly, etc? As I rummaged through these things, I began to think again about what some would call the elements of Black preaching. There are techniques and approaches that typify the form. Not all of these need be present, and no one element should be thought of as essential or indispensable. In other words, so-called "black preaching" comes in many styles and variations. Moreover, the various techniques and approaches could be very edifying when used well or just as problematic when executed poorly. Here are a few musings—pros and cons—for whatever they're worth.

Reading the text—In many respects, the "Black sermon" begins with the oftentimes slow, dramatic, exegetical reading of the text. I've been young and now I'm old-ish, but I've never seen a black preacher rush the reading of his text. He can take ten minutes to read John 3:16! Well, it seemed that way to me as a child. But the traditional preacher reads so that his main thought receives the emphasis. By intonation, repetition, and pace, the preacher helps the reader to know what to listen for. That's a great aid to the listener when done well. But when a text is read poorly, the danger is *misreading* the text by emphasizing a phrase or point that's not the point of the passage. When that happens, you know you're not going to get exposition but something sub-biblical.

Announcing the subject—Often a preacher announces the subject or thought for the sermon following the reading. This is the thesis or main point driving the sermon. A skilled preacher can often give the point in a witty one-liner that sometimes elicits "Amens" and encouragement from the congregation. The art is to be memorable but not too clever, engaging but not merely entertaining, and to make sure the subject or main point can easily be seen in the text itself. When you're laughing or "amen"-ing but can't locate the preacher's thought or subject in the text, that's another tip-off that you're not likely to get an exposition but a flight of fancy.

Dramatic Pause—Some people seem to go to church to leave church. Black preachers aren't usually among them. Black preachers seem never to be in a hurry. They've mastered the art of pausing for effect. An artistic pause builds drama, changes direction, highlights surprises in the text, and calls the congregation to attention without saying a word. Some guys say in an insistent hiss, "Listen. Listen." But some guys simply stand back, scanning the audience for an interminable moment, allowing the congregation to enter a feeling or thought. The white space provided by that well-timed pause is like lighting the fuse to a keg of anticipatory dynamite. That

can be a great thing. But don't be drama-cidal. Many a biblical text has been murdered with a lot of drama, peacocking, and much ado about nothing. Don't over-use the pause. Don't turn it into a show, a pantomime of wasted gesticulation. Some sermons could have been cut in half if the preacher had just preached rather than hem and haw so much.

Use of Story—Ours is an oral, story-telling culture. That's behind the success of a lot of rap—it's just rhythmic story-telling. It's behind the success of black fiction—even the tawdry stuff that passes for literature in popular bookstores. And it's no less true of black preaching. Telling the story makes all the difference. In the narrative portions of scripture, it requires sensing and developing the drama that's already there. In the didactic portions, it may require using a good illustration or anecdote to elucidate the point of doctrine. And it's always a good idea to illustrate the Bible with illustrations from the Bible. I can hear my college literature professor, Karla Holloway, saying to me, "Thabiti, show; don't tell." So rather than simply saying, "Men, flee from sexual immorality," illustrate the point with the story of Joseph fleeing Potiphar's wife, or David failing to flee from Bathsheba, or the vivid storied imagery of Proverbs.

But beware the sermon that's all stories all the time. Beware the temptation to fill the sermon with anecdotes and tales that really have nothing to do with the point of the text. If you find a good illustration, anecdote, or story that doesn't fit the text, write it down, keep it for later, and use it only when appropriate to the text. Sometimes stories get in the way of the Bible. We never want that to happen.

Three Points and a Poem—Good preaching of any sort relies on good structure and flow. A sermon doesn't have to feature three points and a poem, but there needs to be good logical movement through the text and through the argument of the text. Gardner Taylor was once asked, "How many points should a sermon have?" He replied with a wry smile, "At least one." A sermon without points is a pointless sermon. Every good point stated and made from the text is a nail driven to anchor the feet of our people to the Bible. A good poem and close is not atonement for a poorly structured and argued sermon. Some preachers try to hide a multitude of preparation and organization sins with an effective "close." Avoid that trap whether preacher or listener. Lou weighs in more on closing the sermon in this article.

Grit and Grime—It's difficult to find solid traditional Black preaching that does not take seriously the social context of Black people. There's a willingness to "go there," to "tell it like it is." At its best, Black preaching confronts and challenges—both the powers that be and the people in the seat. Whether you call this the prophetic dimension or see it as a healthy insistence on personal application, Black preaching points a loving finger and says with Nathan to David, "You're the man." It exposes and addresses what's real. That's part of its power.

But all power can be corrupted. Be careful not to lift your finger to point unless you're pointing at a text in context. It's possible to start "telling the truth" without in fact telling the people what the Bible actually says or telling them in the spirit in which the Bible says it. The preacher's self-righteousness is nowhere more evident than when he's "telling the people about themselves" while failing to preach "physician, heal thyself." You can get cheap "amens" and raucous laughs by "getting real." But we don't want to be so "real" we forget to be holy and above reproach in everything we say (Titus 2:7-8).

Whoop-n-cough—Any time I’m in a conversation about preaching, I’m bound to be asked, “What do you think about whooping?” You’d think I’d develop a stock answer by now. But each time I find myself scratching my chin a little, first trying to figure out where the questioner is coming from, then trying to figure out how to emphasize what matters. And, for me, what matters in tuning, whooping, singing, humming, moaning, rasping or plain talking your way to the close of the sermon is not the particular style, but whether *the text determines the content and emotion of the close*. Whatever form it takes, does the close expose the content, mood and feeling of the text? Or, does it take the listener off in other directions, perhaps placing a cherry atop a text that requires tears? Every text won’t whoop, hum or sing. So every sermon shouldn’t close with one.

The virtue of traditional closings is their full embrace of emotion in preaching and worship. We need never fear genuine emotion—and we ought to assume the Spirit of God will use the word of God to excite *widely-varying emotions across the congregation from the same text*. Imagine two members hearing the truth of Romans 8:28 expounded. The first, a woman who just found out she’s pregnant after eight years of trying, may stretch her arms to heaven and shout “Hallelujah.” Meanwhile, the second, a man recently diagnosed with cancer, may fall to his knees with head bowed and say “Nevertheless not my will.” Or they may both sit with heads bowed in quiet, tearful prayer—same posture, different emotion. We can let the Spirit do the work of exciting genuine emotion as He applies the word to each heart as He wills. We don’t ever want to be guilty of contrived approaches to celebration. We don’t ever want to think the sermon must conclude with producing the same effect for everyone. And we don’t ever want to take our eyes off the spirit and meaning of the text in order to give 1/3 of the sermon’s time to empty emotional displays. That’s not genuine celebration; that’s genuine manipulation. Let the text make the people sing—or weep, as the case may be.

This, of course, is not an exhaustive list of features. There’s call-and-response and other elements. And I make no claim that any element listed here is more important than all the others. While these are virtues of “Black preaching,” all good things can be corrupted. The surest way to prevent that is to get the text right and let the word do the work, making these elements subservient to the text.

ARTIFACT 11: Generational Curses

<http://religion-and-theology-articles.blogspot.com/2017/02/generational-curses.html>

**Particular attention to be paid to highlighted text*

“Central to the ministry of healing and deliverance is what is understood as a generational ancestral curse and how this is identified in the Christian context. From a contemporary Pentecostals viewpoint, systems of traditional shrine slavery serve as examples of traditional institutions that perpetuate the phenomenon of generational ancestral curses within particular families. The Pentecostal concept of ancestral curse is underpinned by the belief that the consequences of certain sins committed by a persons family whether dead or alive are recurrent in their family lines. Curses, it is believed, arise from certain sinful acts including, as we have noted, participation in traditional religious rituals and negative pronunciations made against people. The effects of such sins and curses are, according to healing and deliverance discourses, to be seen in the prevalence of such negative occurrences as chronic and hereditary diseases, emotional excesses and allergies, frequent miscarriages and deaths, suicidal tendencies, and persistent poverty within a person s family. Also included in actions dealt with under the rubric of generational ancestral curses are persisting emotional difficulties and phobias, physical disabilities, and what has now come to be known in the West as alternative sexuality lifestyles.

Personal observations at various healing and deliverance sessions indicate that any negative habits, events, phobias, negative emotions including excessive anger and so on that disrupts the harmonious ow of a person s life, may be explained in terms of generational or ancestral curses. The sources of such problems are many and varied but the bottom line is that no matter how they occurred whether through personal sin, inherited guilt or curses, their mystical effects could be handled through appropriate healing and deliverance rituals.

Christian mission has to do with knowing the purposes of the creator God in the world and allowing him to co-opt you into his endeavors. But what are Gods purposes in the world Going by Jesus manifesto in Luke 418-19, what the creator God is doing in the world includes preaching good news to the poor, proclaiming freedom for the prisoners, restoration of sight for the blind, and the release of the oppressed. According to Brown, Gods purposes are those things, which God is about in the world. People committed to the reality of God seek understanding of his involvement in order to be immersed in his concerns. These purposes are not an enigma.... God is not hidden or remote. He has come among us and spoken to us... Jesus Christ is the normative understanding of Gods historical project to establish his governance over the entire created order in justice, reconciliation, peace and compassion. (Brown, et al, p.16)

Considered from the biblical perspective and focusing particularly on the ministry of Jesus, therefore, the pursuit of human rights falls squarely within the demands and concerns of Christian mission. Loving God with all ones mind, heart, and soul, and loving ones neighbor as oneself, which is the summary of the Christian faith according to Jesus, underscores the inseparable relationship between religion and human rights. When John the Baptist exhorted the different parties who came to him to observe their religious and social duties, he was advocating the rights of the people to food, clothing and shelter. The soldiers were also admonished to eschew violence against the citizenry (Luke 310-14). The theme is also present in the ministry of Jesus for he points out that those who inherit the kingdom will not be those who display outward

piety, but those who recognize the rights of the poor to decent living and pay attention to their needs. Elsewhere Jesus cautions against denying the old and inform their right to live by claiming to fulfill religious financial obligations at the expense of remittances due them (Matthew 15:3-6). His deep concern for the poor, and the conscious attempts by Jesus to integrate such ritually marginalized persons as lepers, and other ritually unclean people into the community, was not just to restore these relationships with God, but also to restore the human dignity of the victims. Christianity in particular has often been accused of adopting a hostile stance towards traditional religion and culture. That may be so in many respects, but there are also aspects of the culture, which Christianity had to ruthlessly resist because of their negative effects on the human person, as created in God's image. (Ankerberg, et al, 1991)

The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving-kindness and truth who keeps loving-kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.

(Ankerberg, et al, 1991)

Reading this verse closely, it means that when your ancestors sinned then as a penalty for their sins, a generational curse will overtake on you from one lifetime to the next until somebody arrives along and breaks this generational curse off of you. This generally engages a meeting, or meetings, where the sufferer has to cut into their past to convey up the sins of their ancestors, or the curses they have endured with, in order that now they can be consigned from them. Some use this to call out some demon and other ones even force themselves to free the demons. Others shatter the generational curse through some plea equation founded on an unscriptural state that they have arrived up with. It is not there Jesus and the New Testament are demonstrations and have found no record of these types of curses anywhere. Yes, I accept as factual that when you arrive over a demon we can cast it out. We have administration over all the work of the enemy. (Luke 10:19, 1 Peter 5:8, James 4:7, Mark 16:17 numerous others as seen in Ankerberg, et al, 1991)

It is not easy to believe or accept as factual in what some may call deliverance from generational curses and releasing demons. Therefore, to be protected, one must stay with the Word of God and should not get involved with these unscriptural methods or so-called deliverance sessions. Let us proceed to the Word of God to get our concepts straight. It is significant for Christians to be aware of what the Scripture says in context to this because there is much disarray on the subject. Extremely crucial for the comprehending of any scriptural text is that we understand scripture in its context. We should furthermore permit all the Scriptures that talk on a subject to convey us comprehending on it, and not just use some isolated text. I have glimpsed too much doctrine travelling on just an isolated text, numerous times taken out of context. We do not ever desire to do that. It is unsafe and impairing to the Body of Christ in the earth. We should shun from engaging in it.

Actually, if Exodus 34:7 was the only Scripture we had on the subject, there would be a minor likelihood for such a educating as generational curses but it is not the only verse in the Bible on this subject. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing loving-kindness to thousands, to those who love me and keep my Commandments.

(Deuteronomy 59, 10 as seen in Basham, 1972)

Did you observe the phrases those who hate me It is very clear in this route that the iniquity will pass down only upon those who despise God. Go to the preceding verses in this section and you will glimpse that Moses was mentioning to idolatry, or having other gods before the one factual God. Those that despise God in this route are the ones that perform idolatry. I will verify this below. The generational iniquity will only overtake to the next lifetime IF they extend in the idolatry of their fathers. This is a very significant but between verse 9 and 10. Instead of iniquity transient from one lifetime to the next, if the following lifetime will love God and hold His commandments, He will display loving-kindness to them. In other phrases, in the method of the generations, who denies to perform the idolatry of their fathers will get clemency and not judgment. They will get the good thing and not the generational curse.

Generational Curses and the believers of God

What would occur in an idolatrous family where one individual concludes to reside for God Would this new believer still be subject to bear the outcome of the sins of their fathers Would they still be subject to family curses Deuteronomy 30:19, 20 states otherwise. We are granted the right of alternative between the good thing or the curse, life or death. Then we are instructed to choose life in alignment that you may reside, you and your descendants. In other phrases, if somebody in the generational line concludes to select life and good thing, the generational curse and death will not be perpetuated. The buck halts right then That is what you should accept as factual and proceed upon. Do not accept as factual that some generational curse has arrived on you because the penalties of the sins of your fathers have arrived upon you. Do not bow down to the incorrect understanding of some that espouse this error. Believe this Word from God in Deuteronomy 30:19, 20. (Basham, 1972)

The generational curse is on those families that extend in the sins of their fathers according to these scriptures, not on those that repent and assist God. The generational curse does not, and should not arrive on those that assist God. It would be a violation of the covenant for God to need the individual that serves God to bear the penalties of the sins of the generations before them. The curses are for the disobedient, rebellious, and the hard hearted, not for the believer and follower of God. Please read Deuteronomy 28 and read that verses 1-14 notifies you the blessings are for the obedient and verse 15 ff. notifies you that the curses will arrive on the disobedient to Gods commandments.

Jesus became a curse for us when he was crucified on the cross. At that instant he took our curses and extended to us his blessings (Gal. 3:13-14.) That is part of the large exchange. He took everything that was awful and provided us everything that was good. No one although, inhabits with all the blessings that pertains to them. Jesus passed away for the entire world, but all are not saved. Jesus passed away to convey us wellbeing, but numerous are still sick. He passed away to convey us into his family and make us wealthy, yet numerous bear from rejection and poverty. The traverse is an opportunity. As we, by belief lay contain of what the Lord has supplied, we gain more blessings. (Anderson, et al, 2001)

Breaking the Generational Curse

Blessings and curses are set before us. We select one or the other by the way we reside, and the

outcomes continue to our children. Take note, Gods blessings will permit you and your young children to live. Curses do not arrive without reason. Curses arrive on persons and families because of horrific sins that we or our ancestors have committed. They furthermore arrive when those who have administration over us, for example our parents, talk curses or judgments over us. (Jos. 626, 1Kgs. 1634, Gen. 3130 3516 as seen in Basham, 1972)

We may furthermore curse ourselves. Until these curses are taken, they become designations that cripple and hinder our advancement in God. Behind shut doorways, even numerous pastors have arrived to us, inquiring for ministry to shatter generational curses off of their lives. They do not desire the sins of their ancestors to sway their children. We are blessed to glimpse thousands of persons obtain this ministry each year. The shattering of generational curses is particularly essential for first lifetime Christians. They should halt the bleeding initiated by very vintage sins. The judgments should not proceed any further. They face a large assault, but they can certainly win, by the power of Gods Spirit. Curses are lawful judgments initiated by sin. God imposes a generational judgment on wickedness. Then demon spirits have an open doorway and a right to originate trouble. They originate all types of difficulties in the inhabits of humans, encompassing Christians. A Christian will not be demon owned, for ownership is an issue of ownership and Christians pertains to God. If although, there are dark sins or curses, bad spirits will arrive and origin sickness, scarcity, infertility and numerous other types of oppression. Jesus became universal healing his persons, the Jews, who were demoralized by the devil. Act 1038, Lk.418-19 presents us the power to do the same. All problems are not initiated by demons, but numerous difficulties are. (Anderson, et al, 2001)

Curses are initiated by numerous distinct sins. A partial register is discovered in Deuteronomy 2715-26. The register of curse-initiating sins encompasses, witchcraft, sexy perversion, robbing, shedding blameless body-fluid, being an assassin, killing, betraying in enterprise or shattering covenants, dishonoring parents, mishandling widows, orphans, the handicapped, immigrants, the poor or young children, anti-Semitism, and not giving our tithes. Many unidentified generational curses hinder the inhabits of the saints. We do not need to understand the entire minutia to eliminate them. To be free from curses we should plead, confess our sins and repent of them, pardon all who have outraged us, renounce witchcraft and the bad sins of our ancestors. We then will be able to ascertain what pertains to us through the traverse, shatter the power of all curses in the title of Jesus and issue us from the administration and penalties of our ancestors curses. Then we stroll out of jail, shatter the chains and declare our flexibility in Christ. It may engage restitution, good thing our foes, a plea of belief for healing and instructing demons to leave. It may need a change of way of life and allotments of proclamations to obtain Gods blessings and favor.”

ARTIFACT 12: Playbill from Original Broadway Cast Production

<http://www.playbill.com/playbillpagegallery/inside-playbill?asset=00000150-aea3-d936-a7fd-eef7cc5f0005&type=InsidePlaybill&slide=1>

SYNOPSIS

THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS reconcives Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* as parable-like sermons on the ways of fate and particularly on a happy death. It is set in a black Pentecostal church. The congregation performs the invocation and, as the pastors narrate, portions of the story come to life.

After years of wandering with his daughter Antigone, repentant and suffering for the sins he committed in innocence, Oedipus comes to Colonus, the holy resting place he has been promised for his death. His second daughter, Ismene, finds him there. She has come to bring Oedipus the prophecy that he shall now be blessed and those he blesses shall be also.

Antigone tells Oedipus to pray to the gods he once offended. Theseus, King of Athens, hears his prayer and is touched by his story, and they are welcomed to Colonus. Hearing this, Creon, King of Thebes, comes to bring Oedipus back to that city to obtain the blessing. Oedipus refuses to go and Creon has the daughters seized, but Theseus returns them. Polyneices, eldest son of Oedipus, comes for the blessing before going into battle, but Oedipus curses him for his previous disloyalty and sends him away to die.

At his death, Oedipus passes on to Theseus alone his knowledge of life and his blessing. The final sermon is delivered, reminding the congregation to mourn no more, for Oedipus has found redemption. "Indeed, his end was wonderful, if mortal's ever was."

PALIO

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THE INSTITUTIONAL RADIO CHOIR

Altos	Sopranos	Tenors
Betty Cooper	Regina Berry	Charles Bellamy
Angie Haddock	Deborah Britt	Jim Craven
Vincent Haddock	Sharon R. Driskill	Walter Dixon
Crystal Johnson	Lady Peachena Eure	Hayward Gregory
Selene Jones	Mary Fischer	Sidney Hull
Shellie Jordan	Parthea Hill	Kevin Jackson
Janet Napper	Josie Johnson	Roscoe Robinson
Pamela Potier	Carolyn Johnson-White	Billy Steele
Arnita Tillman	Francine Thompson	Ezekiel Tobby
Candace White	Joan Faye Wright	Carl Williams, Jr.
		Jeff Young

UNDERSTUDIES
Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement for the appearance is made at the time of the performance.
Messenger—Reverend Earl F. Miller, Jim Craven; Oedipus—James Carter; Theseus and Polyneices—Jim Craven; Antigone—Pamela Potier; Creon—Carl Williams, Jr.; The Singer—Hayward Gregory; The Choir Soloist and the J. D. Steele Singers—Parthea Hill; The J.D. Steele Singers—Billy Steele.

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION.

ACT I

The Welcome and Quotations	Morgan Freeman
The Invocation ("Live Where You Can")	Choir with Jevetta Steele, Soloist
Recapitulation from <i>Oedipus the King</i>	Isabell Monk, Reverend Earl F. Miller
Oedipus and Antigone Enter Colonus	Isabell Monk, Morgan Freeman
Ode to Colonus ("Fair Colonus")	Willie Rogers, Soloist
"Stop, Do Not Go On"	Sam Butler, Jr., Soloist, with J.J. Farley and the Soul Stirrers
Choral Dialogue ("Who Is This Man?")	Bridge—Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama
Ismene Comes to Colonus ("How Shall I See You Through My Tears?")	Martin Jacox and Morgan Freeman
Narrative of Ismene	The J.D. Steele Singers
Tableau, Polyneices and Etocles	Jevetta Steele, Soloist
The Rite	Isabell Monk
Tableau, Antigone and Ismene	J.D. and Fred Steele
	Isabell Monk, Morgan Freeman, Clarence Fountain
	Janice and Jevetta Steele



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CONTINENTAL

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CAST

MESSENGER:	MORGAN FREEMAN. A visiting pastor who narrates the role of Oedipus and performs the role of Messenger as a sermon.
OEDIPUS:	CLARENCE FOUNTAIN AND THE FIVE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA. A soloist and gospel quintet who sing portions of the role of Oedipus.
ANTIGONE:	ISABELL MONK. An evangelist who performs the role of Antigone and selected choral material.
THESEUS:	REVEREND EARL F. MILLER. The assistant pastor of the church who performs the role of Theseus.
ISMENE:	JEVETTA STEELE and THE J. D. STEELE SINGERS.
CREON:	ROBERT EARL JONES. A deacon of the church who performs the role of Creon.
POLYNEICES:	KEVIN DAVIS. A member of the congregation who performs the role of Polyneices.
CHORAGOS:	MARTIN JACOX and J. J. FARLEY AND THE SOUL STIRRERS.
THE SINGER:	SAM BUTLER, JR.
THE CHOIR SOLOIST:	CAROLYN JOHNSON-WHITE
CHORUS:	THE INSTITUTIONAL RADIO CHOIR
GUEST CHOIR DIRECTOR:	J. D. STEELE

MUSICAL GROUPS

CLARENCE FOUNTAIN AND THE FIVE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA: Clarence Fountain, Bobby Butler, James Carter, J. T. Clinckales, Reverend Olice Thomas, Joseph Watson

J. J. FARLEY AND THE SOUL STIRRERS: J. J. Farley, Jackie Banks, Martin Jacox, Ben Odom, Willie Rogers

J. D. STEELE SINGERS: J. D. Steele, Fred Steele, Janice Steele, Jevetta Steele

LITTLE VILLAGE: Sam Butler, Jr. (guitar), Leroy Clouten (drums), Butch Heyward (organ), Bob Telson (piano and synthesizer), David Sacks (trombone), John Hagen (saxophones), Chris Royal (trumpet), Lincoln Schleifer (bass), Josh Schneider (alto saxophone and slide guitar), Don Brooks (harmonica)

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Dialogue: Chorus Questions Oedipus	Martin Jacox, Morgan Freeman
The Prayer ("A Voice Foretold")	Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama and Sam Butler, Jr.
Oedipus Is Welcomed in Colonus	
Peroration	Reverend Earl F. Miller
Jubilee ("No Never")	Martin Jacox with the Soul Stirrers
Creon Comes to Colonus and the Seizure of the Daughters	Bridge—Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama, Choir, Ensemble
Oedipus Curses Creon (Suite, "All My Heart's Desire")	Robert Earl Jones, Morgan Freeman
Choral Ode ("Numberless Are the World's Wonders")	Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama, Choir, Robert Earl Jones, Morgan Freeman
	J.D. Steele Singers, J.D. and Janice Steele, Soloists, accompanied by the Choir

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Oedipus Laments ("Lift Me Up")	Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama
Polyneices' Testimony and Supplication, Oedipus' Curse	Kevin Davis, Morgan Freeman, Clarence Fountain
"Evil"	Sam Butler, Jr.
"You Break My Heart"	J.D. Steele, Fred Steele, Ben Odom
Poem ("Love Unconquerable")	Isabell Monk
Preaching with Tuned Response	Morgan Freeman
Special Effect ("Ah! Heaven's Height Has Cracked!")	Clarence Fountain
The Teachings	Morgan Freeman, Reverend Earl F. Miller
The Descent of Oedipus	
"On Sunlight of No Light"	Sam Butler, Jr.
"Eternal Sleep"	Willie Rogers and the Soul Stirrers
Mourning	Isabell Monk, Reverend Earl F. Miller, Jevetta and Janice Steele
Doxology, the Paen ("Lift Him Up")	Choir with Carolyn Johnson-White, Soloist
The Sermon	Morgan Freeman
Closing Hymn ("Now Let the Weeping Cease")	Willie Rogers with the Soul Stirrers, Choir, Ensemble
Benediction	Morgan Freeman

The Opening Night of *The Gospel at Colonus* on Broadway is dedicated to the memory of Robert Fitzgerald.

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ARTICLE 13: Gospel Music

History & Style

<https://www.allmusic.com/style/black-gospel-ma0000011926>

“While many white musicians gravitated toward country, folk, and old-timey music to express their spirituality outside of traditional Christian hymns, Black Gospel music drew heavily upon the traditional spirituals that had been passed down from the days of slavery, picking up its more driving rhythmic emphasis from blues and early jazz. Composer and singer Thomas A. Dorsey crystallized the style in 1932 with his epochal "Take My Hand, Precious Lord," and went on to compose a great many songs that later became standards. When performed in the churches, the music was traditionally sung by a choir, with individual soloists sometimes taking the spotlight; this often happened in a form known as "call and response," in which either the choir or the soloist would repeat and/or answer the lyric which had just been sung by the other, with the soloist improvising embellishments of the melody for greater emphasis. As the music developed, these soloists became more and more virtuosic, performing with wild emotion (and, in the South, physicality) in order to properly express the spiritual ecstasy the music was meant to evoke. The music was quite egalitarian in terms of gender, as both male and female performers -- Brother Joe May, Rev. James Cleveland, Mahalia Jackson, the Clara Ward Singers, etc. -- gained wide renown among both black and white audiences. The small-group format was also prevalent, with major figures including the Five Blind Boys of Mississippi, the Soul Stirrers, the Swan Silvertones, and the Dixie Hummingbirds; in general, these groups placed a greater premium on smooth vocal harmonies, although some performances could approach the raucous energy (if not quite the huge sound) of a choir-with-soloist group. As the years progressed, black gospel and black popular music influenced and borrowed from one another, reflecting the gradual change of emphasis toward R&B; black gospel also had an enormous impact on the development of soul music, which directed gospel's spiritual intensity into more secular concerns, and included a great many performers whose musical skills were developed in the church. As a recognizable style unto itself, black gospel music largely ceased to develop around the 1970s; progressing racial attitudes had helped black popular music reach wider audiences (and become more lucrative) than ever before, and tastes had turned towards the earthy hedonism of funk and the highly arranged, sophisticated Philly soul sound. The former wasn't quite appropriate for worship, and it wasn't all that practical to duplicate the latter in church services. However, the traditional black gospel sound survived intact and was eventually augmented by contemporary gospel (an '80s/'90s variation strongly influenced by latter-day urban R&B); plus, singers like Whitney Houston continued to develop within its ranks.”

Gospel Music Characteristics

<https://ourpastimes.com/gospel-music-characteristics-12224026.html>

Lyrics

Gospel music lyrics are simple and clear to communicate the message of God's love and forgiveness expressed through the death of Christ on the cross. The message is expressed sometimes from an experiential "I" and "my" perspective and sometimes from a "we" and "thou" angle (community-oriented traditional hymns).

Instruments

Some instruments commonly heard in Gospel music are the piano, organ, guitar, bass guitar, drums, tambourines, keyboard, violin, and brass horns. The instruments vary according to the sub-genre of gospel music being played. The banjo is found commonly in blue-grass country-style gospel. The guitar and drums are the main source of sound in gospel rock.

Gospel Rhythms

Black gospel music is very rhythmic and involves frequent clapping to the beat of the song. Repetitious lyrics and rhythm patterns are often employed to make memorization of the lyrical content easier. One such song, says "Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King, Soon and very soon we are going to see the King" repeatedly and finishes with "Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we are going to see the King." This repetitious rhythm is both didactic and emotional.

Gospel Performers

Gospel music is presented by a variety of performers. The soloist is often employed to deliver a gospel song as an invitational tune at the end of a service. Duets are used on occasion to inspire the congregation with a heartfelt message. Gospel trios and quartets, such as the Gaither Trio and the Imperials, have produced many gospel classics. Choirs have also presented gospel tunes in churches and in concerts to inspire the faith of many.

Sub-Genres

Gospel music encompasses many sub-genres and styles. The traditional black gospel choir or soloist is definitely part of what gospel music is but not the whole picture. There are Country gospel singers whose inspirational tunes can be heard on country and Christian radio. Contemporary Christian music and Christian/gospel rock have brought the gospel message to mainstream audiences with singers like Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, Stephen Curtis Chapman, and Petra.

SUGGESTED FURTHER READING

Books

- Christian Church Music in Black Worship Service by John M. Bell
- Chapter 6 in Ancient and Modern Religion and Politics - “*Oedipus at Colonus* and *The Gospel at Colonus*: African American Experience and the Classical Text” by John Randolph LeBlanc and Carolyn M. Jones Medine
- Protest and Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion by Jon Michael Spenser
- “Lee Breuer on *The Gospel at Colonus*” in *The Performing Arts Journal*

Websites & Recordings

- “The Gospel at Colonus,” PBS Great Performances
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZyQP_zrD2U
- “The City on the Edge: Lee Breuer's *The Gospel at Colonus*”
 - <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199217182.001.0001/acprof-9780199217182-chapter-5>
- 1985 Cast Recording of *The Gospel at Colonus*
 - Purchase on amazon.com

Films with Oedipal Themes

- “Back to the Future”
- “The Graduate”
- “Star Wars” Trilogy
- “Harold and Maude”
- “Psycho”

PRESS RELEASE

Take me to Church! The story of Oedipus gets revived in *The Gospel At Colonus*

Lafayette, January 2018: Town Hall Theatre Company brings the 1983 Obie Award-winning musical *The Gospel At Colonus* to the Bay Area January 12-28, 2018. Town Hall has reassembled much of the original Broadway cast with its original director Bob Telson at the helm once again.

With original lyrics by Lee Breuer (co-artistic director of Mabou Mines Theater Company) and lyrics and music by Academy Award nominee, Bob Telson (*Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, “Calling You” from *Bagdad Cafe*), *The Gospel At Colonus* is an adaptation of Sophocles’ *Oedipus at Colonus*. Set in a black Pentecostal church, the story of Oedipus is retold during a church service with the roles in Oedipus myth performed by the clergy and congregation. Telson and Breuer dare the audience to stay still and silent with their electrifying gospel soundtrack of original music.

Not your typical American musical, but audiences will be sure to leave the theater revived and invigorated with a new perspective on a classic piece of Greek theater.

WHAT: *The Gospel at Colonus*, book and lyrics by Lee Breuer, with music by Bob Telson

WHERE: Town Hall Theatre Company, 3535 School Street, Lafayette, California.

WHEN: January 12- 28, 2018

WHO: Produced by Town Hall Theatre Company, Directed by Bob Telson, performed by the original Broadway cast.

TICKETS: \$30-\$45. Reserve via phone (925) 283-1557, at www.townhalltheatre.com/single-tickets/, or email boxoffice@townhalltheatre.com.

WEBSITE: www.townhalltheatre.com

PROGRAM NOTES

Welcome to *The Gospel at Colonus*! We are honored to have you join our congregation this evening. Tonight's parable will be taken from the Book of Oedipus, the tragic Greek anti-hero. We will tell his story with the help of song and dance, but this will not be your typical musical. There will be no massive dance numbers or expensive sets, we allow the story to inspire the music. You are welcome to clap, sing or respond in any way that moves you. You are a part of this experience as much as the clergy on stage.

The Gospel At Colonus was originally produced in 1983 by The Brooklyn Academy of Music as a part of their New Wave Festival and was nominated for the 1985 Pulitzer Prize in Drama and won an Obie Award for Best Musical. The production opened on Broadway in 1988 with a book and lyrics by Lee Breuer, with music and direction by Bob Telson. The soundtrack and PBS "Great Performances" recording have kept audiences engaged in this adaptation of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* for over nearly 35 years.

Oedipus at Colonus is the tale of a man befallen by fate, exiled out of his homeland, and forced to wander blindly. Whether told with a Greek chorus or a gospel chorus, this story rings all too familiar. Refugees from the Middle East and beyond are attempting to escape unimaginable conditions, searching for sanctuary outside of the only home and culture they have ever known. Our clergy asks you to open your hearts and your minds to welcome in the possibility of empathy and understanding. Thank you and please enjoy the sermon!

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