

Kwanzaa: The Unity Way!

Written by Rev. Anyanwu Cox, Holy Spirit Healing Ministry, Kansas City, MO

for

A Time of Family

This chapter appears in *A Time of Family Volume 1* Item # 6796 \$13.95

Another resource from your Association of Unity Churches

Copyright Association of Unity Churches
Member ministries may download and print one copy.
Thank you for your cooperation.

KWANZAA: THE UNITY WAY!

An African American Celebration of Family, Community and Culture

Rev. Nora Cox, M.Ed., Holy Spirit Healing Ministry, Kansas City, MO

AN INVITATION

“As cold water to a thirsty soul,
so is good news from a far country.”

Proverbs 25:25



Habari Gani?
(Hah-BAH-ree GAH-nee)
or
“What’s the good news?”

The good news . . . is that you and your ministry family are invited to celebrate diversity by incorporating KWANZAA—an African American celebration—into your yearly special events calendar.

The good news . . . is that Kwanzaa affords you a wonderful opportunity for spiritual communion and community out-reach. As a celebration, Kwanzaa is festive, educational, inspirational, healing, and just plain fun!

The good news . . . is that Kwanzaa is a great way for your church family to experience a dynamic African American celebration that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, races, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

The good news . . . is that Kwanzaa beautifully reflects Unity principles and is therefore, a perfect celebration to be hosted by a Unity Church. In fact, the first of seven Kwanzaa principles is UMOJA which means UNITY.

The good news . . . is that everything you need to know about creating a Kwanzaa celebration is contained in the following pages, including:

- About Kwanzaa
- A Sample Order of Service
- How to Plan a Kwanzaa Celebration
- The Karamu (feast) Menu
- Resources for Creating Kwanzaa
- Kwanzaa Glossary
- Bibliography

ABOUT KWANZAA

“Kwanzaa is a wonderful way for all churches and spiritual centers to honor diversity. It is a rich and noble celebration whose purpose is to renew and reaffirm our commitment to positive values.”
Duke Tufty, Senior Minister; Karen Bradley, Associate Minister, Unity Temple on the Plaza

Books by Dr. Karenga:

- *Introduction to Black Studies*
- *Selections for the Husia: Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt*
- *The African American Holiday of Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture*

What is Kwanzaa?

Ending in one “a” and pronounced Kwahn-zah, it means “first.” The complete phrase from which the name is derived is “Matunda Ya Kwanza” and refers to “the first fruits” festivals which occurred throughout Africa since the early days of Nubia and Kemet (Egypt). These first fruits festivals, also known as Agricultural or Harvest Celebrations, continue today in Africa.

In 1966, after years of research of these festivals and other African practices, Dr. Maulana Karenga initiated an African American holiday based on these practices. The Holiday was named Kwanzaa with an extra “a” to reinforce the symbolism of “seven” in the ceremonies, i.e. seven days, seven candles, seven principles, seven harambee (a call to Unity).

Kwanzaa is celebrated December 26 through January 1 of each year. This time of the year was selected because it corresponds with the seven day harvest celebration by the Zulu nation. However, the principles of Kwanzaa are relevant throughout the year.

Who is Dr. Maulana “Ron” Karenga?

Dr. Karenga is the initiator and creator of Kwanzaa. He is a professor and chair of Black Studies at the California State University at Long Beach and is the executive director of the Institute of Pan-African Studies. As an activist/scholar who has received national and international recognition, his lecture tours have taken him to major campuses in the United States, Africa, Cuba and the Peoples Republic of China.

Why was Kwanzaa created?

Dr. Karenga believed that two basic groups of African people exist. The first group are Continental Africans, which refers to Africans on the continent, and the second group are the African Diaspora, referring to Africans living away from the continent.

He observed that many Africans in the second group were stripped of their language, values, principles, and cultural and spiritual practices when taken from Africa. It was Dr. Karenga's belief and that of many black scholars that reawakening to the positive African core values, practices and history would serve to raise self-esteem, self-worth and the internal power quotient in the collective consciousness of the African Diaspora. This in turn would strengthen the African element of the critical mass which is necessary to raise the Planetary Consciousness.

These black scholars understood that positive changes had to come from within. So Dr. Karenga created Kwanzaa to stimulate "Kugichagulia" or self-determination in African and African American people. This is the second principle of Kwanzaa and is achieved by an individual and/or group speaking, defining and creating for themselves. This principle requires African Americans to assume leadership and responsibility for changing their present state, creating a brighter future and reclaiming the best of what has come before.

According to Dr. Karenga, Kwanzaa, its practices and principles, were designed to move people of African descent to a point where they can once again "self-consciously contribute to the forward flow of human history." However, the spiritual essence that permeates Kwanzaa ceremony and celebration is ancient and has proven time and time again to positively impact people of all ages, races, ethnic and socio-economic groups. All Kwanzaa requires is an appreciation of the value of diversity in its authentic forms combined with appropriate leadership and direction. Then relax and enjoy a truly wonderful experience.

"If you know the beginning well, the end will not trouble you."

African Proverb

"I write 'for ourselves and history', for the record, for our people and the contributions this will make to their deeper appreciation of the rich cultural legacy of African thought and practice, especially its communitarian forms."

Dr. Maulana Karenga

“Everyday is a donation to eternity and even one hour is a contribution to the future.”

Retranslated by
Dr. Maulana Karenga
From: *The Book of Kheti;
The Husia*

Note: Groups interested in hosting a Kwanzaa Celebration may contact:

Rev. Nora “Anyanwu” Cox
M.Ed., Holy Spirit Healing
Ministry
9828 Willow, Apt. 4C
Kansas City, MO 64134

Rev. Cox has participated in and studied Kwanzaa in diverse settings. She offers:

- Consultation
- Facilitation and leadership
- Answers to additional questions
- Information on conducting a Kwanzaa workshop

Why celebrate Kwanzaa?

Kwanzaa offers a well-researched, well-documented, systematic and scholarly work which can provide groups with an effective means of honoring diversity. Because of the devastation of slavery on the African diaspora, Kwanzaa is presently the only holiday of this magnitude celebrated by black people “for the upliftment” of black people. Over the last 30 years it has stimulated the interest of millions of African Diaspora in the United States, the Caribbeans and Africa. It has also been reported to be a soul-stirring experience for other ethnic groups who attend.

Although Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday, it is a deeply spiritual celebration offering a rich array of rituals and ceremony that creates a bond for all.

Who celebrates Kwanzaa?

Kwanzaa may be celebrated by all people, regardless of race, sex, age or ethnic background. However, since Kwanzaa was created to stimulate “Kugichagulia” or self-determination in African people, people of African descent should lead, facilitate and participate in the celebration service. (This may be achieved by outreach into the community, collaboration and/or outside speakers.)

A Simple Rule of Thumb:

- Hosting Kwanzaa: anyone with an appreciation of diversity
- Attendance: anyone with an appreciation of diversity
- Participation: anyone with an appreciation and sensitivity for diversity related to people of African descent
- Leadership/Facilitation: person or persons whose ethnic background is African
- Libation ritual: person whose ethnic background is African

Simply put: Kwanzaa calls for Unity in diversity.

NGUZO SABA (THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES)

Kwanzaa is based on the following principles which are reflected in many aspects of the celebration service and planning. One Principle is celebrated each day consecutively from December 26 through January 1.

1. UMOJA (Unity)

To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.

2. KUJICHAGULIA (Self-determination)

To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for and spoken for by others.

3. UJIMA (Collective Work and Responsibility)

To build and maintain our community together and make our sisters' and brothers' problems our problems and to solve them together.

4. UJAMAA (Cooperative Economics)

To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.

5. NIA (Purpose)

To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

6. KUUMBA (Creativity)

To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

7. IMANI (Faith)

To believe with all of our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Maulana Karenga

Permission granted to reproduce this page.

SCRIPTURES REFLECTING THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

1. Umoja/Unity:

Acts 2:46; Romans 14:19; I John 4:7

2. Kugichagulia/Self-determination:

Genesis 1:26; Ruth 1:16; II Kings 20:1-6; Esther 4:16

3. Ujima-Collective Work and

Responsibility: John 5:2-9; I Corinthians 12:13,14, 18-26

4. Ujamaa-Cooperative Economics:

Genesis 45:18; Malachi 3:10, Hebrews 7:5

5. Nia-Purpose:

Isaiah 49:1,3; Jeremiah 1:4,5,9; Exodus 4:15,16

6. Kuumba-Creativity:

I Kings 17:10-16; Job 22:28; John 1:1,14; John 2:1-10

7. Imani-Faith:

Psalms 36:7; Isaiah 43:1-2; Hebrews 11:1; Matthew 21:21-22

Refer also to Unity Quotes reflecting The Seven Principles, p. 31.

“The very word ‘symbol’ provides a clue to its function. It is derived from the Greek word *symbole* which means, to throw to another plane. Symbols are, quite literally speaking, designed to move our consciousness to another plane of awareness.”
Rosicrucian Order
AMORC

“No matter how high a house is built, it must stand on something.”
African proverb

KWANZAA SYMBOLS AND DECOR

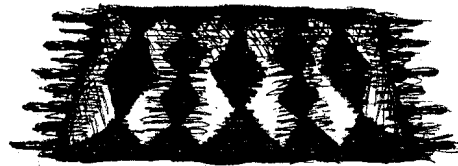
As you plan and facilitate your Kwanzaa celebration, you will want to incorporate these symbols and decor within your Kwanzaa service. See ***A Sample Order of Service*** in the following section for ways these symbols are used.

There are nine Kwanzaa symbols which, “serve as instruction and reinforce desirable principles, concepts and practices.” *Dr. Maulana Karenga*

The first symbols are placed on the Kwanzaa table which is typically situated centrally in the front of the sanctuary or celebration area.

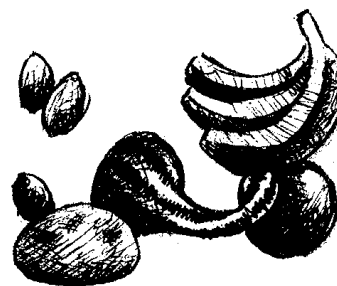
1. Mkeka (m-KA-kah) or “Mat”

This symbolizes tradition, history and building on a solid foundation. Mkeka can be purchased or made out of straw, paper or cloth. Starting with the Kinara (candle holder) all symbols are placed on the Mkeka, depending on its size.



2. Mazao (mah-ZAH-o) or “Crops”

Fruits, vegetables and grain placed in a basket are placed on the Kwanzaa table (altar). Mazao symbolizes rewards that are gained through collective work and responsibility.



3. Kinara (kee-NAH-ra) or “Candle holder”

A symbol of the original African Ancestors (both male and female) and African parenthood.



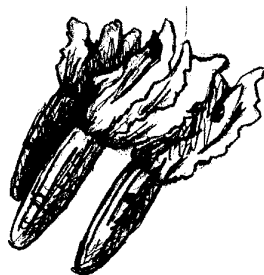
4. Mishumaa Saba (mee-SHOO-ma SAH-bah) or Seven Candles

Each candle corresponds to one of the seven principles or Nguzo Saba. The colors of the candles represent the following:

- One black candle placed in the center of the Kinara symbolize people of African descent.
- Three red candles placed in the Kinara on the left facing out symbolize the struggle of African people and the willingness to overcome obstacles to achieve a desired goal.
- Three green candles placed in the Kinara on the right facing out symbolize hope for a bright future.

5. Muhindi (moo-HEEN-dee) or “Corn”

Each ear of corn symbolizes a child in the family, church or community. Every Kwanzaa table should have at least one ear of corn on it symbolizing our responsibility to every child.



“It takes a whole village to raise a child.”
African Proverb

Zawadi ideas for congregants:

- Tiny scroll with an affirmation, a Kwanzaa principle, or a positive scripture passage
- Bookmarks containing the principles
- For youth, the gifts may include books or other wisdom sources

The **Bendera** and **The Nguzo Saba** are to be displayed in clear view.

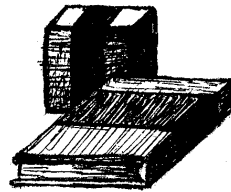
About the graphic artist who designed the symbols in this text:

"I'm a sixteen-year-old 10th grader currently attending Paseo Academy. My major is in Visual Arts, and my minor is music. After graduating in 1999, I hope to go to an arts college where I can further my career in art. In my spare time I enjoy playing basketball, writing poetry, drawing and also participating in my rap group."

Jamal Gamby

6. Zawadi (zah-WAH-dee) or "Gifts"

These symbols represent commitments made and commitments kept during the year. During Kwanzaa, everyone can receive gifts, however the focus should be on the children. Gifts should be practical, useful and inspirational. The gifts should also not be excessive and are not mandatory. Symbolic gifts are placed on the Kwanzaa table.



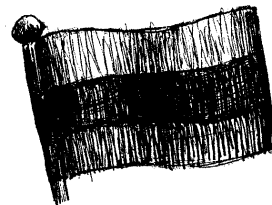
7. Kikombe Cha Umoja (kee-KOM-bay CHAH oo-MO-jah) or the "Unity Cup"

This sits on the Kwanzaa table and holds the liquid to be poured for the libation ritual.



8. Bendera (Bain-DAY-rah) or "Banner"

A banner or flag showing equal amounts of red, black and green. The colors carry the same symbolism as the red, black and green candles. The color symbolism and the flag itself were given as the symbol for African people by Marcus Garvey, an African American hero.



9. The Nguzo Saba (N-GOO-zo SAH-bah) or "The Seven Principles"

These represent the core values of Kwanzaa and were adopted to add support to the positive progressive movement of African people. (See page 17.)

KWANZAA CELEBRATION

A Sample Order of Service

1. Prelude: Drumming

2. Processional

*“Lift Every Voice and Sing”**
by James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing, ‘till earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the list’ning skies
Let it resound, loud as the rolling seas.
Sing a song full of faith that the dark past has taught us;
Sing a song full of faith that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on ‘till victory is won.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way,
Thou who hast by Thy might, led us into the light.
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee
Lest our hearts, drunk with wine of the world, we forget Thee,
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, True to our native land.

*Hymnal: *Songs of Zion*, #210

3. Permission of Elders:

Ask all Elders to stand. Explain to everyone that the celebration/service cannot proceed without the permission of the Elders. Turn to the Elders and ask, “Do we have your permission to begin?” WAIT for nods or a positive verbal affirmation.

4. Opening Prayer:

“There is only One Presence and One Power active in the Universe, God, the Good, Omnipotence.” (May be followed by any heartfelt prayer.)

For finding drummers

Check:

- Your congregation
- Other churches
- Youth department
- Local schools
- Colleges and universities
- Recorded music such as:
Olatunji, *Drums of Passion*, Columbia Records

The Processional may include:

- Elders
- Youth participating in the ritual
- Special guest/s
- Platform assistants
- Minister/s
- Choir (optional)
- Kwanzaa symbols can be carried as part of the Processional or table may be set up before the service.

It is an African Tradition to honor Elders of the community; therefore ceremonies do not begin without their approval. Elders are determined by age and/or knowledge.

Tips:

- Libation is a very sacred aspect of the Kwanzaa service and should be facilitated by a minister, priest or Elder of African descent. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide your selection.
- The Unity cup containing water, a large pitcher of extra water, a plant or bowl of soil and The Libation Statement should be placed on the Kwanzaa table before the service.

“For in the Lord there is a cup...it is full of mixture; and He poureth out of the same...”
Psalm 75:8

* See Resource Section for a sample script and more information about ancestors, page 30.

5. Welcome/Opening Statements

Leader: “Habari Gani”

That means “What’s the good news?”

Why are we here?

What is Kwanzaa? (Use information from introductory materials, pages 14-16.)

6. Libation and Light Drumming

Libation is a ritual requiring the pouring of a liquid (water, wine or clear liquor) using the Unity Cup, into soil or a plant to show respect for the “Ancestor.” In African tradition ancestors are held in high regard (not worshipped) due to the positive efforts that they set forth during their lives, thereby making life better for their descendants. Libation should be performed early in the program so that God, the ancestors and the elders are acknowledged before ourselves.

Libation Intent:

“...to remember and honor those who walked and worked before us and thus paved the path down which we now walk.

...to raise models before the community that instruct and inspire.

...to express recommitment to the legacy they left by preserving and expanding it.”

Dr. Maulana Karenga

Facilitator begins by picking up the Unity Cup and asking someone else to hold the container of soil. Libation statement* is then read or recited. Each pouring of liquid into the soil by the minister, priest or elder is followed by a congregational response of “Ase” or “Ensa.” Ase is Yoruba for “It is so” or “Amen.” Ensa is Ashanti for “Come drink with us.”

7. Meditation

“Healing, Renewal and Recommitment” are good themes to encourage reverence for the Creator and the Creation at deep levels.

8. The Nguza Saba* (The Seven Principles)

The Seven Candles, representing the seven principles, are lit at this time. You may begin by explaining the symbolism of the three colors—black, red, and green (see page 19). The black candle is lit first as its name and definition (Umoja, Unity) are given. The red candle closest to the black candle is lit second with the name of the principle and definition (Kujichagulia, self-determination). The third candle to be lit is the green candle closest to the black candle. The candle lighting continues to alternate red on left, then green on right, as name of principle and definition are given for each.

*Refer to Nguzo Saba, Kinara and Mishumaa Saba under “Kwanzaa Symbols and Decor.”

9. Harambee! (Seven times)

Ha-rahm-bay is a Swahili word which means “Let’s all pull together.” This is done by everyone raising their right hand and together making a downward pull motion with much vigor. It represents “A Call To Unity.” Demonstrate first and invite all to participate.

10. Special Music

See Resources, page 29.

Swahili is a non-ethnic, non-tribal East African language spoken by many nations in Africa. It was chosen as the official language for Kwanzaa because of its African roots and its lack of preference for any one African group. It also is called Kiswahili. The vowels are pronounced like those of Spanish and the consonants like those of English.

Celebration Bulletin

Suggestions:

- Print on red or green paper.
- Use Afrocentric images for graphics.
- Include a list of the seven principles in Swahili and English along with their definitions.
- Include the words to congregational songs.

For a sample farewell statement see the book, *The African American Holiday of KWANZAA: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture*, page 108.

11. Poetry

See Resources Section, page 29.

12. Lesson Ideas:

- Kwanzaa in general
- One or more Kwanzaa symbols
- The Seven Principles
- Healing, Renewal and Recommitment
- Scripture: Refer to Resources, page 17
- Kwanzaa Framework, page 25

13. Music/Offering/Zawadi:

(Refer to Kwanzaa symbols, p. 20, for Zawadi)

These three activities, if well coordinated in advance, can occur at the same time.

14. Announcements

Encourage everyone to stay for the KARAMU or Kwanzaa Feast.

15. The Farewell Statement, Closing Prayer, or Benediction

Reflect on recommitment, world peace, and health of the planet as you encourage practicing the Seven Principles throughout the coming year.

16. Recessional Song: “Amen”

African Drumming also serves as a fun connection between the Service and the Karamu.

HOW TO PLAN A KWANZAA CELEBRATION

The process by which you plan and create your Kwanzaa Celebration is as important as the service itself. As your Kwanzaa team plans, organizes and creates, they will be experiencing and demonstrating Nguzo Saba, the seven Kwanzaa principles, as well as the five practices outlined under the Kwanzaa Framework that follows. You may want to consider facilitating a Kwanzaa introductory workshop for the planning team.

THE KWANZAA FRAMEWORK

Dr. Karenga has described in his book, *The African American Holiday of Kwanzaa*, five basic practices which govern The Kwanzaa Celebration. These five practices create a framework which may be helpful when designing your service or celebration. *Every* activity that you plan should reflect one or more of the following categories:

- Ingathering of the People
- Reverence for the Creator and the Creation
- Commemoration of the Past
- Recommitment to Cultural Ideals
- Celebration of the Good

Ingathering of the People is demonstrated during the planning phase as you invite guest speakers and performers or as you conduct a promotional campaign to attract participants from the community. During the service, this practice is demonstrated during the festive prelude and processional.

Reverence for the Creator and the Creation is demonstrated through honoring and respecting each other throughout the planning process, making sure all ages are represented from your youth to your elders. In the service, this practice is reflected through prayer and meditation, as well as in poems and songs of praise and thanksgiving. Healing, forgiveness and bonding rituals also show reverence for the Creator and the Creation.

Commemoration of the Past is demonstrated in the planning process as the Kwanzaa team selects African/African American heroes and heroines to honor in the service and as necessary objects are collected for the libation portion of the service that honors the ancestors, i.e. Unity Cup, water, a plant.

“Order my steps...”
Psalms 19:133

Tip:

Kwanzaa committees may be divided based on the five basic practices in the framework.

Reverence for the Creator means:

- Prayer
- Meditation
- Praise and Thanksgiving

Reverence for The Creation means:

- Healing old resentments
- Releasing of grudges
- Honor and respect for all life

“Come, clad in peace, And I
will sing the songs the
Creator gave to me when
you [and I] and the Tree
and the Rock were one.”
Maya Angelou,
On The Pulse of Morning

Suggestions for Decorating the Celebration Area

- Cover a long table or altar with African fabric or the Bendera colors (black, red, and green).
- Add African artifacts sparsely to the table.
- Surround the base of the cloth-covered table with African carvings, African musical instruments, pictures of ancestors and books about Black history.
- Use other African cloth to drape other areas of the Celebration/Service room and the Karamu (banquet) room.
- Encourage as many participants as possible to wear African dress or jewelry.

“Thou shalt also decree a thing and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.”
Job 22:28

Recommitment to Cultural Ideals is reflected in planning as seven youth are selected and practice reciting the Nguzo Saba and the lighting of the candles. The minister or speaker will express these ideals in their lesson or talk. Asking the permission of the Elders to begin the celebration is showing a renewed commitment to the cultural ideal of honoring the wisdom of our Elders.

Celebration of the Good is reflected in many ways throughout the planning process and within the celebration service—as poets, dancer, musicians and drummers joyfully rehearse and perform, and as team members plan and prepare the Karamu feast. The Celebration of the Good is most certainly present as everyone partakes of the bounty of the Karamu banquet table.

SUCCESSFUL PLANNING CHECKLIST

- ☑ **Decide how to celebrate Kwanzaa**
 - Host Kwanzaa at your center for your congregation only.
 - Host Kwanzaa at your center for your congregation and community.
 - Support an existing celebration.
 - Collaborate with another ministry or community agency.
- ☑ **Determine how to draw forth African Americans from your congregation and/or from the community to help organize and lead the celebration.**
- ☑ **Decide on a date, preferably between December 26 and January 1. February, Black History Month is also a good time to host a Kwanzaa workshop and other related activities.**
- ☑ **Decide on time-allotment, i.e. one-hour Kwanzaa Worship Service or a two-hour Kwanzaa Celebration and Feast.**

- ✓ Consider offering a Kwanzaa Workshop for anyone interested in planning and participating in the service.
- ✓ Prepare a budget. If you are planning a community activity, your Kwanzaa celebration may qualify for funding from your state or local arts council or other sources because of its focus on the creative arts and the African American tradition.
- ✓ Form committees early to accommodate meetings and rehearsals.
- ✓ Create a time line.
- ✓ Contact community agencies.
- ✓ Work closely with all committee chairpersons.
- ✓ Work with youth director to clarify and prepare youth for their roles, i.e. candle lighting, singing, dancing, poetry or making Kwanzaa symbols.
- ✓ Select, contact and make necessary arrangements for guest speaker and guest performers, i.e. storytellers, drummers and dancers.
- ✓ Collect, purchase, borrow or make symbols for the Kwanzaa Table and room decorations (do this early)—an excellent intergenerational activity.
- ✓ Possibly teach one Kwanzaa word or concept each week, during Sunday Service (see Seven Principles, Kwanzaa Symbols and/or glossary).
- ✓ Plan a menu whether potluck or catered for the Karamu (Kwanzaa Feast, p. 28).
- ✓ Advertise, Advertise, Advertise! Use announcements, flyers, church programs, newsletters, PSA's and of course, word of mouth. Again, start early.

Notes:

Tips:

- Creative expression through music, dance or poetry by congregants not involved in the earlier ritual is a nice added touch to the Karamu. Encourage sharing rather than exactness.
- If space allows, tables displaying African art, jewelry and clothing can be set up.
- Check the telephone book for African or Caribbean caterers or restaurants to prepare or provide recipes for beverages, i.e. ginger tea. Peach tea is available in grocery stores.
- Children may be encouraged to research, prepare and provide an Afrocentric dish or beverage.
- Consider collecting and compiling your own cookbook from African American friends, family and community.

KARAMU MENU: A SAMPLE

Curry Chicken
Shrimp Gumbo
Rice (brown or white)
Green Beans
Cabbage Slaw
Relish Tray containing: radishes, sliced tomatoes, sliced onions and green peppers
Macaroni and Cheese Casserole
Greens (mustards, collards, and turnips)
Corn (pudding, on cob, steamed or fried)
Beans (black eyed peas, black beans and red beans)
Potato Salad
Corn Sticks or Muffins
Dinner Rolls

Desserts: Sweet Potato Pie, Apple Pie, Candied Yams, Pound Cake, Peach Cobbler

Beverages: Ginger Tea, Carrot Juice, Peach Tea

Note: Traditional African American dishes are thought to be high in salt and fat as well as sugar. Now-a-days, however, recipes are available substituting turkey or a vegetable stock for pork. Fructose, maple syrup, or artificial sweeteners can be substituted for sugar. Be creative and follow your taste buds.

KARAMU RECIPE RESOURCE

The Black Family Reunion Cookbook: Recipes & Food Memories, from The National Council of Negro Women, ISBN 1-879958-007

KWANZAA YENU IWE NA HERI!
(May your Kwanzaa be happy!)

KWANZAA CELEBRATION RESOURCES

AFRICAN/AFRICAN AMERICAN ANCESTORS RESOURCES

Empak Publishing Company

Department A

520 North Michigan Avenue Suite 1004

Chicago, IL 60811

- Heroes and Heroines (booklets available)
- *An Empak Black History Publication Series*

The Shrine of the Black Madonna Cultural Center and Book Store

13535 Livernois

Detroit, Michigan 48238

(313) 491-0777

POETRY RESOURCES

Angelou, M. (1994). The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou. New York: Random House.

Baldwin, J. (1985). Jimmy's Blues Selected Poems: James Baldwin. New York: St. Martins.

Dunbar, P. L. (1984). Lyrics of Lowly Life. New York: Carol Publishing Group.

Fowler, V. (1948). Nikki Giovanni. New York: Twayne Publishers.

Metropolitan Museum of Art. (1995). The Block. New York: Department of Special Publications and Viking.

MUSIC RESOURCES

Music was and is a key part of the African and African Diaspora experience. For them, it is a language in itself. Typically more than one drum is used in ceremonies and celebrations, because one drum speaks and the others respond.

During the enslavement period, music was often a saving grace. When the people were no longer afforded the luxury of their talking drums, "Negro Spirituals" emerged carrying the messages of their hearts. Beyond that, the music became a sophisticated cloaking device for coded messages. "Go Down Moses" rang out and they knew that Harriet Tubman was in the area to rescue someone. "Soon I Will Be Done with the Troubles of this World," and the family members of the singer understood that this time Harriet Tubman was coming for a loved one. For this reason, it is suggested that a selection be made from the Negro Spirituals so their many levels can be revealed. Your local library is your best, cost-free resource for *The Baptist Hymnal* and books on Negro spirituals, gospel and slave songs.

Other music suggestions:

From *Breaths* (Compact Disc on Flying Fish Records) by "Sweet Honey in the Rock"

"Ella's Song" (excellent for special music or Karamu)

"Breaths" (excellent before or after libation)

Spirituals [Silverman, J. C. (1995) Spirituals. New York: Chelsea House]

"Steal Away"

"Swing Low Sweet Chariot"

"Wade in the Water"

Music from Africa: [Silverman, J. C. (1993). African Roots. New York: Chelsea House]
"Prayer for Africa"
"Kum Ba Ya"
"Moyaba" [excellent for libation. Contact Rev. N. J. Cox 1-(816) 763-4187]

Unity's *Wings of Song*:
"What a Fellowship," #203
"Amazing Grace," #16
"New Age Vision," #227
"I Am Free, I Am Unlimited," #322

LIBATION: Suggested Script

Leader: It is an African tradition to pour libation at all special occasions. This Kwanzaa Celebration here at _____ is such an occasion. We pour libation out of love and respect for those who once lived in physical form—those who loved and served; those who laid a strong foundation for us and upon whose shoulders we stand. We pour water, a necessary life-giving and sustaining substance into rich, potent soil. Just as the water nurtures and supports growth in the soil, so, too, do our ancestors support and nurture us. (Brief pause.)

Leader: I will call the names of African and African American community ancestors first. As a congregation, after each name is called, I invite you to respond with Ase (ah-shay), meaning "It is so." Let's try that: Ase. *Congregation:* Ase.
(After each statement, a small amount of water is poured into the soil.)

Leader: We pour libation for our motherland, Africa.

Congregation: Ase.

We pour libation for over 20 million who died during the African Holocaust.

All: Ase.

We pour libation for a brighter future.

All: Ase.

We pour libation for Harriet Tubman, who led over 300 slaves to freedom.

All: Ase.

We pour libation for Akhenaton from the 18th dynasty of Egypt who boldly proclaimed there is only one God.

All: Ase.

We pour libation for Imhotep known in ancient Egypt as The Father of Medicine and Mathematics.

All: Ase.

We pour libation for Malcolm X, (allow for "Ase" before continuing) Martin Luther King, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. Dubois (continue with other favorite names and "Ase")

Let us now acknowledge our Unity ancestors.

We pour libation for Charles and Myrtle Fillmore.

All: Ase.

We pour libation for (Unity minister, teachers, others)

All: Ase.

Let us now acknowledge our personal and community ancestors.

We pour libation for (Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, etc.)

All: Ase.

We pour libation for Native American blood shed on this continent.

All: Ase.

We pour libation for those who died in the Jewish Holocaust.

All: Ase.

(Encourage congregation to add others' names as you continue to pour libation. When all have finished, close the ritual with these words stated twice slowly with clear intent.)

Pass on now to higher ground.

All: Ase.

Permission granted to reproduce Libation Script.

Unity Quotes reflecting THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

1. Umoja (Unity) "...unification is accomplished through love....Begin today to be a little more patient. Practice kindness. Be generous in thought and act."

Charles & Cora Fillmore, *Teach Us To Pray*, p. 109-110

2. Kugichagulia (Self-determination) "Keep your own light lifted up by living the victorious life of Spirit. And then, remembering that your dear one, as well as yourself, is an incarnation of the Father, keep him silently committed to the core of his own divine spirit. You do not know what God wants to do in him; you never can know."

H. Emilie Cady, *Lessons in Truth*, p. 134, No. 23

3. Ujima (Collective work and responsibility) "If two or more people come together in a spirit of cooperation, understanding, compassion, joy, peace, love, and mutual blessing, imagine the energy they generate!...the group itself takes on an "over-soul," a mind, a power greater than the sum total of all the members of that group."

Richard and Mary-Alice Jafolla, *The Quest*, p. 32-33

4. Ujamaa (Cooperative economics) "The fact one has a surplus and gives some of it to another does not make the one a benefactor and the other a dependent. The one with the surplus is simply a steward of God and is merely discharging the work of his stewardship."

Charles Fillmore, *Prosperity*, p. 152-153

5. Nia (Purpose) "Really to succeed we must have some great purpose in mind, some goal toward which we are to work."

Charles and Cora Fillmore, *Teach Us To Pray*, p. 45

6. Kuumba (Creativity) "To create is to bring into visibility; to form something where before there was nothing..."

Emilie Cady, *How I Use Truth*, p. 94

7. Imani (Faith) "It is a spiritual power or principle that operates as a faculty of our mind. It embodies hope, belief, trust, and expectancy....This 'perceiving power' [of mind] acting as a faculty in our consciousness, sees the possibility of a thing or result long before there is any evidence of it in the visible realm."

Foundations of Unity, Series II, Vol. 2, p.15

KWANZAA GLOSSARY

Dashiki (DAH-shee-kee)

Loose fitting shirt worn by men or a blouse worn by women.

Diaspora (Di-as-por-a)

The dispersion or scattering of any people of common origin or culture. In this tradition it refers to people of African descent not on the continent of Africa.

Gele (gay-LAY)

An African head-wrap worn by women.

Heri (HEH-rdee)

Means happiness, blessedness, good luck, success or anything good.

Kwanzaa (KWAHN-zah)

An African American holiday which celebrates family, community and culture.

Kwanzaa yenu iwe na heri! (KWAHN-zah YEH-noo EE-weh NAH HEH-rdee)

“May your Kwanzaa be happy!”

Matunda Ya Kwanza (mah-TOON-dah YAH KWAHN-za)

“The first fruits” from which Kwanzaa gets its name. Refers to origins of Kwanzaa in the African agricultural and harvest celebrations. First fruit celebrations are recorded in ancient Egypt (Kemet); Nubia; and in past and present Ashantiland; Yorubaland; Swaziland; and among the Zulu and others.

Tambiko (tam-BEE-koo)

“Pouring of Libation” usually into soil, i.e. a plant, a bowl of soil, or on the ground.

This ritual is done to remember the positive contributions of the ancestor. This ritual is also found in Native American, Chinese, Roman, Greek, Tibetan, Druid and other traditions in various forms.

Wazee (wah-ZEE)

“The Elders” always treated with honor and respect. Kwanzaa does not begin until the Elders (wazee) have given their permission. They should also lead the banquet line.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, D. A. (1993). Kwanzaa An Everyday Resource and Instructural Guide. New York: Gumbs & Thomas.

*Banks, V. J. R. (1989). The Kwanzaa Coloring Book. Los Angeles: Sala Enterprises.

Freemen, D. R., and MacMillan, D. M. (1992). Kwanzaa. Springfield,NJ: Enslow Publishers.

Gayle, S. (1994). Kwanzaa, An African American Holiday. Mahwah, NJ: Watermill Press.

Goss, L. & C. (1995). It's Kwanzaa Time. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Hoyt-Goldsmith D. (1993). Celebrating Kwanzaa. New York: Holiday House.

Karenga, M. (1989). The African American Holiday of Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community & Culture. Los Angeles: University of Sankore Press.

Newton D. M. (1990). Kwanzaa. Chicago: Chocolate Children's Press.

*Newton, D. M. (1992). My First Kwanzaa Book. Chicago: Scholastic.

*Pinkney, A. D. (1993). Seven Candles for Kwanzaa. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

*Porter, A. P. (1991). Kwanzaa. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhonda Books.

Schag, J. (April 1978). Carl Jung and the Fire of the Magi. San Jose, California: The Rosicrucian Digest, Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC.

*Thompson, H. D. (1992). Let's Celebrate Kwanzaa: An Activity Book for Young Readers. New York: Gumbs & Thomas.

Watermeyer, E. W. E. (March 1985). Symbols. San Jose, California: The Rosicrucian Digest, Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC.

*Provides appropriate material for children and adults needing a beginning awareness of Kwanzaa.