



# **The Woke Express**

**BIG BETHEL SOCIAL  
ACTION COMMISSION**

February 2024



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Greetings Woke Family,

**Happy Black History month!** I used to feel slighted that we were given the month with the fewest days to celebrate our heritage. As time went on, I took on a different perspective.....  
**You can't have American history without Black history, so we should be celebrating our heritage and greatness EVERY month!**

We celebrate the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, however, there is still much work to do. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been stripped down so much by the Supreme Court, that it is hardly recognizable. We must use our vote to elect Congress people and Senators who are sympathetic to our cause and will commit to passing the resolution to get the Voting Rights Act and George Floyd Bills passed. This is not something that a president can do by his/herself.

Unfortunately, there are many efforts here in Georgia to erase our contributions and significance in the building of this country. Bills that allow for black history to be removed from the curriculum in the classroom, banning books about slavery, firing teachers, and cancelling funding to schools that are accused of teaching critical race theory are just a few. Despite these efforts, we continue to rise. From 2020 until now, here in Georgia, we have elected the first African American Senator (Raphael Warnock) and the first Jewish Senator (Jon Ossoff). We have also witnessed the appointment of the first African American female Supreme Court Associate Justice (Ketanji Brown Jackson). **This could not have been accomplished without your vote!**

As we kick-off this election cycle, **I implore you not to become apathetic.** In 2016, less than half of registered African Americans voted. Our performance improved in 2018 but unfortunately not enough to elect the first female African American Governor in history. In 2020 and 2022, the African American turn-out in Georgia was record-breaking! So much so, that our impact on the outcome of the national election is still being talked about. While I understand the frustration of a perceived economic slow down on the heels of a pandemic, please realize that electing to sit this one out cannot be an option. I cannot tell you who to vote for but I can suggest that you vote your conscience and consider the impact of your vote on your community at large.

**Stay focused, keep the faith and don't let anyone silence your voice. Your vote is your voice!**

Peace and Blessings,

Editor in Chief

# February

## **American Heart Month**

This campaign reminds people to focus on their hearts and aims to get local communities and organizations involved in raising awareness to prevent heart disease.

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Trusted Source run a program called The Heart Truth, which posts fact sheets and ideas. Campaigns to raise awareness have included wearing red on the first Friday of February.

## **National Cancer Prevention Month**

The American Institute for Cancer Research spearhead National Cancer Prevention Month, which is represented by a purple ribbon. The campaign focuses on what people can do to decrease their risk of cancer by making lifestyle changes.

Other key organizations include the American Cancer Society (ACS) and the National Foundation for Cancer Research. These organizations raise awareness through walks and runs, volunteering drives, and extensive social media campaigns.

How to get involved: The ACS accept donations all year round.

## **National Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)/Low Vision Awareness Month**

These campaigns raise awareness and education around AMD. The NEI Trusted Source have various resources and advice, including videos, webinars, fact sheets, and more.

## **International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month**

The CDC observes this campaign, and the goal is to raise awareness around prenatal infections. The Group B Strep International organization are heavily involved every February and offer a wealth of resources.

# AME DAY @ THE GEORGIA STATE CAPITOL



**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024**  
**NOTICE OF TIME CHANGE**

**9:15AM \* ROOM 230 CAP**

**BISHOP JACKSON WILL BE THE  
CHAPLAIN OF THE DAY  
IN THE HOUSE CHAMBERS**



**BREAKFAST \* MEET THE LEGISLATORS**  
**\* CAPITOL TOUR \* GALLERY VIEW OF THE HOUSE  
CHAMBERS IN SESSION \* PRESS CONFERENCE**  
**\* GROUP PHOTO**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT  
REV. BO BARBER- 706-573-0176**

**We're asking churches to use vans/buses to transport their  
members to avoid the parking fees.**



## **We Honor You, Reverend Lee!**

Although the Reverend Jarena Lee was ordained by the AME Church posthumously during a recent general conference, in the 1800s, she was unable to attain a license to preach. As a woman seeking ordination, she was considered an outsider. Women were simply not allowed to preach, and despite her many efforts to convince Bishop Allen, she ultimately found it necessary to pursue her ministry without a license. Still, Lee was fervent in her belief that God had called her to the Gospel, and began her lonely but fruitful journey throughout Philadelphia, New York and other locations in the Northeast to preach the word of God.

Women in Ministry today stand on Lee's shoulders, whose courage and determination led to our entering the pulpit not only as preachers, but also as bishops in the AME Church. The Reverend Lee is an example of what true faith and a persistent spirit can accomplish. Today, the AME Church and our Women in Ministry honor the Reverend Jarena Lee and pay special tribute to her in February during her birthday.

*The Reverend Monica Jones, PhD*

For more information on the ministry of the Reverend Jarena Lee, see these sites:

<https://amewim.org/>

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/jarena-lee-and-early-ame-church#:~:text=Born%20into%20a%20free%20Black,the%20male%2Ddominated%20African%20Metho dist>

Greetings,

I give thanks and praise to my **Lord and Savior** for each blessing in my life. I, also say **thanks to Pastor Foster** for all the support and guidance that he provides to Big Bethel Social Action Commission. It is impossible to imagine that we would move forward as a ministry without the provision of our Lord and without the advice of Pastor Foster.

I am sending out this correspondence as I feel duty-bound to share details of the insightful, energizing, and successful **"Membership Drive"** we experienced this past Sunday (1/23/23).

First, I must give a "Huge" thanks to our keynote speaker, **Rev. Dr. Monica Jones**. She gave her time and talent to make an outstanding presentation for our event. Her topic was **"Christian Nationalism"**, a topic that many human rights activists consider as the fundamental backbone and catalyst to the spread of White Supremacy and **"The Great Replacement Theory"** in America today. She made crystal clear the harmful effects of this movement of Christian Nationalism. We will not be blindsided by this misguided movement.

Also, a big shout out to **Phyllis Smiley** for all the hard-work she provided with the audio/video during the presentation.

As for the membership drive, we had over fifteen participants in attendance on one of the coldest Sundays in years. We had the pro-team of both the Steward and Trustee Boards in attendance (**Brother Pritchett and Brother Baxter** respectfully). They shared that they will be involved with our projects and will encourage other officers and members to do likewise. BBSAC knows that this commitment from both church leaders is a major boost to our ministry as we look to take on major initiatives this election year.

Overall, everyone present provided good input and showed enthusiasm for working with the Social Action Commission.

I wholeheartedly say thanks to all the officers of the Social Action Commission for their commitment to providing all the food and drinks and the set up required to make the event a total success. This event could not have been a success without the arduous work of the officers of the Social Action Commission. I need to say special thanks to **V.P. Keith Burnett, Sec. Sheila Johnson, and Mary Gordon** as they were on site doing the required work. Also significantly involved to help plan the event, were **Rex Smith and Emery Wright**. Yes, the BBSAC team is shaping up to accomplish the purpose our Lord has for this ministry.

The Big Bethel Social Action Commission is looking forward to working with each of you to promote voter participation, voter registration and to provide the community with truthful information about the candidates and issues on the ballot. All the forementioned will be done in the pursuit of justice and equality for all.

Best regards,

Cyril Mayes

Social Action Commission, President

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PN: +18183378934

**P.S. - We meet every second Tuesday of the month via Zoom. If you would like to have the Zoom invite sent to you, please feel free to email me or call me to request that the invite be sent to you.**

## Equity Not Reparations (Part 3)

By Keith Burnett

Who is Accountable and what does that look like? This great travesty called the North Atlantic Slave Trade was a complex web that was facilitated by many hands. Capitalism and getting rid of one's enemy. This was not just a European endeavor, there was a wide swath of other races that capitalized off of the slave trade.

It was a business, and the fact that the brothers and sisters who worked for free for 400 years demanded their share of equity. We are quite aware of the role that the Europeans played in the North Atlantic Slave trade. Let's smash the myth that it was only facilitated by the Europeans because the catalyst was Africans. Their biggest client was the Kingdom Britain.

The top ten main African nations involved in the Slave trade were:

1. **Dahomey** - The Kingdom of Dahomey was a West African Kingdom located in present day Benin. They were a major source of slaves for the Atlantic Slave trade, raiding nearby settlements for slaves.  
*"The slave trade is the ruling principle of my people. It is the source and the glory of their wealth...the mother lulls the child to sleep with notes of triumph over an enemy reduced to slavery..." King Gezo*
2. **Morocco** - The Alawite Dynasty was a Kingdom in Morocco which took part in the Trans-Saharan slave trade. The Alawite Dynasty captured many Africans and sold them as slaves to the Middle Eastern Empires. They also raided many African towns and were the center for the Arab slave trade. Slave trade finally ended 1950.
3. **Ottoman Algeria** - The Regency of Algiers was a state in Algeria that lasted from 1518 to 1830, and it was part of the Ottoman Empire. They were huge players in the slave trade. They enslaved Africans and Europeans that they raided along with the Barbary pirates.
4. **Egypt** - Egypt was a major player in the Trans-Saharan and then the Atlantic slave trade. It started in 641 A.D. with the Muslim Conquest of Egypt by the Rashidun caliphate. It is estimated that millions of slaves were taken from Egypt to Asia. It ended in the 1900's after immense pressure by the British after Egypt defaulted on its debts.
5. **Kanem Bornu** - The Kanem Bornu Empire was based in parts of current day Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria. It lasted from 700 to 1900 AD. The principal trade commodity of the Empire was in slaves. Initially, they were sold in the trans-Saharan slave trade and eventually participated in the transatlantic slave trade as well, with about two million slaves having moved through the slave route in their Empire.

6. **Kingdom of Allada** - The Kingdom of Allada was a coastal Kingdom located in Southern Benin. It reached the peak of its power in the 16th century when it was a center of the Atlantic Slave trade, being a huge source of slaves. Slaves were captured by raiding and attacking enemy kingdoms. These slaves were then traded on to the European slavers who were bound for America.
7. **Aro Confederacy** - The Aro Confederacy was a political union located in present-day South-Eastern Nigeria. The Igbo who were part of the Aro Confederacy were one of the leading exporters of slaves.
8. **Ashanti Empire** - The Ashanti Empire was an Empire based in current day Ghana. They were formed in 1700 and took part in the slave trade until the 19th century [8]. The economy of the Ashanti Empire was based on the trade of gold and slaves, while their army mainly served as a tool to capture more and more Africans and force them into slavery. Captives in war were taken as slaves to be either treated as slaves in the Empire or be exported across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas. o Europe and the Americas from 1690 to 1902.
9. **Songhai Empire** - The Songhai Empire was one of the largest states in African history and was located in Western Africa. The slave trade was a huge part of the Songhai Empire [9]. Slaves were used extensively within the Empire itself to transport goods, while literate slaves stood a chance of becoming government officials, but many were also exported in the transatlantic slave trade via European slavers.
10. **Mali Empire** - The Mali Empire was based in current day Mali from 1235 to 1670 A.D. They were hugely involved in trade but also the trade of slaves through the trans-Saharan trade route. Slave labor was common and so was the export of slaves.

The reasons I mention these are in an effort to give an unbiased opinion of this great affront to our culture. Whatever African roots we enjoyed before our ancestors were kidnapped and sold as property to the highest bidder have been watered down and have basically tried to be erased from history. Let's be very clear, all parties involved were capitalists among other things.

In part 4, I will share a blue print going forward on what steps we as a people need to take.



☆☆☆ **WITHOUT** ☆☆☆

# BLACK INVENTORS

YOU WOULDN'T HAVE THESE

PRODUCT	INVENTOR	DATE
ELEVATOR	-ALEXANDER MILES	-1867
FIRE EXTINGUISHER	-THOMAS MARSHALL	-1872
STETHOSCOPE	-THOMAS A. CARRINGTON	-1876
LIGHT BULB	-LEWIS LATIMER	-1882
IRONING BOARD	-SARAH BOONE	-1887
MAIL BOX	-PAUL L. DOWNING	-1891
PENCIL SHARPENER	-JOHN L. LOVE	-1897
TRAFFIC LIGHTS	-GARRETT MORGAN	-1923
BLOOD PLASMA BAG	-CHARLES DREW	-1945
AIR CONDITIONING UNIT	-FREDERICK M. JONES	-1949

*Oladino*



**Mass Poor People's & Low Wage Worker's  
Moral March to  
State House Assemblies**  
(A day of Nationally Coordinated Direct Action)

**Saturday, March 2, 2024, 10am**

**Central Presbyterian Church**  
201 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, GA  
(Across from the State Capitol)

**Join us lifting voices for:**

- Protecting our ability and access to vote!
- Expanding our access to affordable and just healthcare!
- Calling for livable wages and policies that support a thriving workforce!

Click [here](http://tinyurl.com/rmed63aw) to sign up, cut and paste  
<http://tinyurl.com/rmed63aw> in your browser,  
or scan the QR code



"If there is no struggle, there is no progress."  
- Frederick Douglass

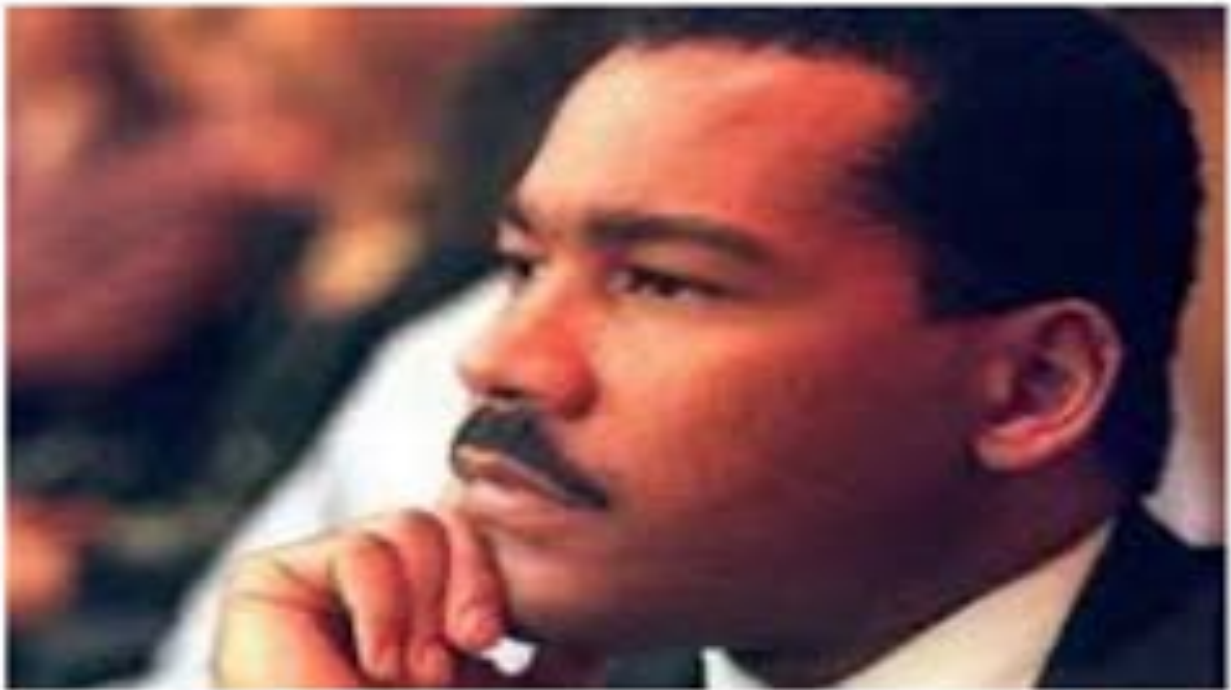
"Never be limited by other people's limited imaginations."  
- Dr. Mae Jemison

"Success is to be measured not so much by the position  
that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he  
has overcome while trying to succeed."  
- Booker T. Washington

"Truth is powerful and it prevails."  
- Sojourner Truth

"The Lord was pleased to strengthen us, and remove all  
fear from us, and disposed our hearts to be as useful as possible."  
- Richard Allen

# **In Memory Of Dexter King**



**January 30, 1961 - January 22, 2024**



# **2024 Presidential Preference Primary Election Dates to Remember**

## **Presidential Preference Primary (PPP) AND Special Election - County/Municipal Contests**

**Registration deadline – February 12<sup>th</sup> @ 5:00 p.m. EST**

**Early Voting – February 19<sup>th</sup> – March 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Mandatory Saturday Voting - February 24<sup>th</sup> and March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Absentee Ballot Request – Now through Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Absentee Ballot Return deadline – Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 p.m. EST**

**Primary In-person Voting – Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**

## **Runoffs**

**Early Voting for Special Election Runoff for Local Offices (if needed) - begins As soon as possible, but no later than April 1 – April 5**

**Special Election Runoff Absentee Ballot Request Deadline – Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**

**In-person Special Election Runoff for Local Offices (if needed) – Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>**

# **OUR VOTES MATTER!!!!**

## Secretary of State Website (My Voter Page):

<https://www.mvp.sos.ga.gov/MVP/mvp.do>



**From this site, Voters can access/update critical voter information:**

- **Voter Registration**
- **Confirm Voter status (maintained by local county office)**
- **Change/Update Voter Information**
- **Polling location Information (directions, hours, precinct cards, etc.)**
- **Absentee Ballot Information**
- **Early Voting Information**
- **Sample Ballots**
- **Elected Officials Information**
- **Much More!**

## **Voter Tips/Reminders**

1. Be sure your state issued ID matches your voter registration name.

**Acceptable forms of identification if you do not have a Georgia Driver's License or State Identification Card Number**

### **Identification with your photograph:**

- United States Passport
- Georgia voter identification card
- Other valid identification card issued by a branch, department, agency, or entity of the State of Georgia, any other state, or the United States authorized by law to issue personal identification.
- United States military identification card
- Employee identification card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States government, Georgia state government, or Georgia county, municipality, board, authority, or any other entity of the state of Georgia
- Tribal identification card

### **Documents that show your name and address:**

Current utility bill ~ Bank statement ~ Paycheck  
Government check ~ Other government document

2. Review the sample ballot (if applicable) on the Secretary of State website.
3. Take advantage of Early Voting and Absentee Ballots
4. If your right to vote is challenged, you have a right to request a **"Provisional"** ballot.

**\*\*\*PLEDGE TO GET THREE (3) NEW VOTERS REGISTERED\*\*\***

# **OUR VOTES MATTER!!!!**