



**BIG BETHEL SOCIAL  
ACTION COMMISSION**



**FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA DISTRICT ATTORNEY FANI T. WILLIS  
TO BE GUEST SPEAKER FOR  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SUNDAY AT BIG BETHEL AME CHURCH!**



**Atlanta, Georgia –Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis will be the guest speaker for the historic Big Bethel AME Church’s Martin Luther King Sunday, January 14,**

2024, during the 10am service, at Big Bethel AME Church, 220 Auburn Avenue., downtown Atlanta, GA (Please see inside for her Biography).

Led by Pastor John Foster, Ph.D., the historic Big Bethel AME Church is synonymous with being a safe haven for political and civil rights leaders to freely speak.

President of the History & Heritage Ministry at Big Bethel AME Church, Richard Marion says, "we look forward to receiving a good and uplifting message from DA Willis."

"We are honored to have Ms. Willis as our guest speaker," says Carla Morrison, Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday Chairperson at Big Bethel AME Church. "As a member of the History & Heritage ministry and the Chairperson for MLK Sunday, I thought this would be a great opportunity to highlight our new age women civil rights leader, by having District Attorney Fani Willis as our guest speaker," stated the women & girls advocate.

"It Starts With Me: Shifting The Cultural Climate Through The Study and Practice of Kingian Nonviolence", is the national theme from the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, during 2024's Martin Luther King Day celebration, which Big Bethel AME has adopted, and DA Willis will speak to.

## **Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday Service at Big Bethel AME Church**

**This is a special day as we continue to lift up the name of  
Jesus Christ, while paying tribute to one of God's disciples,  
Martin Luther King, Jr., and his legacy.**

### **About Fani T. Willis**

D.A. Willis took office on January 1, 2021, after ousting a longtime incumbent while campaigning on a commitment to both protect Fulton's neighborhoods and reform Fulton's criminal justice system by making it fairer, more transparent, and focused on reducing crime by changing lives rather than just seeking retribution. She also promised the people of Fulton that she would restore integrity and effectiveness to the office, and she has brought in a new team of highly experienced trial lawyers and civic leaders who are committed to making the Fulton County District Attorney's office the best in the Southeast and one of the top local prosecutor's offices in the United States.

D.A. Willis is a proud Bison, graduating from Howard University in 1992. She came to Georgia to attend Emory University School of Law, graduating in 1996. She chose to make Fulton County her home, and she lives in the City of South Fulton, where she had the honor of serving as Chief Judge of the municipal court. She is the proud mother of two adult daughters.

### **About Big Bethel AME Church:**

The historic Big Bethel AME Church is 176 years old and was an integral part of the Civil Rights Movement. Our very own member Mr. Jesse Hill was a staunch financial supporter of the movement, and the church has hosted numerous civil rights meetings.

**BECOMING BIG BETHEL AME CHURCH:**

Big Bethel AME Church is the oldest African-American congregation in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia, and according to AME historical documents, it is the mother church of AME in North Georgia. Big Bethel AME Church is located at 220 Auburn Avenue NE in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood. It is the "first" church in the North Atlanta District, in the Atlanta-North Georgia Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Big Bethel was founded in 1847 as Union Church in the town of Marthasville, Georgia. Marthasville became Terminus, and finally Atlanta, and Union Church became Bethel Church, then Bethel Tabernacle. At the close of the Civil War, the AME Church spread rapidly throughout the former Confederacy, and the Bethel Tabernacle allied herself with the denomination, becoming Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Her first pastor was Rev. Joseph Woods. In 1879, the first public school for blacks in Atlanta, Gate City Colored School, was founded in the basement of the church, though it would later move to Houston Street Morris Brown College held its first classes here in 1881 before moving to its first campus. Big Bethel was known as "Sweet Auburn's City Hall." In 1911, President William Howard Taft spoke here, as did Nelson Mandela in 1990.

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Happy New Year Woke Nation,

If you are reading this then God has kept you and sustained you into a new year of the Lord our God. Now that we have gotten Advent, Christmas tide, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and the Yuletide behind us, it's time to get focused and get to work in 2024. We have a major, life-changing election to study up for.

Georgia has been in national headlines since the 2020 presidential election. We have seen the awarding of almost \$150 million dollars to two Fulton County poll workers who courageously stood up against the rich and powerful to protect their dignity, are in the midst of a major RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) case regarding the attempt to disenfranchise thousands of Fulton County voters (being overseen by District Attorney Fani Willis) and most recently, the FBI had to intercept a package of anthrax that had been mailed to one of the Fulton County election offices.

It is no surprise that the residents of the birthplace of the Civil Rights movement would take the lead in showing the rest of the country what it means to take a stand. Martin Luther King Jr., John Lewis and many others fought long and hard for our right to vote in America. It is incumbent

on each of us to continue to share the message, struggle and sacrifice for generations to come. That means we will need every voice to be heard and counted at the polls in November.

Get Ready, we will be providing a wealth of information over the next several months to help prepare you for the road ahead. Now is also a good time to begin researching the candidates in your district so you can evaluate who will best represent your values and make the most impact to your community.

Sincerely,

The Committee



# January Health Awareness

## National Blood Donor Month

People have observed National Blood Donor Month since January 1970, as winter is one of the most difficult seasons to collect blood. It is a drive to increase blood donations and recognize the work of donors.

Organizations such as the American Red Cross and America's Blood Centers come together to celebrate National Blood Donor Month, encouraging people to donate. Locate a local blood donation center and give today!

## National Birth Defects Prevention Month

This is a campaign to educate people on preventing birth defects, or congenital disabilities.

The National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN) have developed materials and resources to educate and inform medical professionals and the public. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have also produced guides and advice. Email [nbdpn@nbdpn.org](mailto:nbdpn@nbdpn.org) for more information.

## National Glaucoma Awareness Month

Supported by the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) and the National Eye Institute (NEI), this campaign highlights the dangers of glaucoma, for which there is currently no cure. For information on glaucoma, dilated eye examinations, and financial assistance available for eye care, visit [www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/glaucoma](http://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/glaucoma).

## Thyroid Awareness Month

The American Thyroid Association promotes public learning about the prevention, treatment, and cure of thyroid-related diseases and cancer.

Join us for a Live Presentation

**Sunday, January 21, 2024**

Immediately Following Morning Service

**GOD, GUNS AND TRUMP**

AN   
**EVIL**  
THAT  
**CREEPS**

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*Six Reasons Why the Black Church  
Should **Reject Christian Nationalism***

**The Reverend Monica C. Jones, PhD.**

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## An Evil That Creeps: Six Reasons Why the Black Church Should Reject Christian Nationalism

This primer summarizes Christian Nationalism (CN), which is the thought or philosophy that Christianity is superior to any other religious tradition and that America is to be revered. It identifies with “God country and guns” themes that currently often include an allegiance to the 45th president. CN Pulpits and Proponents most likely:

1. Agree with violence and threats against others under the guise of patriotism **John 13:34**
2. Criticize and condemn immigration rights **Numbers 35:14-15**
3. Stress anti-choice and abortion but not capital punishment **Psalms 33:5 Matthew 12:18**
4. Promote extreme views and prophecies that are not fulfilled
  - A. Democrats are demons May 2022 (Rev. G. Locke, TN)
  - B. God said Trump won (Kent Christmas, TN) **WRONG**
  - C. Predicted Trump would not be indicted (Julie Green, IA) **WRONG**
5. Have a distorted view of and embrace military force through biblical interpretation
6. Endorse the 45<sup>th</sup> president with little acknowledgment of wrongdoing or proven misconduct (who previously said he’s never asked God for forgiveness, told reporters he attends church “as often as I can, a lot” and attends different churches since he travels so much (CNN report, 2015). They ignore statements that violate Christian principles:

### **Colossians 3:8**

*But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips*

- a) “I did try and f--- her. She was married.” September 2005 (Access Hollywood audio) ... “I don’t even wait. And when you’re a star, they let you do it. You can do anything. Grab ‘em by the p----. You can do anything.” September 2005 (Access Hollywood audio) – and now has been found liable for sexual abuse and other crimes against women. **Filthy language**
- b) He’s not a war hero,” said Trump. “He was a war hero because he was captured. I like people who weren’t captured.” July 2015 (comments regarding Senator McCain, a former prisoner of war); “He is a Soros backed animal.” March 2023 (in reference to D.A. Bragg of New York) **Malice, slander**

One way that CN infiltrates the Black Church is when one or two of its issues is shared by some Black churches, such as abortion. Yet, we cannot be lured into a dangerous web of racist, hate-filled and violent beliefs because of one issue (*see, “Who are We”, Christian Recorder – May 2023*). We must look at the overall agenda, and then reject it when it threatens our church and most importantly, our faith.

### Media References

<https://youtu.be/AZ-iC4m1v0?si=mwJhlczYvxDG3u2>

“We’ve Become the Church Jesus Warned Us About”

<https://youtu.be/v-rLBbWdBIw?si=mH4eDHO1USgSPRVj>

“Christian Nationalists have Hijacked the GOP”

<https://youtu.be/zx8tsompfiM?si=Muv6mIxLbe8DNI-p>

“Trump Worship”/Christian Nationalism

## **Equity not Reparations (Part 2)**

### **By Keith Burnett**

The enslavement of African people in the Americas by the nations and peoples of Western Europe, created the economic engine that funded modern capitalism. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that most of the major corporations that were founded by Western European and American merchants prior to roughly 100 years ago, benefited directly from slavery. Some of them include Lehman Brothers, Aetna, Inc., JPMorgan Chase, New York Life, Wachovia Corporation (now owned by Wells Fargo), N M Rothschild & Sons Bank in London, Norfolk Southern, *USA Today*, FleetBoston, CSX, Canadian National Railway Company, Brown Brothers Harriman, Brooks Brothers, Barclays, AIG.

In part 1, I wanted to draw a picture of the great injustices put upon the builders of this great nation. Yes great, although the founding fathers had no clue this great experiment called democracy would eventually benefit all who chose to participate in it. Once the African American learned how to navigate this still ongoing experiment, outside forces always reared their ugly head to impede our growth. How do we right these wrongs?

Through legislation and pressure put on companies that profited from the North Atlantic slave trade, slaves and land were the main form of wealth in the US before 1860. Therefore, slaves figured in insurance policies and bank loans. Therefore, universities turned to slave owners and slave traders to raise money. Industry in the North and in Britain made money processing slave-grown tobacco, cotton and sugar from the South and Caribbean. Railway companies used slave labor. The most profitable activity on Wall Street was the slave trade.

Let's be clear, the American business structure of the time and the global economy of the time also benefited from the North Atlantic Slave trade (NAST). Corporations that benefited from NAST based on my research:

1) AIG \$45B, 2) Aetna \$70B, 3) Bank of America \$240B, 4) Brooks Brothers \$3.9B, 5) CSX \$65B, 6) Fleet Boston \$47B, 7) JP Morgan Chase \$452B, 8) New York Life \$ 670B, and 9) Norfolk Southern \$50B.

A combined net worth of \$971 billion dollars. This is a small list; through more research I know we can find more companies and nations that profited off of the NAST. Of the many myths told about American slavery, one of the biggest is that it was an archaic practice that only enriched a small number of men.



### **How slavery became America's first big business**

P.R. Lockhart

Historian and author Edward E. Baptist explains how slavery helped the US go from a "colonial economy to the sec...

The North Atlantic Slave Trade was the southern economic juggernaut that created American capitalism and exceptionalism. This exceptionalism was only realized off of the labor and sacrifice of those brought to this strange land where our languages, cultures, song and religion were taken from us. No worries though, we overcame. We remained patient and steadfast and continued to build this strange land. The fingerprint of the African American is all over every major industry and infrastructure project.

From the death of Crispus Attucks to the building of the American West, we the people of what the European people deemed the Dark continent are not looking for the proverbial handout. We desire equity. What does that look like? Stay tuned for part 3 where I will share my thoughts.

"Cheers to a new year and another  
chance for us to get it right."  
— Oprah Winfrey

"JANUARY,  
The first month of the year,  
A perfect time to start all over again,  
Changing energies and deserting old moods,  
New beginnings, new attitudes"  
— Charmaine J Forde

"New month, new intentions, new goals,  
new love, new light, and new beginnings."  
— April Mae Monterrosa