

The Lily Pad



“I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.”

Solomon 2:1



*400 years have passed.
Where do we go from here?*

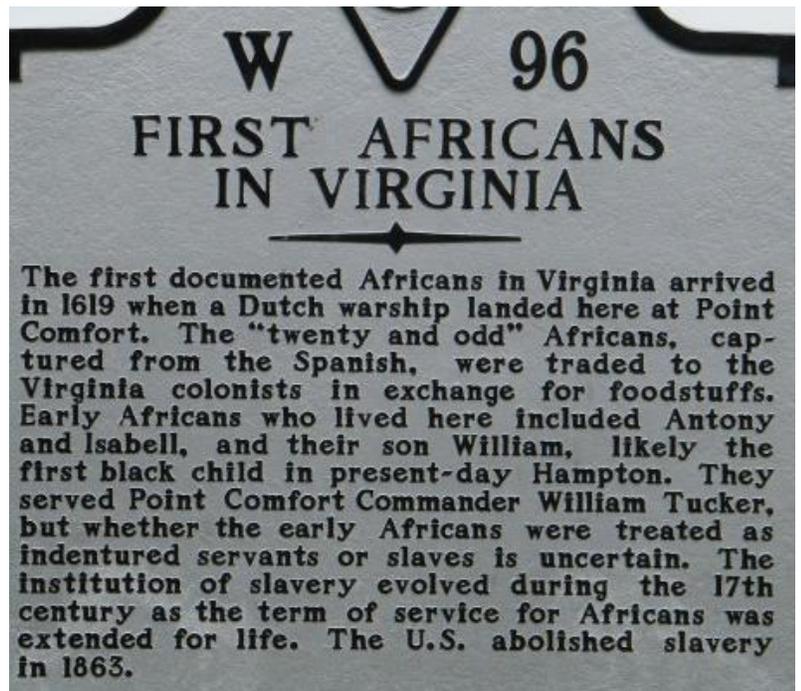
Dearest Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

All eyes were on Hampton, Virginia in August 2019 as the city commemorated a rich vein of history, The 400th Anniversary of the first Africans' arrival on their shores. The events happened long, long ago, but a good number of Americans are only now discovering the story, while 21st Century historians and researchers continues to unearth new layers of details. There may be differences of opinion among their ranks on certain names, dates and details, but they have a shared mission – educating Americans of all ages about a momentous but still little-known chapter in our nation's history.

History also chronicles that well before 1619, free and enslaved Africans joined Spanish explorers in the Americas as early as the 1520s. Esteban the Moor, served as guide and translator for a party near present-day Tampa Bay, the Gulf of Mexico, trekked across the Texas desert and on throughout the Southwest and into Mexico.

But August 1619 was a different kind of landing. Privateer White Lion who brought the first 20-odd Africans to “the new world” by force at Point Comfort, (present day Hampton) Virginia, were not free, and they sure weren't setting out on a fun-filled outing. No, these early Africans were forced to journey across the Atlantic Ocean and their arrival as slaves, began plantation economy which would ultimately set the course for the Civil War.

A married African couple was registered in the 1624 census as Antony and Isabell, by their master, Elizabeth City County planter William Tucker. In the subsequent census a year later, Antony and Isabell – considered to be “the Adam and Eve of Black America” – had been joined by their son, William. He may or may not be the first child of African descent born in Virginia, but he appears to be the first whose birth was formally documented.



Many hundreds of thousands were stolen out of Africa and trafficked to this new free land - America. Anthony and Isabella and their children, were enslaved with upwards of 4 million other Africans, for

generations. We also know that they were worked like mules and tortured and sold, up to and after The Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863.

But did you know that some of these enslaved African could fly away from their bondage, torture and even death? Here's an account of how they flew above their circumstances, their situations to freedom. "

"A long time ago, the story went, befo' yestidy was bo'n, an' befo' bygones was uster-bes, the Africans knew how to fly. Trapped in slave ships, taken across water wetter than tears, many forgot their flying powers. But there were those who remembered. One day, in the field, having had more than enough, one who remembered would speak in a strange tongue – Kum Baba Yali or Kum ... Yali, kum buba tambe – or they'd gather in a circle and run and run, roun day go fastuhnfastuh, and black men and black women and black children would rise up off the ground. They'd stand solid in the air. They'd fly back to Africa for good, or off somewhere for a little while. Some would simply disappear, jis go right out uh sight. The mad white overseer, who could not understand their chant, would chase the flying slaves. Goodie bye, goodie bye, they waved."

The Black Art of Escape: A New Vision for Black Americans, by Casey Gerald

1619 TO TODAY: 'WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?'

These Africans who arrived in Virginia did not travel to the New World destined to be slaves, nevertheless, the desire for economic wealth, set in motion events that would lead to slavery, the Civil War, the Civil Rights Movement and race issues that are still being debated today.

More than a few African Americans have no interest in remembering 1619, the marking our 400 years in slavery, however, its significance demonstrate the resilient and perseverance of African Americans to keep telling our story; it tells what people were going through, what they had to endure to progress despite being segregated and suppressed.

Why would we celebrate becoming slaves? That's certainly not what is being celebrated! 1619 is the undisputable evidence of the birth of a new race of people – **OUR PEOPLE**, African Americans, enslaved and all. August 2019 called for Americans to take a glance in the rear-view mirror at our ancestors to proclaim an abundant fruitful future for ourselves and the generations to come. To learn how to access that gift Ms. Fannie Moore's mother embodies: *"to stand inside oneself in another dimension, on another plane that might help us endure, if not transcend, this plane we cannot fully escape. I do not believe that we are our ancestor's wildest dreams. I do believe they are our greatest hope."*

Ms. Fannie Moore was born in 1849 on the Moore plantation, Moore, South Carolina and told her story of being a child slave in 1937 at the age of 88. (Slavery Through the Eyes of An Enslaved Child: Fannie Moore; by Jae Jones – October 19, 2018 – Black Women - Slavery)

The United States of America's history cannot be told accurately and truthfully without sharing the history that details these first "20 and odd" Africans; as we mourned the long history of American slavery and racism that began on Virginia's shores. At the same time, we'll celebrated the uncountable priceless impacting cultural contributions African Americans have made to our nation.

This story needs to be told in our school systems. It needs to be included in the American history curriculum, because **it is** American history. The truth has to be told in schools and museums and books, all of it. We've

got to honestly and truthfully weave this crucial and missing piece into what's being taught to all our future generations. It would be a great disservice not only to African Americans, but to all Americans, if we fail to appropriately recognize this and other important milestone in our Nation's history.

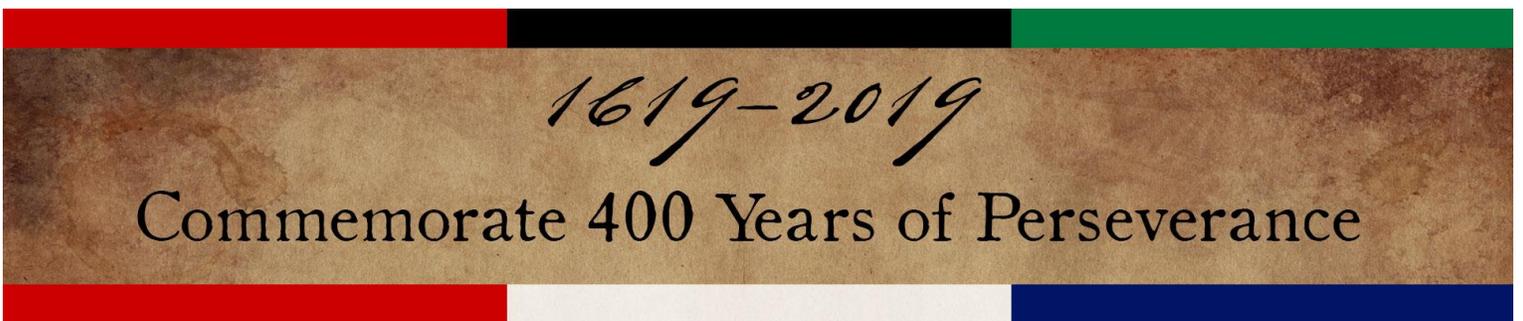
The 2019 Commemoration of 1619 can be a New Beginning for the next chapter in which we are deliberate and committed to recognizing and highlighting the resilience and contributions of African Americans since 1619. What would that chapter look like? Where do we go from here? The battle is not over. We need to continue the legacy.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the Civil Rights movement, dreamt and believed that there was a pathway to racial reconciliation, blessed with a sense of harmony and hope; where people are able to get along, loving and serving one another.

The 400th Commemoration of the arrival of Africans in the first permanent English Colony in North America highlights the perseverance of Africans from 1619 to the present. Numerous commemorations were held throughout the nation - lasting days and even weeks. They were broadcasted through the airwaves, blogged, on the radio, Internet and various other social media forums.

The legacy of slavery into our shared memory of the nation's origin is essential. After all, 246 years of slavery dominate the American story, in contrast to only 154 years of Emancipation. To forget the legacies of slavery, taint our past, and which indeed still taint us today. It is appealing to imagine that the American story is one of independence and freedom, with only occasional exceptions to that. The Mayflower is the center of our founding myth. But the slave ships arrived first. We must correct ourselves by keeping these woven events in mind, for we're descendants of both the Mayflower and the White Lion, and 100% citizens of the United States of America. If we celebrate what we imagine the Mayflower to represent, while burying what the White Lion symbolizes, then we're exonerating our history at the expense of the truth.

Just as the human body is one, though it has many parts that together form one body, so too is Christ. For by one Spirit we all were immersed and mingled into one single body. And no matter our status—whether we are Jews or non-Jews, oppressed or free—we are all privileged to drink deeply of the same Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13



*Strength & Courage in Christ,
Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martín*

OCTOBER 14th
Happy Birthday Marissa! Happy Birthday Sadie Mae!