

CAMPHOR

Memorial United Methodist Church

February 8, 2026



Rev. Cynthia Williams | Lead Pastor

Welcome to Camphor!

We are an open, welcoming, and affirming congregation, intentional and inclusive of all God's people. Camphor worship services are filmed, recorded, and broadcast online. Whoever you are—you are safe here. You are loved here. You are invited into full participation in our life together.

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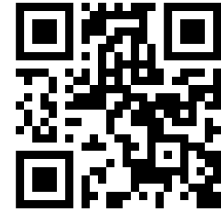
www.camphorconnects.org

Order of Worship

† If you are able, please stand | Where indicated, speak or sing the words in **bold**

Centering Moment: Our Daily Bread

Check out today's passage from
"Our Daily Bread" to get centered for Worship.



Call of the Drums

Daryl Boudreaux

† **Processional** *Siyahamba (AA/HH 164)* Women's Chorale | Judy Henderson, Director

Siyahamb' ekukhanyeni kwenkos
(*phonic: See-yah-hahmb eh-koo-kah-nyen kwen-kose*)

We are marching in the light of God
We are dancing in the light of God
We are singing in the light of God
We are praying in the light of God

Welcome & Call to Worship

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Honoring our Ancestors (Pouring of the Libation)

Mary K Boyd | Iggy Green | Leilani & Skyla Hedstrand

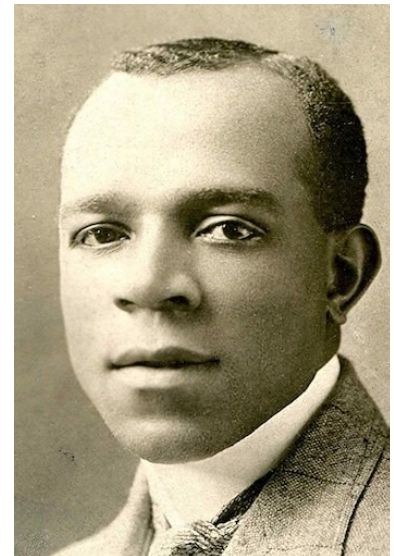
Spiritual Melody

Aimee K. Bryant & T. Mychael Rambo

Opening Prayer- *"From God's Trombones" by James Weldon Johnson*

Jim Mitchell

O Lord, we come this morning
Knee-bowed and body-bent
Before Thy throne of grace.
O Lord—this morning—
Bow our hearts beneath our knees,
And our knees in some lonesome valley.
We come this morning—
Like empty pitchers to a full fountain,
With no merits of our own.
O Lord—open up a window of heaven,
And lean out far over the battlements of glory,
And listen this morning.



[Verse 1]

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty;
let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.

[Verse 3]

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast 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 the wine of the world, we forget thee;
shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.

Spoken Word

Where I'm From by Nilwona Nowlin | Read by Corrine McAfee

I am from the machete that cut sheet cakes and chopped weeds.

I am from Alaga syrup,

lime green easy chairs

and fried Spam and eggs on toast.

I am from homemade jellies and jams,

pineapple upside down cake,

paella,

hot water cornbread

and "gov'ment" cheese.

The purple and gold Crown Royal bag filled with change

and the big gold covered Holy Bible that leads to change.

Hymns and Marvin Gaye.

House too full, house too loud.



I am from, "Girl, you slower than molasses in January!"

and "Yall don't believe fat meat greasy"

and "Yall be quiet in there, and go to sleep!"

The sizzle of the hot comb meeting thick hair,

"Hold your ear down."

"Ooo, girl, look at them kitchens!"

I am from doxologies

and decorating the fake Christmas tree.

Birthday cake and ice cream

and generic "puffa puffa wheat."

Dad's homemade egg nog

and Nat "King" Cole on the record player.

Roller skates and Funkytown.

I am from the mind of God,

a precious child created in the Creator's image;

created to create.

I am from hand-me-down clothes,

handed out food

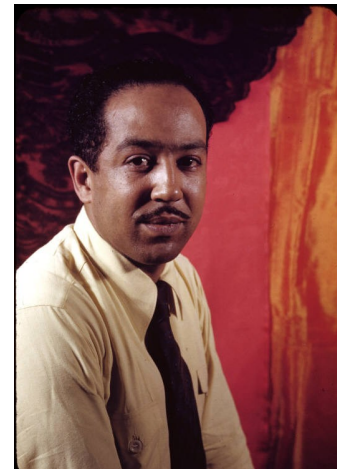
and a handed down faith.

"Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us.

Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.

Facing the rising sun of a new day begun,

let us march on 'til victory is won!"



I, Too by Langston Hughes | Read by Amaris

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh, and eat well

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I'll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody'll dare say to me,

"Eat in the kitchen,"

Then. Besides,

They'll see how beautiful I
am And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

Interlude*Mother Land*

T. Mychael Rambo, Soloist

Sympathy by Paul Laurence Dunbar | Read by Brandon McAfee, Jr.

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!

When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;

When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,

And the river flows like a stream of glass;

When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,

And the faint perfume from its chalice steals—

I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing

Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;

For he must fly back to his perch and cling

When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;

And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars

And they pulse again with a keener sting—

I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,

When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—

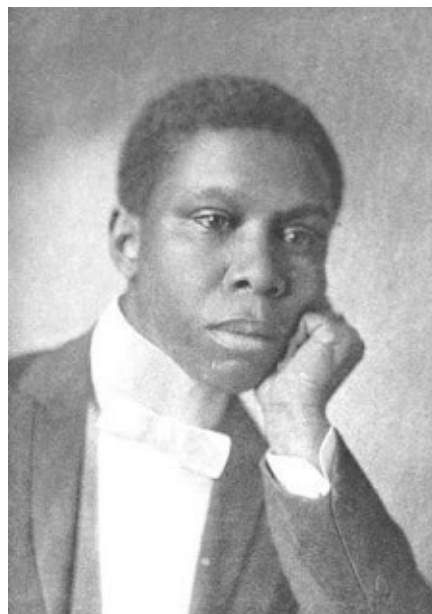
When he beats his bars and he would be free;

It is not a carol of joy or glee,

But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,

But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—

I know why the caged bird sings!.

**Interlude***Mother Land*

T. Mychael Rambo, Soloist

Song of Response*There Is a Balm*

Women's Chorale | Soloist: Courtney Green

Ministry of Giving in Song*The Lord is Blessing Me*

Women's Chorale



Scan the QR Code to give online via Square or PayPal!

1st Offering: Change for Change (Dorcas Circle)

2nd Offering: Tithes & General Offering

Wisdom from the Elder: A Children's Moment *"Tattered & Torn"* Barbara Harris-O'Neal

Song of Response- *Tower of Strength* Aimee K. Bryant | Quinlan McWilliams, Accompanist

We are a tower of strength within and without

We are a tower of strength within

(Repeat)

We let every burden fall from our shoulders

All anxiety slip from the mind

(Repeat)

At let all fears slip away slip away

All fears slip away

(Repeat)

We let every shackle be loosened

We let every shackle be loosed.

(Repeat)

Melodies of our Musical Heritage Aimee K. Bryant | Quinlan McWilliams, Accompanist

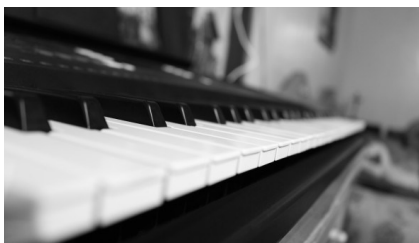
Reflection | Prayer | Call & Response *"Kept through our Songs"* Pastor Cynthia Williams

† Closing & Recessional *Never Give Up | Babalaya*

(Worshippers may depart. Go in Peace)

**Please join us for refreshments and fellowship immediately following worship
in the narthex/fellowship area.**

**Thank you to all who helped bring today's worship to life, with special thanks to
guest artists Aimee K. Bryant, Quinlan McWilliams, and Daryl Boudreaux.**



"Our music is something more than melody; it is the cry of a people in travail, the voice of faith refusing to die. Through sorrow and struggle, it has carried our prayers when words alone were not enough. In song, we have remembered who we are and whose we are."

-James Weldon Johnson

Camphor Bulletin Board

Announcement Submissions: Submit announcements by 10 a.m. two weeks before publication (events: at least one month in advance).

This Week @ Camphor Memorial UMC

<u>Tuesday, February 10th</u>	6:30 pm Finance Team Meeting (Zoom)
<u>Wednesday, February 11th</u>	6:30 pm Bible Study (Zoom)
<u>Saturday, February 14th</u>	9 am Praise Dance Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 10 am United Women in Faith Meeting (Narthex/Fellowship Area) 10:30 am United Methodist Men Meeting (Conference Room) 3 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
<u>Sunday, February 15th</u>	8:45 am Adult Sunday School (Conf. Rm)
<i>Transfiguration Sunday</i>	10 am Worship (Sanctuary & Live-Stream)

Change for Change: Small Coins, Big Impact!



We continue our monthly Change for Change offering—loose coins and spare dollars supporting local organizations through the Oglesby House of Blessing. **The February 2026 recipient is Dorcas Circle**, a ministry of Camphor's United Women in Faith that demonstrates Christ's love and compassion by serving unhoused neighbors.

Ash Wednesday | February 18th

Join us on **Wednesday, February 18 at 6:30 PM** for our Ash Wednesday Service at Camphor Church. This sacred gathering marks the beginning of the Lenten season, inviting us into prayer, reflection, and repentance as we prepare our hearts for Easter. All are welcome to come, receive ashes, and begin this season together.



Welcoming Akudo as our Director of Next Generation Ministries



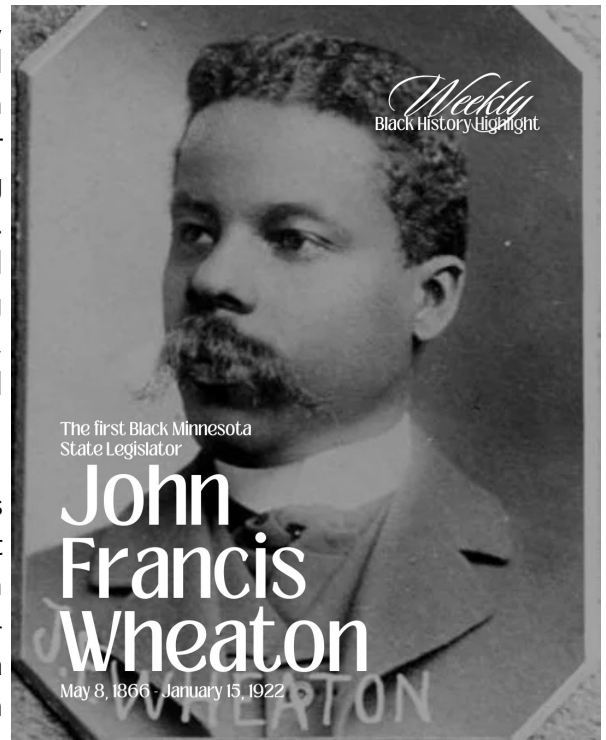
We are excited to announce that Akudo Omeoga has joined Camphor as our Director of Next Generation Ministries. In this role, she will lead the vision and development of ministry programs serving children and youth from infancy through age 18, with a focus on strengthening Camphor's connection to young people and families within the church and the wider community. Akudo holds a Bachelor of Science in Family Social Sciences from the University of Minnesota and a Master of Education in School Counseling from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Black History Highlight: John Francis Wheaton

Attorney, Legislator, Champion for Civil Rights

John Francis “J. Frank” Wheaton was born on May 8, 1866, in Hagerstown, Maryland, to Jacob Francis and Emily Green Wheaton. From an early age, Wheaton valued education and persistence. He attended Storer College in Harper’s Ferry, where he earned a teaching degree, taught school, and studied law simultaneously. In 1892, he received his law degree from Howard University Law School in Washington, D.C. After facing months of resistance due to discriminatory practices, Wheaton was admitted to the Maryland Bar and allowed to practice law.

Wheaton’s interest in public service and politics was shaped in part by his father, who claimed to be the first African American to vote in Maryland after Black men gained suffrage in 1879. As a young man, Wheaton became active in the Republican Party, serving as a delegate to the Maryland Republican State Convention in 1887, 1889, and 1891. At just twenty-two years old, he was selected as an alternate delegate to the 1888 Republican National Convention and campaigned for presidential candidate Benjamin Harrison.



In 1893, Wheaton moved to Minnesota, where he continued to pursue opportunity despite persistent racial barriers. He worked as a hotel waiter and railroad porter to support himself while attending the University of Minnesota Law School. In 1894, he became the first African American to graduate from the law school and only the fourth African American to earn a degree from the University of Minnesota.

Wheaton quickly emerged as a respected leader in Minnesota’s political life, even as he continued to encounter prejudice. In 1898, he ran for public office as a Republican candidate representing Minneapolis’s Kenwood district. Though the district included thousands of eligible voters and fewer than fifty Black residents, Wheaton won the election, becoming the first African American to serve in the Minnesota Legislature.

During his single term in office in 1899, Representative Wheaton introduced fifteen bills. Most notable was his successful effort to strengthen Minnesota’s 1885 civil rights law by preventing businesses from denying service based on race or color. His amendment passed both the House and Senate and was signed into law by Governor John Lind on March 6, 1899—marking a significant step forward in the fight for civil rights in Minnesota.

Source Note

This Black History lesson on John Francis Wheaton is excerpted from Hannah Jackson Matthews’ Black History in the Twin Cities Calendar © 2024.

Ways to Respond in the midst of the ICE Surge:

Many of you wonder how you can help, what you can do to offer care and support to our neighbors being targeted by ICE. Scan the QR Codes to learn some action steps you can take:

Educate yourself about the rights of immigrants and community members who encounter ICE from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)



Read this fact sheet from the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota

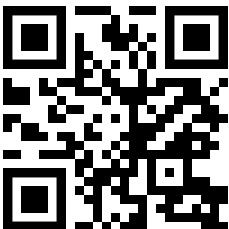
Read or listen to this segment from Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) on the do's and don'ts if you monitor immigration actions in Minnesota.



Contact your U.S. senators and representatives to voice your concerns about immigration enforcement and to tell them what is important to you.

Donate or volunteer with the

Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee (MIRAC)



Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota

Support immigrant-owned small businesses, and check in on your neighbors who might be targeted.

Prayer Corner



"Prayers of the People"

From Valerie Bridgeman Davis (Africana Worship Book-Year A)

God of Unity, We come before you dismayed at our own divisions. We have struggled as your church to live in unity; but we are divided—along all the fault lines of our societies. The ruptures in our families, among friends, among denominations, among nations are wide and deep. When we attempt to get on the same page, we build taller walls and dig deeper trenches. God, help us! We know that Christ is not divided. We know that it is your baptism to which we have been called. It is your service to which we are compelled. You have called us to proclaim the gospel, but we even fight about what that is. Help us, God! Help us to give up our power, and our privileges. Help us to yield for the sake and cause of the cross of Jesus. Help us to want the unity you share, for you are one; in you there is no division. Help us to embrace and to live the foolishness of a life emptied of power and given to service, in the likeness of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Help us to walk in salvation—in the name of the Servant Christ, Amen.

Prayer Requests

- Immigrant Community
- All who are experiencing trauma

Seniors and Homebound

- Doris Douglas
- Johnette Houston
- Pat Jemie
- Barbara Wulf

Loving God. Loving People.