

**age
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BEDFORD-STUYVESANT
& CROWN HEIGHTS

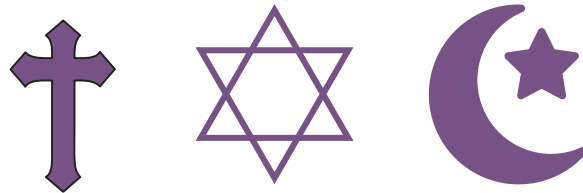
THIRD CHAPTER LIVING

*Hold on
& Have
Courage*

ISSUE 4 | APRIL 2020
A PUBLICATION OF AGE FRIENDLY
NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

RENEWING FAITH

*in our Common Humanity in the face of the
COVID-19 Pandemic.*



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U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTÓNIO GUTERRES'S MESSAGE MARKING EASTER, PASSOVER AND RAMADAN

Today, I want to make a special appeal to religious leaders of all faiths to join forces to work for peace around the world and focus on our common battle to defeat COVID19. I do so at a special time on the spiritual calendar.

For Christians, it is the celebration of Easter. Jews are marking Passover. And soon, Muslims will begin the holy month of Ramadan. I extend my warmest wishes to all those observing these important moments.

We have always known these occasions to be moments of community. Of families coming together. Of hugs and handshakes and the gathering of humanity. But this is a time like no other. We are all seeking to navigate a strange, surreal world. A world of silent streets. Shuttered storefronts. Empty places of worship. And a world of worry. We are worried about our loved ones who are equally worried about us.

How do we celebrate at a time like this? Let us all take inspiration from the essence of these holy occasions as moments for reflection, remembrance and renewal.

As we reflect, let us spare a special thought for heroic health workers on the frontlines battling this awful virus – and for all those working to keep our cities and towns going. Let us remember the most vulnerable of the vulnerable around the world. Those in war zones and refugee camps and slums and all those places least equipped to fight the virus. And let us renew our faith in one another, and draw strength from the good that is gathering in troubled times as communities of diverse faiths and ethical traditions unite to care for one another.

Together, we can and will defeat this virus – with cooperation, solidarity, and faith in our common humanity.

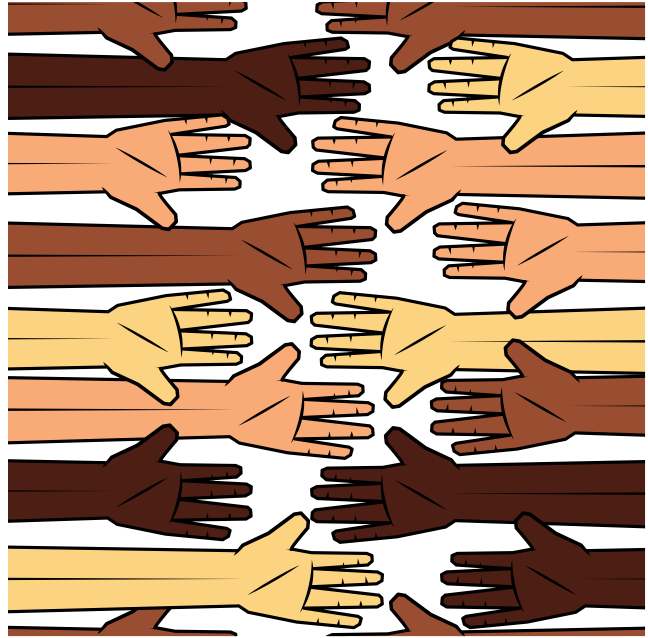
WHAT DOES DIVERSITY LOOK LIKE IN 2020?

BY SELMA JACKSON

The United States has celebrated Diversity Month since 2004. It was developed to recognize the uniqueness of every individual: race, culture, gender orientation, education and socio-economic levels. But here we are in the midst of a pandemic and diversity is showing it's other side.

What happens when years of dismantling the safety net occurs because of racism: hospitals are closed, housing for low income is almost impossible to obtain, homelessness has reached unprecedented numbers, and the prisons no longer have space and are now being privatized.

Add to that after 2017, the federal government closed the office of emergency preparedness for pandemics as being unnecessary. Yet, this month is Diversity celebration. How and what can we celebrate when we look closer at our current situation?



The coronavirus or COVID-19 has erroneously been referred to as the Chinese flu and overnight attacks – hate crimes and discrimination of Asian communities – increased rapidly.

Not surprisingly, black and brown people are dying in disproportionate numbers and account for the majority of those ill. Some of the causes are disparity in healthcare, but black and brown people are also first responders and essential employees on the frontlines daily.

What can we do to honor those who are no longer with us? Is Diversity Month to encourage citizens to work together for the good of us all?

If so, how can this celebration be more meaningful to all? What does diversity look like to you? Please send your thoughts and ideas to the editors @agefriendlyd36@gmail.com

LENT: A SEASON OF REFLECTION

BY LORRAINE GAMBLE-LOFTON

This month as we observed Lent while living with the coronavirus or COVID-19, it has truly been a time to contemplate, mediate, and pray. Lent is an old English word meaning lengthen. It originally referred to the springtime season in the Northern Hemisphere when the days were lengthening and signs of new life were appearing.

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, Lent is a season of reflection and preparation before the celebrations of Easter. By observing the 40 days of Lent, Christians replicate Jesus Christ's sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for 40 days. In times past, the rules on how you observed Lent were more stringent. Along with fasting from comfort food and frivolities, there was also the practice of no meat on Fridays.

Today, people give up things like smoking and drinking while some embrace more Bible studying or being more diligent about exercise and their health. Now, let's pause for a moment. In preparation for this time of self denial, the people first made very, very merry.



That is what Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) also called Shrove Tuesday was for, a time for you to get it all out of your system, before Ash Wednesday. Most of us know about New Orleans and some of the Caribbean Islands and might have even attended some of the celebrations!

On the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, Roman Catholic churches celebrate Mass all day so members of their church can get ashes, which by burning the leftover palm, from the previous year's Palm Sunday, is placed upon their foreheads in the shape of the Cross.

The Cross is symbolic of the ancient Biblical traditions of covering one's head with ashes wearing sackcloth and fasting Seven weeks later, which feels like forever if you have been fasting is Holy Week, the most solemn week of the Christian calendar and represents the last week of Christ's life (Palm Sunday, Passover, Holy or Maundy Thursday) before His Crucifixion (Good Friday followed by Holy Saturday) and His resurrection on Easter Sunday.



NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

BY STEFANI L. ZINERMAN

ACTIVE & HEALTHY | APRIL 2020

Celebrated every year in April, National Minority Health Month is an effort to build awareness about the disparate number of premature deaths and illnesses in minority populations and to encourage action through health education, early detection, and control of disease complications.

This year marks the 105th anniversary of the establishment of National Negro Health Week by Booker T. Washington in response to disturbing findings by the Tuskegee Institute, which highlighted the poor health status of Black people.

As a result, the U.S. Public Health Service focused on providing greater access to healthcare and also encouraged an increased number of Black professionals to enter the field of public health.

Despite over one hundred years of efforts to increase access to healthcare and improve outcomes, Blacks are still experiencing glaring disparities.

With the nation advised to stay in and around their homes, this year's theme is Active & Healthy with a focus on safe ways all communities can stay physically active and advance mental and emotional wellness.

The problem is the theme does not take into consideration the lack of investment in healthcare or the social determinants of health that lead to poor health outcomes in the Black community. It's time to expand Booker's efforts and elevate Black health and wellness as our #1 goal!

E A S T E R

BY GLENDA PATTERSON

Chocolate bunnies, bouquets of lilies and daffodils and hunting for dyed eggs, these are some of the secular symbols for Easter. For many, Easter functions as the unofficial kickoff of spring—but for Christians around the world—the holiday is the most important celebration of the year. Rooted in more than 2,000 years of ritual and rite, Easter commemorates the central event in the Christian church: the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The holiday takes place at the end of Lent, a 40-day season of fasting and repentance that culminates in Holy Week and a commemoration of the biblical events surrounding Jesus' persecution, crucifixion, and death.

Holy Week includes Palm Sunday, Holy or Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter. The New Testament outlines the story. Miraculously conceived and prophesied to be both son of God and king of the Jews, Jesus of Nazareth has made a name for himself as a rabble-rousing minister, miracle worker, and advocate for the poor and marginalized who gains a group of devoted followers and disciples.



But Jesus' popularity also pits him against Roman authorities and religious hardliners. That animosity comes to a head when Jesus makes a triumphant entry into the city of Jerusalem, where he was welcomed by a crowd who laid palm branches in his path (Palm Sunday).

During a meal with his disciples (the Last Supper), Jesus predicts that one of his followers will betray him. After the dinner, Jesus is arrested – turned over to the city's Jewish high priests by one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot – in exchange for 30 pieces of silver (Holy or Maundy Thursday).

Seeing that the crowd has now turned against Jesus, Pontius Pilate, the Roman provincial governor, agrees to put him to death like a common criminal by nailing him to a cross.

Jesus dies and is buried (Good Friday) in a tomb where his body lies throughout the next day (Holy Saturday). But when his mourners return to his tomb on Sunday, it is empty. Jesus has been resurrected.

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FAIR HOUSING AND RACE

BY STEFANI L. ZINERMAN

There were three great civil rights laws passed in the 1960s: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. April is designated as National Fair Housing Month because the act was signed into law by President Lyndon Baines Johnson on April 11, 1968, one week after the assassination of civil rights icon Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



What is the Fair Housing Act?

The Fair Housing Act was designed to protect people from discrimination when buying a home, getting a mortgage; renting or seeking housing assistance; or engaging in other housing-related activities. The bill was first introduced in 1966 to address issues of racial discrimination in housing and to promote integration without major support from either party.

In fact, Congress and the Senate considered the bill several times before its final passage after the shooting of Dr. King.

Why did the death of Dr. King spur the passage of the bill?

If you remember, 1967 was called the “long, hot summer” because of race riots from Brooklyn to Oakland, which resulted in 2,000 injuries and 11,000 arrests. People were actively engaged in social movements to end the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and the promotion of Civil and Human Rights.

Tommie Smith and John Carlos were protesting and MLK was assassinated. His death plunged the nation into a moral crisis, and cities went up in flames. As such, President Johnson knew he needed something to restore faith in government and he got it in the form of a new piece of legislation. According to the president, “fair housing for all ...is now an American way of life.”

Has the Fair Housing Act been effective in ending discrimination?

Fifty two years later, many would say the answer is no. Black and Brown people continue to deal with explicit discrimination.

MANAGING STRESS DURING A PANDEMIC



BY GLENDA PATTERSON

April is Stress Awareness Month! What better time to explore how you can keep your stress under control, particularly as we live in the time of the coronavirus, COVID-19. Let's delve into the causes and effects of stress and what you can do to manage your stress levels.

Stress is a normal reaction the body has when changes occur. It can respond to these changes physically, mentally, or emotionally. Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. Stress is a normal part of life. You can experience stress from your environment, your body, and your thoughts. Even positive life changes such as a promotion, a mortgage, or the birth of a child can produce stress.

Stress can be positive, keeping us alert, motivated, and ready to avoid danger.

Stress that continues without relief can lead to a condition called distress, which can disturb the body's internal balance or equilibrium, leading to physical symptoms such as headaches, an upset stomach, elevated blood pressure, chest pain, sexual dysfunction, and problems sleeping.

TIPS FOR REDUCING STRESS

- Keep a positive attitude.
- Accept that there are events that you cannot control. Example, for now, sheltering-in place and wearing a face mask and gloves when you go grocery shopping is the new normal.
- Be assertive instead of aggressive. Assert your feelings, opinions, or beliefs instead of becoming angry, defensive, or passive.
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques; try meditation, yoga, or tai-chi.
- Exercise regularly. Your body can fight stress better when it is fit.
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
- Seek treatment with a psychologist or other mental health professional trained in stress management or biofeedback techniques to learn more healthy ways of dealing with the stress in your life.

We hope this information is helpful in your effort to maintain a positive stress level during this challenging time. Smiling can help with your stress because smiling makes you feel good!

BY DONNA WILLIAMS

WOMEN & WORDS OF HOPE

Taking inspiration from phenomenal black women born in April.



Maya Angelou – April 4

Poet, singer, and civil rights activist.

“Hope and fear cannot occupy the same space at the same time. Invite one to stay.”



Billie Holiday – April 7

Jazz singer, “Lady Day”

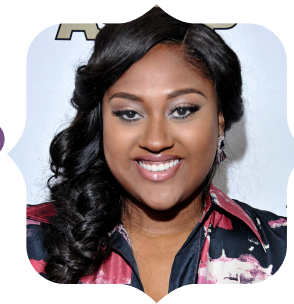
“The difficult I’ll do right now. The impossible will take a little while.”



Kelly Price – April 4

R&B and gospel singer and songwriter

“Enjoy the little things in life, because one day you will look back and realize they were the big things.”



Jazmine Sullivan – April 9

Singer-songwriter

“It makes the quality of living so much better when you just appreciate where you are.”



Jill Scott – April 4

Singer-songwriter, model, poet and actress

“God is ever present. He’s in every breath, in every step. He’s here, always, always.”



Ella Fitzgerald – April 25

Jazz singer, dubbed

“The First Lady of Song”

“The darkest moments of one’s life may carry the seeds to the brightest tomorrow.”

FAIR HOUSING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Practices such as racial redlining in federal mortgage insurance, and real estate deals still restrict home buyers by race despite the law. There are also more subtle actions like real estate agents steering certain people into certain neighborhoods and developing substandard housing in low income areas.

In 2015, the Obama Administration added a provision to the law requiring cities to examine housing patterns for evidence of unlawful discrimination and come up with a plan to cure it, in order to receive federal aid.

Then the Trump administration hired an inexperienced Ben Carson as Housing and Urban Development Secretary who set out to roll back the Obama-era protections.

EASTER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

That day is celebrated as Easter. Christians celebrate Easter in a variety of ways, including sunrise services favored by Protestants and the Easter Vigil, an ancient liturgy and baptismal rite celebrated by Catholics on the night of Holy Saturday. Members of the Orthodox Church celebrate Easter, but 13 days later than other Christians

since their religion is based on the Julian calendar. However this year, many observed Easter, not in church, but rather by participating in a virtual church service. Because of the corona virus or COVID-19 we're unable to physically be together. For the foreseeable future, we need to be creative and find ways to worship apart. How did you mark Easter Sunday?



How can I protect myself and/or report discrimination?

If you believe you have been the victim of discrimination, you can contact the following organization:

- **Fair Housing Justice Center** - For more info, contact: 212.400.8201 Website: <http://www.fairhousingjustice.org/>
- **New York City Human Rights Commission** - Contact the Brooklyn Community Service Center at (718) 722-3130 or online at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page>
- **New York State Attorney General** - contact the Civil Rights Bureau at 212-416-8250 or civil.rights@ag.ny.gov.

EMERGESOUL'S SIMPLE GUIDE TO CARING FOR YOUR WELL-BEING

Bring The Power Back Home To Self

BY TAMEEKA FORD

CREATE A SPACE TO RELAX & RESTORE

Find an area in your house where you can create a relaxing environment to support your inner well-being. Work with what you have, consider the five senses, four elements and meaningful moments that will relax and inspire you.

MEDITATE & PRAY

Spend at least 10-20 minutes each day in pray and meditation. Be still & know.



TAKE A FULL BREATH

Become aware of your breath. Take a full breath in through the nose; allow your belly to expand. Breathe out through the mouth slowly, allowing your body to relax as you breath out. Consciously slow down your breathing with each breath you take. Repeat 7 times. Practice daily.



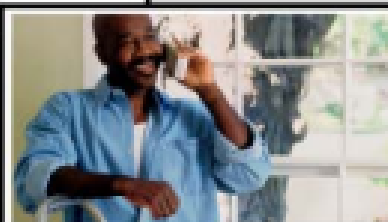
LISTEN TO MUSIC

Studies have shown that listening to music can boost your mood and well-being. Listen to your favorite tunes to shift your emotional state.

PRACTICE AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Gratitude is taking time to think about all the positive things in your life. Research suggests that a daily gratitude practice can increase your well-being.

Each morning and evening write at least five things you are thankful for. Remember, what you appreciate, appreciates.



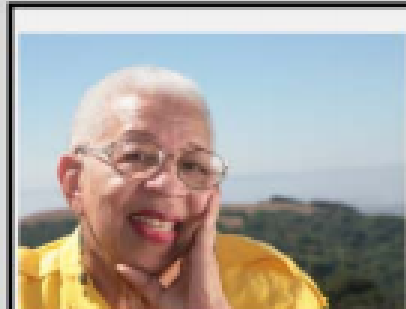
STAY CONNECTED

Take time each day to call a friend or family member to share how you've been taking care of your well-being.

DANCE LIKE NO ONE IS WATCHING

Regular physical activity or exercise can boost energy, help control weight gain, combat health conditions and improve sleep.

Movement is Medicine, so put on your favorite tunes and dance like no one is watching at least 30 minutes a day.



SMILE

Your beautiful smile activates chemicals in the brain that fights off stress and relaxes the body.





Holding
On to the
Power of the
Eternal

ANONYMOUS