

Sun-Reporter



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BEST BUY IN THE WEST

London Breed Wins Historic SF Election

MADAM MAYOR



Image: Dennis Heame

By Gail Berkley

Call her Mayor-elect Breed! San Francisco Board of Supervisors President London Breed will be sworn in as Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco next month, following a hotly contested race to select a candidate to fill the unexpired term of late SF Mayor Edwin Lee. President Breed will be the city's first African American female Mayor.

Breed was backed by a broad multi-racial coalition of voters from across San Francisco, as well as the city's African American community. In the historic election she beat out seven other candidates in voting June 5. As votes were counted on election day, Breed with 36.6% of votes had an early lead, then overnight the lead switched to former State Senator Mark Leno. After several rounds of ranked choice votes were counted, Leno's lead held. Finally, as votes continued to be counted this week, Breed pulled ahead of Leno with 50.42% of votes counted as of Tuesday evening, and continued to widen her lead. Sen. Leno with 49.58%, conceded the race to Breed on Wednesday afternoon. A final vote count may be available Friday.

Following Mayor Lee's death last December 12, Breed served as Acting Mayor until January

23, when in a surprise move her fellow Supervisors voted her out of the position. Her opponents stated Breed would have had too much power while serving as Acting Mayor and Board of Supervisors President.

Breed held a press conference at City Hall Wednesday where she thanked her supporters. "It's really amazing and it's really an honor."

"This is an amazing city and we had a number of amazing candidates who ran for mayor," she added.

Breed said she is ready to tackle the issues facing the city including homelessness, housing and police community relations. "We see people sleeping on our streets. We know they need help. We're not building enough housing. We know there is so much work to do and we have to make the hard decisions to get the job done. I am so hopeful about the future of our city."

She also had a message for young people growing up in San Francisco. "No matter where you come from, no matter what you decide to do in life, you can do anything you want to do. Never let your circumstances determine your outcome in life."

Breed received congratulations from local and national elected officials who supported her campaign. United States

Senator Kamala Harris is a mentor to Breed and accompanied her to file for her first run for elective office. Senator Harris said, "London Breed has never forgotten where she came from and has always been a fearless fighter for the values of her community. She knows how to make the tough decisions. Her leadership as Mayor will pave the way for the next generation and bring a brighter future for all of San Francisco."

East Bay Congresswoman Barbara Lee also supported Breed's candidacy and looks forward to working with her on regional issues. "I'm thrilled to congratulate my friend, London Breed, on her victory in the San Francisco mayor's race. London's passion, tenacity, thoughtfulness and life experience will be an invaluable asset in the mayor's office. As mayor, I know that London will be a voice for all San Franciscans, and I look forward to working with her in this new chapter as we seek to uplift communities throughout the Bay Area," Rep. Lee said.

Former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown said Breed's historic victory is "the ultimate confirmation" of what America is about.

Sun-Reporter Publisher Amelia Ashley Ward, a longtime friend and supporter of Breed, said, "I'm relieved that San

Francisco has elected the best candidate in London Breed. Of course, we're proud that London comes from our community. London's story is one for the ages. A young girl born in poverty, witnessing violence first hand in the Plaza East housing project and tragedy in her family. Even though the odds were stacked against her, she prepared herself and she's proof to young girls everywhere that you can dream big and be what you want to be."

Dr. Amos Brown, President of the San Francisco Branch of the NAACP, was also one of Breed's early supporters. "I think it's a sweet victory for inclusion, for the marginalized and for San Francisco," Dr. Brown said. "It has been demonstrated that when we have people of conscience and goodwill that were engaged, right, truth and justice prevail."

"Once again London Breed has reaffirmed character, competency, charisma, compassion and courage- attributes that are definition of a leader that we need in San Francisco and this nation."

Dr. Brown, pastor at S.F.'s Third Baptist Church, said Breed is a member there and will attend the 10 a.m. service Sunday which will be a celebration of "Thanksgiving and Praise."

"This election process in terms of the final outcome and attitude

and unity is a model for the nation," Brown said. He credited Leno with being gracious in defeat, adding "He was a statesperson and a gentleman. There was no animus. I applaud his concession speech and his spirit."

Leno called Breed Wednesday to concede the race and told reporters, "She is a remarkable young woman. She is going to do a very fine job and we all wish her the best because her success is San Francisco's success."

Democratic National Committee Chair Tom Perez also congratulated Breed. "I'd like to congratulate London Breed on her historic victory as San Francisco's next mayor. As the first African American woman to be elected to the office, Mayor-elect Breed will be a steadfast champion for the thousands of hardworking San Francisco families she'll represent. From strengthening San Francisco's schools and transportation system to combating homelessness and creating good-paying jobs for every San Franciscan, Mayor-elect Breed is ready to get to work on day one," Perez said.

"San Francisco lost a brilliant leader in Ed Lee last year, but I'm confident Mayor-elect Breed will carry on his legacy of public service and work every single day to improve the lives of San Franciscans

Breed was elected in 2012 to represent District 5, where she was raised by her grandmother in public housing. In 2015 she was elected Board President by her fellow Supervisors. She was re-elected Supervisor in November 2016, and unanimously re-elected Board President in January 2017.

As Board President Breed has tackled issues including affordable housing, public safety, small business concerns, improving Muni and environmental health.

Prior to being elected to the Board of Supervisors, Breed was Executive Director of the African American Art and Culture Complex and led the transformation of the community organization into a thriving neighborhood asset. She also served on the SF Redevelopment Agency Commission and the Fire Commission.

A graduate of Galileo high school, she received her bachelor's degree in Political Science-Public Service with a minor in African American Studies from University of California, Davis and a master's degree in public administration from University of San Francisco.

(The Sun-Reporter will publish a Commemorative issue on Breed's victory on June 22, 2018)

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Congresswoman Lee Introduces Resolution On Equality & Inclusion In Cannabis Industry

Washington, D.C.

“There’s no question that there is growing momentum – both within Congress and nationwide – for cannabis legalization. However, as we move into this new era, we must learn from the failed War on Drugs and ensure that entrepreneurs of color are included in this expanding industry. Due to unequal criminalization rates and disparities in access to capital, people of color are being locked out of the new and thriving legal cannabis trade,” said Congresswoman Barbara Lee. “We need to address the systemic exclusion and discrimination at play. Otherwise, we will be prolonging and encouraging the injustices of the past – where brown men spend their lives in prison for cannabis, while white communities get rich off the industry. I encourage my colleagues to support the RESPECT Resolution, the first bill in Congress focused on building equity in the cannabis industry.”

Currently, thirty states and the District of Columbia allow access to medical cannabis



Congresswoman Barbara Lee

and nine states and the District of Columbia have legalized cannabis for adult use. However, due to the economic and legal impact of racially-targeted cannabis prohibition, communities of color have largely been shut out of benefitting from legalization. It is estimated that less than 1 percent of cannabis businesses are owned by African Americans, due to application and licensing fees, bans on individuals with drug arrest and conviction histories, and severely limited access to loans and capitol for cannabis business.

“The systemic prejudice of the failed war on drugs is a stain on America’s history. As these outdated and discriminatory policies come to an end, we must address the damage done to communities of color

and ensure equal access to the growing cannabis economy,” said Congressman Earl Blumenauer (OR-03). “I’m proud to join my friend and colleague, Congresswoman Lee, in this effort—which is an important step in the right direction.”

“This is groundbreaking cannabis legislation that addresses the effects of the war on drugs and how to create a fair and equitable industry while others ignore the opportunity and say it cannot be done,” said Shanita Penny, President of the Board of Directors of the Minority Cannabis Business Association. “We will continue our work to ensure that thoughtful resolutions to this issue are put forth and that cannabis legislation is holistic in solving past problems and preventing future travesties

like the drug war and the exclusion of the communities most impacted by it as this industry continues to grow.”

“As more and more states dial back the war on marijuana consumers, it is important that those who were impacted by this oppressive criminalization are able to see previous harms remedied and be provided the opportunity to participate in the benefits that come along with legalization and regulation,” said Justin Strekal, NORML’s Political Director. “It is absolutely crucial that future legalization efforts include avenues to expunge prior criminal convictions for actions which are now 100% legal. We sincerely appreciate Congresswoman Lee’s vision to facilitate those expungements at no cost to the individual. Currently, a complicated bureaucracy and unnecessary fees often prevent drug war victims from obtaining expungements and being able to fully participate in many aspects of civil society.”

“It’s a gross misstep to not be on the front end of bridging the gap between communities most impacted by cannabis prohibition and access to the legal cannabis marketplace,” said Queen Adesuyi, policy

associate of the Drug Policy Alliance. “Most industries consider equity and impact as an afterthought, but there is opportunity to take bold steps to atone for the devastation faced by individuals and communities who bore the brunt of prohibition in a way that’s equitable and responsive to decades of failed policies and racialized harm. We applaud Representative Barbara Lee and others for their continued fight to address the invisibilizing of communities of color and low-income communities within cannabis reform efforts and the booming marketplace.”

Congresswoman Lee’s RESPECT Resolution has thirteen original cosponsors and the support of nineteen national and local organizations.

Congresswoman Lee is a member of the Budget and Appropriations Committees, Vice Chair of the Steering & Policy Committee, Co-Chair of the Pro-Choice Caucus, former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, former co-chair of the Progressive Caucus, and a Senior Democratic Whip. She also serves as chair of the Democratic Whip Task Force on Poverty.

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Energy Savings Programs

By Genoa Barrow | California Black Media

Summertime is a great time for outdoor activities but when the temperature begins to hit triple digits, many consumers will try to escape the heat by staying indoors. The additional usage of energy can cause bills to increase significantly. Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) does not want their customers to get "beat by the heat" and offers several energy savings tips and programs to help consumers save money and pay their bills.

PG&E offers different programs to those who may need extra assistance in paying their bills every month. "We're here to support all of our customers," says Allen Fernandez Smith, PG&E's Manager of Low-Income Programs and Strategies.

Tandrea and Steve Thysell, a young couple living in Stockton are already utilizing programs provided by PG&E. As a social worker and substitute teacher, the Thysells say they



can use all the help they can get in keeping costs down.

"We've been using them for about six years. They've helped us tremendously, along with the balance pay program, I love that program the most," Tandrea Thysell shared.

She's speaking of Budget Billing, where PG&E will average out a customer's energy cost, using their past history, so that they'll see more man-

ageable payments and avoid big spikes on their bills.

"CARE has helped lower our monthly bills consistently and made the payment manageable when they might be outrageous," Mrs. Thysell said.

The couple also participates in PG&E's Medical Baseline Program that provides extra energy at the lowest price for those with a qualifying medical condition. Both Tandrea

and Steve Thysell use breathing apparatuses for severe asthma.

"Medical Baseline has allowed us to keep power when others may not have had it or to be warned by text or email when we were going to be without it due to our devices," Tandrea Thysell shared.

The CARE program, Budget Billing and Medical Baseline Program are only a few of

the programs offered through PG&E. PG&E has a number of assistance programs for low-income customers including the California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) Program, which gives income-qualified customers a monthly discount of at least 20 percent on their gas and electric bills.

The Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) Program helps larger families and through the Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) program, income-qualified customers can receive free energy-efficient home improvements. These improvements can help reduce energy bills and improve health, safety and comfort. The ESA program is open to those who rent or own their homes and provides qualified customers with energy-saving improvements at no charge. If you're on the CARE program, you're also eligible for the ESA program because the guidelines are the same.

CARE income guidelines are increasing on June 1, 2018 to allow households that earn more money to participate and save. The guidelines are set by

the California Public Utilities Commission.

With the 2018 change, the income threshold goes from \$40,840 to \$41,560 for a family of three; and from \$49,200 to \$50,200 for a family of four. This means more customers will be qualified to apply and receive a monthly discount.

CARE is one of PG&E's highest satisfaction programs. An estimated 1.5

million customers are eligible and 90.5 percent of those who are eligible are taking advantage of the program's discounts. Some 145,000 customers who are eligible have yet to enroll.

"We understand that California is a very diverse state and our customers are also very diverse with many different needs," says Fernandez Smith, "and we want to make sure we're meeting their needs by providing safe, reliable, affordable clean energy."

Online resources include www.pge.com/saveenergy-money and www.pge.com/coolingcenters.

U.S. Dream Academy Receives One Million Dollar Donation At 20th Anniversary Gala From Oprah Winfrey

The Gala honored Award-Winning Icon Cicely Tyson, MENTOR CEO David Shapiro, and Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy Alumna, Mpumi Nobiva

Washington, DC (BlackNews.com)

The U.S. Dream Academy hosted an exciting 17th Annual "Power of A Dream" Gala themed "Living the Dream" on May 8th at the Washington, D.C. Marriott Marquis presented by Amway in honor of the organizations 20th Anniversary. The gala fundraising goal of \$1 million for the 450 attending guests was exceeded when global media leader Oprah Winfrey had Mpumi Nobiva, an alumna from the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy who was being honored at the event with the DreamBlazer Award, make a surprise announcement that Winfrey would match all donations made during the gala celebration.

"Oprah Winfrey is a long-time supporter of U.S. Dream Academy, but this donation was an incredible surprise! This generous donation from Oprah and our other critical supporters, such as Amway, make our programs to serve children all over the country through our after school tutoring, mentoring and our dream building possible," said Wintley Phipps, Founder & CEO, U.S. Dream Academy.

"It was a perfect moment, having one of Oprah's mentee's from her Leadership Academy, make the announcement. Nobiva's accomplishments demonstrate the power of mentoring combined with hard work and perseverance to make 'Dreams' come true. We were thrilled to honor Mpumi as our DreamBlazer Awardee and then to have her surprise us with this announcement, was a great way to end the evening," said C. Diane Wallace Booker, founding Executive Director for U.S. Dream Academy.

The gala was co-hosted by popular award-winning actor,



US Dream Academy Gala Photo Credit: Tony Powell for U.S. Dream Academy

producer and director Larenz Tate (known for co-starring in Girls Trip - Universal Pictures, Power - Starz Network, Deuces on Netflix) along with WHUR popular radio personality Triscina Grey. This year's honorees, Cicely Tyson (President's Award), David Shapiro, CEO of MENTOR: National Mentoring Partnership (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Award) and Mpumi Nobiva (DreamBlazer Award) are passionate advocates of mentorship, education and philanthropy, working to make a lasting impact in their respective fields, in our communities and around the world.

One of the many highlights of the evening was an inspiring performance and heartfelt personal words from honoree and icon Cicely Tyson who spoke words of inspiration directly to the more than 120 DreamKids and the Takoma Academy Chorale after their choir performance on stage. Tyson then led the group in an impromptu song of "Jesus Loves Me", as students of the choir joined softly in with Tyson. Many of the young people were visibly moved to tears by this moment

of unity between the students and Tyson singing together. The magic continued with a special performance by the U.S. Dream Academy founder and Grammy nominee, Wintley Phipps, the Takoma Academy Chorale and the DreamKids. In addition, the Southwest Mentor of the Year Award was presented to three recipients this year, including: Darwin Kemp, (Washington, D.C.), Roosevelt Neely (Houston, TX.) and Beverly Smith (Indianapolis, IN). Dream Academy students also participated in a XS Gum Design Contest with Amway during the course of the school year. On stage, Jim Ayres (Managing Director - Amway North America) and David Vanderveen (VP and GM for XS, Amway Global) awarded the 1st place prize to one student, Kaleem Payne a 7th grader from the Baltimore City Dream Academy. He will receive a cash award of \$2,500.00 and his design will be on every box of XS Energy GUM packaging that will be produced and distributed around the world, along with the US Dream Academy.

The US Dream Academy 2018

Honorary Congressional Committee, included: The Honorable Pete Aguilar, The Honorable Anthony Brown, The Honorable Benjamin Cardin, The Honorable Elijah Cummings, The Honorable Val Demings, The Honorable Kamala D. Harris, The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch, The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee, The Honorable John P. Sarbanes and The Honorable Chris Van Hollen.

For ten years, Amway has served as the Presenting Sponsor of the gala. Additional sponsors that have contributed to make this year's fundraiser successful include: Centera Transport Inc., Southwest Airlines, MarkerMan Productions, QTS, IBOAI, Giant Foods, BWW CHARITIES, CCMG, Richard & Mo Anderson and Sue Ann Wells.

Since 2001, the annual Power of a Dream Gala has raised more than \$19 million to assist with the provision of high-quality after-school programs specifically tailored for children living in high-risk communities. Today, there are more than 700 young people in seven (7) cities across this nation who benefit each day

from evidence-based comprehensive youth development programming delivered through Dream Academy Learning Center Communities, including in Baltimore, Washington, DC., Philadelphia, Houston, Orlando, Indianapolis and Salt Lake City.

The 2018 U.S. Dream Academy Award recipients:

Cicely Tyson, Iconic Emmy and Tony winning Actress, was honored with the President's Award for her tireless work ensuring that the next generation has the tools to succeed. Throughout her career, Ms. Tyson has always been an advocate for children and their need for education. A staunch supporter of the fine arts, Cicely co-founded the Dance Theatre of Harlem. She was honored by having a Performing Arts School named after her, Cicely L. Tyson Community School of Performing and Fine Arts. Her work and achievements have inspired the leaders of tomorrow to live their dreams. Special guest presenter alongside Mr. Phipps to present the award to Ms. Tyson, was inspirational speaker, Wanda Durant, also known as The Real MVP (Mother of Tony and NBA Champion Kevin Durant).

David Shapiro, CEO of MENTOR, who received the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Award for his work in the mentoring field and impacting the future success of our children in underserved communities. MENTOR's mission is to fuel the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships and ultimately close that gap, to ensure that every young person must have the supportive relationships they need to grow and develop. Since Shapiro took leadership, MENTOR launched In Real Life, a national mentoring public awareness campaign, with the support of the NBA and has worked extensively with the Obama Administration on the

mentoring component of My Brother's Keeper. MENTOR was also selected by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to lead the National Mentoring Resource Center.

Honoree Mpumi Nobiva, is an International Speaker and Communication Strategist. She has spoken at the White House, congressional fundraisers, corporate functions and nonprofit initiatives in several countries. She excelled in the first class of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls, and serves as the first alumna on the Board of Directors of the Academy. Mpumi is developing the digital infrastructure for Share Your Story Africa - an initiative inspired by her advocacy work uniting youth against HIV/AIDS and domestic violence in South Africa. The U.S. Dream Academy honored her with the First ever Dream-Blazer Award for her innovative work.

About the U.S. Dream Academy

The U.S. Dream Academy, founded in 1998, is a national after-school program that aims to break the cycle of intergenerational incarceration. The mission of the U.S. Dream Academy is to inspire and elevate the lives of children of incarcerated parents and vulnerable young people through high performance relationships with caring adults. We seek to maximize their potential by building dreams, perseverance, academic skills and character. The program, founded by renowned Grammy Nominated gospel singer Wintley Phipps, is currently operating in 7 cities nationwide including: Baltimore, MD, Houston, TX, Indianapolis, IN, Orlando, FL, Philadelphia, PA, Salt Lake City, UT, and Washington, D.C. For more details, visit www.usdreamacademy.org

The Sun-Reporter

Editorials

We wish to plead our own cause.
Too long have others spoken for us.

Freedom's Journal, March 16, 1827

Op-Ed: Redlining Settlement Fails To Provide Strong Penalties

By Charlene Crowell (Deputy Communications Director, Center for Responsible Lending)

For as long as many people of color can remember, succeeding generations have called for justice. Despite these age-old pleas, justice is not only elusive, but frustrating since the enactment of a series of civil rights laws. Despite federal guarantees of equal treatment, much of Black America experiences something short of what was promised.

A recent settlement of a federal redlining lawsuit is yet another sign that justice is still being denied. Even worse, those entrusted in key federal agencies are willing to accept much less than what is

fair or just.

On January 13, 2017 and as one of the last cases brought under the Obama Administration, the Department of Justice (DOJ) sued KleinBank, a lender in the Twin Cities' metropolitan area with violations of both the Fair Housing Act (FHA) and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA). The complaint said in part that from at least 2010 to 2015, "KleinBank's discriminatory practices as described herein have been intentional and willful, and implemented with reckless disregard for the rights of individuals on the basis of their race and/or national origin."

The January 2017 lawsuit followed a near two-year DOJ investigation that uncovered illegal redlining in neighborhoods of

color. Within the metro area, lending in 78 of 97 majority-minority census tracts were excluded by the bank. Further, as KleinBank expanded to add at least seven full-service branches since 2007, not one is in a community of color.

Beyond a failure to serve all consumers, mortgage applications and approvals among consumers of color were equally disturbing. Other metro lenders surpassed KleinBank by as large a ratio as five-to-one in serving consumers of color. For example, among the 5,837 single-family residential loan applications filed with KleinBank, only 1.06 percent—62—came from consumers of color. Of the bank's approved 4,392 residential mortgages, only 51 were secured in neighborhoods of color.

With these and other findings,

DOJ's complaint requested both monetary damages to those consumers who fell victim to these illegalities, and a civil penalty to vindicate the public interest.

Yet on May 8 of this year when a settlement was reached with the current DOJ, there was no civil penalty or judicial oversight—two key elements in earlier settlements with similar charges. Among other requirements, a limited, three-year agreement authorized a \$300,000 loan subsidy fund to increase credit access in predominantly minority neighborhoods, as well as another \$300,000 for credit repair initiatives, education, outreach and advertising that would include minority media. The settlement required the bank to redraw its Community Reinvestment Act assessment area. KleinBank also agreed to open a single branch in a neighborhood of color within the next year.

According to the settlement, "The United States agrees to jointly stipulate with KleinBank to the dismissal of the Civil Action. The parties agree and acknowledge that this consideration is adequate and sufficient."

Pardon me, but I respectfully disagree—and so do others who believe in fair lending. A lack of civil penalty coupled with a brief term of compliance does not bode well for fair or just lending.

"The absence of a civil penalty is noteworthy and inconsistent with past redlining cases," noted Melissa Stegman, a Senior Policy Counsel with the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL). "Furthermore, unlike prior cases, the parties entered into a settlement agreement—not a consent order. A consent order is a more power-

ful vehicle in that it is subject to the judge's approval. Also, with a court order, the court maintains supervision of the agreement. Arguably, it's a stronger way to hold the bank accountable for meeting the terms of the settlement."

According to the original DOJ complaint the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) never conducted a redlining examination of the bank, nor did it comment on or approve the bank's CRA assessment area.

It is also noteworthy that earlier this month HUD announced it planned to seek public comment to revisit whether its 2013 rule known as 'disparate impact' was consistent with the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruling. Until this rule was adopted in the previous administration, many entities argued in fair housing lawsuits that lenders never intended to discriminate in housing. Disparate impact theory focuses on the effects of practices that foster housing discrimination and was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2015. HUD's interest in public comment in 2018 sets the stage for weakening or reversing the rule and is yet another rollback of Obama-era initiatives.

Unfortunately, these kinds of fair lending concerns are experienced across the nation. In 2017, 28,843 housing-related complaints were reported, according to the National Fair Housing Alliance's 2018 Fair Housing Trends Report. Of these complaints, more than 70 percent were handled by private, nonprofit fair housing organizations.

But the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is charged with ensuring effective enforcement of the Fair

Housing Act. Even so, HUD processed less than five percent of last year's complaints—about 1,311. Further, DOJ brought only 41 cases from the 6,896 complaints forwarded by Fair Housing Assistance Program agencies.

The Home Mortgage Disclosure Act is the nation's most comprehensive mortgage lending report for its inclusion of data on lending by race and ethnicity. It too will be under review by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and appears to be in jeopardy. Currently, this annual report informs the housing industry as well as consumers as to remaining disparities and challenges. Without its detailed data, fair housing measures would be watered down.

When government offices charged and entrusted to enforce laws fail to fulfill their full duties, laws enacted to end discrimination become meaningless. If HUD turns away from fair housing enforcement, as recent actions taken by the agency indicate, or DOJ settles for far less than the law allows or what has even occurred as precedent, none of us should stay silent in the face of these failures.

"It has been 50 years and the Fair Housing Act still has not been fully implemented," noted Lisa Rice, President and CEO of the National Fair Housing Alliance. "We cannot build a thriving society as long as our nation is plagued by discrimination, segregation, and severe economic inequality."

Charlene Crowell is the Communications Deputy Director with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org

OPINION: HEY, ELECTED OFFICIALS: NO MORE CHICKEN DINNERS...WE NEED POLICY

By Jeffrey L. Boney (NNPA Newswire Contributor)

It's that time again. It occurs every year around the same time like clockwork. It's election season.

Political signs infiltrate Black neighborhoods, placed by campaign operatives hoping you remember their respective political candidate come election time. More importantly, these political operatives are hoping your familiarity with their respective candidate will drive you to the polls with the belief that their efforts will translate into a vote for them at the ballot box.

Establishing familiarity is quite an effective tool, especially when it comes to creating a sense of connection with people. Now be honest. If connecting with people through establishing a sense of familiarity weren't so effective, why would radio stations play the same song over and over again, or why would major companies spend an inordinate amount of money to consistently and strategically advertise their product or service to consumers on a regular basis?

Seeking to connect with people by establishing a sense of familiarity is one of the first things any campaign team tries to do to help get their respective candidate elected.

Have you ever noticed that during every election season, radio ads become more frequent, print mailers get sent out in bulk quantities and television ads get placed on any given network during key television shows in an effort to try and reach registered voters?

Politicians have long been staples in our community.

Many of them visit a church here, walk the block and knock on doors over there; kiss babies, shake hands and even give the Black community "stuff" to get them to come out to the polls and vote. It is fascinating the way some political candidates scurry around during election season trying to solicit the Black vote so that they can get elected to a certain office or retain their current seat. It's an art. Many of these campaign operatives and elected officials have it down to a science.

However, when it comes to developing key, solid policies that will help the Black community, many of these same candidates disappear—never to be heard from again—until the next election cycle rolls around. Interestingly, many of these elected officials get a pass for doing nothing.

Now, if members of the Black community would be completely honest, they would admit that a lot of these elected officials are often treated like high-profile celebri-

ties, rather than public servants who have the power to advocate for substantive policies that can literally change the economic landscape and quality of life of their communities.

One act of familiarity that has been a go-to-approach to reach the Black community has been the tactic of political candidates using certain gimmicks to solicit votes.

You know what I'm talking about; offering the Black community chicken dinners, BBQ cookouts, fish plates, steak days, gift cards, air conditioners for senior citizens, etc. Many of these politically-motivated gimmicks have and continue to be used to get Black people to vote for a particular candidate.

You know the routine. Black voters get out to vote, then there is very little reciprocity from many of the candidates towards the Black community, if they are elected.

Think about it for a moment and ask yourself some questions.

What evidence do you have to prove that any of your elected officials have actually advocated for you? Ask yourself, when it comes to developing sound policies and legislation for the Black community, when was the last time your elected officials drafted any policy or advocated for any legislation at the local, state and/or federal level

that has positively impact you?

Now, you may have been invited to a fish fry, steak dinner or community social event, but ask yourself when was the first or last time any of your elected officials educated, equipped and informed your community about any key issues that is impacting them or will affect them?

Truth be told, the Black community has been short-changed when it comes to advocacy by many of their elected officials, regardless of the elected official's race or ethnicity. Blacks have also been deprived of having progressive and substantive policies drafted by many of their elected officials. In many cases, instead of talking to elected officials about substantive policies and key legislation, elected officials are often sought after to attend an event or take a picture with someone as if they are a Hollywood star, versus a public servant who was elected to serve the people. Again, it's about familiarity.

The Black community deserves to be treated more like a partner in a serious relationship versus some fling on the side where politicians whisper sweet nothings in our ears in order to get the only thing they really, truly want—the Black vote.

The Black community must stop allowing disengaged elected officials to continue making empty

promises in order to get their vote, and then turn around, close the deal (get their vote), and never hear anything from these individuals anymore until they need their Black vote again. The same thing goes for political candidates who don't win when they run for office as well.

Elected officials are not highly-paid Hollywood entertainers. Elected officials are public servants. The Black community must stop treating elected officials as if they are the hottest celebrity and start demanding sound policy offerings from them. The Black community must embrace accountability and adopt a realistic expectation of having their elected officials be the advocates they need to get things done and fight for them by any means necessary.

This year, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), a trade group representing over 200 Black-owned media companies across the U.S., is focused on encouraging 5 million Blacks to register to vote before the midterm elections. We need to elect politicians who care about creating sound legislation and being advocates for the Black community year-round.

The same energy and efforts that these elected officials use to get elected, or re-elected, should be the same energy they use when

it comes to sitting down with the Black community to better understand our needs and advocate for policies that positively impact their community.

If the constituents of these elected officials have not progressed since they have been in office, and are no more advanced as a result of their leadership, it is time to start looking for new leadership.

Elected officials can keep giving out chicken dinners, BBQ cookouts, fish plates, steak days, gift cards, air conditioners for senior citizens, etc., but what the Black community really needs, however, are sound policies, legislation and advocacy from their elected officials.

Jeffrey L. Boney serves as Associate Editor and is an award-winning journalist for the Houston Forward Times newspaper. Jeffrey has been a frequent contributor on "The Nancy Grace Show" and "Crime & Justice with Ashleigh Banfield." Jeffrey is a radio personality and a dynamic, international speaker, experienced entrepreneur, business development strategist and Founder/CEO of the Texas Business Alliance. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at jboney1@forwardtimes.com. Follow Jeffrey on Twitter @realtalkjunkies.

THE SUN-REPORTER
RELIGIOUS SECTION
 THE BAY AREA'S CHURCH NEWS & ACTIVITIES



Sunday School Lesson

By *Shunda Criswell*

Teachings on Justice

Lesson: Matthew 15:1-9
 Place: eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee
 Time: A.D. 29

Golden Text: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Matthew 15:8).

A delegation came from Jerusalem, the center of Jewish authority, and was made up of Pharisees (who advocated detailed obedience to the Jewish law and traditions) and teachers of the law (professional interpreters of the law who especially emphasized the traditions). Over the centuries since the Jews' return from Babylonian captivity, hundreds of religious traditions had been added to God's laws. The Pharisees and

teachers of the law considered them all equally important. They believed that these oral traditions (commentaries and exhortation that were memorized and passed on from generation to generation) went all the way back to Moses. As these religious leaders scrutinized Jesus and his disciples, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating without first washing their hands. This referred not to washing for cleanliness, but to a particular kind of washing that made a person "ceremonially clean" before eating. This ceremonial washing cleansed a person from any defilement he or she may have contacted without knowing it. The origin of this ceremonial washing is seen in the laver of the tabernacle, where the priests washed their hands and feet prior to performing their sacred du-

ties (Exodus 30:17-21). That was part of God's law. Oral tradition extended this law to all Jews to be performed before formal prayers and then before eating. Thus, before each meal, devout Jews would perform a short ceremony, washing their hands and arms in a specific way.

This ceremonial washing was not part of God's law; instead, it was part of the rules and regulations added later. "The tradition of the elders" refers to the oral interpretation of God's laws, interpretations that affected every aspect of Jewish daily life. The elders of earlier generations (members chosen from the older people to be part of the Sanhedrin, the most powerful religious and political body of the Jewish nation) passed along this oral tradition until, in the third century b.c., it was collected and written down, eventually forming the foundation of the Jewish Talmud. As such, the tradition of the elders consisted of oral laws given by Jewish religious leaders. The Pharisees and teachers of the law considered these religious traditions to be as binding and as unbreakable as God's law itself. Their assumption was wrong, as Jesus would point out. Having noticed that Jesus' disciples were eating with defiled hands, the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus why they hadn't washed their hands. Notice that the Pharisees realized that this was a "tradition of

the elders," but they believed that this tradition had the same authority as God's law. Their underlying statement was, "If you are really a rabbi, as holy, righteous, and versed in the law as we are, then you should know that we don't eat without first ceremonially washing our hands. We won't attack you personally, but since your disciples aren't washing, you obviously haven't taught them about what is important. Maybe you don't even know this law. That makes you no better than a common sinner, certainly not a rabbi whom all these people should be following!" Many religious traditions are good and can add richness and meaning to life. But just because our traditions have been practiced for years, we must not elevate them to a sacred standing. God's principles never change, and his law doesn't need additions. Traditions should help us understand God's laws better, not become laws themselves.. (Life Application Bible Commentary Matthew.) (Matthew 15:1-2)

In Matthew 15:3-4, Jesus didn't answer their question until Matthew 5:10-11. Instead, he dealt with the issue of authority—your traditions versus the direct commandments of God. Jesus would show that the religious leaders, who had supposedly devoted their lives to protecting the law, had become so zealous for their traditions that they had missed the

point of God's law entirely. Jesus quoted one of the Ten Commandments: honor your father and mother (Exodus 20:12). The commandment did not apply just to young children but to anyone whose parents were living. "Honor" includes speaking respectfully and showing care and consideration. The same law is written negatively in Exodus 21:17, anyone who speaks evil of father or mother must be put to death. "Speaking evil" (also translated "cursing") means to criticize, ridicule, or abuse verbally. Such action carried a severe penalty. (Life Application New Testament Commentary, Matthew 15:3-4). Jesus then went on to explain how some of the Pharisees had found a way to completely sidestep God's command to honor parents: "But you say, 'You don't need to honor your parents by caring for their needs if you give the money to God instead.'" Jesus was referring to the vow of "Corban" which allowed a person to dedicate money or property for God's exclusive use, but it could still be used by the donor. This vow was grossly misused. A man could use an article vowed to God indefinitely, but could not transfer it to anyone else. The Pharisees had allowed men to dedicate money to God's Temple that otherwise would have gone to support their parents. But some found a way to keep from doing so and still use their money or property as

they chose. A man could simply take the vow of Corban, saying that all his money was dedicated to God. Although the action—dedicating money to God—seemed worthy and no doubt conferred prestige on the giver, these people were ignoring God's clear command to honor their parents. Even worse, this was an irrevocable vow. If a son were to later decide that he needed to help his parents, the Pharisees would not permit it. Jesus rightly said that the Pharisees nullified the direct commandment of God by allowing their tradition to violate the fifth commandment. (Life Application New Testament Commentary, Matthew 15:5-6).

Jesus blasted these self-righteous leaders with one word; he called them hypocrites. Jesus then quoted the Scripture that they claimed to know so well. The great prophet Isaiah had described these religious leaders: they gave honor with their lips, but their hearts were far away (Isaiah 29:13). They had replaced God's commands with their own man-made teachings. Isaiah explained that their worship is a farce. Our actions and our attitudes must be sincere. If they are not, Isaiah's words also describe us. The Pharisees knew a lot about God, but they didn't know God. ((Life Application New Testament Commentary, Matthew 15:7-9). Be Blessed Saints!!!

THE SUN-REPORTER
CHURCH DIRECTORY

Little Zion Baptist Church
 1245 Divisadero Street
 San Francisco, CA

Sunday School 9:00am
 Morning Worship 11:am
 Evening Worship 6pm

El Bethel Missionary Baptist Church

Rev. Keva L. McNeill,
 Pastor

1320 Golden Gate
 San Francisco, CA.
 921-4850, 921-0878

Church School 9: am
 Children's Church 10:am
 Morning Worship 10:45 am
 Bible Study 1-2pm & 6:30-7:30pm
 Prayer meeting
 Wednesday 12:00 Noon

St. Peter's Missionary Baptist Church

1601 Newcomb Avenue
 San Francisco, CA. 94124

Rev. Dr. J.P. Alexander

Church School 9:30 am
 Morning Worship 11: am
 Tuesday Usher meeting 7:pm
 Wednesday Bible Study 7: pm
 Prayer and Choir Rehearsal 7: pm
 Prayer and Teacher meeting
 Wednesday 7:30PM

Neighborhood Baptist Church

608 Hayes Street
 San Francisco, CA

Rev. Lane Hawkins

Sunday School 9:30 am
 Morning Worship 11: am
 Evening Worship 6: pm
 Bible Class Monday 5: pm

Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church

6190 3rd Street
 San Francisco, CA. 94124
 Phone: (415) 822-4071
 Fax: (415) 822-0156

Rev. Kenneth R. Reece
 Pastor

Sunday School 9:00 am
 Morning Worship 10:25 am
 Communion Every 1st Sunday
 Baptism Every 2nd Sunday
 Prayer Meeting/Bible Study
 6:30-8:30 pm Wednesday
 Abundant Life Recovery Ministry
 6:30 pm Mondays

Evergreen Baptist Church

6270 3rd Street
 San Francisco, CA.

Rev. Jackey Wilson
 Pastor

Sunday School 9:15 am
 Morning Worship 10:40: am
 Wednesday 6: pm
 Teacher's Meeting 5: pm
 Sr. Mission 5: pm
 Children's Bible Study 5: pm
 Bible Study 6:45 pm
 Saturday 10-11 am
 Food Pantry 10-11 am

Ascension Baptist Church

1311 Quesada ave.
 San Francisco, CA. 94124
 (415) 822-9488

Rev. Anthony Anderson

Morning Worship 10:15: am
 Bible Study Tuesday 6:30 PM
 Church School Wednesday 7: pm
 Communion every 1st Sunday

Shekinah Christian Fellowship

790 Tennessee St.
 San Francisco, CA. 94107
 (415) 646-0747

Ella Henderson, Bishop &
 Founder of SCF

Tyrone and Demetra Hillman
 Pastor
 Sunday School - 9:am
 Morning worship - 10:15 am
 Radio: Sunday 9:30 am KDYA
 TV: Tuesday and Friday 8:30am
 KTLN Total Living Network

Ebenezer Baptist Church

275 Divisadero Street
 San Francisco, CA.

Sunday School 9:15 am
 Morning Worship 10:45: am
 Evening Worship 7:30 pm

Mount Calvary Baptist Church

4000 Middlefield Rd.
 (Cubberly Community CTR)
 Palo Alto, CA. 94306
 (650) 569-6944

Rev Roy Northington
 Pastor

Sunday School - 10:am
 Morning worship - 11:00 am
 Wednesday Bible Discussion 7: pm
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Providence Baptist Church

1601 McKinnun Ave
 San Francisco, CA. 94124

Rev. Calvin Jones Jr.
 Pastor

Wednesday Bible Study
 Women 6pm
 General 7pm
 Sunday School - 9:30: am
 Mom Worship - 8am & 10:45 am
 Morning worship - 10:45 am
 STU 6:30 pm
 Evening Worship 7:00 pm

Living Word Church of God In Christ

12 Westlake Ave
 Daly City CA. 94014

Rev. Derrick Lomax
 Pastor

Sunday School - 10:00: am
 Morning worship - 11:30 am
 Wed Bible Class 8:00 pm
 Friday Prayer Service 8:00 pm

THE SUN-REPORTER CHURCH DIRECTORY

Pilgrim Community Church, U.C.C.
650 Randolph Street
San Francisco, CA. 94124
(415) 586-3124
Pastor Harold Pierre
Morning Worship 10:15 am
Bible Study Tuesday 6:30 PM
Church School Wednesday 7: pm
Communion every 1st Sunday

Fellowship Bible Church
119 Plymouth Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94112
(415) 239-5492
Elder Fletcher Sims, Pastor
Sunday School 10:00 AM
Morning Worship 11:30 AM
Wed. Prayer Meeting/Bible Study 7:00 PM
3rd Sat. Women Prayer 10:00 AM
3rd Sat. Street Witnessing 11:00 AM
Communion Every Sunday!

Wright Chapel A.M.E. Church
627 Capitol Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94112
Rev. Francine Nelson Brookins, J.D., M. Div., Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Wed. Bible Study 12-1 PM - 7:30 PM-8:30 PM
(415) 239-8440

Bayview Tabernacle Baptist Church
1775 LaSalle Street
San Francisco, CA 94124
(415) 641-5835
Rev. John Hall, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Prayer & Bible Study Thursday 7:30-8:30 AM

Union Springs Baptist Church
101 Fillmore Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Prayer Meeting/Bible Study Thursday 6:30 PM

St. Paul Tabernacle Baptist Church
1789 Oakdale Avenue
San Francisco, CA
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:45 AM
Wednesday Prayer Meeting/Bible Study 12 PM & 6 PM
Thursday Prayer & Praise 6:00 PM
Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM

Mt. Herman Baptist Church
29 Lyon Street
San Francisco, A 94111
Rev. Leroy Williams, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
BTU 6:00 PM
Evening Worship 7:00 PM

Broad Street Baptist Church
267 Farallones Street
San Francisco, CA
Rev. Robert Lucas, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Prayer & Teachers Meeting (Wed. 6:30 PM)

Greater Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church
740 Clayton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
(415) 822-0519
Rev. Willie Williams, Sr. Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:30 AM
Evening Worship/Bible Study 6:00 PM
Wednesday Teachers / Prayer Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM

St. Andrews Missionary Baptist Church
2565 Post Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 346-6500
Rev. Ishmael Burch, Jr., Pastor
Sunday School 9:10 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Wed. Bible Study 7:00 PM

Matthew Zion Baptist Church
2340 San Bruno Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94134
(415) 467-4233
Rev. M. Washington, Sr., Pastor
Church School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Wednesday Adult Prayer/Bible Study 6:30 PM-8:00 PM
Thursday Mission/Brotherhood 6:30 PM-8:00 PM

St. James Baptist Church
1470 Hudson Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94124
Rev. Michael S. Williams, Pastor
Sunday School 9:15 AM
Morning Worship 10:45 AM
Bible Class Mon. 6:00 PM
BTU 6:00 PM
Evening Worship 7:00 PM

Missionary Temple C.M.E. Church
1455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94115
Office (415) 921-3324
Rev. Dr. Leroy Johnson, Presiding Elder/Pastor
Morning Worship 8 & 11 AM
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Wednesday Brown Bag/Bible Study 12 PM
Prayer & Bible Study 7:00 PM

Tabernacle of Faith Missionary Baptist Church
1414 Valencia Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 655-9856
Rev. Brandon Walter, Jr. Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Bible Class, Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

Macedonia Baptist Church
2135 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA
Rev. Emmett Neal, Sr., Pastor
Brotherhood 8:30 AM
Sunday School 9:00 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Prayer Meeting & Bible Study Wednesday 12 Noon & 7:00 PM

Mt. Zion Baptist Church
1321 Oak Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
Rev. Edwin H. Watkins, Pastor
Church School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Wednesday Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 12 PM & 3 PM
Christian Liberties Study 1st Sunday of the Month 2 PM to 4 PM

Olivet Baptist Church
1667 Revere Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94124
Rev. Steven Bailey, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
BTU 6:00 PM
Wednesday Prayer & Teacher's Meeting 7:00 PM

New Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist Church
2900 Geneva Avenue
Daly City, CA 94014
(415) 46-6697
Rev. Audrey G. Patton, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Mid-Week Ministries 6:00 PM
Communion Service 1st Sunday

Hamilton Memorial COGIC
2398 Geary Blvd
San Francisco, CA
Rev. J.L. Langston, Jr., Pastor
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
YFWW 6:00 PM
Praise & Worship 7:30 PM
Tuesday Bible Study 7:30 PM
Friday Evangelistic Service 7:30 PM

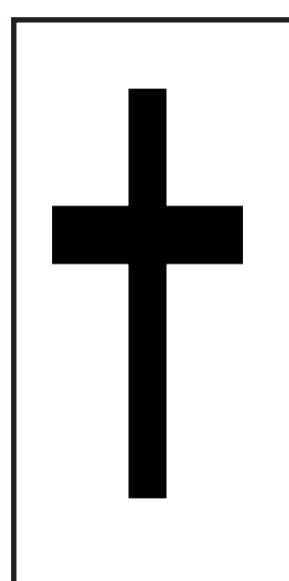
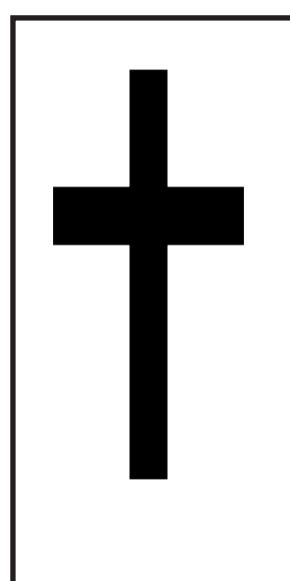
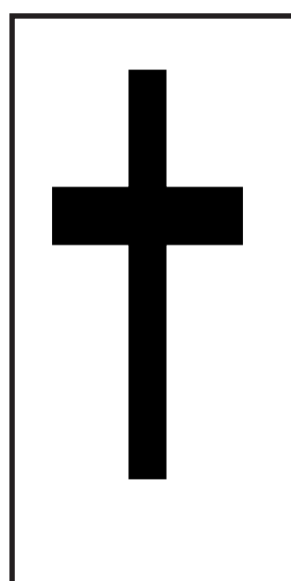
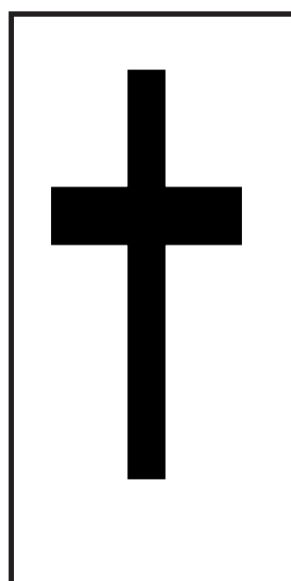
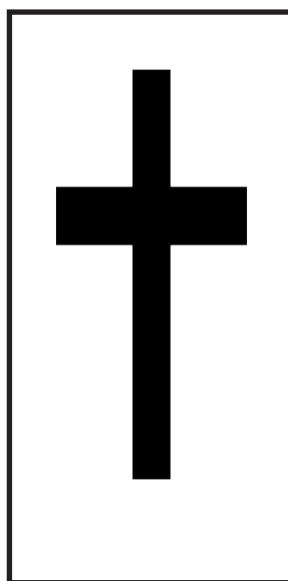
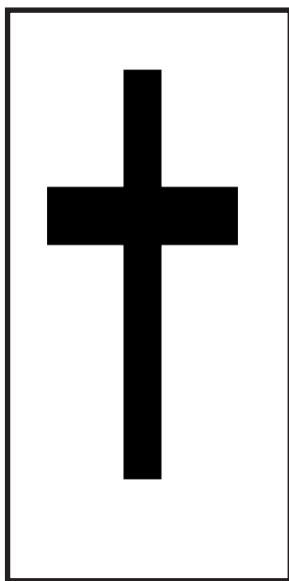
First A.M.E. Zion Church
2159 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA
Rev. Dr. Christopher L. Zacharias
(415) 931-7479
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM

Greater Abundant Life COGIC
6221 Third Street
San Francisco, CA
Rev. T. Lindsey, Pastor
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Wed. Bible Study 7:30 PM
Friday Night Youth 7:30 PM
Tues. & Fri. Noon Day Prayer

Mount Vernon Baptist Church
106 Broad Street
San Francisco, CA 94112
(415) 337-1544
Rev. Alfredo Lewis, Pastor
Sunday School 9:15 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Tuesday Mission 7:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study Rosa Park Plaza 7:30 PM

Second Union Missionary Baptist Church
749 Page Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
Rev. Calvin Ellison, Pastor
Church School 9:00 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Night Service 7:30 PM
Broadcast: KEST (1450 AM)
Sundays 8-9 PM

Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church
195 Scotia Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94124
(415) 468-8405
Praise & Prayer 9:00-9:30 AM
Sundays Church School 9:30-10:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
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Sunday

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Children's Ministry 10:25 AM
Nurture for Baptist 6:15 PM

Wednesday

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Communion - 1st Sunday

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