

# HERITAGE CIRCLE - AFRICAN AMERICANS OF INDIAN DESCENT

A Ministry of

All Saints' Lutheran Church of Boston

ADVOCACY FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

P.O. Box 190012, Boston, MA 02120

Telephone: (617) 442-9282 or 492-5361



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37.

June 20, 1996

**Rev. Vernon E. Carter - Little Arrow**  
Director/Pastor and Founder

**Nicole Richardson - Wild Fire**  
Co-founder

**Barbara J. Ward - Smiling Rain**  
Administrative Assistant

**Lorenzo Williams - Wind Tone**  
Treasurer

**Cynthia Williams - Red Rose**  
Assistant to Treasurer

**Janis L. McManus**  
Teacher/Counselor/Educator

**Raymond Brooks - Lone Wolf**  
Public Coordinator

**Carol D. Carter - Smiling Blue Waters**  
Artist/Director

**Lydia Clapp - Princess Sunbeam**  
Hospitality Coordinator

**Miriam Corbin - Little Wolf**  
Social Worker/Innovator

**Diane Wignall - Creative Spirit**  
Caribbean Consultant

**Anne Tate - Sun Flower**  
Welcome Receptionist

**Joy Austin - Joy to the World**  
Wisdom Reader

**Randy Thomas - Long Hunter**  
Technician

**Patrice Herbert - Sea Breeze**  
Craft Person/Coordinator

**Thelma Barros - Sweet Wild Flower**  
Urban Coordinator

**Ben Haith - High Spirit**  
Urban Specialist

**Paris Swindle - Flint Striker**  
Economic Developer

**Jean Austin - Earth Child**  
Elder

**Russell Peters - Fast Turtle**  
Wampanoag Advisor

**Herbert Allen - Aquinnah DEV.**  
Gay Head Indian Contact

Cambridge, Ma.

To The Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council:

Cornel West of Harvard University tells us in his recent book that it is Twilight Time in Civilization. Entering the twenty-first century appears to be a confrontation with myriad forms of violence. Before we go to sleep completely, let us take a moral and spiritual antibiotic to remove the congestion of indolence and escapisms of responsibilities concerning the burning of churches, especially Black churches in the South.

In the 60s (1967) my church - All Saints' Lutheran Church of Boston - was fire-bombed on a Sunday morning between 12 mid-night and 4 AM. Upon arriving at my church at 9 AM, firemen were finalizing the the cleaning up of the debris. During that time, I was very close in action with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., instigated the demise of Racial Imbalance in the State of Massachusetts and participated in many protests in the North and South. In conjunction with these many activities, I led the 1965 Freedom Vigil for 114 days and five hours - living on the sidewalk, walking 21 hours a day and sleeping 3 hours a day - until the walls of Racial Imbalance came tumbling down. As a result, my church was a target. Vacating the premises after many threats, a fire-bomb hit the church in the South End of Boston.

This was the only church fire-bombed in New England, and possibly in the North since pastors of color stayed at arm's length of Martin for fear of various repercussions, especially during his Vietnam protests. This was more prevalent in the North. I was not an absentee civil rights activist. I was on time and never late to witness for justice. I know the feeling first hand. This is why I want to speak Monday evening, June 24, 1996, on the Southern Black Church fires and others; also to offer suggestions for alleviating these devastating circumstances.

Respectfully,

  
Vernon E. Carter

Church Mailing Address When Directed:  
295 Harvard Street, Apt. 311, Cambridge, MA 02139

Consent Communication #37

5-364

Communication was received from Vernon E. Carter, Heritage Circle-African American of Indian descent, transmitting his concern over the Southern Black Church fires and suggestions for alleviating these devastating circumstances.

In City Council June 24, 1996

*Placed on file*