

NCLF Newsletter

NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM | A BLACK CHRISTIAN VOICE

TRUTH-TELLING IN POWERFUL SPACES



by Rev Ronald A. Nathan

As Christians all around the world were preparing to celebrate Easter, the National Christian Leaders Forum (NCLF) was facilitating a meeting of Black Christians in the House of Lords on 27 February. Attention was focused on the NCLF's *Black Church Political Mobilisation: A Manifesto for Action* document in the run-up to the British general elections due later this year.

Embedded in the biblical account of Jesus' trial is His encounter with Pontius Pilate – Pontius Pilate, representing the political and military might of Rome, and Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, representing the desires of a subjugated people for redemption.

What lessons are there for the Black Church in their encounter?

Pontius Pilate as governor of Judaea was a representative of the imperial colonial power of Rome. Amidst the Pax Romana propaganda, Pilate was in charge and he had an occupying army to back him up. Success for Pontius Pilate was to obey the orders of Caesar, to enrich Rome, keep the peace, and quell subversives.

Expediency and opportunism were at work as Pilate deliberated on what to do with Jesus. He bowed to the cries of the people and listened to the loudest voices. He muffled the still small voice of conscience that said: "This Man has done nothing wrong to deserve state murder." By handing Jesus over to His accusers Pilate gave the Roman seal of approval and issued Jesus' death warrant.

Jesus the Christ, a charismatic, itinerant preacher and teacher, followed in the prophetic traditions of the Jewish

continued on page 2

KEEPING HOPE ALIVE



by Elsa Caleb

In an unprecedented move, on 27 February, the House of Lords witnessed a historic gathering of Black Christian leaders, hosted by the National Church Leaders Forum (NCLF) and Operation Black Vote's Lord Simon Woolley, a prominent figure in British politics.

Our guest speaker, US civil rights activist Rev Al Sharpton (pictured overleaf), addressed the gathering of church and civic leaders on the critical issue of voter registration.

The session commenced with Lord Woolley emphasising the importance of inclusivity and representation in the political landscape. He reiterated the urgent need for increased engagement and empowerment of Black Church leadership to come together and

continued on page 2

Happy
Easter

FROM
ALL AT
NCLF



NCLF Newsletter

NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM | A BLACK CHRISTIAN VOICE

continued from page 1

spread the message that if we want to see policy change, then every Black vote matters.

Amongst the attendees were key individuals, such as Florence Eshalomi, MP for Vauxhall and Shadow Minister for Democracy, who underlined the increased awareness of voting rights and that, particularly in this election year, our next vote is important. We also heard from Baroness Sherlock OBE, Rev Canon Christian Weaver CBE, Rev Nims Obunge MBE, and Lee Jasper.

Rev Sharpton shared that, as far back as the age of 12, whilst being mentored by Rev Jesse Jackson, his political activism had started with his association with Dr Martin Luther King Jr. He also drew similarities between the challenges being faced by the US and UK Black communities.

Attendees received a copy of the revised and expanded second edition of *'Black Church Political Mobilisation – A Manifesto for Action'*, launched in May 2023.

As the session drew to a close, the speakers and meeting affirmed a unified commitment to fostering a more inclusive approach to raising the ways to promote the national Black vote.

continued from page 1 - TRUTH-TELLING IN POWERFUL SPACES

faith, embodying the Jewish sense of self and independence which didn't sit well with Rome. With an unshakeable determination and focused mindset, He understood His destiny was to include death by the Roman legal machinery.

He was totally committed to fulfilling the task assigned by another Power – His heavenly Father ("Not My will but Thine be done"). His love mission was expressed in a life of service to the "least of these". Jesus fearlessly declared to the highest court in the land: "I testify to the truth." Pilate, bewildered by the absence of fear in Jesus, asked: "What is truth?"

The Black Church's political intervention recognises that truth must be presented and represented wherever power is manifested. Truth is not only dogma for halls of worship, but it is designed for the elevation and empowerment of underserved humanity located on the byways and hedges of society.

Black clergypersons who venture into the Houses of Parliament must facilitate truth-telling – even when it challenges the attitudes, assumptions, policies, and actions of the status quo. Effective leadership was exemplified in Jesus. He made a way where there seemed to be no way. He offered hope, salvation and redemption to the powerless in the face of accusations, threats, intimidation, violence and even death. Jesus' words to us are: "Pick up your cross and follow Me."



PICTURE:
Rev Al Sharpton
addressing
the meeting

NCLF Newsletter

NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM | A BLACK CHRISTIAN VOICE



UK Vision 2030, co-chaired by Rev Les Isaac OBE and Dr Jacky McLeod, held a launch event of its photobook and final report on 18 January at the All Nations Centre in Vauxhall, London.

The report represented the culmination of a three-year project involving surveys, interviews and focus groups with 233 visionaries – people of African and/or Caribbean heritage holding leadership positions in British society.

The initial question of “Where will the Black community be in 20-30 years’ time?” led to the growth of the UK Vision team, which looked closely at eight main areas: Arts, Entertainment and Sport, Business and Economy, Education, Family, Government, Health, Media, and Religion. It is hoped that the UK Vision 2030 will be shared in churches nationwide.

SPECIAL GRAND LAUNCH OF CHURCHGOERS APP

https://churchgoers.app

Planting a Digital Ministry In Your Church Soon

CHURCHGOERS

Grand Launch Event

For Church Leaders, Pastors & Associates

Featuring our:

- Digital Ministry Platform
- Fellowship Network &
- Church Convention App

ONLINE EVENT LOG IN ON ZOOM AT 11:00 - 12:15 HRS

Key Topics:

- Digital Ministry Blueprint
- Digital Evangelism Tips
- Digital Compliance Toolkit

LIVE EVENT FROM HOLIDAY INN KENSINGTON AT 17:30 - 19:15

Afterglow Celebrations at 19:30

- 3-course Caribbean Buffet until 21:30 hrs
- Live DJ playing music until 01:00 hrs
- Steel Band + much more

SAT 27TH, APR 2024

Supported By

NCLF A BLACK CHRISTIAN VOICE

REGISTER

https://bit.ly/churchgo

Hybrid Churches
Believers
Digital Ministry Mentors
Conventional Churches
Digital Evangelists

Conventions
Church Apps
Church Index
Pew Reviews
Fellowship Finder

Marketing Churches at Centres of Excellence

A Blueprint for Digital Ministry

A recording of the event is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KU8TvFTxnU> and you can read the full report here: <http://www.tinyurl.com/UKVISION2030/>

NCLF Newsletter

NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM | A BLACK CHRISTIAN VOICE

DEMENTIA AND THE CHURCH



Dementia Action Week runs from 13 to 19 May 2024 in the UK. It is a week dedicated to raising awareness of all forms of dementia, including Alzheimer's Disease (AD) and encouraging people who are suffering from dementia or supporting someone who is.

Unfortunately, in some sections of the Church, and in the Black Church, dealing with dementia is still a taboo subject, but a new book, entitled *Dementia and the Church: A Practical Guide*, hopes to change that.

Co-authored with professionals from Bethel churches, and endorsed by Dementia UK (who wrote the Foreword), lead author, Dr Carol S. Ighofose, hopes *Dementia and the Church* will help congregations and the wider community address issues surrounding dementia. There is an urgent need in society and in the Church to recognise the early signs of dementia so that those affected – either personally or supporting – can receive the help they need. Dr Carol believes *Dementia and the Church* will prove to be an invaluable resource.

This comprehensive and practical book has been a “labour of love” for the ‘Let’s Talk Dementia’ Team of Bethel Apostolic Church UK, and Dr Carol is grateful to God for its publication.

Dementia and the Church: A Practical Guide is available on Amazon in paperback and on Kindle:

Paperback (UK) - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0CSTB6P68>
 Kindle (UK) - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0CSV65F3W>
 US - <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0CSTB6P68>
 Canada - <https://www.amazon.ca/dp/B0CSTB6P68>



Image credit: KSIBS website

KING SOLOMON INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL ACADEMY TRANSFER

KSIBS, founded in 2015 and located in Birmingham, is an all-through Christian faith-designated school in a multi-faith context. Proposals are under way for KSIBS to transfer to Star Academies and become a multi-faith secondary-only school on 1 September 2024.

Parents, carers, staff and stakeholders are encouraged to engage with the proposals before the engagement period ends on 21 April 2024.

For further information, including an online consultation document and questionnaire, please visit the school website at <https://kingsolomonibs.com/Academy-Transfer/>

Email us at info.nclf@gmail.com or connect with us on social media

PLEASE DONATE TO NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM (NCLF)

Barclays Bank PLC | Account Number **33315959** | Sort Code **20-41-50**



Thank you!