

**Press Release: For Immediate Release**

## **‘ARISE’ AND HONOUR OUR ANCESTORS’**

### **Day of Remembrance for Enslaved Ancestors**

**Holy Trinity Church, Birchfield, Birmingham, Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October.**

*Exhibition - Music - Service of Remembrance - Poetry - Drumming - Dramatisation*

A Day of Remembrance is a call to the African and Caribbean communities in Britain to honour and celebrate the lives of their enslaved ancestors. Pioneered by the charismatic Rev. Canon Eve Pitts, a service will take place on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2015, 3.30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Church, Birchfield, Birmingham.

Rev. Canon Pitts, is one of the first Black women to be ordained as a Parish Priest in the Church of England in 1992. This commemoration will be the first of its kind within the context of the church, and she believes it will be an uplifting and liberating experience.

Rev. Canon Pitts said: “Our enslaved ancestors were a people to look up to because they retained a strong sense of who they were in the face of unimaginable evil. They brought from Africa to the Caribbean their culture and heritage and never abandoned it. That’s why we need to honour them”.

The transatlantic slave trade was the largest enforced movement of people in history. It is estimated that between 15 to 20 million men, women and children, were extracted from their homes and sold as slaves. For more than 200 years Britain was at the heart of the lucrative transatlantic slave trade. Enslaved Africans and their descendants were central to the rise of its industrial power.

Many people of African Caribbean backgrounds have difficulty dealing with the brutality and dehumanising nature of slavery. Instead of being ashamed of their dynasties, Rev. Canon Pitts envisions that this remembrance service will highlight the strength, courage and perseverance of their ancestors. These attributes enabled them to play an important part in their liberation. She went on to say that it will also help to provide some restitution to a terrible and enduring legacy.

Preceding the service will be an exhibition of photographs and artefacts from the Liverpool, Black Country and Birmingham Museums. The service will run for two hours and will include prayers, spirituals, songs, drumming, poetry and a short theatrical sketch by young people.

Representatives from the Anglican and Pentecostal Churches, local MPs and other dignitaries, including theologian, Professor Robert Beckford will be in attendance. They will join a gathering to remember the lives and heroic actions of the enslaved Africans, abolitionists and others who acted in the face of great danger and adversity.

**Rev. Cannon Eve Pitts**



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For more information please contact: Joan Blaney at [jmblaney@aol.com](mailto:jmblaney@aol.com), Rev. Canon Eve Pitts at [blackuhru@aol.com](mailto:blackuhru@aol.com) or telephone 0121 356 4241 for more information