

# Angelou recalls horrific abominations of slavery

By Mark Moss

Special to Sentinel-Voice

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (NNPA)—Renown poet and author Maya Angelou called upon the audience at Mt. Zion Baptist Church to never forget the sacrifices made by the ancestors of African-Americans.

Describing the abject conditions of a slave ship — “lying spoon fashion... in each other’s excrement and urine”

Angelou added, “Imagine it. We forget it too frequently. We shouldn’t forget who we’ve come from. We have come a long way. We have been blessed to come a long way with grandfathers and grandmothers who underwent experiences we can’t even talk about.”

Angelou, who is a member of Mt. Zion, was the featured speaker at the church’s dual celebration of

Juneteenth and Father’s Day. Angelou, who is best known for her autobiography, “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,” lives in Winston-Salem and teaches at Wake Forest University.

Rev. Serenus Churn, Mt. Zion’s pastor, called Angelou our “African-American Queen” during his introduction of her. “She belongs to us, and she belongs to the world.”

Angelou interspersed her brief speech with poems to emphasize her theme of paying homage to Black ancestors.

Angelou said that the abominations that African-Americans endured were too horrific to be included in the Alex Haley’s book, “Roots,” or in the TV adaptation of the bestseller.

“I am amazed at anyone who is ashamed to be Black,”

she said. “I think: ‘My Lord, I don’t know what I did before, but I did something right to have been sent here as a Black woman, as an African-American woman,’” she said to applause.

She criticized those young people who sneered at adults who were overly obsequious because they had families to feed and clothe. Angelou also admonished those who referred to themselves as

“dogs.” She asked the audience what they call the female dog. “Is that who your mother is?” she said.

Take your ancestors with you, Angelou advised, when you go to a job interview, when you go to take an examination, when you visit strange places.

She concluded with one of her better-known poems.

Mark Moss writes for the Carolina Peacemaker.

## Jakes

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30,000 members in our church, but we have a relationship with 200 Black newspapers who are serving this number of people [15 million] and let’s negotiate and advertise collectively,” says Jakes, who has written 30 books. His first book, “Woman Thou Art Loosed,” has sold more than 1.2 million copies.

In a speech by NNPA publishers and local residents at Chicago’s Arie Crown Theater, Jakes referenced John 12:1-2, which details the stink of Lazarus before Jesus raised him from the dead, in relation to the wayward lifestyles of young people.

“They may be in the gay bar, they may be in the crack house, but, it’s your child. Don’t let the stink stop you from finding a way to reach beyond the polarities that separate you,” Jakes said.

“Don’t let the stink stop you. Lazarus, come forth! ‘But, I’m stinking.’ Come out anyway! ‘I’m not dressed right, Mama.’ Come out anyway! ‘I don’t have a job, Mama.’ Come out anyway! ‘Mama, I can’t, please...’ Come out anyway! You don’t belong in the tomb with the stinky folks. I didn’t raise you like this. Come out. Come out wherever you are!”

Jakes made it clear that older African-Americans must not abandon troubled youth. “If you’re not part of the group that goes in and calls them out, you’ve got to be part of the group that unwraps them,” Jakes continued.

“The reason that I’m glad to be in Chicago and I’m glad to have an opportunity to work with the Black media and I’m glad to have this opportunity to talk to you is because I fully intend — until my last breath — to call Lazarus out of the grave and say, ‘Mary and Martha are waiting for your return. Big Mama and Grandmama are waiting for your return.’”



Aretha  
Franklin

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

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