

Celebrate KWANZAA!!



The name Kwanzaa, comes from the phrase "*matunda ya kwanza*", which means *first fruits* in Kiswahili - the language adopted for this cultural celebration. The celebration was established by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966. He founded as an alternative to the commercialized Christmas celebration, for African Americans. His purpose was to inspire a new found awareness among African Americans that embraced the ideals of strengthening self, family and community. This celebration encourages appreciation of our cultural roots, our heritage and the family.

The Kwanzaa is non-religious, non-secular, and non-tribal; rather it is cultural. The holiday is observed from December 26th through January 1st: 7 days. It focuses on 7 principals (Nguzo Saba). It includes 7 symbols as part of the celebration ritual. And the word Kwanzaa, has 7 letters.

NGUZO SABA The Seven Principals

Umoja - Unity

To strive and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race

Kujichagulia - Self Determination

To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.

Ujima - Collective Work & Responsibility

To build and maintain our community together and make our neighbors problems our problems and solve them together.

Ujamaa - Cooperative Economics

To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.

Nia - Purpose

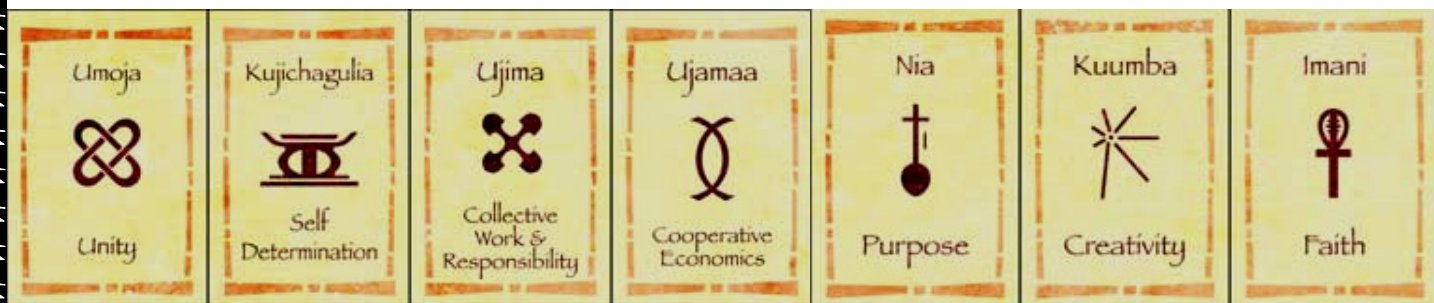
To make our shared work the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

Kuumba - Creativity

To always do as much as we, in the way that we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

Imani - Faith

To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our efforts.



ALAMA SABA

The Seven Symbols

Kikombe cha Umoja (The Unity Cup)

This is symbolic of the foundational principle and practice of unity which makes all else possible.

Mazao (The Crops)

These are symbolic of African harvest celebrations and of the rewards of productive and collective labor.

Mkeka (The Mat)

This is symbolic of our tradition and history and therefore, the foundation on which we build.

Kinara (The Candle Holder)

This is symbolic of our roots, our parent people - continental Africans.

Muhindi (The Corn)

This is symbolic of our children and our future which they embody.

Mishumaa Saba (The Seven Candles)

These are symbolic of the Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles, the matrix and minimum set of values which African people are urged to live by in order to rescue and reconstruct their lives in their own image and according to their own needs.

Zawadi (The Gifts)

These are symbolic of the labor and love of parents and the commitments made and kept by the children.

