

Black History Month

“History is written by the victors” goes the old adage. Though there is some truth to the statement, it isn’t entirely accurate. The Hebrew exodus and the resurrection of Jesus are stories from the margins. As a church, we observe Black History Month every February because we remember that the gospel that has shaped our identity is a message from the margins; it is history written by the oppressed.

During Black History Month, the population is given the opportunity to hear about Black Canadians like Anderson Ruffin Abbott, the first Black Canadian to be licensed as a physician. Abbott had petitioned US President Abraham Lincoln to allow him to join the Union Army during the American Civil War and developed a relationship with Lincoln. He was later honoured to receive the plaid shawl Lincoln wore at his 1861 inauguration as an expression of gratitude from Mary Todd Lincoln, after her husband’s assassination.

During Black History Month, we remember the stories of women like Marie-Joseph Angélique, who was accused of starting a fire that destroyed all of, what is now, Old Montreal on April 10, 1734 (before the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833). There is no consensus on whether Angélique started the fire or was accused of it due to her social conditions.

During Black History Month, we remember the struggles, contributions, and achievements of Black Canadians, knowing that the more these stories are shared, the more we will come to know one another.

For more on Black History Month see
www.united-church.ca/worship



The United Church of Canada
L'Église Unie du Canada

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