



## News Release

Rev. Peter J. Spann  
Carron Baptist Church  
1354 First Street SW  
Washington, D.C.  
**(240) 601-7137**

**For Immediate Release**

### **The Inaugural Southwest Juneteenth Festival** *History, Heritage, and Hope*

Washington, D.C. – The Inaugural Southwest Juneteenth Festival is slated for Saturday, June 17, 2023 from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. on the site of the historic Carron Baptist Church at 1354 First Street in Southwest D.C. This festival engages city-wide residents along with James Creek, Syphax Gardens, Greenleaf Gardens, Greenleaf Gardens Additions, Greenleaf Gardens Extension, and Greenleaf Senior communities. Descendant communities remember the storied past of the enslavement of Africans and African Americans and the celebration of their freedom. This outdoor festival is a celebration through reflective conversations about Juneteenth, music, dance, food, children’s activities, and a walking tour.

Juneteenth or June 19, 1965 marks the date when those who were enslaved in the state of Texas learned that they had been freed – two years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, which freed only those enslaved in the states fighting with the Union. However, the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution abolished slavery.

This event will feature Historian Louis C. Hicks, Jr. who will lead festival goers in dialogue about the Juneteenth National Independence Day - also known as Jubilee Day, Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, and Black Independence Day. He is a renowned community historian with a focus on the intersection of Black history and public interpretation. He currently serves as Executive Assistant for the Association for the Study of African American History (ASALH).

Celebrating 95 years of serving the Washington, D.C. community, Carron – a 14<sup>th</sup> Century Gothic style architect brownstone - is a few walking blocks from National and Audi stadiums (Waterfront and Navy Yard Metro Stations) and three historic landmarks. The former home site of native Washingtonian soul singer Marvin Gaye is at 1617 First Street. In the same block is the location of the James C. Dent House at 156 Q Street. Born enslaved in 1855, Reverend Dent was founding pastor, along with his wife Mary, of a Baptist church and he was a notable community leader advocating social and economic justice. Across the street is Fort McNair, the site where the Abraham Lincoln assassination co-conspirators were hanged 158 years ago.

“Community outreach, civic engagement, and cultural identity are ways that we facilitate change in the surrounding neighborhoods,” said Reverend Peter J. Spann, a Howard University School of Divinity alumni. “The inaugural Southwest Juneteenth Festival aligns with Carron’s mission and vision beyond the walls of the church as a faith-based anchor for local and community-wide residents.”

**This event is free and open to the public.**

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