7-17-2011

Service, Coffin Point Community Praise House

Lula Holmes

Geri Sims

Mary Legree

Joseph Bryant Reverend

Ellie Holmes Mollison

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://digital.kenyon.edu/gullah_video

Part of the American Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Holmes, Lula; Sims, Geri; Legree, Mary; Bryant, Joseph Reverend; Mollison, Ellie Holmes; Middleton, Robert; Pearson, Sara Heyward; Rutkoff, Peter; Harrod, Hope; Johnson, Damien; Morgan, Portia; and Bergen, Zakiyyah, "Service, Coffin Point Community Praise House" (2011). Video Collection. Paper 108.
https://digital.kenyon.edu/gullah_video/108
Interviewee/Interviewer
Lula Holmes, Geri Sims, Mary Legree, Joseph Bryant Reverend, Ellie Holmes Mollison, Robert Middleton, Sara Heyward Pearson, Peter Rutkoff, Hope Harrod, Damien Johnson, Portia Morgan, and Zakiyyah Bergen
Praise House
7/17/2011
(Lula Holmes, Geri Sims, Mary Legree, Rev. Joseph P. Bryant, Ellie Holmes Mollison, Robert Middleton, Sara Heyward Pearson & others)

Peter Rutkoff, Hope Harrod, Damien Johnson, Portia Morgan, Zakiyyah Bergen

ML: We’ve just got everyone here.

PR: Ok.

ML: Except for one person.

PR: Ok.

ML: So I think we’re just gonna start.

PR: Ok. Whatever you want. It’s up to you.

ML: Ok. Well I thought… [cut to next clip] …get Ms. Mollison a program book? Who’s got a program? You got all the program? Does she have one?

DF: (To DJ) David, could you pass that? (DJ passes a program to EHM)

ML: Are they all gone? Now ok, so… now. Pass out whatever’s available to those who are guests (ML passes out programs). See you’re filming so you don’t need one. We need two more in the corner here?

PR: I have one, you gave me one earlier.

ML: Good. So we’re gonna get started. Mr. Bryant? Ok.

RJB: (Stands and walks to podium) We wanna say good morning.

Congregation: Good morning.

RJB: How should we say morning.

Congregation: Morning! (Laughter)

RJB: I am Reverend Joseph P. Bryant. Bryant. With the n on the… n on the tail of it. Uh, some people say Byant, some people say Bryan, but it Bryant. And I come to stand before you at this time, to welcome you to God’s hidden secret. The greatest community on the face of this earth. The Gullah community. I am so happy. We Gullah people are so happy for see y’all to come here. And we wan’t y’all to know that we people are so happy to see you come here. And we want you to know that you is home with you people. With you people. And I is here to greet you.
And tell you that this here is the house of the Lord. And we come here for glorify the name of Jesus Christ. Because he is worthy to be praised.

Congregation: Yes.

RJB: There is no name given unto heaven whereby man must be saved other than the name of Jesus Christ. And I come here now to say, to my brothers and sisters from the great Midwest, Cleveland, Ohio, that you are sure now welcome down here. To sing, to clap, to shout, and to let the people know that God is a good God. Is God a good God?

Congregation: Yeah!

RJB: Is he a good God?

Congregation: Yeah! Yes he is, yes he is!

RJB: Can anybody do you like Jesus?

Congregation: No, nobody!

RJB: Nobody can do it like Jesus. Cause he is my friend.

Congregation: Yes he is.

RJB: Is he your friend?

Congregation: Yes, he is my friend.

RJB: I took hands with Lord Jesus.

Congregation: Yes.

RJB: I don’t know what I’d do without him!

Congregation: Yes Lord.

RJB: Other people, I don’t know what I’d do without Jesus.


RJB: So God is too good for us.

Congregation: Amen.

RJB: And to the soul be free.
Congregation: Yes, Jesus.

RJB: Take us up when we come down and send us when we weak. Take us up on everything inside, and help us Lord to remember that Lord God beside you there with all. Father we Praise dance is over. But before I close mankind everywhere my God.

Congregation: Yes, yes.

RJB: Oh God, look especially on our young men and women who is fighting on the battlefield.

Congregation: Yes.

RJB: Oh God, look on those that are locked down in prison walls. Prison walls they are in. God, look on the sick and shut-in. On the Reed, the Reed family. Have mercy on them right now, Lord. Oh, somebody’s hungry. Somebody need some water for thing.

Congregation: Yes.

RJB: We ask you, Lord, to make a way outta no way, Lord.

Congregation: Yes.

RJB: Just like you did for Moses?

Congregation: Yes Lord, yes Lord.

RJB: And the children of Israel?! Just like it you did it for the Hebrew children. We know you the same God.

Congregation: Same God. Same God.

RJB: Today as you was yesterday.

Congregation: Oh yes you are.

RJB: You’ll be the same God forevermore.

Congregation: Yes, God. Yes. Same.

RJB: Now God we ask you to take over.

Congregation: Yes Lord.

RJB: We put everything in your hands, Lord.

Congregation: Yes.
RJB: Oh God in your hands everything will be alright.

Congregation: Yes.

RJB: We got… blessed now is Jesus’ name.

Congregation: Jesus. Yes.

RJB: Amen.

(All Congregation Sings and claps)

Come by Here Lord (come by here) C AG C AG (F F E)
Come by Here Lord (come by here) C AG C AG (E E D)
Come by Here Lord (come by here) C AG C AG (F F E)
Oh Lord, Come By Here FG EC D D C

Come by Here Lord (come by here) F DC FDC (F F E)
Come by Here Lord (come by here) E C E C (E E D)
Come by Here Lord (come by here) E C E C (F F D)
Oh Lord, Come By Here FG EC D D C

We can’t pray right (’til you come by here) G C E C (E E F F E)
We can’t pray right (’til you come by here) G C D C (E E E E D)
We can’t pray right (’til you come by here) G C E C (E E F F E)
Oh, Lord, Come by here FG EC D D C

(Whole song modulates up a half step)

Lord we need you (to come by here) G C E C (F F E)
Lord we need you (to come by here) G C E C (E E D)
Lord we need you (to come by here) G C E C (F F E)
Oh, Lord, come by here FG EC D D C
Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) GC E C E C (F F E)
Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) GC E C E C (E E D)
Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) GC E C E C (F F E)
Oh, Lord, come by here FG EC D D C

(Dancing starts)

Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) GC E C E C (F F E)
Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) GC E C E C (E E D)
Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) GC E C E C (F F E)
Oh, Lord, come by here FG EC D D C
We can’t pray right (’til you come by here) G C E C (E E F F E)
We can’t pray right (’til you come by here) G C E C (E E E E D)
We can’t pray right (’til you come by here) G C E C (E E F F E)
Oh, Lord, Come by here F G E C D D C

Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) G C E C E C (F F E)
Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) G C E C E C (E E D)
Oh, come by here Lord (come by here) G C E C E C (F F E)
Oh, Lord, come by here FG EC D D C

Congregation: Amen. Amen, Lord!

ML: And now the scripture reading! By sister Chisholm.

U: Amen. Amen and this morning I thank and praise God for being here. And I praise God for another day, and I praise God that he allow us to wake up this morning.

Congregation: Amen.

U: Amen I thank and praise God for the Praise House. Because, in 1968, that’s when I came in contact with the Praise House. My mother and I, my mother-and-law and I used to walk down to the Praise House on Seaside Road. And boy, we had a great time. I enjoy that time that we had in the Praise House. Amen and that was I believe the first time as I grew up that I was really introduced to the Lord. In the Praise House. So I give God blessing, Amen.

Congregation: Amen!

U: This morning I read Psalms 100, the first and fifth verse.

ML: Amen.

U: And it says “make a joyful noise unto the Lord.”

Congregation: Yes!

U: “All the lands, serve the Lord with gladness!”

Congregation: Yes!

U: “Come before his presence with singing! (Congregation begins reciting in unison) Know ye that the Lord he is good. It is He that has made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good! His mercy is everlasting, and his truth endure to all generations.” God bless you.

Congregation; Amen, Amen!
(Congregation singing)

Thank you Lord, B B B
Thank you Lord, D# D# D#
Thank you Lord for one more day, oh F# F# F# D# F# G# D#C# BG#

Thank you Lord, B B B
Thank you Lord, D# D# D#
Thank you Lord for one more day G# F# D#C#B B C# C# B (D#C#)

Thank you Lord, B B B
Thank you Lord, D# D# D#
Thank you Lord for one more day F# F# F# D# F# G# D#C# BG#

Oh you’ve been so good D# C# B B B
You’ve been so good B D# D# D#
You’ve been so good for one more day D# F# F# F# D# F# G# D#C#B

You’ve been so good, G# B B B
You’ve been so good, B D# D# D#
You’ve been so good for one more day D# G# F# D#C#B B C# C# B

Oh, you’ve been so good, D#C# B B B
You’ve been so good, B D# D# D#
You’ve been so good for one more day G# F# D#C#B B C# C# B

You woke me up this morning, G# B B B B B
You woke me up this morning, B D# D# D# D# D#D#
You woke me up this morning for one more day D# F# F# F# F#F# D# F# G# D#C#B

You woke me up this morning, D# B B B B B
woke me up this morning, B D# D# D# D# D#D#
woke me up this morning for one more day G# F# F# F# D# C# B B C# C# B

Oh I thank you Lord, D# C# B B B
Thank you Lord, D# D# D#
Thank you Lord for one more day, F# F# F# D# F# G# D#C#BG#

I thank you Lord, G# B B B
Thank you Lord, D# D# D#
Thank you Lord for one more day, G# F# D# C# B B C# C# C# C#B
Congregation: Amen. Amen! Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

ML: We’re gonna have a prayer by brother Middleton!

RM: First before I go into the house of the Lord I always give God the honor, the praise! Praise the Lord! I praise the haha in them too! My sister and her laugh, sister, Chisholm. I remember, because that’s the Praise House I always grew up in, around the area. I remember when she first move takin her family together because the Praise House, I remember, was always a community background. Because when I was coming up that’s where they solve their problems, in the Praise House. Kids would do bad, that’s where they take em and give em a warning. And I thank God that I live long enough to see this Praise House is still standing. Cause I have many days, these dirt roads, and my dad— I didn’t want to go to this Praise House, but they say you go and you go. Whether you like it or not. And I thank God that y’all come out to learn of our history, cause like Rev say this is one of the greatest places in the country. I been around in the service, I went to my hometown when I was grown in Philadelphia, but I have seen no other place that I enjoy like growing up here. And we bow our head. Heavenly Father, here together another time so we can bow our head and pray. We give you strength. We give you strength that we wake up another day and have hope. We give you strength that we wake up this morning we can be in our right mind, we can put on our garlands, we can sit at our breakfast table. God, we want to thank you for bringing us so far. We thank you first especially for them old folks that walk to the Praise House, hardly had shoes on their feet! And to sing, they would sing and praise God. And always praying God help us. They’d pray for us, Father. They are the one that that got us to pray. They are the ones that sang the praise together. They are the ones that come and put this Praise House together. We wanna thank you for this group that come and bring this Praise House together. We wanna thank you for Sister Legree, that she holdin this Praise House, and this community together. Lord, we wanna thank you again, Father in heaven and days we pray these over cause they are so pleasing my father. So pleasing my heavenly father. Using the rest of the place in your kingdom, your blessed the island in your son Jesus, amen.

Congregation: Amen!

(Congregation singing and clapping)

\[
\begin{align*}
Jesus\ is\ the\ rock\ in\ the\ weary\ land, & \quad D\ C\ B(b)\ G\ G\ B(b)\ C\ D\ D\ D \\
Weary\ land, & \quad C\ C\ C \\
Weary\ land, & \quad D\ B(b)\ G \\

Jesus\ is\ the\ rock\ in\ the\ weary\ land, & \quad D\ C\ B(b)\ A\ G\ B(b)\ C\ D\ D\ D \\
He’s\ the\ shelter\ in\ the\ time\ of\ storm & \quad D\ C\ C\ C\ D\ B(b)\ A\ G \\

Oh\ he\ watched\ my\ mother\ in\ the\ weary\ land, & \quad D\ D\ D\ C\ B(b)\ B\ C\ D\ D\ D \\
Weary\ land, & \quad C\ C\ C \\
Weary\ land, & \quad D\ B(b)\ C \\

Oh\ he\ watched\ my\ mother\ in\ the\ weary\ land, & \quad D\ D\ D\ C\ B(b)\ G\ B(b)\ C\ D\ D\ D \\
\end{align*}
\]
Shelter in the time of storm.  
**Oh Jesus is the rock in the weary land,**  
Weary land,  
Weary land  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alt. (Alt: GEDBG)</th>
<th>Note(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C C C D B(b) A G</strong></td>
<td><strong>D C B(b) G G B(b) C D D D</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C C C</strong></td>
<td><strong>B B/B G</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alt. (Alt: GEDBG)</th>
<th>Note(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>D C B(b) G (alt: GEDBG) G B(b) C D D D</strong></td>
<td><strong>C C D B(b) A G</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D D D C</strong></td>
<td><strong>D B/B G</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alt. (Alt: GEDBG)</th>
<th>Note(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>D D C B Gb Gb D D D</strong></td>
<td><strong>C C C D b A G</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C C C</strong></td>
<td><strong>D C b G</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alt. (Alt: GEDBG)</th>
<th>Note(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C C D B(b) A G</strong></td>
<td><strong>D D C B G B/b C D D D</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C C C</strong></td>
<td><strong>C C C</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Congregation: Yes. Amen! Praise the Lord!

ML: Now we get to the time in the program, where we all get a chance to contribute something about our experiences from what we observed or from what we personally experienced from the Praise House. Most of us is in the age group where we either went with our grandparents or our parents, or we participated ourselves. Some of you might’ve came here for, for instruction when you were Seeking to get into the big church. But um, my own, my own experience is, I had to leave this beloved island at the age of nine. Because I lost my mother at the age of three, and of course you know your grandmothers take care of you if they are living. But both of them passed in 1950, my maternal grandmother, and the paternal. And therefore I had to go to live with my father, who had now been relocated to New York City. And so I had to be snatched out of this culture. Went to a different culture, and of course when I got there I was teased a lot because I was speaking pure Gullah, you know. And um, they probably thought I was backwards. They said where you from, I said you know, from Beaufort, South— from Frogmore, we used to say from Frogmore, they said, “oh, where’s that, where’s that, where’s that at?” So for a lot of, a long time you sort of went up there having a little bit of shame, because people thought you were backwards. And as a result of my being teased so much, I decided to make my speech so perfect, and that’s why you see I’ve lost my Gullah accent, because the kids were teasing me so much so I modified my speech. But when I left here, I took memories with me. And one of the greatest memories was my great grandmother. Cause my grandmother had passed, too. My great grandmother. In this community. At this Praise House. Because this Praise House was standing back in 1950. 1940 something, was rebuilt in 1942 after a major storm. They say it was a big storm, people use to say I was born during the ‘40 storm. A big storm in 1940 and it knocked out
the first Praise House which was further down the road. This house has been standing, it was
damaged a little bit by fire but it was saved in the 50s. But can you imagine a place like this
standing through hurricanes? So, God is in the picture! Through lightning, through
thunderstorms, through windstorms. This building is still standing. But we owe a lot of it to a tin
roof, but thank God to this group, the Carolina Connections and Kenyon College, they’re gonna
make sure we get a new roof.

Congregation: (Clapping) praise God, thank you. Thank you, Lord.

ML: I still remember coming here, and all these songs that I’m participating in? They stayed in
my mind for fifty some years. I never sung these songs when I was up north. When I came back
here, and I started going back to the local church, when they sang these songs I could jump right
in. With the rhythm, and the foot, and the clapping. So that, that was ingrained in me without my
even knowing it. So I came back here, I said there were a lot of people coming here but they
didn’t have any history, they were just looking in the place. And I says you know what, these
people deserve to get an explanation of why this place is standing. And that’s when I decided to
take on the project of trying to restore it and trying to ask for small donations when people, uh
visit. And from the small donations, a carpenter agreed to come in and put in stronger benches
to repaint it. And then from there Carolina Connections last year put in a new floor for us.
And when the people come I’ve tried to develop postcards that tell a little bit about our culture.
About the Praise House and about St. Helena island, this booklet. And now, it’s really a major
stop. It’s really a major stop for all tour companies. There’s about three or four tour operators
that come through Coffin Point all the time because we have a cemetery here, too. And we also
have a big house, a Plantation House. So my memories stem back from the times I used to come
here with my great-grandmother. And they would be singing these songs. And I remembered my
uncle, his name was uncle Willie, uncle Willie Hers, he lived in Savannah but when he died,
there wasn’t a church over here so they laid his body here in the Praise House. So it was also a
place for viewing a body from a relative who might’ve been shipped here from out of town. And
that they would proceed that on down to the Coffin Point cemetery for which all of our Gullah
people is allowed a burial place without having to pay for it as long as you keep it clean. We're
supposed to clean these cemeteries at least once a year, but that practice is diminishing. So
eventually what we're going to have to do is to fence them in and we'll have to charge 100 or 200
dollars for a burial because we're not getting the young people to come out and, you know,
participate in the practice anymore. That's why this filming of this - of Praise Houses is so
important today. Because it might go on for a posterity. Maybe we can come back and sell this
film, or something, so the young people will understand the importance of a place like this. It
was a meeting place. It was a place of instruction. At one time it was a little schoolhouse when
we were newly freed slaves. When we didn't have our own schoolhouses, this is where they
came to teach you. Before even - right after Penn School. The Penn School could not
accommodate the entire island. At Penn School you were charged a fee. So the missionaries
came to the plantations and used the praise houses to give our people their first instruction in
reading and writing. So it's a valuable place! It's a valuable place that should be revered in our
community. And thank God, we've only got 3 structures remaining out of the 47 or 52
communities on St. Helena island, only 3 of the structures are remaining. Either they just
decayed from lack of nobody caring for them anymore or a storm might've knocked them out.
But I says God is in the picture for this little praise house because it's still being held together. So
that's my testimony. Thank you and we want to have anyone else who wants to offer something please.

RJB: I'll give mine because I have to leave right after. I have communion and I want to give my testimony.

ML: Thank you!

RJB: Well, I grew up in the praise house and I can remember sitting there, I was singing next to the old Reverend Morris Edward. The old reverend. He was a practicing minister on this island for about 40 years. And he would walk by - he was one of the men that I looked up to. And he had a song, Andy Nias, what kind of man is there. This was his song. And he had a good heavy voice on him. He would always sing, in and out, and I would be standing on the side of the road when he going to church or he going to the praise house, and I would walk with him. And I grew up in the praise house. Like I say, I wouldn't - I didn't want to go at times, but I enjoyed those folks, and I remember - you know, I sit some and lay in my bed and think of those folks would throw they shoes on their back, over their shoulder they done had and walk barefoot until they get to wash their feet. Then they - some of them would come here and they used to take these benches out, and I used to like to see them shout.

RB: I never could shout, I tried. And you could hear them sing, and you could hear them pray all over the community. And as a kid, you didn't walk by that Praise House. If you wasn't going in that Praise House. You didn’t go in there, that Praise House. You used to go into the woods, or somewhere they couldn’t see you. You didn’t go close to that Praise House, unless you were going in, because somebody would take you in there. And like Sister Mary said, I went away too, and I wasn’t afraid of talking about Frogmore. Because they would call me Geechee when I was in the service, they called me Geechee because I loved rice. And I would get away with those things because when they had rice and somebody said “I don’t eat rice,” and they would come get me, and they would give me… I went overseas. And Frogmore they asked me one time, “why do they call it Frogmore?” and I said because they frogs, they were our wake up call. In the morning when you wanna get up, you hear the frogs and wake up, you know what time it is. That was your time clock. I would have a lot of fun with those things, because we had a accent, a lot of people went away, and they didn’t wanna hear about Frogmore. But this was, wasn’t on the map but this was one of the greatest places. One person that I got away with talkin about when I was in the service and all the way in the Praise House, was I don’t know if you’ve heard of Dr. Buzzard. Everybody would hear of Dr. Buzzard. Everybody, when I tell stories, I’d get in a lot of work even working in Philadelphia. And they would park, they would come near me, just to hear about Dr. Buzzard. And I would tell them look, if y'all don’t treat me right, if you don’t treat me right, I go see, call Dr. Buzzard, you don’t need to doubt. But this was, for real, this is one of the greatest things that ever happened, to have this place in our history. See like sister Legree said, we need our young people to know where, if they knew where they came from, they’d have the history to know where they were goin. I was grow up by two nice, two of my angels, they were my adopted parents, like I told my adopted mother, ain’t nobody like those two people, they were my angels. Back in the 30s and 40s when kids didn’t have food, I had clothes to give away.
Food, I had everything I wanted. And you coulda have my old clothes and everything. And I’m a blessed man. In my age, I’m eighty, eighty-two years old, and I’m proud of my age.

Congregation: Yes ma’am! Praise God! (claps)

RB: Seven children, about fifty something. Fifty great grand, I don’t know how many. They keep me going.

ML: Yes!

RB: And I thank God that I’m blessed by goin to church, I’m got to leave cause I had to get the wine and stuff together. So I may have to leave a little early. And I thank God for y’all and me, God bless you.

(Congregation claps)

ML: Sister Glover?

MG: Well, give it all up to God. To have all our lives. His son Jesus and his Holy Spirit. I am so honored to be here. I live on a plantation called Land’s End. L-A-N-D-S E-N-D. And believe me — it’s the end of the earth (congregation laughs). But um, I would just like to say that um, we did have a Praise House on Land’s End. Um, but it’s not there anymore. But my very, um first experience with the Praise House, um. When I first went in, on Land’s End, I was so happy and I was so thrilled because they didn’t have electric light. It had lamps. And I was just so happy to uh, to be in a place among older people, teaching me the way, the right way to live. And um, so after I kept going to the Praise House, I finally understood the reason why there was a Praise House. The Praise House was to teach me to love everyone. Praise House taught me to respect my elders, and if I did not respect my elders, my elders had the, the uh permission from my parents to beat me, and when I get back home, Imma get another beating! And the Praise House taught me to share. Because when I was coming up, with a family of, uh, each person in the community. If they kill a hog, they’re gonna share it, to everyone.

Congregation: Amen!

MG: Even the feet, even the head, even the tail, everything. So the Praise House taught me a lot of good value. Um, the Praise House taught me to love the Lord, because He is the one that made all thing. Uh, the Praise House taught me no matter where I go at in this world, to respect one another. And I just thank God for my, my parent. Um, both of them deceased. And my mother had fourteen children. And of all fourteen of those kids, my uh, one of my brother. And they didn’t have any hospital anything at that time. And he were twelve pound. And God allowed my mother to go through all that. And she was a strong woman. And also the Praise House taught me. We did a lot of farming. Organic food. To help my parent. To help anyone that need help. And again, I am so happy to be here, And may God to continue to bless each and every one of you.

Congregation: Amen.
GS: (Walks up to the podium) hi.

Congregation: Hi.

GS: And how do you do today?

Congregation; (Laughs) good.

GS: I didn’t come to interrogate you. I came to say welcome. My name is Geri Sims, I now live in Frogmore. The real Frogmore. That way. And we had approximately four Praise Houses on Seaside Road. We have none now. This Praise House was attended by my great-great-grandparents Karen and Jeffrey Holmes, from Coffins Point and my great-grandmother. My great-grandmother and I lived with her mother until I was twelve years old. She died in 1955. I didn’t have people. I’m from New York. So, the Praise House is different. So when I would come, we would come to visit, we would come to the Praise House, I’m an only child. My mother’s Lula Holmes. A 1939 graduate of Penn Center. That’s a Penn Center pin. You may get one if you join the club! And Mary’s our President and I’m Vice President. So, as Momma would tell me (and that’s my great-grandmother Hattie Pope)… she would say, “yuh better do right.” She would say, “you gonna pray.” She said, “never forget. God is everywhere.”

EHM: That’s right.

GS: And he’s in you. So you be a good girl. Momma lived until I was twelve, I knew all my ABC’s, et cetera, et cetera. Uh, momma said that her dad was a constable… on Coffin’s Point. Constable was like your, sorta like your sheriff. He handled the disputes. It was handled here in this building. Neighbors were fightin’, stealing or whatever they were doing, they came here first. They believed in being honest, just, and telling the truth. And frank. Very very frank, nobody bit their tongue.

ML: It’s still that way.

GS: Uh, with my mom, I didn’t go to Praise Houses with my mom. But we had prayer at home. In New York City. I learned these songs. We had a lot of people from South Carolina, Frogmore. Burton. Coming up to New York, Philadelphia, Boston, to live. And we would have, deacons would come by the house. And they’d sing and pray. So it was my mother, my grandmother, my great-grandmother, and me. House full of women. And they would come by, and they would sing and pray, and they would go

(Sings traditional song)

GS: I can’t really shout.

ML: That’s the motion!
GS: When you shout, when you shouting, for God, you don’t lift your feet up. If you lift your feet, you’re dancing. The devil’s dance. So you gotta keep your feet on the floor when you dance. And these are things I learned growing up. And I came here to live, to take care of my mom who was in a tragic, a bad accident. 14 years ago. They didn’t expect her to live or walk. God’s miracle (points to LH).

Congregation: (Clapping) Amen.

GS: My mom is a historian for Ebenezer Baptist Church, or Emeritus now. And, as I said 1939 graduated from Penn. She has a book, An Island’s Treasure. It talks about Penn Center and St. Helena Island. This book can be purchased at Penn Center Museum. All proceeds go to Penn, her baby. She loves the museum. I’m glad that Mary asked me to come, and sing with you, welcome you, and we hope you come back again, and again. And you might move here, you never know, your retirement (congregation agrees). No better place to retire. Thank you (everyone claps).

Unknown: I’m here today and everybody talk about where they came from? You wouldn’t believe me if I tell yeh! But I’m an old lady come from a long way, come from a Prayer House, that’s how I raised up! And you better be right with these mothers and fathers, they gonna chop you every minute. You better be right. We used to go to the Prayer House in the, you know, they carry they shoes in, whatever they ridin in they take they shoes. Had to put the shoes up when you get to the church when you get to the Prayer House, you don’t wear those things. And I came from a long way. I am a old lady with um 18 children, and I am 80 years old. And I thank God where he brought me from! I just can’t forget, I love these people that died, they all died, they all. My mother’s gone, the one who raised me, they is gone. But I’m so happy for the way they raised me up. Because the way I look at things now, I say oh my God. I say thank God for where I came from. I didn’t have no easy days. And um, I don’t know what song you want me to sing…

EHM: Sing your favorite.

Unknown: Sing any one? Well there some good things that um, we can think about but there are some things that people troubled, “oh man, you know I can tell you, I ain’t going through this” and that’s all them bad things, right? But don’t keep all them bad things on you. Think about the good thing. This song that I want to sing, is um, forgetting those things which are behind me. And now I’m reaching for the things that above! And um,

Forgetting those things behind
And I’m reaching for the things ahead
This is my prayer today (congregation joins in)
Take me higher in you

Why? Because

I still got a lot to learn
Off your holy word.
I’m so willing to listen

EED CD D BAGG
C C CD AG C C DDBAG
E D CD D GG
A A AG G G

B B A B C C CBA
A A AGG G
B B BA B CC
As the word to me. A A AG G G

Do you want for A BA GA G
Forgetting those things behind EED CD D BAGG
And every day I’m reaching for G CCC C CB AG
All of my blessings ahead B C D DE F# GF#EDBAG

This is my prayer today E D CD D BAGEG
Oh, Jesus, take me higher in you. B B BA AG G G

And listen to this!

I have travelled oh lots of ground B B BA A A B CBA
And I have seen some lonely road, A A A A G BAG G
Seen some lonely road B A GE ED
I been so wounded along the way B B B BA BDCB B BAGED
But I don’t regret it at all B D D D DE G G

Forgetting those things behind E ED CD D BAGG
Every day I’m reaching for B B B B CB AG
All my blessings ahead D D DE F# GF#EDBAGE
This is my prayer today E D CD D B AGEGE
Jesus, take me higher in You. BB A A AG G G

Why? Because

I wanna go higher in you A AA A bA GE AGEDBAG
I want to go higher, Jesus, in you... A AA A BA AB G E AB G

Congregation: Amen!

Unknown: And I want to say here that God have give me a lot of thing. People ask me why I invent my accents. Accents? I think (congregation laughs). I come right from the same place you come from, old St. Helena Island. And I said I had some old people that raise me up the right way and I’m glad for them. In the grave. And God have taught me in the Sunday school and every time they have a program they go call me to sing a song.

EHM: And play the guitar.

MG: And not yet, the guitar don’t come yet!

EHM: Ok.

Unknown: And uh, you know I got married and came over here and my first pastor was Elder Owens, I believe some of you know him. And uh, you know, I was there in the prayer house and didn't know the Lord yet. I wasn’t saved yet! And um, I got saved, I was risen by a church, this
morning you know I was taken off my baby’s diaper and you know, just a voice came to me and said I want you to play guitar (EHM laughs). Just like you and me talkin. I didn’t pay no attention I go onto sleep with my child. And the next time he said, I want you to play the guitar. You know nothing but no spirit. So, I went to Prayer House. That Prayer House that night, and I they talk, I talk to the pastor, I said you know what I hear? I hear something tell me about play the guitar. I said I can’t play no guitar. He said well you said, sister Mary. I said, some type of play guitar. He said I’m sorry darling, that’s not something, he said that’s the spirit of God. I said oh yeah? I said hey the next thing I don’t have no guitar. He met up and he got up and he met back he came back in the room. And he came back he had a guitar. I started praising God. I brought the guitar home and you know the little children’s were, if you go get something and they don’t like it (drops program). So, I say, “don’t play the guitar.” He come to me again! He said I want you to pick that guitar up and play it! And from that time on, you know the sign, the voice that came to me with the sign, I said God you’re so good I won’t turn back, and then I start playing that guitar, and oh, that thing sound so good! Oh, I just couldn’t stop again, I just couldn’t stop. And I was playing from there on. And people was calling me all about to play and sing. And God is keeping me up! I believe I can outrun anybody out in here (congregation laughs).

MG: She run from me.

Unknown: I can run. I can do some things I mean I’m fishing. I knit next. I do, um (indistinct) And I just thank God for my first lady, you know that, she’s summer that I must come with her.

ML: Well I appreciate it.

Unknown: So I’m so glad for her. Thank God for my pastor too, and. I thank God for y’all just like I’ve been doing on fine. You seen the light. I was in New York, I was feeling so good (congregation claps). Hallelujah, Jesus. And man, we can praise God for this day!

Congregation: Yes (clapping).

MG: I can feel the spirit, you know God is very good in here today.

Oh happy day (oh happy day) A CC E (G AA G)
Oh happy day (oh happy day) A CC GE (G AA G)
When Jesus washed (when Jesus washed) E FE ED (E FE ED)
Oh when he washed (when Jesus washed) E F E ED (E FE ED)
When Jesus washed (when Jesus washed) E F E ED (E FE ED)
Washed my sins away (oh happy day) D D EC CC (D EE F)

Oh happy day (oh happy day) C CC A (E EE F)
Oh happy day (oh happy day) A CC E (E EE F)
Oh happy day (oh happy day) A CC GE (E EE F)
When Jesus Washed (when Jesus washed) E FE ED (E FE ED) (ALT: E EE G)
Oh when he washed (when Jesus washed) E FE ED (E FE ED) (ALT: E EE G)
Oh when he washed (when Jesus washed) E FE ED (E FE ED) (ALT: E EE G)
Washed my sins away (oh happy day)  

Oh, happy day.

MG: Yeah, OK thank y’all for being here!

ML: Thank you minister Roberts! Thank you Lord.

I will trust in the Lord,  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord ’til I die

I will trust in the Lord,  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord ’til I die

I will trust in the Lord,  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord ’til I die

That’s why I’m gonna trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord ’til I die

I will trust in the Lord,  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord ’til I die
Amen!

SHP: I will trust in the Lord ’til I die! My name is Sara Hayward Pearson. And just listening to Sister Glover just now almost bring tears to my eyes because my mom, she would be the one to be here. With the service and everything, when they didn’t have the service. But she passed away now. And this is my mom on the card that she uh made. And she lived ninety years, thirteen children, and when I was young, I was of all the children I was mostly the main one used to follow her to the Praise House. Because I loved to praise God even as I was a little girl. Coming to the Prayer House my mom cause I love the way how they used to sing, I love the way how they used to shout. And we didn’t have any music but just our feet and our hands. And in some Praise House they had the wash boys, use the fork to make the music the wash boys. All the beautiful sound also. Back in my days, when I was coming to the prayer house, it’s where you learn how to live. How to treat your brothers and sisters right. And how to be obedient, not only to the Word, but to your parents, everyone elder to the community. You learn to have respect to one another. And we couldn’t say or do anything to our elders, because we would get a whippin. And I mean with a whipping one of those switch out of there. And you would have to go get your own switch, get your own whipping whip! And there was nothing you could say. We had respect back in the days. When the elders talk, we have no way around. We had no business in there, those conversation. Not the way these young people are doing today. When the elders together we have to be out somewhere else. We come in and the conversation when we are asked to come in the conversation. And that’s how I learned how to respect my elders, I learned how to be obedient to my elders and to the Word. And I learned how to sing. I learned how to pray, and I learned how not to be ashamed of my love Jesus Christ. Because if you ashamed of the head, he can be ashamed of you there. So that’s how I was brought up in the Prayer House and I came through with the teaching and I was brought into the church. You just didn’t jump into the church back in them days, and, you know just go to the church, you’d have to learn how to do it. And how to get into it, and that’s why I came to the Prayer House through my mother’s and… all mothers are my mother. All mothers back in the day was your mom. Because if you do something bad, you don’t wait ’til you get home. Whoever you do it around, you would get a whippin. And it was nothing, the law had nothing to do with it. And that’s what you call a village raising the children, now they say you need a village? They do need more than one for the child. Because these childrens ought to change. And I just thank God for being here on this morning, and like uh, deacon say, he’s the deacon of my church, I have time to get there because I’m in charge of the praise and worship service, at my church. And I’m also in the choir and a lot of other stuff. But I’m working for my Lord. Not for man. Because I’m gonna get my glory when I leave here. This sinful world. I’m gonna get my glory when I go home to my God. And I wanna thank you for being here.

Congregation: Thank you (clapping).

ML: We don’t want you delayed. Um, this is a portion of the program I think we’ve sorta… everyone has sorta spoken what they wanted to say, and maybe we could just sing one or two more songs, so that everyone could keep with, um, onto their own schedule. So anybody who feels like striking up a favorite song, you’re welcome. Just one or two more, and then we’ll…
(Singing and clapping)

Glory glory, halleluja   AC CC EDCC
Since I lay my burden down   E D D C EDC C
Glory glory, halleluja   GAC CC EGGE
Since I lay my burden down   AG E DC DD C

Glory glory, halleluja   EE DC ECAC
Since I lay my burden down   E D D C ED C
Glory glory, halleluja   GC CC EGGE
Since I lay my burden down   A G E DC DD C

Friends don’t treat me like they used to   E E E DC E D C E
Since I lay my burden down   E E D C EDC C
Friends don’t treat me like they used to   GA C C C E G G E
Since I lay my burden down   A G E DC DD C

Oh glory glory, halleluja   G AG EDC EEDC
Since I lay my burden down   E E D C EDC C
Glory glory, halleluja   CC CC EGGE
Since I lay my burden down   A G E DC DD C

Oh I’m going home to live with Jesus   E E E E DC E E D C
Since I lay my burden down   E E D C E C C
I’m going home to live with Jesus   G AC C C E G GG
Since I lay my burden down   A G E DC DD C

Oh glory glory, halleluja   G AG EDC EEDC
Since I lay my burden down   E E D C ED C
Glory glory, halleluja   AC CC EGGE
Since I lay my burden down   A G E DC DD C

Oh glory glory, halleluja   G AC EDC ECAC
Since I lay my burden down   E E D C ED C
Glory glory, halleluja   AC CC EGGE
Since I lay my burden down   A G E DC DD C

Burden down, Lord   AG E DC
Burden down, Lord   EE D C
Since I lay my burden down   E D D C EC C

Burden down, Lord   GA C C
My burden down, Lord   C EG G G
Since I lay my burden down   A G E DC DD C

Congregation: Amen!
(Call and response)

If you live right (Heaven belongs to you)  E G A GE (EE EE D E)
If you live right (Heaven belongs to you)  E G C AG (FF FF F F)
If you live right (Heaven belongs to you)  A A C AG (EE EE F G)
Oh, heaven belongs to you                  GF DD FE D C

If you live right (Heaven belongs to you)  E G A GE (EE EE D E)
If you live right (Heaven belongs to you)  E G C AG (FF FF F F)
If you live right (Heaven belongs to you)  A A C AG (EE EE F G)
Oh, heaven belongs to you                  GF DD FE D C

If you preach right (Heaven belongs to you) C C C AG (EE EE D E)
If you preach right (Heaven belongs to you) C C C AG (FF FF F F)
If you preach right (Heaven belongs to you) C C C AG (EE EE E G)
Oh, heaven belongs to you                  GFE DD FE D C

I say sweet heaven (Heaven belongs to you) C C C CAG (EE EE D E)
I say sweet heaven (Heaven belongs to you) C C C CAG (FF FF F F)
I say sweet heaven (Heaven belongs to you) C C C CAG (EE EE F G)
Oh, heaven belongs to you                  GFE DD FE D C

They have him on the cross (Heaven belongs to you) C C C D C CA (EE EE D E)
They have him on the cross (Heaven belongs to you) C C C D C CA (FF FF G F)
They have him on the cross (Heaven belongs to you) C C C E C CA (EE EE F G)
Oh, heaven belongs to you                  GFE DD FE D C

They pierce him in his side (Heaven belongs to you) C C C D C CA (EE EE D E)
They pierce him in his side (Heaven belongs to you) C C C D C CA (FF FF E F)
They pierce him in his side (Heaven belongs to you) C C C D C CA (EE EE F G)
Oh, heaven belongs to you                  GFE DD FE D C

The blood came stricklin down (Heaven belongs to you) C C C DC CA (EE EE D E)
The blood came stricklin down (Heaven belongs to you) C C C DC CA (FF FF E F)
The blood came stricklin down (Heaven belongs to you) C C C DC CA (EE EE F G)
Oh, heaven belongs to you                  GF DD FE D C

Congregation: Amen! Praise God. Praise God! Halleluja!

GS: One more thing I’d like to say. My mom, Lula Holmes, was director of the Praise House shouts. And we have two members here. Sister Elsie Mollison (Points to EHM) and my mom, my mom can shout. They were between the ages of sixty five and ninety two and they were shouting up until about the past six years. And um, I can’t really shout. I pretend. But they can do it. And uh, the young people are not picking it up, you know, I mean…
ML: Some of em are!

GS: But… OK.

ML: Because there was a time when every new house was built in the community we would go there and shout.

Congregation: Amen.

ML: We would be shoutin’! Christmastime, too. Yes. That’s the test, we’d test the strength of the house. By having the shout. Right?

U: Ms. Elsie, can you still shout?

ML: No, she can’t, her legs are bad…

(General babble)

ML: Any one more standard of anybody?

(RJB starts)

Oh, when I get there               G G A G ED
Oh, when I get there               C C E D BAG
Oh, when I get there               B B C B BAG
Amen                                BAG

Oh, when I get there               B B A G BAG
Oh, when I get there               C C E D D
Oh, when I get there               B B C B BAG
Amen                                BAG

Oh, when I get there               B B C B BAG
Oh, when I get there               A A C A A
Oh, when I get there               B B C B BAG
Amen                                BAG

RJB: Gonna shout like Jesus!

Oh, when I get there               B B C B B
Oh, when I get there               C C C C C
Oh, when I get there               B B C B BAG
Amen                                BAG

RJB: Gonna quote the old word!
Oh, when I get there

Oh, when I get there

Oh, when I get there

Amen

RJB: Gonna see my mother there!

Oh, when I get there

Oh, when I get there (see my mother there)

Oh, when I get there

Amen

RJB: My father will be waiting for me!

Oh, when I get there

Oh, when I get there

Oh, when I get there

Amen

Congregation: Halleluja! Praise God!

RJB: I just wanna say, just wanna say. The Praise House has always, was always an experience. When I was a little boy growing up, I did not want to go to the Praise House. Because when we first got a TV, and everybody in our community had a TV. But when we got one, I wanted to watch Walt Disney on TV on Sunday night. And that was the time my aunt Dorothy Major would say we all going to the Praise House. On the island. On some, you can say St. Helena or St. Helene. “St. Heleena” is for people who go to New York for a while and come back (congregation laughs). With an edumacation (congregation laughs). Ok, when they come back edumacated, they say they from St. Heleena. Regular people say St. Helena. Or, they just say the island. If you don’t specify which island you’re from, they automatically believe you’re from St. Helena. But what got me one time I was on the train. Caught the train, in Yamassee heading up north. And they was full of wild people. Gullah people, and Geechee folks from Charleston. The Charleston Geechee people get on, you know. Cause their children can’t sit down, they just running up and down the train. Our Gullah people sitting down, just paying attention to their own business. Looking out the window, sleepin. And I got, I’ve never gotten. The conductor come through and say, The conductor come through looking for tickets. And he got up to an old black woman from this area here. Right here. And he call her Missy. He say Missy, where you going Missy? She said, “Suh I’m goin, I’m going to New Yahk Suh.” And he said “what’d you say?” She said “It’s a goin to New Yahk.” And the man, seemed like he couldn’t hear. She say, “You deef, hinny?” And “deef, hinny?” (congregation laughs). And I just sit there and I say, “Oh Lord.” And uh, he said what you going to New York for? He finally had caught on about the New York part. She say “I goin up there to see me gandchildren. I got boy children up there, boy up there, and he gone up there and marry high y’all dah chile, from New Yahk. And they got gandchildren for me, and I ent see them since they been bahn, so I goin up there for see them. And they say what’s that, where are you from? I’m from a place called Santelena. Neither St. Helena or St. Heleena. Santelena. I was there from Santelena island, you done hear about that
The man said, “scuse me, I don’t understand what you saying.” I can understand everything she saying. But she said “I’s from a place called Frogmore Plantation, you done hear about that place innyee?” And the man still ain’t going on... He just finally went on, he said “ma’am, have a nice trip. Have a nice trip” on with his business. And I just sit there, I just sit there and I say “Lord, have mercy. I said this is, he shoulda ask me what she’s saying, I would tell him what she’s saying. But the Praise House, I believe, I call it the boot camp of our church. I believe this is where our people learn how to do everything. They learn how to raise they line they call me to him. They had to learn how to line those hymns the right way. Father, I stretch my hands to Thee./No other help I know:/If Thou withdraw Thyself from me, /Ah! whither shall I go? /What did Thine only Son endure,/Before I drew my breath!/What pain, what labor, to secure/My soul from endless death! [note: from Charles Wesley, A Collection of Psalms].

Stepping back hymn number such and such and such and such, we ask somebody for a proper tune at this time and then, now they tell a deacon; a person who was a pretend deacon, a deacon boy, if you don’t have a tune for the hymn, don’t line the hymn. Because if you call it out and the members of the congregation don’t know it and you don’t know it, it’s an embarrassing situation. And then some of them might know it and don’t do it anyhow because they wanna put you on the pedestal and see what they can talk about you when they get home. Because, see Gullah people can talk about things under the tree, and on the porch, and we know all the people in the world, I know that I can talk without moving me mouth. Ok? But you have to be us to know these kind of things? Because I could walk in amongst our people sittin around, and I can tell just by the way they sittin, or the way they lookin at each other. Brother, I am a subject of their conversation. And I just, and I’ll just sit down after taking some of their potato salad, and I’ll say “now, what you wanna know again?” And you know, but this is a culture like no other culture. I want you to know that. And we are a proud culture. And you know we have United Nations status now, people don’t know that. Because of Marquetta, Marquetta, Queen Quetta, has given us United Nations status now. And she’s a member of the United Nations now, and she has given us United Nations status now. And, and we are blessed to be recognized as a nation the Gullah/Geechee nation, from Florida all the way to North Carolina now, along the Atlantic Coast and 30 miles inland. God has really blessed our race. I used to wonder I said God, why you created me black? Because I saw how under-privileged we were. And how we was treated as second-class citizens at one time. I remember, had to go on the back of the bus. I remember, on the school bus, I couldn’t sit down on the school bus when they first desegregated the schools here. We got on the school bus. And the white children were not gonna let us black children sit next to them on the bus. Because they said we didn’t smell right, and things like that. They used to throw spitballs and stuff at us. And we used to have to stand on the bus, and that’s illegal in the state to be standing on the school bus while it’s moving. We couldn’t sit on the school bus. It was really hard. But I thank God for God has brought us into the KINGDOM, for such a time as this!

Congregation: Yes. Amen!

RJB: Now people ask me, they say “oh, you know about the Gullah people? You know about the Gullah people?” They say, “are you related to them?” I say, “since they the ones who raise me, I’m an, I guess I’m an authority or something.” Lady ask me, said, “where can you find the Goolah people? In the library in Beaufort. I’m trying to find the Goolahs!” And I said “you talking about my Gullah people.” And she said “yes,” she said, “I understand they live down
here someplace.” I said “yes, they all around here.” She said “you know anything where they might be located at?” So I told her to go to Wal-Mart on the first of the month (everyone laughs).

And she said, “Praise the Lord, who call the Gaychees?” I said, “you call them Geechee people, now.” She said, “yeah, that’s how you say it?” I said, “yes, ma’am.” She said, “Are they related to the Goolahs? Are they and the Goolahs related to each other?” I said “yes, ma’am, one, they are the same people. I said the only one island, and the only leave if very sick” (congregation laughs). But that’s how I told her. But I just wanna say, I’m a proud member of a culture. I wouldn’t be nothin else. Because God has blessed me to live to see such a time as this. I feel like I’m a movie star now, because when people when I say I’m a Gullah now, the lady say “I just wanna touch you, cause I never touch, see a real Gullah in my life” (congregation laughs). “I just wanna touch you, can you sign this book for me now? Sign this? Because I gotta show this, I’ve never met a real one in real life” (congregation laughs). Then sometimes, you know I do the same thing, specially I do carry people around, show em around, and they sometime it seem like they think I’m taking them to a hostile or paki country or you know, Gullah country, and they think that I’m the one, that’s keeping the attack from taking place? I’m the scout, you know? That knows the territory, knows how to get in and out of these dirt roads, and things like that and so, I just wanna say brothers and sisters, we are blessed. God has blessed us in a mighty special way. And I’m too glad for being Gullah. Too proud for being. Too proud for being. And if I came from Lands End. Tom Fripp. Frogmore. Seaside Road. Down in Scott Plantation. Wallace. Eddings Point? Herring? I’m too glad for being among these people, yeah? And I know if my car broke down, I can stumble on any of my people, I can knock on their door, and say I need to haul a hundred dollars for the rest of the month.

ML: And of course all of you know our great legacy is our land, how we got our land and all of us live on our acreage, and it’s a very proud legacy, that our ancestors has left for us. And this is something a lot of people locally are trying to engage in getting the people not to sell the land, and letting the young people understand that this is a legacy. When I leave, you just don’t sell it. You know. Because remember what out old people used to say. Pay your taxes. And they would pick cotton, pick tomatoes, just enough money to go to town and pay their taxes. Gotta pay your taxes. Because as I come back, I appreciate where I live on my people’s property. I love it and I’m trying to teach my little grandson about Gullah. And about the property and what it means. So you know when he comes he can say “this is my house,” and this is your house and there’s land around it too. Land, you know. So I hope that we just take that to heart and really start getting the message across the best way we can. To the young. And when I say young I’m thinking like what, under 40, under 50? Yeah, right, as old as 50 we need to start preaching that. And I want to just close with a prayer, if there’s no other comments anyone want to offer. I just wanna close out, I think we’re on schedule. I wanna close out with prayer and then we want you to select a Kente cloth, they’re all originally woven. Thanks to uh, Peter Rutkoff, that went to Ghana and brought it. Ok, we’ll close in prayer. Heavenly Father, I want to thank you. Thank you so much this morning, God, for coming by the Praise House. For bringing your spirit here. For just lifting our voices in praise to you. And giving thanks for having such wonderful people who are so interested, sincerely, in our culture. Lord, I want you to bless everyone as they go their separate ways today. And Lord I wanna thank you for giving me the interest and the knowledge to want to perpetuate a culture that was born out of our suffering. It was born out of our becoming free in 1861 when you finally answered the prayers. All the prayers that we offered up in the Praise House! Lord, you did come by and you did stop it. We didn’t have to fire
a single shot. And we got our freedom through your emancipation! Lord, this is a beautiful day, and I thank you. And please protect all of everyone here, as they go their separate ways. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

(Congregation starts standing up and moving around)

ML: Beautiful, beautiful service I wanna thank you, and oh…

RJB: Can I just make a mention of one thing? I failed to mention, I don’t know if you’re all aware, that our first lady of the United States, Michelle Obama, is a Gullah. Ok, good. First one in the White House.