OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT
By Rev. Dr. Wendell Anthony

THE BLACK CHURCH BUILT ON SOLID GROUND NOT MEANT TO BE USED AS YOUR PERSONAL PLAYGROUND!

DETROIT – The Souls of Black Folks, written in 1903 by W. E. B. Du Bois, offers a prophetic analysis of the Black church. “The negro church today reproduced in microcosm all the great world from which the negro is cut off by color, prejudice, and social condition, practically a proscribed people must have a social center and that center for this people is the negro church.” It is for this reason that the Black church has often been seen as both an institution of spiritual fervor and social activism. It has been used and abused by provocative preachers and pretentious politicians. One must be careful not to allow its sacred mission to be abused, particularly by those who see it as a political platform to propel a pernicious political agenda, long on symbolism but short on substance. The Black church down through the years stands as a historic reminder of the fight for freedom, justice, and equality. The substance of its work is not only rooted in the saving of souls but is anchored in preserving the right to vote; creating jobs for the people; educational equity for Black children K through college; advocating for policies that provide health care for all people; maintaining social security, retirement, and pensions for seniors. This is the work that continues by those of us who have contributed so much to make America, despite its problems, the nation that it is today. Policies, programs, and opportunities make us all better. Pretending, performing, and grandstanding can make us bitter. As a Pastor and President of the Detroit Branch NAACP, I know it must be about policies that uplift people, not promises that diminish them.

Black men don’t need gold gym shoes with red bottoms to buy. They need small business grants and economic opportunity so they can make their own shoes to sell to others to buy. T-shirts with your picture behind prison bars don’t make you a friend and ally to Black and brown men. But creating effective criminal justice reform to prevent them from coming in is really the way. Black men need the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act passed and signed into law. America needs the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Where do the leaders stand on these issues? What good does it do for the leader of the free world to pose in front of a church building, holding the Bible upside down, claiming to be standing on the promises of God? Try opening it up to determine if you are standing on the right promises or are you covering up your unrighteous deceitfulness? Manufacturing a $60 God Bless The USA Bible and putting the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence inside of it, will not save our soul. It merely reflects that you are more interested in making gold. After all, “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” Mark 8:36. It is therefore important to look at the candidates for President by the fruit that they bare. The fruit details policies.

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Again, the Bible is the guide, “By their fruits you shall know them,” Matthew 7:16. Has their fruit made your life sweeter? One can look at the number of Black people and women in the current administration. There are more appointed today than in any administration in history. The Honorable Ketanji Brown Jackson stands in the tradition of Justice Thurgood Marshal on the United States Supreme Court. HBCU’s have been targeted for $16 billion in federal grants, contracting, and debt relief, more than at any point in history. Black men are not mocked, they are promoted. Social security and healthcare is protected and respected. It is not resented, threatened, or eliminated. Pharmaceutical products and everyday drug costs have been substantially reduced. There are not 34 felonies hanging over the head of the current leader in the White House. The court system, witnesses, lawyers, and judges have not been attacked. There has been no move to overthrow the U.S. government because of a political decision not in your favor.

On the other hand there is a policy of retribution. There is a policy outlined called Project 2025. It outlines a move to change the entire face of the federal government. It makes loyalty to the President the major criteria for any appointment made by the new administration. It calls for a white Civil Rights Act. It has indicated the intention on day one to implement the greatest deportation program in American history targeting people of color and those from the Middle East. It would grant authoritarianism like power to the President of the United States. This new administration would implement the Insurrection Act of 1807. This policy would allow the President to deploy U.S. Military and National Guard troops in cities to suppress protests and demonstrations. Coming to the city of Detroit to speak at 180 Church to declare that you are a child of God when demonstrating no God-like qualities is a stench in the nostril of God. We must never forget, “Beware of wolves wearing sheep’s clothing,” Matthew 7:15.

Malcolm X said it best, “A wise man can play the part of a clown, but a clown cannot play the part of a wise man.” Let us not mistake chicanery and buffoonery for statesmanship and leadership. We are smarter than that. We are wiser than that. Black folks must not go for the okie doke. We must be about the business of Project 2024, when we all can do much more. Take Your Soles To The Polls and Vote like your life depends on it, because quite frankly, it does.

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