

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH, UCC
LAYMEN'S FELLOWSHIP
BLACK HISTORY PROGRAM
CELEBRATING BLACK COUNTY SHERIFFS
IN ALABAMA



Special Guest Speaker

Derrick Cunningham

Montgomery County Sheriff

February 16, 2020

First Congregational Christian Church, UCC

Montgomery, Alabama

Rev. Dr. Farrell J. Duncombe, Pastor

Our Guest Speaker

The Honorable Sheriff

Derrick Cunningham



Derrick Cunningham was born in Tacoma, Washington and moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama with his family when he was 12 years old. He graduated from Tuscaloosa County High School and later moved to Montgomery, Alabama where he began his law enforcement career.

On January 16, 2015, Derrick Cunningham was sworn in as the current Sheriff of Montgomery County as well as the first African-American Sheriff of Montgomery County.

Cunningham always knew law enforcement was his calling in life. He was appointed by Sheriff D.T. Marshall in 1999 to the position of Chief Deputy of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office. His responsibilities included overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Sheriff's Office as well as the Mac Sim Butler Detention Facility or as it is commonly called, the "County Jail". Furthermore, he was in charge of the budget for the Sheriff's Office which operates on an annual income of 27 million dollars. Before his appointment, Cunningham was

employed by the Montgomery Police Department. He started his law enforcement career in 1989 as a patrol officer. He finished his tenure with the Montgomery Police Department in the Detective Division where he was assigned to the homicide unit and was a member of the International Homicide Investigators Association.

Cunningham has a Bachelor of Science Degree from Troy University and a Master of Science Degree from the University of Phoenix. He has attended numerous schools and seminars throughout the United States since the start of his law enforcement career. He graduated from the F.B.I. National Academy Class 231, December 2007. He is retired from the Alabama National Guard with over twenty-four years of service. Cunningham is the point of contact for Homeland Security for Montgomery County, overseeing funding for the County. He also graduated from the 108th National Sheriff's Institute in Aurora, Colorado in September 2015. He was sworn in as Sergeant of Arms with the Alabama Sheriff's Association in January 2017. He received the Sheriff of the Year award for 2018. Cunningham was sworn in as Vice President of the Alabama Sheriff's Association in February 2019, and in January of this year, Cunningham was sworn in as President of the Alabama Sheriff's Association.

Memberships Held

- Alabama Sheriff's Association
- National Sheriff's Association
 - Iron Men
- Exchange Club of Montgomery
- Kiwanis Club of Montgomery
- Narrow Lane McInnis Neighborhood Association
- Leadership Montgomery – Graduate of Class 17
 - Omega Psi Phi Fraternity
- Sheriff Cunningham is a Certified Advanced Crime Prevention Specialist with the American Crime Prevention Institute
 - AESBL – Alabama Electronic Security Board of Licensure
 - APIBL – Alabama Private Investigators Board of Licensure

Our Honorees



Jerome Gray, a native of Evergreen, Alabama, served as State Field Director for the Alabama Democratic Conference for 27 years. He holds degrees in Biology and English and attended Stanford University for 2 years, where he studied Creative Writing on a Ford Foundation Fellowship. In addition to his ADC employment, Mr. Gray was a public school teacher in Alabama; a college textbook representative in California with Scott, Foresman & Company; a writer-in-residence at Voorhees College; and a staff assistant and office manager for former U.S. Senator Donald Stewart of Alabama. Jerome's authorship credits include *The History of the Alabama State Teachers Association* and *Quiet Revolution in the South: The Impact of the 1965 Voting Rights Act*, for both of which he served as co-writer. He is viewed as one of the most knowledgeable and respected voices in Black politics in Alabama. In 2001, Mr. Gray was one of eight Americans invited to monitor the presidential election in The Gambia, West Africa. The next year, he was invited to team teach at the

Stanford University Law School in Palo Alto, California, with distinguished professor James Blacksher. He was then selected to serve on a panel with law professors at the Yale Law School Alumni Weekend to discuss race and political representation since the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. During the Nation's preparation to elect the first African American president, Mr. Gray was selected to serve as political director for the state of Alabama Obama campaign. As a result of his diligence, he was invited in 2010 by President & First Lady Obama to attend a reception at the White House in celebration of Black History Month. Mr. Gray is a Life Member of the NAACP and served as the Political Action Chairman for the organization's State conference and as the State secretary. His credo is "be like a termite: work quietly but effectively from within."



Sheriff Big John Williams was born June 14, 1957 in Lowndes County. He graduated from Calhoun High School in 1976. He always wanted to make a difference in his community and felt there was no better way than to protect and serve the community thru law enforcement.

In 1978 he started volunteering as a reserve deputy under then Sheriff John Hulett.

From 1984 to 1987 he worked for the Hayneville Police Department until he began working fulltime with the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office. He not only worked with the Sheriff's Office but also continued his employment with the Hayneville Police Department.

In 1990 he was appointed by Sheriff John Hulett as Chief Deputy.

In 2010, he ran for Sheriff of Lowndes County and was elected by the people he served his entire adult life.

In 2014 and 2018 he was once again elected to hold the title of the highest-ranking law enforcement office of Lowndes County, the Sheriff.

John served as the Sergeant-at-Arm for the Alabama Sheriff's Association. He was awarded the 2015 Partner in Education of the Year Award from the Lowndes County Board of education. He received numerous other awards and accolades, and recognitions during his time in law enforcement.

Williams, 62, was a career law enforcement officer first elected sheriff of Hayneville in 2010. Lowndes County officials and residents have described him as a beloved public servant whose work went beyond his law enforcement duties. He was known as a peace maker, and was a respected as a lawman and revered as a community leader. He dedicated his life to serving his community and keeping others safe.

Sheriff John "Big John" Williams was tragically killed in the line of duty on November 23, 2019 in Hayneville, Alabama.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH, UCC

638 High Street at Union Montgomery, AL 36106

Laymen's Fellowship

Black History Program

February 16, 2020

Darryl Sinkfield, Master of Ceremony



Prelude	Musicians
Welcome/Occasion	Curtis Stewart
Invocation	Dea. Theodore White
Music:	Talladega College Choir Mr. William Mitchell, Director
Offertory	Ushers
Introduction of Guest Speakers	Rev. Dr. Farrell J. Duncombe
Guest Speakers	Honorable Sheriff Derrick Cunningham
Invitation to Christian Discipleship	Rev. Dr. Farrell J. Duncombe
Music:	Talladega College Choir Mr. William Mitchell, Director

Presentation of Awards

Felix Parker and William Grimes

Cecil St. Clair Legacy Award

Stephon Crum

Cecil St. Clair Award

Darryl Sinkfield and George Lee

Laymen's Appreciation Award

Recognition of Visitors and Guests	Darryl Sinkfield
<i>"Lift Every Voice and Sing"</i>	Audience (Please Stand)
Remarks and Benediction	Rev. Dr. Ferrell J. Duncombe

NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Congregational Christian Church and members of the Laymen's Fellowship welcome you to our Annual Black History Program. Please join us immediately following service in the Fellowship Hall for a reception as we honor our special guests and speaker.

Black County Sheriffs State of Alabama

1. Sheriff Tyrone Smith	Barbour County
2. Sheriff Raymond “Buck” Rodgers	Bullock County
3. Sheriff Jonathans M. “Joe” Benson	Greene County
4. Sheriff Kenneth W. Ellis	Hale County
5. Sheriff Mark Pettway	Jefferson County
6. Sheriff Christopher West	Lowndes County
7. Sheriff Andre’ Brunson	Macon County
8. Sheriff Richard E. “Ben” Bates	Marengo County
9. Sheriff Derrick Cunningham	Montgomery County
10. Sheriff Billy Jones	Perry County
11. Sheriff Brian Harris	Sumter County
12. Sheriff Earnest Evans	Wilcox County

First Congregational Christian Church Laymen’s Fellowship

The purpose of the Laymen’s Fellowship is to join men of faith in a common purpose for God. We believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and we promote the mission of His Church. We support charitable, religious and educational programs of the Church and the community.

Membership

Darryl Sinkfield, President	Tyrone Barrow	Jermaine Harding
George Lee, Vice President	Christopher Bass	Reginald Miller
Custis Stewart, Treasurer	Clifford Benson	Edward Moten
Leon Forniss, Secretary	Jimmy Cal	Felix Parker
William Grimes, Chaplain	Stephon Crum	Marcus Payne
Rev. Dr. Farrell Duncombe	Roosevelt Gooden	Theodore White, Sr.

Lift Every Voice and Sing

By James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us,
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand.
True to our God,
True to our native land.



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