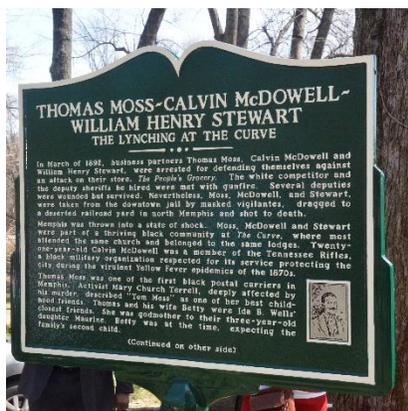


Zion Christian Cemetery Receives Historic Marker For Lynched Victims of 1892

On Saturday, March 23, 2019 at 12 noon, approximately 60 people gathered in Zion Christian Cemetery (Memphis, TN) for the unveiling of an historic marker in memory of Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell and William Henry Stewart that had been requested by Dr. Earnestine Jenkins (*Professor of Arts at the University of Memphis*) via a grant obtained through Mr. Timothy S. Good of the US National Parks Service.



Excerpts of comments by CME Retired Senior Bishop William H. Graves, Sr. included the following about the Cemetery and the Church: *“After the death of her husband, Mrs. Eva Christian, a member of Mount Pisgah CME Church, inherited all the existing shares of the Zion Christian Cemetery. Unable*



to care for the property herself, in 1986, she donated the Cemetery to the Christian Methodist Episcopal



Church for “safekeeping”. ... Today as we stand at the foot of Thomas Moss’ grave and participate in the unveiling of this marker in memory of these three slain heroes of the past, we as a Church are proud to have played a part in the life of the Zion Community Project and the restoration of Zion Christian Cemetery.”

Chair emeritus of the Board of Directors, Ron Walter, further shared the following: *“This landmark cemetery was only 16 years old when in 1892, it “swung open its gates” to bury the remains of three enterprising Memphis entrepreneurs who were barbarically murdered by some who wanted to thwart progress and racial advancement in our city. ... Luckily, this oasis where we are right now, founded by the United Sons of Zion, stood tall and firm, unshaken and unbowed, tranquil and welcoming as it received scores of mourners and friends of Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell and Will Stewart. These businessmen lost their lives because they were accused of raping a white woman. But the real reason was their successful competition with a nearby white merchant. And that resulted in these lives being cut short. What we have is one of the saddest chapters in the 200-year history of Memphis.”*

Other participants included Mrs. Raka Nandi, Reverend O.C. Collins, Jr., Dr. Earnestine Jenkins, Mr. Timothy S. Good, Dr. Tyrone T. Davis (Board Chair) and Reverend William Smith.

Zion Christian Cemetery was founded in 1876 and has more than 30,000 people of color interred. Contributions payable to Zion Community Project may be mailed to PO Box 473, Memphis, TN 38101-0473 or donated online via the Project’s website www.ZionCommunityProject.org where additional information may be found.