



Aswad Walker has served the PAOCC's congregations in Houston, Atlanta, Detroit and Beulah Land in various capacities since joining in 1990; as a member of the Nation's ministerial staff, Ujamaa Graphics, Holy Order of the Maccabees and more. Aswad has spearheaded and/or helped produce the region's *Torchlight* newsletter, *News Around the Nation* e-blasts and weekly *Conscious Conversations* segments via Facebook Live providing a Best Self theological perspective on current and historical events. Aswad has also been a frequent instructor of several classes including *Contemporary Black Reality* and *Black Theology* and a Young Adult group leader.

Before joining Shrine 10 Aswad was part of the Ida Delaney – Byron Gillum Justice Committee (IDBG), an ad hoc collection of concerned citizens who sought to hold the Houston Police Department and its officers who murdered Black citizens (Ida Delaney and Byron Gillum) accountable for their crimes. In keeping alive his social action and community service spirit that was nurtured at the University of Texas as part of the anti-Apartheid / Free Nelson Mandela movement, Aswad helped found *Amandla*, a group of activists who produced the show *Liberation Houston* on the city's public access station, while also beginning his 31-year relationship as a volunteer and supporter of SHAPE Community Center. Aswad still regularly serves as an instructor and presenter for various SHAPE initiatives.

Additionally, Aswad has represented the Shrine during countless social actions, community service events and protest marches over the years, in partnership with member of Houston's Operation Unity, Health Care for All Texans, Black Lives Matter HTX, the National Poor Peoples Campaign, Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston and tons more. The list of issues with which Aswad has been involved includes Waller County voter suppression, police brutality, the "War on Terror," environmental racism, gentrification, public school resource equity, etc. Aswad also served as the region's spokesperson at countless area colleges, faith institutions and organizations both locally and nationally, and has appeared on numerous occasions on Majic 102 FM's *Sunday Morning Live* and several shows on KTSU, KPFT, KPRC (Ch.2) and KTRK (Ch.13).

Moreover, Aswad is one of the Shrine's representatives as a member of the Emancipation Economic Development Council's Faith in Action Work Group—a 3rd Ward-based group that seeks to fight against gentrification while uplifting and empowering 3rd Ward residents, businesses and institutions. He also represented the PAOCC at the *Mobilization for Safety & Liberation Conference* (Minneapolis, 2017).

Possibly Aswad's greatest community impact has come via his work as a lecturer in the University of Houston's African American Studies Program. Since 2004 Aswad has taught several courses including *Black Liberation Theology* and *Introduction to African American Studies* to UH students, many of whom who have gone on to earn Ph.Ds and serve as community leaders and activists in their own right.

Aswad has also been able to impact the community via his work with young scholars and activists as Associate Director of TSU's Urban Research and Resource Center; writer/editor for the Defender Network; and author of three books—*The 100th Monkey: Three Tales of Spiritual Revolution*; *Princes Shall Come Out of Egypt: A Comparative Study of the Theological and Ecclesiological Views of Marcus Garvey and Albert B. Cleage Jr.*, and *Weapons of Mass Distraction: A Other Sermons for a New World Order*. Aswad's writings have also appeared in Dr. Jawanza Clark's book *Albert Cleage Jr. and the Black Madonna and Child*, Palgrave Macmillan (2016); the *Journal of Black Studies* (Nov 2008); the *Frederick Douglass Encyclopedia* (Dec 2009); *UJIMA Magazine* (Summer 2003); and more. Aswad has won multiple awards for journalism, including one from the National Newspaper Publishers Association. Additionally, Aswad's scholarship has been cited in Sylvester A. Johnson's book *African American Religions, 1500-2000: Colonialism, Democracy, and Freedom*.

Aswad earned his Master of Divinity from Emory University's Candler School of Theology, and a B.S. in Advertising from the University of Texas at Austin. He is married and has six children.