



Fact Sheet

Elmendorf Reformed Church

Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force

Task Force Members

Rev. Patricia A. Singletary
Rev. Earl Kooperkamp
Rev. Jon Norton
Rev. Robert Royal
Rev. James Seawood
Congressman Charles B. Rangel
Senator José M. Serrano
Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito
Marion L. Bell
Inez Branch
Elder Mary Brown
Vanessa Burgess
Christine Campbell
Melvin P. Christian
Janet Dorman
Deborah I. Gibson
E. Joyce Jordan
Ken Kurihara
Thomas Lunke
Elder Margaret McCants
Betsy McCully
Elder Warren McKenzie
Christopher P. Moore
Elder Dorothea Sadler
Elder Earl Sessoms
Gary Sharp
Marsha Stokes
Eric V. Tait, Jr.
Jean Ballard Terepka
Juanita Thomas
Sharon Wilkins
Arthur Williams
Melinda Velez

In Formation

About

Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force is a group of concerned citizens who have united to help the Elmendorf Reformed Church (ERC) to restore and memorialize its historically and culturally significant colonial African Burial ground at 1st Avenue, between 126th and 127th Streets. ERC was established in 1660. In 1665, the First Church of Harlem, also known as the Dutch Reformed Church of Harlem (ERC), erected a church building at the corner of First Avenue and 127th Street, and a quarter acre of land connected with the church was set aside and became known as the "Negro Burying Ground" (hereafter called the African Burial Ground).

Objectives

- To reclaim, preserve, and officially recognize the ERC African Burial Ground
- Obtain its listing on the National Register of Historic Places and Landmark Status for the Burial Ground
- Honor the memory of New Harlem's "colony builders," enslaved Africans who were the major contributors to the building of New Netherlands (New York and Harlem) colony
- The creation of a waterfront historical/cultural center on or near the site of the Harlem burial ground, where archival records and artifacts of Harlem's early history would be housed and put on public display, and subsequently protected and preserved in perpetuity
- To establish the creation of a thoughtfully designed addition or enhancement of the future southern phase of Harlem River Park that could hold the above mentioned Historical/Cultural Center and become the new "first stop" for visitors to Harlem, and a bonus for 125th Street and all of New York City

Learn More

To learn more, or join and help, please contact: **Deborah Gibson** at **(212) 534-5856** or dig1214@aim.com

Save the Dates!

Sweet Spirit - a dance, drama and song performance inspired by the Harlem African Burial Ground.
February 28, 2010, 3:30 PM @ Elmendorf Reformed Church, 171 East 121st Street, between Lexington and Third Avenues.

Then I'll Be Free to Travel Home – PT2: The Battle to Save the New York African Burial Ground - a Documentary Screening/Q&A. Reception follows.

March 12, 2010, 7:30 PM @ the Harlem Stage (135th Street and Convent Avenue).