



## **The Stairstep Foundation and Salem Inc.: Facilitator of 21 Days of Peace**

Changing the Narrative Addressing Root Causes.

Economic viability is a key issue for the advance of our community. To be able to be gainfully employed and to enjoy the benefits of our efforts, we need peace and stability in our neighborhoods. Our efforts encompass job creation, job connection, and the healthy attitudes required to execute job requirements successfully.

To promote a viable space for living and working, we will address the violation of our peace. Rev. Jerry McAfee, through Salem Inc., called for action designed to provide the impactful presence of our faith community in parts of our metropolitan area that experienced the highest levels of violence and negative activity. This effort called 21 Days of Peace utilizes the community asset with the greatest historical credibility and potential for impact: the African American church to be present and provide the connectivity between those needing employment and employers.

To enhance job success, we will address trauma - African American people live in a trauma basin created by historical practices and reinforced by systematic exclusions that continue to reinforce limited access to power and resources. We have developed a curriculum to mitigate trauma for those in our community most likely to be perpetrators or victims of violence. It is a Learned-Self-Management tool called "Choosing Life in the Black Community: Achieving the Dream."

We will sustain our job-creating/nurturing efforts by mobilizing the African American church. The church has been the anchor for the African American community since we arrived on this continent. Social advance and spiritual sustenance came from and through the church. Modern times and new voices have raised skepticism by some and a certain pulling back by this critical institution.

The comfort of "To Protect and Serve" has been lost to a growing gap of fear and distrust between the police and the Black community. Criminal behavior continues to grow in this season of disconnection. We will intentionally recreate the constructive relationship between the community and law enforcement. We will promote law enforcement as a career opportunity and an appropriate strategy for repairing the breach.

**21 DAYS OF  
PEACE**  
HEALING BEGINS NOW