

The Pastor's Pen

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Senior Minister



Our heartiest congratulations to Judge Anna Rigsby who has been named by *Washingtonian Magazine* as one of the 100 most influential women in the city. Those of us who know Judge Rigsby know her to be a down-to-earth unassuming person. In spite of her humility, slowly but surely, she has become one of the leading women in the Nation. We thank God for her faithfulness to God and dedication to Shiloh. We pray that she will continue to be not only a great leader, but an outstanding role model for Black women everywhere.

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to educate and inform about the causes, effects, prevention and treatment of breast cancer. According to the National Cancer Institute, breast cancer is the second most common type of cancer in American women. Although the cancer rate for Black women is slightly lower than for whites, the mortality rate is higher, indicating that not only genetics, but finances, life's stressors and insufficient health care play a part in a woman's breast cancer survival rate. Over the years, I have spoken to a number of Black women who have been subject to experimentation by physicians and in many cases steered toward radical mastectomies when lesser measures could have been effective. We cannot emphasize enough the need for consistent breast examinations and consultations with trusted doctors. There are a number of breast cancer survivors in Shiloh. Several have made me aware of their willingness to speak to people about their experiences. Please feel free to contact me for the names of those who are ready to provide emotional and spiritual support. If you are facing this challenge, please do not suffer in silence. The Shiloh family is here to be supportive in any way possible.

In the continuing saga of the NFL players taking a knee during the singing of the National Anthem, it is important for us to know that the third stanza of the anthem is considered to have racist intent. It states,

*"...No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
And the star spangled banner in triumph did wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."*

Some dispute the claim that the third stanza is racist and contend the language is simply metaphoric. Whether you agree with that argument, this information is shared so Shiloh people can know the argument before taking an ill-informed position.