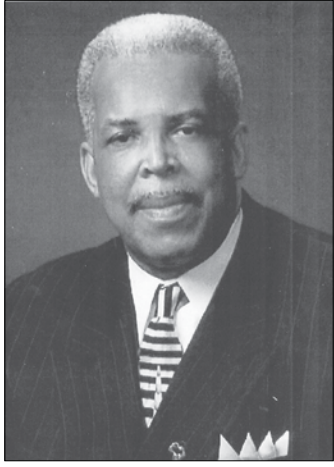


## Allen Temple CME Church

### Celebrates Pastor's 20th Anniversary



Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes

Sunday, June 4, 2017 4:00PM

Location: Maranatha Church, 4222 NE 12th Avenue

**Theme:**

*"I can't come down, I am doing a great work"*

--Nehemiah 6:3

**Keynote Speaker:**

Reverend, Robert C. Jointer  
Bethesda Baptist Church

## Memories of Vanport

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

water fountain.

"They didn't care about my color. We played together. The teachers were just fabulous," she said.

Outside of Vanport, a different reality existed for the black community. Signs hung in nearby Portland store windows saying: "No colored allowed. We serve whites only."

Moss's mother would go once a month to shop at the now closed Newberry's store downtown and as a treat would buy chocolate covered peanuts from the restaurant, but said only white people could sit and eat at the lunch counter.

Moss recalls with fondness the school she attended in Vanport with her brother and sister. Moss was given the nickname Caldonia after the Louis Jordan hit and the neighborhood boys would tease her with a lyric from the song: "What makes your big head so hard?" She took regular classes and enjoyed electives like home economics, sewing and basketball.

An experience in gym class brought back the memories of segregation she learned in the South. She fouled a girl in a game of basketball and suddenly became terrified that she wasn't supposed to touch white people under the norms of prejudice so prevalent at the time.

"All that came back from when we were living in Tallulah," she said. "I had wrapped my arm around a post and the teacher came by and said 'What's the matter, Marge?' I told her, I touched the girl and the teacher said: "That's okay. That's okay. It's just a game. I couldn't get the message and could not let go of the pole, but the teacher was so nice

to me."

On Sunday, May 30, 1948 Moss was making dinner with her mother at home in Vanport, and her siblings were at the movies when the flood alarm began to sound. Her father rushed to the theater to grab the children and a dinner guest, who was one of the few to own a car, and they piled the Moss family inside the vehicle to escape to safety.

Once they reached Denver Avenue, Moss looked out at what was once the most welcoming town in her young life and saw the wooden houses uprooted and floating.

The family lost everything in the flood, except her mother's sewing machine, which she requested to be put in the car at the last minute. A city bus transported Moss and others to Boise School in north Portland which served as an evacuation center. She saw hundreds of people in tears, feeling lost and in shock. The government provided a more permanent shelter for the Moss family in an apartment near the Willamette River, but the location terrified her because it was so close to another river that was seen as dangerous because of high spring runoffs.

Moss says she suffered from post traumatic stress disorder for years after the Vanport flood, not from just witnessing the destruction, but also from losing a community that was open and inviting to her as a young African American girl.

"For us, Vanport was a good place to be," she said. "There are people who say it wasn't, unfortunately many of them are from the white community. But, the story is coming out now and I'm so proud to be a part of it."

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