
We Exist Series 3: Quotes

We Exist Series 3: The Black Church, Maine's
Black Residents and the Wider Community

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Leadership, Participation and Activism

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Leadership, Participation and Activism

**WE
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The Black Church, Maine's Black Residents and the Wider Community

Leadership, Participation and Activism

Ms. Beverly Bowens



"Actually I didn't do too much. I mean, I went to church. I did a lot in my work as a nurse. I was involved in multiculturalism in terms of recruiting nurses. There was a terrible shortage of nurses at one point. In my position, I was a director of nursing. I had a lot to do with affirmative action in my work. I tend to be quite low key. I don't like to participate where people can see me. I'm a quiet type of person, and I feel that I can accomplish much more by actually staying out of the limelight."

Ms. Beverly Bowens (born in Maine; age 67; left at 21 years old for about 35 to 40 years and then returned to Maine)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Bowens, Beverly](#)

Mr. Edgar Anderson



"I'm not very religious. I don't go to church. My kids don't go to church; I don't make them go to church. Even though my father's mother was a preacher, like Reverend Lawson."

Mr. Edgar Anderson (Male; age 51; born 1950 in Chicago suburb called Harvey)

Keywords: family demography, Black Families, Maine

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Anderson, Edgar](#)

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Mrs. Emma Jackson



Interviewer: And you are a member of Christ's Temple Emma Jackson:
"[Yes] Christ's Temple...Church."

Mrs. Emma Jackson (age 62; born 1941 in Atlanta Georgia; lived in
Maine for 46 years; has three children)

Keywords: children's experiences, Black Families, Maine

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Jackson, Emma](#)

Mr. James Mathews



"Well, my pastor, Reverend Margaret Lawson. Also Reverend Steve Coleman, here at Williams Temple. The president of the NAACP, of course, Neville Knowles. There are a number of people that are leaders that work in these churches and with the NAACP, you know. Other people that I have met that I probably couldn't give you a specific name, but there are many people that lead. It just depends on the capacity that they're involved with. I believe when you have the church, your organizations that you're involved with, and so on, there are a number of leaders that even if they're not in, say, a leadership role may be a leader, a de facto leader. Someone that has a lot of influence could possibly be a leader."

"That is a good question. I think that the people at NAACP when I was president saw me as a leader. I believe that organizations that I headed at the church have seen me as a leader. So, specifically names I couldn't really say a name as to who would see me as a leader. But I believe that I have been a leader over my lifetime and I probably still have leadership qualities."

Mr. James Mathews (age 59; born 1941 in Portland Maine; married with five children; lived in Maine all his life – lived in South Portland for over 26 years)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Mathews, James](#)

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Mr. James Sheppard



"In this community. Gee. Maybe talking about politics or people in church, I don't know. Really. I would have to say as leaders I would have to choose some of the politicians that I've dealt with here as leaders."

Mr. James Sheppard (born in New York City in 1924; both his parents immigrated from Antigua in the West Indies to Canada, then they came to the United States in 1923; moved to Maine in 1971)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Sheppard, James](#)

Mrs. June McKenzie



"I've been a member of the NAACP for 35-more than that-36 or 37 years. And I'm an active member of Green Memorial AME Zion Church."

"Well, in church I am a former class leader. I'm a member of two choirs. I used to be head of the missionary board; now I'm a trustee."

Mrs. June McKenzie (age 72; born 1929 in Portland Maine; fifth-generation Mainer; lived in Maine all her life)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: McKenzie, June](#)

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Ms. Odessa Barret



"Well, when you say African American community here in Portland, then that would put me in my church realm or in my other activism."

Ms. Odessa Barret (age 53; born 1948 in Port Arthur, Texas; born in a middle-class, blue collar family; moved to Maine in October 1979)

Keywords: family demography, Black Families, Maine

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Barret, Odessa](#)

Ms. Rose Jackson



"Well, I got a big heart. I must, I must could be a leader because I have a lot of peoples coming to me, you know, coming to me asking me different things. Would I do this for them or could I do this? Could I pray with them or could I talk to them? And especially pray, because a lot of people don't know how to pray. And as soon as they come asking me, 'Well, could I pray?' I'm right there for them. And if that's what you mean by a leader, I'm ready because them prayers is about the only way that I can make it through life."

Mrs. Rose Jackson (age 66; born in Louisville, Mississippi; lives in South Portland for 39 years; married 34 years; has six children; had five children with her first husband; he died and she remarried and had a child with the current husband)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Jackson, Rose](#)