

***Dennis J. Becker Post 205***

***American Legion***

***Memorial Day Ceremony***

***Monday***

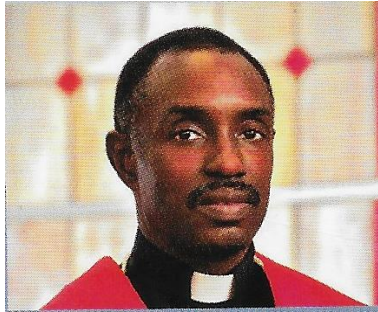
***May 30, 2016***

***11:00 a.m.***

***101 Progressive Street***

***Buckwalter Place, Bluffton***

***Commander- Courtney B. Peeples***



***Reverend Doctor Jon. R. Black Pastor***

***Lt Commander Navy Chaplain, Retired***

*Dr. Jon R. Black was born in Sumter, S.C. and is the son of the late Mr. Theodore and Rev. Eliza Black. He is grateful to God and his parents for the spiritual foundation he received, being reared in a godly home and nurtured by loving parents. He is also indebted to St. Luke A.M.E. Church of Sumter, S.C., which augmented and supported the spiritual instructions he received in the home.*

*He began his primary education under the system of Jim Crow Segregation. Along with his siblings, he integrated the public school system of Sumter during the mid-1960s. after graduation from high school, he continued his education by receiving five earned degrees:*

*Associate in Science Degree from Grossmont College of San Diego, Ca.*

*Bachelor of Science Degree from Southern Illinois University of Carbondale. Il.*

*Master of Divinity Degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary of Evanston, Il.*

*Master of Theology Degree from Princeton Theological Seminary of Princeton, N.J.*

*Doctor of Ministry Degree from Princeton Theological Seminary of Princeton, N.J.*

*Dr. Black is an Itinerant Elder of the A.M.E. Church. His ministry has taken him literally around the world.*

*He is a retired Lt Commander Navy Chaplain, published author and conference lecturer. He has presented at several national conferences including the University of Texas Pastoral Care Symposium. His Last duty station as a chaplain was the National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, Md., affectionately known as the President's Hospital. There he served as the Protestant Pastor and supervised seven chaplains and eight enlisted personnel. Many of his patients and parishioners were U.S. Senators, Congress People and their families.*

*Dr. Black has been the Pastor of five A.M.E. Congregations. On March 11, 2015, he was assigned to Campbell Chapel A.M.E. Church of Bluffton, S.C.*

*Dr. Black is married to the former Donna E. Howell and they have three children. His life theme is based on Galatians 6:9 **"be not weary in doing well: for in due season we shall reap, if we not faint"***



*John W. Thompson, Jr., Fire Chief*  
*Bluffton Township Fire District*

#### ***Fire Service Career***

- *Fire Service career began in 1983 as a Volunteer Firefighter in Washington County, Virginia*
- *Moved to Hilton Head Island Fire & Rescue, Hilton Head Island, SC in September 1987 and took a full time position as a paid Firefighter. Advanced through the ranks to Battalion Chief of the Training Division.*
- *In November 2007 took a position with the Bluffton Township Fire District as Assistant Chief of Operations and was promoted in 2008 to the Deputy Fire Chief position in the Department.*
- *In December 2013 was promoted to the Fire Chief's position for the Bluffton Township Fire District.*

#### ***Education History***

- *The Chief attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University where he studied architecture and urban design and received his bachelor's degree summa cum laude from Columbia Southern University in fire science*
- *The Chief has attended the United States National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program.*

#### ***Personal***

- *The Chief is originally from Bristol, Virginia which is located in the southwestern portion of the state, and married to his very loving and supportive wife Katherine (Kathy). They have four children and seven grandchildren.*
- *The Chief served in the United States Army Reserve as a heavy equipment operator in the Army Corps of Engineers.*



## **Program**

*Welcome, Master of Ceremony -----1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander Robert (Bro) Kitty*

*Sgt at Arms-----Steve Robillard*

*Proceed to open the ceremony*

*Presentation of the Colors*

*Bluffton Fire Department Color Guard*

*National Anthem -----James L. Gilliard*

*Invocation -----James Gadson – Chaplain*

*Patriotic Music*

*Introduction of Speaker ----- Master of Ceremony*

*Speaker ----- Reverend Dr. Jon R. Black*

*Introduction of 2nd Speaker ----- Master of Ceremony*

*Bluffton Fire Chief ----- John W. Thompson*

*Placing of the Wreath – Commander Peeples and Auxiliary Unit President Sterling*

*Remarks ----- Commander Peeples*

*Raising of the Flag -- Past Commander Sterling and Sgt at Arms Robillard*

*Reading of Memorial Day Poem ----- David Hahn*

*Benediction - -----Chaplain Gadson*

*Retire the Colors-----Bluffton Fire Department Color Guard*

## ***History of Memorial Day***

*In 1966, Congress and President Lyndon B. Johnson declared Waterloo, N.Y., the birthplace of Memorial Day. There, a ceremony on May 5, 1866, honored local veterans who had fought in the Civil War. Businesses closed and residents flew flags at half-staff. Supporters of Waterloo's claim say earlier observances in other places were either informal, not- community wide or one- time events.*

*By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Memorial Day ceremonies were being held on May 30 throughout the nation. State legislatures passed proclamations designating the day, and the Army and Navy adopted regulations for proper observance at their facilities.*

*It was not until after World War 1, however, that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American Wars. In 1971, Memorial Day was declared a national holiday by an act of Congress, though it is still called Declaration Day. It was then also placed on the last Monday in May, as were some other federal holidays.*

### ***SOME STATES HAVE CONFEDERATE OBSERVANCES***

*Many Southern states also have their own days for honoring the Confederate dead. Mississippi celebrates Confederate Memorial Day on the last Monday of April, Alabama on the fourth Monday of April, and Georgia on April 26. North and South Carolina observe it on May 10, Louisiana on June 3 and Tennessee calls that day Confederate Decoration Day. It was then also placed on the last Monday in May, as some other federal holidays.*

*Gen. Logan's for his post to decorate graves in 1868 "with the choicest flowers of springtime" urged: "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance... let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no neglect, ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost and free and undivided republic"*

*The crowd attending the first Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery was approximately the same as those that attend today's observance, about 5,000 people. Then, as now small American flags were placed on each grave—a tradition followed at many national cemeteries today. In recent years, the custom has grown in many families to decorate the graves of all departed loved ones.*

*The origin of special services to honor those who die in war can be found in antiquity. The Athenian leader Pericles offered a tribute to the fallen heroes of the Peloponnesian War over 24 centuries ago that could be applied today to the 1.1 million Americans who have died in the nation's wars: "not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions, but there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men."*

*To insure the sacrifices of America's fallen heroes are never forgotten, in December 2000, the U.S Congress passed and the president signed into law "The National Moment of Remembrance Act" P.L. 106-579, creating the White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance. The commission's charter is to "encourage the people of the United States to give something back to their country, which provides them so much freedom and opportunity" by encouraging and coordinating commemorations in the United States of Memorial Day and the Moment of Remembrance.*

*The Nation Moment of Remembrance encourages all Americans to pause wherever they are at 3:00p.m. local time on Memorial Day for a minute of silence to remember and honor those who died in service to the nation. As Moment of Remembrance founder Carmella LaSpada states: "it's a way we can all help put the memorial back in Memorial Day/"*

## **Memorial Day**

- Eula Gladys Lincoln

*In distant field of sunny France  
Where strangers come and go,  
Amid the farms of Flanders, where  
The fragrant breezes blow,  
Our soldier-dead in quiet sleep  
'Neath crosses row on row.*

*Here shrapnel shells once shrieked and burst  
And took their toll of death;  
The very wind, itself a foe,  
Bore poison on its breath.*

*Above their graves the birds now sing  
As round that home of yore,  
When, carefree boys, they romped and played;  
Those childhood days soon o'er,  
The boys to brave and strong men grown,  
They romped and played no more.*

*They put aside their childish toys,  
A man's work each must do,  
And when their country called for them,  
To her they answered true.*

*"We must protect our native land:  
She shall not suffer wrong  
For she has reared and nurtured us,  
We're men and we are strong.  
We'll bid good-bye to those we love;  
It will not be for long."*

*With aching hearts and tear-dimmed eyes  
We watched them go away.  
Some have returned but many sleep  
In foreign lands today.*

*Where English roses bloom and fade,  
In France where lilies grow,  
Among the fields of Flanders, where  
The scarlet poppies blow,  
Our soldier-dead are not forgot  
Though strangers come and go*

