

# Honored: U.S. Rep. John Lewis receives 2016 Liberty Medal

**Bobbi Booker**  
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

The 2016 Liberty Medal was awarded on Monday to U.S. Rep. John Lewis.

Lewis, who, along with Hosea Williams, led the 1965 march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama on “Bloody Sunday,” was recognized for his courageous dedication to civil rights and the Constitution. The ceremony took place at the National Constitution Center on Independence Mall, and was the 28th annual event since it was established in 1988 to honor men and women of courage and conviction who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe.

ABC News’ “Nightline” co-anchor Byron Pitts served as moderator for the event, which featured a performance by the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Choir. Other participants for the evening included Mayor Jim Kinney, former Gov. Ed Rendell, Cynthia MacLeoud of the National Historic Park Superintendent, Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and Amy Gutmann, president of the University of Pennsylvania.

Established in 1988 to commemorate the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, the Liberty Medal was also awarded to Nelson Mandela, Sandra Day O’Connor, Kofi Annan, Shimon



Jerry Rosen, president of the National Constitution Center, stands with U.S. Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), who holds the Liberty Medal while waving to the crowd.

— PHOTO BY ABDUL R. SULAYMAN/TRIBUNE CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER

Peres and Colin Powell. He was youngest speaker for the March on Washing along with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1962.

Prior to the Award ceremony on Monday, Lewis visited the abandoned, boarded-up rowhouse at 753 Walnut Street in Camden that was home to once home to Martin Luther King Jr. King reportedly stayed there from 1948 to 1951 when he studied at Crozer Theological Seminary in Upland, Pennsylvania. Historians say that it was during this period when reports say he staged his first sit-in in 1950 at a Maple Shade restaurant where he was denied service.

Lewis joined New Jersey Congressman Donald Norcross in Camden, New Jersey for discussions on gun violence and to support the restoration and historic designation of the property, according to a news release from the office of Rep. Norcross.

Rep. Lewis, who worked side-by-side with Dr. King during the civil rights movement of the 1960s and was a pivotal figure in the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, told a crowd gathered in front of the Camden home, “The work Dr. King started decades ago is still unfinished. This property, which stands now as

a simple row home, can serve as a touchstone for generations to come as they learn about Dr. King and his deeds to make our country stronger and more inclusive.”

The National Constitution Center’s 28th annual Liberty Medal Ceremony was taped by WPVI-TV/6ABC for broadcast on Sunday, October 2 at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday, October 23 at 1:30 p.m.

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U.S. Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) addresses the crowd at the National Constitution Center Monday night.

— PHOTO BY ABDUL R. SULAYMAN/TRIBUNE CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER



A prayer is offered at sunset in Cobbs Creek Park.

— TRIBUNE PHOTO BY SAMARIA BAILEY

# Masjids celebrate Islamic holy holiday

**Samaria Bailey**  
TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT

Masjids across the city hosted family and community events in celebration of the Eid-ul-Adha, one of, if not the most, important Islamic holiday, on Sept. 12.

Eid-ul-Adha recognizes Abraham’s faithfulness to Allah, when he offered his son as a sacrifice.

The Majlis Ash-Shura of Philadelphia hosted the Eid-ul-Adha 9 a.m. prayer at Georges Hill, a communal gathering attended by an estimated 500 Muslims. Imam Yusef of Masjid Taha gave the message during the morning service and focused on unity and faith.

“This is a celebration that commemorates the command of God to the prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son, but God saying sacrifice a lamb instead,” said Imam Asim A. Rashad, Imam of the Mujahdeen masjid. “We started off with a prayer and sermon at Georges Hill and we all prayed at the same time.”

Jamillah Abdul-Jamii, Mujahideen masjid member, said she was most impacted by Yusef’s message of interdependence.

“He was [teaching] about depending on each other and depending on ourselves,” she said. “...I need to be able to call [someone] and say ‘I’m going

through something,’ for spiritual uplifting.”

Yasmine Nelson, 19, said she learned a practical lesson.

“Imam Yusef talked about how we spend our money, buying things that are over the top [versus] positive things and about spending money wisely,” said Nelson. “It made me think about being money conscious and how I use my money as far as charity.”

Mujahdeen masjid hosted a family cookout at Cobbs Creek Park, with support from several other masjids including Masjid Taha, Masjid Hashr and Masjid dal-Badayah. The cookout concluded with an evening prayer.

The United Muslim Masjid (UMM) hosted two events for families and youth, one of which included an afternoon of bowling and fellowship.

“We are supposed to be celebrating the family with food and sweets and toys for the children,” said UMM Amir Qasim Rashad. Rashad said he personally treated his family to breakfast and his children to toys, in recognition of the holiday.

He added that some UMM families also traveled to Mecca to make Hajj [the Holy Islamic pilgrimage] during the Eid.

Masjid Taha hosted a dinner and toy giveaway while Masjid Mui’d hosted a family skate party.

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**Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops The United Methodist Church**

**A statement presented to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference July 13, 2016, Lancaster PA**

As we gather for this Jurisdictional Conference many persons have been confronted and consumed with overwhelming reports of shootings and violence. Life taken! Trust broken! Anger and fear growing. Frustration and despair looming.

We believe that God’s heart breaks, as our hearts break, with these acts of violence--fed and complicated by fear, prejudice, racism and privilege. We pray for each family and each community affected by profound loss and grief. We pray for the ripple effects of these acts of violence that strip away certainty of safety, sanctuary, value and trust.

The death of young black males in encounters with white law enforcement officers calls for response. The loss of life within our Hispanic/Latino community and among our brothers and sisters identifying with the LGBTQ community in Orlando calls for response. The death of police officers protecting the rights of persons to peaceably protest points to a destructive cycle of violence and retribution. And it calls for a response.

We, the College of Bishops of the United Methodist Church’s Northeastern Jurisdiction, stand together to respond, and our response is not just for the moment. Our response is a commitment to acknowledge our participation in the sin of institutional racism and to have ongoing conversations within the College about racism, privilege and oppression. Our response is to give leadership and develop plans to continue these conversations within and among the jurisdiction and with the leadership of the annual conferences to which we are assigned.

The purpose of these dialogues will be to talk about our own racism and prejudices; to heal the wounds that have been caused by racism, privilege, and oppression; to train our leadership and churches in intercultural competency; and to lead them to celebrate diversity. We will lead and offer training for leaders in the craft of building bridges across cultures and ethnicity so that all those whom we profess to acknowledge as created in the image of God, and as persons of sacred worth, will truly feel welcome and find the safety, sanctuary, value and trust these recent and ongoing acts of violence have robbed from them.

We in the College will hold one another accountable for this action, reporting to our conferences at their annual sessions and providing a report to the 2020 Jurisdictional Conference. At the jurisdictional level we will partner with both the Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry and the Vision Table in our ongoing response.

Together, we claim the need to listen more deeply and to seek greater understanding for those who cry out for justice. We commit ourselves to seeking justice, supporting faithful law enforcement officers, and empowering the movement of people toward healthier community engagement within the areas we serve.

Because we believe that all persons are created in God’s image, from our United Methodist faith perspective, all people matter, all are valuable. In these particularly violent, life-taking incidents and times, however, we need to intentionally lift up that black lives really do matter and the lives of all persons of color really do matter. The lives of our LGBTQ brothers and sisters really do matter.

The NEJ College of Bishops believes that in the midst of the chaos, fear and violence, there is a rich opportunity for the church to be the church. We seek to be the leaders of this church. We seek justice, repentance and reconciliation. We seek not just to love peace, but to be peacemakers. God’s people need us to be bearers of peace.

At the beginning of this Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, we ask you to join us. Join us as we make this response not just for the moment, but effecting the future. Our hope is that, together—as bishops, clergy and laity—we might be quilted together more strongly in our work of allowing God to transform us, so that we might go out with God’s great transforming love—to bring healing, hope and peace to the world.

As a beginning, we would ask that you think and reflect with us on these questions. How will you be a peacemaker in the midst of storms of violence and destruction? How can you be a peacemaker and at the same time work for justice?

What can you do to help develop a sense of wellbeing and harmony in your life, in the lives of neighbors, strangers, friends and communities?

What social problems move you to want to make a difference by building bridges, making connections, valuing people?

Blessed are the peacemakers! Blessed are the peacemakers! Blessed are the peacemakers!

In the midst of all the storms encountered and perpetuated in this life, please think on these things. This work begins with each one of us—first individually and then collectively. We, your bishops, will be not only thinking on these things, but moving in response. We seek your prayers and support as we take this action.

*“But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the Head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” (Ephesians 4:15-16)*



The Sullivan Progress Plaza Shopping Center, built in the late 1960s with African-American funding, has received a marker from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

— ABDUL SULAYMAN/TRIBUNE CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER

**SULLIVAN « 1A**

hand to mark the historic occasion. He fondly recalled the years of visiting the shopping center during his childhood and said he still shopped there.

“I’ve been around this place since I was a child,” Sullivan told the Tribune. “I was about 10 years old when it opened. I came down here with my father all the time. I’m glad to see that the plaza is going strong.”

“It’s been 15 years since he passed away. I think that he would be happy to see that this day has come — that the plaza was recognized,” he said. “It’s a great day for the plaza and for the efforts that he went through in starting these various ventures and programs. He was very much a part of economic empowerment for African Americans.”

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