

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Union United Kicks-off Phase 2 of its \$1.6 Million Capital Campaign**

(Montreal, December 11, 2014) Quebec's oldest Black congregation is launching the **“Let’s Restore Union” Capital Campaign** during the holiday season.

In its second phase, the fundraising drive invites all Canadians to contribute to Union United’s efforts to restore its 115-year old building. The congregation was forced to relocate in 2011 and fundraise to rapidly find sufficient funds to save the historical building due to the presence of asbestos, mold and serious water damage.

For over one-hundred years, Union United has been an incubator for spiritual growth, talent and civic leadership. Key figures such as jazz virtuoso the late Oscar Peterson, two time national NBA championship winner, Joel Anthony, Quebec's first appointed Black judge, Juanita Westmorland-Traoré, and trailblazing law professor, Dr. Esmeralda Thornhill, have all been active congregation members.

Having hosted such luminaries as the late Nelson Mandela, Rev. Desmond Tutu, the Rt. Hon. Michaëlle Jean, and a series of Premiers and Mayors, the congregation has also been a focal point for Quebec and Canadian efforts to promote human rights and inclusion at home and abroad for over a century.

"Our congregation has always drawn from the soul-stirring, foot-stomping Black Gospel tradition and the Judeo-Christian wellspring of love, compassion and social justice to offer sanctuary to and empower the poor and the excluded," says Oliver Jones, Honorary Chair of the Capital Campaign. "Reaching our fundraising target will help us continue to play that vital role in Montreal and beyond. We will get there with everyone’s support."

With more than \$1 million already fundraised, campaign organizers are looking forward to inspire a second phase of giving during the holiday season to keep its legacy alive.

Canadians are invited to make donations directly to [Union United Church Montreal](http://www.unionunitedchurchmtl.ca) through our secure server. Donated funds will help to restore the worship space, facilitate access for seniors and those with physical impediments, and help the congregation reach out to and empower youth within the community.

More information about Union United can be found at [www.unionunitedchurchmtl.ca](http://www.unionunitedchurchmtl.ca).

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