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Through snow and racist threats: Baltimore to DC march demands reparations

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Photo: presidentrashaad on Instagram

Baltimore — On Dec. 5, Reverend Dr. Robert Turner of Empowerment Temple led his 39th monthly March for Reparations. The march, which Rev. Turner calls “40 for 40,” covered more than 40 miles, symbolizing the 40 acres promised to Black people through the famous Field Order 15 of 1865.

The December march was in memory of Isabel Wall, who in 1910 was denied the ability to attend a school because she was 1/16th Black.

Marchers stepped off from Carroll Park, the site of a former plantation in Baltimore City, and walked down Washington Boulevard all the way to Washington, D.C. The march took place in cold, windy conditions, with snow, sleet and freezing rain falling most of the time. However, the weather was only one obstacle participants faced. As marchers made their way to D.C., passing motorists shouted racist threats and insults. Police stopped and questioned the support vehicle that accompanied marchers for safety along the roadside.

Upon reaching D.C., Rev. Turner laid a wreath of 400 roses symbolizing 400 years of racist oppression of Black people in the United States. The roses were dyed black to symbolize that Black people remain in a period of mourning and loss, and will continue to mourn until reparations are provided to Black people and communities across the United States.

Malcolm X said, “If you stick a knife in my back nine inches and pull it out six inches, that’s not progress. Progress is healing the wound that the blow made. They haven’t pulled the knife out; they won’t even admit that it’s there.”

The fight for reparations is ultimately one that is part of a greater fight for self-determination. The fascist U.S. government is actively erasing Black history, shrinking or displacing Black communities and filling its prison plantations with Black bodies.

Reparations are more than just money; they are more than saying you’re sorry and acknowledging the past. Since capitalism and white supremacy drove that knife into Black experience, reparations encompass not only the healing of the Black community and its liberation from these oppressive and racist systems. It is also the end of white supremacy. Reparations include the destruction of the systems and state of capitalism that continue to kill and enslave Black people.



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