



## THIS FAR BY FAITH/FAITH INTO ACTION FACT SHEET

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### **AIRDATE**

Premieres January 2002

### **PRESENTING STATION**

WGBH Boston

### **PROGRAM/SERIES DESCRIPTION**

African-American religious communities and their leaders have played a remarkable and largely unrecognized role in shaping the very meaning and practice of the democratic ideals central to American society. They have given all Americans a richer vision of brotherhood and sisterhood, community, and humanity. Black religious institutions and individuals helped lead the fight for the abolition of slavery; offered new political ideals and leadership during Reconstruction; provided shelter and opportunity not only for African Americans but for others during years of migration, immigration, and the Great Depression; drove the movement for civil rights at mid-century; and in the years since, have formed a vanguard in the search for answers to problems facing the nation: poverty, homelessness, drug abuse, violence, racial and religious unrest.

THIS FAR BY FAITH presents a history of the African-American religious experience. It is a dramatic story of a people and a society being changed and transformed, a history filled with characters of amazing courage and commitment. These are spiritual and moral superstars, people who care deeply about their fellow citizens, people who become the instruments of their own destinies. They are role models not only for the black community but for everyone: corporate leaders, educators, community workers, churchgoers and non-churchgoers. Their work, some say, can and should be seen as a gift to the American soul, a deep probing into the heart and mind of this nation's being. THIS FAR BY FAITH promises to be one of Blackside's most dynamic series, as viewers witness two centuries of women and men engaged in struggles on behalf of and emerging out of their faith.

A history of the African-American religious experience, told in the context of the nation's struggle to realize the goals of democracy and authentic humanity, reveals much about the heart and soul of America itself: who we are as a nation, what we believe as a people, what we consider worth dying – and living – for. **THIS FAR BY FAITH** also provides a platform for debate over the role of faith and faith communities today and in the future, as America continues to grapple with issues of diversity and hardship, freedom and citizenship, courage, conviction, morality, and democracy.

### **PRODUCTION FUNDING FOR THIS FAR BY FAITH PROVIDED BY**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation  
The Pew Charitable Trusts  
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
Lilly Endowment Inc.  
PBS/CPB Program Challenge Fund

The Ford Foundation  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
National Black Programming Consortium

**PRODUCER**

Blackside Inc.

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

Dante James

**WEB SITE**

<http://www.pbs.org/faith>

**Faith Into Action Outreach Campaign**

**Funder**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Inc.

**Campaign Objective**

Incorporating THIS FAR BY FAITH within the Making Connections Media Outreach Initiative is aimed at engaging faith leaders, serving black or underserved communities, as stakeholders in the Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Making Connections Initiative* and introducing them to the educational and community mobilization potential of their local public television stations.

**Campaign Resources**

▪ **Faith Into Action Workshops**

In collaboration with the national partner, Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta, Outreach Extensions developed a *Faith Into Action Resource Guide* that focused on six contemporary issues of social ministry. These include:

- **Faith and Economic Development** explores strategies of faith-based programs that address asset building, educational and financial literacy, the digital divide, and the creation of new businesses. It takes a look at homeownership, entrepreneurship, and other economic solutions that build individual and collective wealth.
- **Faith and Criminal Justice** examines the role of faith organizations in reforming and transforming persons in jails and prisons and the process of reintegration into families and communities.
- **Faith and Health** presents the unique opportunities for faith-based organizations to identify and educate people about physical, mental, and spiritual challenges. This segment also discusses the diseases that disproportionately affect the African-American community.
- **Faith and Leadership Development** identifies tactics to develop leaders for faith institutions and the public arena. It also explores the belief that leadership development is an ongoing process that begins at an early age and, if properly nurtured, continues throughout life.
- **Faith and Diversity** takes a look at the changing faces of America's cities, towns, suburbs, and rural areas, and how faith-based organizations respond to these new demographic realities. This theme addresses ways that communities can honor differences in religious practices, ethnicity, age, gender, or sexual orientation, while responding to common human needs for safety, comfort and social services.

- **Faith and Identity Formation** examines the role of faith-based organizations in the development of positive identity and relationships among our congregations, young people, elders and other family and community entities. It probes existing and changing images of traditional relationships such as marriage, intergenerational family structures, and social groupings such as gangs and other peer groups.
- The companion ***Faith Into Action*** videotape, produced by Dean Radcliffe-Lynes, D.R. Lynes, Inc., offers 15-minute segments on successful faith-based programs that address the six social ministry themes. Both the *Guide* and videotape provide information and examples of faith community best practices that will support faith leaders in taking an active role in family strengthening and community building.
- **Web site** – Outreach Extensions develops and currently maintains the Faith Into Action Web site ([www.faithintoaction.org](http://www.faithintoaction.org)) -- which will later move to PBS.org. Workshop participants, stations, and others are being invited to submit examples of their own model projects. Outreach Extensions will screen each model project as well as edit and format the information for inclusion on the Web site.



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