



THE WHITE HOUSE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

New Episode of the 1600 Sessions: “St. John’s, the Church of the Presidents”

November 25th, 2020 (Washington, D.C.) – The White House Historical Association has released a new episode of *The 1600 Sessions*, [“St. John’s, the Church of the Presidents.”](#) In this episode Association President and host Stewart McLaurin talks to Reverend Robert Fisher, the Rector at St. John’s Church, which is located on the opposite side of Lafayette Park as the White House and has been historically known as the Church of the Presidents. In this special Thanksgiving episode, McLaurin and Fisher discuss the many historic ties that it shares with the White House, and how its congregation approaches both its history and its contemporary mission.

“There is a gracefulness about St. John's and even, I would say a commitment to grace. We are a diverse community, our church,” said Reverend Fisher. “It's diverse racially, it's diverse in terms of the political spectrum. And one of the things that is kind of an agreed upon commitment by, pretty much, everybody at St. John's is that we respect each other and that we treat each other with civility, even when we have very deep disagreements.”

McLaurin reflected on the long and often complicated history of the President’s Park: “You and I can both look out our office windows and see Lafayette Park. And we talked about the recent protest, but just as poignant, perhaps even more so is that space and the enslaved persons that worked and lived in proximity to that space, who built the White House. And the enslaved persons to our early American presidents who lived and worked in the White House. And these are quite poignant histories with real people who some of whose names we know, and some whose names that we don't know. And it's a very powerful responsibility that we have.”

[Listen to the full episode here.](#) [Watch the podcast video here.](#)

The 1600 Sessions

In this podcast series, White House Historical Association President Stewart McLaurin interviews luminaries, historians, and eyewitnesses to history about America’s most famous residence and office—the White House. Each episode includes a prominent guest or guests to

discuss varying facets of White House history, including insights from former staff and many other topical issues.

The 1600 Sessions is available on iTunes, Google Play, Spotify, and Stitcher. To hear the full episode, visit The1600Sessions.org.

For media inquiries, please contact press@whha.org.

About The White House Historical Association

First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy envisioned a restored White House that conveyed a sense of history through its decorative and fine arts. In 1961, the White House Historical Association was established to support her vision to preserve and share the Executive Mansion's legacy for generations to come. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association's mission is to assist in the preservation of the state and public rooms, fund acquisitions for the White House permanent collection, and educate the public on the history of the White House. Since its founding, the White House Historical Association has contributed more than \$50 million in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit www.whitehousehistory.org.

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