

REP Education Sheet: *Desecration of Moses Macedonia Burial Ground*



Located on River Road in Bethesda, Maryland across the street from the Macedonia Baptist Church is the Moses African Cemetery, a historic gravesite for enslaved Africans. As early as 1917, local government and real estate developers have sought to desecrate the sacred site, but community activists and coalition members of the Bethesda African Cemetery Coalition (BACC) are resisting gentrification and fighting back to maintain community control.



- The cemetery is among the largest mass graves in the United States and an international site of genocide. The earliest graves were made for victims of enslavement on local Maryland plantations
- BACC grew from the early struggle of the Social Justice Ministry of Macedonia Baptist Church. The BACC seeks to stop the desecration of Moses Macedonia Cemetery, preserve the rich history of this once thriving African community, and consecrate Moses Macedonia Cemetery with a memorial and museum on River Road
- On October 25, 2021, a Maryland judge ordered a halt on the sale of the historic gravesite, a major victory for the preservation of African history in the U.S. and the continued veneration of our ancestors

Sources:

- <https://bethesdaafricancemeterycoalition.net/>
- <https://jnj.e56.myftpupload.com/struggle-for-moses-macedonia-african-cemetery/>
- <https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/major-court-victory-against-desecration-of-bethedas-moses-african-cemetery/>