

We Speak Your Names

**Because we are free men and women,
born of free men and women,
who are born of free men and women,
back as far as time begins,
we celebrate their freedom.**

**Because we are wise men and women,
born of wise men and women,
who are born of wise men and women,
we celebrate their wisdom.**

**Because we are strong men and women,
born of strong men and women,
who are born of strong men and women,
we celebrate their strength.**

**Because we are magical men and women,
born of magical men and women,
who are born of magical men and women,
we celebrate their magic.**

***My brothers and sisters, we are gathered here to speak their
names.***

**We are here because we are their sons and daughters
as surely as if they had conceived us, nurtured us,
carried us in their loins and wombs, and then sent us out
into the world to make our mark
and see what we see, *and be what we be, but better,
truer, deeper*
because of the shining example of their own
incandescent lives.**

**We are here to speak their names
because we have enough sense to know
that we did not spring full blown from the
forehead of Zeus,
but we arrived on the scene only because it was to will of
Our Heavenly Father.
And our Forefathers had the belief to teach each of us that
Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised!**

**We know that we are walking in footprints made
deep by the confident strides
of men and women who parted the air before them like the**

forces of nature that they were.
We are here to speak their names
because they taught us that the search is always for
the truth
and that when people show us who they are, we
should believe them.

We are here because they taught us
that *our speech* can continue to be our native
tongue,
no matter how many languages we learn as we
move about as citizens of the world
and of the ever-evolving universe.

We are here to speak their names
because of the way they made for us.
Because of the prayers they prayed for us.
We are the ones they conjured up, hoping we
would have strength enough,
and discipline enough, and talent enough, and
nerve enough
to step into the light when it turned in our
direction, *and just smile awhile.*

We are the ones they hoped would make them
proud
because all of our hard work
makes all of their part of something *better, truer,
deeper.*
Something that lights the way ahead like a lamp
unto our feet,
as steady as the unforgettable beat of our collective
heart.

We speak their names.

We speak their names.

<i>Perryman Oliphant</i>	<i>Dan Oliphant</i>
<i>Ella Oliphant</i>	<i>Dora Oliphant</i>
<i>Rose Patterson</i>	<i>John Oliphant</i>
<i>George Patterson</i>	<i>Lillie Mae Oliphant</i>
<i>Henry Oliphant</i>	<i>Rheta Bell Oliphant</i>
<i>Tony Oliphant</i>	<i>Tessie Oliphant</i>
<i>Georgia Braithwaite</i>	<i>Sarah Phillips</i>
<i>Mary Braithwaite</i>	<i>Onnie Roland</i>
<i>Charlotte Dublin</i>	<i>Angeline Whitaker</i>
	<i>Bessie White</i>

"We speak their names"