

## Reverend Liz Walker

Liz Walker is Pastor of Roxbury Presbyterian Church in the heart of Boston where she leads the **Cory Johnson Program for Post Traumatic Healing (CJP)**. Named after a promising young church member who was murdered in 2010, **CJP** is a faith-inspired, clinically supported, community based program that addresses the epidemic of Post-Traumatic Stress in a neighborhood too often overrun by violence. **CJP** offers weekly community gatherings where residents are encouraged to share painful often unspeakable experiences, increase their understanding of psychological trauma and learn coping skills. The program also offers access to mental health support that some residents might not otherwise receive.

Among the most tragic aspects of psychological trauma is its impact on the young. Far too many children are exposed to sexual abuse, physical abuse, domestic violence, community and school violence, suicides, and other traumatic losses. Research shows more than two thirds of American children report experiencing a traumatic event by age 16. Among Reverend Walker's many groundbreaking accomplishments in **CJP** is a special trauma informed children's play space offering;

- Specially trained childcare staff
- Therapeutic toys and games
- Ongoing guidance from clinicians representing the Trauma program at the Justice Resource Institute, nationally renown trauma specialists.

In addition, **CJP** has developed several trauma informed initiatives for young people and is currently working on a monthly 'Can We Talk' community conversation customized for teenagers.

Since its inception in 2014, **CJP** has served more than 6,000 people and is in the process of replicating its 'Can We Talk' community conversations in 8 different locations around the country.

Reverend Walker's calling as a minister is the latest and highest reach of a life journey that includes 11 years of humanitarian work in South Sudan, one of Africa's most troubled countries and 21 years as Boston's first African American Television News Anchor on WBZ TV.

Reverend Walker co-founded “My Sister’s Keeper” a humanitarian organization that in 2007 built a Girls’ school in the village of Akon, Sudan, the first of its kind in that region. On the first day of school, 1000 girls enrolled. Despite persistent violence and political upheaval, the school continues to operate today.

A graduate of Harvard Divinity School, Reverend Walker has long been actively involved in many community service organizations and projects. She helped found the Jane Doe Safety Fund, a multi-million dollar statewide anti-violence initiative that works on policy and supports domestic abuse shelters and safe houses around the Commonwealth.

Reverend Walker received a Master of Divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School in 2005. She is a member of the Core Strategy Team of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization and serves on the Board of Trustees for Boston Medical Center and has served on the Board of Trustees for Andover Newton Theological Seminary, the Tufts Health Foundation and Board of Overseers for Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Reverend Walker has been awarded honorary degrees from numerous institutions including University of Massachusetts in Dartmouth, Boston College, Simmons College, Salem State University and Bridgewater State University. She is the mother of three and grandmother of two.

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