



MEDIA ALERT: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vigil to mark 90th Anniversary of Tulsa Race Riot

Tulsa, Okla. – A walk and candlelight vigil are planned for Tuesday, May 31, 2011, in observance of the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot, called the worst civic disturbance in American history. Tulsans from all parts of the city – north, south, east and west – are encouraged to participate in the Vigil, which organizers hope will become an annual event.

Titled “Vigil of Remembrance -- Tulsa Race Riot: 90 Years Later,” the event is being held on the 90th anniversary of what is believed to be the single worst incident of racial violence in America. The Vigil will take place in the Greenwood area, the site of the most tragic chapter in our city’s history. “The assaults of whites against blacks in Tulsa’s Greenwood district on May 31 and June 1, 1921, must not be forgotten, and we must continue our efforts at healing and reconciliation,” Vigil organizers said.

Participants will meet at 7:30 p.m. at the John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park, 415 North Detroit, for a brief welcome before breaking into two groups. Each group will walk a nine block route in the Greenwood district around the park, each block symbolizing a decade since the Riot. The groups will walk the same route in two different directions, reflecting and remembering the tragic event along the way. The groups will meet back at the Park at 8:05 p.m., encircling the 25-foot Tower of Reconciliation at the center of the park. Participants will then light candles for a brief service of remembrance, ending at 8:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. (Candles will be provided to participants as they re-enter the Park, but everyone is encouraged to bring a flashlight or cell phone with flashlight application in case of wind.)

The Vigil is being sponsored by the Oklahoma Center for Community and Justice (OCCJ), in cooperation with All Souls Unitarian Church, Islamic Society of Tulsa, Jewish Federation of Tulsa, John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation, Tulsa Interfaith Alliance and Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry.

OCCJ is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in Oklahoma. It promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education.