

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

FEBRUARY 10, 2022

February was chosen as Black History Month. Today we will look at Abraham Lincoln, a statesman and lawyer who served as the 16th President of the United States. He was assassinated on April 15, 1865, 42 days into his second term.

His family lived in Kentucky and Indiana and finally settled in Illinois where he became an inventor (bellows to be used on a ship in shallow water), entered politics, became a lawyer, served in the Illinois legislature, and ran for President. While in the Illinois legislature Lincoln cast his first vote against a bill that said “the right of property in slaves is sacred to the slave-holding States...and they cannot be deprived of that right against their will.” Lincoln filed a formal protest stating, “...the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy.”

Lincoln and Mary Todd were married on November 4, 1842. He called the marriage a matter of “profound wonder.” They had four sons, only one of whom survived into adulthood. Compounding their sadness, when the Civil War began, four of Mary’s brothers fought on the side of the Confederacy.

From 1847 – 1849 Lincoln served in the U.S. House of Representatives. He would later run for Senator and win the popular vote, but lose the election to Douglas. During the intervening years the Republican Party was formed and he was elected as the Republican President on November 6, 1860. He ran on a political platform opposed to the expansion of slavery in the territories. His election served as the immediate impetus for the outbreak of the Civil War. He refused to recognize the secession of states from the Union and the Civil War began weeks into his presidency with the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, a federal installation located within the boundary of the Confederacy. Lincoln became the first President to institute a military draft.

The Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 freed about 20,00 slaves in Confederate-held territory, and established emancipation as a Union war goal. He was instrumental in the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment which made slavery unconstitutional in the United States. Historians portray him as the liberator of slaves, the savior of the Union, and a martyr for the cause of freedom.

Lord, give our leaders the courage of integrity and justice. Amen. Pastor Louise