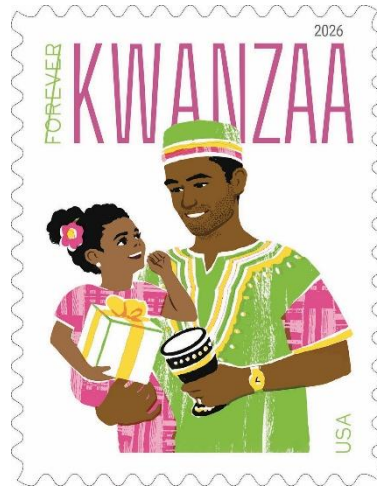


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U.S. Postal Service Features Joyful Father and Daughter On Latest Kwanzaa Stamp

NORFOLK, VA — The U.S. Postal Service continues its tradition of celebrating Kwanzaa, the pan-African holiday observed each year from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1, with a new stamp dedicated today at the 111th annual conference of the [Association for the Study of African American Life and History](#).

“This new Kwanzaa stamp is not only a wonderful affirmation of African American culture, it will also make a beautiful, heartwarming addition to your cards and letters,” said Norfolk, VA, Postmaster Matthew Toman, who served as the dedicating official. “With every new design, I continue to be amazed by the creativity of our artists and designers and their ability to capture the essence of Kwanzaa.”

The first Kwanzaa stamp was released in 1997, and there has been a new one every two years since 2016. Previous stamps have included colorful illustrations of parents and children with Kwanzaa candles; a woman holding a bowl overflowing with harvest bounty; and a festive dance-and-drum performance.

Founded in the United States in 1966, during a time of social upheaval, Kwanzaa was meant to help unify African Americans from a wide array of religious and cultural backgrounds. With its name derived from the Swahili phrase “matunda ya kwanza,” meaning “first fruits,” Kwanzaa draws on ancient and modern first-harvest festivities occurring across the African continent. The holiday incorporates and reimagines many of these communal traditions as a contemporary celebration and reaffirmation of African American culture.

Each day of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of seven principles: unity (umoya); self-determination (kujichagulia); collective work and responsibility (ujima); cooperative economics (ujamaa); purpose (nia); creativity (kuumba); and faith (imani). Collectively known as the Nguzo Saba, the principles are recalled in the traditional Kwanzaa greeting. The response to “Habari gani?” or “What is the news?” is the word for that day’s principle, for example, umoya.

Kwanzaa also has three associated colors: black for the Pan-African people; red for the struggles they have endured; and green for the hope for a better future born from these struggles. Seven symbols — kinara (candleholder), mishumaa saba (seven candles), mazao (crops), mkeka (mat), muhindi (corn), kikombe cha umoja (unity cup) and zawadi (gifts) — are often displayed during Kwanzaa celebrations. The kinara holds one

black, three red and three green candles, each representing one of the founding principles and lit on the corresponding day. Kwanzaa celebrations may also include a black, red and green banner, and people may dress in these colors, or in traditional African attire.

While Kwanzaa is a time for remembering past hardships and contemplating how history can inform and affect future happiness, the holiday also has a festive side, when families and communities may rejoice in the prospect of health, prosperity and good luck in the coming year.

Stamp design

The stamp features a digital illustration of a father holding his young daughter, the two of them smiling at each other while standing against a white background. He wears a green, yellow and white dashiki, with short sleeves in a dark pink print, plus a kufi hat in the same colors and a yellow wristwatch. She wears a short-sleeved dress of the same pink print, with a pink flower in her hair, and holds a zawadi, or gift, wrapped in white paper with green accents and a yellow bow. He holds a black, white and yellow kikombe cha umoja, or unity cup.

For the 11th Kwanzaa stamp, art director Antonio Alcalá hoped to feature art that would bring a fresh take on the celebration. He chose Cannaday Chapman for the job, having followed the artist's work for many years and admiring its distinctive spirit.

For his part, Chapman decided to focus on the family aspect of Kwanzaa, not least because he's a new father to a daughter. He also has fond childhood memories of celebrating the holiday with his family, including lighting the candles and wearing traditional clothing. Because of the small size of a stamp, it made sense to include just two people — and thus we have the first Kwanzaa stamp highlighting a father-daughter pair.

The stamp's color scheme is another first. "I wanted to use colors that felt fresh and unexpected compared to the traditional Kwanzaa palette," Chapman explained. "The lime green, pink and yellow combination is intended to be a vibrant, updated take on the traditional green, red and black."

"My goal for the Kwanzaa stamps is that they honor the celebration and the celebrants and appeal to the general public," Alcalá said.

News about the stamp is being shared on social media using the hashtag **#KwanzaaStamp**.

The Kwanzaa stamp is being issued in panes of 20. As Forever stamps, they will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

Postal products

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through [The Postal Store](#) at usps.com/shopstamps, by calling 844-737-7826, by mail through [USA Philatelic](#) or at Post Office locations nationwide. For officially licensed stamp products, shop the [USPS Officially Licensed Collection on Amazon](#). Additional information on stamps, first-day-of-issue ceremonies and stamp-inspired products can be found at StampsForever.com.

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