



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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KINDRED THOUGHTS BOOKSTORE EXPANDS TO NEW DOWNTOWN BRIDGEPORT LOCATION

BRIDGEPORT, CT – OCTOBER 7, 2026 – The Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District excitedly celebrated the expansion of Kindred Thoughts Bookstore into a new, larger space in the neighborhood this weekend. Kindred Thoughts Bookstore's owners Karin Smith and Derek Tompkins were joined by members of the Downtown Bridgeport and bookstore community to officially open their new doors at 1001 Main Street, Suite 7, Bridgeport, CT 06604.



Proudly located in the historic Arcade Mall in Downtown Bridgeport, Kindred Thoughts Bookstore is an independent bookstore that is 100% Black-owned and 50% woman, and 50% veteran-owned, by Karin Smith and Derek Tompkins. Kindred Thoughts is Bridgeport's only bookstore with an emphasis on African American literature and cultural events, while also supporting the needs and interests across our entire diverse community. Originally launched in October 2020 during the pandemic, Kindred Thoughts started as an online book club with quarterly book discussions that connected literary fans from all over the world. Following the excitement of their online discussions, Kindred Thoughts began to sell books online. In November 2021, they opened their first brick and mortar location in the Bridgeport Innovation Center. After quickly outgrowing that space, in October 2022, they moved into the lovely and historic Arcade Mall, and now have expanded to a second, larger space in the building.



“Bookstores are an important part of a thriving community. Growing up in Bridgeport, I remember Zuri’s Bookstore on Water Street. I remember Rainy Faye Bookstore on Broad Street. They were my inspiration. Åse. So, it was important to me that Bridgeport have a bookstore once again... a place where people could read, discover new worlds, and have a dream of their own,” said Karin Smith, co-owner of Kindred Thoughts Bookstore.

Derek Tompkins, co-owner of Kindred Thoughts said, “Our bookstore has always been about so much more than books. It’s about the people who walk through our doors, the conversations we share, the stories that bring us together, and the community we’ve built along the way. Moving into a larger space gives us the opportunity to welcome even more people, create more moments of connection, and continue growing together as a community. We’re incredibly grateful to everyone who has been part of our journey, and we’re excited to begin this next chapter together.”

“The Bridgeport DSSD is thrilled to that Kindred Thoughts Bookstore is expanding to a new, larger location in Downtown Bridgeport. Karin and Derek have brought such energy and vibrancy to the Arcade Mall with author talks, book clubs, puzzle nights, and more! We are so happy that they will continue to add their special blend of community and connection to the eclectic mix of independent, locally owned shops and restaurants that make our Downtown the unique destination that it is,” said Lauren Coakley Vincent, President and CEO of the Bridgeport DSSD.

Hours are Tuesday to Thursday from 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., closed Sunday and Monday, at 1001 Main Street, Suite 7, Bridgeport, CT 06604.

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About Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District

The Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) serves the vibrant and diverse businesses within the 30 blocks in of our heart-shaped neighborhood. Our role at the Bridgeport DSSD is to support the needs of growing businesses in the district, from keeping the Downtown clean and friendly, connecting them to city resources to offering free marketing and advertising, and everything in between. Throughout the year we deliver sanitation services, our friendly team of Ambassadors keep the district clean and safe, we promote the district through the dynamic Colorful Bridgeport campaign, and produce community events. Contact Lauren Coakley Vincent at lauren.dssd@colorfulbridgeport.com or (203) 908-3622 and learn more at colorfulbridgeport.com.



About Kindred Thoughts Bookstore

Kindred Thoughts Bookstore is an independent bookstore that is 100% Black-owned and 50% woman, and 50% veteran-owned proudly located in Downtown Bridgeport's historic Arcade Mall. Kindred Thoughts Bookstore is Bridgeport's only bookstore with an emphasis on African American literature and cultural events, while also supporting the needs and interests across our entire diverse community. Contact Karin and Derek at books@kindredthoughts.shop or (475) 282-9050 and learn more at kindredthoughts.shop.