

HAPPY ZION
New Year 2022

THE STAR OF ZION

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THE FREEDOM CHURCH: A MOVEMENT EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Strengthening our Fellowship, Serving our Flock, & Sharing our Faith

It is without question that our churches, our congregations, are experiencing a decline in membership, a decline in revenue, a decline in committed disciples, and a decline in our mission and our ministry. The worst thing we can do is to act as if everything is fine and continue to do what we have always done. At this point, it is difficult to determine how we arrived in such a state. Nonetheless, the church is unhealthy, and it is imperative that we intentionally employ the necessary efforts to Strengthen Our Fellowships.


Continues on Pg. 2

ZION



THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church





Official Voice of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

The Star of Zion is an award-winning newspaper and journalistic media organization, published by The A.M.E. Zion Church as its official organ since 1876.

Being guided by the core values of truth, faith, and love, the Star seeks to raise the consciousness of readers with news that is current, relevant, and dependable.




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★ The Star of Zion ★

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«The LORD himself watches over you!
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Psalms 121:5

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Is it possible that the church (the fellowship of believers) has experienced some kind of malady which has caused the church to appear to be paralyzed? The mission and the ministry of the church are still clear, but it seems difficult for many congregations to perform. Most of the efforts we make to fulfill the mission, to build the kingdom or to finance the various ministries are impeded with statements that say, "We are not able." Such statements are made by people who have experienced some kind of paralysis or have been diagnosed with severe arthritis. If we continue to proclaim that we are unable to perform the mission and ministry for which we have been called to do, we will continue to decline; and eventually as a people of faith, have a faith that is without works. Of course, the scriptures tell us that such a faith is dead.

When most people experience a disabling condition such as paralysis or a heart attack, the first thing that is done to save them is to stabilize their condition. Efforts are made to discover the cause of the paralysis or the heart attack. The patient is informed of their condition and are treated for the malady immediately. The proper medication and therapy are scheduled to restore them to better health. Normally the patient is informed that they will have to change their diets and are encouraged to engage in certain new exercises. Everything that is done to restore the health of the patient is an intentional act. If we are to Strengthen Our Fellowships, our efforts in teaching, preaching and ministry must be intentional and not haphazardly done. We must help people understand that as the church of God, we have been chosen to connect to God. What we do is not about us. It is about a community of believers, a household of faith, a fellowship of believers moving together with God - changing people, changing places, changing conditions and circumstances for the good of the kingdom. Our efforts to stabilize our fellowships must be directed to the development of our faith in the God that has brought us through all of the difficulties of this life. No church, no congregation, no ministry can exist without faith in the God that has and will sustain us. As we seek to Strengthen Our Fellowship as leaders, pastors, preachers, and teachers, we must commit ourselves to a faith that will challenge our congregations to trust God and each other, review our practices, renew our approach to ministry and restore our commitment to win souls for Christ.

Board of Bishops

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Inc.



PART 1: THE FOUNDATIONS OF FELLOWSHIP: JANUARY 2022

FELLOWSHIP AND THE EXPERIENCE OF PENTECOST

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.” Acts 2:1-4 (NRSV)

Photo from [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Introduction

There can be no discussion of the fellowship of the church without first having a discussion of Pentecost. It is unfortunate that most churches do not make more of the celebration of Pentecost since it is so vital in the history and life of the church. In this lesson, we will retell the story of Pentecost and explore its formation of the church as we know it.

The Promise of Pentecost

The day of Pentecost happened sometime after Jesus' ascension to heaven. The church as we know it did not yet exist. There were a collective of believers in Jerusalem and throughout the surrounding areas who were made up of the apostles, other disciples, and the people who had experienced Jesus' teachings, signs, and wonders. Although Jesus had become quite popular due to the miracles he performed and how he taught with authority, some of these same people went from crying “Hosanna, in the highest!” as he entered Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) to crying “Crucify Him!” just days later (Good Friday). But after his resurrection what would happen? What else was there to do?

The scripture says that Jesus showed himself to his disciples and true followers during the time between his resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:3). More importantly, during that time, he spoke again about the coming of the Holy Spirit, promising that they would be baptized by the Spirit in a short while (Acts 1:5). Even more, this coming was “a promise of the Father” that they should wait for (Acts 1:4). All of this really set the stage for the coming of the Spirit. It is important to note, though, that

Pentecost does not represent the creation or birth of the Spirit. That would violate our beliefs about the Trinity and a host of other theological matters. Moreover, the scriptures (both Old Testament and the Gospels) speak to the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit long before the moment of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit has always been at work within people in the world. Pentecost is the moment when God's Spirit finally comes *to birth and activates the church* to go forth and fulfill the mission of God. It is the birth of the church and the beginning of our fellowship. Before the believers could do anything or figure out how to move forward after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, they needed the power of the Spirit!

The Purpose and Power of Pentecost

They were all together, on one accord, waiting patiently for God's promise of the gift of the Spirit. Then without notice, the Holy Spirit breaks into their space and manifests in an undeniable, unexpected, and life-changing way. This moment, this arrival of the Spirit initiates a powerful movement where the followers of Christ transform into a body, a movement, a fellowship. They were not just several people who sympathized with Jesus or even individually believed he was the Son of God, they were now endowed with God's Spirit and empowered to fulfill the mission of God on Earth. They were now the church, a new being that had both purpose *and* power. Their speaking in foreign tongues was the outward manifestation and confirmation that God had made this happen because it was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the prophet

Joel (Acts 2:14-21).

Now that the church had been baptized by the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised (Acts 1:5), they were ready and prepared to take Jesus' message all around Jerusalem and ultimately around the world. They were a small group but began to grow by leaps and bounds as they preached, taught, and performed miracles and signs. Things had certainly changed. They were no longer just a group of random people following Jesus during their time in the incubator - time of learning, growing, and coming to believe. Seeing Jesus crucified, buried, and resurrected and then ascend to heaven, it was finally time for them to pick up the mantle and take his message to the ends of the Earth. And the fact that they were all together was symbolic of their being a unit, a body, a fellowship. Nothing happened until they were altogether and on one accord.

Pentecost in the Present

The Church of today has so much to gain from studying the Acts Chapter 2 Church and Pentecost. Just like them, we have stood through some very challenging and traumatic times, but we have also overcome a lot just as they did. We have seen the incredible power of God at work amongst us, and there is still an overwhelming amount of work for us ahead. The most important thing we have in common with the Acts Chapter 2 Church is we have received God's Spirit as well, and we have been empowered through the Spirit to transform the world.

This begs the question, what does carrying out God's mission on Earth look like today?

Continues on Pg. 10

Forgiveness:

Prerequisite for a New Beginning – A Sermon

Reverend Leona Nicholas Welch
Regional Director of S.A.G.E.
(Seniors Advancing God's Excellence)

– NIV Scripture Reference

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34).

Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord and He will

have mercy on them and to our God, for He Will freely pardon them (Isaiah 55:7).

You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to You (Isaiah 86:5).

Who is God like You...You do not stay angry forever (Micah 7: 18-19).

God just cannot help Himself. His love for us, and His mercy toward us won't allow Him to hold our sins against us, Dear People of God. His Word tells us again and again, that we worship a FORGIVING GOD. For He so love the world that He gave His Son to die for our sins, so that we would have eternal life with Him.

God's Forgiveness asks no questions, makes no judgements, demands no conditions; no purchases to be made. He, Himself, is the price. He not only paid the cost for our salvation; He became the cost: HIS LIFE FOR OUR LIFE. God's Forgiveness is absolute. He simply wants us to repent, to come to Him - freely.

Jesus made no grandiose announcements. He made no boast about how He forgave us. Jesus did not come back after He rose from the dead,

sending Instagrams and tweets, saying HEY, LOOK AT ME! I'M BACK. REMEMBER WHAT I DID. I DIED FOR ALL YALL – ME- JESUS. YALL OWE ME. Jesus did not boast of being great, even though He is the Greatest. He only pleaded from the cross that Friday before: *Father forgive them.* Jesus did not lord it over us, though He is Our Lord, and has the absolute right to

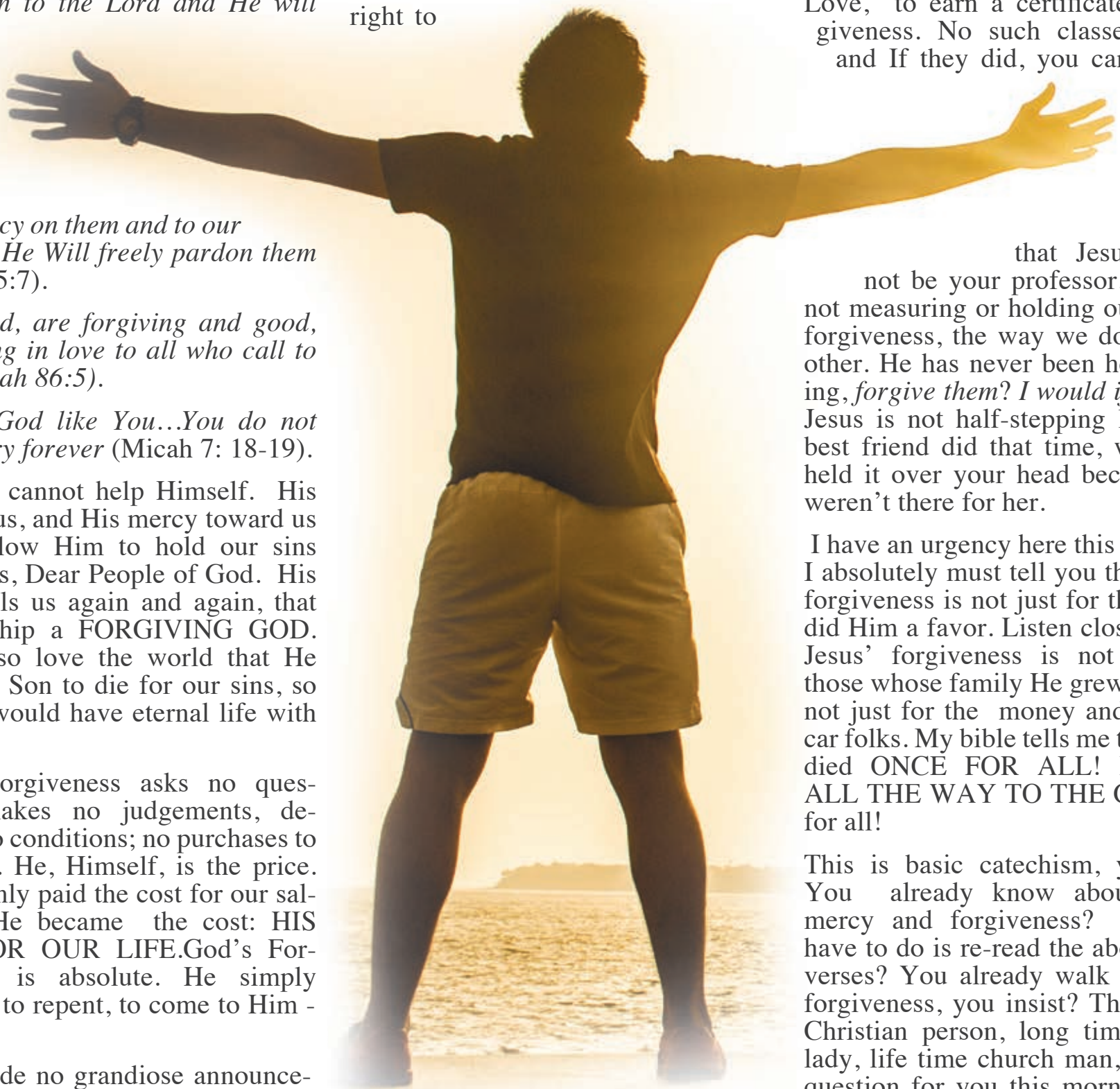
hold anything He wants over our heads. The only thing that Jesus holds over us is His Love.

Dear People of God, I met you in this virtual sanctuary this morning, to tell you that Jesus has no drawbacks, no restrictions, no limitations, no litmus tests, no pop quizzes to pass Salvation 101 or Advanced Abundant Life, In the University of Christ Love, to earn a certificate in Forgiveness. No such classes exists, and If they did, you can believe

that Jesus would not be your professor. Jesus is not measuring or holding out on His forgiveness, the way we do one another. He has never been heard saying, *forgive them? I would if I could.* Jesus is not half-stepping like your best friend did that time, when she held it over your head because you weren't there for her.

I have an urgency here this morning. I absolutely must tell you that Jesus' forgiveness is not just for those who did Him a favor. Listen closely now. Jesus' forgiveness is not just for those whose family He grew up with, not just for the money and big fine car folks. My bible tells me that Jesus died ONCE FOR ALL! He went ALL THE WAY TO THE CROSS – for all!

This is basic catechism, you say? You already know about God's mercy and forgiveness? All you have to do is re-read the above bible verses? You already walk in God's forgiveness, you insist? Then good Christian person, long time church lady, life time church man, I have a question for you this morning. And the truth is, I must ask myself the



A.M.E. Zion member makes history as first Black woman elected to Kannapolis City Council

KANNAPOLIS — A new Kannapolis City Council member made history Monday night as the first female African-American to be sworn onto the board.

Jeanne Dixon had her extended family standing around her as a friend and fellow member of Price Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church swore her in.

Dixon has been a resident of Kannapolis for 48 years and has a long career in public service. After graduating from Barber-Scotia College with a degree in organizational management, she started her career as an eligibility specialist in the Cabarrus County Department of Social Services. She later served as a child support enforcement agent and a child support program manager. When she retired, she was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

Her last position was with the State of North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts as Guardian Ad Litem District Administrator for Cabarrus and Rowan counties.

She has most recently served on the Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, the Board of Cabarrus Partnership for Children and on the Cabarrus NAACP. She previously served on the boards of Cooperative Christian Ministry, Community Free Clinic and CVAN. She also served on the Kannapolis on the Planning and Zoning Board.

During Council comments, long-time Council

member Doug Wilson welcomed Dixon to the board.

The council also took a moment Monday night to thank former Council member Van Rowell for his four-year service on council.

Mayor Darrell Hinnant (far right) thanked former council member Van Rowell (left of Hinnant) for his service on council. Victoria Young, Independent Tribune

Rowell is a graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and a U.S. Army veteran. He is a registered professional engineer in three states — North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

He spent 22 years working in waste water utility management as a corporate engineer before becoming engineering director at the Water & Sewer Authority of Cabarrus County. He has also owned and run several small businesses.

While thanking Rowell for his service, Mayor Darrell Hinnant noted that Rowell has served on the city council during a time of major change for the city. It has under gone a downtown



revitalization project, a West Avenue Street scape project and seen the Atrium Ball Park go up.

"I was just reminded," the mayor said, "that Van was sitting there many times around that table making decisions about whether we were going to chose that color of seat for the ball park or change events along the way to help make decisions to save money and to make this a better place for all of us. So for you my friend, thank you very much for your dedication to this city council and this community."

Hinnant, Wilson and Council member Dianne Berry were also sworn in during the meeting.

Bishop Proctor Makes Historic Appointment

Asbury Park, New Jersey—Bishop Dennis V. Proctor appointed The Rev. Dr. Laticia Hill Godette to serve as the first woman Presiding Elder of the Camden District and the first woman Presiding Elder to serve in the New Jersey Annual Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Zion Church. This is not the first time Dr. Godette has made history in the A.M.E. Zion Church. In 2016, Dr. Godette became the first woman to ever Pastor a "first-church" in the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District when Bishop W. Darin Moore appointed Dr. Godette as the Pastor of York Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Greenville, North Carolina. Bishop Proctor made this historic appointment on November 13, during the New Jersey Annual Conference's 1st and 2nd Combined Check-up meeting which was held today at 10 A.M. at St. Stephen A.M.E. Zion Church. The Pastors of the Camden District and the Presiding Elders joined Bishop Proctor in the sanctuary while the other members of the conference participated virtually via Zoom.

Bishop Proctor introduced Dr. Laticia Hill Godette as follows:

Dr. Godette is married to Bro. Dante Godette and they have been together for 28 years. They have three beautiful daughters. Adina is a licensed therapist in Charlotte, NC; Faith just turned sweet 16; Jordan Christina is

13 and all of them are straight-A student athletes playing basketball and volleyball. The amazing thing is Dr. Godette was born right here in Asbury Park, New Jersey. As a matter of fact, she lived in the house right down the street...423 Prospect Avenue. Her father lives here. Her 83-year-old grandmother lives here. Her cousin, Rev. Janet Jones is the Pastor of Shrewsbury Avenue. Her other cousin, Pastor Nicolle Harris, grew up in Asbury Park. Dr. Godette is a product of New Jersey coming back home to serve New Jersey.

Dr. Godette is a true evangelist and specializes in winning souls for Jesus. She prays and preaches on her Prayer line every day at 7 A.M. for the last 5 years. Dr. Godette is spirit-led and

educated. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She earned a Juris Doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She went to our very own Hood Theological Seminary, graduated Summa Cum Laude and earned a Master of Divinity. She also teaches at Hood as an Adjunct Instructor.

Dr. Godette is an entrepreneur and Founder of her own Consulting Group. One of our very own churches, People's A.M.E. Zion Church, utilized her grant writing services and was awarded two grants totaling \$400,000. Dr. Godette is a productive and progressive business leader. She is shattering glass ceilings in corporate America as the CEO of Ottendorf Laboratories. She believes to whom much is given, much is required. They donated over \$200,000 to Livingstone College. Also, her company provided jobs and opportunities to historically marginalized communities.

She is a visionary leader. She wrote a grant to help struggling churches all over the country. This year, during a pandemic, her nonprofit gave away Ministry Grants totaling \$500,000. She liquidated mortgages for 3 churches in the Eastern North



A.M.E. Zion Elder to Lead Project Hospitality in Service to the Most Marginalized



Longtime community leader and A.M.E. Zion Church Elder, Rev. Janet Jones, will helm the Board of Directors of Project Hospitality - Staten Island, NY's oldest and largest social safety net

November 10, 2021

Staten Island, NY – Rev. Janet H. Jones, an ordained Elder in the A.M.E. Zion Church and a cutting-edge liberation theologian, was sworn in October 20th as the first African American Chair of the Board of Directors of Project Hospitality, Staten Island's oldest and largest social safety net. The impoverished communities Project Hospitality serves are overwhelming communities of color on the borough's North Shore.

For nearly two decades, Pastor Jones has been a community pillar on Staten Island, a borough of New York City with nearly 500,000 residents. For 16 years, she led the Rossville A.M.E. Zion Church in the historic community of Sandy Ground, on the South Shore of Staten Island. She is now the pastor of the historic

Shrewsbury Avenue AME Zion Church in Red Bank, NJ. She was ordained an Elder in the A.M.E. Zion Church in 2005.

She earned a Master of Divinity Degree from Drew Theological School in 2003, where she served as president of the Black Ministerial Caucus. She served a long tenure on the Staten Island Council of Churches leadership.

Pastor Jones's decade-long relationship with Project Hospitality speaks to her abiding faith. A member of the Board of Directors since 2011, she has served as Chair of Human Resources since 2014 and Board First Vice Chair since 2018.

Project Hospitality started in 1982 as a volunteer interfaith effort to provide food and shelter to the homeless camped out in the Ferry Terminal. The agency has since grown into an invaluable source of support for Staten Islanders experiencing many forms of challenge.

Every year, more than 40,000 individuals and families are offered vital support from Project Hospitality, through a continuum of compassionate care that starts with street outreach, shelter, and emergency nutrition, and extends to include clinical, mental-health and substance-use services, transitional and permanent supportive housing, legal assistance, youth programs, geriatric care, domestic violence interventions and more.

In 2020, Project Hospitality served four million meals to the hungry, many of whom had lost

work due to COVID-19. The agency of 400 staff members and its network of hundreds of volunteers provided tens of thousands of vaccines and COVID tests during the peak of the pandemic and continues its COVID relief today.

Pastor Jones's devotion to the most disenfranchised communities has wide-reaching impact, even beyond her contributions to the life-saving work of Project Hospitality: She is a key leader in the Staten Island Housing Dignity Coalition of Staten Island, and has long advocated for housing for impoverished people, many of whom have full-time jobs but are at risk of homelessness due to insufficient income. Her grassroots organizing work led to the commitment of very low-income housing to be built in a recently announced 350-unit high rise building. She repeatedly testified to the need for very low-income affordable housing in several public meetings and City Council hearings.

She has traveled internationally to share her clear-eyed expertise on compassionate, and community-building leadership. She has lent her unique voice and faith-driven perspective to conferences in West Africa, China, South America, and the Caribbean.

She taught for many years at the Arthur Kill Correctional Facility with the Rising Hope Program, which provided inmates the opportunity to earn a Certificate of Ministry, the equivalent of one year of college credit. She is ac-

tive in ecumenical and interfaith work both on and off Staten Island.

Pastor Jones has preached and lectured at retreats, workshops on discipleship and leadership, at the local and state levels in ecumenical gatherings and at the district, conference, and international levels of the AME Zion Church. Pastor Jones served as Administrative Dean of the AME Zion Preachers' Institute and continues to serve as an Instructor of Worship and Liberation Theology.

Pastor Jones is the recipient of numerous awards from organizations across the tri-state area in recognition of her outstanding contributions. In 2015, Project Hospitality honored her for her work to promote social justice with the Rev. Roland Ratmeyer Founders Award. In 2019, she received the Msgr James Dorney Memorial Award for Outstanding Ecumenical Leadership and Service from the Staten Island Council of Churches. Rev. Jones was the first Protestant clergyperson to receive that prestigious award, the borough's highest ecumenical honor. Also that year, Rev. Jones has also received the William Morris Award for Housing from the NAACP – Staten Island Branch. She received the Interfaith Leadership Award from the Building Bridges Coalition of Staten Island in 2018.

She is the mother of Morgana Jones Dennis of Atlanta, Georgia and Eric Jones of Neptune, NJ. She has five grandchildren.

Rev. Dr. Charlrean Mapson Appointed by Wilmington City Council to Advisory Board



Congratulations to Rev. Dr. Charlrean Mapson, appointed by the

City of Wilmington and New Hanover County to serve on the Community Relations Advisory Committee. Dr. Mapson will serve the joint committee as their faith representative. The committee was organized in October 2016 for the purpose of addressing community issues involving prejudice or discrimination on the bases of race, national origin, creed or religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or medical condition. The Committee in-

forms the appointing authorities and other organizations of their findings; and makes recommendations, in an advisory capacity, to the appointing authorities and other organizations, as necessary. This is Dr. Mapson's third community related appointment this year, as she was recently chosen by Governor Roy Cooper to serve on the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities and earlier this year, selected as a member of New Hanover County

Smart Start Board of Directors.

Dr. Mapson is former General Youth Secretary of the Women's Home & Overseas Missionary Society (2003-11), and current pastor of Price Cathedral Church in Wilmington, North Carolina. She looks forward to serving as an advocate for those in the city of Wilmington and New Hanover County. We offer our prayers and support to Dr. Mapson in all her endeavors.

The Salisbury District's Service of Lessons and Carols



The Sensational Salisbury District hosted its annual Service of Lessons and Carols on Saturday, December 11, 2021 at Marable Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Kannapolis, North Carolina. Under the leadership of Presiding Elder, Rev. Dr. Grant Harrison, Jr., the seventeen churches united and celebrated, implementing an intergenerational program framed in reverence.

Worship leader Rev. Bobbie Samuels opened with greetings while organist Kaye Wright Norman led the congregation in the opening hymn, "O Come, All Ye Faithful." The rhythmic sequence of programming included a scripture lesson presented by children and youth of the Salisbury District, followed with a Christmas Carol sung by congregants; hence the program title, Lessons and Carols.

The 1st and 2nd Lessons included youth from New Hope. Bethany Brown read Lesson One, Genesis 3:8-15, and Seven-Hazel Boone followed with the 2nd Lesson, Genesis 22: 1-8a. Zoe Coletrane of Cedar Grove read the 3rd Lesson, Isaiah 9:2; 6-7, and Selena Royce shared



the 4th Lesson, Micah 5: 2-4. Roy Lee Goodlett, III shared the 5th Lesson, Luke 1:18-35; 38 whereas both Selena and Roy are from New Hope. Miller's Chapel's Nala Lawson read the 6th Lesson, Matthew 1: 18-23, Makala Shaw of Sandy Ridge shared the 7th Lesson, Luke 2:8-20, ReAnna Kelly of Moore's Chapel provided the 8th Lesson Matthew 2:1-11, and the final lesson, Nine – was read by Jaylin McCullough of Ardis Chapel. As a carol followed each lesson rendered; the congregation cheerfully and collectively sang; "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus," "O Come, O Come Immanuel," "There's a Song in the Air," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Silent Night, Holy Night," "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice," and "We Three Kings of Orient Are."

The Bidding Prayer and Blessing was delivered by Rev. David Smalls followed by "What Child Is This?" The Homily, proclaimed by Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Grant Harrison, Jr., provided spiritual insight for everyday living with the text, Isaiah 9: 1-7 and topic, "Who Do



You Call the Wonderful Counselor?"

The Invitation to Christian Discipleship was followed with "Jesus the Light of the World," as Christal McRae, director of the Christian Education Department for the Salisbury District presented the outreach project. She addressed the atrocities of the most recent happenings in schools, and charged churches to volunteer and make time for youth in the public school system. She stated, "The youth need to see the light of Jesus in our lives . . . They need you." The special mission projects included donations of school supplies for Rowan County's Communities in Schools.

Lastly, the special offering that exceeded the donation goal, was followed with a response, "All Things Come of Thee, O Lord," and the Collect. Presiding Elder Harrison administered the Benediction after the recessional "Joy to the World." Organist Kaye Wright Norman played the postlude, "Go Tell It On the Mountain," while worshippers exited in fellowship.

Scott A.M.E. Zion Christmas Cantata Benefit Concert



On Friday, December 10, 2021, the Scott African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church held its Christmas Cantata Benefit Concert at the St. Paul UAME Church in Wilmington, Delaware. Truly, it was a "Christmas to Remember" as the Rev. Dr. R.J. Chandler Sr. and friends celebrated the coming of the Lord through song, dance and comedy. Friends included Ms. Ashia Bello, Mrs. Julelah Wallace, Rev. Kenderlyn Turner, Ms. Janelle Thomas, Mr. Ty Jamison and the Gospel Music Workshop of America Delaware Chapter. Ms. Julia Nelson, Chair of the event as well as the Board of Trustees was the visionary genius who encouraged the membership to work together as a team to realize the dream.

The 1st of its kind, the Star of Zion produced the event in a "Live" audience format. This was accompanied by Houser Audio, a local audio and recording company in Pennsylvania that has worked with George Clinton, Gospel Reach Radio, and Gospel artists across the county. Participants from the community gave generously toward this effort. Then, the Star of Zion shared the event on social media. By God's grace the event raised over \$10,000 that is earmarked for the roof re-



placement at Scott A.M.E. Zion Church.

Over the years, the church building began deteriorating to the point that a new roof, interior repairs, 2 boilers (\$37,000ea.), bathroom repairs, and cosmetic work and other renovations are desperately needed. Through Dr. R.J. Chandler's pastoral administration and leadership, the members and friends of Scott have labored and completed three of the four roofs for approximately \$62,000. Entire renovations will cost well over \$650,000.

The historic Scott A.M.E. Zion Church located in the St. Mary's District at 7th and Spruce continues to be a beacon of light to the community. In 2017, the Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District appointed Dr. R.J. Chandler Sr. as pastor.

In 2018, Dr. Chandler named the chapel in honor of the late Rev. Dr. L.A. Lawson Sr. which was dedicated by Bishop W. Darin Moore. This historical moment began Scott's journey in repairs to the edifice.

The congregation embraced the motto of Bishop Moore who said, "It's our OUTREACH that



validates our UPREACH!" As such, the membership of Scott have initiated community prayer rallies, "Stop the Violence Marches", Feed the Homeless projects, and partnered with the Department of Health of Delaware to provide COVID-19 testing, vaccinations and AIDS testing.

By God's grace, Scott is determined to raise \$650,000 to renovate and use their 18,000 square foot building for services that meet the needs of our community. Some of these services are, but not limited to the following: Community Soup kitchen, after school program, Daycare, alcoholic anonymous, fitness sessions and wellness, tutoring, financial literacy courses, educational outreach, community food pantry and seminary courses.

If you are able to provide any assistance, it would be greatly appreciated. The church address is: Scott A.M.E. Zion Church/c/o Rev. Dr. R. J. Chandler, 629 E. 7th Street, Wilmington, DE 19801. (However, due to the condition of the church, we are using P.O. Box 9241, Wilm., DE 19809.) If additional information is needed, Rev. Chandler can be reached at 302/359-3860

The 152nd Session of the West TN & MS Annual Conference Ballooned to New Heights

For the second year, Covid-19 did not put a damper in our Annual conference. As member of this great conference, it was a bittersweet moment. We were reminded of the five year with Bishop and Mrs. Michael Frencher and the legacy they left, but God had a plan and we were overly excited to welcome our new Episcopal leaders, Bishop Eric Leake and Missionary Supervisor Jean McMurray Leake. By the time this great conference concluded on November 13, 2021, we had named our new Episcopal leaders as the “Dynamic Duo”.

The business portion opened with organizing the 152nd Session of the West TN and MS Annual Conference. The Opening organization was followed by the 152 Conference opened with Rev. Dr. Vernon G. Robinson, Presiding Elder of the Batesville District. He shared with us a message entitled, “Our Blueprint for Success” from Acts 2:36-47. The three points he eloquently shared that applied to our devotion to God, “doctrine, fellowship, and the working of grace. After this much need message, the introduction of our 107th Bishop in the line of succession of our Beloved Zion was done by Rev. Dr. Vernon Robinson. Bishop Leake’s message was entitled “A Movement of Power by the Holy Spirit, Serving our Flock”. He provides each of us with a receipt for serving other through Health, Evangelism, and Prayer. He assured us once more that “people don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care”. He further indicated that we must have a desire to rescue the perishing and that our class leader’s system is a great way to help our pastors. We had an abundance of guest from several other conference and because we are unable to capture everyone who join us by zoom, we want to acknowledge our general officers, Ava Swinton, Midwestern Regional President of ACE, Cynthia Revels-Young, General Secretary of Buds, and South Delta Administrative Assistant, Rev. Dr. Floyd Chambers. The Annual conferences had personnel to visit us from Michigan, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Mississippi, North Carolina, and Missouri conferences. We were so pleased to have all of our guest throughout the week.

We then had the opportunity to hear wonderful reports from our Presiding Elders, Dr. Vernon Robinson of the Batesville District and Rev. Nehemiah Martin of the Memphis-Pope District and the Host of the 152nd West TN & MS Annual Conference. We then heard the Pastors and Delegate reports. During Christian Education Day worship, Rev. Latorria Moore, Conference Director of CED gave the highlights of the year. Mrs. Ava Swinton gave accolades of her stewardship. The worship services speaker was Rev. Nehemiah Martin. The topic of his message was “It’s Just a Test” and using Genesis Chapter 17 as the background scriptures. He indicated that a test is the opportunity for us to prove to God and for God to prove to us. He further indicated that God will go after anything that that we trust more that HIM until we place it on the alter, and



Bishop Eric Leake and Missionary Supervisor Jean Leake



lastly, whatever you don’t turn into praise will turn into pride.

The second day of the annual conference begin just as the first day did with intercessory prayer, lead by the Conference Prayer Ministry President, Rev. Kimberly Nickles. The Missionary Convocation begin with our Missionary Supervisor’s greeting. The reports of the District President were present by the Memphis-Pope President, Gwyndolynn Pauley and Batesville District President, Brenda Ingram. Many services and activities were shared by both presidents. Missionary Supervisor Leake gave an arousing speak based on Mark 5:19 about “called to service and assigned to service, beginning the work at home”. She shared with us that to begin the mission we must set the tone of our own home and family in order; prepare for home mission through mind, body and soul; and promote growth in understanding and knowledge. She indicated that something we have to have a “come to Jesus” meeting and to do a security check. We were provided a presentation on Sexual Harassment and especially in the Church by Ms. Marquita Thurman, Licensed Social Worker. The presentation was very informative and one of the suggestions was for each church to create a point of contact for reporting incidents of sexual harassment. Bishop Leake shared with us the AME Zion protocol for reporting harassment. After the continuation of the conference business and committee reports, the delegates to the 51 General Conference, Ms. Tekela Pope, Ms. Dorothy King and Rev. Nehemiah Martin gave a brief overview. Each shared that the voting for Bishops as the most inspiring event. While we had multiple guest during this session, we heard greeting from Rev. Shenell Wilson, Rev. Dr. Andre Smote, Rev. Anita Morgan and Dr. Kathi McNeil. The memorial message was given by Rev. James M. Whitaker from Troy, NC ,who transferred to West TN & MS as the new pastor of Johnson Chapel AME Zion Church. Rev. Whitaker’s topic was “Lord Remember Me” using the scripture Luke 23:39-43. He indicated that we needed to ask God to remember us in our sin, our deliverance, and in our praise. We completed the business of the Annual conference. Rev. D. Derrick T. Simmons, Daniel Chapel AME Zion Church, Phoenix, IL presented the School of the Prophets on Evangelism and Church Growth. He indicated that Covid-19 allow a pandemic to hep us reflect o where we are going and what we are doing. He further advises that we cannot depend on a mode of church that presents a large gathering production, Pastors need to be reformed, we must seek out new possibilities to serve the people, we must focus on discipling, developing, and deploying and lastly, focus on quality and not quantity.

Missionary night guest speaker was Rev. Yolanda Lowe, from the Louisiana Conference. Her topic was Transformative Services will Transform the Flock”, using I Samuel 12:23. She indicated that in this passage of scripture, Jesus SAW her, Je-

Continues on Next page

FAITH PRODUCES A NEW ROOF!

Nehemiah 2:17-18 (KJV) states “Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me: as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for *this* good *work*.”

Pastor Xavier E. Hunter and the members of the 5th Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church in Troy, New York demonstrated what can be accomplished when a spiritual leader and a committed fellowship work together. Pastor Hunter received his



appointment from Bishop Dennis V. Proctor to the Troy, New York church in mid-January 2021. He was met with the responsibility of having to replace the roof of the church edifice. The roof was in a dire state of disrepair and was beyond patching. Rev. Hunter immediately made the new roof replacement a priority for the membership.

He announced a capital campaign fund drive and demonstrated leadership as one who steps out on faith! He took the lead and donated the first \$1,000. The Pastor’s example of committed leadership became contagious! The Trustees and Stewards stepped forward with their donations. The membership followed Pastor Hunter’s leader-

ship honoring the pledges that they made. Donations were also made by former members and friends of 5th Avenue. By the Grace of God, we were blessed to have reached the amount of \$34,000 needed to cover the full roof replacement. Work began the last week of August, a mere 7 months after Pastor Hunter was appointed! The spiritual leadership of Pastor Xavier Hunter and the committed fellowship of the membership showed what faith and commitment can achieve as we were thankful to receive God’s blessing! When the church reopens, we pray God’s blessings will continue to rain down in the sanctuary as we no longer have to worry about Mother Nature’s rain. To God Be The Glory! Amen.

Meet the new St. Croix District Presiding Elder

The Rev. Dr. Maurice Alexander Harden is a native of Windsor, Connecticut. Born and raised in the A.M.E. Zion Church, he developed his Christian roots at the Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, in Hartford, CT. It was at Metropolitan where Dr. Harden was mentored by his father in the ministry, Bishop Kenneth Monroe. In 2002, he accepted his call into the ministry.

In order to properly prepare and equip himself for ministry he entered into Livingstone College, Salisbury, NC where he graduated with honors. While at Livingstone, he was a student leader, serving in various student groups and organizations. In 2005, he was elected by his peers to serve as the student body President.

After graduating Livingstone Dr. Harden went on to Hood Theological Seminary, Salisbury, NC where he earned the Master of Divinity degree. At the age of 28, he earned the Doctor of Ministry degree from Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C. His project is entitled “Mentoring Ministers In The Local A.M.E. Zion Church.”

Dr. Harden’s Pastoral ministry began under Bishop George W.C. Walker Sr, who assigned him to Cathey Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, (Charlotte, NC), New Hope (East Spencer, NC), and Marable Memorial



(Kannapolis, NC). In 2012, Bishop Kenneth Monroe appointed Dr. Harden to serve New Mt. Olivet (Rock Hill, SC): the flagship church of the South Carolina Conference. In 2016 Bishop Monroe appointed Dr. Harden to serve as Pastor of Rush Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, Raleigh, NC where he currently serves. Dr. Harden is also the Presiding Elder of the St. Croix District, United States Virgin Islands Conference.

Dr. Harden is also a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. He was initiated into the Gamma Mu Chapter (Livingstone College). As a member, he has served as the Chaplain for the Association of North Carolina Alphas, Deputy Area Director and Assistant Area Director.

Dr. Harden has served in various capacities in his community and in the A.M.E. Zion Church which includes: Dean of Conference Studies for the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District, Representative to the Pan- Methodist Commission, Campus Minister for Clinton College, Founding President of My Brothers Keeper-Rock Hill, Member of the Discipline Codification Commission, Statistics and Records Board, and Financial Secretary for the International Ministers and Lay Association of the A.M.E. Zion Church.

Dr. Harden’s greatest joy is being a father to his children.

Annual Conference continuation - from Pg. 8

she LISTENED to her, and she TOOK the WORD to THEM in the city, saying “come and see a man”. She ended her message by telling us we have to do something different.

Pope Chapel AME Zion Church were excited and ready to host the in-person 152nd Session of West TN & MS Annual Conference on Saturday, 11/13/21. All the required safety protocols were in put and adhered to as they anticipated seeing in two years conference members they hadn’t seem. It was like a homecoming! After Bishop

Leake met with the pastor and ministers, the processioned into the sanctuary with vigor and joy! The sermon by Bishop Eric Leake was entitled, “A Movement Empowered by the Holy Spirit”, using the Scripture Acts 2; 12-18. He indicated that a movement empowered by the Holy Spirit is with PEOPLE, with PROPHECY, with POSSIBILITY. He ended his sermon indicting we must have a movement upward and release balloons into the atmosphere of the sanctuary. We were left with a ballooning of the spirit. The closing of the 152nd West TN and MS Annual Conference was the charge to the Evangelist using

II Timothy 4: 1-5; to the Pastors using Mark 6: 331-36; and the Laity by challenging us to Help the pastors. All appoints were given and a new pastoral appointment was given to Rev. Kimberly Nickles to Cotton Plant AME Zion Church, Batesville District.

The “Dynamic Duo” had left their impressable mark on the members of the West TN & MS Annual Conference and we are graceful to God for the 107 Bishop in the Line of Session and the highly spirit-filled Missionary Supervisor of our Beloved African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

NKU Board of Regents Chair André R. Ward to join AGB Council for Student Success



HIGHLAND HEIGHTS, KY- Northern Kentucky University Board of Regents Chair André R. Ward has been selected to serve on the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges' (AGB) Council for Student Success. "Being appointed to the AGB Council for Student Success is an honor that will allow me to bring ideas and perspectives to help NKU refine its continued transformational success as a student-ready, regionally-engaged university," Ward said. "The work that we will do as a Council will better serve students at

NKU and throughout the United States." AGB's Council for Student Success is composed of an elite group of college and university board members, chief executives and select administrators and faculty from a diverse array of AGB member institutions, systems and foundations who have a commitment to advancing student success.

The council helps shape the strategic thinking, priorities, and action of university and college boards and their members to elevate student success outcomes. "Chair André Ward's appointment to the AGB Council for Student Success further validates NKU's growing national reputation as a university that puts student success first," President Ashish Vaidya said. "Through the thought leadership put forth by the Council, NKU will better serve its students as we carry out the three pillars of access, completion and career and community engagement laid out in the Success By Design strategic framework." Success By Design, adopted by Northern

Kentucky University in 2019, serves as a roadmap for NKU to increase access, achieve higher levels of completion, and advance opportunities for career and community engagement for all learners.

The vision is for NKU to be

"The work that we will do as a Council will better serve students at NKU and throughout the United States."

nationally recognized as a student-ready and regionally engaged university that empowers diverse learners for economic and social mobility. Ward has served on the NKU Board of Regents since his initial appointment by Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear in 2013 and reappointed in 2019 by Gov. Matt Bevin. Ward was elected as Chair of the Board of Regents in 2020. André is the President, Chief Culture & Transformation Officer of The KhafreWard Corporation.

To learn more about the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB)

To learn more about NKU's Success By Design strategic framework.

About NKU: Founded in 1968, NKU is an entrepreneurial state university of over 16,000 students served by more than 2,000 faculty and staff on a thriving suburban campus nestled between Highland Heights, Kentucky and bustling downtown Cincinnati.

We are a regionally engaged university committed to empowering our students to have fulfilling careers and meaningful lives.

While we are one of the fastestgrowing universities in Kentucky, our professors still know our students' names.

For more information, visit nku.edu. ###NKU###

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January 2022 - from Pg. 3

We know that we are called to preach and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and make disciples, but what are the complexities and challenges of doing so in contemporary times? More importantly, are we willing to wait for the Spirit to move us into meaningful ministry and action? Certainly, we know the world is hurting and broken and in need of healing, justice, freedom, and salvation.

Practical Applications

1. Host a teaching series on Pentecost that will explain its theological foundations and liturgical applications. The purpose of this is to educate the congregation on the meaning of Pentecost and to get them excited about embracing the power of Pentecost today. Pentecost really is a significant day in the liturgical year, but we don't really attend to it. Celebrating Pentecost can really make a difference in the energy of the people. Studying the book of Acts, while constantly tying its stories back to Pentecost, would be a great way to do this. Be sure that you really explain Easter Season (the 50 days

between Easter and Pentecost) and Pentecost as the culmination of Easter Season.

2. Celebrate Pentecost more festively, especially in worship! It is essentially the church's birthday, so make it a big deal! Shape a liturgy for Pentecost Sunday that really allows people to praise God for the gift of the Spirit and challenges and energizes them to really be the church in the world. Be as creative and innovative in that worship experience as you can! The purpose is to help the people believe that they can really do amazing things in the community as empowered by the Spirit, just like the early church did. Since Pentecost is the culmination of the Easter Season (Eastertide) it might be good to fully celebrate the season and slowly build toward Pentecost. Sermons can follow the texts of Easter Season and Pentecost accordingly.
3. Make time leading up to Pentecost Sunday for the church to go through an exercise of praying for the vision of the new church year. This would be symbolic of the period of time the early church waited on the

arrival of the Spirit. This would be a period of discernment, waiting for clarity from God on how to approach ministry and what to do practically that year. Again, creativity here is encouraged. Make it intergenerational.

4. Brainstorm other creative ways to experience Pentecost. Whatever you do, get the people excited about it. An experience of Pentecost has so much potential to motivate us in new and refreshing ways.

Closing Prayer

Powerful God,

Thank you for choosing your church to go forth in the world and share the good news of Jesus Christ. And thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit to lead and guide us in that mission. Remove our fears and commitment to our comforts so that we may go boldly into our communities to share your message of peace, love, forgiveness, hope, justice, and salvation. Send your Pentecost on us today; may we be forever moved and empowered by your Spirit. Amen.

Livingstone College to host in-person winter graduation Friday under safety protocols



“Adhering to our COVID-19 protocols have proven effective during this academic semester,” said Dr. Anthony Davis, Livingstone’s COVID-19 Task Force chairman, senior vice president and chief operating officer. “We are attempting to manage our way through a global pandemic, which has been responsible for 260 million cases

SALISBURY – Livingstone College will hold an in-person winter Conferral of Degrees on Friday at 10 a.m. in Varick Auditorium, featuring retired District Court Judge Edward A. “Ed” Pone as guest speaker.

The ceremony, which was held virtually last year due to the global pandemic, will be conducted under COVID-19 safety protocols. All guests must show proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 diagnostic PCR test within 72 hours of the program to attend.

Proper mask wearing – covering the nose and mouth – will also be mandatory during the duration of the program.

All guests must have a general entry ticket to attend. Each graduate will be given eight tickets.

and 5.2 million deaths. Every protocol must be followed and executed fully to ensure the health and safety of the entire campus community, our graduates and their families as we head into the holiday season.”

Pone, a lifetime resident of Cumberland County, will address the graduating seniors. In February 1996, he was appointed as a District Court Judge for the 12th Judicial District by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., and was elected by the citizens of Cumberland County in 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016 and most recently in November 2020.

In February 2020, he was appointed as the Chief District Court Judge for Cumberland County by then Chief Justice Cheri Beasley.

Pone retired from the bench after 25 years of doing what he calls, “the people’s business” on March 31, 2021.

He graduated with honors from South View High School in 1975 and from North Carolina Central University in 1979, also with high honors. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Law and graduated in 1982.

During his tenure, he was a member of the North Carolina Bar Association; the Cumberland County Bar Association; the North Carolina Association of District Court Judges; a certified Juvenile Court Judge; a Family Court Judge; the presiding judge for Cumberland County’s Family Drug Treatment Court; the coordinating judge for the Cumberland County Misdemeanor Diversion Program, which was designed to keep 16- and 17-year old first offenders out of the criminal justice system; and the Judicial Fellow for Cumberland County Reclaiming Futures, an initiative helping youth with substance abuse issues.

“We are happy to accommodate our graduating seniors with an in-person ceremony

this year,” said Livingstone President Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins, Sr. “This is a celebratory time not just for our graduates, most of whom are first-generation college students, but for their families as well. We urge everyone to adhere to our protocols. They may be inconvenient, but inconvenience is the trade-off for an in-person graduation.”

Livingstone held its first winter commencement in December 2014.

About Livingstone College

Livingstone College is a private historically black college that is secured by a strong commitment to quality instruction, academic excellence and student success. Through a Christian-based environment suitable for holistic learning, Livingstone provides excellent business, liberal arts, STEAM, teacher education and workforce development programs for students from all ethnic backgrounds designed to promote lifelong learning, and to develop student potential for leadership and service to a global community. For more information, visit www.livingstone.edu.

Livingstone College faculty engages in national panel



The National Endowment for the Arts Big Read is a partnership with Arts Midwest that broadens understandings of our world, our neighbors, and ourselves through the power of a shared reading experience. Showcasing a diverse range of themes, voices, and perspectives, each year the NEA Big Read aims to inspire meaningful conversations, artistic responses, and new discoveries and connections in each com-

munity. For a first, and in an effort to galvanize potential applicants and develop and enhance quality applications, NEA hosted a webinar about applying for a National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Grant, featuring a moderated panel that explored various topics of consideration for applications. On Wednesday October 27th, attendees heard from a hand-selected panel of four previous grantee organizations; Sylvania M. Casillas Olivieri of Universidad Ana G. Méndez (UAGM), Gurabo campus, Matthew David of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library, Jacob Freidman of Arizona State University, and Da'Tarvia Parrish of Livingstone College.

The June selected committee, were directed by Joshua Feist of Arts Midwest to produce a forum designed to assist organizations and colleges and universities. The presentation included introductions whereas each panelist announced themselves and provided a brief overview of their organization, community, and programming for the NEA Big Read. Selecting a Book was headed by Sylvania M. Casillas

Olivieri, Jacob Freidman discussed Finding Partners, Developing Programs was facilitated by Da'Tarvia Parrish, and Matthew David encouraged with, Why Apply.

In Dr. Parrish’s presentation, she highlighted Livingstone College’s 2021 programming with a goal of being intentionally intergenerational and intercultural, with their text selection, The Big Smoke by Adrian Matejka. The work poetically chronicles the life and times of the controversial and first African American Heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Johnson. Dr. Parrish stated, “I always feel honored when presented the opportunity to represent Livingstone College on a national level. I’m at the table as an HBCU, as a small private college, and most of all, as an A.M.E. Zion affiliated institution.”

The webinar hosted over 200 attendees for the up to 20K grant award. The session is available on Midwest Arts webpage, and the application deadline is January 26, 2022. Interested applicants can apply at <https://www.artsmidwest.org/programs/neabigread/application-process/>.

HBCU's Lead the Way in HIV/AIDS Awareness



Livingstone College and Southern University A& M College at Baton Rouge partnered on December 1, 2021 in recognition of World AIDS Day. The two HBCUs collaborated with various departments within The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church to engage in a national faith mobilization campaign of partnering HBCUs and faith-based institutions; a mission of grant sponsors InterFaith Youth Core and the Gilead COMPASS Initiative Faith Coordinating Center at Wake Forest University School of Divinity. As grant recipients of this initiative, both Livingstone and Southern University are tasked to take action in dismantling the HIV/AIDS stigma, modeling unconditional love and compassion to all persons living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, disseminating factual HIV/AIDS education, and engaging communities in HIV/AIDS testing services.

As the institutions strive to increase awareness of the epidemic specifically in the South-

ern region of the United States, another goal of implementing programming at the intersection of HIV and AIDS, and interfaith cooperation of the African American Catholic and Zion Methodist communities; commenced on December 1, 2021 at 12noon, EST in a virtual platform hosted by the Star of Zion. "We are prayerful our collective impact will lead to positive and necessary change; and we are eager to present a program that supports critical conversations and voices that meets the fierce urgency of now," said devoted Roman Catholic Deadra

James-Mackie of Southern University, who greeted virtual viewers with the occasion. Rev. Dr. Maurice A. Harden, pastor of Rush Metropolitan AME Zion Church in Raleigh, North Carolina served as the moderator for the event. Rev. Dr. Anthony N. Witherspoon, president of the International Ministers and Lay Association opened with prayer, while Kareem Altidor, an epidemiologist in infectious disease and a clinical research scientist of H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute in Tampa, Florida, presented essential information on HIV/AIDS for

viewers' understanding and interpretation. Altidor discussed the historical emergence of HIV/AIDS in the United States, and disaggregated statistics directly applicable to African American communities. Moreover, he discoursed current treatments available that prohibit the transmission of the disease, that will ultimately lead to the eradication of HIV/AIDS; a 2030 goal of the US's Department of Health and Human Services.

A community response and personal touch of grace, mercy, and humanity was rendered by Rev. Harold Jordan of Third Creek AME Zion Church in Cleveland, North Carolina as he reminded viewers of the church's past response to persons impacted by HIV/AIDS and challenged them to move forward in a more compassionate way. Similar sentiments were expressed by Livingstone College student Emile Dogbe-Gakpetor of Ghana, who too shared a message of love and

Continues on Pg. 23

Churches give away 1,000 turkeys, offer COVID-19 vaccinations in Dover

DOVER — Just in time for Thanksgiving dinner, faith organizations came together to give away 1,000 turkeys and all the trimmings to residents of Dover Housing Authority's Manchester Square Apartments.

Led by the Rev. Dr. R.J. Chandler Sr., pastor of The Scott African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Wilmington and Transformation AME Zion Church in Dover, the giveaway was held Monday.

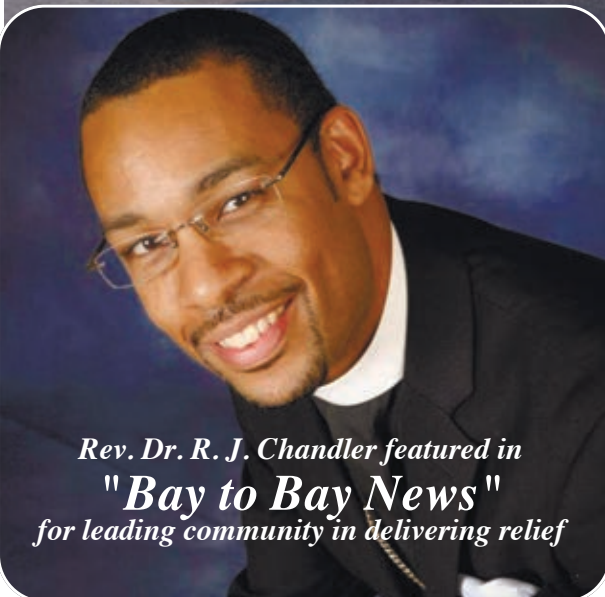
"Initially, the scene was chaotic as a small but determined group of volunteers worked furiously to load cars and keep the line moving," the Rev. Chandler said in a news release.

Mayor Robin Christiansen and Dover City Councilman Andre Boggerty, along with the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Dover and Vicinity, also aided in the effort. The Food Bank of Delaware, which provided pallets of fruits and vegetables, as well as hundreds of frozen chickens and canned items, lent a hand, too.

Of the 1,000 turkeys given out, Dave Zick-afoose of Hilton Bus donated 61. Several more came from individuals, and another 800 were donated by an anonymous benefactor.

With the increase in hunger caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rev. Chandler said Transformation AME has become a food-distribution partner with Feed the Children and the Food Bank of Delaware.

Additionally, through a partnership between the Kent County Coalition and Focus Pharmacy in Smyrna, COVID-19 vaccinations



Rev. Dr. R. J. Chandler featured in "Bay to Bay News" for leading community in delivering relief

doses or booster shoots.

Calling him a "good man with a servant's heart," the Rev. Chandler praised Gov. John Carney for helping in the effort. "Our Gov. John Carney, despite not being adequately dressed for the cold, jumped into the fray and worked feverishly for over an hour hustling different cases of turkeys, some weighing over 60 pounds, stacking boxes of food and loading cars and trucks," the Rev. Chandler said.

He called the event a "tremendous team effort," thanking U.S. Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, state Sen. Trey Paradee and state Rep. Sean Lynn. He also thanked the Rev. Theodore Henderson and the Rev. Rita Paige.

The Rev. Chandler said the United Way of Delaware and Dr. Vilicia Cade, superintendent of the Capital School District, aided in the giveaway, too, along with Polemarch Eric Morgan of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. and Donnell's Salon for Men and Women in Dover.

were available at the event. They were administered by Dr. TaQuina M. Warren of the pharmacy, who provided first and second

Team Ujima on the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District Vaccine Hesitancy Program team celebrates 6 months



Celebrating 6-months of Ministry as Team Ujima on the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District VACCINE HESITANCY PROGRAM TEAM...

What a blessing and a rewarding experience this has been in Outreach Ministry.

I would like to THANK Dr. Evalina Huggins, Program Administrator, Dr. Timothy Freeman, Project Manager, and Ms. Alisha Dawkins, Administrative Assistant for coming all the way from our Episcopal Headquarters in Washington DC to our Program Celebration on Saturday November 13th, 2021 where we cele-

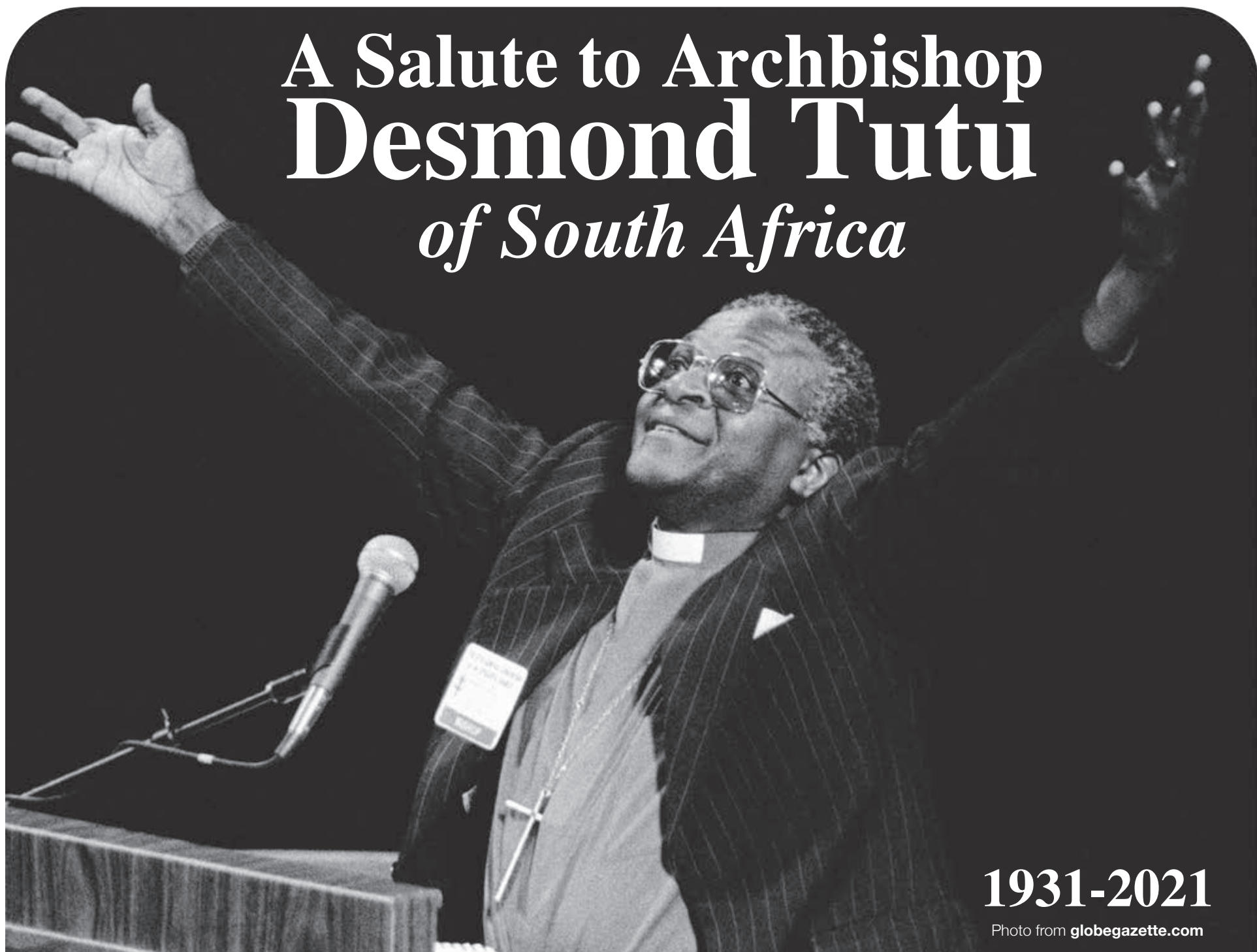


brated with all the persons that received their 1st and 2nd Covid-19 Vaccine Shots. We gave out gift card to say Thank You for assisting us in trying to save lives. We could not have accomplished so much without our Awesome Partners: Bluefield State College and Dr. Ted Lewis, Provost, Bluestone Health Clinic and Nurse Susan Plumley and the Awesome Team Ujima Ambassadors where we all came together and educated, and distributed Covid-19 Vaccine Educational Information to over a 1000 person and actually Vaccinated over 700 of those persons. We say Thank you and To God be the Glory all that He has allowed us to accomplish together these last six months.

We were blessed to award a \$1000.00 Scholarship to Bluefield State College to be awarded to a deserving hard working Student. That Scholarship was awarded to Ms. Congratulatory to her as she continue to pursue her educational career. I would like to thank our Episcopal Leader Team, Bishop and Mrs. W. Darin Moore who selected me to do this work as a Community Partner Coordinator. Thank you to our hard working Leader of Team Ujima Reverend A. Addison Young, III, Regional Coordinator.

Last but not least SPECIAL THANKS TO MY TEAM UJIMA AMBASSADORS: Sisters Angela Sharp, Sister Fern Simpson, Brother Todd Peavy, Reverend Francine Saunders sis.

A Salute to Archbishop Desmond Tutu *of South Africa*



1931-2021

Photo from globegazette.com

The world mourns the death of Bishop Desmond Tutu, Archbishop of South Africa. Bishop Tutu is known for his vision, his voice and his venture to help overcome Apartheid in South Africa. He made a significant contribution to end oppression, racism and injustice as a cleric in the Anglican Church. Without question, he sought to live out the meaning of his call from God.

Whether we are willing to accept the challenges of God's call or not, God calls us to do miracles. Bishop Tutu's ministry broke barriers, freed people from oppres-

sion and injustice, spoke truth to those in power and brought transformation to a society as well as hope and inspiration to those who embraced his message of love, non-violence and goodwill to all people. The transformative deposits made by Bishop Tutu shall forever find a place to live in the minds and hearts of all who were witnesses as well as recipients of his ministry. Such a ministry shall serve as an example for all of us to employ in our daily lives.

May the peace of God continue to sustain us, and the love of God ever embrace us and the power of God enable us to

accomplish the challenges of God's call on our lives.



Bishop Kenneth Monroe,
Senior Bishop
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church



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sankofa



Looking Back to Move Forward

Written by, Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III in
From The Browder Files
Presented by, Rev. Dr. Sarah Fleming

Color, Culture and Consciousness

In the beginning was the word. And the word was with the first people. The first people called the word *Medu Netcher*---the language of God. The first people lived in a land we now call Africa, and their skin was a color we call black. Their greatest culture was in a country called Kemet, which is now referred to as Egypt. The people of Kemet walked on the stage of human history over 6000 years ago, and their consciousness continues to shape the destiny of mankind. It is a fact which makes you quite proud.

It is a wonderful feeling to wake up in the morning and know who you are. It is empowering to walk in the world and know where you came from, and be able to see through the Lies of those who would relegate you to the backdoor of history. It is important to know that you are more your scientific designation---*homo sapien sapien*. You are more than sapient or *wise*; you are sapient sapient. You possess a mind with *double wisdom*. You have the capacity to know and to know that you know. Ahhh, the power of consciousness.

Words have the capacity to unleash the power of your mind by generating thoughts which expand your consciousness. It is an awe-inspiring process. Thought is more than a series of letters strung together to formulate or an idea. Thought is a doorway to an inner dimension of consciousness which embodies the spirit of Medu Netcher---the language of God.

The word *thought* is derived from the Greek word *Thoth*. Thoth was the Greek name for the ancient Kemetic god known as *Djhuiti*. Djhuiti wasn't actually a god, but the spiritual principal which represented divine speech. Sounds confusing? Well stay with me while I complete this train of thought.

All speech is preceded by thought and all thought is preceded by consciousness. We must understand the nature of consciousness in order to understand its relationship to thought and speech. In the African world, consciousness is the conduit to the Creator. It is the means by which one becomes aware of the presence of the Creator within and without.

I recall someone discussing the racial problem in America and saying, "It's not really about color---it's about culture." I think they were on to something and I've come to realize that, *it's not just about culture---it's about consciousness*.

Consciousness determines how one relates to culture and color. I can make my reasoning clearer by defining color, *culture* and *consciousness*.

Color is derived from the Latin word *colos* which means *original sense or covering*. *Colos* is derived from the root word *celare* which means *to cover or hide*. In modern times, color has come to mean, *the color of the skin of a Negro or any person not classified as a Caucasian*.

Culture is derived from the Latin *cultura*, which means, *cultivation or care*. It was derived from the word *culture*, which means to *till*. Culture is defined as the act of tilling and preparing the earth for crops. In modern times it has come to mean, *the concepts, habits, skills, art, instructions, institutions etc., of a given people in a given period*. Culture is often summed up in one word---Civilization.

Words and actions have their origins in thought---you think and then you act on your thoughts. All thought is a reflection of your consciousness and your relationship to the Creator. Thought is often determined by your culture. Each culture has different interpretations of the Creator (God) which is an outgrowth of its unique relationship to its environment (nature). To that end, each culture's interpretation of the Creator is a legitimate expression of that group's perspective. It is an unconscionable sin for any group to invalidate another's interpretation of God simply because it differs from their own.

Cultures which thrived in the cold, frozen waste lands in the Northern Hemisphere often saw God as cold and indifferent. Those cultures which developed in the hot, arid desert regions saw the Creator as merciful at times and vengeful at others. Cultures which developed in temperate zones or tropical environments saw multi-dimensional aspects of nature and God as Creator, sustainer, Destroyer, and Re-creator.

The people who lived in the Nile Valley of east Africa developed the oldest record of a cultural consciousness of God which they referred to as *Netcher* represented the multiple aspects of God as Creator, Sustainer, Destroyer, and Re-creator. This knowledge was written about in spiritual texts which preached the Torah, Bible and Koran. It was practiced in Kemetic temples before the first church or mosque was conceptualized.

Ancient Kemet showed the world what humans could do when their thoughts were attuned to a divine consciousness. At a time when the rest of the world stumbled in darkness, Kemet was "The Light of the World." Remnants of this ancient civilization can still be found in cultures within

Africa and throughout the world.

The Hebrew who entered Kemet seeking refuge left hundreds of years later with laws, a lawgiver and spiritual concepts which have changed the world. Hebrew teachings were the foundation of Christianity and both contributed to the development of Islam. Whether it is acknowledged or not, the world's three main religions stand on a foundation which originated in Kemet.

The Greeks and Romans entered Egypt as conquerors and returned to their respective lands with knowledge which established them as the fore-parents of modern civilization. Before the advent of color prejudice, the ancient European world looked to the culture and consciousness of Africa for inspiration. Anytime you copy an original make copies of the copies, it soon becomes different to clearly understand what you have and where it originated.

Just as a light dims as it moves farther and farther away from its source, the light of Kemet diminished after each European invasion. The Europeans later came to believe that they were the creators of their ancestral inheritance. They began to make color distinctions between themselves and others. All that was good, pure and noble was portrayed as white and non-African. Their lack of historical consciousness set the stage for the enslavement of African people and the creation of the negro.

Every European nation, with the exception of Russia, participated in the slave trade. Each of the world's three major religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) profited from the enslavement of Africans and justified their positions in their religious texts. Between 1444 and 1888, over 55 million men, women and children were enslaved in the New World.

Entire villages were uprooted and nations were destroyed during this era of enslavement. Imagine what it was like being taken from your home, separated from your family and never seeing your loved ones again.

Imagine being imprisoned in a dungeon with hundreds of other souls. You can hear the screams of the children and women who are being molested by their captors. You can feel the anger and despair of the males who are helpless to come to their family's aid. You can see familiar faces being loaded onto the slave ships and setting sail for lands unknown. You feel fear and sadness.

You can't imagine the horrors of the Middle Passage. But did you know that the bodies of the Africans thrown overboard during the trans-Atlantic

A statue of Mary McLeod Bethune will make history at the U.S. Capitol



U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor (FL14) helped unveil the Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune statue for the first time in Florida and the U.S. since arriving from Italy. The Dr. Bethune statue will soon represent the State of Florida in the United States Capitol's National Statuary Hall Collection. Dr. Bethune will be the first African American to represent any state in the collection. Dr. Bethune takes the place of an obscure confederate general who has represented Florida in the state collection since 1922 and will be one of only a few women to represent a state in the 100-statue collection. The confederate statue that has represented Florida since the Jim

Crow era was removed from the Capitol in the beginning of September.

“Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune is an outstanding representative of the State of Florida. The long-awaited arrival of Florida's newest statue in the United States Capitol is now on track for early 2022 after her visit to Daytona Beach where she founded Bethune-Cookman University and embarked on her impactful career on equal rights, education, the advancement of veterans and so much more. I am grateful to the many friends who I've worked alongside for years in order to reach this momentous moment. Dr. Bethune embodies the very best of the Sunshine State – Floridians and all Americans can take great pride in being represented by the great educator and civil rights icon. This exhibit in Daytona Beach – Dr. Bethune's home and the home of Bethune-Cookman University – provides an important and special opportunity to learn about Dr. Bethune's life,

and I am glad that she is being rightfully recognized here in Florida before she travels to her place of honor and recognition by all of America in the U.S. Capitol.”

In attendance at the unveiling with Rep. Castor were many of the partners in the years long journey – master sculptor Nilda Comas, Daytona Beach Mayor Derrick Henry, Bethune-Cookman University President Dr. Hiram Powell, Florida Secretary of State Laurel Lee, Mary McLeod Bethune Statuary Committee Chair Nancy Lohman and Vice Chair Bob Lloyd, State Senator Perry Thurston, Florida Cultural Affairs Director Sandy Shaughnessy, Rep. Michael Waltz, US Capitol Historical Society President and CEO Jane Campbell, and many proud BCU alumni and friends.

A temporary exhibit in Daytona is open through early December where visitors will be able to see the statue and learn about Dr. Bethune's life and

legacy for free seven days a week from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Daytona State College's News-Journal Center, located at 221 N. Beach St.

Bethune was born on a farm near Maysville, South Carolina, in 1875. She was the 15th child of former slaves.

In 1904, she created Daytona Beach Literary and Industrial School for Training Negro Girls.

Bethune's impact left a mark in Florida but also on Black people and women at large.

Bethune, the daughter of formerly enslaved people, was an influential educator and activist who — among her many accomplishments — founded the National Council of Negro Women, advised multiple U.S. presidents and created a boarding school for Black children that would later become Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach.

A Word from Bishop Kenneth Monroe, Senior Bishop and President of the Board of Bishops

Careful About Thanksgiving

On the eve of Thanksgiving Day, as this nation sets time aside to reflect on the many advantages and blessings of life we have enjoyed for many years, the news comes revealing the verdict of three white men in Georgia - Gregory McMichael, Travis McMichael and William “Robbie” Bryan, Jr. – guilty in the murder of Ahmaud Arbery, a young black man. Tomorrow, we will give thanks for a nation that has promised freedom, justice and peace; yet we are still confronted with a greater task of bringing healing and restoration to much brokenness and injustice in this country. So many people continue to be eliminated because of the actions taken by official and unofficial persons who claim to protect and bring stability to our community. While others rejoice today over the outcome of this verdict, we all still fail to embrace the greater promise of this country. Vigilantes that only fight for an unrighteous justice or even selfish peace never can stabilize a society

that yearns for careful reconciliation and celebrative or conclusive restoration.

Of course, there are moments when it is difficult to determine who is right and who is wrong. Loving ones neighbor as oneself can bring some definition to what may seem confusing, contradictory or even camouflaged. Yet, our nation seems to have moved away from this biblical principle and embraced what is socially acceptable only to those persons who have the advantage. The spirit of this nation has become contentious, censured and careless.

It saddened me to say, but this verdict even though seems right only brings comfort to some of us because of our historical and recent exploits as marginalized people in this country. This event only turns another page on the injustice for which we must continue to struggle with and overcome. This is another moment to be encouraged, but never the solution to what we must continue to face in this country. This event, like so many we have already experienced, must remind us of

the plight we are consciously and unconsciously faced as we seek to promote the changes we must perform among ourselves, in our communities and in our homes.

As we reflect on this day and other days that seem to remind us of our challenging experiences in this country, continue to stay focused, serve faithfully and stand firm on the principles of our faith.



Rev. Dr. Kenneth Monroe,
Senior Bishop and President
Board of Bishops
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church



Albert Joseph Daniel Aymer
DEC. 23, 1936 - NOV. 5, 2021

Albert Joseph Daniel Aymer was born in the town of Liberta on the island of Antigua in the Caribbean on December 23, 1936, to Millanette and John Aymer. He lived in Antigua until 1959 when, answering the call to ministry, he entered Caenwood Seminary in Jamaica. His early ministry included parishes in Grenada and St. Vincent.

In 1967, he was married to Miss Shirley Delores Lewin. Following their marriage, he served as the first Caribbean-born pastor of Hawthorne Methodist Church in Barbados. Having been awarded a World Council of Churches Fellowship, in 1969-70, he spent an academic year studying at Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, Pennsylvania (USA), working closely with Dr. Paul Achtemeier, and graduating from there with the Masters of Divinity. In 1970, Rev. Aymer was appointed to a circuit on the island of Tobago, which included serving as superintendent of the Methodist schools. In 1972, he was appointed to a three-point charge

Rev Dr. Albert J. D. Aymer:
First President of Hood Seminary, Dead at 84

in Jamaica, serving as the chaplain of the University of the West Indies, and the pastor of Providence Methodist Church and Constitution Hill Methodist Church.

In 1978, Rev. Aymer was accepted to pursue his Masters and Ph. D. in New Testament at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. During the dissertation phase of his doctorate, the United Methodist Church invited him to an executive position in their General Board of Global Ministries. Two years later, he was called by the Theological School of Drew University to be first Assistant and later Associate Dean. After twelve years at Drew University, he accepted an appointment as the Senior Pastor of First United Methodist Church in Morristown, New Jersey.

However, his days in the academy were not behind him. Only one year into his pastorate in Morristown, he accepted the invitation to serve as Dean of a small historically Black seminary in Salisbury, North Carolina—Hood Theological Seminary sponsored by The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Over the course of twenty years, from 1994 - 2013, Dr. Aymer served as the Academic Dean of the seminary; interim president of Livingstone College of which the seminary was a department, and later as the first President of the seminary when it became an independent seminary in 2001.

When he assumed leadership of the seminary, Hood had fewer than thirty students. Upon his retirement, Hood Seminary had an enrollment of over three hundred students from sixteen different denominations, and was regarded throughout the Association of Theological Schools in the USA and Canada as a leader among its most racially inclusive seminaries and divinity schools. President Aymer served on numerous boards and agencies including a six-

year stint on the Board of Accreditation of the Association of Theological Schools in the USA and Canada; and has received numerous awards, among which are the keys to the City of Salisbury, the Order of the Longleaf Pine – the highest civilian order given by North Carolina; and the degree of Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa) from Catawba College

After retiring from the presidency in 2013, he lived in North Carolina until 2017. A series of health challenges led him to relocate to Texas, and after five years of declining health, he died peacefully on November 5, 2021.

Rev. Dr. Albert J. D. Aymer is survived by his former wife, Shirley, and his three daughters: the Rev. Dr. Margaret Aymer Oget with her spouse Dr. Laurent Oget; Prof. Valerie Elizabeth Aymer; and Ms. Ann-Marie Millinette Aymer with her spouse the Rev. Kristen Claire Foley; and by his grandson, Gabriel Albert Charles Oget.

Memorial services will take place at South Orange-Vailsburg United Methodist Church in South Orange, NJ on December 11 at 11 am. An additional memorial service and interment will be held at Ebenezer Methodist Church in St. John's, Antigua on January 6, 2022 at 10 am. A celebration of his legacy at Hood Theological Seminary will be scheduled for later in the Spring of 2022. For information on the later services, please contact Rev. Dr. Margaret Aymer Oget: maymer@austinseminary.edu.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to The Albert J. D. Aymer Endowed Scholarship Fund at Hood Theological Seminary. Donations to that Endowed Fund may be made at <https://www.hoodseminary.edu/donate/donate-now>.

Joy R. Powell Lattimore, 67, transitioned on October 21, 2021. She is the daughter of the late Albert Powell, Sr. and the late Zudora Powell. She was born on January 18, 1954, in Goldsboro, North Carolina, and was deeply loved and admired by all those around her.

She accepted Christ as a teenager and is a 1972 graduate of Goldsboro High School. Joy is also a 1976 Magna Cum Laude graduate of Barber-Scotia College, with a B.S. in Early Childhood Education. In 1977, she graduated from The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH with an M.A. (honors) in Early and Middle Childhood Education. Her devotion to Christ in loving others is illustrated in both her academic work and involvement in the church. She was involved in many church denominations throughout her life including Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, and the A.M.E. Zion Churches.

She was married to Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President of Hood Theological Seminary, for 42 years, ten months. December 18, 2021, would have been their 43rd Anniversary, and Joy and Vergel dated for five years before being married.

Joy was "known by others for her quiet personality, gentle manner, and inquisitive, brilliant mind. She loved to read and she cared deeply about others, as her involvements reflect intellectual passion, social commitment, spiritual care, and growth in relationships." Her deep



Joy R. Powell Lattimore,
Dead at 67

devotion for others was seen in both her work in higher education and with Pre-K and K-12 children.

Joy was involved with many endeavors over the years including Young Adult Missionary Society (Y.A.M.S) of the A.M.E. Zion Church,

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. (Lifetime Member, Affiliate Chapter – Gamma Zeta Zeta), American Association of University Women (Lifetime Member, Westerville Chapter), National Council of Negro Women, Inc. (Lifetime Member, Columbus Chapter), Jack and Jill of America, Inc., Kente Book Club Friends, Birthday Club Friends, Freedom Colony Neighborhood Association, and Building Responsibility, Equality and Dignity (B.R.E.A.D.). These endeavors show the deep care and compassion she had for those around her.

Joy's memory will be cherished by many including her loving husband Vergel and their three children: Vergel Alston of Westerville, OH, Adam Victor of Salisbury, NC, and Alia Joy of Clintonville, OH. She also leaves one sister, Dr. Linda Addo of Greensboro, NC; one aunt, Ethel Mae Baldwin of Goldsboro, NC; father-in-law, Vergel Lattimore (Laura) of Charlotte; six sisters-in-law, Barbara L. Davis of Charlotte, NC, Margaret L. Nixon of Charlotte, Lisa Lattimore of Charlotte, NC, Eunice S. Gray of Boston, MA, Barbara Coley Jones of Ovilla, TX and Queen Elizabeth Hunt Powell of Hyattsville, MD; one mother-in-law, Perlia E. Gray Lattimore (deceased); one brother-in-law, Leonard A. Gray (deceased). Her memory will live on through countless other family members, friends, and those who were blessed to know her in this life.

A GLOBAL LEADERSHIP VIEW OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH



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 Forgiveness - from Pg. 4

same question.

If we know God's love so well, and if we are truly His followers, what on earth, Dear Forgiven One— what on earth are you doing still nursing that grudge in your heart against that brother who lied on you? I mean, didn't I see you serving communion last First Sunday. I'm just asking...

If you know God's forgiveness so truly, so deeply, why are you still holding that axe over that sister's head – that axe you keep sharpening? You just cannot let go because she left you hanging when the boss blamed you for losing that big contract. If you benefitted so completely from Jesus' suffer, death, and resurrection, why are you making someone else suffer loss and guilt over your un-forgiveness? I am just asking a question.

If God has forgiven you, why are you sitting here in this virtual church house with a grimace and glare on your face at the mere thought of someone who hurt you, betrayed you, or took something from you? Why have you made up your mind never to speak to him/her again? Why have you purposed in your mind and heart to "show her- to get even with him?"

It's time to give you the TITLE of this sermon, My Dear Sisters and Brothers. This morning, we are taking about, ***FORGIVENESS: Prerequisite for a New Beginning***. The truth is, there is another side to this forgiveness story. So, let us switch the script right here, Dear People. Let's look at the other side of forgiveness. Let us consider God's Word again. *And forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors...*(Matt. 6:12).

Sound familiar? If God's love and mercy is real and free--- and it is— then why have you turned a deaf ear to that brother who said, "Hey, man, I didn't mean it..." and offered you his hand. You said you would never speak to him again.

QUESTION: Has God stopped speaking to you? Huh. Has God stopped speaking to you?

ANOTHER QUESTION: If God is still speaking to you, does that mean that you have stopped offending God?

OR, YET ANOTHER QUESTION: could it mean, that God puts up with a lot of mess from you- that He forgives you again and again, and again. He keeps talking to you, trying to help you to finally get it right. We all know that the answer is unequivocally, a resounding, YES! God keeps talking to you. But you won't talk to that brother or sister. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

Let's keep it in the script-switching mode, shall we. God's Holy Word bears up this side of the forgiveness story, as well. Hear what The Almighty says, Dear People.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as in Christ God forgave you(Eph 4:32).

. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy (Matt 5:7).

. Bear with each other and forgive one another...(Col 3:13).

Do we need to hear more? Here we are, grappling with bitterness, resentment and unforgiving spirits, bottling it all up inside, saving it for an angry day. God clearly forbids this behavior. In no uncertain terms, through the words of the Apostle Paul, God commands, *Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, with all forms of malice* (Eph 4: 31).

ENOUGH! How dare we stand in the face of our suffering Christ, our forgiving Savior, and hold a grudge against someone He loves. We wouldn't tolerate that in the human. We all have someone in our family who has just messed up, all around, and back again. But we love that brother, that sister, that uncle, that cousin, that father or mother. We still love them. If someone went after them to hurt them, or talked bad about that one, we would come to the rescue. " Oh, no, not my brother. I know he messed up. I can give him a hard time, but you cannot – or- after all, she's my sister."

Now hear Jesus out, Dear Offended One: She is my Sister. He is my Brother. I know he messed up, Jesus says. I know she messed up, but I died for that mess up and I love her, messed up or not. You will not treat her that way.

Now, what about this New Beginning, about which we all talk, read

about in the bible, and study in bible class? Huh? What about This New Beginning, on which we rely so heavily. We say we are a new creation in Christ. We say we have been given a new life- a fresh start. YET – yet – yet: you hold it against her. You hold it against him. You hold it against them. Don't fool yourself Dear Forgiven One. Hear this: You will never be truly new- you will never have a new beginning- you will never be a new creation in Christ as long as you have hatred, resentment and un-forgiveness in your heart toward another human being. Let us not fool ourselves.

You cannot put new wine in an old wine skin, the Bible says. It will leak out(Mark 2:22) Likewise, you cannot put new love, a new relationship, new ministry, new gifts, new ideas, or a new attitude in an old heart and an old spirit, full of old hurts and un-forgiveness. It will leak out and you will be dried up and more bitter than ever.

What is the answer? It is quite simply: FORGIVENESS IS A PREREQUISITE FOR A NEW BEGINNING! So , go forgive someone. Remove an axe. Set someone and yourself free. Again – go forgive someone. Let something go today. Give it to Jesus. You have picked up your cross with Christ. He nailed your offenses to His cross. Ask Him to help you nail those hurts and offenses you received to your cross as, you walk your Calvary Road with Him. Do not worry about falling down. Three times He fell and picked himself up. There is no measuring how many times He will pick you up. God understands just how heavy offenses can be to carry.

All of that resentment, all of those grudges ,all of the misery of your revengeful heart - give it to Jesus. Guaranteed, you will rise up with new strength! You will rise up with new vitality! You will rise up with visions for a new walk, and a new talk. But above all, you will have become a new creation in the eyes of God, and the people of God will be blessed by the New You.

You see, Saints, we cannot talk to God about a NEW BEGINNING until we do exactly what He tells us to do in Matthew 5:22-23; and I paraphrase: DON'T COME TRYING

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 Continues on Pg. 26

Photo from shareable.net

Black Methodism and the World Methodist Conference in Sweden

By Rev. Ronald A. Nathan

'The first Swedes were Blacks who migrated from Africa at the end of the Ice Age'. So said Matthias Jakobsson, professor and genetic researcher at Uppsala University Sweden. This news has thrown Swedish communities into a bit of a tailspin and opened up the racist underbelly of the normally liberal and progressive Scandinavian nation.

We don't expect that the 22nd World Methodist Conference to be held in the city of Gothenburg, Sweden from the 10-14 August 2022 to create such a stir. However, we are hopeful that the arrival of hundreds of persons of African descent from Africa, the Caribbean, North America and South America will raise some eyebrows and also occasion some prophetic engagements.

The World Methodist Conference is held every five years and is organized by the World Methodist Council. It is made up of more than 80 different churches and affiliated bodies comprising of more than 82 million people in 132 countries. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church has been attending this world body of Methodism since its inception in 1881.

The conference's main theme in 2022 is *'On the Move'* and is carded to be an occasion when the world family of Methodists deepens their

faith, bonds together, creates energy for growth and discerns future contours of ministry, service and leadership. The theme would be discussed under the following three headings: Migration, Pilgrimage and Illumination.

The AMEZ Church "the Freedom Church", alongside other Methodists denominations with large black memberships would be looking for concrete declarations and actions concerning the treatment of African Migrants in North African nations and in European countries including Sweden.

Every day tens of thousands of migrants in Africa are being exploited and their human rights discarded due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, conflicts, food insecurity and climate change. Africans are being forced to move inside and outside of the African continent.

What compounds this already dangerous situation is also the "criminalization of migration in some countries" which has led to an increase in the smuggling and trafficking of African migrants.

International conferences such as the World Methodist Conference present rare opportunities to highlight and raise the profile of these social injustices and to bring them to the attention of the world power brokers. They also provide an op-

portunity for consensus building, collaboration and consolidation amongst Methodists on social justice matters such as Migration.

The conference attendees are certainly looking forward to the dynamic celebratory events of Gothenburg, the fiery preaching from the Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre, the lively business sessions of the World Methodist Council, and the presentation of officers for the next Quinquennium. Attendees will also have occasion to visit Sweden's historical sites and share in its' gastronomic delights. All the above are essential parts of the Conference experience.

After the closing ceremony our delegates will be expected to report to their respective churches, conferences and congregations. Those in black communities in the North America, the Caribbean and South America will want to know what about the Black Lives of African Immigrants and whether they matter to Methodists. What would be uppermost in the minds and hearts of our members in Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia and Sierra Leone will not be the 'conference experience' but what of the treatment of their sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives who in searching for a better life made the treacherous journey up North.

So alongside Swedish CD's and DVD's, curios and presents, and other conference paraphernalia, let us take home some good news that we, World Methodists, have acted decisively and intentionally to eradicate human trafficking and reduce the exploitation of African migrants.

The fact that many in Sweden may wish to ignore their DNA ancestral roots and their colonial historical involvement in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Delaware USA, St Barthelemy and Guadeloupe in the Caribbean or their ownership of some five (5) slave forts in Ghana is the responsibility of Swedish leaders, historians and peoples. The business of Black Methodists in Gothenburg in August 2022 is to lift up the ministry and work of Jesus Christ in His church and that includes mobilising justice for Blacks and African migrants in Europe, including those living under the Northern Lights, at the end of the blue metro line in Sweden.

Rev. Ronald A. Nathan is the senior pastor of the Hoggard AME Zion Church, Jackson, St Michael, Barbados. He a member of the Board of Conveyors of the Trans-Atlantic Roundtable on Religion and Race and is a member of the Trans-Atlantic Episcopal Board of the Central Southern Africa Episcopal Area of the AME Zion Church.

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Historic Appointment - from Pg. 5

Carolina Episcopal District (Little Zion in Sneads Ferry, St. Paul in Aurora and Hyman Chapel in Havelock, NC). She is very supportive of leadership. She gave Bishop Kenneth Monroe \$15,000 to help build the Eastern North Carolina Resource Center. Dr. Godette's generosity extends all the world. She gave \$10,000 to help the Missionaries in the Western Episcopal District and she gave \$65,000 to help

churches right here in the North Eastern Episcopal District where she calls home. She gave \$10,000 to help pregnant women in Africa pay for medical expenses and money to help with missionary work in Haiti.

Dr. Godette is a genuine giver with a pure heart. Her Scholarship Foundation has awarded scholarships totaling \$100,000. Pastor Nicolle Harris has received \$6,000 and Pastor Daren Jaime has received \$9,000 to assist them in seminary. Dr. Godette has given these schol-

arships to Pastors and Lay People across Zion. During the pandemic, Bro. Godette and Dr. Godette just keep giving. They rented trucks and filled tractor trailers with food and clothes. Then they traveled all around North Carolina helping people. They didn't give anyone any mess. They gave the best. They gave away steaks, ribs, chicken, fruits, vegetables, and anything you would find in a grocery store.

Dr. Godette is a trailblazer. She is an ordained Elder and she has

served as a Pastor for the last 18 years. She left every church better than she found it. She took a leave of absence last November to have a tumor removed from her head. God performed a miracle and Dr. Godette is cancer free.

Bishop Proctor welcomed Dr. Godette and her husband, "My wife and I are blessed to have this anointed sister, powerful preacher, hard-working leader and faithful servant joining our Team."

The Foundation for Evangelism Local Church Grant Cycle Launches in January 2022

LAKE JUNALUSKA, North Carolina – The Foundation for Evangelism is pleased to announce the launch of a new \$250,000 Equipping the Local Church grant cycle. Grants for \$5,000 or \$10,000 will be awarded to small and medium* church congregations, or clusters of churches working together, in a Wesleyan-tradition denomination. The grant focus is to launch an experiment or initiative to share the Gospel, tell their faith stories, and invite others into a

relationship with Jesus. Any church or group of churches fitting the criteria may apply. A total of 25-50 possible grants will be awarded in the summer of 2022. Information will be posted at FoundationforEvangelism.org/grant-seekers on January 1, 2022.

Applications are due by February 28, 2022. The Foundation for Evangelism Equipping the Local Church grant initiative seeks to empower pastors, laity, and smaller local congregations to dream, take risks, and partner with

God in the transformation of lives and communities. These grants are made possible through the generosity of donors, friends, and partners with The Foundation for Evangelism. The Foundation for Evangelism works globally to educate and invite people into the Christian faith. Grants to pan-Wesleyan/Methodist leaders, churches, seminaries, and denominations impact Christian leaders in Russia, Europe, several African countries, and the United States.



To learn more about our ministry, visit www.FoundationForEvangelism.org.
*under 250 participants ###

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HIV/AIDS Awareness - from Pg. 12

compassion. Southern University's junior and business major Lenecia Turner soothed audiences with a performance of Thank You by Walter Hawkins; and Livingstone College faculty, Da'Tarvia Parrish

followed with sincere thanks to all of the program participants and viewers. She said, "We must uphold and advance human rights and in these efforts; we must fight all forms of stigma and discrimination." Dr. Parrish commented the

programming was "phenomenally fortifying," in recognizing a global effort to combat a health crisis.

Rev. Dr. Eleazar Merriweather, director for the Department of Church Growth and Develop-

ment closed with prayer, invoking for divine help, blessing and guidance, in our global effort to prevent diseases and improve the health status of humanity with mobilization and impact.

Sankofa - from Pg. 15

journey were eaten by the sharks which followed the slave ships? Did you know that this constant supply of food changed the migration pattern of sharks in the Atlantic?

Did you know that, were the Atlantic to dry up, it would reveal a trail of human bones along the ocean floor, marking the various routes of the Middle Passage? Do you realize that every African who reached the New World was sold into slavery and labored on plantations throughout the Caribbean and North, Central and South America?

Have you forgotten that our ancestors were not allowed to practice their culture or pass it on to their children? After endless years of beatings, rapes, murders and back-breaking labor, maybe they found it easier to try to forget one of the saddest chapters of human history.

Maybe they erased the pain from their minds in an attempt to ease their pain. Maybe they were ashamed of slavery or believed that it was a blessing because it brought them closer to the white man and his God. Maybe their enslavers encouraged them to forget the past so that they wouldn't realize that the past is prologue.

You see, an event does not end at the end of its occurrence---it continues to move, down through the years, visiting each generation until it is acknowledged and resolved. If an event is traumatic, it settles deep within the mind, body and soul and can be released at any time. Unresolved memories manifest themselves as disease, anger, fear, hopelessness or despair. The medical name for this condition is called "post traumatic syndrome."

People who have experienced tragedy need to grieve and receive therapy if they are to ever become whole again. The survivors of the Oklahoma, City bombing, the students at Columbine High School, and similar victims, received grief counseling within hours of the tragedy. African Americans have not been as fortunate. We certainly have not received the counseling necessary to overcome the scars of our past.

The survivors of the Middle Passage, slavery, segregation, racism, discrimination and police brutality have been told to "get over it" and forget the past. As a group, African Americans have never acknowledged the need to grieve the loss of

our culture, consciousness and ancestors.

Collectively, African Americans are the wealthiest and best educated Africans on Earth. We spend over \$20 billion annually on junk food and entertainment. Yet, we have no national museum or memorial to honor the millions of Africans enslaved in America.

We have forgotten, and forgotten that we have forgotten. We have yet to fully recognize the need to preserve and defend the memories of our ancestors. It is time for a change of consciousness.

If we are to forget, then let us forget what it means to be disconnected from our past. Let us forget the centuries of spiritual brainwashing and mis-education which have separated us from the knowledge of our true selves. Let us forget about the negro so that we can begin to remember the times before color prejudice. Let us remember the times when the culture and consciousness of African people were the standards which others used to measure their humanity.

Let us reclaim the consciousness which has always been a part of our collective memory. Let us remember to never forget...again.



*May the Spirit of Christ
fill your hearts and homes
with love and joy this
coming New Year.*

**Wishing
All of Zion
a Happy
New Year!**

*The International Ministers'
Spouses and Widows(ers)
Fellowship*

Is Church Fashion a thing of the past?

**“what you wore
to church back
in the day
showed your
reverence to
respecting
God’s house.”**



**ZION
FASHION**

Growing up in church, fashion was prevalent all around me. As a child, my parents dressed me in lace socks and fluffy dresses. I wore barrettes and ribbons in my perfectly twisted hair. My grandma would not be seen in the church without her fancy large hat and matching suit. My mom wore pretty dresses and suits along with stockings. The women would not dare step into the church building without stockings. On first Sundays, Communion Sundays, we wore white, no questions asked. You see, what you wore to church back in the day showed your reverence to respecting God’s house. It was not just an Easter Sunday thing.

After having a conversation with my mom and grandma, what was passed down came from our ancestors. Our ancestors, particularly in the Black community, looked forward to taking a break from the fields and housework to attend a church service looking their best in what they had. They were able to dress themselves on this particular day and often would use garments they made. They wanted to be seen worshipping God in their best and looked forward to this time of community and fellowship despite their circumstances.

Fast forward to today, is church fashion a thing of the past? Millennials and Generation Z have changed the rules on how we show up to church and other religious spaces/activities. It is rare to see big floppy hats and matching suits these days, and if you do, the question becomes, “where is that person going?” Folks are comfortable showing up as they are. You might be questioning where I stand on dressing up for church and I must say, I am here for showing up in your Sunday best.

If you have the means and time to shop for that fire outfit for the special event, your friend’s birthday, or work, you have time to put together a classy look for church. Am I perfect in how I show up? Nope!! I know we are in a pandemic and some of us are joining the workshop service virtually depending on the church, but a good button up or blouse will be good for a virtual church service.

Our parents and elders looked forward to looking their best on Sunday morning and were excited to be in the presence of other believers. I am not sure how the Sunday best tradition was lost for some folks and I also recognize that our parents and elders are still carrying the torch. I will never forget shopping for outfits to wear to church with my mom growing up because it shaped me into the stylist that I am today. My question remains, “Is Church Fashion a thing of the past?” I would love to hear from you.

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HAPPY
New
Year
2022

Wishing every day of the new year to be filled with the success, happiness and prosperity of the Lord for all of Zion



Rosetta Dunham

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 Forgiveness - from Pg. 20

TO BRING ME YOUR GIFTS, WHEN YOU KNOW THAT YOU HAVE AN ISSUE WITH ANOTHER PERSON. GET OUT OF HERE. GO AND MAKE IT RIGHT WITH THAT PERSON, AND THEN COME BACK TO THE ALTAR, AND I WILL GLADLY ACCEPT YOUR GIFT.

Sisters and Brothers, Jesus died for one thing: FORGIVENESS. Of course He is going to demand forgiveness of us before we can have a New Beginning, before we can have a New Life in Him.

As I come to a close I want to remind us of some of our favorite excuses we use to hold on to unforgiveness.

1. IF SHE/HE SAYS I'M SORRY, I'LL FORGIVE HER. Well, If Jesus had waited for us to say I'm sorry, we would all still be on our way to hell. But even before we arrived on the scene, He had shed His blood and forgiven us. Jesus did not turn to his Father and say: "Daddy, if they tell me that they are sorry, I'll

go to that cross. I'll die to save them. Only, Daddy, only if they say, I'm sorry."

2. I have forgiven her/him too many times already. For this, I simply remind us of these words: SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN. I don't need to dwell on that. We know that is how many times Jesus says we must forgive, and these numbers are just a metaphor for: As many times as is necessary. I pose one simple question, here: HOW MANY TIMES HAS GOD FORGIVEN YOU ALREADY?

3. Naw...that's just too much to ask...not this...un un. I can't forgive her for this.

Question:

Which of your sins did God pick out of the bunch and say, UN UN, NOT THIS ONE; I CAN'T FORGIVE THIS ONE? Think about it, Forgiven One.

4. And then, then there is the famous: I WILL FORGIVE, BUT I WON'T FORGET. True, things stay in our memory all by them-

selves. But when you make this statement, you have already made up in your mind that you will not let it go, and that is not forgiveness. You have already decided to remember it on purpose and intentionally. Stop fooling yourself. This is not about your memory. This is about your need to pretend to forgive, when you really want to hold on to it. Don't blame your mind for remembering it; that's what the mind does. You do not forgive with your memory. You forgive with your heart. So throw that one out right now.

My Dear Sisters and Brothers, you have been redeemed. You have been forgiven. You have been equipped. You know God's Word. You know well that you are required to forgive those who do you wrong. The problem is WE JUST DON'T WANT TO LET IT GO. YOU ARE NOT READY TO LET SOMEONE OFF THE HOOK. UNDERSTAND CLEARLY: GOD IS WAITING FOR YOU TO DO JUST THAT. ONLY THEN, WILL YOU ENJOY YOUR NEW BEGINNING WITH HIM. Amen!



Hood Theological Seminary Center for Chaplaincy to Host January Didactic

The Center for Chaplaincy at Hood Theological Seminary is hosting a 2-part series on

**Trauma: Part I:
TRAUMA & THE BODY**
Monday, January 24, 2022
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., EST.

The facilitator will be Dr. H. Mac Wallace who is a Psychotherapist, CPE Supervisor, Pastoral Counselor & Marriage/Family Therapist, and Professor of Pastoral Theology. The session will define trauma and its impact on the limbic system in the brain, other organs of the body, addictions, and how one recovers and cares for themselves when such trauma occurs. Each participant will receive 2 CEUs following the session.



To register in advance for this meeting go here:
<https://tinyurl.com/cfcMeetRegistration> or scan qr code

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with further instructions.

We look forward to your attendance!

For questions please contact
Karen L. Owens, D.Min. Director,
 Center for Chaplaincy at Hood Theological Seminary,
 at kowens@hoodseminary.edu.





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2022

FROM
MR. DARIN KENT
CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
EDITOR IN CHIEF OF THE STAR OF ZION



PSALMS 33:11

"BUT THE LORD'S PLANS STAND FIRM FOREVER;
HIS INTENTIONS CAN NEVER BE SHAKEN."