

THE STAR OF ZION

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Happy & Blessed
New Year


Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

ZION



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



THE STAR OF ZION
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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Prayer for the Church

Lord, you are so good to us. You are the only God and You are awesome. We thank you for your goodness towards us. Father in the name of Jesus fill us with the knowledge of Your will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that we may live a life worthy of You and please You in every way. Help us to let our lives bear fruit in every good work as we grow in the knowledge of God.

Lord, thank you for strengthening us with all power according to Your glorious might so that we may have great endurance and patience. For this blessing, give joyful thanks to You. We are glad that You qualified us to share in the inheritance of Your holy people in the kingdom of light.

Lord, we thank you for rescuing us from the dominion of darkness and bringing us into the kingdom of the Son of your love. Let your light shine in us as we do Your will. In You we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins. And we are ever grateful to You Lord. We love you and we honor you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

(Colossians 1 : 9 - 14)

- Rev. Angela W. Boyd

Peace to you!
Happy New Year!
Be a Blessing!

CORRECTION NOTICE

The November 2022 issue of the Star of Zion incorrectly credited Dr. Dana Stilley, Financial Freedom Editor, with an article written by Dr. Allison Lee, Social Justice Editor, for the article entitled "Federal Student Loan Forgiveness"

The October 2022 issue of the Star of Zion in the World Politics Section incorrectly mentioned Rev. Nicholas Irion and Rev. Xavier Daniels as an observer for the WCC. Rev. Daniels was a delegate and Rev. Irion was an academic representative for Duke University and an advisor for a select group of students chosen by the University.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS & NEW BEGINNINGS



Submitted by Debra Chappelle-Polk
Zion Spotlight Editor, The Star of Zion
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New York, NY

January 2023 - January is the first month of the new year and the month wherein resolutions are made – hence the phrase– New Year Resolution. Immediately after the Christmas gift-giving ads disappear, we are bombarded with ads promoting products that “guarantee” weight loss, hair growth, memory boosters, etc. To lose 10 pounds in 10 days and eliminate unsightly belly fat, we need only take a vitamin or supplement twice a day. Nutritiously balanced, perfectly portioned and packaged meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner can be delivered directly to our doors. For a small, additional fee, low-calorie snacks and energy shakes can be added to the meal plan. Fitness clubs offer one-time only, low-cost new year memberships. The new year is the optimal time resolve whatever needs to be resolved. This also may include resolving to rid ourselves of certain relationships, although it will probably require something more than popping a pill.

SO, WHAT ARE THE ORIGINS OF NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS?

A Google search reveals that new year resolutions date back to the ancient Babylonians and the Romans, both of whom made promises to their gods. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, established the Covenant Renewal Service in 1755. Held at or near the first week in January, it was a powerful time of self-examination and confession that culminated in renewal of commitment to discipleship.



On New Year’s Eve, Watch Night (Freedom’s Eve) services are held in Black churches across the country to commemorate the Emancipation Proclamation, enacted

January 1, 1863 by Many slaves gathered in churches on New Year’s on Dec. 31, 1862 to await confirmation of their freedom. On that first Watch Night, abolitionists and others waited for word via telegraph, newspaper or word of mouth that freedom had been issued. The night symbolized not only freedom, but also real hope and change. Throughout the years, families and church members have joined together on New Year’s Eve to pray and thank God not only for the present, but also for the New Year. *Pray away the old, and bring in the new.*

SUGGESTED RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Read the Bible: Reading the Bible is usually on the list of New Year’s resolution for many Christians. It may also be on the list of some who

would like to develop a relationship with God and better understand scripture. And let’s be honest, reading and understanding the bible can be a daunting task. Reading the Bible is also a means of getting closer to God and understanding who He is on a personal level. There are scriptures to support and encourage you in your New Year’s New Beginning. (e.g., Jeremiah 29:11-13: *“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.”* Isaiah 43:18-19: *“Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”*)



Volunteer. The “do-list” of things to do to help our brothers and sisters in our own backyards, as well as globally is endless. **Martin Luther King Day of**

Service, A Day On, Not a Day Off. MLK Day is a great day to lend your services at churches, soup kitchens and other organizations. Volunteering is not only good for the community, but is also a great way to glorify God, who has blessed us with gifts and talents to benefit others. 1 Peter 4:10, *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”* Volunteering can be a great family activity, as well. It will help our children learn the importance of gratitude. **Health & Wellness:** When we think of honoring God, we typically only focus on our spiritual health. God, however, wants us to be better in all aspects of our lives, including our mental and physical health. Our bodies are made to honor Him. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 states: *“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.”* Taking care our mental and physical health enables us to honor and serve God more fully.

Share your testimony with non-Christian friends, family members or co-workers. Tell them about Jesus Christ and ask them to attend church with you. Talking about your faith journey may be the only time they ever learn about Jesus, so it’s important to make it special and offer up helpful information as you are able.

Create a tithing plan. Christians are called to be generous. That means using some of your financial income to honor God at your local church. It’s no secret: churches need money to continue to function as a place of worship. If you haven’t gotten in the tithing habit yet, the new year is a great time to start. Even if you can’t give a lot, start with something. For many, 10 percent of all income can be intimidating at first. Look at what you can do, and then work your way up as your faith grows and your

resolution blossoms. Talk to your pastor about other ways of tithing that are not financial.

Lean on God for support. Resolving to pray more, to read the Bible every day, and to attend church more regularly are fantastic resolutions. However, they can be difficult to maintain just as often as the non-spiritual resolutions. That is why it's incredibly important to lean on God and trust in Him more. We can become better versions of ourselves to glorify God when we ask for His help and guidance. When you struggle to meet your new fitness goals or break a habit, talk with God.

Random acts of kindness. Buy a sandwich or cup of coffee for a stranger. It might be his or her only meal for the day. A smile can brighten someone's day too.

Get more active in your church. The church is an important part of the Christian lifestyle. It's where we meet other Christians, celebrate the joys of the God, and learn about the Bible's teachings. Serving your church doesn't have to be boring or difficult. Look at your spiritual gifts and personal skill set and try to apply that to your churches' needs.

The New Year is a time of fresh beginnings. It gives us a chance to start over and grow. It is a time when healthy lifestyles and behaviors can be incorporated into our lives. It is also a time to make resolutions that will make a difference in the lives of others. It's a time to take what you have learned, build upon it to become the best version of yourself, and to always honor God.

UNION SPRINGS DISTRICT CED AWARDED BLACK BELT GRANT TO SPONSOR HISTORICAL EXCURSION TO ATLANTA FOR ITS VCYC

Submitted by Cannesta Felton

UNION SPRINGS, AL - There is so much in the Deep South to see and to be proud of that visiting Atlanta became a 2022 goal of the Unions Springs District's Director of Christian Education. Nadine Ivy, a native of Bullock County, home of Union Springs, is a graduate of Morris Brown College. Her personal experiences in coming to understand Atlanta's history teamed with the experiences of taking her students on city visits led her to suggest a tour of some of the most historical and popular attractions that Georgia has to offer. The district's Christian Education directors welcomed the opportunity to expand students' awareness of Atlanta's role in the Civil Rights Movement; its churches that were a source of solace for non-violent protesters and activists; its colleges and universities that have always supported service, scholarship, and leadership; and other sites not so commonly known or easily accessed (the Herndon House, the AU Center, Tyler Perry Studios). This excursion took place mid-July and was arranged for qualified youth from the Unions Springs District of the Alabama Conference.

When the idea for an excursion was initially pitched, the CED directors needed funding for a daytrip of this type. The economic increase was felt in all aspects of life, so admissions tickets and travel

expenses saw an increase in pricing. This made the need for locating funding paramount for the Unison Springs District CED. The Alabama Black Belt Community Foundation offered a Community Grant, as well as an Arts Grant, to support the needs, growth, and development of a particular community. Although the application process

is not tedious, the application is very specific to the demonstration of need (from the awareness/educational aspect), demonstration of production, and explanation of resolution and evidence. Two persons of the district's executive board wrote the grant, two others on the executive board worked to qualify youth for this excursion, while two more attended to the logistics of the excursion. The entire board relished the success of the award and enjoyed the reward by traveling with the youth to Atlanta to increase their learning and remind themselves of the sacrifices of the people who worked tirelessly on the Civil Rights Trail in that city.



This VCYC activity was aligned to the priorities of the organization: scholastic reengagement wherein academic enrichment is most important; and spiritual resurgence wherein gaining knowledge builds sound faith.

The CED directors were grateful to the grant foundation and were all committed to present required evidence of the use of the grant to the Black Belt Community Foundation coordinators and directors.



Youth participants included: Kandice Dixon, Andrew Chapel; JaNyah Fletcher, Tyson Chapel; Cabrera Penn, Cornerstone; Isaiah Thomas, Shiloh; Eve Morales, Creekstand; Christopher Carter, County Line; and Morgan Mason, Derry's Chapel. Unions Springs District directors who coordinated and experienced the excursion are District Director Nadine Ivy; Hattie Rowell; Marie Whatley; Mary A Smith; Marycile Echols; and Conference Director, Dr. Bobbie D Floyd.

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CLASS MEETINGS SYSTEM ENJOYING A RESURGENCE IN ATTENDANCE AND SPIRITUALITY AMONG MILLENNIALS AT ST. MATTHEW A.M.E. ZION CHURCH



Written by Rev. Dr. Charles Wesley Thurman, Jr., Pastor
Submitted by Debra Chappelle-Polk,
Spotlight Editor, The Star of Zion
Email: ZionSpotlight@StarofZion.org

New York, NY

January 2023 - The gospel of St. Mathew 18:20, tells us this: *“For where two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in the midst of them.”* These prophetic words were fulfilled thanks to vision and the tenacity three God-fearing pioneers, Mrs. Mary Stewart, Mrs. Alice Quarles and Mrs. Ellen Watson, who felt the need for a Methodist Church in the community and began worship services in a tent on a vacant lot at 2801 Mersington in Kansas City, Missouri. A few years later, these same persevering saints gave life to St. Matthew African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. A church that started as a canvass tent with dirt floors and kerosene lamps is now a pre-cast concrete stone building located on 4400 E. Linwood Blvd., with wall-to-wall carpeting, padded pews, a paved parking lot, gas, water, electricity and central air-conditioning. St. Matthew is now the Second Church in the Missouri Conference. Pastoral appointments to St. Matthew include Reverends Chappel, Canty, S.S. Ingram, Broomfield, J.C. Webb, W.A. Hilliard (later became a Bishop), Ben Blanks, George W. Whisonant, G.M. Howell, Annie M. Webb, Milford S. Vaughn, Jesse L. Williams, Dr. Osofo L.H. McDonald, Terry L. Jones Sr., Herolin Aiken, Vince L. Monden, Lloyd W. McKenzie Jr., D’Andre W. James-Daniels, Kelsey M. Hopson.

The Rev. Dr. Charles Wesley Thurman, Jr. is St. Matthew AME Zion Church’s current pastor, having been appointed by Bishop Starnes in 2018. Dr. Thurman has a passion for ministry and the work of Christ. He desires to be purposeful in creating ministry that prioritizes disciple-making.

St. Matthew has four women on its ministerial staff: Associate Pastor, Rev. Lisa Anderson; Associate Ministers Rev. Shannon Hancock, Rev. Rebecca Skinner and Rev. Cynthia Lewis. Rev. Ivan Harvey also serves as an Associate Minister. Other Ministries include a Praise & Worship Team, Outreach Ministry, A Children’s Zone, and Young Adult Ministry. Dr. Thurman believes its vital to establish a presence in the community.

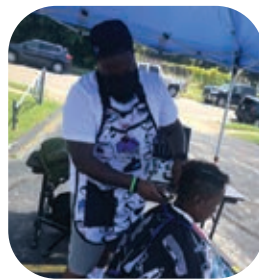
The Outreach Team strives to assess the needs of the individuals who reside in the 64128 area. As part of their outreach initiatives, St. Matthew hosts annual backpack, coats, and clothing giveaways.

This past August St. Matthew hosted and giveaway and provided food, free haircuts, face painting, obtained a bounce house, and served the community with prayer. They blessed the community with over 100 backpacks.



Because of the pandemic, in 2019 St. Matthew was closed and began broadcasting its Sunday Worship services via Zoom. In-person Sunday services resumed in 2020. Services continue to be live-streamed. Sunday School and Bible Study are held on Zoom as well.

Dr. Thurman is intentional in his efforts to build and maintain strong relationships with his congregation. He is most proud of the reinstated Class Meeting system, and in particular, the growing participation among millennials. He said, “the reinstatement of Class Meetings has been very successful both spiritually and numerically.” He has found there’s more interaction among younger people, “who feel more empowered to freely express their spirituality in the Class Meeting setting.” Class Meetings also provide a



space where millennials discuss the importance of the Black Church on their lives, as well as how the church can expand its reach among the younger African Americans.

The capital campaign to raise \$100,000.00 for the expansion and renovation of the church building is another project Dr. Thurman is proud of. They have currently raised \$35,000. In addition to applying for grants to meet this goal, St. Matthew members have committed to donating \$10 a week for 18 months. The expansion and renovation will allow St. Matthew to increase its community outreach programs, expand its children’s ministries, as well as host annual and district conferences.

When he is not preaching, Rev. Thurman teaches in the Black Leadership and Ministry Doctor of Ministry Program at Nazarene Theological Seminary. His focus is on developing more young African American practitioners to advance the field of Black Theology and bring about liberation in the Black community. He also serves as the Associate Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program. He has helped to create the Doctor of Ministry in Black Leadership and Ministry track and serves as the DMIN Track Professor of African American Spiritual Formation and Discipleship for the track.

Rev. Dr. Charles Wesley Thurman, Jr. was born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana. He is married to Christina Thurman, and they have four children.

He graduated from IUPUI in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and later graduated from Indiana Wesleyan University, Wesley Seminary in 2016 with a Master of Divinity degree and obtained a Church Planting and Multiplication Certification. He also received his Doctor of Ministry Degree with a focus in Transformational Leadership from Wesley Seminary in 2020. His dissertation focus was “An Analysis of the Methodist Class Meeting and Its Spiritual Effects on Black Millennials in the 21st Century.” He is currently working to obtain his PhD in African preaching and sacred rhetoric from Christian Theological Seminary, in Indianapolis, IN., under the direction of Rev. Dr. Frank Thomas.



He is an ordained elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. His first pastorate was completed at the Alive AME Zion Church in Noblesville, Indiana, where he planted and served for three

years. He now serves as the lead pastor of the St. Matthew AME Zion Church in Kansas City, MO., and has served there since January of 2018. Dr. Thurman has a passion for spreading the message of Jesus Christ. He desires to be purposeful in creating innovative and transformative ministry and desires to be instrumental in the expansion of the

kingdom of God through making disciples.

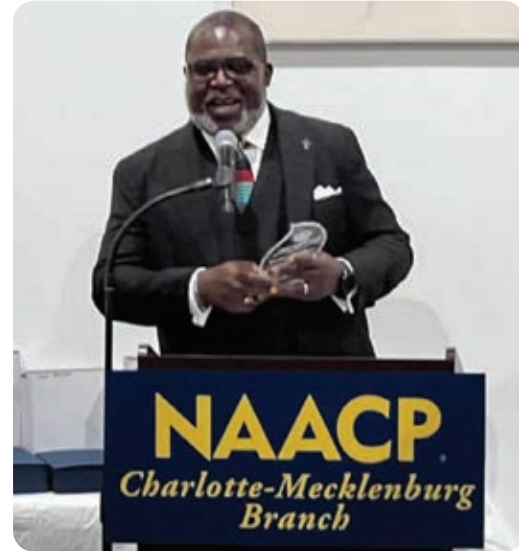
“To God be the glory for the great things He has done in the life of St. Matthew. We are abundantly blessed.” - Rev. Dr. Charles W. Thurman, Jr.

THE REV. DR. DWAYNE ANTHONY WALKER RECEIVES “EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AWARD”

Submitted by Rev. Diane Commander

A very Gala event was held on Saturday, October 22, 2022, at the Charlotte Museum of History. The atmosphere was inviting, exciting and delightful as awardees proudly received their awards at the NAACP Charlotte-Mecklenburg 2022 Freedom Awards Banquet. Congratulations to my Pastor, Rev. Dr. Dwayne Anthony Walker who received the “Excellence in Leadership Award”. The evening was dedicated to honoring people who empower our communities to take a stand and to create a positive change.

Dr. Walker please know that your family and church family are so very proud of you! We enjoyed great food and great music from the Musical Guest - the Hamiltones. To God Be the Glory!



WOMEN IN THE PULPIT IS STILL AN ACT OF RESISTANCE

Written by Rev. Nicolle Harris

Submitted by Debra Chappelle-Polk,
Zion Spotlight Editor, Star of Zion
Email: Zionspotlight@StarOfZion.org

January 2023

New York, NY - This latest article in **The Clergywomen in Zion** series is written Rev. Nicolle Harris, Pastor of Duryee Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Schenectady, New York. Rev. Harris talks about the opposition she’s encountered as a female minister and how her perseverance in ministry is “an act of resistance”. As the series continues, female clergy will share their experiences as female “preachers”, while navigating the sexism, patriarchy and misogyny that still exists in the church, the academy and society at large.

Pastoring is the only vocation I have ever held where people opposed me doing it simply because of my gender. I have held down jobs as a waitress, bartender, non-profit director, and teacher. Not once while I was working in those positions did, I have someone come up to me and say, “you know you really shouldn’t be doing this.” Not until I was a preacher did, I realize that operating in certain roles in ministry was an act of resistance.

When I first became a licensed preacher in 2011, my family was elated. St. John A.M.E. Zion Church, a small parish in Lakewood, New Jersey, was standing room only for my trial sermon. Mind you, it did not take much to fill up the sanctuary, but to me it was a huge crowd full of love. I was nervous, but grateful to have so much support. It was not until I started preaching regularly at St. John that it was revealed that some of the support was a façade. My pastor, who is also my father in the ministry, was incredibly supportive and gave me and the other five preachers on the ministerial team ample opportunity to hone our craft. Soon after I started preaching as a part of the regular rotation at our church one of the trustees wanted to make me aware of his disapproval. He came up to me often after I preached to let me know, I was a fairly good preacher

however, he did not believe in female pastors. He even shared that he told the Presiding Elder once not to send a female pastor to our church. He even chuckled after saying it. He said this in the presence of other men and no one spoke up to defend me. I did not even defend myself. My mind responded with a nervous laugh. In hindsight, I realize that he was perhaps not the only person at St. John who felt that way. In fact, I’m sure he is not the only one in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church who felt this way. Let me be clear - there are men *and* women who are opposed to women being pastors. This trustee was the first to make me aware of this but he would not be the last.

With all the sexism I have encountered in ministry I am sure it pales in comparison to what Rev. Julia A. J. Foote and Rev. Mary J. Small experienced. Rev. Foote was ordained as the first woman deacon in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Rev. Small became the first woman to be ordained an elder in our denomination when her nomination was approved on May 23, 1898 at the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference. She was nominated after passing her examination. It is recorded that several ministers protested and requested a trial. They strongly opposed her ordination. Despite the opposition, she was elected an elder by a vote of 24 to 13. This made the A.M.E. Zion Church the first to open the position of elder to women. As an elder, Rev. Small was given the same rights as her male colleagues, including authority over male members of the church.

I have been in pastoral ministry for five years now and I could submit an article full of examples of sexism I have experienced personally. None were as painful as the ones I have experienced at the hands of those I thought were in my corner but I digress because I would rather thank the ones who not only support me, but continue to pave the way for me.

I have two mentors in ministry. One of my mentors is Rev. Dionne Boissiere. I met Rev. Boissiere during my internship while I was working on my Master of Divinity degree at Drew University. Rev.

Boissière is the Chaplain of the Church Center for the United Nations (CCUN). She is the first woman of African descent to hold the position in the history of this New York ecumenical and inter-faith landmark. My other mentor is Rev. Dr. Laticia Hill-Godette. Dr. Godette was recently appointed 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 A.M.E. Zion Church. She was also the first woman to Pastor a first church in the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District. These appointments came under the leadership of Bishop W. Darin Moore and Bishop Dennis V. Proctor. There are women such as the late Bishop Mildred “Bonnie” Hines, the first woman elected Bishop in the A.M.E. Zion Church, who broke the ecclesiastical glass ceiling. I thank the women who broke the glass ceiling. The women who were cut, wounded, and scarred so that I would be able to serve as I am called.

The ministry ceiling has been shattered. Nevertheless, in 2022 the jagged edges of the glass that remain are still cutting women like myself who are called to pastor. While it is true, we have many female pastors in the A.M.E. Zion Church, it is safe to say not everyone approves of our appointments. I have never once considered not being a pastor because of someone’s opinion about women in ministry, because they did not call me, God did. Women will continue to mount pulpits. We will continue to resist and persist.

I have a 15-year-old young lady at the church I pastor. She is a sophomore in high school and has already decided which college she wants to attend for undergraduate school and has stated that she wants to go to seminary to earn her Master of Divinity degree one day. Her anointing is obvious, and I am honored to be her pastor; who knows, one day she might be my pastor. She may experience sexism and opposition one day, but my prayer is that she will always remember she had a calling before anyone who opposed her had an opinion.



Rev. Jean-Simon is the Pastor of Duryee Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Schenectady, NY. She is a graduate of The Theological School at Drew University & a Doctoral Student at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

“I approach this role and everything I do in life while making sure it’s aligned with what God has called for me to do. I’m not just appointed to a church, I’m appointed to a community. So it’s not, ‘Nicole, go over there and be the pastor of that church,’ it’s ‘Nicole, go there and serve that community.’ And I look at it that way. When God sent me here, he wasn’t just sending me to the church, he was sending me to the community.”

THE EASTERN SHORE DISTRICT ANNUAL “MORE ON THE SHORE” CRAB FEAST A SUCCESS! HONORING THE LEGACY OF PRESIDING ELDER JOHN W. KENNEDY AND MS. ROXIE CONNELLY

Submitted by Aundra Roberts

St. James A.M.E. Zion Church, Salisbury, MD - It was a “Crab-Cracking”, Saturday on September 26, 2022, for over 200 guests, as the group of Eastern District churches, youth, families, friends, and community supporters, gathered at The Salvation Army Richard Hazel Youth Center for the Annual “More On The Shore” Crab Feast, to support the Kennedy-Connelly Educational Assistance Fundraiser.

The Kennedy - Connelly Educational Assistance Fund was established under the guidance of Rev. Dr. William E. Kelly, Presiding Elder, in memory and recognition of the ministry and leadership contributed by the late Presiding Elder, Reverend Dr. John W. Kennedy and Ms. Roxie Connelly, District Director of Christian Education, to the Eastern Shore District and youth. The fund is established for the purpose of providing educational assistance stipends to individuals pursuing higher education at an accredited institution AND are active members in good standing as members of a church within the Eastern Shore District.



The Rev. Dr. William E. Kelly, Presiding Elder of the Eastern Shore District,

Mrs. Aundra Roberts, Chairperson, and the Steering Committee; Rev. Dr. David L. McLendon,

Rev. Dr. R. J. Chandler,

Rev. Tyquan Alston, Ms. Deborah Stanley, Ms. Thelma Orr, Mr. Michael King and Mr. Thom Foster welcomed guests to the “Sold Out” event.

The afternoon began with greetings from Presiding Elder Kelly, followed by a memorial video prepared by Walter Kennedy, grandson of Presiding Elder Kennedy, owner of Social Aspect. An inspiring

recorded message from Rev. Keitha Kennedy, expressing her gratitude for hosting the event followed. Mr. Lewis Connelly, widower, of Ms. Connelly, and Richard Woodard, grandson of Presiding Elder Kennedy, gave words of appreciation and gratitude to the committee and presented generous family contributions to the fund. Gifts of love and appreciation were presented to honorees by Presiding Elder Kelly and Mrs. Robrbs.



A buffet of servers with a variety of menu items, awaited our guests prior to the crab cracking, corn-on-the-cob feast. Guests were entertained with live music, a raffle and door prizes. Presiding Elder Kelly and Eastern Shore District Pastors; Rev. Tyquan Alston, St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Rev. Daquan Bimbo, Mt. Hope A.M.E. Zion Church, Rev. Dr. R. J. Chandler, Transformation and Scott A.M.E. Zion churches, Rev. Dr. David L. McLendon, St. James A.M.E. Zion Church, Rev. Dr. Wilford Oney, Liberating Power A.M. E. Zion Church, Rev. Alisa Torney, Wallace Temple A.M.E. Zion Church and Rev. Tashanika Thomas, St. John A.M.E. Zion Church, were all presented with a hotel stay get-away and dinner.

If you wish to donate to the Kennedy-Connelly Educational Assistance Fund, please make checks payable to: Eastern Shore District, (note on memo line: KCAF) and send to Eastern Shore District Secretary, Ms. Deborah Stanley, P.O. Box 4161, Salisbury, MD 21803-4161.

“There’s More on the Shore where success always demands effort”!

WESLEYAN TRADITION EVOLVES INTO GLOBAL MINISTRY

Submitted by Rev. Gwendolyn Moore

Rev. Dr. Roe Nall, Jr. will readily acknowledge his humble beginnings as a Zionite, and being sustained through the faith of his dedicated Mother's mite. He advocates: **"Where a person starts in life and ministry has no bearing on where the person will end."** He recalls his first pastoral church appointment to Warrior Mission, by Bishop Felix Anderson, North Alabama Conference in October 1970. He was only 23, newly married, and remembers how warmly the congregation of 17 members embraced them. The one-room church edifice with no plumbing, was heated by a "pot-bellied" coal stove. The meager offerings were used for church maintenance. He served without salary allowance; and later relocated to the Michigan Annual Conference, Saint Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Toledo, Ohio under the spiritual guidance of Rev. George Maize, III. He subsequently returned to the North Alabama Conference for pastoral work in four churches under the priestly guidance of Bishop J. Clinton Hoggard, who encouraged young ministers to "either go out and start a church or use your gifts and talents to help grow other striving works." Rev. Nall felt that God was calling him to another point of service, away from the corporate world where he was a Vice President for Human Resources for a major fortune 500 Company.

In preparation for ministry, Rev. Nall earned a Master of Divinity Degree, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, and a Doctorate of Ministry, Luther Rice Seminary, Lithonia, Georgia. Bishop Arthur Marshall, Jr. presented him with a "paper appointment" as Pastor in Charge of Decatur Mission on Sunday, November 2, 1986. There was no official membership roster; no Sunday School classes; no church building; no place to celebrate marriages nor to funeralize loved ones; but God continued the story. "During the 27 years, four months, and eight days as pastor, God raised up a monument to His honor and glory." Decatur Mission is currently renamed Solid Rock A.M.E. Zion Church, Lithonia, Georgia. At the end of Pastor Nall's tenure, there were 225 congregants, and the church was completely debt free. The six-acre campus comprises a sanctuary, an educational building, an annex building, and a Senior Day Care Center serving families in DeKalb County Georgia. His mother, Mrs. Virgie Nall, was the Center's first client. The ministry provided a lucrative salary package, employed five salaried staff members, and had over \$500,000 in cash assets. According to Pastor Nall, "God blessed me from my beginnings of no salary nor benefits to a salary with benefit package that was second to none." He reaped enormous benefits and witnessed renowned travels with Church Choirs and congregants to the White House, Washington, DC and Rome, Italy. He was the only American invited to Rome to serve on the Planning Committee for the 300th Birth Anniversary of Charles Wesley. The Vatican invited Pastor Nall to attend several papal audiences. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church appointed him to the World Methodist Council of which he is now serving his fifth term.

Rev. Nall sponsored a delegation to the 20th World Methodist Conference in Durban, South Africa with the Bishop Clarence Carr Mass Choir of Georgia rendering musical selections. Later, the Solid Rock Ensemble, with musical Director Ronald Stevens, were special guests at the 300th Birth Anniversary celebration of Charles Wesley in Rome, Italy. Such accomplishments cannot be realized without the support of others. He is thankful to Bishops George E. Battle, Jr., Joseph Johnson, and Kenneth Monroe; and the late Bishops Arthur Marshall, Jr., Cecil Bishop, and Clarence Carr for such milestones in the life of his ministries—locally and globally. **Where a person starts in life and ministry has no bearing on where the person will end.**

As he and his late wife, Mayfred, served throughout the A.M. E. Zion Church with a world perspective, they devoted their ministry to the **John Wesleyan Tradition:** "Do all the good we can, by all the means

we can, in all the ways we can, in all the places we can, at all the times we can, to all the people we can, as long as ever we can."

Thusly, he embarked upon a missional calling inclusive of the "World as my Parish." He advocated as the co-founder with his late wife, Mrs. Mayfred Nall, an evolving ministry named *Reaching and Meeting Needs Worldwide Ministry, Inc.*, founded November 29, 2013. This non-profit evangelistic outreach has nurtured the spiritual life of Zion through the publication of the Lenten Dove for the past eleven years, with its commemorative edition published in April 2022. Rev. Dr. Nall, Jr., CEO, has made generous contributions to ecumenical ventures and to Zion causes—locally and internationally, urban and rural churches. He has served as former Presiding Elder of the Georgia Conyers-Winder District, a Pastor of Pastors, and prayer warrior for Zion's episcopal and executive leaderships.

Globally, he has donated financial gifts to clergy upon their appointments in the Western West African Episcopal Conference during Bishop S. Chuka Ekemam, Sr.'s tenure. He has also donated school and health supplies for a village orphanage in South Africa. Locally, the world parish ministry has renovated bathroom and fellowship halls for rural churches, installed first-class sound systems, paid off mortgages for churches; co-sponsored with metro-churches to feed 3,500 families during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to assist other churches/congregations during natural disasters.



Rev. Nall convenes a weekly meditation and prayer outreach via virtual teleconference and renders other pastoral care "par excellence" to recipients at their point of need. These recipients may be seniors or physically impaired, caregivers of homebound or isolated listeners, active intercessors or exhorters. Some are simply needing the comfort and refuge of corporate prayer. Callers connect through similar struggles, feel transparency and acceptance, seek spiritual presence and compassionate pastoral care. This weekly assembly began to make inquiry of meeting together face to face to share identity beyond the auditory linkage by phone. Thusly, the Inaugural Assembly of the World Parish convened in August 2022, at the Omni Atlanta Hotel at CNN Center, Atlanta, GA. The theme for the Assembly of the World Parish was: "Sustained by God's Faithfulness." The gathering of around eighty participants hailed from the north (Ohio), the south (Florida, Alabama, Mississippi), the east (Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Georgia), and west (Texas). The fellowship forged a connection between voices and faces uniting.

Event planners, Marva McKnight and Janice Grady, facilitated an enjoyable weekend itinerary with a meet and greet reception, cultural civil rights and city tour, banquet, and Sunday Morning Prayer and Worship Services. Rev. Garrett Williamson, Emmanuel A.M.E. Zion Church, Stone Mountain, Georgia, was keynote speaker for the Banquet. He expounded on sermon topic, "I Thought We Were Going to Have a Good Time," Genesis 9:20-21; central points: Noah received favor but experienced challenging obstacles as a result of the flood; humanity's preservation and the revelation of Noah's inherent gift was not revealed until the storm; Noah's ark experience left him drunk and taxed without resolve. Pastor Nall has served parishioners from a godly perspective to navigate life's turbulent storms and to prayerfully seek resolution through spiritual guidance.

Dr. Rachel Dunbar was the Banquet Program Presider; other program participants were: Rev. Dr. Mercuria Williams, Dr. Sondra Coleman, Rev. Garrette Williamson, Dr. Steven Steinhilber, Ms. Vanessa Nealey, Professor Edward White; Ms. Virginia Mathis, Rev. Sabrina Scott, and

Mr. Paul and Mrs. Jenny Thompson; China Scholars: Khadija Easley, Kendarius McNeese, Keneisha Rollins, and Derrick Williams.

Special awards and recognitions followed: First person to register, Eloise Ramsey; most distant travelers, Bill and Vicki Tabor; the volunteer, Cheryl Weems; the evangelist, Zeddie Hall; the youth attendee, E. J. Dunbar, Jr.; the youngest attendee, Naomi Rose Wherry.

The concluding services began Sunday morning, August 21 at 8:00 A.M. Rev. Shirley Sparks, Pastor, Walls Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Toledo, Ohio, was the Worship Leader for the Sunday Morning "Encountering God Through Prayer" Service. Other participants in the Prayer service were Bonita Adams, Arietha Lockhart, Rev. Charles Watkins, Sr., Rev. Tandra Jones, Rev. Dorothy Thomas, Rev. Gwendolyn Moore, Ron Marshall, Johnna Moon, Debra Rivers and Monique Wherry. These prayer warriors from clergy and laity addressed spiritual, human, societal, generational, and political needs.

The culminating Worship Service began promptly at 10:00 A.M. with the Call to Worship by Pastor Nall. The Prayer of Invocation, Rev. April Sumrow; the Morning Prayer, Dr. Montina Jackson. The closing sermon encouraged attendees to remain "Sustained by God's Faithfulness." The parishioners individually received a benedictive blessing as they quietly recessed from the sanctuary in preparation of returning to their homes throughout the nation. Pastor Roe Nall, Jr., Mr. Clement Ezeanii, E. J. Dunbar, Jr., Dr. Tamara Nall-Ezeanii, and Dr. Rachel Dunbar, were gracious hosts and hostesses for all the events of the Assembly of the World Parish as a Global Ministry.

As Rev. Dr. Roe Nall, Jr. reflects on the Methodist, ancestral legends which have impacted his life, he acknowledges a mantra to go into the world imparting the gospel message and making disciples. His ecumenical outreach has become a viable legacy for pastoral care and ministerial support through the "Wesleyan" tradition.

TWO NEW YORK CONFERENCE PASTORS

City & State New York Magazine annually publishes profiles and photographs of notable leaders on their various "POWER 100" lists. Last year the popular magazine published its December 6th issue the inaugural power 100 list of faith leaders.

Two of the A.M.E. Zion Church's very own leading pastors, Dr. Malcolm Byrd of Mother A.M.E. Zion Church in Harlem and Dr. Stephen Pogue of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion in Mount Vernon, NY were included on the notable roster. It is worth saying they are included with giants such as Rev. Al Sharpton, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, and Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum.

"I am honored to share among this extraordinary and exceptional group of clerics throughout our state but I am especially thrilled to share this moment with my friend and colleague of long standing, Dr. Stephen Pogue. The work of the Freedom Church must continue!", Commented Dr. Byrd to *The Star of Zion*. Dr. Byrd is an alumnus of Livingstone College, a historically Black college in North Carolina. He received an undergraduate degree from the State University of New York, at Purchase. He is also a graduate of the Pacific School of Religion of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA with a graduate degree in theological studies. He undertook further studies at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ. He was an undergraduate fellow of the Fund for Theological Education. In 2019 Rev. Byrd received the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology (Honoris Causa) from the Wayland Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a member of the Board of Visitors of Howard University School of Divinity.



As an ordained Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Dr. Byrd enjoyed successful pastorates in Brockton, Massachusetts, and Greenport, New York. Having been appointed by the Board of Bishops of the A.M.E. Zion Church as Zion's second Chief of Protocol in 50 years, Dr. Byrd is responsible for establishing order and custom for all national services and ceremonies of the A.M.E. Zion Church. He

also served as the Senior Pastor of the historic Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, (Founded 1818) the oldest continuous Black church in Brooklyn, New York. Rev. Byrd served as the Senior Pastor of the First A.M.E. Zion Church-San Francisco, California, one of oldest African American institutions west of the Mississippi, organized in 1852, where through his leadership the mortgage was liquidated, a pipe organ installed and the church renovated. During his years in San Francisco, he

was engaged in social and ecumenical ventures that made First A.M.E. Zion Church a hotbed of social justice activity in San Francisco.

Dr. Byrd is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., 100 Black Men of America Inc, American Academy of Religion, NAACP, a 32nd degree Prince Hall Mason (Boyer Lodge #1), The 100 Coalition, Grand United Order of Odd Fellows and the University Club of San Francisco.

Reverend Dr. Stephen W. Pogue is a native of Roselle, N.J. He graduated from Cranford High School and then joined the United States Air Force. He remained enlisted until 1988.

In 1998, he graduated from Nyack College with a B.S. Degree in Bible and Pastoral Ministries. While there, he served as President of the African American Association of Cultural Exchange (AAACE) Club and the President's Advisory Panel on Cultural Enrichment (PAPCE).

Dr. Pogue is currently vice president of the Alumni Association of Nyack College. He is also a graduate of Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, NY where he received a Master of Divinity Degree in May 2005. In May 2011, he received his Doctorate of Ministry Degree in preaching from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. Pastor Pogue has faithfully served in the New York Conference of the A.M.E. Zion Church in a variety of capacities. In 2001, he was appointed Pastor of the Greater Hood Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Harlem, N.Y. where he served until September 2006. During that time, Rev. Pogue also Co-Founded the Hip Hop Church in Harlem New York. The Hip Hop Church has been featured in a variety of national and international print media. It has also been profiled in international media, on cable networks MTV and BET as well as local and national news stations; CBS, ABC, NBC, and CNN.

In September 2006, Rev. Dr. Pogue was appointed to serve as the Pastor of The Greater Cooper A.M.E. Zion Church in Oakland California. Rev. Dr. Pogue served the California Conference in a variety of capacities. Dr. Pogue was appointed to Greater Centennial in November 2012. "I am honored to have been selected with such powerful preachers and faith leaders. I thank God for blessing Greater Centennial and Zion.", Said Dr. Pogue to *the Star*.

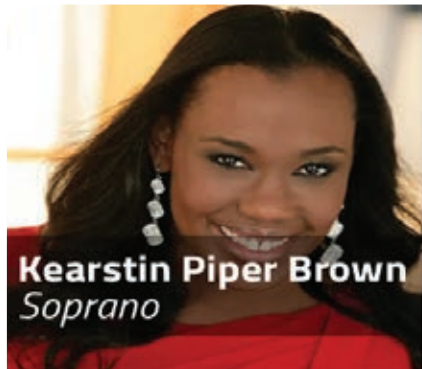
We certainly look forward to hearing of even greater things from these two servant leaders.



HANDEL BRINGS HELP TO HUGGINS

Submitted by The Star of Zion

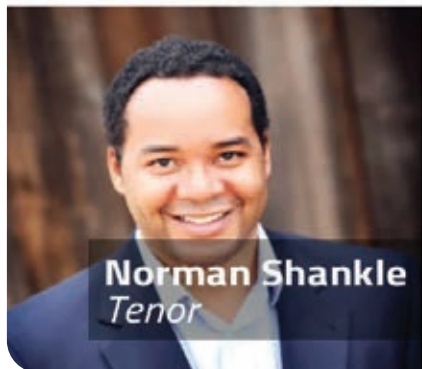
POTOMAC, MD — One of the best-known choral works, *Messiah*, HWV 56 was written by Handel in 1741 as an Easter offering, with English-language text compiled by arts patron and friend Charles Jennens. The oratorio features an instrumentation characteristic of baroque ensembles—including strings, oboes, trumpets, timpani, and basso continuo—as well as a choir and four vocal soloists. Following Handel's death in 1759, the work has been adapted to feature sizable orchestras and choruses, and it has become a staple of the Christmas season. NatPhil continues this tradition with three holiday performances, featuring the National Philharmonic Chorale and Orchestra under the baton of



Kearstin Piper Brown
Soprano



Lucia Bradford
Mezzo Soprano



Norman Shankle
Tenor



Jorell Williams
Baritone

Stan Engebretson. The choral and orchestral mass will be joined by four soloists: soprano Kearstin Piper Brown, mezzo soprano Lucia Bradford, tenor Norman Shankle, and baritone Jorell Williams.

**NATIONAL
PHILHARMONIC
HARMONIC
AT STRATHMORE**

National Philharmonic (NatPhil) presents three performances of George Frideric Handel's *Messiah*, aimed at bringing renewed social relevance, commentary, and philanthropy to an annual holiday tradition. Conducted by Stan Engebretson, the program features a stellar cast of African American singers alongside the National Philharmonic Chorale. In the spirit of the season, 50 percent of the proceeds from this year's performances at Strathmore will go

toward the 2nd Century Project to raise funds for the restoration of the historic Scotland African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church. NatPhil's *Messiah* takes place on Saturday, December 17 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, December 18 at 3:00 p.m. at Strathmore and on Friday, December 23 at 7:30 p.m. at Capital One Hall. Tickets are currently on sale at nationalphilharmonic.org.

The Scotland African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church was built by hand and opened in 1924 by Black congregants in Potomac. Registered as a State Historic Site by the Maryland Historical Trust, today the church is the only historic building to survive in the Scotland

community. It is a site of struggle, triumph, and resiliency that deserves to be celebrated and supported.



The original wood-frame structure, one of the last of its kind in the region, was nearly destroyed by a flood in the summer of 2019 and has suffered subsequent damage due to intense tropical storms over the past few years. These storms damaged the foundation of the church and collapse of the entire structure is imminent without your support.

Today, the members of the Scotland A.M.E. Zion Church and its allies in Montgomery County have launched the *2nd Century Project*, a three-phase plan to rescue the building. They want to repair it, safeguard it against floods, and expand it to serve the future needs of the congregation and the wider community. "This is a tremendous blessing to our 2nd Century project" commented Pastor, Dr. Evalina Huggins, Presiding Elder of the Baltimore District.



In addition, NatPhil will welcome the Scotland A.M.E. Zion Mass Choir and its director Michael Terry for a pre-concert set on all dates. Patrons are encouraged to attend this free performance, which will start 30 minutes prior to the *Messiah* in the venues' lobby areas.

The upcoming performances also provide an opportunity to research, reflect on, and educate audiences about the history of *Messiah*'s composer. An area of focus will be the recent scholarship uncovering Handel's link to the slave economy through his own financial investments and by accepting donations from investors in the Royal African Company. To explore these complicated topics, NatPhil will partner with the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts (CAAPA) to present *Hidden Handel*, a seminar at the CAAPA Cultural Center on Wednesday, December 14th at 11 a.m. This panel discussion with talk-back aims to shed light on the lives of artists within their historical context, and to acknowledge the conflicts that exist between art and artists to this day. Additional education opportunities surrounding Handel will also be explored through NatPhil's Harmonic Justice series, which highlights the intersection of racial equity and classical music.

"We are overjoyed to bring back *Messiah*—our most popular event each season—and to reach more people in the DMV area by presenting the program at two locations," said National Philharmonic Music Director Piotr Gajewski. "Several aspects will make these performances even more meaningful than in years past: our fantastic cast of vocal soloists, whom we're thrilled to showcase; our effort to raise awareness of, and much-needed support for, the Scotland A.M.E. Zion Church; and our learning and engagement activities to educate audiences about the complicated history behind Handel. All of these comprise what I deem to be an appropriate response to the programming of Handel's masterpiece, and one that we aim to thoughtfully design and bring to our community for seasons to come."

NORTH CHARLOTTE DISTRICT LIFE MEMBERS PRESENT A CRUISE ON THE AGAPE LOVE BOAT

Submitted by G. Joyner Johnson, Reporter
Syteria Puryear, Photographer

CHARLOTTE, NC – Under the North Charlotte District Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society, Mrs. Roye Buck, President, the Life Member’s Chairperson, Ms. Castella Conner prayerfully decided to use the “Love Boat” theme for the District Project. Members, neighbors and friends of the District convened at Greenville Memorial AME Zion Church pastored by Rev. Dr. Sheldon R. Shipman on the afternoon of December 4, 2022.



Rev. Henrico White, Pastor of the Weeping Willow AME Zion Church served as the Master of Ceremonies and with tasteful humor, led all the attendees and program participants through the afternoon. Rev. Jarma R. Chisholm and Rev. Clarence Jones opened with Prayer and reading of the scripture, respectively.



Music was provided by a quartet which included

Rev. Reginald and Mrs. LaKiesha Coffey, Pastor and First Lady of the Reeves Temple AME Zion Church and Rev. Ellison Bowman (Retired Pastor and Retired North Charlotte District Treasurer) and Mrs. Linda Bowman (Retired President of the North Charlotte District WH&OMS).



The pageantry of the day began with the entrance of the Life Members Chairman/Contestants, dressed in red, from each church was escorted by a Bud of Promise also dressed in red and the pastor of the church. Then the entertainment of the evening began with a skit entitled “Love Boat”.

Participants sang a slightly modified comedic version of the theme song from the Love Boat television show of the 1970’s-1980’s. Captain “Agape” was portrayed by Rev. Clarence Jones and his back-up singers were the “Lovettes”. The “stewards” on the Love Boat each explained how they will show LOVE to people during the coming year.



Three contestants were crowned in each of four categories with the first-place winners receiving a very large trophy and a tiara/crown. The second and third place winners in each category received trophies. All contestants were photographed with Presiding Elder Henderson and Mrs. Buck. Ms. Conner presented the BUDS as they received thanks and gifts as they also gave their interpretations of the meaning of love.



After closing remarks and thanks to all participants, supporters and attendees, Elder Henderson prayed the benediction and grace for the food being served at the repass. Everyone enjoyed their short cruise on the “Life Member’s Love Boat.”



YOUTH MISSIONARY TEE-SHIRT PROJECT EXCEEDS THE GOAL

Submitted by Melva Polk Wright

The Youth Missionary Society of the Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society is celebrating its 111th Anniversary during the month of January 2023. Mission ministry to our Youth ages 13-21 has occurred continuously since its inception. We are excited to share the overwhelming response to our most recent ministry project.

In April of 2022, as Connectional Secretary of Youth, I invited all Presiding Elder Districts to participate in the “2500 Tees for Teens Project”. Tee shirts are the third highest requested item in homeless shelters. Socks are the most requested item with underwear being a close second. The goal of the project was for each Presiding Elder District to donate at least 20 shirts to a shelter, school or community entity that serves our target population of 13-21 year old’s. There are at least

120 stateside Presiding Elder Districts in the continental United States. The goal of 2500 should be easily reached.

All nine Episcopal Areas with stateside work participated. A special thank you to the Missionary Supervisors for encouraging your District Youth Secretaries to engage in this project.

Our goal for this project was a total of 2500. I am thrilled to share that we exceeded that goal in a major way. We collectively were able to donate **10,419** tee shirts to various entities in our local communities. As an incentive, the Presiding Elder District that collected/donated the highest number of tee shirts will receive a \$100 seed for their next mission project. We are excited to share that the Lincolnton District, Western North Carolina Conference, Piedmont Episcopal District donated 2701 tee shirts to a variety of locations within their area. Congratulations to the District Youth Secretary, Dedra Glenn.

The PE District that came in second was the Baltimore District, Philadelphia Baltimore Conference, Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. The District Secretary of Youth is Rev. Erika Butler. The 3 Episcopal Areas that collected/donated the largest number of tee shirts are the Piedmont Episcopal District, the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District and the North Eastern Episcopal District respectively. Missionary Supervisor Camille Starnes’ Episcopal Area donated 3831 tee shirts. Special thanks to Missionary Supervisors Devieta Moore (second) and D. Diane Proctor (third) for their leadership in their areas. I sincerely want to thank Missionary Supervisors Sheila Monroe, Lovetta Holmes, Gelenia Frencher, Laurenna Crenshaw, H. Jean Leake, and Rev. Felica Thompson for working with their areas. Every Episcopal Area went above and beyond to support this ministry project. We as Youth Missionaries are grateful that we can collectively make impact in our communities. Thank you to our International President, Mrs. Sandra B. Crowder, for her ongoing support of the ministry projects of the Youth Missionary Society.



WELLS FARGO'S GEORGETTE DIXON RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTORATE FROM LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE

Submitted by The Star of Zion

Dec. 9, 2022,

SALISBURY – Livingstone College has added another distinguished member to its family of honorary degree recipients.

Wells Fargo's Georgette "Gigi" Dixon received an honorary doctorate degree from the historic black college in Salisbury on Dec. 9 during Livingstone's ninth annual December Conferral of Degrees.

Livingstone President Dr. Anthony J. Davis, by authority of the college's Board of Trustees, conferred upon Dixon the honorary doctorate degree in humane letters, following her commencement address to the graduating seniors.

Dixon serves as executive vice president and head of External Engagement for Diverse Segments, Representation and Inclusion for Wells Fargo. She received the honorary doctorate for her work with the company and as a champion for diversity, equity and inclusion.

She is also a member of the national NAACP Board of Directors; vice chair for the NAACP Foundation; vice chairman of the U.S. Black Chambers Inc.; a corporate advisory board member of UnidosUS; a trustee of the Trust for the National Mall; a member of the Rainbow Push/Coalition Board of Directors; and a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.

"This has been a very emotional and moving day for me and my family," Dixon said. "Never would I have thought that I would receive this honor."

She thanked Davis for the invite and the honor as she mentioned how proud her mother would be if she were alive to witness this because she believed education was the great equalizer.

Dixon spoke to the graduating class about resiliency, relevancy and readiness – three branding points of the college under the leadership of its new president.

"Livingstone has given you what you need to be resilient, relevant and ready," Dixon said. "Livingstone College has given you the stone of life."

She told the graduates that they have everything they need to be resilient. "If you're a believer and you are on this campus, which was founded on Christian principles, then you have what's called the Holy Spirit ... which rests and abides within you and will keep you no matter what.

Life is designed for you to have challenges but remember, you don't have a testimony unless you've been through a test," she said.

She told students that relevancy can be fleeting. "Your relevancy can go away tomorrow. It is not tied to your social media status ... It's

more important for you to know how to assess and own your own relevancy."

"God sits at the center of all things and therefore with Him, you can't be irrelevant. It's a matter of whether you choose to lean into your relevancy," she said.

A college degree is a good step for readiness because it provides graduates with a credential that people can't deny. "How you use that degree is another story. Do you use it for the stepping zone that it is to get to the next phase, or do you become complacent," Dixon said.

Dixon said she doesn't believe in failure. Life is a journey filled with experiences and some of those experiences don't feel good. "Some people would define them as failures, I define them as strengtheners. If I understand that God has a plan for me ... then I cannot fail."

"There are going to be people who don't like your light. You need to praise God for those people," she said. "You need to love them."

Davis, the 13th president of Livingstone College, presided over his first winter commencement program after being named president this fall. As he stood at the podium and looked over the crowd, he reminisced on his own Livingstone graduation ceremony in 2001. He remembered sitting in those very same seats as he awaited his chance to walk across the stage.

Davis spoke of his journey coming from the foster care system and how the numbers and statistics were against him ever receiving a college degree, let alone becoming a college president of his alma mater.

"Class of 2022, you will always be special to me for you are the first graduating class under my leadership as president," he said.

To view the complete graduation ceremony, visit Livingstone College's official YouTube channel.

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.



2022 LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE VOTING PLAN

Submitted by The Star of Zion

With democracy, reproductive rights, and so many more everyday intimate issues on the ballot, Livingstone College student leaders gathered and vowed to make voting a priority for this year's student activities. Since freshman year, I've heard voting is a constitutional right and I have firmly agreed with that notion. However, after engaging in an academic faith-based discourse with Livingstone faculty advisor Da'Tarvia Parrish, I have come to learn – it is also sacred. "There is blood that cries out in the universe in the name of voting," stated Dr. Parrish at a rally to register students to vote. She continued with examples of the Opelousas, Louisiana and Eutaw, Alabama massacres during the Reconstruction era, and shared

direct quotes from participants in the Selma, Alabama march and Fannie Lou Hamer's testimony at the 1964 Democratic National Convention. Moreover, Dr. Parrish noted the Opelousas massacre in 1868 and Hamer's testimony in 1964 were only four years shy of 100 years a part; and today, over 150 years later, "... more blood, sweat, and tears are still crying out in the universe." It was in that moment, I knew it was time to act.

As President of the Student Government Association, I asked all student leaders to meet with Office of Student Affairs under the direction of Terri Stevenson, and faculty and staff interested in the initiative whereas we were intentional in finding a program to complement our mission. We found Interfaith America's Vote is Sacred, Black Voters Matter, Common Cause North Carolina, and Students Learn Students Vote. Interfaith America's programming

served as the framework for our mission. The content helped to educate, enlighten, and inspire our student leaders, who in return had the skillset and confidence to stand before others. Moreover, Black Voters Matter assisted tremendously with community initiatives, marketing, and igniting a greater sense cultural pride. Common Cause of North Carolina and Students Learn Students Vote connected us with other college campuses, training, and aided as well in marketing materials and supplies. We were truly blessed in our efforts.

Grant funding from the organizations provided us the opportunity for a six-phase program.

Phase One: Student leader and advisor training included Interfaith America's Vote is Sacred content-based workshops, discussions, and simulations to help define purpose and mobilize the mission. Common Cause of North Carolina Ambassador training included voter registration, voter intimidation tactics and poll monitoring. Students Learn Students Vote and Black Voters Matter training primarily focused on voter awareness and engagement.

Phase Two: Voter planning included methods and programming to register voters, increase voter awareness, and mobilize voters. Each area aimed to have at minimum five programs.

Phase Three: Voter registration included registration in freshman orientation, traditional orientation, campus events to include community engagement such as LC on the Green, sporting events (football and volleyball games), dorm storms (visiting each residence hall), and registration



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Suite 3200
Chicago, IL 60604
interfaithamerica.org

rallies at local churches and community events. Furthermore, voter registration efforts were rewarded with trivia

games activities and events such as a skate party.

Phase Four: Voter awareness included multiple campus discussions on the current events, local elections, Supreme Court decisions, and kitchen-table topics that specifically effect college students such as financial aid. Moreover, in an effort to better acquaint students with candidates, Livingstone College engaged in four major forums to include faculty serving as a facilitator for the Sheriff candidates (Da'Tarvia Parrish) and female candidates (Nicole Oehman), and the campus hosting US Senate candidate Cheri Beasley, and a forum exclusively for Rowan County candidates.

Phase Five A: Voter mobilization included early voting immediately following the Rowan County candidates' forum. *A Party with the Prez* pep rally that hosted the college's president Rev. Dr. Anthony J. Davis and radio host personality No Limit Larry from Power 98, helped to galvanize students and staff to the main location as grant funding assisted with transportation to the polls. Black Voters Matter disseminated clothing apparel, the local NAACP was present, and various city officials charged the Livingstone College community to vote. From 11 a.m.- 4 p.m. students were shuttled to the Board of Elections to cast their ballot.

Phase Five B: After evaluating the number of students who engaged in voting, we decided to sponsor two more days of early voting with transportation to the polls. Early voting is important because students, who may not be registered, can register and vote in the same day. We had a few students who registered with their local DMV and then registered with Livingstone College; however, their addresses were not updated.

Phase Five C: Voting on Election Day is our final attempt to move voters. Again, the student leaders, faculty, staff, and community leaders – rallied at Livingstone College to march-to-vote at the community precinct, Miller Recreation Center. This effort not only gets the final few who may not have yet cast their ballot, but it also gets the attention of people in the community, who also joined us in these efforts.

Phase Six: Evaluating our program includes two-months of collecting student-feedback and comparative data analysis. At present, we know compared to other HBCUs in North Carolina, Livingstone College is the number one voting institution; however, we need to ensure our outcome is parallel to our output. We will assess our student population, our current number of registered voters, and those who actually voted. As political action and social responsibility is a tenant of our holistic modules, we will determine a hands-on plan to target students who did not vote and even engage in discussions as it relates to reluctant voters and maintaining engagement in student voters. After review, we will begin with meeting and planning programming the spring semester for returning students.

As we have taken on much regarding voter awareness and mobilization, it has all been worth the while. Voting is sacred because democracy is sacred. In my faith, and the faith in which America was built, we learn we are many members of one body, and in political terms, that body is democracy. Therefore, whether we are Christian, Jew, Gentile, bond, or free, we are one in the spirit of democracy; and this too cries out in the universe.

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JOSEPH, EGYPT AND COP27

Submitted by: Rev. Ronald Nathan
World Politics Editor, The Star of Zion
Email: WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org

Climate change was nothing new to the ancient civilizations of our world. There was a cataclysmic famine in North-Eastern Africa in 19th century BCE recorded in the book of Genesis. Joseph, a Hebrew expatriate living in Egypt recommends to Pharaoh Serositis III, King of Egypt certain actions in respect to agricultural yield, food adaptation policies and the development of long-term grain storage facilities as a key adaptive response to climate stress. This timely action, insulated the Egyptian nation from the effects of a disastrous famine and the resulting national and political fallout.



Fast forward to 2022, delegations from across the world had gathered for the Conference of Parties 27th session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 27). The major breakthrough came with the agreement by all nations at the conference to establish a “Loss and Damage Fund”. This Fund will assist nations in the Global South who are being devastated by floods, droughts, hurricanes, and rising sea levels.

The conference, however, failed to act with the urgency demonstrated by the ancient patriarch, Joseph and Pharaoh Serositis III, when it came to placing limits on fossil fuels companies. Instead they kicked the tin down the road. This delaying tactic was in no doubt due in no small measure to the 638 fossil fuel lobbyists,



who were granted unmitigated access to policymaking processes and are allowed to unduly influence and weaken the critical work of the United Nations Climate Change Conference the official organisers.

There is no doubt that climate change is having a deleterious impact on food production. The machinations of the fossil fuel lobbyists and their success in delaying any new emissions limitations will come back to haunt the world especially in regards to the critical matter of food production.

Two hundred and sixty miles away from the illustrious conference halls at Sharm



El -Sheikh is the ancient temple of Luxor inscribed on its walls in hieroglyphics are these words, ‘There grows no wheat where there is no grain’.

This simple skill called joined up thinking illustrated by the Luxor luminaries seemed to have been missing from many of the COP27 delegates. May God speak to those who have ears to hear at the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) which will convene from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates.

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• H A P P Y •
New Year

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NEW YEAR, FRESH START: BLACK TRADITIONS NOT CANCELED BY COVID!

Submitted by Mr. Daman De Leon
Health and Wellness Editor, The Star of Zion
Email: Health_Wellness@StarofZion.org

2020 was a tough year. 2021 was also tough, though not as bad. 2022 saw slow progress. During the worst period of the COVID-19 Pandemic, people were out of work, evictions were rising and you can get yelled at for asking someone to wear a mask in your establishment. Parties were canceled, bars were closed, and going out to eat inside a restaurant safely was compromised.

In Roman Mythology (which was borrowed from Greece, which in turn, was influenced by Kemet) there was a diety who went by the name Janus. This particular diety had two faces turned in opposite directions, and was believed to be all-seeing and omniscient. Janus was known as the god of gateways, the god of doors. Romans soldiers would pray to him before they embarked upon new wars and expeditions. It's from his name that we get the name JANUARY, as the first month of the new Gregorian Calendar Year. So every January was to represent a new beginning and a new journey.

Members of the African diaspora hold superstitions and beliefs that both predate colonialism and were developed during slavery. Many of these practices focus on improving one's luck, setting intentions and becoming closer to loved ones. Thanks to the somber and introspective approach of these practices, many can be done alone, with members of your household or even over a Zoom call. So whether you are looking for safe ways to celebrate the end of this year or just want a little bit of history on the traditions you grew up doing, here are 10 Black New Year's Eve traditions to help turn 2020's luck around.

- 1) The "Hoppin' John", a dish of garlicky, herby black-eyed peas with pork is an African American staple for New Year's Eve. There are many stories about how the bean came to be so important to African American culture, which dates back to slavery often in the South, where it was discovered that black-eyed peas grow easily in muggy weather. When slaves would gain their freedom, they would take dried beans with them since they could be planted in many places and still flourish. And so the black-eyed pea is associated with good luck, new beginnings and even wisdom. The dish often calls for celery and bell peppers, while my family likes to add hot peppers. The running joke is that the spice will "wake us up" to a new dawn.
- 2) Collard greens and cabbage are considered good luck. Because of their green color and the way they lay on a plate when cooked, collard greens have come to represent "folded money" since when you have a lot of bills, you often fold them to keep them compact and neat. Eating collard greens is said to bring prosperity to the eater in the new year and are often eaten with the Hoppin' John.
- 3) Eating delicious, warm cornbread is a sure way to improve any mood. On New Year's Eve, this soul food staple is supposed to bring riches into your life, specifically disposable income. The association likely comes from cornbread's golden color.
- 4) Many times in our nation's cultural history, African Americans have been left with undesirable plants, seeds and parts of meat. We've had to make meals out of what was considered "livestock food" and feed them to our families. The tradition of preparing pig feet, fatback and chitlins developed from this necessity and duly became a part of Black New Year's Eve traditions. Pork not only adds amazing flavor to dishes like Hoppin' John or collard greens, but also has some symbolism. As some have noted, pigs root forward in the mud versus chickens and turkeys who scratch their feet

backward. For this reason, pigs have come to symbolize progress. Some Dutch American families also eat pork on New Year's Eve for similar reasons, but they often pair it with sauerkraut.

- 5) The next practice has origins in Voodoo. On New Year's Eve, the dwellers of the house need to clean, scrub and sweep the entire house and then throw the dirt away and outside. This is related to the belief that energies can be altered and moved from one place to another with the right actions and intentions. Sweeping represents removing the stale energy from the previous year that will no longer serve us in the new year, and making room for new blessings and growth.
- 6) Another reason it's a good idea to clean your house on New Year's Eve is the tradition of not being allowed to remove a single thing from your house on New Year's Day. For 24 hours, every bit of trash or dirt has to stay put. Some families will even hide their cleaning tools away for the day to avoid any mishaps. Similarly from the deep cleaning from the day before, throwing anything out on New Year's Day means risking throwing away any good luck or energy the new year might have given you when the clock struck midnight.
- 7) Opening all the windows. This practice follows the same idea as sweeping. Old, stale energy moves out of your house, taking old year air with it. Fresh, new air is ushered in it. This is also a way to passively allow the new year's energy to take hold in your dwelling wherever it needs to go.
- 8) A full Cupboard. The idea here is that you need to start the new year the same way that you want to go through it. This action is supposed to be preventative. Starting the new year with an empty cupboard could mean that your cupboard will stay barren all year. This is about intentional energy and steering the energy of the new year into the parts of your life where you need it.
- 9) The Person who crosses your threshold after Midnight must be the right person. There are many versions of this tradition. I've had single friends ask a member of their attracted gender to cross their threshold after midnight. I heard of hopeful couples directing a child they know through the front door (if the kids are still awake) to encourage fertility. Some people don't like to interfere with fate at all, allowing the new year to bring through their front door whoever is supposed to be there. Whoever walks through the door on New Year's Day and however they get there, they need to have some money in their pocket to, once again, bring monetary growth and prosperity to the dwellers of the house.
- 10) "Watch Night" Church Service. The tradition of the Watch Night service probably dates back to the 18th century with the Moravian church, where members would get together on New Year's Eve to reflect on the old year and look forward to the new one. It is said that African Americans adopted this practice starting on Dec. 31, 1862, when many enslaved Black people stayed up all night in anticipation of President Abraham Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation. On New Year's Day, they were legally free.

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ALL OF US

Submitted by: Rev. Dr. Allison N. Lee
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“History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. He[she/they] who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he[she/they] who helps to perpetrate it. He[she/they] who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.” – Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The aforementioned words, penned by the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are a compelling reminder to both self and the collective of a responsibility...our responsibility...to use our voices to speak up and out against acts of oppression and inequity in any form. It is a prompting to first direct our thoughts toward injustice that is occurring, and then command a corrective action to follow. This reference is a straight pin of critical reflection regarding duty that has been ignored in the fabric of a country that focuses on self and historically turns a blind eye to the troubles of others. It is a nail of acknowledgement that lack of action against an issue is eerily close to being an active contributor in the wall of a society with a bystander mentality. These words speak the reality that although we may be from a variety of places, of different ethnicities, have separate faith beliefs, and hold unique stories, ultimately, we are bound by a common experience.

These words are chilling, because the nature of self-reflection as we gaze into the mirror begs that honesty take place regarding whether we have been part of the problem or are actively seeking and working toward a solution. The words of Dr. King require more from us than to simply: attend trainings on equity in a perfunctory manner, know that there is a lens of oppressor v. oppressed through which we can look, or share a post on social media at the height of societal upheaval. These words

require us to do all of those things and to also “get our hands dirty,” through the transformative work that creates and sustains social justice oriented organizations and movements, uplifts engagement of policy pertaining to economic, racial, gender, and political matters, advocates openly and freely for the work of justice to be done, and does the heart-work required to be candid with self, regarding the role the we each play in either standing up to injustices or remaining silent.



2023 marks 40 years (1983) since the United States of America saw legislation passed that made an observance of the late Martin Luther King Jr. a federal holiday to take place on the 3rd Monday of each January, which will either fall on or close to his birthday each year, which is on January 15th. In 1986 – for the first time – the country celebrated the nationwide holiday that we have come to know and celebrate as Martin Luther King Jr. Day, also known as MLK Day. It took additional time for each individual state to recognize and enact this special day. This holiday is regarded as one that celebrates Dr. King’s legacy, focuses on civil rights, and calls the public to action and change. Many regard the holiday as a *day on* rather than a day off, which manifests in the way of parades, breakfasts, marches, community service efforts, and the like, all in the name of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

As we pause to remember the efforts and accomplishments of Dr. King, may we strive to be present in action and outspoken in justice as we fight for others and for ourselves. May we be bold in our pursuit of tearing down the structures of injustice built long ago and maintained by a system that benefits from oppression. May we be daring in our embracing of one another and desire intentional change as we march on.

FORWARD TOGETHER, NOT ONE STEP BACK

Submitted by: Rev. Dr. Allison N. Lee
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“Forward together, not one step back! Forward together, not one step back! Forward together, not one step back!” This was the rallying cry that could be heard in the frigid, crisp air on a Friday night as a block full of people gathered with candles, signs with the names of individuals they wished to be pardoned, and a lot of faith that the work being done would eventually yield results that make a difference.

On Friday, December 9th at 5:30pm, I attended *Freedom Friday* in Raleigh, North Carolina across from the Governor’s mansion. Freedom Friday has traditionally been a time in which people who are from various grassroots and social justice oriented groups gather to march, talk, pray, sing, and demand societal change. Several different entities, such as, but not limited to: Repairers of the Breach, Justice Serve NC, NC Justice Center, ACLU, NC Forward Justice, NC Second Chance Alliance, etc. come together to support the work of decarceration.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines decarceration as, “The practice or policy of reducing the number of people subject to imprisonment.” According to a representative of NC Second Chance Alliance, the work also pertains to advocating against policies that harm the rights of those with convicted felonies. Putting an end to the death penalty, eliminating long-term prison sentences, lifting the burden associated with fees and fines pertaining to court costs, securing adequate funding for re-entry programs, eliminating the drug tax, reinstatement of voting rights for those dealing with felony convictions, and irregular stops are some of the things that these groups and individuals have fought for and/or are continuing to fight for.

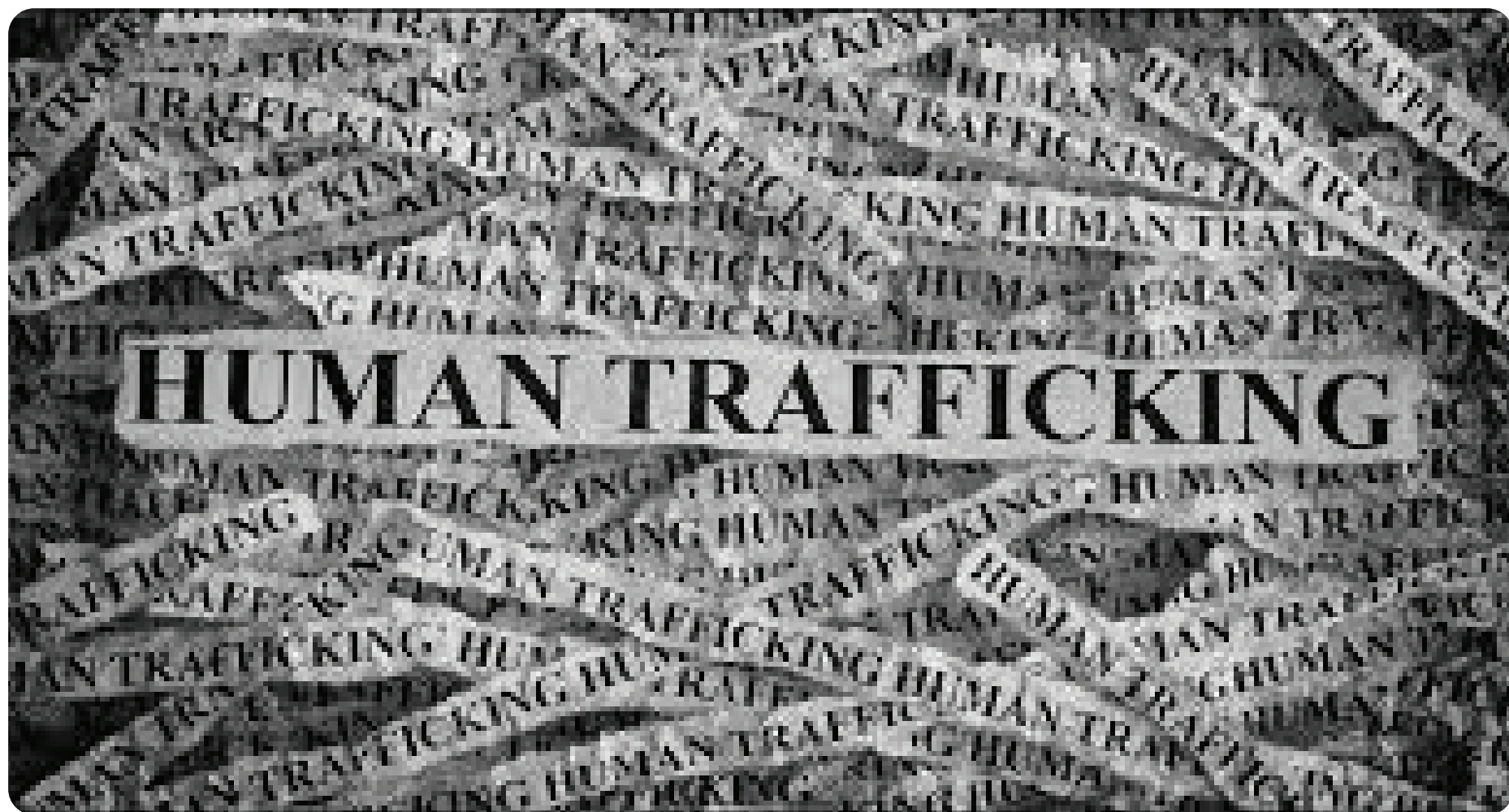
This particular Freedom Friday was a special one, as it involved a vigil setup to honor the life and legacy of the late Rev. Dr. T. Anthony

Spearman. As I arrived on the street across from Governor Roy Cooper’s mansion, between Blount and Jones streets in Raleigh, preparing to do an opening prayer as a representative of Trinity AME Zion Church - where Dr. Spearman was most recently a member - people walked up to introduce themselves. These introductions spilled into long points of conversation as they told their personal stories, expressed gratitude for Dr. Spearman, spoke of what Dr. Spearman has done for them through helping either them or a loved one to be released from prison, or how Dr. Spearman taught the ropes of social justice advocacy. As the evening wore on, this continued. Many people spoke into the microphone about their horrific experiences with - what should be a justice system - gone wrong. Many shed tears over the grief associated with losing a giant in the person of Dr. T. Anthony Spearman. All were resolved to continue the fight even in the face of difficulty, pain, and at times, feelings of discouragement.



As we walked around Governor Roy Cooper’s mansion with people chanting battle cries, talking softly, crying, praying, speaking through megaphones pointed toward the Governor’s house, and wearing signs that said “I AM...” which included the names of: Howard Dudley, Michael Parker, Glen Howard Chapman, Dontae Sharp, and others, I could not help but feel unified in the fight for justice that is before us...that is ever before us. May we never stop standing up for the things that truly matter. May our legacies speak of kindness, compassion, advocacy, love, and justice.

Forward together, not one step back.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

Submitted by: Rev. Dr. Allison N. Lee
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January 11th each year is recognized as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. The full month of January marks the annual observance of National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. It is also known as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Beginning in 2010, then President of the United States – President Barack Obama - declared January a month of awareness, prevention, and education regarding ways to recognize, prevent, and report the crime of human trafficking. Presidents since have followed his lead. In addition, the United States Department of State focuses on increasing knowledge about human trafficking, not just Stateside, but abroad as well. This effort overseas is funneled through both consulates and embassies.

According to the Department of Justice, human trafficking is defined as, “A crime involving the exploitation of a person for labor, services, or commercial sex.” It is split into two types – forced labor trafficking and sex trafficking. Both of these types are explained in The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. The United States Department of State believes that more than 24.9 million people in the world are subject to human trafficking, both men and women. As such, it is imperative that: legislation is passed and enacted, & people are informed regarding that legislation, as well as, signs of human trafficking which is also known as modern day slavery.

Outside of the obvious harm caused by human trafficking, there is also a direct link between that and injustices carried out. In a comment on the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken shared the connection between human trafficking, injustice, and inequity in terms of who is assumed to be a victim and who is assumed to be the perpetrator. Blinken states,

Systemic discrimination creates inequities between communities, whether the discrimination targets perceptions of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, or any other social identities. It manifests in societal exclusion and prejudices against those communities, which help perpetuate an

imbalance of opportunity and support. These inequities undercut our goal of combating human trafficking and embolden traffickers. We have seen, for instance, how deeply held racial biases and stereotypes inappropriately influence outcomes for those in our criminal justice system as they lead to racially disparate assumptions about who is identified as a trafficker and who is identified as a victim. This is not a new truth, but it is a somber, unacceptable reality.

In this same communication, Blinken writes about the need to take steps that will “mitigate” practices and guidelines that are problematic.

Still in regards to who human trafficking affects, President Joseph R. Biden stated in his 2022 Proclamation on National Human Trafficking Prevention Month,

Since human trafficking disproportionately impacts racial and ethnic minorities, women and girls, LGBTQI+ individuals, vulnerable migrants, and other historically marginalized and underserved communities, our mission to combat human trafficking must always be connected to our broader efforts to advance equity and justice across our society.

What Can We Do? Indicators + Action

While victims of human trafficking may be hidden in a place where people would never come across them, they also walk among us daily. Below is a graphic of human trafficking indicators listed through the Department of State of and a list of actions that can be taken, also shared by the Department of State. It is important that neither traffickers nor victims are approached directly for the purposes of safety, but where and when possible, reports are made.

1. Learn the **indicators of human trafficking** listed above or on the TIP (Trafficking in Persons) Office’s website or by taking a training. Human trafficking awareness training is available for individuals, businesses, first responders, law enforcement, educators, and federal employees, among

others.

2. If you are in the United States and believe someone may be a victim of human trafficking, call the 24-hour **National Human Trafficking Hotline** at 1-888-373-7888 or report an emergency to law enforcement by calling 911. Trafficking victims, whether or not U.S. citizens, are eligible for services and immigration assistance.
3. Be a conscientious and informed consumer. Find out more about who may have picked your tomatoes or made your clothes at **ResponsibleSourcingTool.org**, or check out the Department of Labor's **List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor**. Encourage companies to take steps to prevent human trafficking in their supply chains and publish the information, including supplier or factory lists, for consumer awareness.
4. Volunteer and support anti-trafficking efforts **in your community**.
5. Meet with and/or write to **your local, state, and federal elected officials** to let them know you care about combating human trafficking and ask what they are doing to address it.
6. Be well-informed. Set up a web alert to receive current human trafficking news. Also, check out **CNN's Freedom Project** for more stories on the different forms of human trafficking around the world.
7. Host an awareness-raising event to watch and discuss films about human trafficking. For example, learn how modern slavery exists today; watch an investigative documentary about sex trafficking; or discover how forced labor can affect global food supply chains. Alternatively, contact your local library and ask for assistance identifying an appropriate book and ask them to host the event.
8. Organize a fundraiser and donate the proceeds to **an anti-trafficking organization**.
9. Encourage your local schools or school district to include human trafficking in their curricula and to **develop protocols** for identifying and reporting a suspected case of human trafficking or responding to a potential victim.
10. Use your social media platforms to raise awareness about human trafficking, using the following hashtags: #endtrafficking, #freedomfirst.
11. Think about whether your workplace is trauma-informed and reach out to management or the Human Resources team to urge **implementation of trauma-informed business practices**.
12. Become a mentor to a young person or someone in need. Traffickers often target people who are going through a difficult time or who lack strong support systems. As a mentor, you can be involved in new and positive experiences in that person's life during a formative time.
13. Parents and Caregivers: **Learn how human traffickers often target and recruit youth** and who to turn to for help in potentially dangerous situations. Host community conversations with parent teacher associations, law enforcement,

schools, and community members regarding safeguarding children in your community.

14. Youth: **Learn how to recognize traffickers' recruitment tactics**, how to safely navigate out of a suspicious or uncomfortable situations, and how to reach out for help at any time.
15. Faith Based Communities: Host awareness events and community forums with anti-trafficking leaders or collectively support a local victim service provider.
16. Businesses: Provide jobs, internships, skills training, and other opportunities to trafficking survivors. Take steps to investigate and prevent trafficking in your supply chains by consulting the Responsible Sourcing Tool and **Comply Chain** to develop effective management systems to detect, prevent, and combat human trafficking.
17. College Students: **Take action** on your campus. Join or establish a university club to raise awareness about human trafficking and initiate action throughout your local community. Consider doing one of your research papers on a topic concerning human trafficking. Request that human trafficking be included in university curricula.
18. Health Care Providers: **Learn** how to identify the indicators of human trafficking and assist victims. With assistance from local anti-trafficking organizations, extend low-cost or free services to human trafficking victims. Resources from the Department of Health and Human Services can be found on their website.
19. Journalists: The media plays an enormous role in shaping perceptions and guiding the public conversation about human trafficking. Seek out some media best practices on how to effectively and responsibly report stories on human trafficking.
20. Attorneys: Offer human trafficking victims legal services, including support for those seeking benefits or special immigration status. **Resources** are available for attorneys representing victims of human trafficking.



The Unveiling / Dedication of the Harold & Alice Steele-Robinson Global Artifacts Collection

Submitted by Rev. Dierdre' Parker – Rowson
Entertainment & The Arts Editor, The Star of Zion
Email: Entertainment_Arts@StarofZion.org

November 29, 2022

Salisbury, NC - For many, Hood Theological Seminary is a place of growth and evolution. It is a place where faith and knowledge increase. For graduates, returning is like going home, and those you meet there will always be family.

Rev. Harold Robinson is a 1998 graduate of Hood. His ministry afforded him the opportunity to travel the world. He served in the mission field at the time of the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa. Rev. Robinson, and his wife, Mrs. Alice Steele-Robinson (who is a former educator and served as Executive Secretary of the WH&OMS), spoke passionately about their desire to have this unique collection of artifacts and literature continue to bless and increase the cultural knowledge of the students who matriculate through Hood Seminary. They hope the collection will inspire others to take up the work

of missions.

Hearing the Robinsons share anecdotes of their travels was especially poignant. They have truly dedicated their lives to further the cause of Christ and to share the mission of the AME Zion Church globally.

The curation and planning committee for the unveiling of the collection consisted of Dr. Mary Love, Ms. Tyesia Walker, Ms. Gail Hounshell, Mr. John Everett, Ms. Francis King, Ms. Patricia Commander, and Dr. Vergel Lattimore. The prayer of dedication was offered by Bishop Darryl Starnes.

The collection includes wood carvings, fabrics, paintings, musical instruments, flags, dolls and currency. The literary resources in this collection include articles written by Rev. Robinson regarding the inauguration and presidency of Nelson Mandela. This gift is truly a blessing not just to Hood Theological Seminary, but to all of Zion. If you are in the area, go and see this collection. Especially the Chronicles written by Rev. Robinson. It may inspire you to go to the mission field as well.



Night Life: Ministering through Movies

Submitted by Rev. Dierdre' Parker – Rowson
Entertainment & The Arts Editor, The Star of Zion
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November 13, 2022,

St. Louis, Missouri - In our October issue we brought you the story of Zion's own Rev. Kenneth McKoy and his street ministry, Night Life, operating in St. Louis Missouri's toughest neighborhood. We also brought you the livestream event with Rev. McKoy and Seth Ferranti the director of the film. For his directorial debut, Ferranti was looking for a local story and was led to Rev. McKoy. The movie is the result of two years' worth of filming and three years of editing.

The space that this movie resides in is the cracks between which too many Americans fall. These cracks between needs and the means to meet them, fractures lives in varying degrees. Many of those affected are left with little or no hope, and no help. Rev. Kenneth McKoy works to fill the cracks with Night Life Ministry.

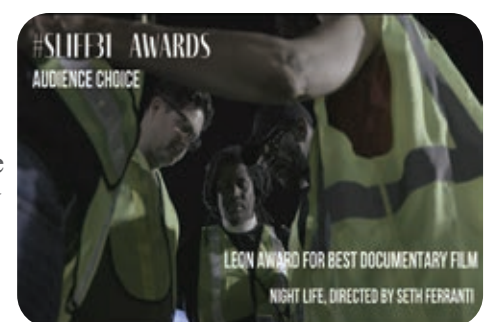
The documentary is an unfiltered look at Rev. McKoy's daily life; the work of one person who answered the call to do more in his community. It follows the ministry and the minister as they work to find the niche

that will fill in the cracks. The film is shot with raw honesty, that is at times gut wrenching, heart-warming and even frightening. This type of ministry is not for the faint of heart, as this documentary shows, with the constant background noise of gunfire. It could serve as a framework for those who are called to minister in this way.

Ferranti uses animation to tell some of the back story. This is an interesting choice that almost lightens the mood of the movie but not in a way that is condescending or demeaning.

The film has begun its rounds to various film festivals and was honored with Audience Choice and Leon Award for Best Documentary at the St. Louis International Film Festival. When asked how he felt about the win, Rev. McKoy replied, "I'm still in shock! We went up against fifty films!"

We at Star of Zion pray that God would continue to use Rev. McKoy,



A CALL TO ACTING

Submitted by Rev. Dierdre' Parker – Rowson
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“The human universal is the journey. The ebb and flow” says Carol J. McKenith with a megawatt smile. “Your belief and foundation is what centers you.”

Carol J. McKenith is a lifelong Zionite, the daughter of Rev. Dr. William and Mrs. Doreen McKenith. Growing up as a P.K. gave her the opportunity to develop her own faith. It also afforded her the opportunity to develop confidence as she matriculated through Sunday School and Church plays and all the things that provide a firm faith formation.

“Zion was all of my childhood. My father’s family is not that large, but I didn’t have to worry about a lot of cousins. I grew up in the choir and in Sunday school with all the kids. Zion has nurtured me in so many ways that I didn’t even realize back then. I understand now. Zion is a large part of why I am the way I am. My spiritual journey is deeply rooted in Zion.

When I’m out of town working, because I am rooted in Zion, I know that I can walk into any AME Zion Church and know exactly how it’s gonna flow. It’s home. It centers me. Even when I am not in church, it is in my heart and in my *body*. Zion has grounded me so much. It still does.”

In a time when so many feel that the church has let them down, it is refreshing to hear how the tradition of Zion has been an anchor for her. “Don’t get me wrong,” she says, “I’ve had my times when I’ve pulled away, but Zion is my center.

I learned of Ms. McKenith from our Editor-in-Chief. He said that she was doing some amazing things and that he would let her talk about it. In the age of Google it only took a quick search to find out that she is indeed doing some amazing things in the world of acting.

On Acting

I’ve always been in love with imitating life. I was in church, but I was in the back playing house. I would also imitate my father’s preaching. I knew I wanted to do acting. I went to Virginia State University and studied. After graduation I went back to New Jersey where my parents were. When my parents moved to North Carolina, it wasn’t working for me in Jersey so I moved to Charlotte. I started studying. I also took a job in sales. Things started to happen when I was in Charlotte. I did a web series in Charlotte and I got my first commercial Gig in Charlotte. Then the opportunity presented itself in Atlanta, so I moved to Atlanta.

The sales Job was happening but the acting wasn’t. What if I put that energy into myself? Was I betting on myself? I knew that I could bet on GOD. I had to. I decided to give acting what I was giving to this nine to five. If I trust HIM and I continue to do the work in acting, pretty much collaborating with God, how would that look for me? Three months after quitting, I booked my first network movie, *Line Sisters*, on Lifetime. In those three months between quitting and booking that faith was tough. But God uses everything to get you ready for your next.”

Carol J. McKenith plays the role of Willie Mae in the Movie *Till*, which is currently in theaters. Of this experience she says, “This is a story of a mother’s fight, unwavering love and willingness to share her trauma with the world. I’m incredibly honored to be a part of the telling of this story. It has changed the way I look at my work.”

Her advice to anyone trying to break into the acting game is this: Get in class, and in community so that you will learn what you need for this journey. Mostly you have to believe. I was training. I was doing it but not at the scale and capacity that God wanted me to do it. It wasn’t

until the shift in my thinking that things started to happen. I had to up my faith.”

Talking to Carol J. McKenith, was such a refreshing experience. I am truly a fan. Let us as all up our faith and we can also can say with confidence, “What’s for you, won’t miss you.” At Star of Zion, we pray that God will continue to elevate Carol in her calling, and all of us in our faith.



Rev. and Mrs. Keith J. Harris
 Presiding Elder
 The Loving Long Island District

Happy New Year

May the Blessings
 of our
 Loving God
 Keep You
 In Health and In Peace
 in the
 New Year

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

THE OUTPOUR EXPERIENCE

Submitted by Rev. Dierdre' Parker – Rowson
Entertainment & The Arts Editor, The Star of Zion
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November 19, 2022,
Rockingham, NC - The air was electric with anticipation as we walked into Kate Finley Auditorium in Rockingham on a chilly Friday night. The Staff for the event were in place and checking in was swift and easy with pleasant smiles. Ushers greeted us as we walked in the double doors and gladly helped us to our section. Once seated it was clear that a very diverse group was waiting to experience the vocal viscosity that is the legendary, Grammy Award- winning, singer/songwriter, entrepreneur, member of one of gospel music's royal families, the First Lady of COGIC, Karen Clark-Sheard.

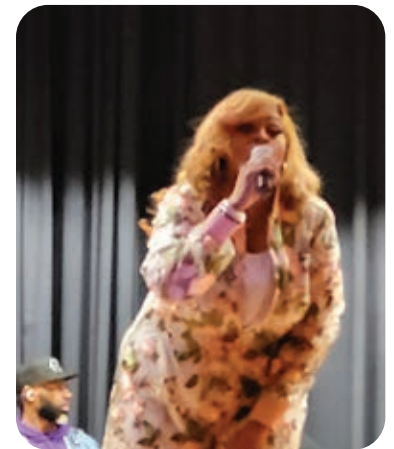
The audience was multigenerational and multidimensional. It was obvious that this was not only a family friendly environment, but when you stepped in the room, you *became* family. We were all there for "The OUTPOUR Experience."

The Outpour Experience was the brainchild of Pastor Lloyd Nivens. When asked what inspired this event, he said very simply, "The Lord gave us a vision." Pastor Nivens is a young man, but it was obvious that he is passionate about what he does for the kingdom. "That man right there, helped that vision come to pass." He points to a bespectacled gentleman who is moving swiftly up and down stairs, and in and out of doors. "I want you to put this down. Every visionary needs help. One thing I've learned from this, is that you can't do it alone. We *cannot* do it alone. God gave the vision, and I just put it out there. I put it out there with friends, and God provided the resources. Now this is the man right here, Mr. Richard Bennett. I want you to talk to him." Pastor Nivens was exhausted. He had worked hard *for* this event, and praised hard *at* this event. Mr. Bennett answers the same question "The inspiration was to bring people of, every background, every denomination, every culture together for an outpouring of God." An outpouring of God it was. For no other but the Almighty, could have created such an immaculate instrument as is the voice of Lady Karen Clark-Sheard. From the moment she took the stage until the moment that she literally *danced* her way off the stage, her gift filled the room and our hearts with reminders of *What a mighty God we serve* and we *acknowledged His presence*, knowing that we are *Blessed and Highly Favored*. Her voice is truly as smooth as silk but as powerful as a tidal wave as it washes over your spirit with the Love of God and the

liberty of redemption.

When asked what she does to take care of herself, she answered in a very soft and gentle voice that belies the power of her singing voice. "I get my rest. I spend valuable time with my family. Praying. I like to go shopping too (she giggles). And praying." She wanted to emphasize praying.

This concert was blessed to have a collaborative effort from three Zion Churches. The Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Zion Church, New Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church and Wayman Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church. If it was Pastor Nivens' vision to inspire others to seek an outpouring of God across denominations and cultures and backgrounds, then his vision has not only come to pass but has inspired others to go and do likewise.



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God's plan is for Zion to have a strong future in all the work we do for Him. I believe God has given me a STRONG vision for The AME Zion Church to help carry out His plan for us. For us to have a strong future in achieving our potential, saving souls, and building the kingdom of God, we must:

STRENGTHEN our Faith in God and our church, The AME Zion Church.

TERMINATE the underutilization of women leaders and acknowledge their value, qualifications, and readiness by integrating them in leadership positions at all levels within the church through elections and appointments, fostering an environment of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

REFOCUS on strengthening our local churches, and the health of our communities.

OPTIMIZE the use of young and global leaders throughout Zion.

NEUTRALIZE the effects of prejudice and bigotry in our communities by nurturing healthy relationships and strong families.

GROW and develop ministries in our church that better meet the needs of all people.

I am humbled to be the pastor of St. Paul in Ewing, NJ, the first church in the Camden District (CD) and one of the strongest churches in the North Eastern Episcopal District (NEED). I supervise five supernumerary ministers and over 28 church officers. It has always been my practice to help my colleagues, church leaders, members, friends, and churches to go beyond the apparent and to embrace the possibilities and plans God has for His people. I strive to be a change agent and believe it is my duty to leave everywhere I am appointed better than I found it.

I have served as a leader in The AME Zion Church in many capacities over the years; however, I am most passionate about the impact I have made as a mentor for children, youth, and young and old adults in the following areas: spiritual well-being including developing healthy relationships and emotional and psychological wellness; educational and career progression and accomplishment; assisting churches, pastors and members in distress; organizing and implementing outreach projects, especially during the pandemic to provide COVID-19 testing and vaccinations to underserved communities, food and other resources to the unemployed, food deserts, and experiencing the impact of the loss of a loved one; and diligently providing means to keep members and the community at-large "Connected to God and one another, Encouraged by the word of God and unity of spirit of like believers, and Informed about everything that may impact them in every day society," especially the power of the vote.

I currently serve as: Board Member, Harriett Tubman Home, Inc.; Chair, New Jersey Conference (NJC) Finance Committee, and the Budget Committee; Conference Studies Professor; Board of Examiners; Lead, NJC Annual Conference Site Planning Committee; Chair, CD Admissions Committee, and member, CD Finance Committee. I formerly served as the Co-Dean and presenter for the NEED Leadership Summit, Jersey City District's Finance Committee Secretary, and Dean of the Spiritual Health, Wealth, and Wisdom – Personal and Professional Development Series. I collaborated with Rev. Dr. Reginald Boyd, Director, Recruitment, Admissions & Alumni Engagement at Hood Theological Seminary to lead a committee of Zionites to develop the 27-Credit Conference Studies Certificate, which is in beta testing in NEED. I have authored numerous articles published in the Star of Zion. I serve as a Chaplain in the U.S. Navy representing the Emmanuel presence in the life of service members in the Marine Corps in Twentynine Palms, CA and the Navy around the world including San Diego, CA, and Yokosuka Japan. My last duty assignment was as the first Chaplain Program Officer with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion mission for chaplain recruiting.

Memberships: Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the NAACP, the Zion Clergywomen Network, National Naval Officers Association (NNOA),

Military Chaplains Association, and the past president of the Fellowship of Black Churches of Hackensack and Vicinity. I have traveled to five of the seven continents, 43 countries, 45 states, and visited over 320 AME Zion Churches around the world.

Family: Married to Rev. Jimmie Miller since 1983. Three sons, Jimmie, Jr., and twins, Jerome (married to Terri) and Jason (married to Sherry); one daughter, Jetaime; raised a nephew, Lamar (married to Jessica). Proud grandparents of eight, and proud grandaunt/uncle of three.

Work Experience:

1987-1994, Drafter, Computer-Aided Drafting, E.L. Hamm & Associates, DynCorp

1994-2001, Technology Teacher, Drafting Instructor, Norfolk Public Schools

2001-2003, CADD Department Manager, U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security

2003-2004, Technology Teacher, Stafford Public Schools

2005-2008, Pastor, Sycamore Hill, NC

2006-2008, Graduate Teaching Assistant/Adjunct Professor, Old Dominion University

2009-2012, Chaplain, U.S. Navy, Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS) 374

2010-2012, Pastor, Martin Temple, CA

2011-2014, Adjunct Professor, Higher Education, Ashford University

2013-2021, Pastor, Varick Memorial, NJ

2015-2017, Education Services Specialist, Navy Recruiting District New York

2016-Present, Chaplain, U.S. Navy, Navy Surface Warfare Support, Littoral Combat Support, Navy Recruiting Command

Education:

DMin, Biblical Interpretation and Proclamation, Candler School of Theology, Emory University

PhD, Higher Education, Old Dominion University

MDiv, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University

BS, Occupational and Technical Studies, Old Dominion University

Certificate, Engineering and Architectural Drafting, Maryland Drafting Institute

Other Certificates: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Cornell University, Sustaining the Preaching Life, Princeton Theological Seminary, National CAD/CAM Association Master Drafter, Global Certificate in Understanding and Serving Our Global Community, Old Dominion University, Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Level I, Hampton Veterans Administration Hospital, and United States Navy Professional Naval Chaplaincy course.

Personal Interests: A passion for learning, arts and crafts of all kinds, gardening, completing puzzles, exercise, hanging with family, and traveling and cruising with my husband.

Rev. Dr. Melanie Miller, Zion's Choice for a Strong Future!



RESOLVE TO GET ON THE PATHWAY TO A BETTER YOU

Submitted by Dr. Dana G. Stille
 Financial Freedom Editor, The Star of Zion
 Email: FinancialFreedom@StarofZion.org

In preparation for a new calendar year many of us spend time contemplating 'New Year Resolutions'. During this process we often think about ways to improve our physical health. Common options include losing a few of those unwanted pounds, breaking the nicotine habit, or promising to engage in more physical activities. Similarly, we often consider resolutions that will improve our mental health. As we ponder the events of the last 365 days, we vow to increase our prayer life, to 'just say no', and to do (or not do) whatever is necessary to protect our peace. Unfortunately, research has indicated that most people struggle keeping their new year resolutions beyond thirty days. This year, I challenge you all to go beyond the norm, and make a financial freedom resolution that you can keep.

The key to keeping a resolution and producing positive results is to take the time to set tangible, attainable goals. Like physical and mental health, financial health requires work, planning, revisions, and more work. To get started, consider your financial position, and determine how you would like that to improve by the end of the year. If increased savings is your desire, then set a definite goal, and determine how much money you will need to save weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly to achieve the goal. If your financial



freedom is goal is retirement what is your timeline? How much money will you need to retire? What about your health benefits? The answers to these questions and many others may lead you to create a resolution that includes savings, creating an investment schedule, and/or setting a goal to pay down a specific amount of credit card debt.

Once you have established your financial freedom resolution, and set your goals, write them down and make them plain. Re-read your resolution and goals often to keep them fresh in your mind. Most importantly if you need to adjust your goals, do so, but do not

give up. If you need an accountability partner get yourself one. Financial freedom is a pathway to better physical and mental health. Financial freedom is a pathway to a better you.

Happy New Year!

UNIVERSITY A.M.E. ZION CHURCH IS GRANTED 50K FOR RENEWAL



Submitted by The Star of Zion

University A.M.E. Zion Church in Palo Alto, California is granted 50K for clergy renewal

The viability of any congregation is linked to the health and wellness of its pastor. Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana in partnership with the Lilly Endowment award millions of dollars annually to congregations all over the United States to aide in the congregation providing a time of sabbatical for the pastor. A sabbatical is a period of paid leave for a leader or employee of an organization for the purposes of study, travel, development, or reflection. Lilly Endowment clergy renewal programs are administered by the Center for Pastoral Excellence at Christian Theological Seminary. Through its religion grantmaking, Lilly Endowment, an Indianapolis-based, private philanthropic foundation, seeks to deepen and enrich the lives of American Christians. It does this largely through initiatives to enhance and sustain the quality of ministry in American congregations and parishes. To this end, National and Indiana Clergy Renewal Programs provide an opportunity for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and engage in a period of renewal and reflection. Renewal periods are not vacations but times for intentional exploration and reflection, for drinking again from God's life-giving waters, for regaining enthusiasm and creativity for ministry.

"Pastors play such an important role in nurturing our spiritual lives and guiding the ministries of our congregations," said Christopher Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion. "The past two years have been exceptionally challenging for pastoral leaders as they have helped their congregations navigate the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19

pandemic. We hope that these clergy renewal grants will help congregations celebrate the extraordinary service of their pastors and honor them by giving them opportunities to step away from the daily demands of ministry for rest and renewal."

Rev. Kaloma Smith has been pastor of University A.M.E. Zion Church since 2013 after serving on the staff of Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church in Mt. Vernon, NY. He is no way a stranger to hard work and his story speaks to his commitment to ministry. "We look forward to being better equipped to serve the people of University during this much needed sabbatical", commented Rev. Smith. It is notable to mention University is the only A.M.E. Zion Church in the entire denomination to be awarded the grant this year!



In addition to travel as a form of renewal, some pastors will use time away from their congregations to engage in new spiritual disciplines, focus on time with loved ones, and study topics that renew their excitement for preaching and congregational life. Activities for congregations include engaging intercultural faith narratives, seeking insight into the history of racism and race relations in the life of the church, exploring the meaning and application of Sabbath rest, and equipping lay leaders.

Dr. Robert Saler, director of the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs at Christian Theological Seminary, noted that the grant programs integrate elements of support, trust and encouragement, which are all indicators of healthy congregations. "The programs are engineered to honor an innate human need to balance active service to others with periods of reflection and renewal. Animated by a spirit of gratitude and generosity, the programs provide a means for congregations to show appreciation for their leaders and actively invest in their pastors' health and energy for continued ministry," Saler says.

LEADERSHIP AND THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER: INCREASING EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Submitted by Ken Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, Drea Zigarmi
Executive Summary Submitted by Jeff Dunn-Rankin

Sitting in Panera, sipping on hot tea, Jim was explaining that different people have different management styles.

“I’m what you would call a delegator,” this pastor told me. “I like to make assignments and give people room to get the job done.”

“Makes sense,” I said. “You know what works for you, and you lead that way.”

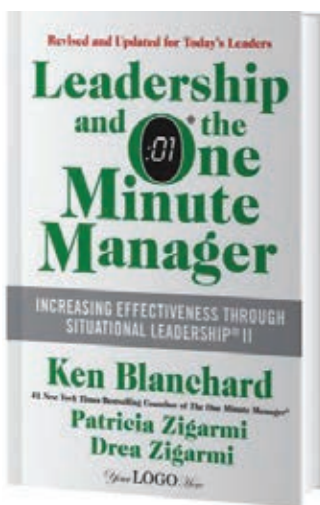
“Yeah, but here’s the problem,” he said, shaking his head. “It works for me, but it doesn’t work for our youth pastor. He needs a different kind of leadership. He needs a coach.”

Jim said that learning your own leadership style is only the first step. The next level is learning how to break away from your preferred approach, based on the needs of each individual you’re managing.

I started thinking about the different personalities on my own team – both paid and volunteer. They are wired differently and are in different spots in their development as team members, so naturally, if I care about their success in ministry, I need to recognize that they have different needs. Brilliant.

“I didn’t invent the idea,” Jim said. “I got it from an old business book that I read in seminary: *Leadership and the One Minute Manager*.”

This classic (written by Ken Blanchard, with an assist from Patricia and Drea Zigarmi) even spells out four kinds of leadership and describes the kind of person who needs that type of guidance.



Directive: This is when you give lots of instruction, training and structure. This style of leadership is crucial for an eager volunteer who is new to the job. “They need direction and frequent feedback to get them started,” writes Blanchard. Think of an enthusiastic, first-time coordinator of a special event who tells you, “I don’t know what I’m doing, but I’m willing to try.”

Coaching: This is for people who have a certain amount of competence, but they lack the confidence or the commitment to do the job

well on their own. “They need direction and feedback because they are still relatively inexperienced. They also need support and praise to build their self-esteem, and involvement in decision-making to restore their commitment.” This might be a youth leader who is in her second year but is not performing at the level you know she can.

Supporting: This style – heavy on praising, listening and cooperative problem-solving – is used when someone has plenty of experience, but they need more inspiration or trust in themselves. “They do not need much direction because of their skills, but support is necessary to bolster their confidence and motivation.” Think of a veteran worker who is tentatively trying out a new program or new style of ministry.

Delegating: Turning over responsibility for day-to-day decision-making and implementation is reserved for people with high levels of both competence and confidence. “They are able and willing to work on a project by themselves with little supervision or support.” This is cherished and talented Sunday school teacher who was leading kids to Christ long before you arrived and will be making disciples long after you are gone.

I found it useful to think of each member of my youth team and to name the style that each of them needs at this time.

This level of fine-tuning your style is more work, but it’s absolutely necessary if we remember, as Blanchard writes, that leaders “should work for their employees, not the reverse... When they win, we win.”

Workshop

1. Read the summary of this book:

Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness Through Situational Leadership

2. Which of those four leadership styles is most natural for you

Directive Delegating Coaching Supporting

3. Which style is hardest for you?

Directive Delegating Coaching Supporting

4. Name 3 or more volunteers. What leadership style do they need from you this year?

_____ Directive Delegating Coaching Supporting

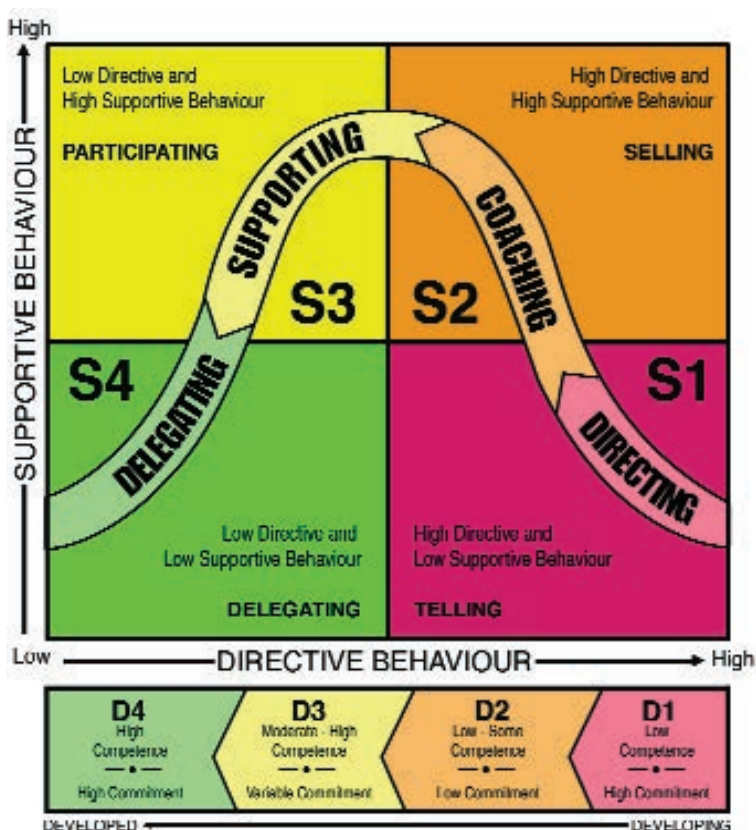
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Looking Back to Move Forward The Creation of the Negro

Written by Dr. Anthony T. Browder

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Sarah Fleming

Pick a name, any name---negro, colored, black or African American. Call a people by any name and they are still the same people, right? Wrong!

The name that you respond to determines the degree of your self-worth. Similarly, the way a group of people collectively respond to a name can have devastating effects on their lives, particularly if they did not choose their name.

Asians come from Asia and have pride in the Asian race. Europeans come from Europe and have pride in European accomplishments. Negroes, I am to assume, come from **Negroland**---a mythical country with an uncertain past and an even more uncertain future. Since **Negroland** is a myth, where did the myth of the negro originate? The key to understanding what a negro is, is to understand the definition of that word and its origin.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to enslave Africans, and they were the first to call them negroes. When the Spanish became involved in the slave trade, they also used the word negro to describe Africans. Negro is an adjective which means *black* in Portuguese and Spanish. But since 1444, and the beginning of the slave trade, the adjective **negro** became a noun and the *legitimate* name of a newly enslaved people.

Both the Portuguese and Spanish language were derived from Latin which have their origin in Classical Greece. In most European languages, the word for black was typically associated with aspects of death. The word *death* is derived from the Greek word **necro**, which means dead, and is similar, in sound and meaning, to the word **negro**.

Throughout European history, the words *necro* and *negro* were commonly used to reference the physical, spiritual or mental death of a person, place or thing.

Historically, when the Greeks first traveled to Africa 2,500 years ago, the Egyptian civilization was already ancient. The Great Pyramid was over 3,000 years old and the sphinx was even older. Writing, science, medicine and religion were already a part of the civilization and had reached their zenith.

The Greeks came to Africa as students to sit at the feet of the masters, and to discover what Africans already knew. In any student/teacher relationship, the teacher can only teach as much as the student is capable of understanding.

Egyptians, like other Africans understood that life existed beyond the grave. Ancestral worship is a way of acknowledging the lives of the people who have come before you, and their ability to offer guidance and direction to the living. Temples were designed as places where the ancestors could be honored, and holidays (Holy Days) were the days designated to do so.

Egyptians had hundreds of temples and hundreds of Holy Days to worship their ancestors. They had a preoccupation with life and celebrated the legacy of their loved ones. But the Greeks thought these Africans had a preoccupation with death. They regarded the act of ancestral worship as **necromancy**, or *communication with the dead*.

Since the root word **necro** means *dead*, another word for necromancy is magic---that *Old Black Magic* which was practiced in ancient Africa. When the Greeks returned to Europe, they took their distorted beliefs with them and the word *negro* ultimately evolved out of this great misunderstanding.

Less than 300 years after the first Greeks came to Egypt as students, their descendants returned as conquerors. They destroyed the cities, temples and libraries of the Egyptians and claimed African knowledge as their own.

Not only was the African legacy stolen, but the wholesale thief of African people soon followed. With the birth of the slave trade and the creation of the negro, it became necessary to dehumanize Africans and devalue their historical worth as a people in order to ensure their value as slaves. What was once referred to as a color and physical condition is now regarded as an appropriate state of mind for millions of Africans now residing in America.

So there you have it, the *negro*---a race of dead people with a dead history and no hope for resurrection as long as they remained ignorant of their past. This was a triple death---the death of the mind, body and spirit of the African people.

It was strictly forbidden for *negro* slaves to learn to read or write. Such knowledge was the key to liberation and was placed firmly out of reach. As *negroes* became educated, however, they sought to redefine themselves.

The evolution of the *negro* from colored, to black, to African American, to African represents a progression of self-consciousness. As a *free people*, we have a responsibility to educate ourselves and rediscover our African identities. Knowledge of self is the key to unlocking the door to the future. The sooner we understand that fact, the sooner we will be able to say *thank God we are an African people*.

Commentary

Of all the essays in *From The Browder File*, "The Creation of the Negro," has been one of the most popular. It has been well received for two obvious reasons, the subject matter and the accompanying illustration, specifically the image of the kingly figure emerging out of Africa.

The illustration was drawn by Malcolm Aaron and we have received numerous requests from people who asked permission to use the art on T-shirts and posters. Several years ago, while lecturing at an Air Force base in Misawa, Japan, I was told that this art was the most popular tattoo among brothers in the military. This image of a strong African king is one which any former negro would naturally be drawn to.

Regarding the word negro, and the legitimacy of its use as a name for Africans, I refer you to Richard Moore's book, *the Name "Negro" Its Origin and Evil Use*. There is no doubt that the word negro was created by evil people for evil purposes. The late John Henrik Clark often reminded us that "dogs and slaves were named by their masters and that only free men named themselves." With this understanding, any free-minded person should view the word negro as an inappropriate name for black people and black organizations.

I can understand our acceptance of the name years ago when we did not know any better. But with all of the knowledge that we have available to us there is no excuse for the continued use of a word that is demeaning and obsolete.

As a recovering negro, I have promised myself never to write negro with a capital “n.” Negro is not a noun, it is a nuisance and it should be jettisoned from our vocabulary along with the other infamous “N”

word. Anyone who chooses to use these words does so out of ignorance or disrespect.

The latent king or queen inside of you cannot peacefully co-exist with a negro mentality. Either you choose to be free and you think, talk and act like a free person, or you are a slave. You cannot be both.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS GOD'S WAY

Submitted by Ms. Angel Eason
Lifestyle Editor, The Star of Zion
Email: Lifestyle@StarofZion.org

The New Year is here and this is the time when people establish resolutions to carry out during the year. These resolutions often include things like “lose twenty pounds,” “eat healthy,” “get closer to God,” and/or “spend more time with family, Etc.”



These resolutions are great but what happens at the end of the year when these goals are unmet? I had the opportunity to have a conversation with Rev. Darlene R. Counts, Associate Minister at Judah Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, located in Mitchellville, Maryland about this important topic as we start the New Year.

What has been your experience with creating New

Year's resolutions?

I thought of it as having goals to set personally or spiritually for areas of improvement. When I set goals, I think of things I need to achieve, things I like, and/or things I need to push myself to be greater for what I am called to do on this earth.

Have your goals been met for 2022?

Absolutely not, if I am transparent. Even though I haven't reached certain goals, I give myself grace because life happens. That doesn't mean I don't have opportunities within the rest of the year or the upcoming year to carry out these goals. The goals I meet, I am excited about it and I have people around to keep me accountable including myself. Some of the goals could take years, but they are never unobtainable. I just have to reevaluate how life has been or find another strategy to meet my goals.

How do you intentionally set your goals?

I approach every New Year with spirituality and I go into consecration which includes 21 days of fasting. I think about my character and personality that I want to alter, activities and events I want to participate in; gifting (spiritual or work-related), and how I want to be socially engaged with people, build connections, and network.

I start by fasting and I talk to God about guiding me and sharing my desires for development. I need the Lord. I can do nothing without God guiding me. Taking one goal and starting with that goal after fasting or consecration with God, I feel that God is pushing me. For example: showing love to all mankind; being reflective about showing love at my job, with family and friends, at the grocery store, hair salon, and finding every avenue in which I can exude love. Another example: I want to love more and better and I want to have more patience. I prayed for more patience about a year or two ago. Be careful what you ask for. I found myself in sticky situations, sometimes I failed and sometimes I exceeded. I can be patient with myself and others. God directs me and there are things he shows me that he wants me to work on. Then of course, sometimes I have a plan and then there is no plan.

I also create vision boards by adding affirmations, goals, and perspectives on a board which helps me as a visual learner. To be able to see the board daily is a reminder or strategy to obtain goals and it serves as motivation.

One thing I will say, our relationship with God is key before any goals, strategy, or anything we want to set forth. Personal desires and goals are normally for our fulfillment and it taps into our emotional space. I am a firm believer that our relationship with God is so paramount to fulfilling any resolution or strategy. It is up to God and our relationship with Him that He guides and governs our day-to-day, in our devotional space, God validates us, affirms us, provides for us, and opens up the doors. In our relationship, He makes our desires. I would push our connection with the father, to be able to fulfill those resolutions. Even when it gets tough, it's through his word that we find strength. Putting it always before the Lord. God is omnipotent. We always want God to breathe upon our efforts as we walk on this faith journey.

It's been a rough year for a lot of people, what encouragement do you have for folks as we enter a new year?

Go with God - it means you're in His timing. In His instructions, In His provision, in His strength and joy. As life continues to move forward, life has a way of derailing us. When you delight yourself in the Lord, He gives you the desires of your heart. Whatever we need in life, is found within Him. He responds by giving us the desires of our hearts. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” Proverbs 3:6

He directs our path and gives us whatever we need. Remain encouraged, “the joy of the Lord is our strength.” God is in the midst of it all. As we all journey in faith, know that Emmanuel is forever with us as we walk out our faith.

MY GOD IS ABLE

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Dwayne L. Tutt
Email: Ezraassociates24@gmail.com

As we head toward another General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, I have decided to share with you lessons I have learned over nearly 40 years. These are lessons learned while serving in ministry, as a professor of economics, and business development. I will write and publish these lessons monthly in our Star of Zion at my own personal cost. My hope is that these lessons will remind us of the Most High God and we are His people. I feel a need to remind Zion that My God Is Able.

It would be robbery for me not to thank Bishop George Washington Carver Walker, Sr. for his encouragement in my life. Bishop Walker appointed me back in 2004 to the Western North Carolina Annual Conference Studies Committee. The appointment was made at a planning meeting in Charlotte, NC at Greater Gethsemane AME Zion Church. Bishop Walker appointed me as the instructor of AME Zion Church Polity and History. I still serve on this committee. That appointment lit a fire under me which continues to burn to this very day! I cherish the opportunity to serve this great church. Thank-you Bishop Walker!!!

Lastly, for those who have asked if I am available to present at your church or meetings; the answer is yes. I am happy to do whatever I can to support your ministries. My contact information is: Cell Phone 828.455.4826 and Email Address ezraassociates24@gmail.com.

Testimony Three

Last month I focused on Camp Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center. We reviewed how the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ) purchased nearly 60 acres of land in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. The camp is located minutes from Asheville, North Carolina. We reminded ourselves of the important vision Bishop William Jacob Walls had in the 1950s. That vision was for urban youth to experience Christian Education in a rural and mountain setting. I reminded the church that AMEZ promoted the camp for decades by sending AMEZ youth and others to the camp over the summer months. By faith AMEZ was able to purchase the property and provide ministry for our youth. Furthermore, lay people and episcopal leadership continued the ministry of the camp to this very day. Including the recent construction of a 50 bedroom lodging complex. The new complex is absolutely beautiful! This lesson will continue our discussion of Camp Dorothy Walls' ministry to our youth in the midst of economic downturns over the many decades. We will discuss the difficulty of moving forward in ministry, your homes, and in your lives when you cannot see how things are going to work out.

Going back to the Book of Nehemiah the text reads: **Nehemiah 1:4-11**
⁴And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,⁵ And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:⁶ Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.⁷ We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.⁸ Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:⁹ But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.¹⁰ Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.¹¹ O LORD, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.

Please recall from Lesson 2 how Nehemiah had something inside of

him which caused him to inquire as to how his people were doing at his homeplace. From this inquiry, Nehemiah learned that while his homeplace of worship was not what it once was, there were still people at home ... a remnant.

Does not Nehemiah thoughts prompt us to think about our homeplaces of worship and ministry? How often do we stop and ask how things are going at our homeplaces of family and worship?

Now look at the "ACTIONS" Nehemiah took once he heard about home. First, **He Heard!** My Jewish friends would say, "Tutt, to hear is to obey". After Nehemiah heard about his homeplace, he sat down, cried, mourned, fasted and prayed. I wish to summarize what he did this way. He stopped, reflected, fasted and prayed. During his reflection and prayer, he dealt with his **own** shortcomings and the shortcomings of his people. Nehemiah didn't push blame on someone else. He fell back on his teachings and his faith (Verses 9-11) ... he remembered who he was and who his people were in the sight of God.

Please go back with me to the Hebrew Language coursework I learned at Hood Theological Seminary. I learned Hebrew under Dr. Albert Aymer, the former president of the seminary. The Hebrew word for **remember** is 'רוכז' pronounced "ZaCar".

First, **remember** is a verb ... it is action. The root word **remember** does speak to plowing lines. The analogy is like a farmer plows rows to plant seeds. Therefore, **we need to remember we have plowed lines and planted seeds to our mind and to God.** When we find trouble in our lives, we "ZaCar!!!" we **remember** we have a line and have planted seeds to the Most High God. We have lines of communication to God, and we need to **remember** that.

For instance, Jesus said in Luke 22:19 "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in **remembrance** of me." We should always **remember** what God has done for us through his son Jesus.

Next notice how to prosper as instructed in Nehemiah 1:11; if we desire to prosper, we need to fear the name of the Lord. We must have reverence for the Lord and seek mercy and grace. AMEZ we must ZaCar (**remember**) who and whose we are in this world. We have a plowed line of communication between our thoughts and the power of the Most High God.

Now going go back to Camp Dorothy Walls. Under many episcopal leaders and lay people, new facilities were constructed, and worship services have continued. My last lesson focused on the contributions to the camp by Bishop George Washington Carver Walker, Sr. His faithfulness to improve Camp Dorothy Walls was Nehemiah in action within AMEZ. It was through his vision and the very hard work of ministers and lay people of the Piedmont that the camp was to secure millions of dollars from major lenders TO BUILD AMEZ MINISTRY. We also financed the purchase of an Episcopal Residence in South Charlotte and fully furnished the home. All these funds were borrowed during the Great Recession. However, at the point of retirement for Bishop Walker, the Piedmont Episcopal District was in millions of dollars of debt. Recall during last month's lesson I said, "then God sent a banker from Rocky Mount, NC to the Piedmont Episcopal District." Now I will talk about the banker from Rocky Mount, NC.

When I was a young preacher, I was afforded the magnificent opportunity to be around three people who were, or to become presiding elders. The three people were Presiding Elder James Henry Dunlap, Sr., Presiding Elder Henry C. Tutt, Sr. (my dad), and Presiding Elder James Coleman Tutt, Sr. (my uncle). I clearly recall discussions they had about a pastor in Charlotte, NC who had an elevator put in his church. The discussion centered on the amazement that a Zion Pastor could convince a church to make the investment in the construction of an elevator in



the church. I also recall a second conversation about a pastor in Charlotte, NC who had the ability to use his financial acumen and banking relationships to rescue Livingstone College when the institution was having very serious financial problems. A third discussion I heard was about this pastor, who was the most financially gifted minister in AMEZ, had made a decision to run for bishop. I still remember Presiding Elder James Henry Dunlap saying to dad, “if we elect him as a bishop who will rescue the church when there are other financial problems?” Of course, that pastor would be elected as the 84th bishop in AMEZ and his name is George Edward Battle, Jr.

Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr was born in 1947 to George and Mary I. Battle. After high school he matriculated at Clinton Jr College and Livingstone College (B.A.), Hood Theological Seminary (M.Div.) and Howard University School of Divinity (D.Min). He began his preaching ministry in the South Carolina Annual Conference. His pastoral work included churches in South Carolina and North Carolina. The church he was elevated to the episcopal ministry from was Greater Gethsemane (the elevator church) in Charlotte, North Carolina. During his pastoral labors in Charlotte, he served in various high-level appointments and positions including serving as the President of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education and was elected as the Chairperson of the Board of Education. He served as a powerful voice within the Charlotte Banking Industry! Many of his years of being a financial banking expert was during the period when there were two major banking centers east of the Mississippi River in the United States of America. One of the cities was New York City and the other was Charlotte, NC.

Key Information		Assessment Details	
Zoning	PS	Neighborhood	TDMN
Land Use Code	REL.CAMP/RESORT/ASM	Municipality	-
Fee District	FEB	Special District	-
Present Use	-		
Appraisal Area	-		
Exemption	RXM		
Land Value	\$512,100	Building Value	\$2,970,000
Features	\$49,600	Total Appraised Value	\$3,531,700
Deferred Value	\$0	Exempt Value	\$3,531,700

STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
As of July 31, 2022	
ASSETS	
Current Assets:	
Checking	\$ 336,210
Total Current Assets	336,210
Property and Equipment:	
Land	2,100,000
Buildings	8,759,788

Bishop Battle had proven his financial wherewithal to the point that he was a well-known member of an extremely influential circle of Charlotte banking executives. Bishop J. Clinton Hoggard wrote in his AMEZ Bicentennial Commemorative History Book that Bishop Battle, “he manifests unusual administrative ability.” It was this bishop that God sent to the Piedmont Episcopal District. God sent him to work out the financial plan to liquidate the millions of dollars of debt.

I clearly recall Bishop Battle standing in one our earliest meetings and declaring, “we are going to pay-off all the debt before I retire.” He then proceeded to develop a very aggressive debt liquidation plan. The Piedmont Episcopal District executed the plan. The debt was retired within eight years! Once the debt was paid off, Bishop Battle invited Bishop Walker back to Camp Dorothy Walls for the celebration and mortgage burning. Can somebody say AMEN?

To appreciate how God used Bishop Walker and Bishop Battle to improve the financial strength of Camp Dorothy Walls and the Piedmont Episcopal District, please consider the following extract of a real estate evaluation conducted by the Buncombe County Government of North Carolina. The evaluation was conducted before Bishop Walker began improving the property:

To the above valuation, I must add additional unimproved land values of \$249,000, \$39,800 and \$41,000. These additional evaluations were

listed in separate reports conducted by the county. When all the evaluations are summed, the Camp Dorothy Walls valuation was **\$3,861,500**.

After the real estate improvements by Bishop Walker, we have the following financial review by a North Carolina CPA. This review was provided by Bishop Darryl B. Starnes to the Camp Dorothy Walls Board of Directors during our December 2022 board meeting. These financials are an extraction from the Balance Sheet:

Summing just the land and improvements value, Camp Dorothy Walls real estate assets equal **\$10,859,788** (circled above in red).

Now I remind you that God used Bishop Battle to liquidate all the debt of Camp Dorothy Walls. The implication of this liquidation is Camp Dorothy Walls by conservative estimates was worth almost \$11,000,000 with no debt as of July 2022.

Because I love telling stories of how powerful God is in our lives and within Zion, please consider the following discussion on wealth.

While teaching microeconomics, macroeconomics, and money and banking at Livingstone College, I taught my students: Wealth = Assets – Debt. I wanted my Livingstone Students to clearly understand that wealth increases when asset values increase and when debt decreases. That said, at Camp Dorothy Walls we had an appreciation in real estate values and the liquidation of all debt! God let Zion increase asset values and decreased debt!

What God did at Camp Dorothy Walls was to increase our wealth!!! Camp Dorothy Walls now provides a positive contribution to our financial standing within the banking community. AMEZ and specifically Camp Dorothy Walls reminds us of what God CAN and WILL DO if only we trust him and walk with faith.

Before I close this lesson and my testimony on the power of the God, I ask you to reflect on the increase in wealth. The increase in wealth came to Zion when Zion moved forward into financial darkness. Look at the numbers above and see what God did for Zion in the midst of the Great Economic Recession.

To discuss risk and wealth, I add this story. When I was an undergraduate student at Morehead State University in Kentucky, I had to take a high-level microeconomics course. The course was Microeconomics 350. My professor was a man named Dr. E.E. Morrow. Almost 40 years ago he said, “Mr. Tutt to who takes the risk, goes the reward.” Beloved, the Piedmont Episcopal District took a huge risk to improve Camp Dorothy Walls and to purchase an Episcopal Residence. We did so by doing our due diligence and walking forward with faith. Because we did, today we have more wealth.

Beloved, Rev. Dr. Dwayne Lavone Tutt brings more good news to you. That news is, “**we serve a risk mitigating God.**” God mitigates our risks and can eliminate all our risks if we trust Him. We simply have to trust Him and step forward with wisdom as we make our journeys in life.

God is able to lead us to more wealth and prosperity in our homes, churches, and in Zion if we do our due diligence and walk forward with faith. I praise God for allowing me to share this story of Camp Dorothy Walls with you. My prayer is that this testimony helps you see the power of the God we serve.

Lastly, I told you about the wealth increase at Camp Dorothy Walls. My next testimony will be on how difficult creating the wealth was for the Piedmont Episcopal District. Let there be no doubt in your mind how difficult it was to accomplish what was done at Camp Dorothy Walls. So, then God sent a medicine man with an ointment from the presses of Gethsemane. Next time we will talk about the medicine man and the ointment. See you next month. My God Is Able!

Why not grow? Why not now? Why not us? Why not YOU? See you next month!

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Star of Zion.

It's About Time

Submitted by Zion Shoulders
Sports Editor, The Star of Zion
Email: Sports@StarOfZion.org

Dec 8, 2022 - 9 Months. 42 Weeks. 294 Day is the length of time Brittney Griner spent detained by Russian authorities, prior to, during, and after her subsequent sentencing. Brittney Griner was arrested on February 17, 2022, in Russia on "smuggling" charges. Smuggling is a word that has been used heavily in the media regarding Brittney's arrest. This term is ambiguous at best.

Brittney Griner was prescribed medical cannabis by a Doctor in Arizona. While returning to Russia, to play for one of their Women's Basketball Clubs, Griner was arrested for possession of illegal substances in Russia. She had a vapor cartridge containing less than "1 Gram" of hash cannabis oil.

Instead of Russia giving a fair and humane trial, they used her as a political pawn. After being in and out of various detention centers post her February arrest, the Russian government sentenced Brittney to 9 years for her actions in early August.

Many supporters believed there was a lack of urgency for justice for Brittney Griner from the United States Government. This sentiment was particularly expressed by leading voices in the in the Black and Women's' rights activist communities. Their grievances enlightened many of the disparity's professional women athletes face. Deductively, it could be concluded if Brittney received compensation commensurate to her male counterparts she may have not had to compete in Russia. This is easily understood when given these numbers: The average WNBA player earns annually approximately \$78,000.00 which is well below the 5.1 million earned on average in the NBA.



Brittney was arrested in February. The United States did not publicly state her arrest as a "wrongful arrest" until early May. While this may seem like a short time lapse, one should consider the larger implications this has on Brittney's wellness and career. As a professional athlete diet, exercise, sleep

patterns, and training are all key components of any preparation protocol for any tournament. While incarcerated Brittney was not likely to have access to all the requisite resources to maintain her athletic performance capabilities. "Ms. Griner is allowed outside once a day, said Mr. Boykov, a Russian spokesperson- during which she walks



for an hour in a small courtyard at a penal colony outside Moscow..." (New York Times). For 9 months, Brittney was 5000 miles away from her closest loved one. She went weeks at times without talking to her wife. Once a day for an hour, Brittney was allowed outside- once a day, one hour for a woman who helped to acquire 2 Olympic Gold

Medals for the U.S.

After news of her detention broke on March 5, 2022, some observers connected her detention to Russia's history of holding high profile travelers as political prisoners. "This follows a pattern of Russia wrongly detaining & imprisoning US citizens, including **Trevor Reed**," Texas Representative **Joaquin Castro** tweeted at the time. «US citizens are not political pawns. Brittney, Trevor, and other Americans must be safely returned.» (Reed is a former Marine who

had been detained in Russia since 2019; he was returned home in April 2022.)

On December 9, Griner touched down on U.S. soil, landing at San Antonio's Brooke Army Medical Center, where she underwent a medical evaluation before returning home. This is one component of a lengthy list of reentry protocols set by the US State Department, especially for those detained at length by hostile governments. Lindsay Kagawa Colas, Griner's agent, told CNN she got back on the court over that first weekend and made her first move, a slam dunk. "She's doing extremely well. She seems to have endured this in incredible ways." Still, Colas added, "She's reintegrating into a world that has changed for her now. From a pure security standpoint, she's not going to be able to move in the world the way she did."



In her first public statement since her release, Griner posted photos of herself stepping off the plane and hugging Cherelle to Instagram, confirming she intends to play basketball for the Phoenix Mercury this season and sharing her gratitude "to each person who advocated" for her freedom. Thanking her wife, team, legal representation, and the Biden-Harris administration for bringing her home, Griner expressed her hopes that Paul Whelan will be freed from Russia soon, adding that she will use her platform "to do whatever I can to help." On behalf of all American detainees, Griner continued, "I also encourage everyone that played a part in bringing me home to continue their efforts to bring all Americans home. Every family deserves to be whole."



#MISSIONSMATTER



A PURPOSE DRIVEN
SERVANT- LEADER
DEDICATED TO
RESTORING
MISSIONS THROUGH
PRAYER, LOVE AND
SERVICE.

VOTE REV. DR. PEGGY L. OWENS WHOMS FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION UNIVERSITY

Vacancy Announcement for the post of President

Background

AME Zion University commenced in 1983 with the founding of the AME Zion School of Business, attached to the AME Zion Academy.

In 1987, the AME Zion Community College was established, offering Associate Degrees in Criminal Justice Administration and Law Enforcement, Liberal Arts, and Business, as well as Diploma in Trauma Counseling. It held its First Convocation in May 1989. In 1996, by Act of the National Legislature, the AME Zion University College was established with the Reverend Frederick Umoja serving as its first President.

The university, which the AME Zion Church operates, presently has seven (7) Colleges. Namely, the Wilfred E. Clarke College of Criminal Justice Administration, the Andrew Cartwright College of Business and Public Administration, the Ruben L. Speaks College of Liberal Arts, the Bishop Warren M. Brown College of Divinity, the Alicia Smith-Lartey College of Education, the College of Agriculture and Agri-Business Studies. AMEZU has an Extension program in Unification Town, Margibi County. It presently offers Bachelor's Degree Program in Divinity, Education, Criminal Justice Administration, Liberal Arts, and Business-related Disciplines. The university has enrolled over 20,000 students and graduated over 5,000 since its establishment. AME Zion University is accredited by The National Commission on Higher Education of Liberia. It is a Founding member of the Association of Liberian Universities.

THE OPPORTUNITY

AME Zion University is seeking collaborative and strategic executive leadership to build on the university's legacy and push the university forward during an evolutionary time in higher education. Reporting to and partnering closely with a committed Board of Trustees, the President will bring emotional intelligence and energy to manage and further the university's vision, strategy, and program development. The President will have overall responsibility for the educational, operational, and financial affairs of the College and serve as Chief Executive Officer reporting to the Board of Trustees. This visionary, ethical leader will inspire and empower staff, partners, and stakeholders, respecting the past and present while generating exciting ideas for a more significant impact in the future. The President will also bring a solid commitment to the excellence, justice, and equity framework that the Board of Trustees seeks to embed throughout all aspects of internal and external work, including the alignment of administrative, academic, and financial departments and investments.

SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide the creative, strategic vision, inspirational motivation, effective day-to-day direction, and efficient operation necessary to ensure the university's success and continued advancement of its values, mission, and purpose.
- The President shall be responsible for preparing the Annual Budget of the University to demonstrate sound fiscal management.
- Collaborate with the Board, faculty, staff, alumni, and community stakeholders to ensure that the university's values, mission, and purpose fully embody all aspects of the instruction and works. The President will work closely with the Vice President of Academic Affairs on the appointment of the faculty. He/she will have full authority over academic divisions, departments, staff, and all employees, salaries and is accountable for the quality of their performance.
- Working closely with the Board, faculty, and other stakeholder partners, identify and effectively communicate a compelling, shared vision for the Board, faculty, and staff.
- Ensure academic management and financial administration strategies and systems are effective and aligned with the university's mission and vision.
- Steward academics and finances with an ethical lens that promotes legal compliance and financial integrity.
- Ensure the development of academic programming, grantmaking, and investment strategies and systems are effective, aligned with

the mission/values of the university and AME Zion Church, and implemented with excellence.

- Ensure standards and systems are in place that tracks the effectiveness and impact, centered in equitable evaluation principles, including rigor around programmatic innovation and outcomes, and with increased program integration with the endowment for a more powerful impact platform.
- Assess organizational needs and support creative solutions to enhance structures, practices, systems, tools, reports, and staffing ensuring role clarity and alignment and identifying necessary resources to thrive.
- Recruit, lead, mentor, and coach a diverse faculty and staff, ensuring they are supported, entrusted, empowered, recognized, appreciated, and amplified. Foster a community of meaningful collaboration, intellectual curiosity, continuous learning, transparency, and open feedback. The President will be evaluated annually.
- Work with the Board to help ensure proper resources and information for effective governance; support Board members as they individually and collectively fulfill their management and fiduciary responsibilities and ensure transparency and regular communication with the Board in all key areas.
- Serve as a liaison and foster effective relationships within the Board, between the Board and university's faculty and staff, and with external audiences.
- Engage in contemplative discourse with the Board around emerging trends and exploration of investments in existing and new initiatives cultivating open, thoughtful, and collaborative partnerships.
- Work collaboratively with other private and public institutions, organizations, funding sources, and community partners as a thought leader, lifting the voices of the University's community partners and influencing measurable change.

QUALIFICATION:

- The ideal candidate for this post will possess an earned Doctorate degree from an accredited university; Have no less than ten (10) years in a senior administrative and/or academic position at a college or university, either as President, Vice President, Dean or Administrator and be fully computer literate;
- The President must be a proven senior executive with a documented record of successful administrative management and a deep commitment to academic superiority.
- The individual will also have experience in and/or passion for grounding institutional culture and serving as a fierce internal and external university champion.
- Driven by intellectual curiosity and steady presence, the individual will bring outcomes-oriented leadership to advancing the university's objectives and goals.
- Strong people leadership and management skills with a proven background of empowering diverse groups of professionals, entrusting and amplifying the work of others, including experience with board governance and engagement.
- Outstanding communications skills and diplomacy, including listening to, relating well, and inspiring various constituencies and people at all levels.
- A history of successful engagement, partnering and fostering alliance-building among a broad range of constituencies and an ability to work with and effectively inspire innovative thinking among stakeholders and audiences in multiple sectors.
- Experience managing organizational complexity and enhancing capacity and impact.
- Knowledge and zeal for one or more focused disciplines in which the University educates, trains, and instructs as well mindful of democratic values, economically disadvantaged communities, wealth disparities, and sustainable climate change.
- Understanding power dynamics around the changes in academic institutional structures and government engagement in the essential role of higher education in movement building to affect sustain-

able, progressive change.

Note: We recognize that a compelling candidate might meet some, not all, requirements and invite interested candidates to explain what makes them uniquely well-suited for this leadership role consistent with the specific duties outlined above. Also, include a discussion on his/her vision for the university over the next three to five years in an essay not exceeding five pages.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

A competitive compensation and benefits package will be offered to the

successful applicant.

To Apply email to amezuacademic@gmail.com and use as heading/
Subject: **LAST NAME and AMEZU Presidential Search**. Example:
Hawkins: AMEZU Presidential Search

Address to:

The Presidential Search Committee

AME Zion University

166 Benson Street, Monrovia, Liberia

Marvin AME Zion Facility Manager Job Description

Purpose: The Facilities Manager is a full time position responsible for assuring successful operation and function of the church's building and grounds in support of its mission. The position is responsible for completing and/or overseeing maintenance of all systems for plumbing, electrical, HVAC (heating ventilation air conditioning), security, telecommunications, sound, lighting, fire safety, security digital recording and landscaping. The position also requires completion of carpentry, painting, masonry work and general handyman knowledge to maintain the interior and exterior of the church. The position reports to the Senior Pastor and works closely with Trustee Chair.

Specific Duties: The Facilities manager is responsible for completion/coordination of the following:

1. Performing preventive maintenance activities on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual basis to reduce wear and tear or breakdown of systems, including computer systems.
2. Assessing system breakdowns and determining the kind of repairs that are required.
3. Completing in-house system repair whenever possible.
4. Schedule/supervise outside vendors, when necessary, to meet on site, review system failures, request estimates and oversee repairs.
5. Setting up and taking down the chairs and tables in fellowship hall, gym, and other rooms to accommodate regularly scheduled weekly or monthly activities as well as special events.
6. Coordinate, receive and provide access to outside vendors making deliveries.
7. Communicating regularly with Trustee Board Chair and participating in regular meetings as needed – providing a monthly report. He/she needs to be involved in the coordination of scheduling of events to assure readiness of the facility.
8. After approval by Pastor/Trustees, the Facility Manager may be asked to work with lay leaders as well as volunteer workers in support of regular activities and special projects.
9. Meeting building inspectors and resolving any deficiencies.
10. Ensure daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly routine janitorial functions are completed as outlined.

Skills, Qualifications & Experience:

- Basic handyman knowledge of plumbing, HVAC and other building

systems.

- Competence with repair tools and techniques.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to speak with all levels of employees, guests, vendors and members.
- Great time management, organization and prioritization abilities.
- Keen attention to detail and efficient problem-solving skills.
- Ability to lift equipment, tools, etc. weighing 50 – 75 Lbs. and comfortable standing or walking for long periods.
- Candidates should have many years of experience in building maintenance roles.

Marvin AME Zion Facility Manager Job Description

- Previous leadership experience is also beneficial.
- Must have a valid driver's license.

Education and training requirements:

Facilities Manager candidates must have at least a high school diploma or GED and some years of on-the-job training from previous roles in the industry. General handyman knowledge is required. Completion of some educational programs, certification in project management, communication, sustainability and/or operations management is preferred but not required.

Salary Expectations:

The Facilities Manager will be paid a salary commensurate with experience, level of education and pertinent job skills. Salary range between \$35,000 - \$42,000. The selected candidate must complete a ninety-day probationary period successfully once hired and will be evaluated for performance annually. Additional performance reviews may be appropriate at the discretion of the Pastor and Trustee Board Chairperson.

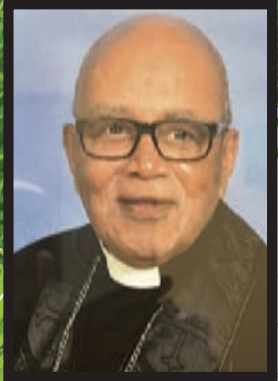
Equal Employment Opportunity:

To provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at Marvin AME Zion Church will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. Marvin AME Zion Church does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion, physical or mental disability, military/veteran status, and/or any other class protected by federal or state law.

Serious Inquires Apply: info@mamez.org

HAPPY NEW YEAR

From The Elizabeth City District



P. E. Donald Jones
Good Hope &
Pilgrim Journey



Rev. Javan Leach
Mt. Lebanon



Rev. Dr. Joseph Walton
Bay Branch &
Winslow Grove



Rev. William Bonner
Whiteville Grove



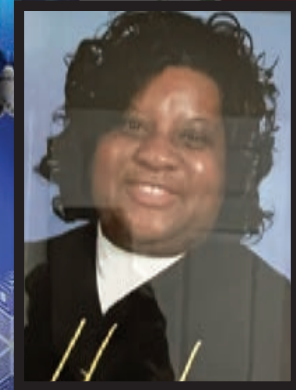
Rev. Ernest Cole
St James



Rev. Doris Gramby
Pitts Chapel &
Rebecca



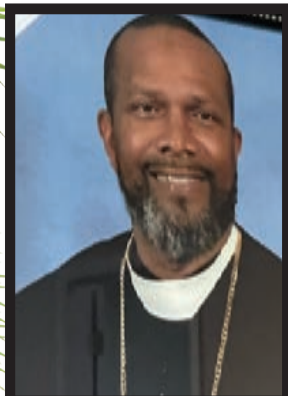
Rev. Charlie Bowe
Leigh's Temple



Rev. TaVanda Fields
New McBride



Rev. Iris Dance
Moses Temple



Rev. Miracle Parker
Center Chapel &
Mary Holly Grove



Rev. Anita Hurdle
Parksville &
Wilson Grove



Rev. Lakisha Caldwell
Bethel

Elizabeth City District of the Albemarle Conference is Grateful to the Pastors and Laity for their faithfulness and Commitment to the building of the Kingdom of God



The Freedom Church



Love, Sharing & Teaching