

# THE STAR OF ZION

SEPTEMBER | VOL 146 No. 9 | STAROFZION.ORG | THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

## Marvelous Ministry In The MO The Missouri Annual Conference

By Georgette Williams

The one hundred and thirty-third session of the Missouri Annual Conference convened virtually on Wednesday, July 6, 2022, and Thursday, July 7, 2022. The theme, "Serving Our Flock," was emphasized throughout the conference. The host church was Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church in Kasas City, MO. Bishop Michael A. Frencher Sr. and Mrs. Gelenia A. Frencher were with us for their first Missouri Annual Conference. The host pastor and presiding elder of the Kansas City District are Rev. Michael L. Murray and Rev. Seth Martin Moulton. Presiding Elder Carrol A. Johnson was with the St. Louis District.

The conference was kicked off with intercessory prayer led by Presiding Elder Johnson and closed with Bishop Frencher. We went immediately into the Morning Worship Service, led by Rev. Michael L. Murray. Hymns were provided to the tech team by conference musicians Cynthia Smith and Georgette Williams. The Love Feast sermon was rendered by Rev. Kenneth Pegue and was entitled "The Missing Link," taken from Matthew 28:18-20.

Following the "Invitation to Christian Discipleship" we participated in the "Love Feast"



Pictures by Larentz Boyd & Richie Williams. Pictured, Bishop & Mrs. Michael A. Frencher Sr., Pres. Elder Seth Martin Moulton, Pres. Elder Carrol A. Johnson & Rev. Michael Murray.

led by Bishop Frencher. We learned the origin of the Love Feast. The scripture was from Luke 9:12-17. After the Agape Address we were asked to participate in the taking of the bread and water. After the dismissal, we organized the conference with the report of the Rules Committee, Nominating Committee, and Credentials Committee all of which were led by Rev. Michael Murray. An appropriate motion was made and seconded to approve each report. The roll call was read. Bishop Frencher officially opened the conference for business at 12:04 p.m. We were greeted by our Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. Gelenia Frencher. The dates and location were selected for the next annual conference. It will be held June 28th – July 1st 2023 in St. Louis, MO at Washington Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church where the host pastor is the Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon and the Presiding Elder is Rev. Carrol A. Johnson.

The Episcopal address was entitled "Our

Need to Serve our Flock in this Ever-Changing World". It was a "call to action" for us to lift up the importance of education through Sunday School, bible study and Discipleship classes, prayer, mentoring and church growth and development. After reports and the closing prayer, we had a brief break before the evening service.

The Christian Education worship service was presided over by Rev. William Marcell Brown. District Christian Education officers participated in the service. The message was given by Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon. "Waiting on the Top of Ashes" was taken from Job 2:8 and 14:14b. The message emphasized the importance of waiting on God. A virtual Stoling Ceremony was led by Rev. Leshia Sams.

The Missionary Convocation was held Thursday, July 7, 2022 with Mrs. Frencher

Continues on bottom of page 4



## Knoxville District PE Rev. Dr. John Butler wins Knox County School Board seat in landslide victory!

Thursday, August 4, 2022 The State of Tennessee held it's County general elections. In Knox County, Zion's very own

Rev. Dr. John A. Butler was elected to serve as School Board Representative for District 1. In a landslide victory Butler won over 75% of the vote beating two independent candidates. Butler won the Democratic nomination back in April.

Rev. Dr. John A. Butler serves as the Presiding Elder of the Knoxville District, TN Annual Conference, as well as the Pastor of Clinton Chapel AME Zion Church in Knoxville TN.

Dr. Butler serves as the First-Vice President of the International Presiding Elders Council of the AME Zion Church and as the Vice-President of the Mid-West Episcopal District Presiding Elder's Council. Dr. Butler is a member of the Zion Benefits Services Board and served as the Chair of the Benefits and Services Committee at the 2012 AME Zion General Conference.


Dr. Butler serves as the Vice-Chair of the Mid West Episcopal District Finance Committee, the Chair of the Budget Committee of the Mid West Episcopal District Leadership Institute, the Chair of the TN Conference Budget Committee, the Chair of the TN Conference Holy Orders Committee and the Vice-Chair of the TN Conference Board of Trustees.

Dr. Butler serves as the President of the Knoxville Branch NAACP; as the President

of Knoxville Interdenominational Christian Ministerial Alliance; as the Chair of the FAITH Coalition (a Faith-Based Coalition to help reduce HIV & AIDS); and as the Coordinator of the Mechanicsville Neighborhood Watch Program. Dr. Butler served 6 years as a member of the Knoxville Police Advisory and Review Committee (PARC); on the Board of the Beck Cultural Exchange Center; and on the Board of the Great Schools Partnership.

Dr. Butler completed a Doctor of Ministry (Summa cum Laude) at Covington Theological Seminary in Rossville, GA; a Masters of Divinity (Magna cum Laude) at Hood Theological Seminary in Salisbury, NC; and a Bachelor of Arts - Sociology (Magna cum Laude) from NC A & T State University in

Continues on bottom of page 12



**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.

**THE STAR OF ZION**  
(ISSN 0038-9870)  
PUBLICATION NUMBER  
05 19-200



The Official organ of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Periodicals Postage Paid at Charlotte, North Carolina. Founded in 1876 and published once monthly from The A.M.E. Zion Church Headquarters, 3225 W. Sugar Creek Rd., Charlotte, NC 28269.

**POSTMASTER:** Send Change of Address to THE STAR OF ZION, Post Office Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770.

**THE STAR OF ZION**  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY FROM  
The A.M.E. Zion Church Headquarters,  
3225 W. Sugar Creek Rd.,  
Charlotte, NC 28269.  
Paid circulation 5,000.  
Member of the Associated Church Press.

**Accelerating Communication About The Freedom Church**

★ The Star of Zion ★

**COMMUNICATIONS BOARD**

- Chairman:**  
Bishop George D. Crenshaw
- First Vice Chairman:**  
Bishop Brian R. Thompson, Sr.
- Second Vice Chairman:**  
Bishop George E. Battle, Jr.
- Third Vice Chairperson (Layperson):**  
TBD

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>PIED</b>  | Rev. Dr. David A. Williams<br>Ms. Carlous Tyrance       |
| <b>ENC</b>   | Rev. Dr. Florence S. Brown<br>Ms. Nora K. McNeill       |
| <b>MW</b>    | Rev. Todd Jarrett<br>Ms. Martha Scudder                 |
| <b>NE</b>    | Rev. Kenneth Lewis<br>Mrs. Mattie Taylor                |
| <b>SA</b>    | Rev. Sandra Sistare<br>Ms. Marilyn Graham               |
| <b>MA</b>    | Rev. D'Andre W. James-Daniels<br>Mrs. Debra P. Dennison |
| <b>AL/FL</b> | Rev. Dr. Erskine Faush, Jr.<br>Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson   |
| <b>SWD</b>   | Rev. Gary Adams<br>Ms. Pamela Brown                     |
| <b>WD</b>    | Rev. Kaloma Smith<br>Mr. Clyde Ellis Virges             |
| <b>CSA</b>   | Rev. Seth Moulton<br>Mrs. Melanie Parker                |
| <b>WWA</b>   | Rev. Sharon Mitchell<br>Mr. Daniel Brown                |
| <b>EWA</b>   | Rev. Johnny Ruff<br>Mr. Nse Joseph Edem                 |

- Editor in Chief**  
Mr. Darin Kent  
[Editor@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Editor@StarOfZion.org)
- Managing Editor**  
Rev. Samuel Brown  
[Admin@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Admin@StarOfZion.org)
- Zion Spotlight Editor**  
Mrs. Debra Chappelle-Polk  
[ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org](mailto:ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org)
- World Politics Editor**  
Rev. Ronald Nathan  
[WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org](mailto:WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org)
- Health and Wellness Editor**  
Mr. Daman Deleon  
[Health\\_Wellness@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Health_Wellness@StarOfZion.org)
- Social Justice Editor**  
Rev. Dr. Allison Lee  
[SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org](mailto:SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org)
- Entertainment & The Arts Editor**  
Rev. Deirdre P. Rowson  
[Entertainment\\_Arts@StarofZion.org](mailto:Entertainment_Arts@StarofZion.org)
- Financial Freedom Editor**  
Dr. Dana Stilley  
[FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org](mailto:FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org)
- Lifestyle Editor**  
Ms. Angel Eason  
[Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org)
- Subscriptions Department**  
704-688-2561  
[Subscribe@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Subscribe@StarOfZion.org)
- ADVERTISING RATES FOR THE STAR OF ZION**
- Rate Space** ..... Times  
\$12.00 Per Col. Inch..... 1-3
- SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
**One Year** - \$38.00 **Single Copy** - \$4.00  
**Bundle (50 Copies)**: \$100.00

**Notice to Star of Zion Reporters**

Article/Ad Submission Deadline Dates

October 2022 Issue.....	September 15, 2022
November 2022 Issue.....	October 15, 2022
December 2022 Issue.....	November 15, 2022
January 2023 Issue.....	December 15, 2022
February 2023 Issue.....	January 15, 2023

**IN THIS ISSUE**

LOOK INSIDE

PAGES

02-12

ZION SPOTLIGHT

13

WORLD POLITICS

14-15

HEALTH & WELLNESS

18-21

SOCIAL JUSTICE

22-23

OBITUARIES

24-25

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

26-28

ENTERTAINMENT & THE ARTS

29

FINANCIAL FREEDOM

30-31

LIFESTYLE



**BE A BLESSING**  
*Grocery Store Kindness*

By Reverend Leona Nicholas Welch

One particular day, I rushed to the store to pick up something for dinner. I had just two hours to shop, cooked, eat, and sit down to a Zoom meeting. As I dashed through the automatic door, I hoped desperately for short lines and a fast-moving individual at the register. My heart sank when I saw that everyone in town was there, and they all had made it to the line ahead of me. The man in front of me apparently had a large family; his basket was flowing over.

Before I could take my second deep breath and huff it out as quietly as possible, the gentleman with the overflowing basket turned to me and said, "You only have two things. Go ahead and get in front of me." I quickly laid my items onto the belt, thanking the kind man profusely.

One moment in time, one small act of kindness, one instantaneous connection, human to human, and the rest of my evening fell in place. Imagine what the world would be like if random acts of kindness such as that one lived out in the grocery store were repeated all day, every day, everywhere, in the store, at the bus stop, in church, on the job, in the doctor's waiting room, in the classroom, at the conference table, at home. What peace!

God's Word lists Kindness as FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Gal 5:21-22). The botanical definition of a fruit is "the seed-bearing structure of the flowering plant." Fruit is seed-bearing. Kindness is fruit of the Spirit of God. I think I see what God has in mind. He wants us to deposit His Spirit, the Seeds of Kindness into one another, and by doing so, we cause one another to flower into the likeness of God.

Dear People of God, let us plant Kindness as often as we can. If you are having trouble finding opportunity to do so, take a quick trip to the grocery store and BE A BLESSING!

**CORRECTION NOTICE**

*The July Issue of the Star Of Zion mistakenly credited the wrong author of the "Bishop Eric Leake Leads No Stone Unturned" Article in our Zion Spotlight Category. The correct author of this article is Rev. Dr. Aurelia Jones-Smith, SOZ Reporter, South Mississippi Conference of the Southwestern Delta Episcopal District.*

# 200 Years of Harriet Tubman: A Litany



By Rev. Dr. Melanie Miller,  
Harriet Tubman Home, Inc., Board of Directors

This year, 2022 marks 200 years since the birth of Harriet Tubman and celebrates her service for the cause of freedom, care of indigent people, and voting rights for all. This is a time for us to reflect on her story and to share it with others. As heirs to the property of the free Harriet Tubman, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church celebrates her legacy, appreciate her sacrifices, and hail her not only as the Moses of her people but our Shero. We highly recommend that you visit the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park, Auburn, NY or join us for a future Harriet Tubman Pilgrimage to memorialize her graveside and tour the 32-acre grounds she left behind. In honor of the Harriet Tubman Bi-Centennial Commemoration, we pause to share this litany that reminds us of who she was, what she did, and her faithful relationship with Almighty God. We pray that you will find an opportunity to use this litany in your local church, community, district, or conference to honor 200 years of Harriet Tubman and her legacy.

## Harriet Tubman Bi-Centennial Commemorative Litany

**LEADER:** In March of 1822, Araminta “Minty” Ross was born. She came to be known in perpetuity as Harriet Tubman and the Moses of her people. We pause today to commemorate her 200th birthday and the legacy for the cause of freedom she left behind. We celebrate Harriet as a member of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, who aided in raising funds to build Thompson AME Zion Church, Auburn, NY. She has made us heirs to her legacy as a free woman. We thank God for her contribution of a total of 32 acres of the property known as the Harriet Tubman Home, Inc., which the Tubman Home for the Aged and John Brown Hall, and is now recognized as the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park.

**PEOPLE:** We pause to celebrate Harriet and like Harriet, we endeavor to use our resources to help the aged, the indigent, the captive, the brokenhearted, the widows and the orphans amongst us!

**LEADER:** We celebrate Harriet Tubman, who attributes her rise from the bitter roots of the racialized caste system of reinforced racial prejudice called slavery to the provision, protection, sustenance, wisdom, and guidance of Almighty God. Harriet held “steady on to the Lord,” and she “knew He would see her through.”

**PEOPLE:** Like Harriet, we will continue to rise above racism breaking the chains of systemic and systematic racism by holding on to our faith that God will see us through!

**LEADER:** We celebrate Harriet who God gave the courage and power to break the generational racialized curse of slavery that began with the documented captivity of her maternal grandmother named Modesty. Modesty was a captive female African child or young woman who was sold to a planter in Little Blackwater Bridge, Dorchester County, Maryland.

**PEOPLE:** Like Harriet, we will continue to break generational and racialized curses meant to keep us captive to others and captive to the sin that creates and supports it!

**LEADER:** We celebrate Harriet who was a survivor who endured personal suffering from an injury to her head and the emotional, psychological, and spiritual turmoil of family members torn away from their babies and sold further south into the dark abyss of slavery, whose fate may never be discovered.

**PEOPLE:** Like Harriet, we will continue seek strength from God to help bring us through the trials of life!

**LEADER:** We celebrate Harriet and the day in the fall of 1849 that she escaped to freedom and responded to the call to set free the captives with the help of God. She believed that “God’s time was always near and that He set the North Star in the heavens; that He gave her the strength in her limbs; that He meant she should be free.” We thank God for her sacrifice that resulted in the freedom of thousands of enslaved Black people because of her courage, dedication, and ability to navigate through perilous conditions.

**PEOPLE:** Like Harriet, we shall safeguard our freedom and we shall be liberated from all the people and all the things that try to bind us daily!

**LEADER:** We celebrate Harriet who was a conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years and knew that to sit and not go onto freedom meant death. So, Harriet used the means of a pistol to encourage and to propel those who were weakened by the journey, those exhausted by the fear and anxiety of running for their life, those whose soles of their feet soon replaced the worn soles of their shoes, and those who doubted and became hopeless as the road got rough and the going got tough. She commanded them to “Get Up and Move or Die,” because she had “heard their groans and sighs, and seen their tears, and she would give every drop of blood in her veins to free them.”

**PEOPLE:** Like Harriet, we shall continue to Get Up and Move with purpose, power, and the patience to encourage others, so we do not die!

**LEADER:** We celebrate Harriet’s service to our country as a nurse and the first female expeditionary officer in the United States Army who helped to navigate three gunboats up the Combahee River resulting in the freedom of over 750 enslaved Black people. Harriet “always prayed to God to make [her] strong and able to fight, and that’s what [she] had always prayed for ever since.” We thank God for her joining the fight of the women’s suffrage movement and care for the aged, indigent, and ill African Americans.

**PEOPLE:** Like Harriet, we shall Get Up and Move to fight for the cause of freedom with God being our help so we may live!

**LEADER:** We thank God for this woman, the granddaughter of Modesty, the daughter of Rit and Ben Ross, a woman who fell in love and married, mother of her adopted daughter, Gertrude “Gertie” Davis, an effective on the Underground Railroad, an entrepreneur, a business owner, a nurse, a spy, an expeditionary officer in the United States Army, a care giver, and one whose legacy will never die as we maintain that which she has gifted us while we continue to fight for the cause of freedom, voting rights, justice and care for God’s creation.

**ALL:** We are thankful as The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church for Harriet! So, we pause to celebrate Harriet and like Harriet, we shall Get Up and Move as committed and faithful soldiers on the battlefield for the Lord!

## Resources:

Harriet Tubman Historical Society. Accessed July 12, 2022, <http://www.harriet-tubman.org>.

Harriet Tubman Home. Accessed July 12, 2022, <https://www.harriettubmanhome.com>  
Larson, Wilson K., *Harriet Tubman: A Reference Guide to Her Life and Work*, Rowman and Littlefield: New York, 2022.

National Park Service. Accessed July 12, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/hart/index.htm>.

# SMALL CHURCHES – LARGE AID

By Rev. Harriet McElvaney

The Bardstown District of the Kentucky Conference, under the leadership of Rev. Erich V. Shumake, have once again come to the aid of people who have been devastated by natural disasters. Between July 26 and July 30, 2022, floodwaters hit south of I-64 and caused deadly flash flooding and devastating river flooding to Eastern Kentucky and central Appalachia. Over 600 helicopter rescues and countless boat rescues were needed to evacuate people, leading to millions of dollars in infrastructure damage. Entire communities were lost and 37 people lost their lives.



we partnered with the Bardstown United Methodist Church, pastored by Rev. Phillip Bradley, to send clean-up kits to help the flood victims.

Even though our Bardstown District Churches have small congregations, we strive to help those in need – wherever they are. This relief effort was part of a larger effort sponsored by UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) to respond to disaster relief and ministering to needs around the world.

Our Episcopal Leaders, Bishop Michael Frencher and Mrs. Gelenia Frencher, continue to support our efforts.



## Leigh named to African-American Heritage panel

By Reggie Ponder,  
Staff Writer – *The Perquimans Weekly*



Perquimans County Commissioner Fondella Leigh has named to the North Carolina African-American Heritage Commission.

Leigh was informed by N.C. Speaker of the House Tim Moore in a July 8 letter that she had been appointed to fill the unexpired term of Lisa Matthews on the commission.

The term ends Sept. 30, 2023.

“Thank you for your willingness to serve in this capacity,” Moore, R-Cleveland, said in the letter. “I am confident you will have much to offer the African-American Heritage Commission and will be effective and diligent in your service to our state.”

In addition to her service on the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners, Leigh is presiding elder of the Edenton District of the AME Zion Church and pastor of Porter’s Chapel AME Zion Church in the Chapanoke community.

Leigh explained that she got to know state Rep. Ed Goodwin, R-Chowan, as they both were working on restoration of the historic Kadash AME Zion Church in Edenton. The Edenton District includes 19 churches in Chowan, Perquimans, Tyrrell, Washington and Martin counties.

Leigh noted that Goodwin was instrumental in securing \$2 million in funding for the Kadash restoration. She said as they were working on the restoration project he told her he planned to recommend her for a spot on the African-American Heritage Commission.

She said she didn’t hear anything right away and had actually forgotten about the potential appointment until she received the letter from



Moore a few weeks ago.

“I am brand new to this,” Leigh said of her service on the African-American Heritage Commission.

She attended her first meeting as a member of the heritage panel last week.

Leigh said she is excited about work the commission is doing in areas such as Rosenwald Schools and historical markers honoring African-American contributions to the state’s history.

“I am still learning my role on the commission,” Leigh said.

One contribution she plans to make is keeping the rest of the panel aware of the extensive African-American heritage in northeastern North Carolina, including Kadash and other historic churches, the Colored Union Soldiers monument in Hertford, Rosenwald Schools, and Elizabeth City State University.

Leigh said she mentioned the Colored Union Soldiers Monument at the meeting last week.

Leigh is serving her second term on the Perquimans Board of Commissioners and is seeking reelection in November. She is the first woman to serve as a presiding elder within the Albemarle Conference of the AME Zion Church.

Missouri Annual Conference Continued...

presiding. Her message was entitled, “Globally Committed to Transformative Service,” which reemphasized service to people. Reports were given by the Missionary presidents from each district.

Mrs. Frencher then turned the conference back over to Bishop Frencher. The Lay Council report was read. The conference business continued with various other reports. After a break, we went into the Necrology Service led by Rev. Kenneth R. Pegue. Rev. Lelar Williams’ message was “New Life from Death.” The scripture reference was John 12:23-27. Rev. Pegue gave the roll call of members who have passed away since the last conference year. The conference received “Sexual Misconduct Training” by Attorney

Anita Pearson-Royster.

The evening Missionary Service was presided over by Mrs. Gelenia Frencher, who also led the virtual stoning ceremony. We were blessed with a solo “Lord, Send Me” by Mrs. Lucy White. The sermon was offered by Rev. Carrol A. Johnson and was entitled, “How to Reach the Masses.”

Friday was a travel day. The Saturday morning Youth Service was presided over by Marquez Wagner with our youth participating in the service. The hymn of preparation was offered by Miss Maya Hines and was entitled, “Psalm 42”. The message by Miss Grace Cole focused on “Youth”. Ms. Cole is a lifelong member of Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church and a recent college graduate. She emphasized ways to engage our youth by listening, investing

and being willing to change. The Youth Council Officers were installed. We had a break before the “Sending Worship Service.”

The Music Ministry of Metropolitan rendered selections, “Omnipotent” and “My Help.” The sermon offered by Bishop Frencher was entitled “Are You Thriving or Just Surviving?” using Psalm 92:13-14 as the focus text.

Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon announced his candidacy for Bishop in 2024. The charge was given to the Pastors and other appointees and the appointments were read.

Throughout the conference, we had numerous visitors and friends join in on our services. We thank the Tech Team for making sure the conference ran smoothly on Zoom and was live streamed on Saturday.

# North Charlotte District Back 2 School Event A Success



**G. Joyner Johnson, Reporter**  
**S.H. Puryear, Photographer**

Charlotte, NC- On Saturday, August 13, 2020, the children, youth, parents and friends of the North Charlotte District gathered at the Hairston Fellowship Center at Rockwell AME Zion Church, Rev. Jordan Boyd, Pastor, to celebrate going back to school.

Approximately 75-100 gathered safely and the atmosphere was electric as they waited with great anticipation for the festivities to begin.

Following the scripture and prayer by youth, the District Youth Director Sister Aurrita Payne introduced the keynote speaker. Miss Meoshia Burgess a Youth Messenger. Her goal is to inspire the you to be the change. She is a highly successful youth entrepreneur, community activist and motivational speaker. She was given the title Charlotte Princess by Mecklenburg County Sheriff Gary McFadden. She has been awarded a full scholarship from Howard University, Washington, DC.

Miss Burgess topic was “Don’t Let the No’s Stop You.” She

gave details of being bullied for very sick for being from unknown causes, wanting and attempting to “leave this world”, be told no and discouraged in even attempting to progress through school or start her own businesses. She encouraged the students to not be afraid to being told no and to push onward to achieve their dreams. Though a teenager she now has her own fashion design business and owns her own record label. All these accomplishments and even more before she is off to Howard University next year.

A second speaker, Miss Rachael Smith, daughter of the District Youth Director, is a graduate student made a presentation geared toward the parents. She provided information on the Power School Program for North Carolinians. It provides information necessary to keep up with your student’s progress throughout the year. Additionally, she gave details about the state absence policy and procedure as well as the free breakfast and/or lunch application requirements.

Rev. Jarma R. Chisholm, pastor of Columbus Chapel AME

Continues... page 21

## Serve & Play! WILSON DISTRICT OF THE CAPE FEAR CONFERENCE

**By Norketa Ferguson**

*Serve & Play is a time for children to serve other children  
& then go somewhere fun to play!*

**A big impact in Wilson and the surrounding counties!**

The BUDS of Promise of the Wilson District are making major moves and impact in the community under the leadership of Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Michael S. Bell, Missionary President Mrs. Veronica Bell, and the visionary of Serve & Play, Mrs. Norketa Ferguson, the Superintendent of the BUDS of Promise.

Blessing bags were prepared by children of the Wilson District on July 30, 2022, to bless other children. The blessing bags contained 5 new items for children between the ages of 5 and 12. Blessing bags were donated later to Tedi Bear Children's Advocacy (Tender Evaluation, Diagnosis, and Intervention for Better Abuse Response). The Tedi Bear Children’s Advocacy is the largest children’s advocacy center in North Carolina. They provide assessments and treatments for children who may have been



victims of child abuse or neglect. The Serve & Play mission has been teaching the children how to sacrifice and serve other children.

Each time the children serve, they get an opportunity to go somewhere fun to play. Sawyer’s Fun Park in Greenville, NC attractions included a trampoline park, rock climbing, laser tag, and a ninja course for the children to enjoy. Immediately following, the children and Mrs. Ferguson headed to McDonald’s for lunch. “I am teaching and training the children to be impactful missionaries in the lives of other children through Serve & Play,” said Norketa Ferguson. Since Serve and Play started December 2021, the children have delivered a little over 200 blessing bags. The children have delivered bags to Wake Children’s Medical Center in Raleigh, NC and to the Partnership for Children of Wayne County, NC.

If you would like to help the children of the Wilson District to Serve & Play, cash app your best blessing via cash app \$WilsonDistrictAMEZ. Please type Serve & Play on the memo line on the cash app.

# The North Eastern Episcopal District, New York Conference

*Theme: Serving our Flock, Ephesians 3:20-21*

Hymnologist, Charles Wesley, penned the hymn “Are we yet alive, And see each other’s face”? To God be the glory - we were yet alive and seeing each other’s faces! On Friday, June 24, 2022, the 201st session of the Mother Conference’s North Eastern Episcopal District, New York Conference, convened virtually under the leadership of The Right Reverend Dennis Vernon Proctor (97th Bishop in succession of the A.M.E. Zion Church). Our more seasoned members viewed our faces which resembled an old TV show, “Hollywood Squares” and our youth observed us as on the new TV program entitled, “Dancing With Myself”.

We salute host pastor, Rev. Dr. Stephen W. Pogue and the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church for their hospitality and our Tech Team, Dr. Xellex Rivera and Presiding Elder Derrill Blue for their expertise!

After the official organization of the church, Bishop expressed his gratitude to Rev. Julius Walls Jr. He was applauded for his stewardship as New York Conference Treasurer and his elevation to Chief Operating Officer of the General A.M.E. Zion Church. Although the conference embraced the retention of his position, due to the uniqueness of his situation, Bishop recommended ascertaining an assistant treasurer which resulted in the election of Rev. Isidoa Branch Jr.

Bishop Proctor cited that most financial deficits surrounding our churches resulted from memberships not physically inhabiting the buildings over the past two one-half years causing a decrease in tithes and offerings. Yet, God continues to oversee churches and ourselves individually as Covid has caused us to assemble virtually in the overabundance of caution. Nevertheless, we must continue to be mindful that our Connectional Church functions by our assessments.

Missionary Supervisor and Cabinet Secretary, Mrs. D. Diane Proctor announced the locations and dates of the upcoming Conference Check-up Meetings. Bishop conveyed that with the continuing surge due to Covid variants and morphing with the possibility of exposing our people to a risk will dictate whether it will be in-person. We will continue to be under advisement of those in the profession as we must not only protect ourselves but those around us by receiving vaccinations and boosters. It is his prayer that we may be able to strengthen our fellowship even in a hybrid fashion.

Senior Presiding Elder of the New York Conference, Westchester District, Reverend Isidoa Branch, Sr. voiced his official greeting and formally introduced Bishop Proctor. Following the virtual North Eastern District Conference Choir singing the great of hymn of the Church, - Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart, Bishop delivered the Episcopal Address.

**EPISCOPAL ADDRESS** - Bishop Proctor is recognized for his outstanding knowledge of current events and consistency in dropping pearls of wisdom. Before commencing his address, he provided an overview of his educational journey which encompassed a college football scholarship before his intended career was altered by notable Fathers of Zion. He encouraged parents, guardians, and caretakers



of children to offer our youth opportunities to experience possibilities we may not have experienced as we don’t know how God is preparing our children for their next phase of life.

Bishop emphasized that it was difficult to offer a normal Episcopal Address in the abnormal times in which we live. In fact, he began receiving texts from his peers concerning the Supreme Court overturning Roe vs. Wade. He emphasized that these rulings effect the care of women of color and lower economics. We must be prepared as much more will take place. Color consciousness remains a part of the American psyche.

He was prepared to speak about Self, Service and Spirit but in lieu of time focused on “Self” and what we need to know by un-

derstanding who we are and where we are.

**What is necessary for us to have a fulfilled life?** Those who are proponents of Jesus Christ should be the happiest and joyful people on the planet as we represent the essence of joy and peace. This should be our focus as a conference, church, a people etc. Our spiritual foundation is that the world does not begin or end with us as there is someone bigger than you and I.

Some of us have experienced that we have been here before not discerning if it was a dream or a vision. This is because our spirits were not born with our bodies. They were alive and well before they were placed within our body, or your spirit would not be eternal. We are eternal creatures that mimic the nature of God. Jesus was always eternal that is why he could say “Before Abraham was I am.”

Spiritually we have been here, and God brings to this to our awareness. This is what being born again is about. We should not take lightly our spiritual selves. “Being that we have not been in a building should not negate our relationship with the one who gives us essence. “We are spirits that live in a body and happen to have a mind. Our spirit will continue even when our body decays.

We have an emotional foundation. There will be no joy if you continue to compare yourself to someone else. Compare yourself to yourself and learn what satisfies you - emotionally. If God has given you another day of life be satisfied.

**The Physical Grounding** - Most of us enjoy living as we are not rushing to die. We must assure we are exercising that health is wealth. If we are unable to enjoy the life we have it means zero. We must become physically mindful of exercise and do what is necessary to keep our body moving and functioning well.

We must pay attention to our relational selves and be willing to share with others. Giving is the key to receiving for you must be a giver to receive God’s blessings. It may not be physical giving but we all can give encouragement. Bishop closed by saying, “*Can’t do everything but what I can do I will do for the glory of God and for you!*”

**LAY CONVOCATION** - Sis. Rhandi Stith, New York Confer-

Continues... next page

# Celebrates the 201st Session of the Annual Conference

ence Lay Council President provided an exceptional report of the numerous activities sponsored by the Lay Council over the 2021-2022 conference year. Additionally, she announced upcoming scheduled events.

**PRESIDING ELDER REPORTS** - The Presiding Elders, Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson, Rev. Keith I. Harris and Rev. Isidoa Branch, Sr. presented the conference with creative pre-recorded reports which enlightened activities of their Districts.

**MISSIONARY CONVOCATION** - Our regal Presiding Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. D. Diane Proctor enthusiastically spoke of the Three-in-One Retreat and supplied updates regarding the Missionary Department along with the report the Missionary Retreat. The informative video reports of the District Officers were presented: Long Island – Mrs. Betty J. Ford; New York City – Mrs. Ruth Young and Westchester – Miss Marsha Henderson. Life Members were recognized by Mrs. Proctor who expressed gratitude to the District Life Members Chairs for their continued support. She then presented Bishop who in turn introduced the speaker of the hour, The Reverend Nicole Rushing. The North Eastern Episcopal Virtual Choir blessed us with the singing of “Any Day Now”.

Rev. Nicole Rushing delivered an inspirational and eloquent message. The scripture reference was Romans 12:9-13, and her subject was “Serving with Love”. She enlightened that we should be devoted and love one another and not just go through the motions.

**BUSINESS SESSION SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2022**

**Christian Education Department** –Co-Conference Directors, Irene Boykin and Terneisa Lynn Calhoun shared their report electronically which included a video presentation highlighting the February Youth Council. It also featured several of our youth emphasizing their experiences and lessons learned during the pandemic. There were video presentations of the 2022 Graduates, and a message from Miss Alexandria Carson, the outgoing Conference Youth Council President.

We were blessed with greetings from Dr. Brenda L.G. Smith, former General Secretary of Christian Education and Ms. Sarlyn Tate, Episcopal Director of Christian Education. Bishop Dennis V. Proctor reported the appointments for the Christian Education Department which remained the same except for: Long Island District – **The Reverend Natalie R. Wimberly**, District Director and Westchester District – **Miss Abby Brown**, District Director of Youth.

Mrs. D. Diane Proctor offered information regarding the 30th Missionary Convention in New Orleans, July 22-28, 2023. It will be her final report as an active Missionary Supervisor. Long Island District’s, **Mrs. KiRondi Branch**, was duly elected as delegate to represent the New York Conference.

It was questioned if there were any ministers requesting superannuated status. The Reverend Isidoa Branch, Sr. offered the name of **Reverend Dr. Sandra Comerie-Smith** (Westchester District). Following protocol, she was granted superannuated status.

Our Presiding Elders Rev. Isidoa Branch, Sr., Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson, and Rev. Keith I. Harris were reappointed to their former positions for another year along with the pastoral assignments. Congratulations to our new ministerial appointments: St. Mary AME Zion Church – **The Reverend Tonya Morrissey**; Rush Temple AME Zion Church – **Reverend Xavier Hunter**; Greater Hood Memorial AME Zion Church – **The Reverend Kerry Rogers**. The **Reverend Quavon Newton** was transferred to the New Jersey Conference, and appointed to the St. Stephens A.M.E. Zion Church, Asbury Park, NJ.

Presiding Elder Reverend Keith I. Harris thanked Bishop Dennis V. Proctor for his stellar leadership and the wonderful way he led the 201st Session of the New York Annual Conference. The Conference will be praying for Bishop Proctor as he ascends to the Presidency of the Board of Bishops. Following the Seven-Fold Amen. Bishop Dennis V. Proctor pronounced the conclusion of the 201st Session of the New York Annual Conference and wished the Conference well.



**POSTER ONLY**

**\$19<sup>99</sup>**

+Shipping & Handling

---

**POSTER WITH BASIC FRAME**

**\$35**

+Shipping & Handling

---

**POSTER WITH ANTIQUE FRAME**

**\$125**

+Shipping & Handling

**ON SALE NOW!**

**The A.M.E. Zion Bishops Poster 2022**

Available for purchase at  
<https://amezpublishinghouse.org>



THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

**THE STAR OF ZION**

www.StarOfZion.com

Mr. Darin Kent  
Editor in Chief, The Star of Zion

Poster Size: 24 x 36 Inch

**BASIC FRAME**

Color: Black Frame

Material: Plastic

**ANTIQUE FRAME**

Color: Bronze

Material: Engineered Wood

# WELCOME BACK RECEPTION & LUNCHEON

## Mother Zion Welcomes Back Rev. Malcolm J. Byrd

By Debra Chappelle-Polk, *Zion Spotlight Editor*

Pursuant to the provisions of the A.M.E. Zion Book of Discipline, pastors are appointed and reappointed during Annual Conferences. At the 201st Session of the Annual Conference (June 17-19, 2022), the Presiding Prelate, Bishop Dennis V. Proctor reappointed Reverend Dr. Malcolm J. Byrd to serve as Mother A.M.E. Zion's Senior Pastor for the 2022-2023 Conference Year.

It has become a tradition that reappointed pastors be welcomed back by the congregation in grand fashion. In keeping with tradition, on July 23rd, Rev. Byrd's reappointment was celebrated by members, family and friends at a filled-to-capacity reception and luncheon at Ponty Bistro. Well known for its French and African cuisine, Ponty's is located literally two blocks around the corner from Mother Zion on 139th Street & Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard in Harlem, where Rev. Byrd often enjoys after-Sunday-Service brunch.

Over 60 members, friends and family turned out to celebrate Rev. Byrd's return to Mother Zion. Upon entering, guests were given souvenir buttons with Reverend's likeness and date of the event. The MJ Byrd Jazz Trio (Antwane Harrison, keyboard; Kayade Morris, saxophone and Justin Henry, drums) serenaded guests with popular jazz tunes and memorable Duke Ellington melodies throughout the afternoon. Before lunch, Sis. Natasha S. Cooper sang a beautiful rendition of *Summertime*. Professor Antwane Harrison is the Director of Music and organist at Mother Zion and Sis. Natasha S. Cooper serves as Choir Director.

***"I am so happy to welcome back Rev. Byrd, a learned man who lifts up Harlem in a manner reminiscent of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and a man of God, whom I am honored to serve with at Mother Zion." Rev. Audrey Williamson***

Reverend Audrey Williamson, The Reverend Nina M. Neely Minister for Christian Education, served as Mistress of Ceremonies for the afternoon. "I am so happy to welcome back Rev. Byrd, a learned man who lifts up Harlem in a manner reminiscent of



***"I am truly grateful that God has allowed me the privilege to serve Mother Zion."***  
-Rev. Dr. Malcolm J. Byrd

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and a man of God, whom I am honored to serve with at Mother Zion."

Rev. Philippe E.C. Andal, Senior Pastor, Community Baptist Church, New Haven, Connecticut, offered prayers and blessed the food.

Joseph Edwards (V.P. Board of Stewards) followed with Welcome Back remarks. Bro. Edwards said he, too, was happy Rev. Byrd was back at Mother Zion for another conference year. He joked that this has become a "traveling appreciation", noting that this was the third affair over the last three months that Rev. Byrd's ecumenical leadership and work in the community has been acknowledged.

Lifelong member of Mother Zion, Yvonne Singleton Davis, recited a poignant poem she had written in tribute to Rev. Byrd, who later remarked the words of the

poem brought tears to his eyes. Sis. Davis received resounding applause and a standing ovation for her moving tribute. Courtesy of Mrs. Davis, the poem is printed at the end of this article.

The Honorable W. Franc Perry, III (Justice, NY State Supreme Court) followed with a toast, noting Rev. Byrd's knowledge of scripture and applauded Reverend's advocacy for the Harlem Community.

As the accolades continued, these are just a few of the adjectives guests used in describing Rev. Byrd: anointed, patient, powerful, progressive, dedicated, scholarly, historian, class act, debonair, leader and friend.

***"Byrd is special. He's a scholar and a new generation religious practitioner." Rev. S. Rashaad Hoggard, Ph.D. Assoc. Minister, Abyssinian, Baptist Church***

Bro. Kermit Morris said he "was glad to be on board," and thanked Rev. Byrd for allowing him to sit on the pulpit at Mother Zion on Sunday mornings. Rev. S. Rashaad Hoggard, Ph.D. and Associate Minister, Abyssinian Baptist Church said "Byrd is special. He's a scholar and a new generation religious practitioner."



Members & Friends





Members & Friends

Hon. W. Franc Perry, III, Christina Jaquard

Members & Friends

James Garner, Former Mayor Town of Hempstead

Nathaniel Higgins, The Worshipful Master, Boyer Lodge 1, thanked Bro. Malcolm Jameel Byrd for his friendship and for his dedication as a Masonic brother. James Garner, Former Mayor, Town of Hempstead and Alpha Phi Alpha Frat Brother thanked Rev. Byrd for his activism in support of the Hempstead community.

The consensus was Mother Zion was blessed to have Rev. Byrd and Sis. Johnnie M. Walker from Jackson Memorial, Hempstead, New York couldn't agree more. "In fact," she lamented, "Mother Zion stole" Rev. Byrd from Jackson Memorial. Everyone laughed when she asked if Mother Zion "was feeding him, like we fed him at Jackson."

Joan Capel brought greetings from the New York City District Lay Council. She recalled that several years ago, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture held a lecture on three Black churches in Harlem at which Rev. Byrd was one of the panelists. Mrs. Capel said the audience was totally enthralled with Rev. Byrd's presentation, his knowledge of the Black church and Mother Zion's rich history.

Rev. Stephen Marshall and Ashley Sharpton congratulated Rev. Byrd on behalf of Rev. Al Sharpton, Founder of the National Action Network (NAN). Rev. Marshall said "he had an immediate connection" with Rev. Byrd from the very beginning and thanked him for "his dressing tips." Ashley Sharpton congratulated Reverend Byrd, who she said was "like a brother" to her.

The Ministries and Boards of Mother Zion presented gifts of appreciation, expressing their joy that Rev. Byrd would be serving as Senior Pastor for another conference year. A beautiful floral arrangement was donated by the Grimes' family. On behalf of the Trustees, Sis. M. Denise Niles, presented Rev. Byrd with an I-Pad. Sis. Amelia A. Montgomery and Bro. Joe Edwards gave envelopes on behalf of Stewardess Board and Board of Stewards, respectively. Sis. Montgomery acknowledged and thanked the "Welcome Back" committee for their help in planning the reception. She also thanked the owners and executive chefs of Ponty Bistro, along with wait staff.

Sporting a straw hat, white suit, with a yellow flower boutonniere pinned to the lapel, a red and white pinstriped shirt with a red polka dot tie tied around the upturned collar, red and white loafers, sans socks, Rev. Byrd lived up to his rep as the "most well-dressed minister in Harlem."

Guests were on their feet and clapping as Rev. Byrd began his remarks with the chant, "Get down, get down! Rock Steady!"

Rev. Byrd expressed his heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the members and friends of Mother Zion. He praised Rev. Audrey Williamson, who "God sent to Mother Zion" and thanked her for her ministry. He thanked Sis. Davis once again for her poetic tribute. He said he was truly honored that friends from Hempstead, Long Island, New Haven, Connecticut, and the "independent republic of Brooklyn" turned out to celebrate his reappointment.

He extended a special thanks to the Welcome Back Committee "for leaving no stone unturned in planning a church event that wasn't churchy." Rev. Byrd thanked former Mayor James "Big Jim" Garner, noting he was the first African American to be elected mayor on Long Island and was the first African American president of the United States Conference of Mayors in 2003. He also acknowledged "The Mayor of 137th Street", Reverend Ruth McDaniel and thanked her for coming. He also thanked Robert Charles Hollis, as he unveiled the portrait of himself painted by the renowned artist.

Rev. Byrd led a resounding round of applause for MJ Byrd Jazz Trio and Natasha S. Cooper. He told everyone to stay tuned as the MJ Byrd Trio will be playing "Sunday Brunches at Ponty Bistro." (d/b/a)

It was wonderful afternoon enjoyed by all. The food was tasty, the music was good, the atmosphere was festive and celebratory, and the guests looked good, many of whom were decked out in all white, the "suggested" attire. The Welcome Back Reception & Luncheon was planned by Sis. Amelia A. Montgomery, President of the Stewardess Board, Bro. Joseph Edwards, Vice President, Board of Stewards and Sis. M. Denise Niles, Trustee Board Secretary & Treasurer and Administrative Assistant to the Pastor. They are all to be commended for a job well done and for keeping the Mother Zion Legacy of Elegance & Grandeur alive!

Before leaving, Rev. Byrd said "I am truly grateful that God has allowed me the privilege to serve Mother Zion." Mrs. Johnnie M. Walker shouted a sentiment shared by all – "We love you, Reverend Byrd" to which he replied, "I love you more."



M. Denise Niles, Amelia A. Montgomery, Rev. Audrey Williamson

Joe Edwards, Rev. Audrey Williamson

Rev. Byrd & Guests

Natasha Cooper, Joan Capel & Guest

# A weekend to remember!

By Rev. Dr. Geraldine J. Jones, Ph.D



In 2018, the following article appeared in the Star of Zion:

## “UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE....”

It all began in Dover, Delaware on March 1, 2018 at Transformation A. M. E. Zion church where more than 200 people from throughout the peninsula gathered to hear the soul-stirring message of the Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore. The Ecumenical Service included the Crossroad Community Church Youth Dance Ministry of Dover and the Delaware Gospel Music Workshop. Other worship service participants were the Rev. Dr. William Kelly, Presiding Elder of the Philadelphia Eastern Shore District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

During the awesome spirit-filled service, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Reginald Chandler, Sr., the congregation presented a check for \$ 2, 500.00 to the Central Delaware Branch of Habitat for Humanity. What an exhilarating experience! The theme for the Ecumenical Service was, “Let’s build something together” (Hebrews 3:41).

And, then, the culmination... The Framing Frenzy on April 28, 2018 on Delaware State University campus where the Transformation A.M.E. Zion church family, friends and members of the community; as well as surrounding areas, utilized those funds to build a house. The builders included the homeowner, habitat staff, the Transformation A. M. E. Zion Church members, AmeriCorps, Delaware Gospel Music Workshop, Dover Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta

Sorority, Inc., Crossroads Community Church, Star Hill A. M. E. Church and Maranatha Hispanic Church.

The day began with Greetings by the Mayor of Dover, the Honorable Robin Christensen, who banged the first nail in the frame. Throughout the day there was food, moon bounce (for the kids), music, framing, fellowship and fun! At the end of the day, the construction company loaded the house on a truck and

moved it to a permanent location on Cherry Street in Dover, Delaware. At a later date, when the family has moved into their home, the Rev. Dr. Chandler, Sr. will bless the house.

Through this outreach ministry, everyone was graciously blessed. The next day, at Sunday Morning Worship Service, the congregation jubilantly sang: “We’ve come this far by faith!” Those words had taken on a new meaning for this growing established church. **The best is yet to come!**

## And now nearly five years later...

On May 15, 2022, with the Founding Pastor, the Rev. Dr. R. J. Chandler, Sr., Transformation

A.M. E. Zion Church celebrated its 5th Anniversary. The elegant week-end began with a Gala attended by nearly 200 guests, from throughout Delaware, and from as far away as Ohio and Florida. The Gala opened the week-end with elegance, splendor; as well as pomp and circumstance.

During the formal white-tie evening, the honored guests included dignitaries, celebrities, government officials, outstanding citizens, humanitarians, philanthropists, donors, contributors and so many, many more celebrants. And who were some of those guests? What did they have to say about the “week-end-two-day” celebration?

Mr. Anthony and Rev. Mary Simpson, out of St. Paul A.M.E. Zion church in Salisbury, Maryland, enjoyed everything as they celebrated with the Transformation A.M.E. Zion family. According to the Simpsons, “We had a good time. We enjoyed everything; especially the program and the message delivered by the Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon. Such a profound Word. And, by the way, who decorated the ball room so beautifully? The room was filled with round tables covered with white linen cloths. Each table was accented with a centerpiece of a red and white floral arrangement. The chairs, adorned with red covers,



# T.A.M.E.Z.C. 2016!



surrounded each table. The picture was breath-taking. We thought the decorations were exquisite.”

A couple of other guests, hailing from Ocean View, Delaware: Mrs. Billie Showell (who was celebrating her 96th birthday) and Mr. and Mrs. Rodney & Valerie Reeves described the Gala as wonderful, elegant, and fantastically amazing. They enjoyed the Jazz Combo and the Silent Auction. They were highly impressed with the young escorts and ushers who were children and youth from Transformation A. M. E. Zion Church. Those young gentlemen escorted guests to their tables, assisted the honorees to the podium as they received their plaques, and served as waiters for the seniors and in-ambulatory guests.”

When asked to share their opinions about the Gala and The Cornerstone Dedication Service, the Rev. Dr. William E. Kelly, Presiding Elder of the Eastern Shore District, said, “Creative. Eventful. Celebrative!” And, the First Lady of the Eastern Shore District, Mrs. Minola Kelly, exclaimed, “It was a wonderful service... spirit-filled!”

In response to the interview questions, the Rev. Rita M. Paige, Pastor of New Beginnings Community A. M. E. Church in Frederica, Delaware, stated, emphatically, “ It was a beautiful affair, well organized. I had a nice time. The atmosphere was appropriate. The fellowship and the program were good. The electronic programs were contemporary and somewhat advanced for those folks who may not have technical options. Otherwise, the ability to access the scheduled program via cell phones and other devices was in keeping with today’s trends.”

Brother Thom Foster, President of the Trustee Board at Transformation A. M. E. Zion Church stated that for him, the Gala was fun: “The attendance was a ‘plus’; as well as the diverse guests list. The music was phenomenal. The food was good. The facility was awesome. The commendable part of the event

was the Cornerstone Dedication which was ‘on-point.’ I enjoyed the service tremendously. It is my hope that the stewardship reaped will commend the splendor of the Celebration.”

Mr. and Mrs. Don and Delores Chandler of St. Luke A.M.E. Zion Church in Buffalo, New York spent the two days celebrating with the Transformation family and their son, the pastor. The Chandlers could not say enough about the Gala and the Cornerstone Dedication Service: “ We were really pleased with the entire week-end and the honorees (we could have had a few more women honorees). Sunday was such a beautiful experience, for us to see our son celebrating his 25th year in the ministry. We are so proud of him and of the Founders of Transformation A.M. E. Zion Church. We marvel at how, together, they have pushed forward to work in God’s vineyard. We can see God working miracles in Transformation A.M. E. Zion Church. The week-end was just wonderful!”

A picture speaks louder than a thousand words. Picture the honorees that the Chandlers mentioned and the Dedication Service messenger, the Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore. Not to forget State Senator Trey Pardee, who during Worship, served as the drummer. We must not forget the Honorable Delaware House of Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester who offered Greetings.

(Here share small candid pictures of the Dedication Service & the Honorees.)

What a celebration! What a fellowship! What a joy divine... leaning on God’s everlasting arm.”

And now, today, Transformation A. M. E. Zion Church stands as the first and only Zion church in all of Dover, Kent County, Delaware. Such an amazingly outstanding accomplishment... a forward moving ministry to the Glory of God...the Builder of this House!





# Kickoff for Kadesh restoration held

By Tyler Newman,  
Staff Writer – *Chowan Herald*

Edenton, NC – It was a joyous and tear-filled morning on Aug. 3 as the congregation of Kadesh AME Zion Church gathered at the foot of their beloved home to celebrate the kickoff of a long-awaited restoration project.

The church, located at 119 East Gale Street in Edenton, has been a spiritual oasis and powerful cultural center for countless Edentonians since its inception.

Constructed by once-enslaved hands – legendary carpenter Haniel Badham Sr. – the Gothic Revival church stands as a testament to not only the Badham family, but to the perseverance of the African American community through disparity and discrimination.

In 2003, the church saw structural damage due to Hurricane Isabel, leaving it unsafe for parishioners to worship inside. While much of Edenton pushed forward from the hurricane, the damage wrought to Kadesh has remained a vestige of Isabel and her fury for nearly 20 years.

Fundraisers and donations helped kickstart a renovation campaign several years ago. The awarding of two Sacred Spaces grants pushed the project even further.

But it was the surprise \$2.1 million from the North Carolina General Assembly last fall that gave the project a much needed shot in the arm.

State Rep. Ed Goodwin (R-Chowan) brought the state funding announcement to the congregation at their temporary home on Badham Road back in November. He later said that “there wasn’t a dry eye in the room.”

Assembling at Kadesh on Aug. 3, a group of church parishioners, members of the Edenton Historical Commission (EHC), town leaders and the Kadesh Restoration Committee excitedly acknowledged the beginning of the first phase of the project.

Don Faircloth of Edenton Construction will lead the first phase of the renovation, saying that stabilizing the building and sealing it from the elements is step one.

“I have been working for two or three years on this project. This building has been a dream of mine for years, it hurts my heart to see it in this shape,” Faircloth said. “It’s a gem that I have wanted to do for the community, it is an honor and privilege for my company and I to do this.”

Work is expected to commence soon, with contracts already finalized.

“I’m trying to hold back tears,” said Sadie Riddick, a lifelong Kadesh member. “We are so grateful and thankful for what is being done, I’m so happy this morning. We have prayed and prayed that this would happen and it has.”

Riddick said she is ready to come back to Gale Street to worship.

The Rev. Haywood Dillahunt offered a prayer over the group and church upon gathering. He referenced the Book of Psalm in his invocation.

“Accept that the Lord builds the house; they that labor, labor in vain,” Dillahunt said.

Taking a brief tour inside before the gathering, Kadesh member Willie Drew guided across the church’s hallowed floor, elaborating on how it once was.

Drew motioned to where the church’s kitchen was, as well as the organ, a stairwell and the old layout of the sanctuary. Lifting the cover from an old piano, he noted its condition gingerly, as if meeting an old friend. While he pointed around to century-old history, the smile never left his face.

Engraved just above the sanctuary is “Luke 18:27.” The verse reads: “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

At the peak of its glory, Kadesh boasted Tiffany stained glass windows, gothic arches, Victorian chandeliers and perhaps the largest sanctuary in Edenton – large enough for 400 souls to worship in.

“I am grateful for the community, members, the historical committee, Rep. Ed Goodwin and especially to God for the work that will begin. It is important that this membership return to their original building to worship Him in spirit and truth and to be able to host the district, Albemarle Conference and other events when available,” said Elder Fondella Leigh of the Edenton District of the Albemarle Conference of the AME Zion Church.

Leigh’s father, Walter L. Leigh, was presiding elder when Kadesh was first struck by Isabel.

“We know the restoration of Kadesh AME Zion Church will be great for the congregation, for Gale Street, and for Edenton. We also know it will be important to the State of North Carolina,” said Robert Leath, Executive Director of the EHC and Project Manager.

Kadesh’s role in promoting unity over division was emphasized as well.

“In fact, the Kadesh restoration project is nationally important. At a moment when our country is so often focused on division, the Kadesh restoration shows how historic preservation can be inclusive, not exclusive; how it can invite people in, not push people out, to build an even larger community of support for historic preservation,” Leath said.

Leath said that in the near future, he hopes to hear Kadesh’s bell ringing out over Edenton once more.

Kadesh Restoration Committee member and EHC Commissioner Sam Dixon said that the revitalization of Kadesh is a miracle.

“It has been a long, difficult path to get this project to this point. The congregation is to be congratulated for never giving up,” Dixon said. “I can remember those cold winter days over a decade ago when we all came together with nothing but hope and prayers to dream that this might someday become a reality.”

Dixon was instrumental in securing the Sacred Spaces grants early on in the restoration process.

“Saving Kadesh is proof that a community can accomplish anything when everyone comes together to make it happen,” Dixon said. “This is a great day for Kadesh and for Edenton.”

Knoxville County PE Continued...

Greensboro, NC. Dr. Butler completed Officer Candidate School (OCS) at the North Carolina Military Academy, Fort Bragg, NC and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the US Army National Guard/Army Reserve.

Dr. Butler served in the U. S. Army National Guard/Army Reserve, honorably

discharged with the rank of Captain. Dr. Butler also worked with the Piedmont Triad Council of Government Area Agency on Aging, covering six counties in Piedmont NC, as an Elder Rights Coordinator and Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman; the Rockingham County Council on Aging, Reidsville, NC, as a

Community Case Manager; the Randolph County Senior Adults Association, Asheboro, NC, as a Program Developer.

Dr. Butler, a native of Greensboro NC, has been a resident of Knoxville TN since 2007; is married to Rev. Donna M. Butler with 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

# Kenyan General Election - a Sign of Political Maturity

By Rev. Ronald A. Nathan,  
*World Politics Editor*

Kenya, a country the size of Texas, with a population of 54 million continues to amaze many political commentators not least because of the legal challenge to the presidential election results concluded on August 9, 2022.

Wafula Chebukati, the Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission's (IEBC) chairperson and the chief election returning officer had declared Dr. William Ruto, the leader of Kenya Kwanza, the president - elect of the Republic of Kenya. This has been challenged by the Azimio kwa Moja political leader, Raila Odinga.

The media headlines focussed on the disturbances that took place at the central tallying centre located at the Bomas of Kenya cultural centre. In front of the international media and observers scuffles broke out, tables and chairs were thrown and four of the seven elections commissioners attached to the Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission (IEBC) walked out.

Irrespective of these erratic events around the declaration of

the IEBC I want to salute Kenya for its progressiveness and political maturity. This progress and maturity was evident if one would take a longitudinal view of the Kenya.

First, in a country independent for only 58 years it has been dogged in the past with politically inspired violence. The people of Kenya today chose peace during this general elections.

Second, the nation made a significant move from ethnic-based politics to issue-based politics.

Third, the country offered a high level of electoral transparency with the development and spread of technology.

Fourth, is the acceptance of a robust judiciary who is considered by the people as the final arbiter in respect to any disputed matter pertaining to the general elections.

Fifth, is the growth in the creditability of the Non-Governmental-Organization sector who are prepared at great personal risk to hold government accountable to high international standards.

I therefore interpret the current presidential challenge not as a sign of weakness in the electoral process but as a strength of the growth and development of the people of Kenya and their institutions. This is the entrenchment of democracy in a young nation.

## The Caribbean, Same Location, Two Different Worlds (Part 1)

By Rev. Ronald A. Nathan, *World Politics Editor*

The image of the Caribbean as a paradise is a historical reality for some of its past and present inhabitants. This image of the region running south of the Floridas, gained future lure when in the 15th century Portuguese and Spanish explorers spoke of and set out for the mysterious El Dorado.

The name El Dorado became associated with the myth surrounding the adventures of Juan Martin de Albuja in the Guianas, and became a metaphor for any place where wealth could be rapidly acquired. Added to this myth was the advent of Trans-Atlantic Slavery where the Caribbean became a magnet for those European colonizers who were able to access a source of reliable labor and of capital accumulation. It made the planters rich, and slaveholders dominated not just the economy but the region's politics and culture.

When we come into the modern era the Caribbean is the location of paradise due to the natural beauty of the islands, the proverbial sun, sand and sea and increasingly eco-tourism through its lush flora and fauna. Top travel magazines, advertise the region as a

paradise for the top ten percent of the richest persons in the world. From the European and North America winter months of December to April, the world's wealthy bring their yachts and private jets to the azure waters of the Caribbean for a little sunshine and conspicuous consumption.

The Caribbean's exotic foods and unique combinations of aged rums provides a delightful menu for the rich and famous in exclusive resorts and villas in the Antigua, Anguilla, Barbados, Bahamas, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Turks and Caicos Islands. The exclusivity of these places can fall into the weekly price raise of US\$50,000 to US\$150,000. Most of the Caribbean inhabitants do not get a glimpse of this world. Those who do work in these villas are cooks, drivers and entertainers.

The diversity of the Caribbean is that in this location there is another which is populated by the majority of the regions persons of African descent who dream of employment in the above world and to have the privilege to access some US dollars or Euros.

## The Caribbean, Same Location, Two Different Worlds (Part 2)

The Caribbean "islands of enchantment," and the playground of the rich and famous is also home to a majority poor Black population. The Caribbean is a region caught between the historical legacy of European colonialism and the challenge of poorly performing economies in a global context of increased competition.

The Caribbean, stretches from the Floridas in the North to the Guianas in the South gets its' name from the Caribs, one of the indigenous people groups. Its current population of 44 million persons are made up of the descendants of the indigenous peoples, descendants of enslaved Africans, and descendants of indentured servants from India and Europe.

Caribbean governments have pegged their economies to the vagaries of the tourism sector and is now the most tourism – dependent region in the world. Tourism has been an important component of Caribbean island economy for more than three decades. The business model of Caribbean tourism is based largely on the deployment of low-wage workers in destination surroundings which imitates the past colonial plantation era. Researchers in tourism studies show that a 1% expansion in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is associated with a 1.2% increase in tourist arrivals. However, the Caribbean's

ability to grow tourist arrivals is limited by its small land space.

In addition, to the competition for tourism revenue by destinations outside the Caribbean, regional states are struggling to find new means to maintain and expand the tourism trade. Alternative tourism venues such as sex, gambling, tax evasion, medical, sports, culture and ecology are being implemented. Some of these offerings however, are indeed degrading to Caribbean people and their cultural traditions.

While there are other factors to the persistence of poverty in the region such as poor governance, undeveloped human capital, and a lack of institutional capacity. Government and non-governmental agencies, including the Christian church, must do more to develop the human capital of these small territories.

The Caribbean continues to be challenged by population growth that outgrows its provision of employment opportunities. It is only with advances in education linked to employment opportunities locally and globally will the Caribbean be able to increase economic growth, reduce unemployment and develop its human capital.

The delivery of decent education and decent opportunities for employment will also allow more Caribbean people to access the world of the privileged that exists within the same geographical space.

## Groundbreaking Alzheimer's Research Revealed at Alzheimer's Association International Conference

With more than 6 million Americans and 180,000 North Carolinians living with Alzheimer's disease today, researchers are working tirelessly to advance science that will lead to earlier detection, preventions and additional new treatments for Alzheimer's and all dementia.

Last week, more than 10,000 researchers attended the Alzheimer's Association International Conference® (AAIC®) 2022 both in person and virtually to share the latest in Alzheimer's and dementia science. Highlights included:

**Another reason to move your body.** Results are in from the longest-ever clinical trial of exercise in older adults with mild memory problems. After 12 months of regular physical activity -- aerobic exercise or stretching -- study participants experienced no significant cognitive decline.

**Junk food might be hurting our brains.** Researchers studied more than 10,000 people over eight years and found that high consumption of ultra-processed foods led to a 28% faster decline in cognitive function.

**Racism's impact on memory.** In a study of nearly 1,000 adults, exposure to interpersonal and institutional racism was associated with lower memory scores, especially among Black individuals.

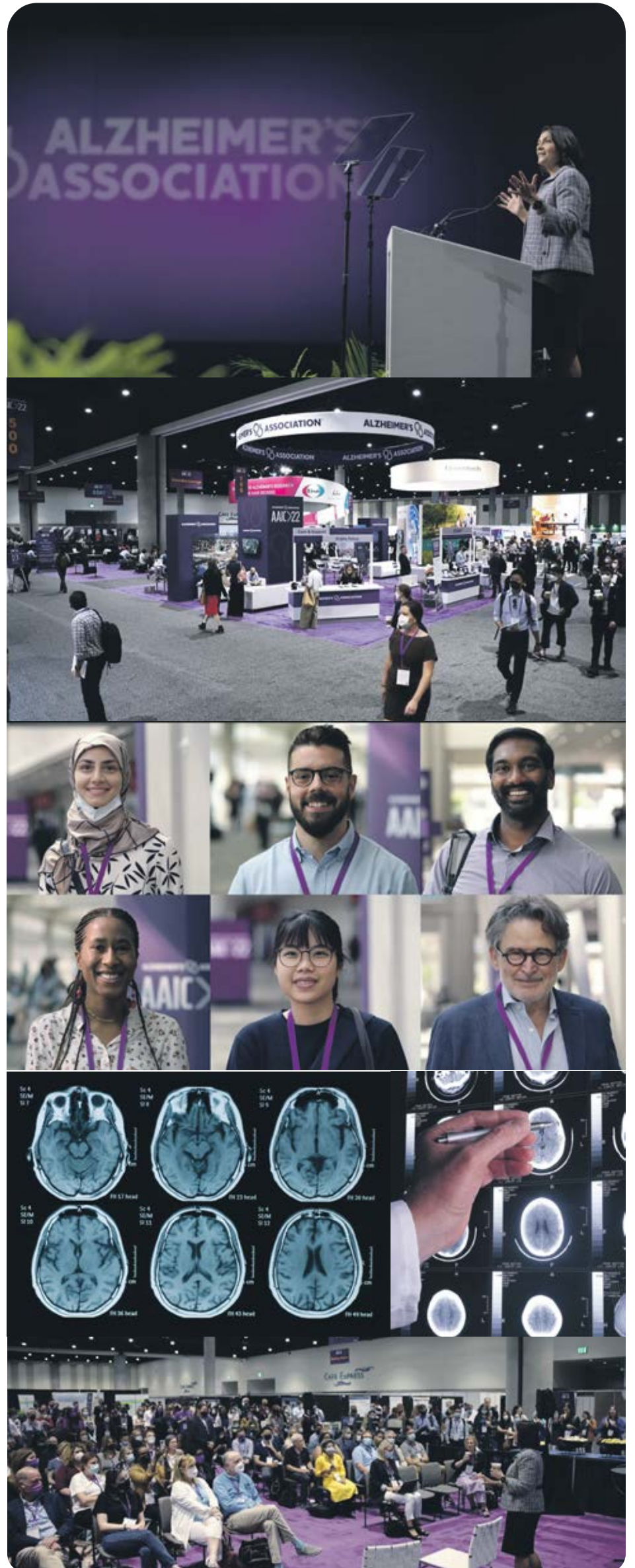
**More long-term impacts of COVID-19.** Researchers found that loss of smell due to COVID-19 infection may be a better predictor of long-term cognitive and functional impairment than severity of the illness.

**Earning less money may increase dementia risk.** Compared with workers earning higher wages, sustained low-wage earners experienced significantly faster memory decline in older age.

"There is great progress in Alzheimer's and dementia research," said Katherine L. Lambert, CEO for the Alzheimer's Association – Western Carolina Chapter, who attended the conference. "This year at AAIC, we heard new ideas about what makes us at risk, as well as a diverse array of treatments and prevention methods for Alzheimer's disease and all dementia. The work of the scientific community holds great promise for the future worldwide, and in our own back yard here in North Carolina."

More than 80 scientific presentations from the conference were from N.C.-based researchers and investigators from including: Duke, University, East Carolina University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, UNC Greensboro, Wake Forest University and other research centers.

To learn more about the studies presented at the 2022 Alzheimer's Association International Conference, go to [alz.org/aaic](http://alz.org/aaic). The Alzheimer's Association is available with information and support for families as they navigate the disease and related research. For more information on the Alzheimer's Association - Western Carolina Chapter, visit the [alz.org/northcarolina](http://alz.org/northcarolina) or call the 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.





## Hearty meal after services

By Hanna Raskin, *Editor and publisher The Food Section*  
[thefoodsection.substack.com](http://thefoodsection.substack.com)

In most religious traditions, a hearty meal after services is optional. But scholars say the importance of Sunday dinner, or its equivalent in other faiths, shouldn't be discounted.

"It is very clear to me that food is central to all of the world's religions, whether as a way of bringing people together in fellowship or serving as a symbol of religious history and doctrine," says Elijah Siegler, a religious studies professor at the College of Charleston.

According to Siegler, whether the gathering in question is a fellowship meal in a social hall or a meetup of congregants at a nearby restaurant, sharing food gives worshippers an opportunity to strengthen their bonds and consider the morning's message.

Those aims are generally accomplished even if the chicken's oversalted and the cakes are storebought. For church leaders, though, the quality of the meal matters.

"From a pastoral perspective, giving sermons, leading worship, and counselling parishioners are all hard work, requiring physical as much as spiritual sustenance," Siegler says.

To put it another way, clergy members are uniquely positioned to know which restaurants to patronize after services.

The Food Section, a twice-weekly newsletter covering food and drink across the American South, is hoping to showcase a few of those favorites. We're looking for places that may not get a lot of press attention but deserve recognition for serving their communities every Sunday.

If you know a restaurant that fits the bill, please email Hanna Raskin at [readthefoodsection@gmail.com](mailto:readthefoodsection@gmail.com).

**Thank you in advance for your help!**

 Saint Paul School of Theology

## Is God Calling You for More?

Saint Paul School of Theology is educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online and hybrid learning courses on a FLEXible schedule. Grounded in Christ, we are shaping leaders to make the difference.

**Discover More!**

Call (913) 253-5084 or  
email [admiss@spst.edu](mailto:admiss@spst.edu)

[spst.edu](http://spst.edu)

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL

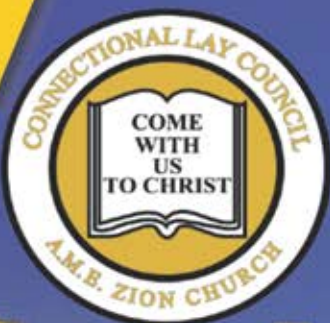
NORFOLK, VA

# EVANGELISTIC

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

# Retreat

# 7<sup>th</sup>



# OCTOBER 7-9 2022

Book your room: [Connectional Lay Council 7th Quadrennial Evangelistic Retreat](#)

**Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel**

**777 Waterside Drive**

**Norfolk, VA 23510-2102**

**Phone: (757) 622-6664**

Marriott Bonvoy customers can earn Points

**Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis**

*1<sup>st</sup> V.P./CLC Retreat Chair*

**Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr.**

*CLC International President*

**Bishop Michael A. Frencher**

*CLC Chairman of the Board*

## NEXT3.0

### YOUR ONE-STOP-SHOP

FOR ALL YOUR BRANDING, MARKETING, AND PROMOTIONAL PRODUCT NEEDS

ee  
I can always count on Next 3.0 to deliver with a spirit of excellence. Their customer service, quality, and timely delivery can't be beat!



BISHOP BRIAN R. THOMPSON SR.  
AME ZION CHURCH

### OUR SERVICES

- BRAND DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING
- WEBSITE APP DEVELOPMENT
- PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS
- GRAPHIC DESIGN
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- AND MORE!

## CONTACT US NOW AND GET YOUR QUOTE!

[www.Next3x.com](http://www.Next3x.com)  
@ Sales@Next3x.com





# Gregory M. Alcorn to Speak at



Opening Convocation marks the official beginning of the academic year and is a time when the Seminary community joins together in asking God's guidance throughout the coming year.

## Hood Theological Seminary Virtual Opening Convocation

This event will be virtual via Zoom.

**Friday, September 16, 2022**

**@6:00 P.M., EST.**

Gregory M. Alcorn will be the speaker for Hood Theological Seminary's Opening Convocation on September 16, 2022 at 6:00 pm. Mr. Alcorn is Founder and C.E.O. of Global Contact Services (GCS); Co-founder (with his wife, Missie) of ApSeed Early Childhood Education, and Author of *The 7 Dumb Things We All Say*. The public is welcome to attend this special service which is also free of charge.



For event details scan QR code or Please go to Hood Theological Seminary's website:  
<https://www.hoodseminary.edu/news/2022-virtual-opening-convocation>  
The zoom link will be posted soon on the Hood website.  
***We look forward to your attendance!***



# Dr. Teresa L. Fry Brown

to be Guest Lecturer at the Virtual  
**Ruben L. Speaks Lecture Series**

*This event will be virtual via Zoom.*

**Friday, October 7, 2022**

**@7:00 P.M., EST.**

**&**

**Saturday, October 8, 2022**

**@10:00 A.M., EST.**

*The public is welcome to attend this special service which is also free of charge.*



For event details scan QR code or Please go to Hood Theological Seminary's website:  
<https://www.hoodseminary.edu/news/fall-2022-speaks-lecture-series>  
The zoom link will be posted soon on the Hood website.



***We look forward to your attendance!***



# I AM MY ANCESTORS'



**By Rev. Melanie Miller,  
Ph.D., D.Min., M.Div.**

On May 10th, I delivered the eulogy for a 100-year-old World War II (WWII) veteran who grew up in Varick Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AME Zion) Church, where I pastored for nine years. Mr. Eugene Dednam was described at his death at being penniless and alone.

However, to my surprise, when I arrived at the graveside service held at George Washington Cemetery, Paramus, NJ, hundreds of veterans, public agents, law enforcement, NBC and other news outlets, and citizens from all around New Jersey had come to honor him. Mr. Dednam, better known as "Eugene," was proudly inducted into the United States Army and officially joined during WWII. He served with honor and distinction for the 4043rd Quartermaster Truck Company in six campaigns in the European Theater of War: the Ardennes, Central Europe, Normandy, Northern France, and Rome-Arno, earning the European-African-Middle Eastern (EAME) Campaign Medal, WWII Victory Medal, and Good Conduct Medal.

Eugene returned home from the war with his friends in 1945. His friends included Mr. Piney Summerville, also one hundred years old and currently residing in a nursing home, the late Arthur Rochester, brother of the late Bishop Enoch B. Rochester of The AME Zion Church, and others who looked like him with colored skin. When these men returned home after the war, they did not receive the hero's welcome as depicted by many ticker-tape parades recorded at the time. Many of these Black men, my ancestors, even as they served, were shunned, disrespected, abused, denied benefits, chastised, beaten, and killed for wearing their military uniform. Despite the prejudice they experienced, these men wore their uniforms with great pride and dignity reflecting their honor, courage, and commitment. I stand here today, a Black American woman, with my husband, Rev. Jimmie Lewis Miller, Sr., a retired Navy Commander, who was a submarine officer, two of my sons, Jerome, who served in the United States Marine Corps as an Osprey pilot and Jason, who served as a Surface Warfare Officer in the Navy and is now completing medical school to serve as a Navy physician, and my many Brothers and Sisters of Color serving in the United States Armed Forces, as our ancestors', like Eugene, wildest dream.

After learning of his death through the news media and that I would be officiating Eugene's graveside service, a cousin, Karla, contacted me. Karla and some members of Varick Memorial AME Zion, who knew, remembered, or heard stories about him, shared with me his life, after returning from the war. He worked at Macy's in New York City and loved to "dress to the nines." I imagine he intentionally dressed so well because he loved to walk, and he wanted to make sure he looked good walking. Ms. Shirley Randolph, the younger sister of his friend, Enoch Rochester, described how Eugene always walked past her family home on Clay Street headed to the Post Office. Others saw him walking down Union, State, Main and Essex Streets, while some described how he continued to walk to the grocery store way past his 95th birthday. He was described by all of them as fiercely independent and very private. However, the point that struck home with me in our conversations was the family's discussion of his arrangements. They had the

opportunity to postpone the service and plan a family service of their own, but they chose not to do so. Karla told me that, once they discussed the homegoing celebration planned by the Veterans Affairs Office with full military honors, they decided the graveside service should proceed. The family felt Eugene was so deserving of such an honor for his service to this country; and in a way, they felt it transcended time and location to honor not only him but those who never received the honor due them. This honor was probably one of Eugene's wildest dreams.

As a Chaplain in the US Navy, I know firsthand from counseling service members that war affects people in ways that many who have never served on the front lines can even begin to conceive or as Eugene's family pointed out, to understand. Consider the war in Ukraine as it is broadcast live into our homes and how it is affecting us thousands of miles away. We cannot begin to fathom its effects on those right there amid the bombings, the shootings, the tanks, and the armored vehicles rumbling through, as the enemy invades their homes, destroys their communities, and upsets their livelihood. Eugene served this country in six back-to-back campaigns in another country to support and defend the constitution of these United States of America and the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for its citizens and its allies. War affected him in a way many would never know or begin to understand. When he returned home, his family said he was different. Eugene was a different person, and they believed he was so private because he was often deep in his own thoughts. I wonder if he may have been deep in his visions and dreams. Maybe he reflected on how he and so many Black men and women served proudly. Maybe he often remembered the treatment he received when he returned home and his struggle to find healing for the mental war wounds he sustained. Perhaps his thoughts wove in and out of scenes of the European campaigns in which he operated abroad with his brothers in arms, while tracing imaginary fingers along the psychological, emotional, and spiritual scars he sustained.

As I pondered this, I began to realize that perhaps Eugene while deep in his thoughts was dreaming of my future, dreaming of your future, dreaming of our future--dreaming his wildest dream that one day, I, a Black American woman with two doctoral degrees, an ordained elder in The AME Zion Church and recipient of numerous awards, proving my leadership and service, both military and civilian, would achieve the rank of Lieutenant Commander as an officer in the U.S. Navy. More than that, maybe his wildest dream was that I would serve as a chaplain in the Navy endorsed by The AME Zion Church to care for Sailors, Marines, Coast Guard men and women, Merchant Marines, and their family members across the nation and around the world. His wildest dream could have been of my serving alongside and caring for Marines and Sailors at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twenty-nine Palms, California at Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, earning the designation of a Fleet Marine Force Qualified Officer. His wildest dream may have been my serving Sailors on ships, in chapels and commands around the world, earning my memorable piping ashore upon detaching from the USS Stethem in Yokosuka, Japan or receiving the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for extraordinary service rendered at Officer Training Command Newport, Rhode Island. Or perhaps his wildest dream was closer to home. Maybe he dreamed of my being appointed as the Pastor of four distinguished A.M.E. Zion churches, including Sycamore Hill, Gatesville, NC, Martin Temple, Compton, CA, Varick Memorial, Hackensack, NJ, and now the notable St. Paul in Ewing, NJ. I am my ancestors' wildest dream. I am Mr. Eugene

Continues... next page

# WILDEST DREAM

Dedham's wildest dream.

My current position in the Navy is the Chaplain Programs Officer for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Navy Recruiting Command, Millington, TN. In this position I realized over the years, even since the Vietnam war, many course corrections had to be made in the treatment of military service members of color and gender, specifically women, to get us to this seemingly equitable state. It is clear in our history that many course corrections had to be made for women to serve and to lead as officers in the armed forces where their knowledge, experience and skills were recognized and employed justly and fairly. However, more course corrections need to be made if we are going to have a military that reflects the diversity of American citizens. This diversity must be intrinsic in recruiting and retention methods that model equality in the ranks, enlisted and officer, as we do our part in dismantling not only sexism but for women and service members of color, systemic and systematic racism that is ingrained in our culture. Our armed forces must not just state that all are welcome but be an institution that reflects in action, policy, and practice in all the ranks to make everyone feel that we all belong.

As an elder, a pastor and a woman minister, I realize many course corrections were made in the past in how women were treated in the church. The course corrections to advance women into leadership roles in our denomination include:

1. The removal of the word "male" from *The Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church* in 1876 at the 15th Session of the General Conference, allowing women for the first time to vote for trustees in their local churches and participate in Quarterly and Annual Conferences.

2. The election in 1892 of Mrs. Fannie Van Bronk as the first woman delegate who was seated at the 19th Session of the General Conference.

3. The ordination of Rev. Julia A.J. Foote on May 20, 1894. She was the first woman ordained a Deacon. She was ordained by Bishop James Walker Hood at the 73rd Session of the New York Annual Conference held in Poughkeepsie, NY.

4. The ordination of Rev. Mary Small in 1898 as the first woman ordained Elder. She was ordained by Bishop Charles Calvin Pettey at the Philadelphia and Baltimore Annual Conference.

5. According to the Indianapolis Recorder, on September 23, 1899, Rev. Lizzie Butts was appointed to pastor Elizabeth Mission, a small mission church in Evansville, Indiana. She is noted as the first woman to be appointed a pastor; however, Rev. Florence Randolph-Spearing is the first confirmed woman appointed pastor.

6. Dr. Madie L. Simpson was the first woman elected as a General Officer in 1976 at the 40th Session of the General Conference.

7. In 1978, Rev. Harriett Olivia Hooks was appointed the first female presiding elder by Bishop George Junius Leake III at the Southwest Rocky Mountain Conference in California in the Western Episcopal District.

8. Dr. Betty V. Smith was elected the first woman president of the Connectional Lay Council in 1976.

9. In 1996, the Honorable Adele Mosley Riley, a Judge in the U.S. District Court of Ohio, was elected the first woman president of the Judicial Council.

10. On July 18, 2008, at the 48th Session of the General Conference held in Atlanta, GA, Rev. Dr. Mildred "Bonnie" Hines was elected the first woman and 98th bishop in the line of succession.

11. On July 22, 2012, at the 49th Session of the General Conference, Rev. Dr. Kathryn Gertrude Brown was elected the first woman to serve as General Secretary of the Christian Education Department.

12. Mrs. Addie L. Hudson Lisby was elected the first

woman and 17th Editor of the Star of Zion (SOZ) at the 49th Session of the General Conference in 2012.

13. In 2013, I was appointed the first woman pastor of Varick Memorial; and on January 1, 2022, I began serving as the first woman appointed pastor of St. Paul.

The appointment of many women to leadership roles as the firsts in their office or appointments remains a common occurrence today in the year of our Lord 2022. However, many more course corrections will need to be made if we are going to have a church that reflects the diversity of those called by God's name in the ranks of leadership in our church as episcopal leaders, general officers, presiding elders, pastors of established churches, and representatives of the denomination as the norm and not an inconsistent reality. These course corrections must obliterate the question of whether women are "qualified" and the discussion of whether "The AME Zion Church is ready for another female leader." The course corrections we make must normalize the acknowledgment and advancement of the knowledge, experience, skills, anointing, and the heart for God and His people women bear as they operate in their calling. As we reflect on what the goal of any course corrections should be in our church, we must refer to John's vision, his wildest dreams in Revelation 7:9-10 of God's plan for His kingdom,

*After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

When we embrace the prophesied diversity, equality, and inclusion of God's kingdom, we must endeavor to be intentional in our efforts to ensure we do not exclude those God has called for a time such as this to lead His people no matter their gender. For Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus tells us as His disciples,

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So, wherever you go, make disciples of all nations: Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to do everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am always with you until the end of time.*

This imperative by Jesus sets no parameters or qualifications as to who is to go, make disciples, baptize, teach, and remember, except to be His disciple. Unfortunately, our human nature of self-preservation and sinfulness impede our ability to accept Joel's wildest dreams for God's restored and repentant people as recorded in 2:28-29:

*And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.*

However, to reflect that we receive Jesus' commission and believe in Joel's dream, our course corrections must take in account James's teaching in 2:1-4.

*My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?*

James wrote that letter in a time not much different than our own today that was filled with prejudice and hatred, based on class,

ethnicity, nationality, and religious background. People did not care about the consequences associated with acting with bias; and, therefore, they readily dealt out labels of classification, enacted policies and conducted practices that reflected their biased hearts. People were identified, policed, and treated as Jew or Gentile, slave or free, rich or poor, Greek or barbarian, or whatever the powers that be imposed, much like today. However, we know, those of us who identify as Christians, that a significant aspect of the work of Jesus was to break down the walls that divided humanity, and to bring forth a unified church of all people in Him (Ephesians 2:14-15). Like Jesus, the early church of Christian believers whose behaviors reflected their love of God probably shocked those who were in power and held influence over the community, raising their wildest nightmares. The unity of spirit and the openness in which these new believers shared probably caught these predisposed leaders off guard, probably nothing they saw in their wildest dreams, because they were the ones who held the responsibility of meeting the needs of the people, doing good, and carrying out justice and fairness. They were the ones whose actions greatly impacted the lives of those they led, with whom they worked, or served. These Christian believers did these things without the limitations of the law and partiality they would generally use in the practice of their office. We know in our society today, unity, doing good, being fair and just, and being transparent do not come automatically and require intentionality. For the early believers to get to that state, the apostles had to teach them to never hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, never to call themselves Christian believers while showing bias, partiality of one person over another.

According to Scripture, partiality shows evil intent because it reflects that one cares more for the outward appearance, the things of worldly thinking and aspiration, and does not consider the heart. The late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s expression of one of his wildest dreams sums up James's epistle statement, "I have a

dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." Not by their bling, not by their designer clothes, not by their societal, economic, or cultural privilege, not by their dominance over others, not their feminine wiles, or macho bravado, not by their PhDs or other educational accomplishments, but by what they bring to the table that lies beneath the gender identification, but by their heart which is the manifestation of each authentic being created in the image of God.

It is up to us together to elect and appoint leaders in our denomination, over our districts and churches, no matter their race, nationality, gender, or Christian style of worship receive the same special attention of those traditionally given special treatment in our churches. We must ensure that they are not relegated to practices that overlook them, neglect them, avoid them, reject them, devalue them, ignore them, and eventually frustrate and turn them away or never bring them to the table in the first place. As we respond daily to the current call on our lives wrapped up in our service as Zionites for the purpose of building God's kingdom, Micah 6:8 says it best. *"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."* Our future course corrections must reflect justice, mercy, and humility so that the leadership reflects the diversity of our membership and the people we serve. This diversity must be inherent in our appointment and election of leaders, as well as our training and retention methods, that model equality in the ranks, clergy and lay membership, as we do our part in dismantling the injustices that maintain the stained-glass ceiling erected to limit the advancement of women that is ingrained in our church culture and traditions. The make-up of the leadership must not just state that all are wel-

Continues... next page



The Los Angeles District  
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

**OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON THE PROPOSAL TO EXPAND ORDINANCE 41:18**

July 27, 2022

**"And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'" - Matthew 8:20**

We the members of the Los Angeles District of the historical African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, also known as the "The Freedom Church" boldly and loudly oppose the expansion of inhumane ordinances and laws that criminalize those who are experiencing homelessness in the City of Los Angeles like 41:18.

The proposed amendment on 41:18 is the most dramatic expansion, creating unsheltered exclusion zones across a massive portion of Los Angeles. Despite what the Council believes, a significant portion of Angelenos opposes criminalization as a tool to address homelessness, knowing that it is expensive, ineffective, and inhumane. History has already taught us, that criminalizing and policing our unsheltered friends only leads to more incarceration and we believe that it is sinful to continue to keep pushing "the least of these" into jails when we clearly have the resources 888\*to uplift every Angeleno out of homelessness and poverty.

We, the members of the Los Angeles District of the historical African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church boldly and loudly declare that homelessness is not a crime, being poor is not a crime and any ordinance used to displace and criminalize our fellow siblings who are experiencing homelessness is a human rights violation and morally wrong.

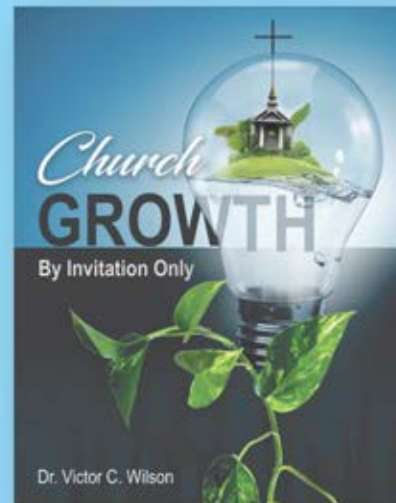
We, the members of the Los Angeles District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, call on all Los Angeles City Council Members to oppose expansion on 41:18 and to invest in resources like housing, healthcare, mental health, and harm reduction resources, and other much-needed resources for those living in encampments, in our city.

Servants of love, justice, and hope;

The Los Angeles District, A.M.E Zion Church

The Reverend Redeem Robinson, Minister of Social Justice of the Los Angeles District

The Reverend Alonzo Braggs, Presiding Elder of the Los Angeles District



*This book is a tool for the leaders who are looking for a method to grow their ministry in the midst of a pandemic!*

**Church Growth  
By Invitation Only**

**GET YOUR COPY TODAY**

~Purchase On Amazon

~Call or email direct for

signed copy

~Scan QR Code below



**Rev. Dr. Victor C. Wilson**

**P.O. Box 2522**

**Rock Hill, SC 29732**

**drvwilson@comporium.net**

**CashApp: \$GiveVWilson**

**(803) 322-6953**



come but be the church of God that reflects in action, policy, and practice as a norm that we all belong.

So, as I stand here today as a Black woman, an elder, and a leader in our great church, I endeavor to seek out God first in all things and to live right before Him with the knowledge, encouragement, and conviction that reflect that I stand here as one who knows that I am my ancestors' wildest dream. I implore you to join my efforts to ensure that the past does not repeat itself and that we ensure that some dreams of the past come true as we make course corrections in our efforts as to identify, elect, appoint, and send out leaders, especially women leaders in The AME Zion Church.

**Let us pray:**

O Lord Almighty, remember those who dreamed of our future and who sacrificed much to ensure that one day their dreams would become realities. Protect those like us, whether women, people of color or other underrepresented minorities, who currently serve not only our church but our nation and around the world. Let our hearts be compassionate, and our minds clear and determined, in giving all those who offer themselves to serve You and Your people

our respect and special attention. And let us in all things be dependent on the loving kindness of the Lord our God.

As we continue the work laid at our hands, let us be true to our calling as those who serve and lead with the core values of faith, hope, and love, with a greater reflection of our love. Help us to be the true masters of agape, unconditional love.

O Lord, guide us in the way of moral responsibility, enlighten us as true believers in ethics and justice.

Let this day be a day of course correction as we remember the possible dreams of Mr. Dednam, the wildest dreams of our ancestors and the present aspirations of those who dare to accept their calling, even when our church and its members may not acknowledge or appreciate our service.

Remember us, O Lord, in Your mercy, may we always include You in our thinking as we make plans to do this work and have a desire to please You so that our thoughts and our choices may be illuminated by You. Make us a generation of dreamers, who are doers, who go forward with wisdom, discipline, and good faith. In the precious name of Jesus, we do pray. Amen.

NC Back 2 School Event Continued...

Zion Church spoke to the parents regarding a Mecklenburg County Positive Parenting Program (PPP).

Then, under the direction of Mrs. Anika Robinson, students from pre-K through recent high school graduates put on "The Greatest Fashion Show in Zion". Each of the sixteen students modeled their school fashions for the new year in their own way. They strutted, walked and some even ran across the runway! For their participation they each were rewarded with a gift card from Chick-fil-A restaurants. Take-out lunches were also provided by the restaurant for all in attendance.

Mr. J. Gilbert McRae, the District Director of Christian Education made remarks and gave thanks to all department directors

and participants in this energy-charged back to school event. All the donated school supplies from the churches, members and the District Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society will be donated to the Winding Springs Elementary School in the neighborhood of Rockwell AME Zion Church.

Presiding Elder Wardell Henderson gave accolades to the students, the parents and the directors for a remarkable program. He encouraged the students to do their school work and to be obedient. He prayed for the students, parents and teachers for a successful and safe school year.

Everyone left the rally excited and energized to begin the new school year.

**Gladys M. Felton**  
Labor 12/9/1925 - Reward 8/10/2022

**Reginald M. Felton**  
Labor 1/1/1947 - Reward 6/11/2022

*From the bottom of my heart,  
I thank all of Zion for the prayers and support during this most difficult time.  
- Renee Felton Pullen*

SCAN TO SUBSCRIBE



THE STAR OF ZION OFFICIAL SUBSCRIPTION FORM

YES! I would like The Star of Zion delivered to my home.

Stay up to date on the latest news and happenings in Zion. Subscribe to The Star of Zion for only \$38 per year for 12 issues. It will be delivered once a month to the address given below. Don't miss a single issue!

Name: Rev./Dr. \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (REQUIRED) \_\_\_\_\_

I already subscribe to The Star, but would like my address changed to that above.

Please Bill Me  Payment Enclosed

Please send a check or money order, payable to:  
The Star of Zion P.O. Box 26770  
Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

Please allow 4-6 weeks to process your subscription. Questions or concerns about subscriptions may be directed to [subscribe@starofzion.org](mailto:subscribe@starofzion.org) or call our offices Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm at (704) 688-2561

Visit <https://www.starofzion.org/subscribe> to subscribe online today.

# Remembering the Avant Family



## *Janice Elizabeth Howard Avant*

was born in Evergreen, Alabama on June 20, 1933. She was the eldest child of the late Annie Mae (nee Ferguson) and Robert Wright. When she was a child, her family joined the Great Migration north, settling in Buffalo, New York.

Janice attended the Buffalo public schools, excelling in her academic pursuits. She honed her musical talents by studying the piano and flute, and by singing in several choirs. Janice was a master seamstress who sewed most of her wardrobe. She gifted family members and friends with her beautiful creations. Janice played pinochle, bid whist, and bridge. Her gardens were an eclectic hodgepodge of blooms, reflecting her love for flowers of all types.

Janice graduated with honors from every school she attended. As an adolescent, she did not receive the acknowledgement and accolades she deserved due to racism. She did not let this deter her from pursuing higher education, however. Janice was a proud alumna of Morgan State College (now Morgan State University), Class of 1955. While attending Morgan State, Janice met and married upper-classman Richard V. Avant. They were married for more than 65 years.

Janice and Richard lived in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Chicago, Illinois, before settling in Summit, New Jersey, where members of Richard's family lived. They lived in Summit for twenty years. Janice and Richard encountered racism, both overt and covert. Janice showed her determination to prove that she was equal to anyone by breaking several barriers. One notable achievement was becoming the first African American employee hired as a bank teller by the Summit & Elizabeth Trust Company. Janice also served as a member of the board of directors of the Summit YWCA and the Child Development Board.

Janice left the banking industry for the field of education, becoming a teacher for the Newark Public Schools. In order to augment her career path, Janice attended Bank Street College of Education, graduating with a master's degree. Janice served at several schools, first as a teacher, then as a Title I instructor, then as a guidance counselor. She retired, after 27 years of service, as an assistant principal.

Even in retirement, Janice's hands were not idle. She joined Delta Sigma Theta sorority as an undergraduate. She continued to give service through the sorority. Janice established, and partially funded, a scholarship which was awarded to a deserving high school senior yearly. Janice also owned a boutique, "Jan's Gifts of Distinction", which sold Greek sorority and fraternity paraphernalia.

Janice accepted Christ at an early age while attending Bethel AME Church in Buffalo. When she moved to Summit, she joined Wallace Chapel AME Zion Church, which her mother-in-law helped to establish. In her 60-plus years of dedicated membership, Janice was a tireless worker for Zion on the local level. At various times, she served as the director of the Youth Choir, coordinator of the Black History Month Program, member of the Women's Day Leadership Team (including several stints as Women's Day chairwoman), delegate to the Annual Conference, secretary of the Quarterly Conference, member of the Steward Ministry, member of the Church Choir, chairperson of the Flower Ministry, member of the Scholarship Committee, member of the Budget and Finance Committee, and president of the Deaconess Ministry.

Janice passed just after midnight on November 11, 2020, in the presence of her husband. Besides her parents, she is preceded in death by her sisters, Lisa Giselle Rodgers and Sandra JoeAnn Gumbs, and by her brother-in-law, Onaje Allan Gumbs. She is survived by her husband, Richard V. Avant Sr.; her children, Patricia A. Jackson and her husband, Clarence, Richard V. Jr., and Marjory Avant Cocco and

her husband, Carlos; her sister, Linda S. Bannerman-Martin; her grandchildren, Jocelyn, Matthew, and Clarence Vincent; her great-grandchildren, Jahni, Melody, Jeidin, and Johann; a step-granddaughter, Verik Johnson; a goddaughter, Dawn P. Halley; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, sorority sisters, church family members, and friends, all of whom were very dear to her.

## *Richard Vincent Avant Sr.*

was born on January 14, 1932, at Overlook Hospital in Summit, New Jersey. He spent many of his early years living with his extended family in Climax/Greensboro, North Carolina. He also spent time living with the family of close friends, Talmadge and Kramer Dillingham, in Summit, NJ. Richard graduated from the Manual Training and Industrial School for Colored Youth in 1950. He then attended Morgan State College (now Morgan State University), graduating in 1954.

While at Morgan State, Richard served honorably in the United States Army as a First Lieutenant during the Korean Conflict. Richard also met and married Janice Elizabeth Howard. After his wife's 1955 graduation from Morgan State, Richard and Janice moved several times before settling in Summit, New Jersey. To support his now-growing family, Richard worked as the Director of the Neighborhood House in Plainfield, NJ; the Director of Youth Services for the United neighborhood Centers of America; the Director of Pre-Sentence Intervention Services and Assistant Court Administrator of the City of Newark; and the Newark Housing Authority.

Richard and Janice encountered racism, both overt and covert. Richard fought racism in Summit and its surrounding communities by writing letters and holding sit-ins. He walked against racism with Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. He was the lone picketer when Senator Strom Thurmond came to Summit to speak at an event. He was the president of the Tri-City NAACP for several years. He taught Black History classes to people in the community, as well as to his children. In everything he did, Richard endeavored to emulate the example set by his mentor, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., of using non-violent civil disobedience to protest racial inequalities.

Richard lived a full spiritual life. He counseled and mentored youths in Summit and Plainfield. He gave money, food, and money for food to anyone in need. Richard was a member of Wallace Chapel AME Zion Church for nearly 60 years. When he was healthy, Richard sang in the Senior Choir and Male Chorus. He was a member of the Church Newsletter staff, the Men's Day Leadership Team, and president of the Lay Council. Quietly and most notably, Richard served on the church's Feeding Committee, and he gave rides to church members. Richard did these things and more until dementia ravaged his brilliant mind.

Richard was known as an entertainer. He graciously hosted family and friends at his legendary cookouts, where he cooked slabs of his famous barbecued ribs and piles of delicious, chopped barbecue. Richard and Janice also traveled: Buffalo for Thanksgiving with her family, North Carolina to visit his aunts and uncles, Wildwood, NJ to deepen their tans.

Richard leaves to mourn his passing his children: Patricia A. Jackson and her husband, Clarence, Richard Jr., and Marjory Avant Cocco and her husband, Carlos. He leaves his grandchildren, on whom he doted: Jocelyn, Matthew, and Clarence Vincent. He leaves his great-grandchildren: Jahni, Melody, Jeidin, and Johann. Richard also leaves a sister-in-law, Linda Bannerman-Martin; a special cousin, Clarence Avant; two nieces, two nephews, a goddaughter, and a host of relatives and friends.

# Cecelia Wallace Campbell “Ceily” Passes at age of 82



On the evening of August 9, 2022, Cecelia Wallace Campbell “Ceily” (aged 82 years) exchanged time for eternity and answered the call of her creator to “Come unto Me and Rest. . .”

Cecelia was born the second child of five siblings to the late Mildred Pauline Gillispie & Winston Alexander Wallace in Rockford, Tennessee. Her siblings, Winfred Anetta Wallace Henderson, Leonard Eugene Wallace, Viola Elizabeth Wallace and granddaughter Amanda Nicole McNear Gonzales predeceased her.

Cecelia’s walk with God began at an early age. She was born into membership at Mt. Pleasant African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church where her great-grandfather, the late Carson Gillespie served as a founding Trustee. Baptized

as an infant by the late Rev. George W. Maize II, Cecelia gained an early appreciation for the Kingdom Building her family had long been committed to. Cecelia served in many capacities at her beloved church. She sang in the choir where she brought much joy and assurance to many with her signature solo, “Your Grace and Mercy”. As a youth, she served as secretary for Sunday School, Usher, and even helping her great-uncle, the late Bishop Paris Arthur Wallace, Zion’s 39th Bishop with his episcopal record keeping. She served as both Steward and Stewardess at her local church, active member of the Mildred P. Wallace Missionary Society, and served the Tennessee Conference as a Home Missions Worker. Stressing the importance of faith, Cecelia’s parents instilled in her and her siblings, with God, anything is possible. Cecelia’s WALK WITH GOD ENCOURAGED HER.

Strong-willed and independent, Cecelia lived a life of love and is admired by her loved ones for her strong Christian work ethic. A 1958 graduate of Charles M. Hall High School in Alcoa, TN-Cecelia developed a love for learning and keen awareness of the importance of formal education. Cecelia was a culinarian par excellent! She retired after over 35 years of employment with Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA) at Scona Lodge. She worked

an additional 15 years at Williamsburg Villas, and would occasionally lend a helping hand to her first cousin Josaphine Stewart with her long-standing catering contract at Second Presbyterian Church in Knoxville. Simply put, Cecelia knew her way around the kitchen and was best known for her delicious baked goods. Cecelia’s WALK WITH GOD SUSTAINED HER.

She bids a fond “see you later” to siblings; Walter Suddreth of Alcoa, Mildred Long of Alcoa, son Rick McNear of Alcoa, daughters; Doris Y. McNear of Knoxville and Melanie Brown of Rockford, grandchildren; Rev. Sam Brown of Knoxville, Clarissa McNear of Knoxville, Ayawna McNear of Maryville, aunt; Rose Gillespie of Rockford, 6 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great grandchildren a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, relatives and friends.

Services will be held on Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at Mt. Pleasant A.M.E. Zion Church, 3664 Grade Road, Rockford, TN Rev. Kamau Kenyatta, Officiating. Viewing will begin at 11:00am; family visitation at 12:00noon; celebration of life at 1:00pm. Please be advised a strict mask mandate will be enforced. Arrangements entrusted to Foothills Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers the family suggest contributions be made to Mt. Pleasant A.M.E. Zion Church 140th Anniversary Celebration in memory of Cecelia Wallace.



**December 9, 1925 - August 10, 2022**

Gladys Marie Greenfield Felton, the seventh child of the late Arthur and Beatrice

Greenfield was born on December 9, 1925, in Waldorf, Maryland, and departed this life on August 10, 2022. She was baptized in St. Peters Roman Catholic Church of Waldorf. Following the death of both parents at the age of five, she joined her sisters in moving to Washington, DC under the guardianship of the late Pauline Green, the first African American Teacher in Montgomery County, MD.

She attended the Parochial and Public Schools of DC. She received her B.S. in Education from Knoxville College and further studies at Norfolk State University and Chicago State University.

She married the late Rev. Dr. Carroll M. Felton, Jr. on February 7, 1945, and to this marriage, two children were born, a son, Reginald McCoy who preceded her in death on June 11, 2022, and a daughter, Renee Felton Pullen.

She was employed for ten years for the United States Patent Office, Washington, DC.,

and employed later as the registrar for nine years at Knoxville College in Knoxville, TN. She taught in the school systems in Perquimans County, NC; Bellcross, NC, and various schools in Chicago, Il. She was the head teacher and counselor at Tesla Alternative High School for Pregnant Girls, when she retired in 1990.

She was a dedicated and zealous member of the A.M.E. Zion Church. She served as the District Chairperson for the Life Members Department of the Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society in three Annual Conferences: Albemarle, Allegheny, and Michigan, and the church’s local chairperson at Martin Temple in Chicago and John Wesley in Washington, DC. She was elected in 1991 to the position of General Chairperson of Life Members. During her tenure, the life members lapel pin was introduced, and the record of making more than twenty thousand life memberships.

Gladys always credited her success to her mentors, Mrs. Etta Mae Wooten Murphy, Mrs. Lucy David, Mrs. Medis Warren, and Mrs. Ethel Coleman. Those sisters of faith encouraged her as she made it a personal goal to always be an encourager to others. She often said, “It is my desire to INSPIRE before I EXPIRE.”

She traveled extensively throughout the United States and abroad: in West Africa, Haiti, Brazil, Trinidad Tobago, Islands of Barbados, Nassau, Jamaica, Kinston, Egypt, Greece, and the Holy Land.

She has also served as a Class Leader while a member of Martin Temple AME Zion Church, Chicago, Il. and chaplain of the Lay Council at John Wesley AME Zion Church.

Gladys has served in the following organizations: Church Women United, YWCA Executive Board Harris Branch Chicago, Illinois, National Council of Negro Women, World Feder-

ation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women, National Association of Business Teachers, Chicago Alumni Chapter Knoxville College, AARP Washington DC.

Gladys proudly served the MidAtlantic Episcopal District as the receptionist during the tenure of Bishop & Mrs. Warren M. Brown, the late Bishop Richard Thompson, and Mrs. Georgia M. Thompson and the current presiding prelate Bishop and Mrs. W. Darin Moore. She was affectionately called Girl Friday.

Gladys loved family and was always increasing the numbers, adding children, sisters, and brothers. Continuing her legacy and the inspiration she shared are her family.

*Daughter;* Renee Felton Pullen, and Daughter in Love, Dianne L. Felton.

*Grandchildren;* Brandon R. Felton (Brie) , Ashlee M., and E. McCoy Pullen. *Great-grandchildren;* Grace, Oliver, and Aaron. *Cousin/Sister,* Margie Knight.

*Bonus Children;* Dr. Theora I. Jamison, Dr. Reginald Broadnax, and Mr. Eugene Spellman.

*Brother in love;* Henry D. Felton (Barbara).

*Nieces;* Teresa Chase, Frances Hudson, Willa Mae Spruill, Diane Yates, MaryEllen Greenfield, Gertrude Gordan(Chuck) and Shirley Greenfield, Shawna Bailey (Irving), Sheree Melton, Wanda Felton Owens (Michael), and Tammy Felton.

*Nephews;* Arthur Greenfield, Joseph E. Greenfield, Marty Easterly (Ilene), Ammioz Felton (Tracy), and a host of cousins, great nieces, and nephews

*Special close friends through the years;* Annette Braden, Alberta Ford, Glenda Hunter, Estella Jarrett, Dr. Sandra Gadson, Barbara Shaw and the Brandenburg Family.

**Donations in her honor can be made payable to the John Wesley AMEZ Church Scholarship Fund**

## Celebrating the Life of Gladys M. Felton

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



**1. Bishop Kenneth Monroe**  
EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
Office: P.O. Box 1167, Fuquay Varina, NC 27526  
Office: (919) 554-8994; Fax: (919) 556-6049  
Email: encedistrict@gmail.com  
District includes: Albermarle, Cape Fear, Central North Carolina, North Carolina, Virgin Islands  
Mrs. Sheila W. Monroe, Missionary Supervisor



**2. Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr.**  
PIEDMONT EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
3225 West Sugar Creek Road, Charlotte, NC 28269  
Ph: 704-904-9817 Fax: 704-599-0485  
Email: BishopDBStarnes@aol.com  
District includes: Blue Ridge, West Central North Carolina, Western North Carolina, Jamaica (all divisions)  
Mrs. Camille C. Starnes, Missionary Supervisor



**3. Bishop Dennis V. Proctor**  
NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
8369 Governor Grayson Way, Ellicott City, MD 21043  
Ph: (410) 418-4364 Fax: (410) 418-5834  
Email: BishopProctor@aol.com  
District includes: New England, New Jersey, New York, Western New York, Bahamas and London-Midland  
Mrs. D. Diane Proctor, Missionary Supervisor



**4. Bishop Mildred B. Hines (Deceased)**  
SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
Office address: 5115 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 620, Los Angeles, CA 90036  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 10272, Rock Hill, SC 29730  
Ph: (323) 930-7862; Mobile: (323) 559-0098  
Email: bishopmildred.hines@gmail.com  
District includes: Georgia, Palmetto, Pee Dee, South Carolina, South Korea  
Mrs. Lovetta J. Holmes, Missionary Supervisor



**5. Bishop W. Darin Moore**  
MID-ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
Office: 9701 Apollo Drive - Suite 245, Largo, MD 20774  
Ph: (301) 322-3866 Fax: (301) 322-3862  
Email: office@amezma.org; bishop@amezma.org  
District includes: Allegheny, East Tennessee-Virginia, Ohio, Philadelphia-Baltimore, Virginia, Barbados, Guyana-Suriname, St. Vincent  
Mrs. Devieta Moore, Missionary Supervisor



**6. Bishop Seth O. Lartey**  
CENTRAL SOUTHERN AFRICA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
2361 Olivet Church Rd, Winston-Salem, NC 27106  
Ph: (336) 529-8496  
District includes: East Angola, West Angola, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia  
Mrs. Jacqueline Inez Williams-Lartey, Missionary Supervisor



**7. Bishop Michael Angelo Frencher, Sr.**  
MIDWEST EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
2935 Shady View Drive, High Point, NC 27265  
Cell: (336)-312-8245 Fax: (336)-886-4300  
Email: bishopmafrencher@gmail.com  
District includes: Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Tennessee, Trinidad-Tobago  
Mrs. Gelenia Aaron Frencher, Missionary Supervisor



**8. Bishop George Crenshaw**  
ALABAMA-FLORIDA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
3605 Sandy Plains Road, Suite 240-238, Marietta GA 30066  
Ph: 770-633-4801 Office: 334-269-6365; Email: bishopgdcrenshaw@aol.com  
District includes: Alabama, North Alabama, South Alabama, Central Alabama, West Alabama; Cahaba, Florida, S. Florida, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, North Kivu, South Kivu  
Mrs. Laurena Crenshaw, Missionary Supervisor



**9. Bishop Hilliard Dogbe**  
WESTERN WEST AFRICA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
West Africa Address: A.M.E. Zion Church Episcopal Residence/Office; P.O. Box GP 22220, Accra, Ghana / Aggrey Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, P.O. Box MP 522, Mamprobi-Accra, Ghana, West Africa  
Office: 233-30-703-0241 Cell: 233-24-782-2440  
Email: hdogbe@hotmail.com bishopwwa@gmail.com  
District includes: North Ghana, West Ghana, Mid-Ghana, Liberia, East Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire and Togo  
Mrs. Cynthia Dogbe, Missionary Supervisor



**10. Bishop U. U. Effiong**  
EASTERN W. AFRICA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
Office: Anderson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Diamond Hill, Calabar Annex/Postal: 57 School Road, Satellite Town, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria  
Ph: +234 803 6765 479 Email: effiong\_uudak@yahoo.com District includes: Nigeria, Central Nigeria, Rivers Nigeria, Lagos-West Nigeria, Mainland Nigeria, Northern Nigeria, Cross River Nigeria, South-Eastern Nigeria, Southern and Akwa Nigeria, Port Harcourt. Mrs. Promise Effiong, Missionary Supervisor



**11. Bishop Brian R. Thompson, Sr.**  
WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
Office: 5760 Yadkin Rd, Fayetteville, NC 28303  
Ph: (916) 270-6700 Email: bishopthompson106@gmail.com  
District includes: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Oregon-Washington, and Southwest Rocky Mountains  
Rev. Felicia Thompson, Missionary Supervisor



**12. Bishop Eric L. Leake**  
SOUTHWESTERN DELTA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
Episcopal Residence: 123 Sagefield Square, Canton, MS 39046, Illinois  
Residence: 1529 Tina Lane, Flossmoor, IL 60422  
Ph: (708) 724-3017 Email: bishopericleake@gmail.com  
District Includes: Arkansas, India, Oklahoma, Louisiana, South Mississippi, Texas, and West Tennessee-Mississippi, India  
Mrs. Jean McMurray-Leake, Missionary Supervisor



**Bishop Joseph Johnson (Retired)**  
45 Awesome Ridge, Garner, NC 27529  
Ph: (704) 877-9646  
Email: djjj85@windstream.net



**Bishop Nathaniel Jarrett (Retired)**  
18031 South Pheasant Lake Drive, Tinley Park, IL 60477  
Ph: (708) 802-9873  
Email: rtrvej@aol.com



**Bishop Warren M. Brown (Retired)**  
4010 Castile Square, Austell, GA 30106  
Ph: (678) 574-2725  
Email: brownnamez@aol.com



**Bishop Marshall H. Strickland (Retired)**  
2000 Cedar Circle Drive, Baltimore, MD 21228  
Ph: (410) 744-7330  
Fax: (410) 788-5510



**Bishop George W. Walker Sr. (Retired)**  
3654 Poplar Road, Flossmoor, IL 60422  
Ph: (708) 799-5599 Fax: (708) 799-5584  
Email: gwalker047@aol.com



**Bishop George E. Battle Jr. (Retired)**  
18403 Dembridge Drive, Davidson, NC 28036  
Ph: (704)-895-2236 (H) (704)-332-7600  
Email: bishop84senior@yahoo.com



**Bishop S. Chuka Ekemam Sr. (Retired)**  
P.O. Box 1149, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria  
Tel: +234-803-213-3767 or +234-803-301-8280  
Email: bishopamezng@yahoo.com  
schukaekemamsr@gmail.com



**GENERAL OFFICERS**

**Rev. Dr. J. Elvin Sadler, General Secretary-Auditor**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770  
Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax:(704) 688-2549. Email: jesadler@amezion.org

**Rev. Al Hamilton, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Finance**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770  
Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax:(704) 919-5580  
Email: alchamilton@amezion.org

**Rev. Julius Walls, Chief Operating Officer / Business Manager**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770.  
Ph: (704) 599-4630 Fax:(704) 688-2541, Email: jwalls@amezion.org

**Mr. Darin Kent, Chief Communications Officer**  
**Editor, The Star of Zion**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770  
Ph: (704) 599-4630, ext. 2577; Email: cco@amezion.org

**Rev. Dr. D.B. Cannon,**  
**Dept. of Global Missions Office & Missionary Seer Editor**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770  
Ph: (704) 599-4630. Email: dbcannon@amezion.org  
For articles/info:missionaryseerm@gmail.com

**Rev. Patrick Barrett, Secretary-Treasurer,**  
**Christian Education Department**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-677  
Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax:(704) 688-2550; Email: pbarrett@amezion.org

**Dr. Eleazar Merriweather, Director**  
**Dept. of Church Growth & Development**  
P.O. Box 217258, Charlotte, NC 28221  
Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax:(704) 688-2547  
Email: emerrw721@amezion.org

**Rev. George E. McKain, Director of Public Affairs & Social Concerns**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770  
Ph: (704)599-4630, ext. 316 Email: GEMcKain2@amezion.org

**Dr. David A. Aiken, Sr. Executive Director, Zion's Benefit Services**  
P.O. Box 217114, Charlotte, NC 28221  
Ph: (704) 714-1505; Mobile: 917-837-5173  
Email: DAikenSr@amezion.org

**FORMER GENERAL OFFICERS**

Dr. Raymon Hunt  
Dr. W. Robert Johnson, III  
Dr. Kermit DeGraffenreid  
Dr. Mary Love  
Dr. Shirley Welch  
Dr. Otis McMillian  
Dr. Addie Lisby  
Rev. Dr. Gregory R. Smith  
Dr. Brenda L. G. Smith  
Mr. Herbert Watkins  
Dr. William Mckenith

**JUDICIAL COUNCIL**

**The Hon. Adele M. Riley, President**  
625 Ellsworth Drive Trotwood, Ohio 45426  
Email: mariley310@yahoo.com

**Rev. Dr. Reid R. White, Jr., Vice-President**  
6608 Cartwright Drive, Columbia, SC 29223

**Rev. Dr. Lisa T. McDow, Esq., Clerk**  
Post Office Box 2541, Wilmington, NC 28402-2541

**Rev. Dr. Derrick R. Anderson, Chaplain**  
7013 Toby Court, Charlotte, NC 28213

**Rev. Dr. Richard Austin, J.D.**  
1415 Earlham Drive, Dayton, OH 45406

**Dr. Marsha C. Grayson, Esq.**  
88 Roberts Street, Philadelphia, PA 15219

**Dr. William Stokes**  
5821 West Tree Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507

**Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Tolbert, Sr., J.D.**  
104 Black Avenue, Bessemer, Alabama 35020

**Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey**  
502 Ferndale Drive, Salisbury, NC 28147

**CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL**

**Mr. Joseph King Davis, President**  
1018 Southpoint Crossing Durham, NC  
Ph: (919)236-3740, Email: jkdjr1911@frontier.com

**Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis, 1st Vice President**  
419 Eberle Way, Matthews, NC 28105  
Ph: (704) 321-7022; Cell: (704) 562-0402  
Email: CLC.FVP@gmail.com

**Mrs. Connie Bell Wright, 2nd Vice President**  
822 Polk Street, Charlotte, NC 28206  
Cell: (704) 724-2759,  
Email: CLC2VP.Conniewright@gmail.com

**Mrs. Mireille Landrum, Recording Secretary**  
506 Lincoln Crest Cir., Austell, GA 30106  
Ph: (678) 809-5253; Cell: (678) 420-8919,  
Email: clcsecretary11@gmail.com

**Mr. Ned D. Highsmith, Financial Secretary**  
125 Kenneth Carter Rd, Clinton, NC 28328  
Ph: (910) 592-4294; Cell: (910) 590-9284  
Email: clcfinancialsecretary@aol.com

**Mrs. Cynthia White, Treasurer**  
1257 W. 27th, Norfolk, VA 23508  
Ph: (757)235-2475; Email: clctreasurer11@aol.com

**Mr. Jerry McCombs, Chaplain**  
P. O Box 1444Newton, NC 28658  
(PH); 828-310-6918; Email: clcchaplain21@charter.net

**Mrs. Lula K. Howard, President Emeritus**  
4009 Landside Dr., Louisville, KY 40220  
Cell: (502) 494-9527  
Email: Lmkhoward330@gmail.com

**WOMEN'S HOME & OVERSEAS MISSIONARY SOCIETY**

**Mrs. Sandra B. Crowder, International President**  
100 East Ocean View, Suite 1110, Norfolk, VA 23503  
Email: sandracrowder@yahoo.com

**Mrs. Angela Davis-Baxter, First Vice President**  
P.O. Box 11302, Rock Hill, SC 29731; Ph: 803-981-2169  
Email: adavisbaxter@yahoo.com

**Ms. Renee Felton-Pullen, Second Vice President**  
P.O. Box 178, Burtonsville, MD 20866; Home: 301-890-0270  
Email: rfp2vp@yahoo.com

**Mrs. Rosetta J. Dunham, Executive Director**  
P.O. Box 26846, Charlotte, NC 28221-6846  
Email: rodunham@amezion.org

**Mrs. Chantay F. Boulter, Recording Secretary**  
114 Pelham Lane, Fort Mill, SC 29715  
Home: 803-548-1774, Cell 803-242-5044;  
Email: cboulter@fortmillsc.gov

**Ms. Verdelle Cunningham, Treasurer**  
1880 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11225-5056  
Email: oliver1447@att.net Ph: 917-742-5565

**Dr. Joy Kennedy, General Coordinator of YAMS**  
243-4 Country Club Drive NE, Concord, NC 28025; Ph: 704-232-7963  
Email: joyforyams@gmail.com

**Ms. Melva Polk Wright, Secretary Youth Missionaries**  
438 Parkview Court, Unit C, Salisbury, MD 21804  
Email: principalmelva1960@gmail.com; Ph: 443-880-5728

**Mrs. Cynthia L. Revels-Young, Superintendent, Buds of Promise**  
31 Doty Street, Hammond, IN 46320; Home: 219-933-9432  
Cell: 773-230-1946 Email: whombuds@yahoo.com

**Mrs. Jo-Ann Monroe, Secretary, Bureau of Supplies**  
40 East Sidney Ave., #12B, Mt. Vernon, NY 10550  
Email: jom4supply@gmail.com; Ph: 914-224-7621

**Mrs. Vanessa Clayton, Chairman, Life Members Council**  
10 Wendy Road, Trumbull CT 06611, Ph: 860-930-8843  
Email: claytonvanessa1@gmail.com

**Mrs. Jacqueline L. Anthony, Director of Communications**  
1563 Kingston Drive, Kannapolis, NC 28083  
Ph: 704-352-7248 eFax: 801-880-1749  
Email: ja.comm.whoms@gmail.com

**INTERNATIONAL MINISTERS & LAY ASSOCIATION**

**President, Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon**  
4556 Behlmann Farms Blvd., Florissant, MO 63034  
Ph: (314) 533-0316; Email: anwitherspoon1@gmail.com

**First Vice President, Mrs. Lula K. Howard**  
4009 Landside Dr., Louisville, KY 40220-3080  
Mobile (502) 494-9527;  
Email: lmkhoward330@gmail.com

**Second Vice President, Rev. Dr. Myrtle Bowen**  
12006 Othman Court, Ft. Washington, MD 20744  
Ph: (301)237-7755; Email: PEBowen50@gmail.com

**Executive Director, Rev. Dorothy Patterson**  
48 West 17th Street, Bayonne, NJ 07002  
Email: Kleinz@aol.com

**Secretary, Ms. Marie Denise Niles**  
718 Decatur Street, Brooklyn, NY 11233; Ph: (917) 373-5237;  
Email: mdn929@gmail.com

**Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Carlous E. Tyrance**  
11508 Turnstone Ct., Charlotte, NC 28226  
Ph: (704) 541-5237; Email: ctyrnc@bellsouth.net

**Treasurer, Rev. David T. Miller**  
P.O. Box 6753, Harrisburg, PA 17112  
Ph: (717)712-4709; Email: revdmillersigma@icloud.com

**Financial Secretary, Rev. Dr. Maurice Harden**  
6101 Clarks Fork Drive, Raleigh, NC 27616  
Ph: (704) 202-8437; Email: pastormharden@gmail.com

**Chaplain, Rev. J. Martin Boulter, Sr.**  
114 Pelham Lane, Fort Mill, SC 29715  
Ph: (803) 448-7100; Email: jmboulter@comporium.net

**DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**Eric Alfonzo Smith II, President**  
**Assembly of Christian Educators (ACE)**  
2400 Nicol Circle, Mitchellville, MD 20721  
Email: ericforace@gmail.com; Ph: (240) 401-5459

**Rev. Samuel Brown, Chairperson**  
**Young Adults in Christian Ministries (YACM)**  
2744 Selma Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37853;  
Email: yacmchair@gmail.com; Ph: (865) 456-3357

**Justala Faith Simpson, President**  
Varick International Christian Youth Council (VICYC)  
7009 Cross Bend Court, Montgomery, AL 36117  
Ph: (334) 430-6113;  
Email: justala.simpson@gmail.com; vicycpresident18@gmail.com

**COLLEGES**

**Livingstone College, Dr. Jimmie Jenkins, President**  
701 W. Monroe Street, Salisbury, NC 28144  
Ph: (704) 216-6151; Fax:(704) 216-6217  
Internet: www.livingstone.edu

**Hood Theological Seminary, Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President**  
1810 Lutheran Synod Drive, Salisbury, NC 28144  
Ph: (704) 636-7611; Fax:(704) 636-7685

**Clinton College, Dr. Lester A. McCorn, President**  
1029 Crawford Road, Rock Hill, SC 29730.  
Ph: (803) 327-7402; Fax:(803) 327-3261.

**Lomax-Hannon Junior College, Rev. Wallace L. Noble, President**  
725 Conecuh Street, Greenville, AL 36037. Ph: (334) 382-2115

**A.M.E. Zion University, Rev. Mulbah Gray, President**  
P.O. Box 1960, Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa. Ph: 011-231-261-071.

**Hood-Speaks Theological Seminary, Dr. Donald J. Ekpo, President**  
Ndon Ebom, Uruan.LGA, P.O. Box 2503, UYO, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**INTERNATIONAL PRESIDING ELDERS' COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Rev. Dr. Anthony K.R. Gibson, International President**  
7399 N. Shadeland Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46250  
Ph: (317) 362-5387  
Email: 7thInternationalPresident@gmail.com

**Rev. Dr. Florence Brown, First Vice President**  
Post Office Box 1646, Lumberton, NC 28358.  
Ph: (910) 612-7948; Email: Fsbrownyes@gmail.com

**Rev. Fondella A. Leigh, Second Vice President**  
239 Woodville Rd, Hertford, NC 27944.Ph: (252) 312-8733,  
Email: edentondistrictamez@gmail.com

**Rev. Dr. Willa Estell, Executive Secretary**  
414 Smokey Mountain Drive, Maryville, TN 37801.  
Ph: (865) 335-7527,  
Email: we41602@aol.com

**Rev. Lelar H. Johnson, Treasurer**  
7 Spring Hollow Drive, Crystal Springs, MS 39059.  
Ph: (601) 573-4636; Email: brooks4l@yahoo.com

**Rev. Alonzo Braggs, Recording Secretary;**  
38780 Orchid View Place, Apt. 303, Palmdale, California 93550-6526  
Ph: (661) 227-4816 or (910) 262-8382,  
Email: alonzobraggs@gmail.com

**Rev. Dr. Evalina Huggins, Chaplain;**  
3921 23rd Place, Temple Hills, MD 20748. Ph: (301) 980-8793  
Email: Evalina45@gmail.com

**Rev. Dr. Erlinda Dobson, Parliamentarian;**  
2920 NC Hwy 55 West, New Bern, NC 28562. Ph: (252) 670-1127  
Email: pedobson@newberndistrict.com

**Rev. Dr. Joel D. Miles, Senior Advisor to President;**  
8400 S. Damen Avenue, Chicago, IL 60620. Ph: (773) 405-6375,  
Email: revjdmiles@yahoo.com

**Rev. Hanna Broome, Chief Strategist;**  
P.O. Box 26181, Fayetteville, NC 28314-2967, Ph: (864) 525-4679,  
Email: hrb8792@gmail.com

**Rev. Derrill Blue, Chief Technology Officer;**  
39 Warwick Ave, Rochester, NY 14611  
Cell: 405-821-1333, Fax: 585-546-1652, Office: 585-546-5007,  
Email: derrillblue@gmail.com

**Rev. Rochelle McEntyre, Assistant Recording Secretary**  
702 Whitehead St., Key West, FL 33040. Email: rochel16@aol.com

**INTERNATIONAL MINISTERS' SPOUSES & WIDOW(ERS) FELLOWSHIP**

**Rev. Margaret R. Anderson, President**  
7013 Toby Court, Charlotte, NC 28213  
Ph: 704-598-7419 (H), 704-493-0046 (C);  
Email: laverne28144@yahoo.com

**Mrs. Ava J. Morrow, First Vice President**  
5105 Ivestone Court; Belmont, NC 28012;  
Ph: 704-825-3784 (H), 704-678-3661 (C); Email: avaj1952@gmail.com

**Mrs. Betty M. Ruth (deceased), Second Vice President,**  
2592 Westchester Way, SE Conyers, GA 30013

**Mrs. Tojuna R. McClendon, Recording Secretary**  
6020 Kempton Court, Salisbury, MD 21801;  
Ph: 443-736-4799 (H), 704-796-2979 (C);  
Email: Tojunamac41@yahoo.com

**Mrs. Bessie Baker, Treasurer**  
10653 Stone Bunker Drive, Charlotte, NC 28227  
Ph: 704-545-0135 (H), 704-562-6857 (C);  
Email: Bbake2@bellsouth.net

**Mrs. Jeryl Anderson, Financial Secretary**  
12803 Bald Eagle Dr., Charlotte, NC 28215  
Ph: 919-749-3000; Email: Jzanderson12@yahoo.com

**Mrs. Syteria Puryear, Newsletter Editor**  
8530 Walden Ridge Drive, Charlotte, NC 28216  
Ph: 704-900-8084 (H), 704-957-0385 (C);  
Email: blessuallover@aol.com

**Rev. Patricia (Patty) Smith, Spiritual Life Chair**  
P.O. Box 1424, Shelby, NC 28151; Ph: 704-281-1544;  
Email: ladypattysmith@gmail.com

**Rev. Andrea Wiley, Reporter**  
1660 Woodberry Drive, Mobile, AL 36695; Ph: 419-350-6019  
Email: Wiley8726@sbcglobal.net

**Mrs. Belinda Gibson, Parliamentarian**  
7399 N. Shadeland Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46250

**CHIEFS OF PROTOCOL**

**Rev. Malcolm Byrd, Chief of Protocol**  
60 Peninsula Blvd., Hempstead, NY 11550  
Ph: (516) 483-2724; Email: Alphadubois@hotmail.com

**Dr. Kathy Thomas McFadden, Assistant Chief of Protocol**  
7025 Brassie Bend, Montgomery, AL 36116;  
Ph: (334) 467-6777; Email: katmcfadden@yahoo.com

# Singing in the Choir

By Rev. Dierdre R. Parker - Rowson, *Entertainment & The Arts Editor*

I miss singing in the choir. There is something about being able to blend my voice with other voices in celebration of being yet alive in spite of the plans of the enemy and *because* of the grace of God. It is when I am in the choir that I can release from down deep in my soul, the love songs to the One who keeps on keeping me through the violence of the world.

When I am singing in the choir, the vibration of the Spirit in us and the Spirit in the air around us creates a *singularity*. Now, I had to look up what a singularity is because I wasn't sure if I had the correct cataclysmic event. According to Miriam-Webster a singularity is a point of infinite mass density as which space and time are infinitely distorted by gravitational forces. This is what occurs in the context of choir rehearsal. There is an energy, a density in the air, a vibration that engulfs the space where all the notes are pristine and egos are extinguished. The Presence is evident. It is warm and comforting but as sharp as any two-edged sword, able to separate bone from marrow. This moment is what I call the "*shah dah*". The "*shah dah*" is as vague as it is specific. It is as weakening as it is energizing and there is no other experience like it. It contains healing and forgiveness and deliverance, peace, joy and celebration. Yes, even salvation. In that moment you find everything that you needed.

Singing, in my opinion, is worship in its purest form. When you sing you are using your voice, the instrument of communication, to share the deep and abiding love that you have for the God who has kept you through it all.

I love being in the choir, being enveloped in that energy where the *shah dah* resides. I don't have to explain anything. I don't have to tell anybody about the hills that I've climbed, or the valleys I've struggled my way through. I don't have to justify why it *does* "take all that". All I have to do is worship.

Singing in the choir is in my DNA. My grandmother began "playing the piano" for the senior choir, a job that she took over from *her* mother at the age of twelve. She held that position well into her sixties, longer than anybody in the history of that church.

As the piano player (they didn't call them choir directors then), it was my grandmother's job to choose the songs, hold rehearsals, and wrangle the choir. Whenever there was a need for children to sing, you best believe that if nobody else showed up her seven grandchildren were there. That is not the very beginning of my love for choir singing, though. My own mother was a music major.

Before I went to kindergarten, I knew how to sing a three-fold amen in three-part harmony. I learned on days when there were terrible thunderstorms and my siblings and I were afraid because the lights would always go out. Mama lined us up at the foot of her and daddy's bed and taught us how to sing our own parts. As the years went on singing became a very important part of our interaction as a family. Mama went to McFadden Music and bought a pitch pipe and we started singing in church. We were our own choir. It was in those times when we sat around the table and mama taught us our parts that I felt the realness of God. Some of those times I was so loud that I was singing from the Livingroom while everybody else was in the kitchen. It was from those songs that I learned that He would *keep me in the time of storm* so I could *surrender all* and *bless the Lord* with all that is within me.

As much as I love singing in the choir, the choir hasn't always loved my singing. I am blessed with this ear, that was fine-tuned



by my grandmother. I can hear my note 'soon as you play the soprano note. On top of that, I am loud, outspoken and if I think you are giving me the wrong note, I have a hard time letting it go. I don't think I'm *always* right, but I don't think I'm wrong *that much*.

Did I mention that I'm loud *and* a woman who sings tenor?

Yes, tenor. I always wanted one of those high-pitched voices that could scream the paint off of a brand-new Chevrolet, but, alas, that was not my portion. I used to run around and play with the other little girls and when they screamed, the sound that came out of my mouth was much more akin to a foghorn. I hated it. Over the years I learned to embrace the depth of my voice. It took me a while.

My voice has been shunned by many a tenor section because I don't *look* like a tenor. I was then warmly welcomed by the alto section. Until after about two or three Sundays where I was the only one who was singing the correct tenor note in the early service and the choir director moved me over to the tenor section and put me in the mic. Being in the mic in your section doesn't mean that you will be the one who is singing solos. On the contrary. It means you are providing the volume that attracts the uncertain notes like a magnet, to round out the chord.

Most choirs that I have been in are soprano, alto, tenor (SAT). Because tenor is the lowest note in an SAT choir, people don't like the optics of seeing women in tenor sections. Because women outnumber men in most choirs, people feel that a woman in the tenor section is encroaching on men's territory. I did not choose the tone of my voice.

I don't have a voice that can sing beautiful trills and crescendo and decrescendo up and down the scale in breathtaking and awe-inspiring runs. I'm not good at ad lib or solos. What I *can* do is hold a note and sing a counter-part.

Over the years it has been singing, whether in the choir, or the shower, or in the grocery store, that has kept me from forgetting the things that are important when the violence of the world becomes a burden too heavy to bear alone. It is the songs that I learned under my grandmother's tutelage that have kept me in the darkest of times. It ain't nothing wrong with the new stuff! As a matter of fact, I love me some contemporary and neo soul gospel; but when I'm down ain't nothing like some Blessed Assurance to pick me up. When I am grateful for the bounteous blessings nothing hits like "O for A Thousand Tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise". And in those times, I hear the voice of my grandma saying, "Listen to the lyrics of the songs you sing..." Then I remember that, "On Christ the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. All other ground is sinking sand."

I miss singing in the choir.

# The Soundtrack of our Lives: The JMac Affect

By Rev. Dierdre R. Parker - Rowson, *Entertainment & The Arts Editor*

If you could only listen to one album for the rest of your life, what would it be?

For me it would be *Make Room* by Jonathan McReynolds. I was first introduced to the music of Jonathan McReynolds on a trip down the Facebook rabbit hole. I saw this skinny kid singing with a voice higher than mine. He has a nice voice but it was the lyrics for me.

*“Take from me all the pressure, pressure, pressure”*

*To be someone else that the church has made. Help me be me and only see you. Let me decrease and glorify you.*

*I just wanna live, I just wanna live for you, and nobody else but you...”*

The lyrics of this song captured how I was feeling at the time. I was fractured and frustrated by where my life and ministry were *not* going. I had gotten caught up in people pleasing and it resulted in disappointment. I was beginning to wonder if I was doing the right thing. Should I just go somewhere and sit down? This song spoke to my spirit, the words that my flesh could not articulate.

I am a firm believer in the fact that our words are containers of power. I mean God said let there be and it has *been* ever since. The words of this one song spoke to me in a way that nothing else did at that time. I’m sure it spoke to countless others as well.

That year I went to Women’s Empowerment Conference in Raleigh at the PNC arena for the first time. Who should show up on stage but that guy who sings that song? I went home looked him up. I have been a fan ever since.

During the time that I discovered the music of Jonathan McReynolds, Periscope was a thing. He would go live on Periscope and just sing. Sometimes with just his guitar and backup singers. You could tune in and request songs and they would just sing them. It was like my own private concert. During those intimate, impromptu concerts, I felt like Jon and Grandy (“the voice”) and all the people in the band belonged to me and we were just a group of friends vibing to the music. Having that kind of access early, before he became as big as he is now, was amazing.

If you don’t know by now, words are my thing. When I was a little kid I used to read the dictionary. Words have flavor and substance and impact. The lyrics of these songs were not only poetic and thought provoking, they were profound and hit my spirit different. I watched every video of a live performance by Jonathan McReynolds that I could find on YouTube. One such video was at Marvin Winan’s church. Even Marvin was impressed at the lyrical content of Jonathan’s songs and declared, “This guy knows Jesus.”

How Jonathan McReynolds came to fame is an interesting story. He is a church boy from Chicago. He grew up in the COGIC arena, playing music and singing in church. A life that many of us can relate to. When he was in college, he wrote some songs and recorded them to give out as Christmas presents. Somebody sent it to a radio station and the rest is history. The result of that was his first album *Life Music*. *Life Music* contained songs like *Glory up*, and *No Gray*, *Thank you for (always) Loving me*.

Once the second album *Life Music Stage Two* came out, I considered myself *the* number one fan. My radio show started that year (*Morning Coffee w/Diva*) on WMNX in Wilmington, and I featured the music of Jonathan McReynolds. The second



album contained songs like *Maintain*, *Gotta Have you*, *Limp* and the studio version of *Pressure*.

While I have not really found any music by Jonathan McReynolds that I don’t like, *Make Room*, was the album that has impacted me the most. Every song on it is fire. Every single one. It was recorded live in what he called the *Life Room*.

*“We’ve been turning living rooms into life rooms. We been giving God room with these life tunes...”*

It was an intimate setting with other singers present. When Jonathan says “turn up the life room” that means that one of the mics strategically placed, would be turned on and one of the amazing singers in the audience would join

in with what was happening onstage. The result was an amazing worship experience. This album features Doe Jones (of *Forever Jones*), Anthony Brown (*Group Therapy*), and Darrell Walls (*The Walls Group*). The *Hamiltones*, the backup singers of Anthony Hamilton, even show up on one song.

For Christmas that same year I got a ticket to see Jonathan McReynolds in Charlotte! On my birthday weekend! My kids are good at giving good gifts that do double duty. The concert was at *Neighborhood Theater* in Charlotte. It was a theater right in middle of a cute little neighborhood and that is exactly where I parked. I walked around the corner and there was the line. I knew I was in the right place. I was so excited! The songs of this album were more personal to me. I even used *Dee One’s* rap in a sermon one time (I gave him the proper credit).

Even before the concert started the audience began to sing along with the piped in music. Then *Melodies from heaven* came on. I don’t even have to tell y’all what happened. The audience turned into a choir, broke off into sections and apparently sounded so good some of background singers came out to see what was going on.

I don’t know if I mentioned that I had a VIP ticket. It got me early entry for a meet and greet, which was more of a photo op, but I did get to take a picture with Jonathan McReynolds and ask him how I could pray for him. He paused. “Wow, I’ve never had anybody ask me that before.” He asked me to pray for his endurance to make it thought the tour. I did.

The concert was *exactly* what I hoped it would be. At first, I was taking pictures and videos because it was a great concert, but when he got to my favorite song...

*I find space for what I treasure, I make time for what I want I choose my priorities and Jesus you are my number one.*

*I will...make room for You. I will...prepare for two so You won’t feel that You can’t live here.*

*Please live in me*

The energy in the air changed. With our hands lifted and tears streaming, we became involved in corporate worship. Individuals with different experiences and realities, from different places, on one accord in worship. Healing and deliverance were in that room. We were family in that worship moment. Every time I hear the song *Make Room*, I am transported to that feeling. Not because of the music, but because of the lyrics. If I only had one album to listen to for the rest of my life, it would definitely be *Make Room*.

Check out the music of Jonathan McReynolds for yourself at [www.jonathanmcreynolds.com](http://www.jonathanmcreynolds.com). You can thank me later.

# Let The Sisters Come

By Rev. Dierdre R. Parker - Rowson, *Entertainment & The Arts Editor*

My mother loved butterflies. She collected them *in* things and *on* things and would almost run off the road not to hit one while driving. Whenever I see a butterfly, I think of mama. A black butterfly with blue markings on its wings landed on the carport on that Friday. It fluttered through the sunflowers and landed on the chair right beside me. Because I saw that butterfly the day that my sisters were coming to visit, and because it kept flying around me almost landing on me, I saw it as her blessing our weekend. Her spirit would meet us here.

The color of the butterfly is very significant. Our mother passed away almost thirty years ago, but in 2005 after our brother recovered from a sudden but lengthy illness, we celebrated Christmas in July. I have 6 siblings. We have children and lots of family and friends so Christmas in July was a big enough deal for us to put up a tent. As soon as the tent was up, a black butterfly with blue markings on its wings, flew into the tent. It stayed in the tent the entire time we celebrated. We believed that the butterfly was proof of our mother's presence with us.

Back to the sisters. Please understand that my sisters, are the sibling version of "Laverne and Shirley". Since they don't want me using their names that is how I will refer to them. They grew up in a place where the cultures of the black bourgeoisie and Gullah/ Geechee intersect. I write this with confidence and reputable sources to corroborate that claim. My daughter is a Public Historian and a subject matter expert (You'll probably hear more on that from me later).

The sisters began the two-hour trip after Laverne got off from work as an instructor at a Cosmetology school. On the way they ran into construction so it took them a little longer than the normal two hours to get here. Hubby and I were sitting on the carport, so we saw them as they passed by the house.

Shirley told me later, that Laverne said, "Ooh look at those lights." To which Shirley replied, "That's Didi's house, Laverne. 'She don't never listen to me'".

We watched as Laverne did a u-turn in the middle of the state highway and pulled into the driveway. I could see them going back and forth as I walked down the driveway toward the car. I smiled. *Laverne and Shirley*. I opened the door and their argument spilled out into the quiet night. Not an argument really. This is the way Laverne and Shirley communicate with each other. Shirley with her stoic expression, voice flat and straight. Laverne, with her ever increasing volume and pitch. It was music to my ears.

"Now y'all gone have to keep that noise down! Don't come out here disturbing my quiet neighborhood." I said.

We laughed and talked over each other as we unloaded the car and got them set up in the spare room. We stayed up laughing and talking 'til well after midnight.

The purpose of the visit was for Laverne to go to the flea market with us and sell her jewelry while we sold t-shirts. That's what we did. We got up bright and early Saturday morning and we all (with only one bathroom, mind you) got ready and made it out of the house by a little after eight in the morning. It was a fun day. We enjoyed the sights of the flea market and we laughed and joked amongst ourselves until we packed it up and headed back home. When we got home, we laughed and talked some more, and teased and reminisced. We sipped tea and we sang songs all to the back drop of barbecue smoke from the grilled chicken and I picked my sisters some silver queen corn. Laverne was tired and went to bed a little earlier than Shirley and I did. We did more talking. More healing conversations. I was reminded of how beautiful the differences between us are. Me a ball of energy, moving in three directions at once. Laverne, prim and proper, and keeping me and Shirley in line, which, believe me, is no easy feat. Having the opportunity to talk about the things that we understood differently, and being able to see the other person's side without judgement was the healing balm that we needed. Even as we had this time our hearts and minds were on our other



sisters, one gone, the other sick. Twins. Our mother, our grandmother, our aunts, even our nieces our daughters. We come from a family of strong women. Entrepreneurs and teachers and musicians and lovers of books and makers of history. Who they were is inextricable from who we are. Being with them, being able to sit in the garden and let go of the cares of the world and re-member the joys of the past was everything I didn't know I needed.

The entire weekend, my sisters reminded me of who I am. They reminded me that I am energetic. They reminded me that I talk too much. They reminded me that I still have a lot of baggage to let go of. None of this was done by using belittling words. None of it was done as a means of putting me in my place. My sisters represent my foundational beliefs and ethics. I think that this is what happens when people *know you*, know you. People who knew you before you knew how to hide behind the personality you have chosen to present to the world to support the narrative of yourself that you have become comfortable with. When people *know you*, know you, there is no need to explain your actions. You can just be. What is understood does not need to be explained.

Being with my sisters also reminded me that the truth is often different to people who grew up in the same household. Some truths that are not discussed in polite company, but whispered behind hands that hide mouths as they speak their truth. Whispered inquiries that are often denied.

As we moved to the bedroom to look at the jewelry the public historian had joined us and began asking questions that would give her the background information she needs for her documentary thesis. Before we knew what hit us, we were in the middle of unraveling old pain and aligning our different perspectives. We were more than just physically present, we were together. Sisters, in a place that was safe to be vulnerable. In a place where love was foundational. A place where you were accepted no matter what you said or did. In that space I was able to *hear* some things that assured me that I'm crazy. I was able to *release* some things that held me in shackles to a past that is just that. Passed. I survived. Survival was the first step. From there I learned to stand, then I started to strive. It was in the striving that I learned to thrive. I am thriving. Now that the sisters have come, and I have released the shame and the blame. I have found peace in areas where there was none. I feel like the color is returning to my wings. They are becoming strong enough for me to fly. That weekend with my sisters was everything that I didn't know that I needed.

Since their visit, our eldest sister Marlene, crossed over. She is now reunited with her twin. I believe she is with mama and grandma and all of the others who helped make us who we are. Laverne and Shirley and I know, that now, more than ever, we must be intentional about our time spent together.

If you have sisters or friends who are like sisters, let the sister come to each other's rescue. Let the sisters come to comfort each other. Let the sisters come to pray for each other. Let the sisters come to help heal each other. I'm so glad I saw that butterfly. I'm so glad that I let the sisters come.

# Preserving Black Churches Grant Program

By Dr. Dana Stilley, *Financial Freedom Editor*

The Preserving Black Churches Grant was the topic of discussion at a very informative session presented by the Department of Church Growth and Development and other AME Zion departments on August 22nd. The Star of Zion served as host for the event. More than 500 virtual guests attended.

A project of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, the Preserving Black Churches Grant was designed to assist with the preservation of historic Black houses of worship. With grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$200,000, the funds will strengthen capacity to better manage, steward, and use these historic structures for the benefit of congregations, preservation organizations, and community groups.

Highly competitive, this grant offers funding in five categories: 1) Capital Projects, 2) Endowment and Financial Sustainability, 3) Organizational Capacity Building and Opera-

tions, 4) Programming and Interpretation, and 5) Project Planning were the focus of the presentation. Guest presenters included Rev. Dr. Eleazar Merriweather, Rev. Julius Walls, Mrs. Stephanie McCarthy, Rev. Al C. Hamilton, Rev. Hannah R. Broome, Rev. Rebecca Warren, Mrs. Tamesha Hughes Frazier, and Ms. Tiffany Tolbert. The evening concluded with a robust question and answer period facilitated by Star of Zion Financial Freedom Editor, Dr. Dana Stilley.

*The presentation is available*

THE STAR OF ZION

On Demand     [StarOfZion.org](http://StarOfZion.org)

scan to  
**Watch Us Live**  
And On Demand



THE DEPARTMENT CHURCH GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT  
IN COLLABORATION WITH AMEZ DEPARTMENTS PRESENT

A VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION ON  
**"Preserving Black Churches"**  
**Grant Program**

Grant writers will be available to provide tips and answer some questions.  
*Watch Live*     [StarOfZion.org](http://StarOfZion.org) **Monday, Aug. 22 @ 8:00 P.M. EST.**

Hosted by The Communications Department of the AMEZ church  If you have any questions, please contact  
**Rev. Dr. Eleazar Merriweather**  
at (616) 308-7952

TRANSFORMATION AMEZC  
Feeding Families Ministry  
God Loves U!!!  
September 22 & 23, 2022

SAVE THE DATE  
2nd Annual **HEALTH NUT**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER  
**Terence M. Murphy, FACHE**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Bayhealth, Inc.  
(Kent & Sussex Counties, Delaware)

Produced by  
THE OFFICIAL PARTNER OF THE 2022-2023 2000 EDWARD  
**THE STAR OF ZION**  
[www.StarOfZion.org](http://www.StarOfZion.org)  
"Health and Wellness"

OUR SPONSORS

VIRTUAL SESSIONS









# Sankofa

## Before There Was American History There Was Black History

*Written by, Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III • Presented by, Rev. Dr. Sarah Fleming*

### The Historical Accomplishments of Kemet New Perspectives of an African Civilization

The nations of the “First World” are often held in high esteem for the rest of the world to idolize, and with good reason. Modern technology has created rockets which have taken man to the moon and has launched satellites to explore the furthest regions of the galaxy. The marvelous advances in computer sciences now make it possible to store the contents of libraries onto discs no larger than a long-playing record. But despite these technological advances, modern man cannot recreate the technology that built the Great Pyramid, mummified the Kings of Kemet, or built the Temple of Ipet Isut (Karnak)

The admiration of the accomplishments of Kemet has given rise to an entire field of study named in its honor—*Egyptology*—and the unearthing of her priceless treasures, which has brought wealth and fame to archaeologist and their financial backers. No nation in the history of civilization has had a greater influence on the arts and sciences than Kemet and it is there where one can still find the only remaining, one of the “Seven Wonders of the World.”

For thousands of years various European leaders have held Egypt in high esteem and looked to her as the progenitor of world civilization and as the seat of ancient knowledge. Administration for the accomplishments of the ancient Egyptians was so strong that it prompted the following remarks from Henry H. Gorringer, lieutenant commander of the United States Navy in 1882:

Egypt itself is a book of history, one of God’s great monumental records...It was the birthplace of literature, the cradle of science and art, the garden and garner of the world...In the branches of decorative art and the science of us at the present day...The architectural types of all other structures of antiquity sink into insignificance when compared with those of Egypt. The Egyptians were the first to observe the course of the plants, and their observations led them to regulate the year from the course of the sun. They were a wonderful race, combining within themselves all the branches which adorn, beautify, and add to the reputation of a people when directed in the right channel.

Since the development of the Black Studies movement in the 1960’s and the expansion of Negro History Week into Black History Month, February has come to be regarded as a time for

the official recognition of the accomplishments of African people. Over the years, a number of major corporations have helped to promote “Black History Month” by sponsoring scholarships and creating calendars, posters and advertisements depicting the many accomplishments of African people.

Of the many ads produced for Black History Month, one has generated particular interest within the African American community. This ad depicts four unmistakably black Egyptian figures and a caption which reads “Before There Was American history, There Was Black History.” One of the reasons for the ad’s popularity is its portrayal of Egyptians as “Black” Africans and its association with a “legitimate” corporate entity, the now defunct Eastern Airline.

This specific advertisement has also been reproduced on T-shirts and sold throughout the United States, and on papyrus scroll which are sold in Cairo, Egypt. The cultural exclusivity associated with the marking of these two products is most interesting. In Egypt, the aforementioned papyrus art is displayed solely to groups of African American tourists; while in America, the ad ran only during Black History Month – and only in *black* publications. It is as if the only time one can be interested in Black History is during the month of February and the only people interested in black history are black people. The history of Kemet should be important to everyone, not only because it is the history of a people who have had a profound impact on world civilization.

Every culture has had its classical period, a time of high achievement which provide the social, moral and intellectual impetus for succeeding generations. For Western culture, its classical period began in ancient Greece. For the ancient Greeks, their classical period began in Africa, in a country called Kemet. Herodotus, the reputed “father of history.” provided us with a written testimonial of Egypt’s relationship to Greece in the fifth century B.C.E.

History, it’s been said, is biography. Yet some of the world’s greatest biographies, Black biographies are still but lost history. Sundiata, Mansa Musa, Sunni Ali, Askia Muhammad. Not exactly household names, but they were honored in their time as leaders of empires. Yet it appears their honors have

Continues... next page

# Can Christians Go to Therapy?

By Angel Eason, *Lifestyle Editor*

The short answer is yes! I had the opportunity to speak with Latoya “Nicole” Edwards:

Licensed Psychotherapist, Holistic Practitioner, and Founder of Thriving Well Holistic Wellness Solution.

**Can you tell me about your background and why you chose to help teens and young adults, particularly the Black and Brown community at this thing we call “adulthood”?**



*Latoya “Nicole” Edwards*

I have been in the field of social work for 15 plus years working with children and those transitioning into adults. I wanted to work with individuals who have lost hope and wanted a way forward.

For the Black and Brown Communities, historically it has been taboo to seek out mental health services.

**What is your definition of adulthood and how has it shaped the services your team provides?**

Adulthood is more of the emotional connection. When you think of being an adult, it’s those responsibilities and tasks. Sometimes being an adult can be hard. For example, people may struggle with bills and finances, navigating relationships, and having effective communication skills. Having that safe space to talk to someone about life allows you to feel comfortable as you get older or navigate being an adult.

**What is the misconception that church folks have about counseling?**

A lot of churches in recent years have been embracing counseling services. My experience in the past has been that people think you are supposed to pray away some of these symptoms or worries. Some things I have heard individuals say are: If a person has mental health issues, it’s a demon, you’re not praying enough, and you need to get more encompassed in the word.

I tell people you can go to therapy and pray. When you are praying, ask God for guidance. God can put clinically trained counselors in your life that can assist beyond the spiritual realm. They have been trained to utilize tools to help you navigate when you are feeling uncomfortable, stuck, lost, or unseen and get you through the healing process so that you can obtain the word of God.

**What do you wish was taught in the church about counseling and mental health?**

Having an open dialogue with licensed therapists about what mental health is. I always tell people therapy is a ripple effect. You work with one person and they see the changes going on with you and then they want to know more about anxiety and depression. Having an open dialogue and telling people about the symptoms and what “normal” is. I use quotation marks with normal because everyone is uniquely them. These feelings of sadness and depression, we all experience. However, if you are feeling sad and depressed more often than others, then it is time to talk to someone outside of your pastor and/or youth advisor.

**What are some reasons why folks would seek out a licensed therapist?**

Different therapists have different specialties. Earlier, we talked about me specializing in adulthood. I often see superman and superwoman who are the strong friends of the group. Others might want career development, relationship advice, or need help navigating the next steps in life. Therapy can be long-term. I always tell my clients that I’m actively working myself out of a job. I have had people say I don’t know why I am here but wanted someone to talk to. People might seek therapy because they might feel like their life is stuck and they want to move forward.

**As we wrap up our conversation, sometimes, I hear that folks have a hard time finding a therapist that looks like them and/or with a Christian foundation in their area? What resources do you recommend for them to use to find someone like-minded and/or of the same race/ethnicity?**

I own a group practice in Virginia, we have a mixture of Christian-based men and women therapists. We see as young as 7 and go all the way up to age 85. We have an intern who sees clients based on a sliding scale if we do not take your insurance.

Other ways to reach services in your local area are to login to any of the resources below:

- Psychology Today
- Clinicians of Color
- Therapy for Black Girls
- Therapy for Black Men

**Keep in contact with Thriving Well.**

**Instagram: @thriving\_well**

**Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/thrivewellservices>  
<https://thrivewellservices.com>**

Sanfoka – continued from previous page

vanished along with their empires

But they weren’t the end of black history. Only the beginning. Because Black history is an ongoing entity; a progression of brilliant biographies still being written.

And this time, they won’t be lost. American history could itself be said to have begun with a piece of black history when the death of Crispus Attucks in the Boston Massacre made him the first of America’s 600,000 war dead.

Dr. Daniel Hale Williams made black history, if not world history when he performed the first successful open heart surgery.

Edward M. Bouchet made history when Yale made him the first black in America to be awarded a doctorate. James B. Parsons went into the history books as the first black federal judge in the continental U.S. Charlotte Ray joined black history when she became America’s first black woman lawyer. Madam C. J. Walker, when she became America’s first millionaire black woman.

Black biographies have made and will continue to make black history in more cities than even Eastern Airlines flies to, which is more cities in Latin America, Florida, and the Caribbean than any other airline. That’s a lot of cities. But that’s a lot of history too.



Christian Education Department  
AME Zion Church



# Christian Education Month

Virtual Celebration



*Guest Preacher*  
**Rev. Dr. Erlinda Dobson**  
Presiding Elder, New Bern District  
North Carolina Conference  
Member, Board of Christian Education

September 25 | 7 PM EST

Streaming Live  

Christian Education Dept. A.M.E. Zion Church

Dec 27-30th 2022

Save the date  
#truthville22

# CHICAGO



Registration and Hotel Information will be announced

September 1st

Rev. Patrick Barrett II    Bishop Dennis V. Proctor  
General Secretary                      Board Chair