

THE STAR OF ZION

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Congressman Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) first African American elected Minority Leader.

Special to the Star

Washington, D.C. - In the early morning hours of Saturday, January 7, 2023, the United States 118th Congress convened and selected leadership. This greatly anticipated historic moment is the culmination of a series of events beginning with the midterm elections in November of 2022.

After the public announcement of former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi not intending to seek leadership in the new Congress, the name of Hakeem Jeffries immediately began to be discussed in circles of influence within the Democratic Caucus; this is after it became evident Democrats would not have the majority in the approaching Congress. Despite the schismatic personalities in the federal legislature which caused the election for house speaker to last a historic 15 ballots- the most since before the Civil War. All 15 ballots support for Congressman Jeffries was unanimous amongst his Democrat colleagues. This unity lead to Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, the gentleman from New York being the first African-American elected to lead a major party in congress. In that capacity, he is the highest-ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives. He is also the former Chair of the Democratic Caucus, Whip of the Congressional Black Caucus and previously co-chaired the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee where he helped develop the For The People agenda.

House Democrats selected Jeffries to helm their party during a closed-door election in November. He ran unopposed, and Democrats have united around him following Pelosi's exit from leadership after two decades helming the party. Jeffries will likely be at the forefront of the House Democratic minority for the next two years with Republicans holding a slim majority in the chamber.

In Congress, Rep. Jeffries is a tireless advocate for social and economic justice. He has worked hard to help residents recover from the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic, reform our criminal justice system, improve the economy for everyday Americans and protect our healthcare from right-wing attacks.

Since President Biden took office in January 2021, Rep. Jeffries has been instrumental in-House Democratic efforts to put people over politics by lowering costs, creating better-paying jobs and fighting for safer communities. Over the past two years Democrats have passed the American Rescue Plan, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.

During the 117th Congress, Rep. Jeffries was one of the most effective legislators, passing multiple bills through the House of Representatives and into law with substantial bipartisan and stakeholder support. These measures touched on diverse subject matters and were drafted with the intention of making meaningful improvements to our federal laws and programs. Such bills included measures to ensure veterans and their families have access to benefits information (H.R. 2093, Public Law No. 117-62), to measure the progress of recovery and efforts to address corruption, rule of law and media freedoms in Haiti (H.R. 2471, Public Law No. 117-103), to protect attorney-client privilege

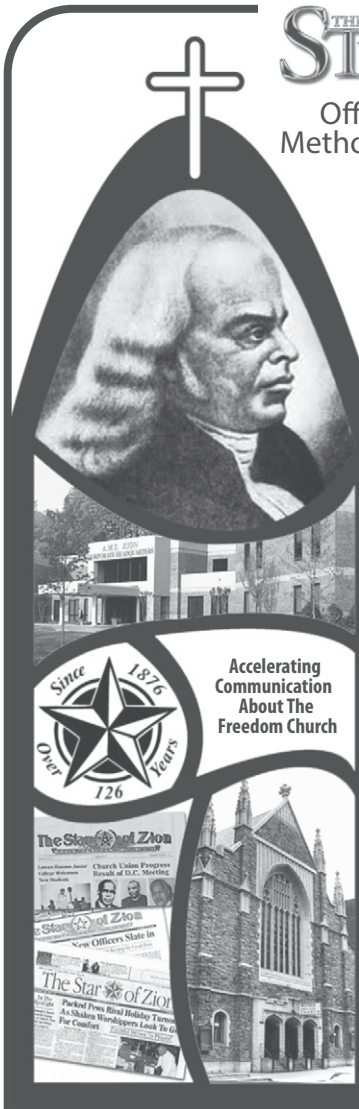
for incarcerated individuals corresponding electronically with their legal representatives (H.R. 546) and to eliminate the federal sentencing disparity between drug offenses involving crack cocaine and powder cocaine once and for all (H.R. 1693).

Last Congress, Rep. Jeffries was similarly active in the legislative process, with many of his bills passing the House of Representatives and becoming law. They included bills to create a copyright small claims board allowing the creative middle class to protect their works (H.R. 2426, Public Law No. 116-260), to expand scholarship opportunities available to Pakistani women (H.R. 4508, Public Law No. 116-338) and to provide entrepreneurship counseling and training services to formerly incarcerated individuals (H.R. 5065).

In January 2020, Rep. Jeffries was selected by Speaker Nancy Pelosi to serve as one of seven House Impeachment Managers in the Senate trial of President Donald Trump, becoming the first African American man to serve in that role. During the nearly three-week trial, Congressman Jeffries argued that President Trump should be removed from office for abusing his power by pressuring a foreign government, Ukraine, to target an American citizen as part of a corrupt scheme to interfere in the 2020 election. The House Impeachment Managers established with a mountain of evidence that crimes against the Constitution were committed. Nevertheless, the Senate failed to remove the President without hearing from a single witness during the trial.

On March 9, 2021, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1280, the "George Floyd Justice in Policing Act" for the second time through the House. During both pushes, Rep. Jeffries helped lead the charge with respect to passage of this historic police reform bill, which included legislation authored by the Congressman to criminalize the chokehold and other inherently dangerous tactics such as a knee to the neck. Rep. Jeffries remains dedicated to working with his colleagues to make transformational police reform a reality and breathe life into the principle of liberty and justice for all.

Rep. Jeffries has played a major role in shaping the Congressional response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He has fought hard to assist state and local governments whose budgets have been devastated by the virus, pushed for an extension of the emergency unemployment benefit and supported efforts to keep everyday Americans in their homes. Rep. Jeffries also worked across the aisle with Rep. Peter King (R-NY) to secure billions of dollars in funding for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in the CARES Act (H.R. 748, Public Law No. 116-136), which became law in March 2020. At home, Rep. Jeffries partnered the Governor to expand testing in hard-hit communities of color by establishing walk-in sites at houses of worship throughout New York City. He denounced discriminatory social distance policing that targeted communities of color and helped bring about a change in policy. In the community, Rep. Jeffries continues to personally distribute food, masks, gloves and hand sanitizer to residents in need.



THE STAR OF ZION

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

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

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Editor in Chief

Mr. Darin Kent

Editor@StarOfZion.org

Managing Editor

Rev. Samuel Brown

Admin@StarOfZion.org

Zion Spotlight Editor

Mrs. Debra Chappelle-Polk

ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org

World Politics Editor

Rev. Ronald Nathan

WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org

Health and Wellness Editor

Mr. Daman Deleon

Health_Wellness@StarOfZion.org

Social Justice Editor

Rev. Dr. Allison Lee

SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org

Entertainment & The Arts Editor

Rev. Deirdre P. Rowson

Entertainment_Arts@StarOfZion.org

Financial Freedom Editor

Dr. Dana Stillely

FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org

Lifestyle Editor

Ms. Angel Eason

Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org

Sports Editor

Mr. Zion Shoulders

Sports@StarOfZion.org

Subscriptions Department

704-688-2561

Subscribe@StarOfZion.org

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BE A BLESSING: Share the Rejoice!

From: Reverend Leona Nicholas Welch and Seniors Advancing God's Excellence (S.A.G.E.)

Rejoice in the Lord always; and again, I say rejoice -Philippians 4:4 -NIV

The Christmas rush is over. Though wrapping paper, tensile, and trees have all been discarded; gifts received are being enjoyed or stored for safe-keeping, and the table is now set for fewer people, the hugs still warm our hearts, and the laughter still rings in the air. I pray that the sweet refrains of "Silent Night, Holy Night" move us into this brand-new year with a positive, strong, and peaceful mind. Since we know that the spirit of Christmas is hope and peace, we ought not lack joy. Christ is born! A new year has come! Love is still alive (in us, in Jesus). With this, My Dear Friends, I say, LET US LIVE IN THE REJOICE! *And again, I say, REJOICE!*

But the message does not end here, Dear Friends. Those of us who have and who were able to enjoy a Christmas of giving, must now pause and ponder the stark reality that many do not rejoice. Many are using every resource in them to stay alive, keep warm, and find a modicum of joy in the midst of their physical, mental, and spiritual lack. So, what can we do, those of us who experience real, deep, and lasting joy, those of us who truly do rejoice? What can we do to share our rejoice with those who do not possess the knowledge, the substance, nor even the will to rejoice in the Lord?

The simple answer is to become a blessing for someone else. Joy is a practical fruit of the Spirit. Put it to work for someone who is without. Let your full cup of joy flow over into another's life. Everyone knows someone struggling to hold on and hang in there; someone who needs groceries, someone who needs a bill paid, someone who needs a strong shoulder, someone who needs a hospital visit, someone who needs an encouraging word. There is always someone around who needs your smile, and someone who just plain needs Jesus; and the list goes on.

Now, let us go back to the initial statement of this writing. Let us try to take all those Christmas hugs and laughter, couple it with lingering peace and good-will from the sweet refrains of "Silent Night, Holy, Night, wrap it in the beauty and brightness of our own joy, and then, Dear Friends of Christ, together with those who need what we have, let us truly REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS, and again, I say, REJOICE! Be a blessing. Share the Rejoice!

THE 143RD SESSION OF THE CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Submitted by Rev. Debra L. Gray

Rev. Belinda Staten-Branch

FAYETTEVILLE, NC - Simon Temple A.M.E. Zion Church was the venue for the long-awaited in-person gathering of the Central North Carolina Annual Conference. From the first chord of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" on Thursday to the last amen on Saturday, it was clear that the pandemic had not diminished the excellence of this gathering.

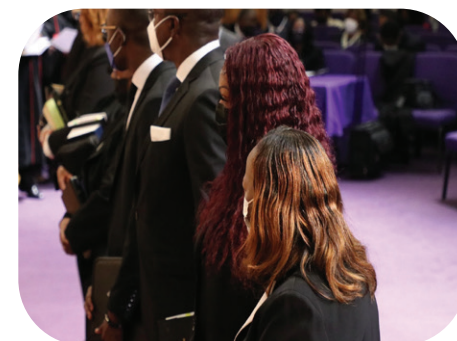
The conference began with the opening service on Thursday, November 3, 2022, at 7:00 pm with the processional to "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name". The atmosphere was set for worship, and every heart felt the gratitude in seeing one another in person after two years of meeting on Zoom. In the spirit of adulation, the ministers who lead the service did so outstandingly. The highlight of the evening was the preached word from Rev. Nathaniel Cox - "Trusting God in the Pivot". The message challenged the listener to remain strong while trusting God in the flexibility of change. Rev. Cox reminded the congregation, "We must trust the Lord even when we can't trace Him." With the spirit-filled worship and word, Central was ready to begin the business of organizing the annual conference for another year.

On Friday, the bishop of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District, the South Atlantic Episcopal District, and the senior bishop of our church, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Monroe gave the Episcopal Address. The charge he gave for this conference year was to "Position for Progress, Production, and Perfection". As always Bishop Monroe reached the core of the issues faced in our churches today. His warm, prudent guidance set the path for our success. The afternoon service featured the Visionary Moment by Rev. Edwin Ferguson. He explained some churches during the pandemic were absorbed in "when are we going back in the building?" Instead, churches need to be busy being the church. The church is more than the building; it is the people and those people being the

light of the world. The good news is God knows our mess-ups yet still gives us assignments - missions to fulfill. The remainder of the afternoon consisted of most of the reports that were to be given. The day was capped off with the evening worship service. Rev. Iris Kennedy, from the South Atlantic Episcopal District, presented an exciting word - "It's All Coming Together"

On the last day of the conference, Rev. Ferguson delivered the second installment of the Visionary Moment he began on Friday. Like Friday's teaching Rev. Ferguson gave another inspiring message. It challenged the individual to continue, to convert, and to confess knowing that Jesus empowers the believer. The final reports were made, and the pastoral appointments 2022-23 conference year were announced. Bishop Monroe gave the benediction, and the conference was concluded. Three days of spirit-filled worship and word had come to an end. It was a momentous occasion for all in attendance. The words of the Psalmist are a fitting tribute to the excellence of this gathering.

"I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord!'"
(Psalm 122:1 KJV).



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ANNUAL Conference
September 15-17, 2022

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BISHOP
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 Rev. Danny Lewis

Opening Night
 Rev. Rick L. Lee

Memorial Service
 Rev. Dorothea Jermon

Missionary Service
 Rev. Bobbie Willis

Host Pastor & First Lady
 Rev. Victor & Ashlee Patterson

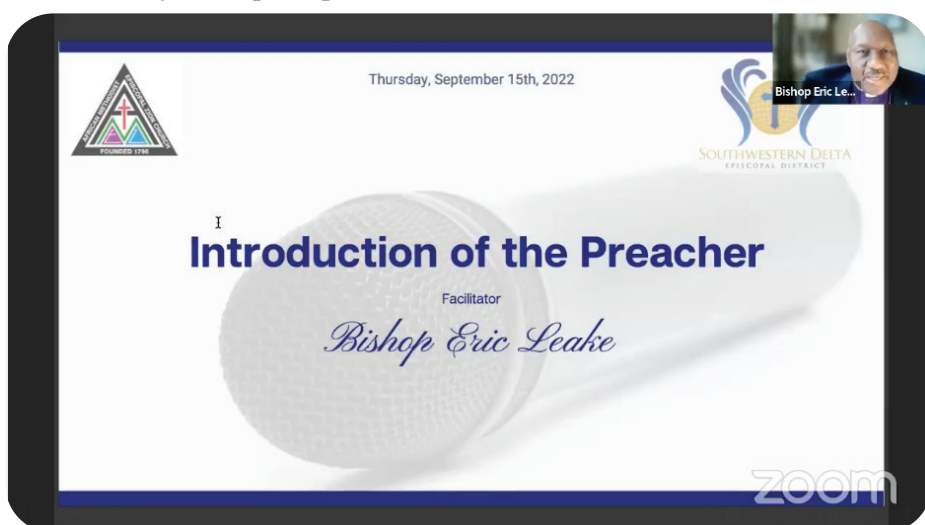
Host Presiding Elder
 Rev. Janice Nelson

School of the Prophets
 Rev. Dr. Charmaine B. Mappes

THE 140TH SESSION OF THE VIRTUAL ARKANSAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Submitted by Ms. Lillie Carter
 Reporter, The Star of Zion

The 140th Session of the Virtual Arkansas Annual Conference was held September 15-17 2022. Payne Chapel AME Zion Church, Host Pastor Rev. Victor Patterson and First Lady, Mrs. Ashlee Paterson. Bishop Eric Leake Presided, Mrs. Jean McMurray Leake, Missionary Supervisor, Presiding Elders were Rev. Janice Nelson and Rev. Gregory Gyce. The Conference opened on Thursday morning. Bishop Leake shared with the conference our Theme: The Freedom Church: A Movement Empowered by the Holy Spirit: Strengthening our Fellowship, Serving our Flock, Sharing our Faith and Securing Our Future. A very inspiring message was delivered by Rev. Danny Lewis, Pastor of New Walters AME Zion Church; Scripture-Psalms 51:10-13-Subject "A Right Spirit.". Presiding Elder Janice Nelson Presented Bishop Eric Leake, Presiding Prelate of the Southwestern Delta Episcopal District, a selection, followed by the Episcopal Address.



It is with humility and gratitude that I share with you my second episcopal address. The Lord carried us through round one and now we're into round two. I'm excited about what the Lord is already doing in Arkansas! It's a miracle and a blessing that after 140 years the grand old ship of Zion is still sailing along in the state of Arkansas! You've weathered so much; you've endured so much, and you have accomplished so much! To God be the glory! You've had great leaders to come through Arkansas, both lay and clergy. Many have slipped into eternity, but the Lord has kept us here for such a time as this. The Quadrennial Theme for the A.M.E. Zion Church is, "The Freedom Church: A Movement Empowered by the Holy Spirit: Strengthening our Fellowship, Serving Our Flock, Sharing Our Faith, and Securing Our Future. This year's focus is Sharing Our Faith Through H.E.L.P.

Background scripture for this address is: Mark 16:15-16; Philemon 1:6
 "And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone." NLT.

"I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we^[b] may do for Christ."

1. Sharing Our Faith with Health
2. Sharing Our Faith through Evangelism
 - A. Virtual Faith Sharing
 - B. Personal Evangelism
 - C. Outreach Evangelism (Meeting needs and then sharing the gospel.)
 - D. Social Justice
3. Sharing Our Faith through Leadership
4. Sharing Our Faith through Prayer

Let us continue to share our faith through HEALTH, EVANGELISM, LEADERSHIP AND PRAYER

Four applications for faith sharing I would like to leave with us today:

1. Pray daily for open doors to share our faith and boldly take advantage of them.



2. Create an impact list of people you pray for daily that need to be saved, healed, or delivered.
3. Plan regular times to spend with lost friends.
4. Be ready to take a step of faith and respond with a word of encouragement and truth.

If you are going to share your faith, you must know what you believe. My I remind us of what we believe: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Begotten Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. The third day He arose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen."

Go share your faith: Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Tell the story, Tell it at Home, Tell it in the Community, Tell it in the Workplace, Tell it in the World. People need the Lord, People need to be saved, People need to be restored, People need to be healed, People need to be delivered, People need to be encouraged, People need to be strengthened, Tell the story! Share your faith!

1. "I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love. I love to tell the story because I know it's true; it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.

2. I love to tell the story, for those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest. And when in scenes of glory I sing the new, new song, 'twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.

3. Christ Jesus, pure and holy, without a spot or stain, by wicked hands was taken, was crucified and slain! And now the word is finished, the sinner's debt is paid, because on Christ the Righteous the sin of all was laid.

4. O wonderful redemption! The price for sin is paid, salvation is accomplished, my heart is unafraid, for God has raised Christ Jesus to show the work was done; his glorious resurrection declared the victory won!

5. The Savior of all people has brought his peace to you; now go and tell the story, for others need it too. To every land and nation ring out the gospel call; proclaim that Christ is risen and grants his peace to all. "

I love to tell the story; 'twill be my theme in glory to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love. "I said I wasn't going to tell nobody, but I just couldn't keep it to myself...

Responses to the dynamic Episcopal Address were given by the Laity: Bro. Ed Davis, Minister: Rev. Dorothy Gardner and Presiding Elder Rev. Gregory Gyce.

Thursday afternoon Sheriff LaFayette Woods, Jr. of Jefferson County, Arkansas conducted Sexual Misconduct Training.

Thursday Evening the Christian Education Worship Service was held. Mrs. Ava Swinton Presided. Payne Chapel, Host Church had a short Welcome Program. The special guest was Mr. Frank Scott, Jr. Mayor of Little Rock, AR, he greeted Bishop and Mrs. Leake and declared September 16th Arkansas Conference Day in Little Rock. Rev. Rick Lee, Pastor of Moores Chapel AME Zion Church delivered a dynamic and inspiring message "Don't Leave Jesus At The Church. Scripture Luke 2:41-50.



Friday was Missionary Day, Missionary Supervisor Mrs. Jean McMurray Leake Presided. During the Convocation, she delivered a powerful and inspiring address on AGAPE Love 1st Corinthians Chapter 13. "How Deep is your love, how deep are you willing to go in the mission field? Our first mission is to love and sacrifice unconditionally. We got to love and that is what will make the world go round. Agape Love is sacrificial.

Friday afternoon the Necrology Service was held. Rev. Linda Inmon, Pre-

siding. Rev. Derrotha Jermon delivered the Memorial Message, Subject: "What Can Separate Us From The Love Of God" Scripture: Romans 8:31. Immediately after this service the School Of The Prophets was presented by Rev. Dr. Charlean Mapson, Pastor, Price Cathedral AME Zion Church, Wilmington, North Carolina. The focus was "Sharing Our Faith-It's Time To Turn Up!" Highlights are as follows:

Faith is a Spiritual Gift. The Holy Spirit distributes the gift of faith to some in order to encourage and build up other believers in their confidence in God. Those with the gift of faith, trust that God is sovereign, and that he is good. They take Him at his word and put the full weight of their lives in His hands. If we are going to share our faith we must Turn UP the Faith Instilled by our families, encouraged by our friends and empowered by our Father.

Friday Evening Missionary Worship Service, Missionary Supervisor Mrs. Jean McMurray Leake, Presiding. The speaker was Rev. Bobbie Willis of the West Tennessee-Mississippi Conference delivered a powerful and spirit-filled message on Love. Scripture John 13: 34-35.

Saturday, Intercessory prayer led by Rev. Dorothy Gardner. Bishop Eric Leake installed the Youth Council Officers. This was followed by the closing worship service and Holy Communion.

Bishop Leake preached a powerful, uplifting and inspiring message. Subject: "A Nevertheless Obedience" Luke 5: 4-11. Highlights are as follows: When we have a nevertheless obedience even a good excuse won't work. When we have a nevertheless obedience, extraordinary events take place. When we have a nevertheless obedience, it prepares us for a higher calling. After the Charge, Bishop Leake passed out Apointments.

Saturday afternoon the Home Missions Department held the annual Home Missions Luncheon. Mrs. Cecil Mitchell, Presiding. After a delectable lunch was served, the Crowning of the King and Queen of the Arkansas Conference was held. Bishop Leake gave the final remarks and Benediction.

The 2023 Annual Conference will be held at Cherry St. AME Zion in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Church September 13-16.

We've come this far by faith. Leaning on the Lord. Trusting in His holy word. He's never failed me yet!

- Has anybody come this far by faith?
- Are you leaning on the Lord?
- Faith that brought you here?
- Faith that will lead you on?
- Faith that kept you?



SOUTHWESTERN DELTA'S SOUTH MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE

CANTON DISTRICT FIRST MASS MEETING & TRAINING SESSION

The LORD is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed. On December 17, 2022, the members of the Canton District of the South Mississippi Conference of the Southwestern Delta Episcopal District gathered at Liberty Hill A.M. E. Zion Church (Durant, MS) for the first mass meeting and training session of the 2022-2023 conference year. The Canton District is led by Presiding Elder Rev. Floyd Chambers and the host Pastor was Rev. Ola Dixon. The Presiding Prelate is Bishop Eric Leake and Mrs. Jean McMurray-Leake is the Missionary Supervisor. The day started with the Missionary Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the District's Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society. Mrs. Vickie Harmon, Director of Youth, served as the program guide. We were blessed to have our wonderful and talented youth participate on the program as well. Ms. Madison Dixon read the scripture. Ms. Kirsten Jackson and Ms. Myionna Bush prayed a heartfelt prayer together. Sister Ashley Collins served as the meditation speaker with the subject of "Praise Him While You Can" expounding on Psalm 150. The message was both dynamic and soul-stirring. A delicious breakfast was served by the host church as members from all eleven (11) churches on the district fellowshipped while Christmas music filled the room with great anticipation. The members of the Missionary Society also assisted with the offering and other duties prior to and during the program. They include Mrs. Bonita Mosley, Supply/President of Prayer Breakfast, Ms. Glennetta Baker, Coordinator of YAMS, Ms. Viola Allen, Life Members Council, Ms. Margaret Dixon, Health Coordinator, Mrs. Ebony Johnson Bracey, Superintendent of Bud, and Ms. Tonya Parker, Mission Education Director. Mrs. Mary Bonds serves as the District President for the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society.

The various directors from each Christian Education Department presented their goals while presenting informative workshop sessions on "Sharing Our Faith." The attendees were reminded to re-ignite Christian Education sessions in the local churches and encourage more of our youth and adults to continue to help strengthen each other. The Christian Education Directors includes Mrs. Gladys Hughes as District Director, Ms. Linda Thompson, Director of Adults, Dr. Mary Sims Johnson, Director of Young Adults, Rev. Angela Brown, Director of Youth, Mrs. Helen Parker, Director of Children, Mrs. Camiel Brown-Fleming, Director of VBS, and Mrs. Hattie Chambers the South Mississippi Conference Director. In this season of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, the district members so graciously enjoyed a contest, wearing Christmas Ugly Sweaters. Children, youth and adults walked the runway displaying their lovely ugly sweaters. It was a sight to behold, and everyone enjoyed the impromptu fashion show. Awards and tokens of appreciation were presented to two winners – a youth and an adult. The winners were selected via applause of the audience.

The District Meeting ended with Presiding Elder and Mrs. Chambers presenting Christmas gifts to the Pastors and District officers. The Elder extended thanks to everyone for the service being rendered to the kingdom of God. He wished everyone a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year. "To God be the Glory for the things he has done and will do!"



Following the Prayer Breakfast, the Christian Education Department was in charge, along with the Lay Council and Evangelism departments. Bro. John Conway provided a short spirit-filled message on behalf of the Evangelism Department. He was introduced by the District President of Evangelism, Rev. Acquanette Johnson. Comments were also provided by the Lay Council District President, Mr. Melvin Bonds.



The Conference of National Black Churches (CNBC) 2022 National Consultation - 48 Power-Packed Hours!!

Submitted by Debra Chappelle-Polk
Zion Spotlight Editor, The Star Of Zion
Email: ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org

New York, NY The Conference of National Black Churches (CNBC) convened its Annual National Consultation at the Rosen Center Hotel in Orlando, Florida from December 13th through 15 2022. The CNBC National Consultation is one of the most influential ecumenical events for clergy of color.

Organized as the Congress of National Black Churches, the Conference of National Black Churches (CNBC) is now a program of the Institute of Church Administration and Management. The CNBC is comprised of leaders from the largest historically Black denominations in America (AME, AMEZ, CME, COGIC, National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. and the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.) The organization represents more than 80% of African American Christians across the nation and has a combined membership of over 20 million people and 30,000 congregations. CNBC serves as the vehicle by which member denominations collaborate in the areas of health, social justice and public policy on behalf of African American communities.

CNBC's online press release stated, "the 2022 Consultation is a special hybrid event. The funding generated through this effort will support the implementation of our programmatic work focusing on COVID-19 and variants, general vaccine education, voter education, social justice and gun violence."

"When America gets a cold, Black America gets the flu. We cannot afford to put our health on the back burner any longer. COVID is still here. We want as many people as possible to receive the booster shot because that is the best method of protection against the current variants. Vaccine fatigue is real, and we want to offer frequent opportunities to people to get vaccinated," said Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson, Chairman of the Conference of National Black Churches. "We gathered some of the brightest minds in the nation to address Black physical and mental health. The Black Church is alive and well, and we are committed to health and social justice and providing adequate health access to Black communities across this country. It is imperative that we rebuild trust amongst the Black community in healthcare, which is entrenched in medical racism, through programmatic initiatives."

The 2022 Consultation's information filled agenda included:

- The ongoing impact of COVID on Black churches and communities;
- Testing protocols; education and guidance relative to vaccine safety and efficacy.
- Racism; social justice and gun violence.
- Millennials and the Church
- Addressing issues of Mental Health and Wellness

Top leaders from historically Black denominations and leaders of more than 5000 mainstream religious bodies, business, non-profits, thought leaders, policy makers, community activists and social justice advocates gathered together to address some of the country's most significant crisis related to COVID-19 and race.

Dr. Howard-John Wesley, Senior Pastor of Alfred Street Baptist Church, Alexandria, VA., National Youth Activist Tamika Mallory, Rev. Jamal Bryant, Senior Pastor of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church, Benjamin Crumb, Esq., Rev. Al Sharpton, Founder, National Action Network (NAN) and the Hon. James Clyburn, (D. S.C.) were among the panelists and guest speakers.

The AME Zion denomination representation was equally as



impressive and included CNBC Board Members Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate, Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District and Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, current President of the Board of Bishops and Presiding Prelate of the North Eastern Episcopal District. Additional participants were CNBC AME Zion Board Members, Dr. Barbara Shaw, past International President of the WH&OM Society; Bishop George D. Crenshaw, Presiding Prelate of the Alabama-Florida Episcopal District, and Senior Bishop Kenneth Monroe. Retired Senior Bishop George E. Battle, Jr. serves as an ex-Officio At-Large Member of the Board of Directors.

There were also attendees from several Episcopal Districts: Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Darwin Little, Metropolitan AME Zion, Norfolk, VA., and Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Maurice Harden, Rush Metropolitan AME Zion, Raleigh, NC. The Rev. Dr. George E. McKain, Director of Public Affairs and Social Concerns was also present.

The Star of Zion reached out to some of the Zion dignitaries and asked them to share their comments about the CNBC National Consultation with SOZ readers.

Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Maurice Harden noted that the CNBC's mission and goal is "to provide information and resources to denominations." He added, "Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson has been instrumental in helping African American congregations' opportunities to help and assist the communities that they serve." He further commented that "during the conference, we received updated information related to COVID-19. The CNBC has been actively working with the Federal Government to ensure that funding and resources would be placed in underserved Black communities. Through their assistance they have been able to provide testing, vaccines and health information related to COVID 19." Dr. Harden found the various panel discussions and guest speakers, who addressed topics that affect the Black Church, to be particularly informative. "One of the key conversations centered around HBCU's. Several HBCU Presidents shared their perspective on the current state of HBCU's."

Bishop W. Darin Moore was a participant in the Ecumenical Worship Service. He said "The Rev. Dr. Jerry Young, President of the National Baptist Convention delivered a powerful message." Bishop Moore was also the moderator for a panel discussion among Bishop Theresa Jefferson-Snorton, CME Ecumenical Bishop and Chair of the National Council of Churches and leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). Dylan Roof, who killed 9 worshipers at Emanuel AME Church, in Charleston, South Carolina during Bible Study, was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Bishop Moore noted the commitment made by the Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the ELCA staff "to confront systemic racism and white privilege and outlined the initiatives they are taking as a denomination to address issues around diversity, racial, and social justice."

Bishop Moore also commented on the representatives from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) who "expressed their profound gratitude for the impact the CNBC continues to have on addressing the COVID crisis through its programs to educate, test, and get people in our churches and communities vacci-



nated.” Of note, Bishop Moore advised “the CDC has made a multiyear, multimillion dollar commitment to CNBC for continuing efforts to address health disparities in the Black Community.”

There was onsite COVID testing and a healthcare van offered screening for prostate cancer. Bishop Moore said “many of the leaders set important examples for others as they were the first to undergo screening.”

The Hon. James Clyburn, (D. S.C.) was one of the featured speakers. He spoke about the historical and continuing struggles facing our people and challenged attendees to remain actively engaged in improving this country. He listed several key legislative victories accomplished by this administration and Congress as a result of the energized voter turnout and the important role the Black Church has in registering, educating, and mobilizing voters.

Dr. Howard-John Wesley led a panel discussion that included Youth Activist Tamika Mallory on the issue of the Church and Mental Health and Wellness. A panel that included Rev. Dr. Briana Parker, (CEO of Black Millennial Café, LLC), Rev. Dr. Jamal H. Bryant, and others explored challenges and opportunities with millennials and the Black Church.

The session ended with an Awards Banquet. Bishop Dennis V. Proctor was the Master of Ceremonies, who, Bishop Moore said, “was extraordinary.” Rev. Al Sharpton was the keynote speaker. Bishop Moore said, “He [Sharpton] challenged the leaders of the Black Church never to lose its prophetic voice on race and justice issues.” Rev. W.R. “Smokie” Norful, Jr. was the evening’s Gospel Artist. Awards were presented to outstanding national leaders, including Dr. Jacqui Burton, CNBC President.

By all accounts, the 2022 Annual National Consultation of the Conference of National Black Churches was a wonderful event that, Bishop Moore said, “was intellectually enriching, spiritually empowering, and powerfully engaging. Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Darwin Little said “it was the best conference” he had ever attended.



Front Row Left to Right: Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith, WCC North America President; Bishop Theresa Jefferson-Snorton, CME Bishop and Chair of NCC, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop of ECLA, Rev. Dr. Margret Rose, Ecumenical Officer of The Episcopal Church, Bishop Vashti McKenzie, Interim President and General Secretary of NCC, Judith Roberts, ELCA Director for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, Rev. Dr. Leslie Copeland-Tune, COO of NCC



Back Row Left to Right: Rev. Lamont Wells, ELCA, Bishop W. Darin Moore, AME Zion, Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Miller, Moravian Church in America, Ms. Jennifer DeLeon, ELCA Director of Racial Justice, Ms. Kathryn Lohre, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop ELCA

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District Missionaries Hold Dual Events At Little Rock

Submitted by Gloria Joyner Johnson, Reporter

CHARLOTTE, NC – Beginning early Saturday Morning on January 7, 2023, the North Charlotte District Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society began gathering at the Little Rock AME Zion Church, Dr. Dwayne A. Walker, Pastor. The District Missionary President is Mrs. Roye Buck and Dr. Wardell Henderson is the Presiding Elder.

The day began with the Bureau of Supply Prayer Breakfast led by the District Supply Secretary, Ms. Cassandra Stephens. The service devotion started with the Call to Worship by Ms. Tiffany McCain, the Invocation by Ms. Avis Earl, a hymn "O master Let Me Walk With Thee", the Scripture and Responsive Reading by Ms. Debbie Dunn and Ms. Cathy Brandon, respectively.

Prayers for transformative service to families, transformative service for the community and for transformative service to the church by Ms. Jammie Simmons, Ms. Mildred Phifer and Ms. Michelle Horton were the prayer warriors.

The Mowing Glade Ensemble led by Ms. Geneva Potts sang a stirring rendition of "God Said He Will Make It Alright". The Meditation by Rev. Morgan Glenn, pastor of the Mowing Glade AME Zion Church was really a sermon accompanied by many shouts of Hallelujah and Amen. Rev. Glenn preached about Naaman from 2 Kings 5:1-3, "A Man with A Problem".

After the singing of the Wesleyan Grace led by Rev, Clarence Jones, Pastor of the Wesley AME Zion Church, a delicious, hot breakfast prepared by the Little Rock Culinary Ministry, was enjoyed.

Ms. Cassandra Stephens then presented to Dr. Orlando Lewis, Vice President of Student Affairs at Livingstone College, huge baskets of personal hygiene/toiletry items to provide the students who need help with these items. Missionaries and members of each church in the dis-

trict purchase items for the baskets, which are then wrapped beautifully for Livingstone College and Clinton College.

As attendees left the fellowship hall, they proceeded directly to the sanctuary North Charlotte District WHOMS’s Third Mass Meeting convened with Ms. Roye Buck, Missionary President presiding. Following the devotion, Ms. Buck presented the speaker, Rev. Wanda Merriweather of the Jonahville AME Zion Church where Rev. Mark Evans is the pastor.

Rev. Merriweather’s subject was "Agape Love" in which she explained the differences between philia, eros and agape love and how we are children of God, and in His image, we are to keep His commandments and to love one another unconditionally, to be benevolent, full of goodwill toward mankind in general.

Following the meditation and invitation to Christian Discipleship, the District Life Members Chairman, Ms. Castella Conner began the Stoling Ceremony in which sixteen members received their stoles.

Following the remarks by Mrs. Myrtle Henderson, the First Lady of the North Charlotte District, Presiding Elder Henderson gave remarks, thanking Ms. Buck and the missionaries for a successful day and led the Missionary Benediction.



RETIREMENT CELEBRATION FOR MRS. EDNA M. LITTLEJOHN

Submitted by G. Joyner Johnson
Reporter, The Star of Zion

CHARLOTTE, NC – On December 20, 2022, a great celebration was held at the AME Zion Corporate Headquarters. Mrs. Edna M. Littlejohn was honored at a special luncheon as she retired her position in the Bureau of Church Growth and Development.

Rev. Dr. George E. McKain, II was the Master of Ceremony and really set a festive tone for the celebration. Along with Dr. Eleazar Merriweather, the current Executive Director of the Bureau of Church Growth & Development and Mrs. Merriweather, two former Directors Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Presiding Prelate of The Piedmont Episcopal District and Dr. Otis McMillan, Retired were also in attendance accompanied by their wives. Mrs. Starnes and Mrs. McMillan.

Glowing accolades were given to Mrs. Littlejohn, not only by the Directors, but also Dr. Mary Love, Retired General Officer of Church School Literature; Dr. Dwight B. Cannon, Director of Global Missions, Director of Global Missions; Dr. David Aiken, Director of Zion's Benefits Services and Rev. Reneé Bethea from the West Central North Carolina Conference among others. Also in attendance were Mrs. Effie B. Woodard, past 2nd Vice President of the Connectional Lay Council, Mrs. Delois Coleman-Black, other family and friends



along with staff and associates at the AME Zion Headquarters.

The AME Zion Headquarters Ensemble lent their harmonious voices and provided lovely music for the occasion. The members of the ensemble were Cynthia Brown, Kirsten Martin, Doreen McKenith, and Althea Stewart. They were accompanied on keyboard by Franklin Hardison.

Mrs. Littlejohn thanked everyone for their kind words and expressions of love. She tearfully related her fulfillment of learning, teaching and loving her career while serving the Church. She stated she had worked with four Directors beginning with Dr. Norman H. Hicklin, (deceased) through Dr. Eleazar Merriweather.

After the blessing of the food, prepared and catered by Zion's own Mrs. Sallie Holmes "Blessed Occasion Event Planning", a bounteous, delectable table was enjoyed by all.

Many well wishes were extended to Mrs. Littlejohn on her retirement along with photo ops and more fellowship.

Thank God for all Mrs. Littlejohn has done over the years serving God and Zion!





GOLDSBORO DISTRICT ON THE MOVE FOR MISSION

“Looking Back to Move Forward”

Submitted by Rebecca Wright

Goldsboro District President of the WHOM Society

The Goldsboro District Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Fourth Missionary Mass Meeting/Seminar convened at Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Delway, NC.

The Reverend Jimmy Melvin, Host Pastor; The Reverend Dr. Andrew D. Brown, Presiding Elder, Mrs. Rebecca Wright, District President.

The Goldsboro District is part of the Cape Fear Conference, under the Leadership of Bishop Kenneth Monroe and Mrs. Sheila Wells Monroe, Missionary Supervisor, The Leaders of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District.

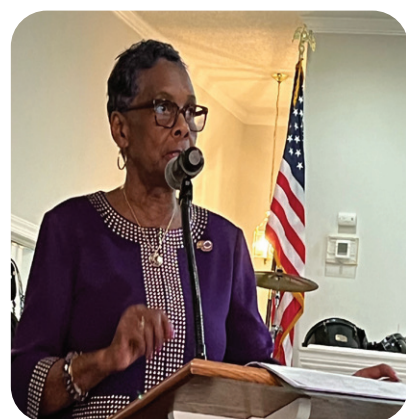
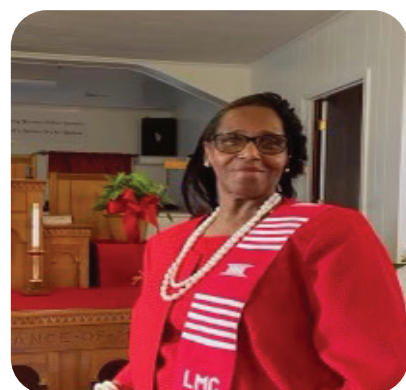
The Reverend Jimmy Melvin served as the Devotion Leader with the assistance of his Local Missionary Officers. We were blessed to have two Connectional Officer, Dr. Dwight Cannon and Mrs. Rosetta Dunham along with the six District Officers as workshop presenters.

The Reverend Dr. Dwight Bernard Cannon, Department of Global Missions and Missionary Seer Editor. His Subject, “Back to The Basic to Move Forward. He delivered an electrifying workshop, wherein he spoke on the importance of missions and why the local church must work alongside the Missionary Department. Our work impacts lives each day within the breaths and depths of Zion. With use of alliteration, Dr. Cannon reinvigorated the Goldsboro District to continue in prayer, passion, and participation as we strive to share Christ both locally and globally. Dr. Cannon presentation with accompanying handouts was well received by all in attendance. His use of humor and passion for missions, revived veteran missionaries and inspired those newly appointed.

It was a great privilege to have Mrs. Rosetta J. Dunham, Executive Director for the Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society give an overview on the Financial Aspects of the Missionary Society and the Centralized Office for the Cape Fear Conference/Goldsboro District. It was a delight for her to be with the district. Mrs. Dunham is an innovative, creative, and have a compassionate spirit, her willingness to help people is why she is the right person for the Executive Director of the Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society. Mrs. Dunham is an able and willing Servant of God. It was a Learning Experience to have her to teach, explain and answer questions about the district (Assessments) Finances and to see them on film.

The Six District Officers held workshops with the Local Church Officers and distributed literature on their department. Mrs. Cynthia McKoy, Coordinator of YAMS, Topic: “Local Projects” (Suggestions) on Winning Souls for Christ; Reverend Pia Jessup, Youth Secretary, Topic: “Closing the Gap” Rev. Jessup will divide the district into clusters of five churches each and meet with each cluster twice and as a group at district Mass Meetings focusing on Mentoring Programs. Mrs. Betty Jessup, Superintendent of Buds, Theme: Creating and Developing an Interest and Love for Mission in our children. Mrs. Wennona Newson, Bureau of Supply, Topic: The Giving Tree, Supporting College Students at Livingston and at Home. Mrs. Cathy Newkirk, Life Member Chair, shared the Tool Kit; and Ms. Yolonda Highsmith, Mission Education Department; Topic: Mission Study Materials, Constitution and By Laws.

After much motivation and uplifting of our spirit, we are now ready to “Move Forward.”



Workshop Presenters

Mrs. Rebecca Wright, District President; Mrs. Cynthia McKoy, YAMS Coordinator;

Rev. Pia Jessup, Youth Secretary; Mrs. Betty Jessup, Superintendent of Buds; Mrs. Wennona Newsome, Bureau of Supply; Mrs. Cathy Newkirk, Life Member Chair; Ms. Yolonda Highsmith, Mission Education Department.

Reverend Dr. Dwight B. Cannon, Department of Global Missions and Missionary Seer Editor;

Mrs. Rosetta J. Dunham, Executive Director Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society.

DAUGHTER SAVES MOM'S LIFE

Submitted by Ms. D. Maria Osborne

August 31, 2022, began as any ordinary day. Megan Leatherwood, a 15-year-old Girl Scout and Youth Usher, at Trinity A.M.E. Zion Church in Washington, DC, was in the kitchen fixing herself a snack. She heard a sound as if something had fallen on the floor. No problem, either her mom had dropped something or was just playing a trick on her. Megan and her mom have a strong bond and are very close and will often joke around with each other. As she entered the room her mother was in, she saw her mother lying on the floor. She became alarmed, SOMETHING WAS DEFINITELY WRONG!!! She checked on her mom and there was no response. Megan immediately called 911 for assistance.

The 911 call-taker who answered the call helped Megan assess her mother. When it was determined that Melanie was in cardiac arrest the call-taker began to give Megan lifesaving instructions. As Megan cried, she listened and followed the instructions of the call-taker providing chest compressions. It seemed like hours to her as Megan continued with the chest compressions until the arrival of Montgomery County Fire and Rescue.

Once the crew of Medic 701 entered the apartment, they found Megan performing CPR. Master Firefighter Paramedic Pfarr and fire fighter Paramedic Carter took over as Megan was comforted by Captain Dement of Medic 701, informing her what a good job she did to keep her mother alive. They placed the cardiac monitor on Melanie, started an airway to provide ventilation via bag valve mask while Firefighter Farrell resumed chest compressions. At the first pulse check, the rhythm had converted to ventricular fibrillation (her heart stopped). The crew defibrillated Melanie and resumed compressions. Several attempts were made using the defibrillator and chest compressions until finally a strong rhythm showed on the cardiac monitor.

Melanie was then prepared to be transported to Holy Cross Hospital.

Upon arrival she was transferred to the emergency staff. Melanie was intubated and stabilized in the emergency room and sent to the Intensive Care Unit for monitoring and treatment. Melanie's condition continued to improve, and she was then transferred to Washington Hospital Center on September 4, to receive a cardiac catheterization and a cardiac MRI. Based upon those findings, it was decided that she should have an internal defibrillator implanted. Melanie continued to improve and was discharged from Washington Hospital Center on September 10, 2022.



Thanks to the heroic and timely actions of Megan Leatherwood, the 911 call-taker, the team from Medic 701, with the assistance of Engine 701's Paramedics, Mom – Melanie was able to return to work part-time, November 2022, and will be able to resume driving in April 2023.

As we realize that this is **HEART HEALTH** Month, we realize how important **CPR IS IT IS WORTH LEARNING**. YOU may have to perform it one day to save a **LOVED ONE**, Megan did.

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NEW AND EXCITING LEADERSHIP IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Submitted By Ms. Erika Carmichael and Rev. Erich V. Shumake

On October 18, 2022, Bishop Michael A. Frencher Sr., and Missionary Supervisor Gelenia Frencher arrived on the Caribbean Island of Trinidad. Meeting the Bishop and Missionary Supervisor was the new Presiding Elder of the Trinidad and Tobago Annual Conference Rev. Dr. Anthony N. Witherspoon. He is also the pastor of Washington Metropolitan AME Zion Church in St. Louis, Missouri.

The members were excited about meeting their new Bishop, Missionary Supervisor, and Presiding Elder in person. Because of COVID-19 and travel restrictions no in-person meetings had taken place since 2019. Trinidad and Tobago is a two island nation located off the northern coast of South America.

On Tuesday, October 18, 2022, Presiding Elder Witherspoon hosted his first in person Quarterly Conference which also offered training for the district. Rev. Dr. Derrick T. Simmons presented training for Stewards and Trustees. Rev. Erich V. Shumake offered a presentation, "Who We Are – The Laity and Our Responsibility." These presentations were received with great enthusiasm. At the Quarterly Conference, Rev. Larry and Mrs. Celia Williams transferred their membership from the Texas Annual Conference to the Trinidad and Tobago Annual Conference. They were received in the conference by Rev. Mariam Thomas and Presiding Elder Witherspoon.

On Thursday, October 20, 2022, the Trinidad and Tobago's first Check-Up meeting and Leadership Training Institute began at 6:00 PM. Bishop Frencher and Missionary Supervisor Frencher were officially presented, and the people rose to their feet and received our leaders with great jubilation.

Training sessions were led by Bishop Frencher for ministers, our Missionary Supervisor Gelenia Frencher for missionaries, and Dr. O. Lacy Evans offered training for the laity. Each of these sessions provided inspiring concepts that empowered the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Departmental reports were received from each organization. The members of Shaw Temple and Presiding Elder Witherspoon are to be commended for their preparedness at this Check-Up meeting.



During the worship service Bishop Frencher presented Rev. Dr. Willa Estell. Dr. Estell is the former Dean of the Shaw-Frencher

School of Ministry. Her message topic was "A Transitional Moment & Reflection." She encouraged the conference not to let their lights grow dim. They have been a beacon light on the shores of Trinidad and Tobago, and weary sailors will continue to look for a safe place to place their anchors.



The Leadership Training Institute began on Friday, October 21, 2022 with Morning Glory given by Sis. Rhonda Ramlal. The Morning Story was told by Ms. Dayna Williams followed by the keynote address by Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr. Four plenary sessions were presented; the first by Rev. Mariam Williams-Thomas entitled What Salvation Is, Rev. Erich V. Shumake presented Religion vs. Relationship, Mrs. Lystra Roberts-Glaud presented Faith-Sharing, and Ms. Erika Carmichael presented Leadership in a COVID-19 Era. Each of the Plenary Sessions covered timely and relevant topics.

Rev. Jonse Young, President of ACE assisted by Erika Carmichael, stoled six Christian Educators during Friday's worship service. Friday's services concluded with a thought-provoking sermon by Rev. Dr. Derrick T. Simmons.

Saturday's Ministry Outreach was conducted by the Sunday School department. Rev. Austin J. Young, pastor of John Wesley AME Zion, was the evangelist and offered an encouraging word about not giving up. From Psalm 23:4, the sermon title was "If Cockroaches Can Dance, Why Can't You." The evangelistic outreach was conducted outside the walls of the church. The community was invited and there was a large gathering of people in attendance. The theme of the outreach was in support of Breast Cancer Survivors. Shaw Temple provided care bag for mothers in the community consisting of food staples and personal hygiene items. At this event two young ladies gave their lives to Christ, and united with the church.



On October 23, 2022, the Institute concluded with Sunday worship services. Bishop Frencher preached a rousing sermon from Acts 11:26. His sermon title was "Called To Be Christians." At this service a family of seven united with the church, making a total of eleven persons being united with the Shaw Temple church during this week of meetings.

A welcome program for Bishop and Mrs. Frencher was held. Political leaders from across Trinidad and Tobago greeted Bishop and Mrs. Frencher and brought encouraging remarks as they pledged their support for Shaw Temple AME Zion Church.

This was an exciting time for the ministry of Trinidad and Tobago. Bishop and Missionary Supervisor along with Presiding Elder Witherspoon were well received, on this their first in-person visit since the pandemic. The membership has pledged to work even harder for Kingdom building in Trinidad and Tobago.

Eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, no mind has imagined the things God has prepared for those (in Trinidad) who love Him! 1Corinthians 2:9.



We look forward to God doing greater works in Trinidad and Tobago.

PALMETTO ANNUAL CONFERENCE 132ND SESSION CONVENES AT THE KENNETH MONROE TRANSFORMATION CENTER

**Rev. Patty S. Smith, Reporter
Bishop Kenneth Monroe
Presiding Prelate & Senior Bishop**



The 132nd Session of the Palmetto Annual Conference convened at the Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center in Rock Hill, SC, September 15-17, 2022. Reverend Dr. Victor C. Wilson Host Presiding Elder and Reverend Iris Kennedy, Host Pastor.

Bishop Warren Matthew & Mrs. Aurelia Brown assisted Bishop Monroe during the 132nd Session of the Palmetto Annual Conference.

Thursday evening opened with the Welcome Program led by Reverend Iris Kennedy Worship Leader. The Host Church, New Hope-AMEZ, entered music along with Jones Memorial AMEZ Church Choir. The sermon was delivered by the Reverend Thelma Gordon entitled, *“The Mission of the Church Is Still Possible When Your Heart Is In It And When the People Have a Mind To Work”*. The organization of the Annual Conference was held immediately following the service.

The following guests were recognized: Reverend Sharon Newton, North Carolina Annual Conference, ENCED, Reverend Otha Smith, South Carolina Conference, York-Chester District, Reverends Emmett Browning and Grady Sharps, South Carolina Conference, Rock Hill District.



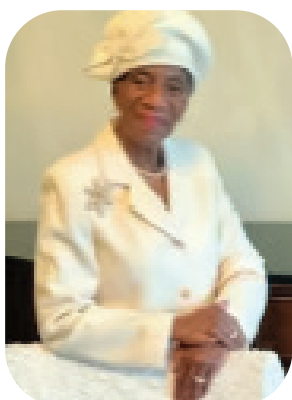
**Reverend Dr. Victor C. Wilson,
Presiding Elder
Spartanburg District**



**Reverend Dr. Alvin McLamb,
Presiding Elder
Columbia-Camden District**

Friday morning, Bishop Kenneth Monroe gave the Episcopal Address, with the response and motion to accept Bishop’s superb address given by the Reverend Dr. Victor Wilson. The Reverend Dr. Alvin McLamb, Presiding Elder, Columbia-Camden District seconded the motion. The address was unanimously received with thanks by the annual conference. Also, the conference was pleased to receive greetings from Bishop Hilliard Dogbe, Presiding Prelate of the Western West Africa Episcopal District.

**Mrs. Lovetta J. Holmes,
Missionary Supervisor**



Friday afternoon consisted of the reports by the Presiding Elders. Special recognition was given to Mrs. Sheila Monroe, Missionary Supervisor, Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District. Mrs. Lovetta Holmes, Missionary Supervisor, greeted the conference and reports were given by Reverend Melissa Benton,

District President - Columbia-Camden District, and Reverend Patty Smith, District President - Spartanburg District. Gifts were presented to the Missionary Supervisor by both district presidents. The Christian Education Report followed with Mrs. Linda Jones giving thanks and making her final report as the Conference Director of the Christian Education Department. Following Mrs. Jones’ announcement, unreadiness was recognized. It was agreed upon by the body that a scholarship would be named in Mrs. Jones’ honor for her many years of dedicated service to the Christian Education Department.

The Lay Council Report was given by Mrs. Annie Williams, Conference President and Reverend Benson Watt, Chairman of the Lay Council Board. Other departmental reports followed. The following guests were recognized: Reverend Dr. Maurice Harden, ENCED, Raleigh District, Reverends Dr. Carlton Brown and Henry Gregory, Rock Hill District, South Carolina Conference, Reverends Sandra Sistare, Mary Adams English, April Wolfe, and Sister Sara Myers, Lancaster District, Pee Dee Annual Conference, Mrs. Patricia Mickel, Candidate for the State Department of Education Superintendent, Reverend Julian Pridgen, Candidate for Office of Bishop.

The Friday evening service was led by Reverend Dr. Robert T. Benton, Worship Leader. The sermon entitled, *“I Understood the Assignment”* was delivered by Reverend Dr. Lester McCorn, President of Clinton College, Rock Hill, SC. The following guests were recognized: Reverend Jalen Leach, Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District, Albermarle Conference, Reverend Dr.

Anthony Davis, Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District, Central District-Raleigh District, Reverend Dr. Carlton Brown and Mr. Caleb Brown, Rock Hill District, South Carolina Conference, Reverend Dr. Benjamin L. and Mrs. Ava Morrow, and Miss Karlease Smalls, Candidate for Connectional YAMS Coordinator.

Saturday morning, the International Ministers Spouses & Widows(ers) Fellowship met at 8:00am with Mrs. Marilyn Scurry, Conference President. Greetings were given by Mrs. Lovetta Holmes, Mrs. Aurelia Brown, and Mrs. Shelia Monroe. The District Presidents (Mrs. Ruthie Holmes & Mrs. Karonda Hardwick) also gave remarks.

Beginning at 9:00am, the Reverend Monica Davis led Devotion, and the Visionary Moment was given by Reverend Dr. Jermaine Armour, Pastor of St. Luke AMEZ, Wilmington, NC, entitled, *“Revitalizing our Ministries During the Post Pandemic”*. The Home Missions Report was given by Reverend Thelma Gordon, Conference President. Additional reports such as “Holy Orders”, etc., followed. Visitors included Reverend Michael Frencher, Jr., SAED, South Carolina Conference, Rock Hill District, Reverend JaQuavis Tucker, SAED, South Carolina Conference, Rock Hill District, Mr. James Ware, Bethel Baptist, Mt. Holly, North Carolina, and Ms. Renita Hines, sister of the Late Bishop Mildred Bonnie Hines.

Appointments were read by Bishop Kenneth Monroe. The 132nd Session of the Palmetto Annual Conference adjourned at 1:47pm. The 133rd Session of the Palmetto Annual Conference will convene on September 14-16, 2023, at the Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center.

WILLIAMS PROMOTED TO ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR AT HOOD SEMINARY

Salisbury, NC. - Dr. Rona M. Williams has been promoted to Associate Director of the Congregational Faith and Learning Center (TCFLC) at Hood Theological Seminary (HTS), Salisbury, NC. This appointment was effective January 1, 2023.

The goal of TCFLC is to provide training and faith engagement directly to congregations in the community by being a place to “educate, empower, and equip” congregations to thrive.

Williams previously served as Program Coordinator.

Educationally, Williams earned a B.A. in Political Science and Business Administration from Winthrop University, and earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University Of South Carolina School Of Law. In December 2022, Williams completed the requirements for her Master of Divinity degree at Hood.

Dr. Vincent W. Howell, Director of Congregational Faith and Learning Center, stated, “I am excited that Rev. Williams has accepted this new

role. She has a passion for ministry leadership and service, and brings an important perspective of ministry innovation and creativity; this helps the church relate to all generations and cultures of people.”

Dr. Williams also serves as Executive Pastor at City of God Ministries in Charlotte, NC. As an entrepreneur, she is CEO of The Purpose Law Firm, and WebEP, a consulting firm.



LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE SERVES UP MEALS, CONVERSATION AND COMPASSION IN HONOR OF KING HOLIDAY

Submitted by **Kimberly Harrington,**
Director of Public Relations, Livingstone College

Jan. 13, 2023

SALISBURY – Livingstone College observed the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday in the way it was intended: A Day of Service.

The college fed homeless individuals of Rowan County at the Salisbury Civic Center on Friday, providing hot meals, toiletries and conversation.

The college gave away 41 packaged lunch boxes of turkey and cheddar sandwiches, roast beef and Swiss sandwiches, cookies, chips, fruit and water. They also served homemade chicken noodle soup with crackers.



Each person also received a bag filled with hand sanitizer, toothbrushes, tooth paste and other personal hygiene items.

The N.C. Counts Coalition, a nonprofit organization, were on hand distributing bags filled with hats, gloves, hand warmers and COVID-19 tests.

Livingstone College Culinary Arts, under the leadership of chefs Elizabeth Marquez and Carl Brown, students prepared and packaged the meals and served them from the college’s impressive and branded 53-foot mobile food unit.

The event was in partnership with the Salisbury Police Department’s victims/homeless program, in which Dennis Rivers is the program liaison.

“We reached people, but the goal is to reach more,” Rivers said. “We made an impact because if we feed one, that’s one less hungry person. We will continue to collaborate with Livingstone College and Rowan Helping Ministries to tackle homelessness.”

Social work majors, student leadership, football players, faculty and staff joined Livingstone President Dr. Anthony J. Davis throughout the two-hour event.

“Everybody can be great – because anybody can serve,” said Livingstone President Dr. Anthony J. Davis, quoting Dr. Martin Luther King



Jr. “Today is about connecting to our community and showing them that we care.”

“This is really a big learning experience for me, being able to help and do God’s work,” said Shawnae Robertson, a junior social work major at Livingstone. “I just helped a lady take her food to her car and she had a child inside. It

kind of hurt, but it’s good I could help contribute to her and her child.”

Student Nia McDougald, who aspires to be a licensed clinical social worker, said she has always had a compassion for homeless people. “I love being here today, knowing I can do something to make someone’s day better.”



“It’s nice to see our institution give back to the community to let them know we are here,” said Michael Gilyard, Livingstone SGA president.

Livingstone will also participate in Rowan County’s MLK Community Resource Fair on Jan. 14, and at the prayer breakfast on Jan. 16. Both events will be held at the Salisbury Civic Center.

About Livingstone College

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

This Is Us: Black History Month

Submitted By Allison N. Lee
Social Justice Editor, The Star of Zion
Email: SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org

Let me start by saying, “Happy Black History Month!” I was reared as a child to appreciate (in a respectful kind of way) and to love (in a feel-it-way-down-in-your soul kind of way) this time where we intentionally celebrate the achievements of Black people and honor the overcoming that took place in the face of challenge. I was in anticipation of this piece being serious and cutting straight to the facts - perhaps it will still be that after all is said and done. As I sit down and put pen to paper, however, I feel many things: an overflow of respect, honor, love, seriousness, and celebration all thrown into one. I am experiencing appreciation, joy, and fondness. A sense of belonging. I feel excited knowing that Black History Month is on the horizon, and by the publishing of this article, it will be *here*. To keep it simple:

I love Black History Month.

I love Black History Month. I LOVE Black History Month. I love it. I love history (it was my favorite subject in school), I love US (Black people), and I love the month dedicated to uplifting Black History. Yes, Black History is 365 - as many will post or say during this time - *and also*, there is a heavy steeping of the culture in February. There are rays of sunshine, seemingly beaming in honor of what this month means. There is a heightened scent of soul food in the air. There is a standard of excellence. There is a mood among Black people that actualizes an extra helping of love, light, support, and admiration for one another, the history, and the culture.

I love Black History Month.

Black History Month is celebrated annually during the month of February in order to honor the achievements of the Black community. It was initially started in 1926 as “Negro History Week” during the second week of February (to fall in line with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass) by scholar and historian, Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Dr. Woodson hoped to honor Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass due to their significant involvement in and contributions to the Black community surrounding freedom and rights. Woodson also desired to uplift the achievements of all Black people.

I love Black History Month.

To delve a bit deeper into the inspiration for what was then Negro History Week, and ultimately evolved into Black History Month, Dr. Carter G. Woodson attended a celebration in 1915 to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of emancipation and was inspired at that time to - in conjunction with others - found the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH). This group was designed to motivate scholars to study and speak to Black history in a time where institutions of learning, by-and-large, were both currently and had previously been refusing to do so. Encouraged by Woodson, his fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., launched “Negro History and Literature Week” in 1924. Two years following this, in 1926, in order to bring continued attention to Black history, Negro History Week was officially launched by Woodson and the ASNLH.

I love Black History Month.

As the years went on and due to the significant fight for and progression of civil rights, by the 1960s, many areas had begun to refer to Negro History Week as Black History Month. It was in 1976 that Black History Month was pushed by who was originally the ASNLH (Woodson’s organization), which was later named the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) to be celebrated in all places and to be recognized on a national level. At that time, President Gerald Ford appealed to the country to, “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.” Since that time, every succeeding President has followed suit.

I love Black History Month.



The theme for Black History Month 2023 is Black Resistance. According to the Association for the Study of African American Life and History’s webpage, this theme focuses on resistance to continued oppression, including, “...lynching, racial pogroms, and police killings.” The ASALH also speaks to both the ways in which the Black community has fought to push for the United States of America to make good on what it states that it believes and stand on, “...freedom, liberty, and justice for all,” and the methods that have been taken to stand up for and, “protect Black lives.”

I love Black History Month.

I love the regular singing of the Black National Anthem, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, penned by James Weldon Johnson. I treasure the warmth and deep honor that comes with knowing that those who came before us believed so much in the future - in us - and in standing up for what was right that they fought for it and us in the most passionate of ways. I love the Black History Month acknowledgements and programs had in churches as heritage is celebrated. I enjoy reading and hearing about Black Excellence from decades ago and today. I appreciate every teacher and/or adult who strives to incorporate teaching about Black history and celebration of Black achievement into a curriculum that is fixed on acting like it does not exist. I revel in the Black consciousness that shines through year round, but especially during this time. Even with the often difficult reminders of what our people have had to endure and continue to wrestle with, I love Black History Month. Even as I think about the sure fact that Black history should be celebrated and taught year round without question, fear of retribution, or public outcry, I love this month. *May we continue to overcome. May we always remember the contributions of our ancestors that brought us to this point. May we uplift and celebrate the good things happening in the Black community today. May we protect our people at all costs. May we push to both excel and rest, recognizing that both are care of self and care of culture. May we resist...may we continue to resist so that we may rise.*



LOOKING FOR LOVE ONLINE

Submitted by Tessa Benson
Email: TessaBenson116@gmail.com

January 10, 2023

Brentwood, TN - I chuckle loudly, when I think about the idea of online dating. I've done it, but I've moved away from it. While some people find their soulmates this way, I have not had much luck getting to serious long-term relationships. Several years ago, I developed a few friendships with men I met via the online dating sites. I once dated a man who I thought I'd marry. It didn't happen. I've tried various sites over the years. I do believe that I am finished with online dating.

On one site, a man told me that his friends recommended that he choose 3-4 ladies to "have in rotation," when he initially joined Black People Meet.com. Sassy, feisty, no-nonsense women like myself, will have deleted a man's phone number and moved on by the time a man might circle back around. There have been times when I have gotten phone calls and or random texts, and had to politely ask, "Who is this, please?" after I have moved on.

I find myself saddened that in the 21st Century, men are rarely pursuing women with marriage as the end goal. That is the Biblical way. Whoso findeth a wife, he findeth a good thing... As a middle-aged woman, I can remember dates that I went on with potential partners 2-3 decades ago. Most were good dating experiences, as they afforded my dates and me opportunities to converse, laugh, get acquainted, uncover commonalities, and have some fun. Now, it is a luxury experience to get to go on a date. Period.

Many men are noncommittal and playing games with several women at a time. Some women want a man in their lives so badly, that they are willing to accept "whatever" behavior, lack of attention, and various foolish modes of communication (i.e., texting/sexting often leading to misrepresentations and misunderstandings) that men are offering. This is not what God desires of us. He created men and women, so that we can be helpmates to each other. Family structures across this Country are often dysfunctional and outside of societal norms. Again, this is not



what God desires of us and our time here on earth.

I pray that our society will realize the value of the old-fashioned way of dating, and return to it. Online dating is hard. More often than not, it requires long-distance involvement. Getting to know a person you are interested in through your phone or on screen are poor substitutes for in-person conversation, genuine displays of emotions and affection. You can't see a show of etiquette/manners, and human touch. To determine compatibility/commonality, I've always found that in-person encounters in various settings while on dates, allows a person to discover who that other person truly is as a potential mate.

Society cannot continue to corrode itself. At some point, we will have to return to the Biblical way of courting, if we indeed desire companionship. For this, I pray.

Tessa Benson is a poet, author, preacher and advocate for traditional dating.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

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

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God, in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

In February we celebrate the beauty of romantic love and encourage each other to take care of our hearts with heart health awareness. We also celebrate February 14-10 as Random Acts of Kindness week. The highlight of that week is National Kindness Day, February 17, 2023. A random act of kindness is a non-premeditated, inconsistent action designed to show kindness to others. It is giving to others without requests or expectations of something in return. The phrase "practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty," was written by Anne Hebert on a placemat in Sausalito, California in 1982.

According to PositivePsychology.com, random acts of kindness increase well-being. Well-being is described as the presence of positive moods and emotions, satisfaction with life; fulfillment and positive functioning. Kindness, then, is not an attitude or a mindset. Kindness



is love in action with no expectation.

Random Acts of kindness benefit the receiver of the kindness and the giver of kindness. There are fourteen proven benefits that come from committing RAK. Some of these proven benefits are that the recipient of the kindness feels loved. Kindness can increase strength and energy. It can make you feel calmer, less depressed. It increases feelings of self-worth and decreases anxiety and stress. Recipients and givers can experience a sense of awe when thinking of these acts of love.

When we give with no expectation it reminds us of the act of kindness that is the cross of Christ. With no expectation of anything in return, Jesus gave His life so that we could be reconciled to God. An act of kindness so profound, that it is still affecting lives, and increasing well-being every day.

Kindness is not complicated, but it must be intentional. Start small, holding the door open for the person behind you. A random act of kindness can be as simple as eye contact and a smile.

If you are not sure how to begin The Random Act of Kindness Foundation's website is full of ideas for work and home as well as K-8 lesson plans. The website provides free printable resources.

TILL : THE STORY OF A MOTHER'S LOVE

Submitted by Dierdre' R. Parker-Rowson
Email: Entertainment_Arts@StarofZion.org

January 17, 2023

Lillington, NC - When I was a kid, every year or so, around the same time of the year, that picture would run in the Jet Magazine. That picture of the kid that got killed because he whistled at a white woman. At first, my internalized racism said he should've known better than to do that. All I knew was that colored people were the good guys and white people were the bad guys. That was because of slavery but nobody talked about it. There were enough whispered stories for me to know it didn't matter who the good guys were when the bad guys held all the power. Unchecked. As I got older, I learned that there was much more to the story. The well documented story of what happened to fourteen-year-old Emmett Louis Till on August 28, 1955 in Money Mississippi is a hard pill to swallow. The story of his death has been sold and told from many different angles. In Till, the Movie, the story is told through the eyes of his mother. The eyes of the main character, Mamie Till-Mobley (played masterfully by Danielle Deadwyler), are literally the vehicle that drives this movie. Deadwyler's eyes were more than expressive. Her eyes acted as windows to allow us to see past our knowledge that things get better, to the clear and present danger that our people in that city at that time in this nation lived with every single day. Deadwyler's Till-Mobley moved through the trauma of losing her only son, with such honestly raw emotion that there is no wonder she is receiving Oscar buzz. The entire cast, including Zion's own Carol J. McKeith, was excellent. The young actor who played Emmett, Jalyn Hall. He brought light and life into a person of



whom little is known outside of his tragic end. The bright, crisp lighting and the sharp vibrant colors of the costuming and the surroundings sat in stark juxtaposition to the hate and darkness that permeated this story of a mother's love for her son. May she rest well knowing that her sacrifice; allowing the world to witness her profound pain, to expose what hate produces, was successful even though it took sixty-seven years. The Emmet Till Anti-lynching was bill signed into law in 2022. The screenwriting to the directing, the acting, lighting, and costuming, even the make-up, speaks to the importance of our stories being told by people who understand them from the inside out. Our stories must be told by those who love us. By those who see beyond the tragedy to the humanity and the inhumanity that continue to co-exist. Even though, power in this country is not yet equal, it no longer goes unchecked because one woman had the courage to share her pain. We at Star of Zion, pray that this movie will serve as a reminder of what was, and strengthen our resolve to ensure that the future will be better than the past and the present.

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Theological Preparation for Effective Leadership in a Diverse Society

THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Submitted By Mr. Daman DeLeon
 Health & Wellness Editor, The Star Of Zion
 Email: Health_Wellness@StarOfZion.org

February is that time of year where we celebrate and commemorate the history, plight, and overcoming accomplishments of those of us of the African Diaspora here in the Americas. Although other parts of the world celebrate variations of Black History Month (such as the United Kingdom, for example, which celebrates BHM in October), the festive month originated here in the United States in 1926, through the innovation of Carter G. Woodson.

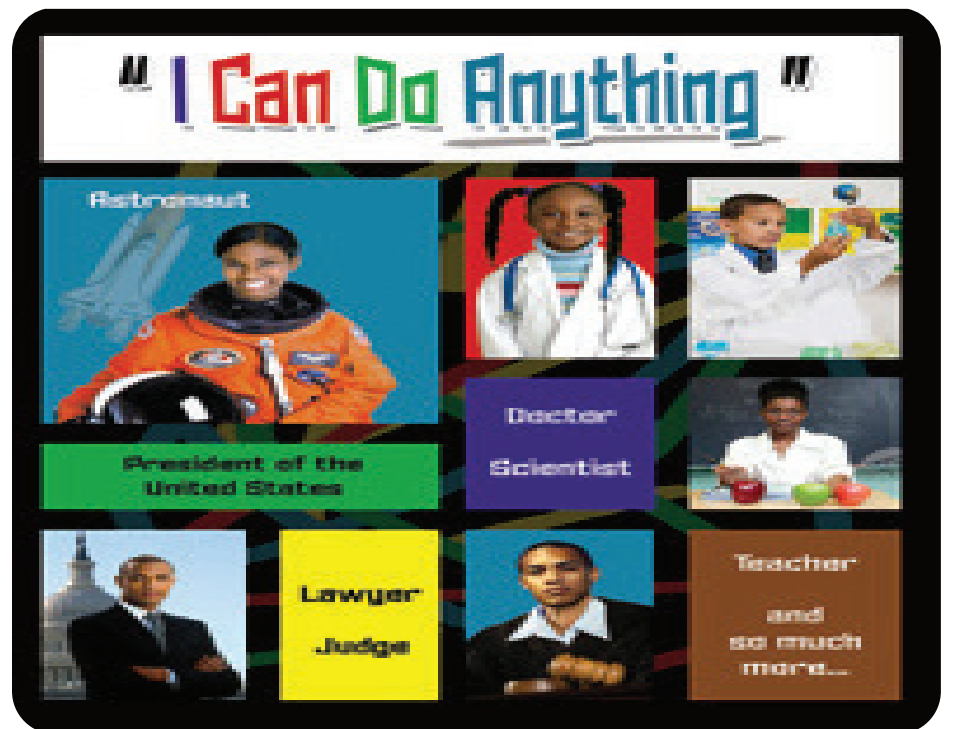
It is an opportunity to spotlight and celebrate the achievements that African Americans have accomplished in this country, despite the history of racism and oppression. Most of all, it is a time to teach or remind our children of the history lessons they might not learn as part of the everyday school curriculum. During Black History Month it is important that conversations occur in the education system too. Children should be educated on the key figures throughout black history and those that have achieved, invented and succeeded. It is commonly known that in the education system, if black history is taught, it is often the topic of slavery that takes centre stage. This is an extremely important part of history for children to learn about, but it is also important to expose children to the successes of black people and the outstanding contributions they have made to society that has changed our lives today. In addition, we need to highlight the differences in black history in the UK and in the USA. If we want change, we have to look to the children in schools that have the opportunity to shape the future.

Black History Month is an important month whereby conversations focusing on the disparity and issues faced by black people can occur in all different types of environments including the workplace. These conversations are there for people to express their struggles and identify that there are major gaps in the working world which still highlight the discrimination black people are facing to this day. These may be uncomfortable conversations to have but are extremely important to acknowledge and identify the steps that can be taken towards bridging the gap and removing the differences and opportunities black people have.

Black history month does not only promote diversity, it also celebrates diversity. To promote diversity, it is about bringing awareness to the idea that we are all diverse and we all contribute to something. By educating others we are showing and celebrating the achievements of black people, but also them as individual men and women. People are then made aware of the achievements of black people and how they have impacted our lives.

In our education system we only explore a glimpse of black history which usually looks at slavery and the events that took place. Instead it is essential to illustrate a black history that is balanced and also focuses on the kings, queens, nations, inventors, entrepreneurs and alike. Black history month is an opportune moment to celebrate success stories! It is a month to celebrate all the achievements, prizes, discoveries and inventions accomplished by people of African and Caribbean descent. It is the month to highlight that without these success stories we wouldn't be in this position today and we wouldn't be moving towards future change. During Black History Month it is very important to commemorate the past to understand, reflect and learn about the difficulties faced by black people, but it is also important to look to the future. Everyday history is being made and we are living through it as well as shaping it which will have an impact on the future generations and people's attitudes and values.

In conclusion, every aspect of a celebration of a Culture enhances the overall unity, self-perspective, and appreciation of that particular group. The general psychological and well-being benefits from it, which leads to the perpetual progress of the minority and majority as a whole.



WHOMS RESOLUTIONS ANNOUNCEMENT

WOMEN'S HOME AND OVERSEAS MISSIONARY SOCIETY
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

RESOLUTION ANNOUNCEMENT

An important component of the 30th Quadrennial Convention will be the revision of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society. This occurs by the submission of resolutions to the Recommendations Committee ninety (90) days prior to the opening of business of the 2023 General Convention. A resolution is a formal way of presenting a main motion, which is always presented in writing. At the 30th Quadrennial Convention the Recommendation Committee will present all resolutions; resolutions will not be accepted from the convention floor.



RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE

30th QUADRENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE

WOMEN'S HOME AND OVERSEAS MISSIONARY SOCIETY

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

Submission Deadline: April 14, 2023

Delegates to the 23rd Quadrennial Convention of the Woman's Home and Overseas Missionary Society voted to change the date for submission of resolutions to ninety (90) days before the General Convention begins. This serves as an official announcement of this lawful and standing change and a reminder that all persons interested in submitting resolutions and recommendations should meet the official deadline of **April 14, 2023**. Resolutions and recommendations must be sent to:

Recommendations Committee
c/o: Mrs. Devieta C. Moore
9701 Apollo Drive - Suite 245
Largo, Maryland 20774
 Email: supervisor@amezma.org

RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FORM

The Resolution Committee is receiving Resolutions and Recommendations from delegates to the 30th Quadrennial Convention to be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, on July 22 – 28, 2023
(This form is to be copied and used in submitting Resolutions/Recommendations to be voted on for inclusion in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society (2023-2027).

DEADLINE: APRIL 14, 2023

RESOLUTION TITLE:

Please check the appropriate classification:

New Revision Information Item

THE RESOLUTION:

(If necessary, please use an additional sheet.)

THE RATIONALE:

Submitted by: _____

Episcopal District: _____

Conference: _____

PE District: _____

SUBMIT TO:

Mrs. Devieta C. Moore
Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District
9701 Apollo Drive - Suite 245
Largo, Maryland 20774
 Email: supervisor@amezma.org

Sample wording for Resolutions is found below:

DAY OF HEALTH Resolution

Whereas a study done by a national commission reveals there are twice as many African Americans with diabetes than a decade ago; Whereas African Americans must modify their lifestyles to enhance quality and longevity of life; and, Whereas information and health awareness initiatives have been proven to promote healthy living; therefore be it Resolved, that the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society establish a "Day of Health" for screenings and dissemination of information. *(Underneath resolution, provide data identifying presenter:)*

[Name of person(s) submitting resolution]
 [Episcopal District]
 [Conference]
 [PE District]

THE REUNION:

THE POINT OF VIEW (POV) OF ZIONITES WHO ATTENDED THE ANNUAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WINTER MEETING IN CHICAGO, IL TRUTHVILLE 2022

Submitted By Angel Eason
Lifestyle Editor, The Star of Zion

The Christian Education Department hosted Truthville 2022: The Reunion in Chicago, Illinois on December 27- 29, 2022.

Words to describe folks anticipation for the Reunion:

Expecting

Excited

Impactful

Empowerment

“The Christian Education Department Winter Meeting, known as “Truthville” is the premier educational and evangelistic experience in our Zion; centering powerful preaching, transformative teaching, and faith-filled fellowship that engages persons of all ages. Truthville 2022: The Reunion was our first in person gathering since the pandemic quarantine and what a time it was. Hearts were lifted and souls were saved. Despite the peculiar challenges that faced us due to travel interruptions, the Lord did not fail to move mightily at Truthville 2022! We are grateful that, nonetheless, more than 1,200 persons registered for this power-packed experience, including 300 who joined us virtually. Our gratitude to all of our event staff, guest preachers, guest psalmist, and Life Lab presenters that added richly to our gathering.”



Rev. Patrick Barrett II, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Christian Education Department of the AME Zion Church.
Kara McGougan



my lifestyle because of my profession. I wanted to make sure I was in line with the Chicago weather including packing sweaters, slacks, jackets, headgear, and a heavy coat. The weather was not bad at all and there was a day I went to Nordstrom and I didn't have a coat.”

Laurinburg District
District Director of CED
Central North Carolina Conference
Let's talk about fashion, how did you decide on your looks for the Truthville: The Reunion?

“My original thought was I have to wear something casual and something dressy. The Truthville team sent out information via Facebook to wear business casual and that's

What nuggets did you receive from attending Truthville: the Reunion?

“No matter what and after all we've been through, we still have good times. Watching Zion grow and I remember going to Mid-winter for many years and to see it's still strong. Good times are still happening.”

“I cannot forget about the College Rally. The praise team and the steppers were great. One of the highlights of the banquet was the children singing Frankie Beverly, Happy. “You make me happy..”



“During the breaks, there was time to explore the magnificent mile, when you walked right out of the hotel, you didn't have to go far. The hotel was in the perfect location!”

Alexxis Hutchinson,
Norfolk District Youth
Secretary
WHOMS

Virginia Conference

How did you decide on what to pack for the Truthville: The Reunion?

“Of course, due to the cold weather, I wanted to be cute but warm. The themes made it easier for what I was going to wear along with my daughter. For Greek Night, I was happy to wear a sweater by Be Fashionably Greek. For Episcopal day, our colors were black and white, I wore a white bodysuit, leather joggers, and Jordan 1's.”

“The one thing I love about mid-winter is that I can be myself and wear what I want. I get to show my personality.”

What nuggets did you get from attending the sessions and worship services?

“I participated in a session that was a focus group. We had a discussion on children and youth ministries. We talked about whether we have a budget for our churches. Do we allocate certain Sundays for our youth? One pastor shared that they have junior trustees and stewards. He shared that he gives out certificates and it makes the youth feel like they are a part of the church. I thought that this is a good way to teach our youth how to be leaders in the church. Sometimes, I feel like we have to set up our next generation as we want our church to grow.”

What was your favorite session at Truthville: The Reunion?

“I loved the college rally because we give our scholarships and kids are exposed to HBCU/ PWI life, and Greek like. The new president of Livingstone College was present with SGA leaders. He wanted to bridge the gap between the school and the church. I loved that all ages were able to participate. I always like it because it's different and inclusive of everyone.”

“Domenique's (my daughter) favorite session was the informational session on ViCYC.”

How was your experience staying at the meeting hotel on the Magnificent Mile?

“I love the Magnificent Mile, and during holiday time, it's so pretty. During our downtime, we went to the Museum of Ice Cream, Michael Jordan's restaurant, and to a Chicago Bulls Game.”

Rev. Brandon Smith,
Pastor of Lee Thee A.M.E. Zion
Church
Rockingham District

How was your overall experience attending Truthville: The Reunion?

“This year was the 20th year I attended a winter meeting. This has always been on my calendar, and it's a special place for me. The church has been



scattered due to the pandemic and it was a breath of fresh air to be present again.”

How did you decide on what to pack for Truthville: The Reunion?

“That’s funny because I have served as a connectional officer and every time in the past it was pretty formal and I would pack suits. This year, I packed one suit and everything else was super casual. A few weeks before, I had ordered five pairs of Jordan 1’s and they came right on time. The dress code was something that I’m not used to, especially being a pastor. I took the opportunity to dress casual as it was asked by the General Secretary.”



How was your time reconnecting with fellow Zionites?

“It was good, especially since I haven’t seen some people in a few years. Seeing young people run around the conference and seeing my colleagues; it was nostalgic since we’ve been in Chicago before and got snowed in. It’s funny that a lot couldn’t get in Chicago this time because the last time we were there for the winter meeting, people couldn’t get out of Chicago. It was a bad blizzard and flights were canceled and delayed.”

“The Reunion was good for the soul.”

What was your favorite food in Chicago?
Garrett’s Popcorn and Al’s Italian Beef

What was your favorite session?

“I went to one of the workshops on money management. The opening worship service was my favorite. Seeing my colleagues on that platform and three of them I knew personally. They had wonderful preachings.”

“It was refreshing for me because I enjoy seeing us highlight our own people. Nothing to take away from those we bring in. It’s a country saying that I heard as a kid growing up, “it’s a poor frog who doesn’t praise its own pond.” Seeing my colleagues in my ministry who had never seen that platform was refreshing.”



A note from the Lifestyle Editor:

As the Norfolk District Youth Director for Christian Education, I had my bags packed and was ready to attend Truthville in Chicago. As a fashion stylist, I planned my outfits to be warm, fashionable, and comfortable. I was excited to learn, engage, and to connect with

fellow Zionites at the meeting. Southwest stopped my plans to attend the meeting in-person, but the Truthville team made it easy for me to switch my registration to virtual... as folks say, “But God.”

The virtual experience was amazing and I walked away with just what I needed to continue to work as a Christian Educator in the A.M.E. Zion Church.

Words to describe folks experience from the Reunion:

Magnificent
Refreshing
Reconnected
Spirit-filled



“The CED Midwinter Meeting, now known as Truthville, continues to be the most impactful of Zion’s gatherings for all ages. This year was a reunion for many and a new experience for others. The powerful worship services, transformative workshops, and inspirational connections were wonderful. It was my 46th consecutive meeting and one that blessed us greatly. Our GOD is awesome!”

- Bishop W. Darin Moore, Vice Chair, CED

“This year’s Truthville was like none other, for me!! I say that literally and figuratively. I was wrestling with a cold, and was quarantined. So for the first time, I was completely virtual!! A huge shout out to our CED and Zion Communications staff, that let me feel as if I was there in person!! The quality of the broadcast, and the extensive coverage, was just what ‘Thee Doctor’ ordered!!! Major Kudos!!!”

- Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, Board Chair, CED

Mark your calendar and plan to attend Truthville 2023 which will be held in “the city of oaks”, Raleigh, North Carolina! Registration will open over the summer.



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



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



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



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



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 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 or schukaekemamsr@gmail.com



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
ESTERN WEST 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_uduak@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. Felica Thompson, Missionary Supervisor



12. Bishop Eric L. Leake
SOUTH WESTERN DELTA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
 Episcopal Residence: 123 Sagefield Square, Canton, Mississippi 39046
 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 Warren M. Brown (Retired)
 4010 Castile Square, Austell, GA 30106
 Ph: (678) 574-2725
 Email: brownamez@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

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: missionaryseergm@gmail.com

**Rev. Patrick Barrett, Secretary-Treasurer,
Christian Education Department**

P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

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: emerriw721@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; Cell: (917) 837-5173; Email: DAikenSr@amezion.org

FORMER GENERAL OFFICERS

- Dr. Raymon Hunt
- Dr. W. Robert Johnson, III
- Dr. Kermit DeGraffenreid
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- Dr. Shirley Welch
- Dr. Otis McMillian
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- 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 Earham 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.ConnBellwright@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: clcfianancialsecretary@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

Ph: (301) 890-0270 (H); 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

Cell: (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: Kleinza@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**

Rev. Johngerlyn "Jonse" Young, President, President

Assembly of Christian Educators (ACE)

1663 Coalcar Ct. SE, Kentwood, MI 49508

Email: Jyoungace@gmail.com; Ph: (616) 581-5358

Rev. Samuel Brown, Chairperson

Young Adults in Christian Ministries (YACM)

2744 Selma Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37853;

Email: yacmchair@gmail.com; Ph: (865) 456-3357

Mr. Ezekiel A. Perez,, President

Varick International Christian Youth Council (VICYC)

Ph: (408) 757-9249 Email: ezekiel1132@gmail.com

COLLEGES

Livingstone College, Rev. Dr. Anthony Davis, President

701 W. Monroe Street, Salisbury, NC 28144; Ph: (704) 216-6151

Fax: (704) 216-6217; Internet: www.livingstone.edu

Clinton College, Dr. Lester A. McCorn, President

1029 Crawford Road, Rock Hill, SC 29730

Ph: (803) 327-7402; Fax: (803) 327-3261

Hood Theological Seminary, Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President

1810 Lutheran Synod Drive, Salisbury, NC 28144

Ph: (704) 636-7611; Fax: (704) 636-7685

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

**INTERNTAIONAL 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: Fsbrownnyes@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 Orchard 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: rochellep16@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

THE VICTORY YOU CAN SEE

OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN TO ELECT REV. DR. VICTOR C. WILSON

A BISHOP IN THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH HAS LAUNCHED

A historical mark was made on the grounds of the Freedom Temple Ministries in Rock Hill, South Carolina, on December 17, 2022, at 3:00 pm where Reverend Doctor Victor C. Wilson declared his candidacy for bishop in the AME Zion Church in 2024. The Freedom Temple Ministries is strategically located in the South Atlantic Episcopal District, where Bishop Kenneth Monroe is the presiding bishop and Senior Bishop of the AME Zion Church.

Bishop Carlton Williams, Mt. Calvary Holy Churches of America, Inc., Roanoke, North Carolina, was the worship leader. Bishop Williams announced welcome to the Campaign to Elect Victor C. Wilson for Bishop in the AME Zion Church. If you're going to Greensboro, you're in the right place, at the right time. Now is the time to support and elect my friend for over thirty years, the Reverend Doctor Victor C. Wilson, the next bishop in the AME Zion Church. No matter how small we may think we are, each one of us can make a difference in the Wilson for Bishop Campaign. Why should we make a difference in this campaign? I am so glad you asked. He is a leader par excellence that leads his people. John Maxwell said it best: "He who thinks he leads, but has no followers, is only taking a walk." Look at the people who have followed him here to today to help launch his campaign. Dr. Wilson has led people everywhere that he has served. He is truly a leader.

The greeting and statement of purpose was given by Reverend Lawrence Ganzy, Jr., pastor of Liberty Hill AME Zion Church, Clover, SC. He announced the official launch for the Reverend Dr. Victor C. Wilson for bishop in the AME Zion Church in 2024. From his reflections as a pastor under Dr. Wilson's leadership, Reverend Ganzy stated "Dr. Wilson is a servant leader. Service is at the core of who he is. One of the things that he would tell the Spartanburg District is that we need to go and make some disciples. Dr. Wilson's campaign platform is SEE. This is also what he represents." The expressions in support of Dr. Wilson's candidacy were given by the following people: The Reverend Sonya Burns, mentee and was an associate minister under Dr. Wilson's pastoral leadership at the United AME Zion Church. Reverend Burns reflected on how Dr. Wilson's leadership helped her gain valuable skills to become a successful pastor. She shared, "I watched how he motivated the members for ministry and he allowed them to become a prominent church in the community." Rev. Burns highlighted how active they were in the Interfaith Ministerial Alliance to improve the Fort Mill community and their influential participation in the Town of Fort Mill's Strawberry Festival. In fact, they were so successful under Dr. Wilson's leadership that the church would have to revamp their booth with something new every year because other people would copy their ideas. "We were very visible and we took the community by storm. He allowed each minister to excel in their strengths and he would challenge us to grow in our weaker areas. He encouraged us, celebrated us and pushed us to become better. I think he will do the same for all clergy of all ranks when he becomes a bishop in the AME Zion Church." Mr. Shaun Golden, a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Kappa Alpha Chapter, Rock Hill, South Carolina. Elder Wilson is a man of God. He has given his life to serve as a minister since 1993, when he answered his call to preach. He also gives service in the community through Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. Mr. Golden encouraged everyone to get behind Dr. Wilson's campaign with the song, "Victory In Jesus," by Eugene M. Bartlett.

"Let's help Elder Victor get the Victory in 2024." The Reverend Iris Kennedy, first pastor of the Spartanburg District, New Hope AME Zion Church, Union, South Carolina spoke on behalf of the Fired up and Ready To Go District, The Spartanburg District. "We know him to be a visionary leader and always seeking out opportunities to make a difference. We salute you presiding elder as you march toward your desire to become a bishop in the AME Zion Church. I want to leave with you a quote by Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr., "The difference between a dreamer and a visionary is that a dreamer has his eyes closed and a visionary has his eyes open" I say to you keep your eyes open as you walk up to that stage to take office as a bishop in the AME Zion Church, to God be the glory for the things he is going to do!"

Bishop Kenneth Monroe, presiding bishop of the South Atlantic Episcopal District and Senior bishop of the AME Zion Church brought words of encouragement to the candidate. Bishop Monroe begins by thanking the people for giving their support to Reverend Dr. Victor Wilson's campaign for bishop in the AME Zion Church. Bishop Monroe shared the following accolades about Dr. Wilson. In my fourteen years of knowing and working with Victor Wilson. I have come to know him as a servant leader. Dr. Wilson has demonstrated tremendous pastoral skills, dedication to the work of ministry and exceptional administrative skills as a pastor and presiding elder. Please note that these are some of the elements that are needed to serve the people as a bishop in the AME Zion Church. Bishop Monroe encouraged Dr. Wilson to always listen to God, pray first, aim high, and stay focused.

The Honorable Theodore R. Newman, Jr., Senior Judge, District of Columbia, Court of Appeals, Retired, spoke for the family. Judge



Newman reflected that he has known Dr. Wilson to be a man of honesty, integrity, and excellent character. Judge Newman continued that Dr. Wilson is a man of vision for the AME Zion denomination. He has the leadership ability to accomplish the vision. Judge Newman's parting words were, "Do what is right, support and elect Dr. Victor Wilson as one of your next bishops. God bless you!"

The Reverend Doctor Titus Thorn, Presiding Elder, Mobile District, Campaign Chairperson, and the Dr. Wilson's son in the ministry, presented the candidate. Dr. Thorn began by thanking the Co-Campaign Chairpersons, Reverend Patty Smith, and Reverend Zaniel Young, the campaign committee, and all who had assembled. From his reflections, Dr. Thorn shared that in the early 2000s, there was a shift in the Christian community in Fort Mill, SC. The faith community had not felt this buzz or excitement since the 1970s. The buzz was centered around the young, anointed, innovative leader of the United AME Zion Church, who had taken the whole city by storm. This church was led by Reverend Victor C. Wilson and they were at the forefront of every major issue or concern that plagued the community. The church was healthy, it was vibrant, it was financially stable. The commitment of the membership was second to none! The church was going. They were evangelizing. They were making a difference in the lives of others. What Fort Mill was witnessing? What the faith base community was witnessing? What AME Zion Church was witnessing was transformative ministry by a transformative leader. United AME Zion Church had become strong in every way possible, membership, financially, economically, ministry wise.

Doctor Thorn recalled getting into that white bus and going into communities and knocking on doors. We would go into barber shops and stores to evangelize, by telling someone about the Good News of Jesus. This same ministry platform that he did at United; he has done it everywhere he went. He has gone from Fort Mill, South Carolina, to Augusta, Georgia, Lancaster, South Carolina, Rock Hill, South Carolina, and Spartanburg South Carolina, everywhere God has sent him it



has worked. We are witnessing what it means to have effective leadership, an effective man of God that makes a difference. I believe that the AME Zion Church will become a stronger church, equipped church, an effective church with this kind of leadership as a bishop. Let us celebrate, the Reverend Doctor Victor C. Wilson, Presiding Elder of the Spartanburg District, our candidate for bishop in the AME Zion Church in 2024.

The Reverend Doctor Victor C. Wilson begin his remarks by thanking God for using him in his ministry.

Dr. Wilson made the following statements. "I didn't just start on yesterday. I am reminded of Rock Grove AME Zion Church. God gave me a servant heart. I served as an usher



standing at the back door, welcoming the people into God's house. Later, I joined the trustee board, served as the preacher steward, always serving in God's house. I want to thank my parents for introducing me to the AME Zion Church and most of all to God. The late Reverend Doctor Charles Joseph Wilson and Mrs. Mary Wilson that they are in that great cloud of witnesses looking down and cheering me on to victory." Dr. Wilson was called out from the membership at the Rock Grove AME Zion Church into pastoral ministry under the leadership of Bishop Joseph Johnson. Dr. Wilson remembers Bishop Joseph Johnson asking him which type of pastor are you going to be a problem or a solution for the bishop? Dr. Wilson said that he decided to be a solution pastor. "I thank God that he always gave me the solution for the problem wherever I served. It wasn't me; it was God who gave me answer to the problems that I encountered." God saw Dr. Wilson's labors, and moved on Bishop Mildred B. Hines's heart to appoint Dr. Wilson as the presiding elder of the Spartanburg District. God has done a tremendous work there. Dr. Wilson shared, "I just thank God for the way he keeps using me. After, being elevated to a presiding elder, I was content but God reminded me that he is not through with me. He said he has more work for me to do. He kept showing me visions of me serving all these people. I kept pushing it out of my mind. I did not want anything to do with it. Just like when he was calling me to preach, I didn't want anything to do with it

but I yield to the spirit of God. I had an unrest in my spirit, just restless. I picked up the phone and called the late Bishop Mildred B. Hines. I said Bishop Hines, God is calling me to the office of bishop. At that moment the restlessness left and my joy was restored. God gave me a vision for His church. The vision is SEE! God wants to Strengthen the church. I'm glad God always allowed me to *strengthen* the church. Each church I served I left it better than what I found. It is all because of what God did. I yield myself to God and I followed God.



God said we must *equip* the people. We have to invest in our people both lay and clergy. We have to teach and train them in the way that God would have them to serve. On the Spartanburg District God has allowed forty-five percent (45%) of my pastors to be women. I support both women and men in ministry. I am glad God has allowed me to have some sons and daughters who serves as pastors and presiding elders in the AME Zion Church. They are equipped to serve. Then my passion is evangelism. Evangelism is the life line of the church. We don't have to close any church; the church doesn't have to die but we need to do some work. We have to go out and evangelize the world. I am so glad that God gave me a passion for people to go out and knock-on doors and invite the unchurch to come and see. Come and See that Man called Jesus and watch how he can change your life. We got to tell somebody about Jesus. I thank God for ministry. It's not about me; it's about Jesus I'm a nobody trying to tell everybody about that man call Jesus. Follow me as I follow Christ."



The Reverend Sharon A. Browning, Presiding Elder of the Rock Hill District gave the closing remarks and benediction. Presiding Browning stated that our candidate is a brother beloved and he is also a servant leader. He has a love for people and for the things of God. "In 2002 I had a major stroke. He was the first pastor to invite me to come to his church and preach. I cannot talk well. I had a lot of things going on with my memory but he kept pushing me. He is a person that wants the best for you and out of you." A reception followed the campaign service where Mrs. Nancy Fleming-Griffin, owner of Flawless Functions LLC, provided delicious refreshments and immaculate decorations.

The Wilson for Bishop 2024 Campaign Team is sincerely grateful to Bishop Herbert C. Crump, Jr. and the Freedom Temple Ministries church family and staff for their impeccable hospitality and a sincere willingness to serve us during the campaign launch service.



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CLINTON COLLEGE SETS TO BE DIFFFERENT

One of our very own is helping shift the culture for our young students. Clinton College, a renowned HBCU in South Carolina, has been helping pave the way for student gamers with the launch of its Esports Program. If you are unfamiliar with Esports, Esports allows students to connect and compete with different schools and organizations in a variety of competitive video games. It has become more prevalent in recent years due to the takeoff of content creators and professional gamers.

I had the chance to speak with the current head coach of the Clinton College Esports team, Jerret Fite. We spoke for about half an hour, and he had nothing but great things to say about his Esports team and the support they get from the community and school.

Clinton College Esports team launched in 2020. In the beginning, it wasn't very easy, Coach Fite described to me. In year one, they only had 1 player. Then in year two, they had 5. Now in year three, they are up to 14 students who compete weekly in a variety of competitions and tournaments.

I find it awesome how young people are able to play games competitively now and not hear things like "You are wasting time" or "Go do something productive instead of playing that dumb game". There are a lot of life lessons and benefits that can be made from scholars joining Esports programs now. Coach Fite explained to me some of the prizes students can win from these competitions. "These students get a wonderful opportunity to make money and get scholarships and internships. It is an



amazing opportunity when you have a chance to enter a \$500,000 Mountain Dew tournament. That tournament was also giving away (4) \$50,000 summer internships for students."

I personally love hearing when young adults can do what they love, and it also has a long-term benefit for them. Coach Fite explains that Clinton College's Esports team is helping his students better understand the real world. Deadlines, communication, group planning, and many more life skills are learned and developed through Esports gaming.

For a program like this to survive and thrive, is impossible without the support of the University and administrators. "The school has done a lot. We have gone from nothing to what we have today. They helped build a game center for our team. The school invested in this just to get a space for esports. A space just for us. If we need purchasing of equipment, software issues, the running of wires, they always give us a helping hand" said Coach Fite.



What Clinton college is doing in the Esports world and the value they are bringing to students is amazing. Sometimes these programs go overlooked at certain schools if you do not have a big enough budget or enough student participants. Clinton did not let that stop their vision, and that is why they continue to thrive.



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FUNERAL SERVICES HELD FOR REV. ALEX PHIPPS SR.

Submitted by Ms. Ruth L. Thompson, Reporter

Funeral services for Rev. Alex Phipps Sr. were held on Saturday, December 17, 2022 at Farrah Funeral Home, Jefferson City TN. Host pastor was Rev. Luke Curry, Sr. Presiding Elder was Rev. Herbert Grant. Eulogist was Bishop Darryl B. Starnes. Music was provided by the Young's Memorial A.M.E. Zion Choir.

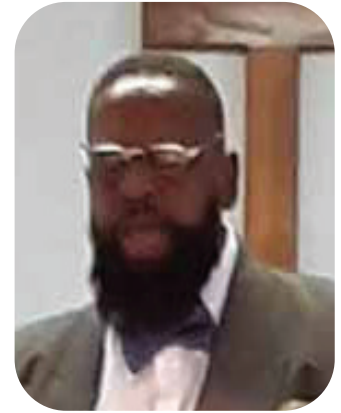
Rev. Phipps was a devoted and faithful member of Young's Memorial prior to his call into the ministry. While at Young's Memorial he served on various boards. His first charge was Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church, Dandridge, TN where he served for 13 years. He served at Young's Temple A.M.E. Zion Church (Morristown, TN.) for the past three years.

He leaves to cherish fond memories his wife Connie, children, Jana Thomas (Robert), Alex Jr, Rodney Phipps (Ami), Cornellia Norris, Kayla Noriega (Jorge), Caleb Phipps (Catie), Cameron Phipps, Kiarra Phipps, Keane Phipps, Caden Phipps, Keaton Phipps, Mother, Mary Phipps, siblings Mary Ann Thomas (Tommy), Kenny Phipps several grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Pastors and ministers of the Blue Ridge Conference (vested) were part of the procession, Participants in the devotion included Revs. Wayne Purcell, John Mitchell and Norman Jefferson. Resolutions and acknowledgments were received from the Conference (Rev. Keith L. Lipsey). District (Rev. William Staley)., Young's Memorial (Mrs.

Stephanie Thompson), Young's Temple (Ms. Ruth Thompson). A letter of Sympathy, Respect and Condolence from Retired Senior Bishop and Mrs. Battle was read by Presiding Elder Herbert Grant. Rev. Phipps was defined as a humble servant, one whose life was lived in Godly service, a devoted husband, father and grandfather. One with a gentle nature and a keen and unique sense of humor.

Bishop Starnes delivered the eulogy on "Living by Faith" (2nd Cor. 5:1-10). He said, "Living by faith is believing what God promises. Living by faith gives us three essentials for experiencing the highest possible quality of life. He defined these as 1. Living by faith gives us blessed assurance that when we die one day, we will have a body that cannot die. 2. Living by faith gives us great confidence for life in this world and for life in the world to come. 3. Living by faith gives us Godly perspectives on our way of life, goal in life and on our outlook in life. This means recognizing that we are ultimately accountable to God for how we live."



REFLECTING ON OUR PAST, INVENTING OUR FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Submitted By Dr. Dana G. Stillely
Financial Freedom Editor, The Star Of Zion
Email: FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org

Black history month is the time of year that is devoted to focusing on the many accomplishments of African American people. We honor the artists, scientists, inventors, educators, and entrepreneurs, whose creativity and intelligence allowed for the development of products and services and facilitated the rise and development of the United States of American

Common names extoled during this month include Benjamin Banneker, Madame C.J. Walker, and George Washington Carver. Yet, there are countless others on the verge of being forgotten that remain missing from most U.S. history books.

Alexander Miles is one of them. Miles, a businessman and inventor created a mechanism to automatically open and close elevator doors. Miles received a patent for this work in 1887. His designs are often mirrored in elevators that are in use today. Similarly, the design of a common household item, the ironing board, was greatly enhanced by Sarah Boone, an enslaved woman, in 1892. She altered the original horizontal wood block to include a narrow, curved design that made it easier to iron sleeves and women clothes. Boone's designed was the catalyst for the modern design used today. She was the 2nd African American women to get a patent.

Other notable inventors include Dr. James E. West and Mary Van Brittan Brown.

Dr. West was the co-inventor of a more compact, sensitive microphone in 1960. Most of the microphones used today, including those used in cameras and phones, were developed by Dr. West. Mrs.

Brown, concerned about her personal safety, invented an instrument that could hold a camera and look through peepholes in her front door. The camera's view was projected onto a monitor in her home. She later enhanced this system to include a microphone to speak to people at the door, and buttons to call the police and unlock the door. The patent for this system was awarded to Mrs. Brown and her husband in 1969. The home security systems used today contain several elements from her original design.

We may never know what financial gains, if any, that these inventors were able to gain from their products. Yet, we should still look to them for inspiration, as we continue to work toward our own financial freedom. As we move through Black History Month, I encourage everyone to reflect on their God given talents and skills. When doing so, consider opportunities to use your gifts, hobbies, or specialized crafts and embrace what is commonly called a 'side-hustle.' A side-hustle refers to opportunities to make money outside of your primary, regular job.

The additional money generated from a side-hustle may be used to pay off debt or increase savings, easing the pathway to financial freedom. Side-hustles may also become lucrative full-time employment opportunities if the product or service has ample demand, and you have the skills and ability to protect and grow your business.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of our forefathers and foremothers this month, know that the ability to create great things lies in each of us. Don't sleep on the notion that you possess the idea, motivation, and skills to invent a system or product that can change the world and may lead to the financial freedom of your family for generations to come.

REPARATIONS BY ANOTHER NAME

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

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Webley, revealed that the Church of England had set aside £100 million in a fund intended “to address past wrongs” related to the institution’s historic links with the transatlantic slave trade.

There was never any doubt that the Church of England had extensive ties to the Transatlantic trade in Africans. One has to only visit one of its oldest theological seminaries, the Codrington College, built in 1714 on the Codrington Plantation, in the parish of St. John, Barbados. The property including its slaves were bequeathed to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, an Anglican missionary agency. After emancipation of British Slaves in 1838, the Society was paid £8,823 for 411 slaves as compensation for the loss of their labour.

However, it was an act of great moral courage for the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Webley wrestling with his conscience, the bible and his Church to have finally declared his hand. He stated, on January 11, 2023 “I am deeply sorry for these (Trans-Atlantic Slavery) links. It is now time to take action to address our shameful past. Only by obeying the command in 1 John 1:6-7 and addressing our past, transparently can we take the path that Jesus Christ calls us to walk and face our present and future with integrity. It is hard to do this at a time when resources in many parishes are so stretched, but by acting rightly we open ourselves to the blessing of God.”

This statement came into effect after a full report laid bare the links of the Church Commissioners’ predecessor fund with the transatlan-



tic chattel slavery. The Church Commissioners, is a body which administers the property assets of the Church of England. It was established in 1948 and combined the assets of Queen Anne’s Bounty, a fund dating from 1704 for the relief of poor clergy, and of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners formed in 1836.

tical Commissioners formed in 1836.

The Queen Anne’s Bounty had invested £406,942, British pounds (today’s equivalent £724 million) – in the South Sea Company. The report estimated that the South Sea Company transported 34,000 slaves in poor conditions over its 30 years of operation.

The establishment of the Fund was controversial as many of the church’s clergy and bishops are more concerned about their current financial state of affairs than their past moral duplicity and sinful injudiciousness

PELE, A SYMBOL OF MOBILITY (1940-2022)

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

Edson Arantes do Nascimento, also known to the world as Pele, was outstanding in his ability to handle, manipulate and manage a size 5, soccer ball with a circumference of 27” and a weight of 14-16 ounces. His charismatic movements on the soccer pitch’s 76, 665.6 square feet was legendary. His ability to avoid the obstacles placed by the 11 opponents on the other soccer team was exceptional. His capability to place the soccer ball in the opponents’ net with a combination of brute physicality, speed, mathematical precision, power and style was remarkable. Pele thrilled world audiences with his performance on the soccer field resulting in an average of 1 goal per match.

Pele’s greatest achievement however may very well be off the soccer pitch. That could very well be what he represented in the minds and spirits of Latin America’s poor Afro-descendants. Like 90% of Afro-Brazilians Pele grew up in poverty in Sao Paulo. Like most Afro-Brazilians of his time he shared their invisibility. Though persons of African descent are the majority ethnic and racial group in the republic of Brazil they were rendered invisible in the fields of education, economy, arts, media, the professions and politics.

Trapped in the barrios and favelas of Latin America, young boys and girls dream that one day they will be like Pele. Pele, broke through the race barrier and became, an outstanding sporting personality, hero and role model. He unlike many other players of colour was ahead of his time when it came to marketing and monetise his value. Pele’s charisma and ingenuity further allowed him to transcend the

barriers of language and race to become a significant person in the lives of young American boys and girls. His attachment to the New York Cosmos soccer team for three seasons has transformed soccer in the United



BLACK BLOOD VOICES CRY OUT

INSPIRED OF BLACK LIVES MATTER

IN HONOR OF THOSE FALLEN AT THE HANDS OF POLICE

Submitted By Leona Nicholas Welch

From a street in Staten Island,

BLACK BLOOD VOICES CRY OUT!

ERIC GARNER...ERIC GARNER...ERIC GARNER.

Black blood voices echo against the walls of buildings,

In boomerang effect, sending out red ripples to the New York Harbor...

I CAN'T BREATHE...I CAN'T BREATHE!

Watery, choking BLACK BLOOD VOICES CRY OUT.

Another voice cries,

flooding the streets of Ferguson,

Crimson-soaked cement bears the guilt –

testifies to a legacy of bigotry, proudly owned.

This voice cries-18 years alive

MICHAEL BROWN MICHAEL BROWN MICHAEL BROWN

Hands in the air: DON'T SHOOT! DON'T SHOOT!

BLACK BLOOD VOICES CRY OUT!

From inside a darkened stairwell, yet another voice.

Unlawful bullets ricochet and take

Another black life. Newly braided hair

Soaked in innocent blood...Brooklyn heard

AKAI GURLEY AKAI GURLEY AKAI GURLEY

BLACK BLOOD VOICES CRY OUT!

Twelve, black and male, he plays – toy gun in hand
systematic race- fear raises its head,

Joins forces with the law designed to

Make black blood cry out.

TAMIR RICE TAMIR RICE TAMIR RICE

And Cleveland sees –

A play structure streaked with blood.

BLACK BLOOD VOICES CRY OUT!

OH, BEAUTIFUL FOR SPACIOUS SKIES

WHILE BLACK BLOOD CRIES!

OH, BEAUTIFUL FOR SPACIOUS SKIES

WHILE BLACK BLOOD CRIES.

FREDDIE GRAY, in a Police Van one day

Injured and died

Baltimore lied.

PHILANDO CASTILLE, also killed, while a four-year girl looked on.

To the Minnesota law, His last words:

I AM NOT REACHING FOR A GUN!

BLACK BLOOD CRIES OUT, AMERICA

While your beauty remains stained

From sea to shiny sea

SET MY PEOPLE FREE!

His blood cries out,

flooding his grandma's, yard; Sacramento law at his back.

STEPHON CLARK STEPHON CLARK STEPHON CLARK

Cell phone in his hand – not a gun.

BLACK BLOOD CRIES OUT

MY COUNTRY TIS OF THEE, SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY

FOR WHOM? FOR WHOM? FOR WHOM

BOTHAM JEFFERSON - Dallas

BREANNA TAYLOR – Louisville

AHMAD ARBERY – Satilla

Blood connection in the streets-

Between walls, in play places

VOICES CRYING OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER

CRYING OUT for life

CRYING OUT for liberty

CRYING for the happiness, UN PURSUED.

GEORGE FLOYD GEORGE FLOYED GEORGE FLOYD

Bigotry's knee on his neck,

A nine-minute death sentenced imposed

MAMA! MAMA! MAMA!

Minneapolis could not hear

WAKE UP AMERICA!

We have grown tired of counting

Tired of recalculating the stats against blacks

Tired of walking through black blood

To get to privilege, to get to justice, to get

Outside of these narrow margins that keep us

Suffocating for the America that we built.

WAKE UP, BLACK AMERICA.

These purple mountains are ours.

They attest to our majesty.

WAKE UP BLACK AMERICA –

Let's reclaim our TOGETHER

LET'S SAVE OUR OWN LIVES

No one knows better than we– Black American

No one knows better - that BLACK LIVES MATTER.

BLACK BLOOD VOICES CRY OUT!

“MY GOD IS ABLE” LESSON 4

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Dwayne L. Tutt

The last two months I focused on the AME Zion ministry at Camp Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center. I reviewed how the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ) purchased nearly 60 acres of land in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. By faith and hard work, AMEZ was able to purchase the property and provide ministry for our youth.

Then I wrote about the liquidation of the debt for the camp. I said the Piedmont was in millions of dollars of debt. I then wrote about how God sent Bishop Battle to the Piedmont and how he used his financial acumen to retire the debt. Now we turn to what happened after Bishop Battle.

This lesson will focus on how God sent a bishop to minister to the people and to bring a long-term business plan to Camp Dorothy Walls. But before I do, I digress to the first lesson I wrote a few months ago.

Please recall in the very first article I wrote to the Star of Zion, I wrote about how the AME Zion Church had grown exponentially up to the Great Depression in America. Then during the Great Depression, the General Conference made a decision to cut budgets. After the Great Depression, the denomination had to rebuild and promote growth.

My research over the many years provides a thesis that the church should grow when people are in a state of crisis and uncertainty. It was with that thought in mind, I started writing this column to prepare for our General Conference in 2024. I want AMEZ to always plan for growth! This is now my fourth column.

Initially, I contracted with The Star of Zion to write a total of six articles in a six-month period. I love the AME Zion Church and believe we have our best days ahead of us. All we must do is remember God Is Able to use Zion to minister to the world.

Going back to the Book of Nehemiah the text reads:

Nehemiah 2:11-18

*¹¹ So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. ¹² And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. ¹³ And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. ¹⁴ Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. ¹⁵ Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned. ¹⁶ And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work. ¹⁷ Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. ¹⁸ Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. **And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.***

Note the strategy of Nehemiah. When he arrived in Jerusalem, **he studied the situation**. He studied the conditions of the walls and gates. Even though he knew why he had journeyed to Jerusalem, and he knew he had support from his king, he still took time to **study the situation**. Furthermore, he didn't tell people why he was there. Instead, he went out by night and only took a few men with him. Then after he had a plan, he spoke to the people. He explained to them God had put it upon his heart to rebuild the walls and gates in Jerusalem. Also, he told them he had the needed resources from the king to complete the job. After the people heard him speak, they were ready to rebuild, and they prepared their hands for the work.

I am a firm believer when God sets a human being to a task, that person will use their hand, heart, and hands (HHH) for the work. No success, growth or accomplishment can be accomplished without planning and thought. Both planning and thought occur in

the mind / head of human beings. I remind you Nehemiah had been “planning” to do this work for months before he let everybody know. He had started planning when he was in the Kings palace as a cupbearer. Nehemiah had a goal to rebuild in his heart. The Jewish people teach that the heart of humans is where the soul exists. Please allow me to put it this way; in our hearts we have a desire and with our heads our desire leads to a plan. The plan is executed with our head, heart, and hands.



For example, in my heart I believe God wanted me to write these series of articles and publish them in the Star of Zion. I never told anyone what was in my heart. For months, I used my head to think about how to approach what was in my heart. I finally reached out to the Star of Zion to inquire if and how I might write this column. After conversations, I agreed to write six articles. Then I did my research and began writing by using my head, heart, and hands. Right now my hands are typing these words as my heart and head directs. God uses our head, hearts, and hands to accomplish His work in this earth.

Now going back to how God used Bishop Walker, Bishop Battle, Piedmont pastors, ministers, and laypeople to breathe new life back into Camp Dorothy Walls. In our last column, I reported how God performed a miracle in the Blue Ridge Mountains for the AME Zion Church. What I observed is how the leadership of one bishop built and another bishop's leadership was used to liquidate the debt. These two bishops' leadership allowed the wealth of the AME Zion Church to grow. Then after Bishop Battle retired then God sent a bishop who loves to teach and to minister to the Saints. Plus, the new bishop has been very strategic in planting seeds to ensure operational success at Camp Dorothy Walls. Of course, the new bishop is Bishop Darryl B. Starnes.

Bishop Starnes was born in Hampton, Virginia. He was raised in Knoxville, Tennessee. Knoxville, Tennessee is the home of the University of Tennessee. Anyone who knows Bishop Starnes knows he loves the University of Tennessee, and he promotes the University of Tennessee's color orange wherever he goes.

Bishop Starnes was greatly influenced by his grandfather. His grandfather is Rev. Dr. J.A. Babington – Johnson who organized and served as the pastor of First AME Zion Church, Knoxville.

Bishop Starnes gave his life to Christ at the age of 15. He was also a studious young man and did very well in school. He was also blessed as a very gifted athlete. He played football, baseball, basketball and ran track. After graduating from high school, he studied at Livingstone College. After graduating from Livingstone College with a major in history, he enrolled at Hood Theological Seminary and earned a Master of Divinity Degree. He then attended the Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama to earn a Doctor of Ministry Degree.

He has served the church as a pastor in several Annual Conferences before the AME Zion Church elected him to be the Director of Evangelism for the AME Zion Church. He has built a reputation as a church leader who brings the healing power of Jesus to the people he serves.

In the bible at **Mark 14:32-50** we read that Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He had Peter, James, and John with him as he went into the Garden of Gethsemane. The weight of the world was laying on the human side of Jesus. The divine side of Jesus knew his time on earth as a human was coming to an end. So, Jesus went off by himself to pray. I remind you that all four Gospel writers Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John report that Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray and to await his captors.

The Garden of Gethsemane is located at the Mount of Olives. At this location there are olive trees. The word Gethsemane is derived from the Aramaic word meaning oil press. The olive presses were used to crush the olives to create olive oil. Olive oil is referenced all throughout

scripture often meaning anointing and healing. In **James 5:13-14** we read that if there are sick among us, we should anoint them with oil (it would have been olive oil when James wrote) and to pray and the sick would be healed. Olive oil also has a symbolic meaning for the Holy Spirit of God and we see in scripture the practice of pouring oil on leadership.

When the Prophets in scripture poured olive oil on the heads of the kings to anoint them, they were symbolically pouring the Holy Spirit of God on the person and the person would be covered with and by God.

As I stated in previous lessons, the work of Camp Dorothy Walls, caused a great deal of stress and hardship on many people in the Piedmont. Yes, the work has provided greater wealth for the Piedmont, and there were costs. Many of the costs were paid by the hardworking members of the Piedmont. Just like the people of Nehemiah came to work on the walls and gates, people came to work on Camp Dorothy Walls. I remind you that it took years to build new facilities at Camp Dorothy Walls, it also took years to retire the debt. Yet, by the grace of God, the Piedmont accomplished the goals.

Then God sent Bishop Starnes and he has come with healing oil for the Piedmont. While his story and total contribution is still being written, he is providing the Piedmont with his gifts of ministry, teaching, preaching, and healing.

As I close this lesson, what God has put in my heart to say is, “look at the power of the itinerant ministry of traveling bishops.” One bishop built, another bishop paid, and the next bishop is ministering using Camp Dorothy Walls.

My decades of serving as a pastor in the AME Zion Church, I have admired the way bishops with different gifts rotate in the episcopacy to the benefit of the denomination. Time and time again, I have seen bishops expand various previous projects of former bishops. When I compare bishops building upon projects of other bishops, I wonder

why pastors do not seem committed to do the same? Furthermore, the Book of Discipline of the AME Zion Church, makes retirement mandatory for bishops, but not other ministers in Zion. I have never understood why bishops must retire and other ministers do not have to retire. I challenge AMEZ to think about mandatory retirement for all AMEZ ministers. I know there are many reasons for ministers and church leaders to stay in a place for very long times, but I also wonder what the costs are to AMEZ?

As we head toward another General Conference in 2024, it seems to me we need a healthy debate about the itinerant ministry and mandatory retirement for ministers. I am certain some will wonder can we pay for ministers to retire, and we know we cannot. I challenge AMEZ, should local congregations be the **100% retirement plan** for ministers until the death of the minister?

When I was a young pastor many years ago, I was blessed to have as conversation with Bishop Nathaniel Jerrett, Jr. My district had suffered the death of one of our under shepherds. The spouse of the minister turned to the district for burial support. The fact was the district didn't have the financial strength to support the spouse. I called Bishop Jarrett to seek his guidance. He said something I never forgot. He said, “ministers must plan for the day when they will not serve anymore.”

Again, I am hopeful legislation will be brought to the AME Zion General Conference of 2024 which forces the delegation to ask tough questions about the itinerant ministry and mandatory retirement for ministers.

Join me next month and I will tell you about a storm from the Caribbean which hit North Carolina.

See you next month. My God Is Able!

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

MODELING THE FUTURE OF RELIGION IN AMERICA

Submitted by The Star Of Zion

In September of 2022 the Pew Research Center released a report entitled “Modeling the Future of Religion in America”. Within this report the Pew Center shows four hypothetical scenarios modeling a future religious landscape for the United States if present demographic trends remain. Each model projects self-identifying Christians in the U.S. will decrease from 64 percent in 2020 to a range of 35-54 percent in 2070.

Pew's models may not be predictions of the future they do; however, present scenarios that would continue the last 30 years of a growing decline of self-identified Christians. The models are supported by data and research gathered by the Pew Center and cited in the report as well. A senior researcher with pew, Stephanie Kramer told *Christianity Today*, “A reversal of these trends is not impossible; it is just unlikely. We have never seen it and we do not have data to model a religious reversal.”

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/09/13/modeling-the-future-of-religion-in-america/>

American religious identity has experienced nearly three decades of consistent decline. But this roughly linear trend masks significant generational variation in religious identity. Research has consistently shown that every generation of adults is somewhat less religious than the generation that preceded it. This pattern continues with Generation Z demonstrating less attachment to religion than the millennial generation did. *The Survey Center on American Life* reports, “In terms of identity, Generation Z is the least religious generation yet. More than one-third (34 percent) of Generation Z are religiously unaffiliated, a significantly larger proportion than among millennials (29 percent) and Generation X (25 percent). Fewer than one in five (18 percent) baby boomers and only 9 percent of the silent generation are religiously

unaffiliated.”

The Star of Zion gleaned varied perspectives from faith leaders, academicians, and activists at all levels. Considering the Pew report their commentary give insight on how they feel the church could or should respond to actively reverse these projections.

These statements have been modestly edited for clarity and length.

Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr., Presiding Prelate Piedmont Episcopal District A.M.E. Zion Church-

“The days of people maintaining their affiliation with a religious group solely because of it being the religious persuasion of their parents, of their grandparents, or even of their own formative years, is long gone. Increasingly the religious affiliation of people will be made and maintained based on the impact of that church's ministry on their lives, on the lives of their loved-ones, and on society. Therefore, it is incumbent on the church to proclaim Christ's gospel by word (that is, by sharing with people how they can be in a right relationship with God); to proclaim Christ's gospel by deed (that is, by meeting people's felt needs in manner reflective of God's love for them); and to proclaim Christ's gospel by sign (that is, by serving as a conduit through which people can experience God's supernatural power). Yet, it must be said that each of these aspects of proclaiming Christ's gospel can only be



done in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Rev. Dr. Eleazar Meriwether, Executive Director of Church Growth & Development A.M.E. Zion Church- “We are consecrated, commissioned and are in a conducive environment to make disciples. Simply put, there is no shortage of sinners in the world; however, we must ensure the means we are using to disciple current or future believers remain effective- meaning they may need to change from time to time. It is in being a disciple that we can be most effective in doing the work of disciple making.”

Dr. Richard Gadzekpo, International Prayer Coordinator A.M.E. Zion Church, and Presiding Elder Chattanooga District- “In spite of the dire situation presented in the report I believe opportunities still exist for the church to remain relevant and to present the gospel to our generation in new, creative, and exciting ways because we serve a God who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above what we can think of or even imagine Ephesians 3:20-21. The report calls the church, Christians, to live out the command to “go make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18-20). We in the A.M.E. Zion church will have to be intentional in equipping our members to “go” rather than sit people down to be entertained Sunday after Sunday. We will have to be a unified church with clear expectations of members and members having clear expectations of those in leadership positions such as Bishops, Presiding Elders, and Pastors. Equally important considering this report, before the A.M.E. Zion Church embarks on any strategic planning for the future of the church, this report calls for a re-examination of the culture of the church to determine if our culture is relevant and serving the present age and helping us to fulfill our calling. Learning our culture in this context includes the examination of our espoused values, basic assumptions, and observable artifacts of the church.”



Rev. Tajuan Kyles, Pastor St. John A.M.E. Zion Church in Mocksville, NC- “Leaders should not get tangled up in the nuances of doctrine and those things that my divide us but amplify the fundamental truths of the Gospel such as God is love, Jesus Saves, and the Holy Spirit is power. We show our love for Jesus by displaying that love to others through service and conveying a clear message to everyone that Jesus is our inspiration and the reason for our transformation. The same love we receive from God is available to the unbeliever.”

Elder Matthew Best, Executive Director of the Change Center and ordained Elder Church of God in Christ, Inc.- “However incomplete these models may be, they still indicate in data what all of us as practitioners of Christian ministry have known for years. Traditional Black churches had bucked these trends in some ways for decades, but now we are firmly amid so many more “nones” and “dones” in our communities. I would argue that rather than panic and talk about how ‘evil’ the world is becoming, I think those of us in ministry should be excited about this opportunity. We get to re-evaluate our current methods and strategies, and we also get to be creative in determining what to do next. We literally serve the most creative force in the universe, so I refuse to be deterred by societal trends in my efforts to serve my community.”



Rev. LaKesha Womack, Principle and Founder, Rethinking Church Strategies, LLC. and A.M.E. Zion ordained minister-

“It can be tempting for the church to believe people choose not to affiliate with it because of branding issues or rejection of historical institutions. Some even think the issue is cosmetic such as removing the altar, removing the Apostle’s Creed, or shortening our worship service. However, the church must conduct some level of market research to identify the needs of its target market and ask the critical questions of whether it is meeting those needs. When people join the church, they often seek deliverance, forgiveness, a sense of community, and teachings to help them develop a relationship with Christ. People worship in storefronts and movie theaters, not because they reject traditional sanctuaries but because they find what they want once they enter. To reverse this trend, more churches should be asking if they are offering what people are looking for rather than what they want to provide. It can be tempting for the church to believe people choose not to affiliate with it because of branding issues or rejection of historical institutions. Some even think the issue is cosmetic such as removing the altar, removing the Apostle’s Creed, or shortening our worship service. However, the church has to conduct some level of market research to identify the needs of its target market and ask the critical questions of whether it is meeting those needs. When people join the church, they often seek deliverance, forgiveness, a sense of community, and teachings to help them develop a relationship with Christ. However, many churches have dwindled down the worship experience and often lack intention when planning their service projects. People join organizations that are clear about their mission and purpose while actively working toward making them a reality. The churches that are reversing this trend by attracting new converts and younger members are working to actively engage their members in ministries that fit their lifestyles and teachings that lead to personal and spiritual growth. People worship in storefronts and movie theaters, not because they reject traditional sanctuaries but because they find what they want once they enter. To reverse this trend, more churches should be asking if they are offering what people are looking for rather than what they want to provide.”



Dr. Darrius Benton, Ph.D. Presiding Elder Dallas-Fort Worth District and Associate Professor of Communications at the University of Houston-Downtown- “The church has an opportunity to clarify and communicate its identity in this changing world in a way that is attractive for the upcoming generation to subscribe to. Pew makes a point of noting ‘self-identifying’ versus the previous existing culture where one is told what they believe.

Rev. Joseph Robbins, Pastor Fair Promise A.M.E. Zion Church in Sanford, NC, and Homiletics Ph.D. candidate at Duke University School of Divinity- “A hypocritical misrepresentation of what it is to be a Christian is a major contributing factor to these trends. In America this is exacerbated by the behaviors and rhetoric shared by white evangelical Christians. People hear the messaging and see the priorities of ‘mainline’ faith leaders; and because we have done a good job sharing the message of Jesus persons can readily identify contrasts when we do not model the behavior of Jesus. Authenticity is the surest way to reverse these projections by building and maintaining relationships with current and future believers. As leaders called to be Christ’s witnesses and beneficiaries of God’s spirit, we have an obligation to reflect the ideals and morals of Jesus not only in our thoughts or words but in our deeds as well.”

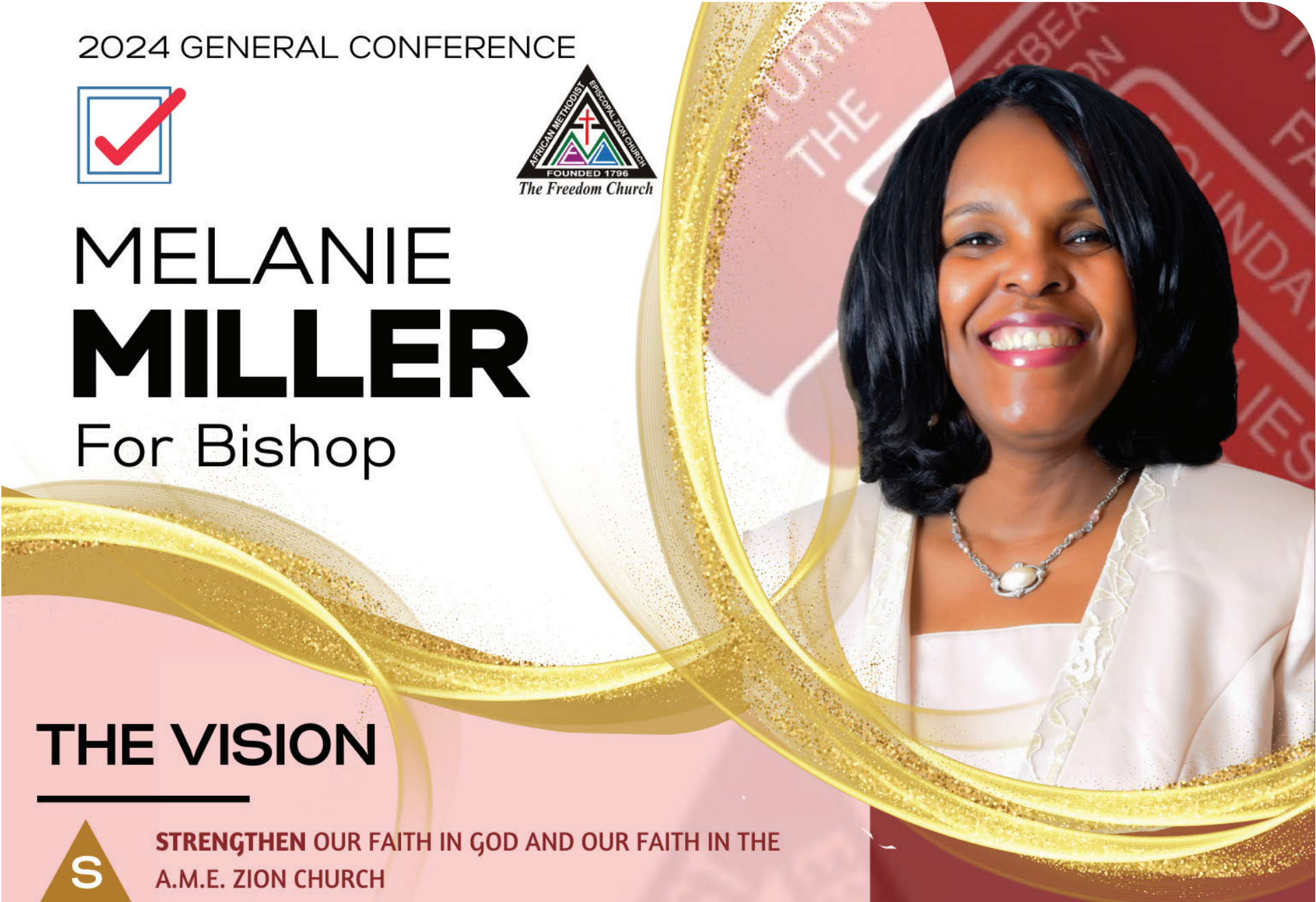


2024 GENERAL CONFERENCE



MELANIE MILLER

For Bishop

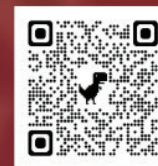


THE VISION

- S** STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH IN GOD AND OUR FAITH IN THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
- T** TERMINATE THE UNDERUTILIZATION OF STRONG WOMEN LEADERS BY CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT FOSTERS DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION
- R** REFOCUS ON STRENGTHENING OUR LOCAL CHURCHES, AND THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITIES
- O** OPTIMIZE THE USE OF YOUNG AND GLOBAL LEADERS FOR ZION'S STRONG FUTURE
- N** NEUTRALIZE THE EFFECTS OF PREJUDICE AND BIGOTRY IN OUR COMMUNITIES BY NURTURING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND STRONG FAMILIES
- G** GROW AND DEVELOP MINISTRIES IN OUR CHURCH THAT BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE

**A Vote for Miller is
A Vote for Change**

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+
Strong Foundation
+
Strong Families
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A STRONG FUTURE



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