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# THE STAR OF ZION

AUGUST 2023 | VOL 147 NO. 8 | STAROFZION.ORG | THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

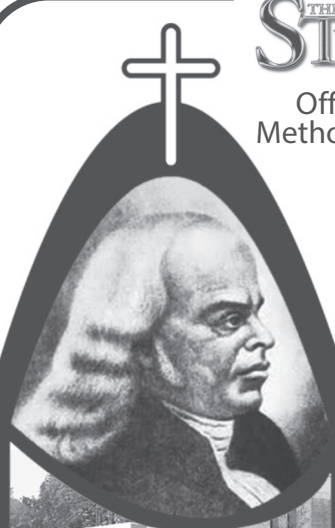



## New Season of LEARNING





**THE STAR OF ZION**  
Official Voice of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Accelerating Communication About The Freedom Church

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

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

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# Editor's Letter

Happy August, everyone!

It may be hard to believe, but we have officially entered the eighth month of 2023. We are in the thick of the summer season, and as the kids say, summer is definitely "summering." When it comes to the weather forecast, the heat is on. Many people are enduring record-breaking heat this season – not only here in the U.S. and throughout the Caribbean, but in parts of Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.



It is a season of extreme heat. However, for quite a few elementary, middle, high school, and college students all over the world, August marks a new season of learning. This is a time when many of them are heading back into the classrooms or, at least, preparing to head back in September.

So, this month's edition of *The Star of Zion* is dedicated to all of the children and adults who are gearing up for a new school year. You'll find tips on how to be smart when it comes to back-to-school shopping, as well as a look at the latest technology being used in classrooms. Plus, we are celebrating recent graduates throughout A.M.E. Zion who are starting the next chapters in their lives.

This edition also includes a few "learning opportunities" for those of you who are not heading back to school. Be sure to check out the article on the new African American history museum now open in South Carolina. We've also provided a lesson from a dermatologist on the importance of protecting our skin from the sun. (Yes, Black folks need to apply sunscreen, too.) In addition to those articles, we're taking a closer look at the consequences that the recent SCOTUS decision regarding affirmative action could have on public and private institutions of learning.

This is just a taste of what you'll find as you flip through the pages of this new edition. I pray you enjoy it.

Until next time, stay cool, stay hydrated, and most importantly, stay positive.

**Karla Redditte**  
Managing Editor

## CORRECTION NOTICE

*For the July 2023 Star of Zion, the articles featuring the Donor Dinner, Hood's new Academic Programs, and Hood's Graduation have Carol Palmer as the person who submitted the articles. However, Carol Palmer has not worked at Hood for several years now, and the person who submitted the articles should be Kelly Bryant.*





Mrs. Debra Chappelle-Polk  
Zion Spotlight Editor  
ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org

# Washington Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Presents Children's Day & Graduate Sunday



By Georgette Williams  
Contributing Writer

St. Louis, MO - "Children's Day and Graduate Sunday" was held on June 25, 2023, at Washington Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church in St. Louis, Missouri, where Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon serves as pastor. Children's Day is normally celebrated across the denomination on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in June. However, during the pandemic, we were not able to celebrate the achievements of the children, youth, and graduates. We combined the days so we could acknowledge everyone. Evelyn Gilliam (Director of Youth), Krista Holmes (Director of Children) and the local C.E.D. team coordinated the service. Our local Christian Education Director is Loretha Young.

The theme was "Born 4 This," taken from the Varick's Children's Curriculum. The content was based on the story of Joseph, using the scripture I Timothy 4:12, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity." Knowing that children have a heart for worship, they led every aspect of the worship service. Jesus said in Matthew 19:14, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children."

The celebration began as the children and graduates marched in to "Every Praise." The Call to Celebration was given by Braya Whitehead. Christopher Stevenson introduced the opening hymn, "Jesus Loves Me," and Andre Washington gave the invocation. The Varick's Children declaration was led by Myracle Saunders, Braya Whitehead, London Hite, Alivia Woolridge, and Langston Gilliam. The Children's Choir of Washington Metropolitan, under the direction of Mr. Keith Fowler, rendered a selection called "I'm a Child of the King," with soloists London Hite, Alivia Woolridge, and Langston Gilliam. Ypsilanti High School Choir, under the direction of Crystal Harding, traveled from Ypsilanti, Michigan to be our guests. They rendered two acapella selections: "Down in the River to Pray" and "Shona Malanga." Fallon Stevenson led the Responsive Litany. The Old Testament scripture was taken from Genesis 37:1-11 and was read by Taylor Boaz. The New Testament scripture was taken from I Timothy 4:12 and was read by Savannah Eskew. We were led in prayer by Antoine Luckie. Jacob McKnight lifted the offering.

Evelyn Gilliam recognized all of the children who were promoted from pre-school to 11<sup>th</sup> grade. They were congratulated for having a successful school year. A shout-out was also given to the high school graduates from Ypsilanti High School Choir.

The graduates from Washington Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church from 2020 to 2023 were recognized as follows:

**Taylor Boaz** – Daughter of Andrea Boaz. Parkway Central High School, Class of 2022. She is currently a sophomore at the University

of Missouri – St Louis Honor College.

**Roman Brown** – Son of Kenneth & Ramona Brown. Jackson State University in Jackson, MS, Class of 2023. He accepted a full-time position with Amazon in the Dallas/Fort Worth, TX area as an Area Manager.

**Sydnee Campbell** – Daughter of Wendell & Marian Campbell. Edwardsville High School, Class of 2022. She attends Spelman College.

**Micah Clay** – Son of Anissa McCaskill and Mauriel Ramon Clay. Belleville West Township High School, Class of 2022. He attended Truman State University in Kirksville, MO, with a major in 3-D Modeling and Animation. He will attend Webster University in the fall and major in Animation with a minor in Illustration.

**Riane Davis** – Daughter of Brian and Erica Davis. Graduate of St. Charles Community College Class of 2020 with an Associate's degree in Arts. She is currently a student at Tennessee State University in Nashville, TN, where she is majoring in health sciences.

**Maya Hines** – Daughter of Michaele Hines-Phillips. Graduate of Grand Arts Academy Class of 2023. She will attend Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD, where she will major in psychology and music.

**Jamar Hinton** – Son of Ennis & Kafi Hinton. Graduate of Michigan State University Class of 2023 with a Bachelor of Science in animal science with a concentration in exotic animals and companionship.

**Kamilah Hinton** – Daughter of Ennis & Kafi Hinton. Graduate of STEAM Academy at McCluer South Berkeley High School, Class of 2023. She will attend the University of the Virgin Islands and major in finance and accounting.

**Jasmine Hughes** – Daughter of Erika Carmichael. Graduate of Crossroads College Preparatory Academy Class of 2023. She will attend Regis University in Denver, CO, where she will major in biology with a minor in neuroscience.

**Joseph McKnight Jr.** – Son of Joseph McKnight Sr. and Melissa McKnight. Graduate of Parkway South/South Tech High School, Class of 2023. He desires to do right by the Lord and earn a good living.

**Genesis Rhodes** – Daughter of Nenomoshia Patterson. Graduate of Bishop DuBourg High School, Class of 2023. She will be attending Fontbonne University and will major in psychology.

**Kenneth Thompson** – Grandson of Cheryl Thompson. Earned a Certified Nursing Certificate, Class of 2022.

**Rev. Niesha Thomas-Walker** – Graduate of Washington University, Class of 2021 with a Master's in education.

Andre Washington introduced the speaker of the morning, followed by a rousing praise dance by Jasmine Hughes to "War Cry" by Queen Naija. Marquez Wagner-Howard opened his message entitled, "Born for This," with a question, "When you look at me, what do you see?" He reminded us that we are all equal. Will you be a believer like Joseph or turn on your siblings? You were "Born 4 This!"

Gabriel Woolridge gave the benediction.

Thank God for a spirit-filled worship experience delivered by the children and youth of Washington Metropolitan. After the service, the children and youth were treated to lunch and the movie "The Little Mermaid."



# Noted Education Magazine Recognizes Dominique Turner For Leadership

By Karla Reddite  
Managing Editor

*Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* recently selected Dominique Turner as one of its Rising Graduate Scholars. Every year, the *Diverse* team chooses ten exceptional graduate students based on their standout scholarship thus far, and their trajectory toward a promising future in academia and beyond.

According to an article written by *Diverse's* Lois Elfman, the team chose Turner, who is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in higher education administration at Morgan State University, for his leadership potential. The article shared a quote from the university's chair of the Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership and Policy, Dr. Frimpomaa Ampaw, who said, "I can easily see Dom Turner being a college president one day. I don't even know if he sees it for himself, but I see it for him."



Turner, who is a lifelong member of Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church, credits much of his success to the lessons and encouragement received from his mentors and church elders. "My childhood pastor was Rev. Dr. Lewis M. Anthony, and he was a significant mentor of mine, as well as Rev. Dr. Kathryn G. Brown, who was the denomination's General Secretary of Christian Education," Turner said. "Other mentors in my local church include Mrs. Annette Chisolm, Mr. Isaac Humphries, and Mr. Leroy Proctor."

Turner has served in several capacities within his church throughout the years, including Youth Director, Young Adult Director, Trustee, Steward, and Preacher's Steward.

He currently works as the Director of Non-Traditional Programs at the University of Maryland Global Campus. Turner expects to obtain his Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Morgan State University in May 2024.

To read the entire *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* article highlighting Turner's career background, goals, and leadership, look for the story on the magazine's website – [diverseeducation.com](http://diverseeducation.com).

## New York Annual Conference Convenes in Tarrytown

By M. Denise Niles  
Contributing Writer/Photographer

Tarrytown, NY- The 202<sup>nd</sup> Session of the New York Conference convened on June 22, 2023, at the Westchester Marriot Hotel in Tarrytown, New York. It was hosted by First A.M.E. Zion Church, which is located in Brooklyn, NY. Rev. Dr. Marvin D. Hooks serves as pastor.

As is the custom, clergy processed in to "God of Our Fathers." The Rev. Dr. Wallace Noble, who is pastor of St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion in New Rochelle, NY, delivered the sermon for the opening worship service. His sermon title, "Guaranteed," was inspired by Ephesians 3:20-21. Annual conference business followed, which included the Roll Call and the Committee on Rules. Reports by the Lay Council and Observances were given by conference president, Ms. Rhandi Stitch.

Co-Conference Directors Ms. Terneisa Lynn Calhoun and Mrs. Irene Boykin opened Christian Education Department Night. Rev. Annie Bryant, who serves as an Associate Pastor at Institutional A.M.E. Zion Church in Yonkers, read the scripture. Rev. Xavier Hunter, pastor of Rush Temple in Queens, delivered the prayer. Rev. Tonya Morrissey of St. Mary's A.M.E. Zion in Medford, NY, served as the guest speaker for the evening and preached a dynamic sermon.



Rev. Dr. Marvin D. Hooks, Host Pastor  
Rev. Isidora Branch Sr, Presiding Elder - Westchester District  
Rev. Keith I. Harris, Presiding Elder - Long Island District  
Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson, Host Presiding Elder  
Mrs. D. Diane Proctor, Missionary Supervisor  
Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, Presiding Prelate  
North Eastern Episcopal District



Conference business resumed Friday morning, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. The agenda included reports from Presiding Elders Rev. Keith I. Harris (Long Island District), Rev. Isidora Branch, Sr. (Westchester District), Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson (New York City Dist.), as well as from the Admissions, Conference Studies, Holy Orders and Necrology Committees.

The WH&OMS Convocation convened during the afternoon session. The service opened with the missionary theme song, "Throw Out the Lifeline." The Long Island, Westchester, and New York City Districts submitted Presidents' reports. Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. D. Diane Proctor, provided an update on the 30<sup>th</sup> WH&OMS Quadrennial Convention.

Zion generosity and philanthropy was on full display in the person of Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Laticia Hill Godette of the Camden District, New Jersey Conference. She gave monetary gifts to clergy, as well as individual conference attendees.

On the last day of Conference, June 24<sup>th</sup>, the elections of ministerial, lay delegates, and alternate delegates to the 2024 General Conference were held. Of the 44 delegates elected, 6 were young adults.

Bishop Proctor read the pastoral appointments: Rev. April Lewis' appointment to Woods Memorial received a standing ovation. The Rev. Denise Davenport was reappointed pastor of Caldwell Temple. Bishop Proctor said she preached her way into that reappointment, referring to



The WH&OMS Candlelight Service in recognition of Life Members and the sacred stoning ceremony followed. Rev. April Lewis read the scripture, Mark 8:22-11, and the prayer was delivered by Rev. Shirley Brockman, pastor of Walker Temple in Hempstead, NY. The Missionary Supervisor brought greetings and thanked the district officers for the work they do to support and to fund mission programs in the United States and overseas. She said she was delighted to present the bishop and used a number of adjectives, all beginning with the letter "P", to describe him- pragmatic, promise-keeper, protector, persistent, and phenomenal. She then asked everyone to stand to receive the 97<sup>th</sup> bishop in the line of succession, Bishop Rev. Dennis Vernon Proctor. Bishop Proctor smiled and said, "It's good to hear somebody saying something good about you in this day and time." He began his introduction of the guest preacher for the night - the Rev. Denise Davenport, pastor of Caldwell Temple, by saying, "she can be summed up this way - she loves God, she leans on God, her big brother is Jesus, and she is led by the Holy Spirit." The room was on fire as Rev. Davenport took the pulpit. "God has been good to me," she said. "He woke me up this morning and started me on my way. You need to open up your mouth and give God some praise. This is the New York Conference!" Her sermon was entitled, "Three Times the Charm." The Holy Spirit filled the room before, during, and after Rev Davenport's sermon.

the powerful, awe-inspiring sermon she preached the night before. Rev. Dr. Malcolm J. Byrd was reappointed as pastor of the Mother Church. The reappointment of Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson as Presiding Elder of the New York City District received rousing applause from the Carson family cheering squad (daughters Alexandria and Alexis). Bishop Proctor laughed and said, "You've got your children programmed well."

In closing the 202<sup>nd</sup> Session of the New York Annual Conference, Bishop Proctor said, "I have enjoyed spending these last few days with you and reminiscing." He encouraged everyone to take their charge seriously and to "do everything you can to make your ministry foolproof, because we are going to need persons in place to take this even higher."

Many thanks to the members of the host church First A.M.E. Zion and Rev. Dr. Marvin D. Hooks for meeting the needs of all attendees.

**Editor's Note: Please visit the NEED website, NY Annual Conference Facebook page, and/or You Tube for a complete list of Pastoral Appointments, General Conference Delegates and other Conference highlights.**



# Retirement Celebration of Renee Felton Pullen

By Mrs. Glennis Gill  
Contributing Writer

Washington, D.C. - A celebration was held in Renee Felton Pullen's honor on Saturday, July 8, 2023, at Union Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church, located at 1860 Michigan Avenue NE, Washington D.C. She has served as the Second Vice President of The Women's Home & Overseas Missionary Society A. M. E. Zion Church from July 2015 until July 2023.

The Philadelphia-Baltimore Conference hosted the program. Mrs. Mary Williams, Class Leader and Chair of Life Members, and President of the Lay Council at John Wesley, served as Mistress of Ceremony. Mrs. Williams also leads the Thespian Acting Troupe at John Wesley. She truly set the sincere, dynamic, and yet comedic tone for this event! We laughed, we cried, and we reflected as Renee was celebrated in rare form.

Nearly two hundred Zion officials and members from around the country attended the event. Numerous family members, co-workers, and committee members were also in attendance.

Renee has successfully served in every corner of Zion, and this celebration proved that she has served us well. She embodies the following words:

<b>R - Reliable</b>	<b>F - Friendly</b>	<b>P - Progressive</b>
<b>E - Energetic</b>	<b>E - Enlightening</b>	<b>U - Unyielding</b>
<b>N - Necessary</b>	<b>L - Listener</b>	<b>L - Likable</b>
<b>E - Enthusiastic</b>	<b>T - Talented</b>	<b>L - Learner</b>
<b>E - Enthusiastic</b>	<b>O - Observant</b>	<b>E - Earnest</b>
	<b>N - Numbers-driven</b>	<b>N - Natural</b>

Here is a list of those who rendered awards to Renee for her outstanding achievements over the last eight years:

## Renee Through the Years

Ms. Tanya Jones Bosier, Esquire, Immediate Past President, Omicron Phi Zeta Chapter,

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Mr. Eric Smith, Immediate Past President of Assembly of Christian Educators

Mrs. Yvonne Baskerville, Former First Vice President, Connectional Lay Council



Dr. Barbara Shaw, 16<sup>th</sup>  
International President, WH&OM  
Society

Dr. Sandra Gadson 17<sup>th</sup>  
International President, WH&OM  
Society

Rev. Dr. Rita Colbert, Administra-  
tive Elder Mid-Atlantic Episcopal  
District

## Renee's Journey Continues

Mrs. Sandra B. Crowder, 18<sup>th</sup>  
International President, WH&OM  
Society

Ms. Angela Davis Baxter, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice  
-President WH&OM Society

Dr. Reginald Broadnax, Editor of the Quarterly Review

## Musical Selection

Mrs. Roslyn Murphy Jenkins, "Alabaster Box," Soloist, John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church

## And finally...

Dr. Christopher Lee Zacharias, Pastor John Wesley A.M. E. Zion Church, Washington DC

Rev. Dr. Evalina Huggins, Presiding Elder, Baltimore District

Rev. Dr. Alvin T. Durant, Presiding Elder. Washington District

Bishop and Mrs. W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate, and Missionary Supervisor, Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District

## The Celebration Committee included:

Doris Atkins

Sharon Hassan

Evelyn Easton

Rhonda Means

Kim Zacharias

Wilhelmina Frazier

Melva Polk

We were blessed to celebrate Renee for her holistic service to the church of Zion. We continue to appreciate and acknowledge her contributions. We thank her for her willingness to get things right as she continues to serve her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

# BE A BLESSING: SPREAD JOY

By Reverend Leona Nicholas Welch  
Contributing Writer

JOY is a little word with a lot of power. JOY is a dire necessity to a happy and healthy life. JOY is a dire and necessary quality of life, yet it is so inadequately and inefficiently shared and spread throughout the world.

So, what is joy anyway? Before we define what it is, let's start with what joy is not. Simply, joy is not something you just talk about. Joy is something you feel, you share, you spread, you sing, you clap, you dance, you use to praise God. Joy is something deep inside of you where the Holy Spirit sits,



stirring up your soul, and breathing good, God-stuff up and out of you, toward others.

One biblical commentator puts it this way, "Joy flows from inside out and bubbles up and flows, or even erupts." Another commentator writes, "Joy is an internal reservoir or well that erupts inside of you, eventually expressing itself in songs of praise and great delight."

In scripture, the word **JOY** is used 214 times. HERE ARE A FEW:

1. *Those who sew with tears, will reap with songs of joy.*  
Ps. 126:5



2. *The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.*  
Ps. 126:3

3. *May the God of hope fill you with all joy... Romans 15:13*

Let us remember three basic things about joy.

**JOY COMES FROM GOD. (Ps 84).** If joy comes from God, and if we are messengers of God and conduits of his blessings, then it is clear that God intends to spread His joy to others through us. Talking about being a blessing! The joy of the Lord transforms lives, and just think, we can be instruments in those transformations.

**JOY MUST BE PRACTICAL.** What is PRACTICAL JOY? Practical joy is joy being put to work. Joy is not just a good idea or ideal. We should not just *have* joy to put in our pockets and save for a rainy day. We are to *DO* joy. Do something with joy other than just keep ourselves feeling good.

Take joy to the hospital and let it work on the fear and pain of someone

suffering through the tenderness in your voice. Take joy to a homeless shelter and let the light of Christ in your eyes give someone else some joy. Take joy to the prison and let the reassurance of Christ in your demeanor give someone some joy. Joyfully reach into your wallet and hand someone your last ten dollars, and watch joy light up in someone's eyes as she/he heads into McDonald's. The list goes on and on, *ad infinitum*.

**JOY IS EXPONENTIAL.** By the breath of the Holy Spirit, it multiplies itself over and over again. When shared and put to work, joy increases all around us. MULTIPLY YOUR JOY and watch the world around you get stronger. THE JOY OF THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH! Think about it, the more joy we spread, the stronger the world becomes, and you and I can truly make the world a better place, right where we stand, by letting the joy of Jesus flow, erupt, drip from us (whichever way the Spirit chooses at the time). And all the while, all we are doing is **BEING A BLESSING!**

## Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Enlightens Students Through Summer Camp

By Karla Redditte  
Managing Editor

Concord, NC – Summer break remains in full effect for many school students across the nation. However, local communities and churches are offering educational opportunities to help children avoid summer learning loss.

Dozens of students in Concord, North Carolina, recently received lessons in visual arts, cooking, dance, hydroponic gardening, yoga, and much more, thanks to members of Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Church, as well as other sponsors such as the Concord District of the A.M.E. Zion Church, Cabarrus County Public Schools, Lowe's, the Green Blue Marketplace, Juice+, and North Carolina Central University.

The church, which is under the leadership of senior pastor Rev. Lea'Vee L. Jordan, hosted a free, five-week program this summer called Enlighten Summer Camp. It began June 19th and ran through July 21st. Rev. Jordan said the camp was designed to provide a safe environment for children (ages 10 to 16) to develop self-sufficiency in their social and decision-making skills.

"I drive around in the neighborhood, and I see the need for mental encouragement, spiritual enlightenment, and economic empowerment. Even though this is a working-class community and there are great people who live here, I saw the need to offer opportunities for self-sufficiency," she said. "I want our children to not rely on other entities

for their success. So, that's why we're teaching them entrepreneurial development. For example, we're teaching them how to grow their own foods in different ways, and not only that, but how to can and freeze the foods, and maybe they can even turn this knowledge into a side hustle. Please know, I am so grateful to our Education Director, Dr. Huida Harris, and retired educator, Ms. Priscilla Green, for their expertise and commitment to bring the camp's vision to life."

One of the camp highlights included a visit from Tommy Nichols, who is the executive director of Power Up USA. It is a technology training company dedicated to closing the digital divide by providing technology skills to individuals and families within underserved communities. Nichols, along with two assistant instructors, brought laptop computers to guide the students through coding as well as media technology lessons. The students were engaged throughout Nichols' entire presentation, and they were particularly excited to learn how to navigate the social gaming platform, Roblox.

Rev. Jordan wants to keep learning opportunities available to the community throughout the year. She says Zion Hill plans to partner with Power Up USA to offer an afterschool program for children, as well as a professional development program for adults in the future.

Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Church is part of the Concord District of the West Central North Carolina Conference under Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr. Rev. Dr. Kevin W. McGill serves as presiding elder.





# Wilmington District Missionaries Receive and Give Lessons on Going Beyond the Walls

By LaVerna Hargrove, Contributing Writer  
Deborah Price, Rev. Karen McCracken and Bryan Smith  
Photographers

## Lesson One

Wilmington, NC - The Wilmington District Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society demonstrated the effortless move from within the walls of the church to beyond the walls of the church with the *Walk for Dahlia*. Men, women, and youth were invited to walk for Dahlia, who is a 6-month-old girl in need of a heart transplant. The Wilmington District WH&OMS sponsored a Walk-A-Thon on May 27, 2023, at 10 AM. Each walker was asked to pledge one penny for each step in a mile or \$20 per mile as there are between 1935 and 2252 steps in a mile. Many walkers raised multiples of the requested amount. All churches responded with donations, and/or walkers. Reverend Dr. Jones, who serves as Presiding Elder of the Wilmington District, pledged to match funds of the district's youth walkers. Due to everyone's generosity, \$5000 in pledges, donations, and matching funds have been presented to Dahlia's family.

Dahlia is doing well, but she has not yet had the heart transplant. This update, along with a short video of a very happy Dahlia, was given at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mass Meeting.

Her grandparents are members of Warner Temple A.M.E. Zion Church.

## Lesson Two

The Wilmington District WH&OMS held its 3rd Mass Meeting of the 2022-2023 Cape Fear Conference Year on Saturday, June 24, at Warner Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, with the president of the Wilmington District WH&OMS, Mrs. Delma Jones, presiding. Rev. Dr. Clifford Barnett, Sr. serves as the church's pastor.

Illustrations of the fourth element of the Quadrennial theme, "The Great Commission: Missions Matter. . . Globally Committed to Agape Love," was evident from the stirring meditation brought by the pastor of Browns Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Southport, NC, the Reverend Avery McAllister, and his choir. The scripture for the meditation was Mark 16:15-18, with verse 15 being the focus. The central thought, "Tell everybody about somebody that Christ wants us to build it back better," was a call to all generations that we must be about the business of kingdom building through agape love. Let not character, condition, status, fortune, fame, walls, or the lack thereof, be a hinderance of executing the Great Commission of Christ.

The Wilmington District WH&OMS presented lessons on going beyond the walls of the church by (1) addressing the issues that directly affect our communities, (2) presenting information and resources that will help those most directly affected and information that will help us network and partner with organizations that are already at work in established ministries, and (3) keeping ourselves ready to go forth to serve beyond the walls of the church.

Rebecca Martin and Alexia Hunter of The Carousel Center, which is a nonprofit child advocacy organization for the four-county area of Columbus, Brunswick and New Hanover County and Pender, gave information on how technology has helped a different form of child abuse known as sexploitation to flourish. They revealed 500 cases of some form of sex abuse



Wilmington District members signing in to participate in the Walk for Dahlia

are reported in this four-county area each year. Less than 5% are false allegations and 90% of abusers are family members, family friends, and youth leaders. The key to loving all our children is to always be a child advocate-- at all times and in all places. Listen to the children, be aware of their surroundings, be willing to speak up, and be prepared to hear what they say in a non-judgmental way. Children must know that they have rights as individuals and those rights must be respected. The first step is to become aware. Then, educate adults and children on how to report, where to report, and support organizations that are safeguarding our children. The Carousel Center offers workshops, speakers, and take away kits to put agape love in action in loving our children. The Wilmington District WH&OMS has gone beyond the walls by making our district aware and presenting a resource for further involvement.

Beth Gaglione, the director of the Wilmington Branch of the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina, presented information on the newly renovated 45,000 sq ft. facility at 1000 Greenfield Street in Wilmington. The facility will not only be able to store more food, but it also has refrigeration that can store and freeze food. From the new commercial kitchen, the Food Bank will be able to serve prepared meals during a disaster to the five counties (New Hanover, Brunswick, Columbus, Duplin, and Pender) it serves, give cooking classes to help persons become certified in food service and preparation, and eliminate the food desert in the Greenfield Street area by establishing a market that the residents can easily access. The Food Bank is also a part of the Health Opportunities Pilot (HOP), which addresses upstream social determinants of health and reducing the need for clinical interventions by using Medicaid dollars to pay for services related to transportation, nutrition, housing, and interpersonal safety. The Wilmington District WH&OMS can go beyond the walls by donating time, money, and food to the Food bank. The WH&OMS concluded its food drive for the Food Bank at the Mass Meeting with hundreds of pounds of food having been donated. Three of our churches, Warner Temple, St. Luke (Wilmington), and St. Paul (Bolton) are already serving as outlets for the Food Bank weekly.

Vernell Burns, the Health Education Coordinator, introduced "Let's Get the Word Out About Shingles" by Nurse Zania Josey. She gave both printed and oral information on the cause, effect, prevention, and treatment of shingles. This presentation was especially relevant as the disease is most prevalent in the over 60 population. The Wilmington District WH&OMS has gone beyond the walls by making this information available and by citing sources for obtaining the vaccine to prevent Shingles. Taking care of our bodies and minds prepares us to go beyond the walls to serve.

The Wilmington District WH&OMS was rallied to attend either in person or virtually, the 30th WH&OMS Quadrennial Convention in New Orleans, LA on July 22-28, 2023, with a jingle to the tune of *When the Saints Go Marchin' In*, written by Ava Farmer (Western North Carolina Conference), proclaiming they will march into New Orleans reaching up, reaching out, and reaching all to win the world for Christ. Each department head of the Wilmington District WH&OMS reminded the audience of their function within the organization as a superhero.



WD WHOMS President Delma Jones leads missionaries in singing the rallying jingle, "Yes, We Are Going to New Orleans!"

Reverend Dr. Alexander Jones, Sr. applauded the Wilmington District WH&OMS for its bravery in bringing issues to the church that need our attention, our effort, and our hands-on. We are no longer reluctant to get involved in a bold way that can only serve to save a life, a soul, or both by making us more watchful and more willing to worship and to serve. We must do this if we are to "Build Back Better" the church family of the A.M.E. Zion Church.



Rebecca Martin and Alexia Hunter, representing The Carousel Center, present "Loving Our Children."



# Camden Barringer Selected as 2023 Recipient of Thomas and Jeanne Dixon Scholarship

By Dr. Raphael Dixon Weeks  
Contributing Writer

Concord, NC - The Thomas and Jeanne Dixon Scholarship Committee recently selected Camden Barringer as its 2023 recipient. Barringer is a graduate of Northwest Cabarrus High School. He will attend North Carolina Central University in the fall.

The Thomas and Jeanne Dixon Scholarship fund was created to support the youth of Price Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Concord, North Carolina. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Dixon, who served in the church's Christian Education Department for more than 30 years, established the fund in January 2020 in lieu of gifts in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary. From its inception, the Dixon scholarship fund has provided over \$3,500 in financial support to the students of Price Memorial who are pursuing a degree at a college or university.



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# The Columbia-Camden District Comes Alive to Share the Faith

By Linda Powe Jones  
Contributing Writer

Eastover, SC - It was a weekend of Holy Ghost fire, fun and fellowship as Presiding Elder Reverend Dr. Alvin McLamb led the members of the Columbia-Camden District to Antioch A.M.E. Zion Church in Eastover, SC, on Friday June 23, 2023.

Reverend Dr. Robert T. Benton, host pastor and Reverend Melissa Benton, First Lady and the District's WHOM'S President, rolled out a huge welcome mat of radical hospitality. They left no stone unturned to make sure the first in-person Church School Convention since the pandemic was second to none. After three years of zooming through the Convention, members were eager to come together again to worship God in the beauty of His holiness.

Delegates and members traveled from Great Falls, Camden, Kingstree, Summerville, and Charleston, to participate in the Duke & Duchess Pageant. This spectacular show of people and pageantry was beautifully coordinated by the District Superintendent of Buds, Tenille Simons. After the showcasing of talents by the Buds and pageant participants, the winners were announced and celebrated. Little Master Kyrie Branch of Antioch was crowned Duke, and Little Miss Naomi Grant of Fairview A.M.E. Zion Church (Rev. Anthony Hardrick, pastor), was crowned Duchess. District Superintendent Simons announced that the Duke & Duchess Pageant's entire program was dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Ethel D. Campbell, who served the A.M.E. Zion Church in many capacities, most notably as Christian Education District Director of Children for more than 40 years.



The congregants then moved from pageantry to prayer as Rev. Melissa Benton, President of the Women's Home & Overseas Missionary Society, hosted and called to worship a Prayer Breakfast that was fit for royalty at 6:30 p.m. The members enjoyed a buffet of breakfast foods as they offered agape love and 'table-top' prayers for children, youth, young adults, and for persons suffering from mental abuse. At the suggestion of Rev. Vanessa McLamb, First Lady of the Columbia Camden District, more youth and children were invited to take an active role during the prayer breakfast. The selected speaker for the occasion was Maria Chisolm, a youth from Jones Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, who received a standing ovation for her beautiful meditation.

At the end of the day, the delegates and members retreated to the host hotel in Columbia where they engaged in a night of family fun with lots of board and computer games. The Interim District Director of the Christian Education, Ashley Melton, creatively planned and coordinated a festive, intergenerational fellowship that everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

The sharing of faith continued early Saturday morning as the Men of Zion, led by their President, Brother Darrell Chisolm, gathered at a local restaurant for an intercessory Prayer Breakfast and more Christian fellowship among men of the district.

The business of the Church School Convention began as all the members and delegates assembled at the Church. Presiding Elder Reverend Dr. Alvin W. McLamb greeted the congregants with enthusiasm and gratitude. Dr. McLamb expressed to them that he was looking forward to the opportunity to worship together and conduct the business of the district. During his teaching moments, he reminded the members of why we do what we do and the true purpose of the church. He offered these points for consideration: (1) to worship God, which is most essential, (2) to minister to believers through teaching the Word, and (3) to take the ministry of Word to the world. Evangelize.

All of the churches of the district were represented by the delegates and Sunday School Superintendents, who each offered glowing reports of their labors through their Christian Education Departments. Ashley Melton then introduced the Departmental Directors and their workshop topics which focused on the theme, "Sharing Our Faith." The workshops were as follows: Varick's Children, "My Light Will Shine" presented by Sheonne Haughton, VICYC/Youth, "Hidden Treasures" presented by Deanna Grant and Rachel Davis, YACM/Young Adults, "The Christian and the Oxymoron" presented by Bro. Lawrence Jackson, and the Adults, "Get on the Bus: Rules to Fuel Your Life and Work" was presented by Dr. Barbara Montgomery.



The Columbia-Camden District continued the tradition of recognizing and congratulating all of the high school and college graduates from the churches. Each 2023 graduate received a monetary gift of love, a certificate of recognition, and congratulatory remarks by Ashley Melton and Dr. Alvin McLamb.

A special Oratorical Contest was held and dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Ethel D. Campbell. The first-place winner was Paisley Melton of Jones Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, where Rev. Thelma Gordon serves as pastor. Paisley wrote and recited her original essay on the given topic, "How Can We Share Our Faith in a Way That Will Influence Our Generation?" Congratulations and ovations were in order for Paisley's excellent presentation.

The business of the 2023 Church School Convention of the Columbia-Camden District was made complete with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the sharing of the faith, the family fellowship and agape love.



# Southern City Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church Continues To Make History

By Bridget Henderson  
Contributing Writer

East Spencer, NC - Southern City Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church in East Spencer, NC, was born in 1897. The church originated from the New Hope A.M.E. Zion Church, which was established in 1889 when a local preacher named Charles Holmes, bought the 1st acre of land along old Highway 29 in Spencer. With donated lumber, these members and friends built the first A.M.E. Zion Church in Spencer and named the church the "New Hope A.M.E. Zion Church." (New Hope is currently located on 1470 Long Street in Salisbury, NC, and its current pastor is Rev. Thomas Grinter, who is a professor at Hood Theological Seminary.)

After several years, a majority of the membership decided to relocate to a more centralized location to accommodate its growing membership. With prayer and faith in God, those members, along with then pastor, Rev. J.E. House, relocated to North Shaver Street in East Spencer, and Southern City Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church was born. The pioneering families included those such as the Stokes, Holmes, Clements, Fraziers, and Carter family.

During the years at the North Shaver Street site, the membership grew to the extent that the then pastor, Rev. A.R. Hawkins & officers of the church saw the need for a larger building. So, in 1915, which would be 18 years after being founded, Rev. H.R. Hawkins and members built the church at its present location on 904 Long Street in East Spencer. In 1918, under the leadership of Rev. B.B. Moore, the cornerstone was laid. These people of faith and courage struggled on through the years to offset the mortgage of the church under the pastoral leadership of Rev. U.S. Johnson. In the spring of 1958, under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Paul E. McGuire, the sanctuary was graced with the installation of new pews, which were dedicated to the service of God by the Right Rev. William Jacob Walls. In 1977, under the leadership of Rev. George C. Tharrington, the congregation expressed a desire and need to build a new sanctuary. While the new church was under construction, church services were held in the auditorium of North Rowan Middle School. In January 1978, the new and present edifice was dedicated to the glory of God by the Right Rev. William Milton Smith.

Southern City Tabernacle has a history of vision, commitment, and growth. The church has been blessed to have devoted musicians, and it is known for having high spirited worship and strong community involvement. Currently, the Mayor of East Spencer, Sis. Barbara Mallett, and her family are members.

The church has continued to thrive under the leadership of several bishops, presiding elders, and pastors. Some of those pastors include: Reverends J.E. House, Bolger, S.L. Leake, B.B. Moore, H.E. Wilson, J.J. Nicholson, U.S. Johnson, W.M. Jones, George Smith, J.R. Whitmire (local preacher), N.V. Jones, Clarence Carr (later elected Bishop in Zion), Marvin Mayfield, Melvin Tate, George Tharrington, James French, S.V. Campbell, Calvin Miller, Rev. Dr. Donald Holness, Rollins S. Graham, Thomas D. Lee, and Patrick Tate.



On June 17, 2023, Bishop Darryl B. Starnes appointed the Rev. Dr. Tajuana Kyles who serves as the first female pastor. Previously, she served at the Mt. Calvary A.M.E. Zion Church in Monroe, NC, and pastored the Ebenezer A.M.E. Zion Church in Waxhaw, NC and St. John A.M.E. Zion Church in Mocksville, NC. She and the members of what some refer to as "The City," look forward to continuing the legacy of Southern City Tabernacle. It is a legacy that includes vision, commitment, growth, high spirited worship and community outreach. Pastor Kyles' first sermon was entitled, "Rejoice!," and she told the congregation they can rejoice because with God's help they would continue to make history together and that the church as a "new hope" and promising future.

For more information on churches within the Salisbury District of the A.M.E. Zion Church, visit the Salisbury District website at [sdwnccamez.org](http://sdwnccamez.org).



# The 113th Session of the West Central North Carolina Conference

By Cynthia R. Brown  
Contributing Writer

Greensboro, NC - In the worship book for the conference, Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr. states that as a Christian, we are on a journey, but on your journey, you are not alone. So, the gathering of God's people for this Annual Conference is one of the most important parts of our journey with God.

It is with this statement that the 113th Session of the West Central NC Conference joyously came together to report our labors, hear powerful preaching, receive impactful teaching, sing songs of praise, pray to an Omnipotent God, and experience true worship.

The Conference convened at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, NC, on May 31st through June 3rd, 2023, with our Presiding Prelate, Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr., and Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. Camille C. Starnes, leading us. We were also delighted to have as associates from the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District, Bishop W. Darin Moore and Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. Devieta Moore. Under Bishop Starnes' leadership, Prayer Coordinators are always in place and set the atmosphere for the day's activities, and they did so for the week's activities.

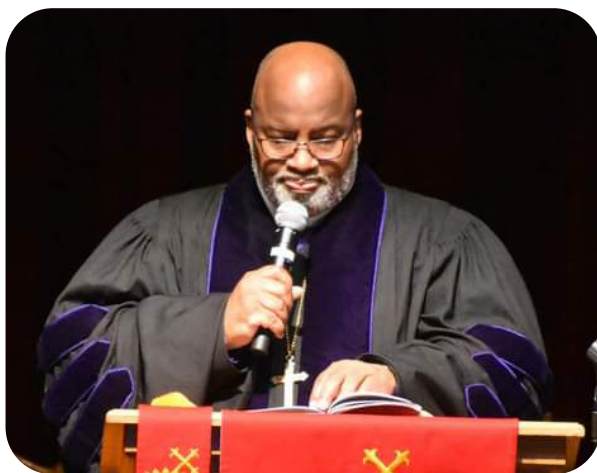
Opening worship service was held Wednesday, May 31, 2023, with the Rev. Rodney Moore, pastor of the Kesler Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church (Wadesboro-Monroe District) as the preacher. The Kesler Chapel choir rendered the music. Rev. Moore preached from I Corinthians 9:19-23, with the sermon entitled, "Having the Desire to Reach the Lost." His message set the tone for the conference, challenging all in attendance. The official business of the conference followed.

During the lunch hour, we gathered for a joyous celebration. It was in honor of the Connectional YAMS Coordinator for the WH&OMS, Dr. Joy Kennedy. As we head toward the General Convention to be held in New Orleans, Louisiana in July, Dr. Kennedy will conclude her eight years as General Coordinator. With family, friends and other executive board members in attendance, music, tributes, gifts, and praise were given to her for her years of dedicated service.

On Wednesday afternoon, we gathered for the episcopal address from Bishop Starnes. After a selection from Mr. Shipps Washington, "My Heavenly Father Watches Over Me," Bishop Starnes blessed us with his message entitled, "The Evidence of A

Spiritually Empowered Church." Responses were given by lay member, Mr. Bruce Stanback, Dr. Daran Mitchell, Presiding Elder Michael Massey, and Bishop, W. Darin Moore, who stated, "Let's Be the Church."

Before the dinner break, Rev. Wanda Merriweather presented a workshop on the subject, "Sexual Misconduct Prevention". Dr. David Aiken, Sr, Executive Director of Zion's Benefit Services, presented materials and resources for Prevention Barriers for the Church.



We gathered for the annual sermon on Wednesday night, and we were challenged again as disciples of Christ by the messenger. The Rev. G. Rebecca Warren, pastor of the Wayman Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church (Rockingham District) delivered a message based on John 5:11-13. She let us know that "Salt is Valuable."

Thursday morning began as all of our days begin in the Piedmont Episcopal District- with Prayer. The coordinators from each district- with the Rev. Dr. Lisa Caldwell as the chairperson- prayed for the events of the day and set the tone. The next order of business was the election of delegates for the 2024 General Conference. After a delay due to voting machine issues, singing broke out and the Holy Spirit moved from heart to heart. The song, "I've Got a Feeling, Everything is Gonna Be Alright", became a mic-toss event with several persons leading and blessing us. The elections were soon completed, and the persons elected were:

## Ministerial Delegates

- 1) Rev. Haven Anderson
- 2) Rev. Daran Mitchell
- 3) PE Michael Ellis
- 4) Rev. Lisa Caldwell
- 5) PE William Jordan
- 6) Rev. Tyrone Rigby
- 7) PE Kevin McGill
- 8) Rev. Charles Wilson
- 9) Rev. Lloyd Nivens
- 10) Rev. Lynn Mitchell
- 11) Rev. Willie Funderburk
- 12) Rev. Reginald Keitt
- 13) Rev. Solomon McAuley
- 14) Rev. Tracii Miller
- 15) PE Michael Massey

## Lay Delegates

- 1) Bruce Stanback
- 2) Carolyn Quick
- 3) Bonnie Summers
- 4) Tiffany Wilson, Esq.
- 5) Pat McCoy
- 6) Preston Waddell
- 7) Walton Jones
- 8) Thomasina Spencer
- 9) Vernice Coley
- 10) Betty Evans
- 11) Edna Adams-Fulton
- 12) Minnie McRae
- 13) Pamela Ford
- 14) Carla Tyrance
- 15) Jeremy McKenzie



Alternate Ministerial Delegates 1-Rev. Robert Mathis, 2-Rev. Vivian Williams, 3-Rev. Joshua Holmes, 4-Rev. G. Rebecca Warren, 5-Rev. Corey Rustin

Alternate Lay Delegates 1-Alice Steele-Robinson, 2-Dorothy Colson, 3-Janice Spearman, 4-Tavania Keitt, 5-Janice Holt

The Lay Council was in charge of the luncheon on Thursday afternoon. For the West Central NC Conference, it is the annual S.O. Jones Scholarship Luncheon and we were delighted to have our guest, the Rev. Dr. Anthony J. Davis, president of Livingstone College, as speaker. His message, "The Power of Philanthropy," spoke to all who were present and donations were received to benefit the fund. After lunch, we reconvened for the "Lay Hour," with Mr. Walton Jones presiding. We received the report of the Lay Council Conference President, Ms. Minnie McRae of the Wadesboro-Monroe District. We were also grateful to have Dr. Mary Ponds and Mrs. Connie Bell Wright in attendance. They assisted with stoling and other activities throughout the day.

Thursday night worship was Education Night, and Dr. Reginald Boyd, Jr. of the Concord District gave his first report as Conference Director of Christian Education. It was received and each District Director gave words of appreciation for his leadership. In attendance were guest Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President of our Hood Theological Seminary, and Rev. Thomas Grinter, Assistant Episcopal Director of Christian Education for the Piedmont District. Rev. Dr. Daran H. Mitchell of the Trinity A.M.E. Zion Church of the Greensboro District delivered the preached Word entitled "The Gospel," which was based on Acts 2:22-36. The Trinity Church Choir rendered songs of praise.

Prayer coordinators gathered Friday morning for the kickoff of Missionary Day. With Ms. Selenia Hinson of the Concord District presiding, we were guided through the program starting with a meditation coming from our Associate Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. Devieta Moore. Using Galatians 5:22-23, she let us know that we have accessories to put on. We were challenged to get "dressed in the Fruit of the Spirit," for we are already loved by God and He wants us to bear His



fruit in us. The tone of the day was set by her powerful message, and we were then ready to go into Convocation with Mrs. Starnes sharing time with us. A recording was played by the late Rev. James Cleveland, "Ordinary People." Mrs. Starnes shared about us getting on the Love Train and showing Agape Love. The Holy Spirit then began to lead her in another direction. She began to pray for the people and operate in the gifts that God has given her. The atmosphere was charged and healing and deliverance was received from the movement of the Holy Spirit. To God be the Glory! We were able to continue with the program and proceeded by singing the convention jingle for the Quadrennial, and we heard district president reports. Gifts were given to both supervisors and retiring YAMS Coordinator, Dr. Joy Kennedy. We then heard from our visitors, which included two current members of the Connectional Executive Board, Mrs. Melva Polk Wright, General Secretary of Youth, and Mrs. J.L. Anthony, Director of Communications. We were also thankful also for the candidates who were in attendance that have offered themselves to serve as executive level officers.

The Necrology Service followed with yours truly singing the opening song, "I Can Only Imagine." Committee chair, Rev. Cynthia Ransom, presided as each district representative called the roll of members who are no longer with us. It concluded with the song, "It Is Well With My

Soul." We then moved quickly to the Home Missions Luncheon with Conference chair, Mr. Bruce Stanback, serving as Master of Ceremony. The Queens from each local church were presented and able to give their final wave with the winners from the district level remaining up front. We offer congratulations to the following winners-

**1st Cluster - Ms. Robin "Nikki" Goins, the Trinity Church, Greensboro District**

**2nd Cluster - Miss Ronae Durham, the Lee Thee Church, Rockingham District**

**3rd Cluster - Miss Mychaela Cannon Ferby, the Zion Hill Church, Concord District**

The Ordination Ceremony was held during the afternoon for all ministers who had advanced earlier during the conference.

For the evening worship service, the Missionaries were again in charge of service with Mrs. Starnes presiding. Each district life members chairman presented stoles to persons investing in the work of the Council. The Concord District Choir provided music for the evening, and the message came from our Associate Bishop, Bishop W. Darin Moore. His sermons was entitled "Don't Trip," with the supporting text coming from Psalms 37:23-26. It was received by all present, which included a delegation for the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District, who was there in support of their bishop. The offering followed, and in the tradition of the West Central NC-C, monies are collected by district. With District Presidents and Presiding Elders at their tables, those gathered gave in friendly competition. The Concord District was again the winner this year.

Saturday began with our Prayer Coordinators setting the atmosphere for the day, which was Youth Day. The Christian Education Department had persons in place to receive registration for the day. It was also a time for us to break down into groups for training and discussion sessions. The clergy was taught by our master teacher, Bishop Starnes. The Adult Class was lead by Ms. Bertha Hardin from the Rockingham District, and Dr. Rosa Purcell served as the Young Adults Leader, along with a group of five young adults in place to discuss a wide range of topics for their age group. The Youth Workshop was lead by Southeastern Regional Officer, Mr. Andre Griffin, and the children were lead by Director Ms. Robin Simmons-Blount from the Greensboro District.

After the sessions, we returned to the ballroom for service. The first order of business was to install the Newly Elected Youth Officers that would service for the next 2 years. We were also blessed to hear from the children as they sang and did sign language learned during their session to the song, "Let The Church Say Amen." The service continued with Collin Lindsay presiding. We heard from the praise team of the Marvin Church in Waxhaw, NC, and then we heard the preached Word, which was delivered by the newly ordained Rev. Lafayette Thompson of the Concord District. The message was entitled "It's On and Poppin'," based on I Samuel 17:44-49. It was received well by the young and the young at heart. The invitation to accept Christ was given, as it had been done during each worship experience with many giving their lives to Jesus during the week. One person who was an employee of the hotel yielded to the Spirit moving. To God be the Glory.

After lunch for our final gathering, we sang the hymn of preparation, "A Charge to Keep I Have," and we heard the message from Bishop Starnes entitled, "Sharing Our Faith - Fully Proclaiming Christ Gospel," based on Romans 15:18-21. We had also been charged. The Grand Ushers March returned to the Conference this year. With ushers from every corner of the Conference represented, they strutted, stepped and marched for their beloved Zion.

The Courtesy Committee reported, giving the Conference a glowing report of all the activities and services that took place during the week. We are also grateful for the many visitors who graced us with their presence and we hope that you felt the Love.

Appointments were read, and we are thankful for our leaders, for we know that how they lead compels us to do the work with love.



# CLERGYWOMEN IN ZION: A CALL TO SISTERHOOD IN MINISTRY

By Debra Chappelle-Polk  
Zion Spotlight Editor

The latest installment of the **Clergymen in Zion** series is written by Rev. Leona Nicholas Welch, who is the founder and director of **THESE ARE THE DAUGHTERS**, Ministries, Inc. She shares her thoughts about clergymen in ministry and by extension, sisterhood in ministry:

**THESE ARE THE DAUGHTERS**, Ministries, Inc., is approaching its 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive year in February 2024, and it exists to bring women together to minister to one another, to encourage and inspire one another toward self-development, personal empowerment, and a closer walk with Jesus. **THESE ARE THE DAUGHTERS** exists first and foremost to honor God, to lift the name of Jesus, and to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Our guiding scripture is Joel 2:28, which reads, *“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters founder and director of **THESE ARE THE DAUGHTERS**, Ministries, Inc. will prophesy...”*

The annual **THESE ARE THE DAUGHTERS** main event is a very special, highly unique gathering that takes place in the San Francisco Bay Area every February. It is the original all-day women’s preaching event. At its inception, 25 years ago, it was – and likely remains-- the only one of its kind. The event affords a space where women are spiritually fed and encouraged. It is where they network, have a day of retreat, reflection, and regeneration, and where they hear some powerful

preaching by eight dynamic anointed women preachers, all bringing a message on the same relevant and spirit-lifting topic.

Initially founded to give women a space and opportunity to preach, when otherwise denied, **THESE ARE THE DAUGHTERS** Ministries, Inc. has grown in numbers and, most importantly, in purpose and in service. Women have found opportunity, open doors, and lasting friendships in **THESE ARE THE DAUGHTERS**. For the women who have been blessed by this ministry, the TATD preaching event is a “must attend,” which they place on their calendars each year. Women come from across the country and from around the Bay Area to preach the Word and/or to attend and participate in various ways. The word out concerning TATD is: “Once a Daughter, always a Daughter,” and “You’ll never want to miss one.” Truly, God’s Spirit and the love and support of the women have kept TATD strong, constant, and an exceptionally effective ministry.

My burden and passion -- my devotion is toward God’s people, particularly women, and more particularly, God’s women called to preach His Word. I am equipped by God to be a motivator and an encourager. I am driven, by the Holy Spirit to inspire, and to urge women **TO STAND TOGETHER**, no matter what is falling apart around us, among us, and in us, personally.

I recall the day (recorded in the Bible) when three women Joanna, Mary Magdalen, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, got up early on Sunday morning after Jesus’ crucifixion and went together to Jesus’ tomb, hoping to anoint His body. These women, like many of us, for one reason or another, were bound together in their grief. We can imagine the sisterhood they shared, the happy times and the sad times; but for this present burden they each carried, there was a unique and unbreakable tie by which they shared strength to face their pain. We can understand that these three women had each other’s backs.

Women of God, bound together in a common calling, to preach the Gospel of Christ, let us never abandon that special call as women, that as we remain faithful to our commitment to God’s Word, we remain faithful to the sisterhood with which we have been blessed. It is challenging enough to face the obstacles and oppositions that we sometimes encounter simply because we are women. This is a call for women of God, honoring that station in life called sisterhood, to never be found guilty of placing obstacles and opposition on anyone’s calling, most particularly on another sister’s calling. Never close a door of opportunity in another sister’s face. Avoid the backbiting, the jealousy, the gossip, the bad-mouthing and the discouraging, condescending, debilitating words with which women far too often plague other women.

True, we strive to encourage and uplift our brothers working in God’s kingdom, but this is a call for a closer, more genuine, sold-out commitment to stand together in Godly and sanctified sisterhood – in that beautiful and privileged, often overwhelmingly challenging work of ministry -the call to preach God’s Word. **God bless our sisterhood!**

**About the author:** Reverend Leona Nicholas Welch, born in Mobile, Alabama, in a family of nine children, is an ordained minister with a long-time record of service to the sick and the shut-in, and has served as a pastoral care minister and a volunteer hospital chaplain. For more than 40 years, she has ministered as a retreat, seminar and conference speaker. She is the founder and director of the **These Are Our Daughters Ministries, Inc.**







Rev. Sam Brown  
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# 2023 HTSNAA Alumni Meeting and Election Results



By Kelly Bryant, M.A.  
HTS Library Assistant  
Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Salisbury, NC - The National Alumni Association Annual Meeting took place on Thursday, May 18, 2023, in the Aymer Center on the campus of Hood Theological Seminary. The speaker for the event was Dr. Alice Marie Graham, founder of Turning Points from the Soul and author of

*Everything, Everywhere, and All at Once.* Dr. Graham discussed self-care, trusting God, soul care, and the need for God to be present.

This meeting included the Treasurer's Report, presentation of Alumni Directors, and the Scholarship/Endowment presentation. In addition, the HTS National Alumni Association created an endowed fund to support the needs of the seminary. The new Hood Theological Seminary National Alumni Association Officers were also installed. The new officers are President: Rev. Dr. Timothy L. Freeman, Vice President: Rev. Dr. Reginald Keitt, Secretary: Rev. Tamica L. Robinson, Assistant Secretary: Rev. Eleanor B. Wilson, Treasurer: Rev. Dr. Carolyn Dewberry, Chaplain: Rev. Dr. Yolanda Alston-Foster, and Parliamentarian: Rev. Elliott Crowder.

If you'd like to learn more information about each new officer, visit the Hood Theological Seminary website at [hoodseminary.edu](http://hoodseminary.edu).

## Have You Heard About Essie Academy in Salisbury, North Carolina?

By Deloris Foxx  
Contributing Writer

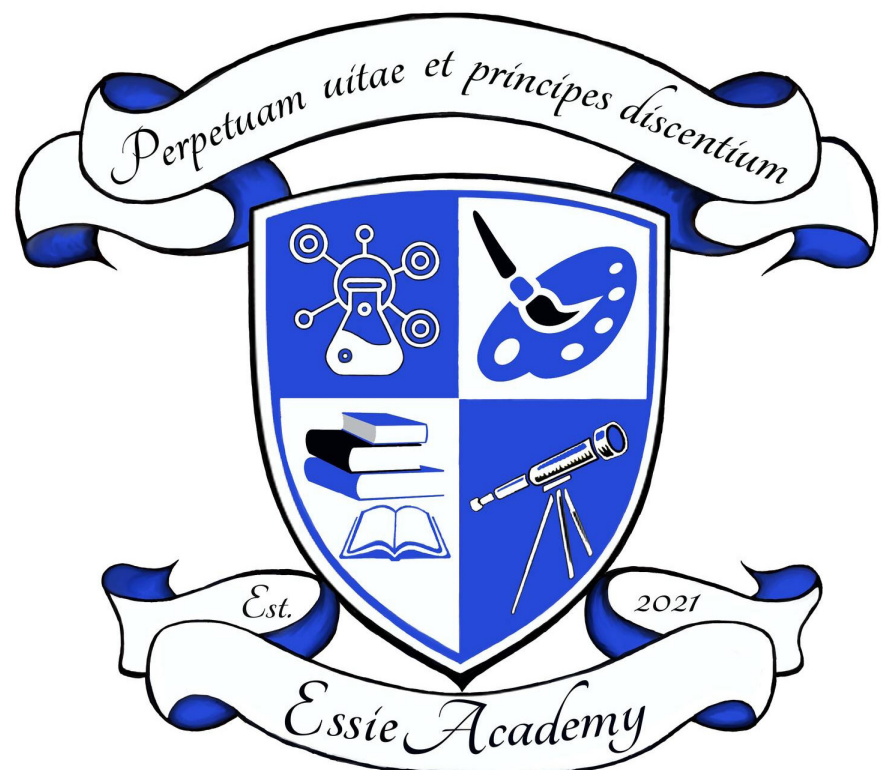
Salisbury, NC - The Essie Academy is a private school with a mission to promote academic excellence and cultivate confident, life-long learners and leaders. The school has a rich history and presence of enhancing the lives of the underserved population. Its legacy stems from Essie Mae Kiser Foxx, who dedicated her life in the town of East Spencer, North Carolina. She was a faithful and devoted member of Southern City Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion until her death in 2016.

The town's government officials, adults, and children felt the love of the community activist from her engagement with the Dunbar Center, Dunbar Reunion, Southern City Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church, and other activities within Rowan County. She ensured the residents of East Spencer were educated about the purpose of living in a family-oriented town. She was known to be a spokesperson for small businesses and minorities.

Her legacy continues through the lives of her children. Tina Foxx Wallace serves as the Board Chairperson. Darrell Foxx serves as a board member, while Deloris Foxx works as the cafeteria manager, and Jacqueline Foxx Hillian works as a teacher and bus driver.

Essie Academy offers unique experiences, free food and nutrition, smaller classrooms, transportation, financial literacy, social and emotional learning, and entrepreneurship. The 2022-2023 students' activities involved Hugo's 21 Days of Reading, cooking with Livingstone College's Hospitality Management and Culinary Arts, raised bed gardening with Rowan Soil and Conservation, STEM with the Pedal Factory, and dental care with Smiles By Design.

The current needs include financial support for operations, art supplies, Chromebooks/student laptops for 50 students, and volunteers. For more information about Essie Academy, feel free to call 704-232-5282 or send an email to [essieschool@gmail.com](mailto:essieschool@gmail.com).





# Livingstone College's Dr. Da'Tarvia Parrish Selected as Reader for New AP Program



By Rev. Sam Brown  
Education Editor

Salisbury, NC - Known for administering standardized tests and curricula utilized by K-12 and post-secondary education institutions to promote college-readiness, the College Board is piloting AP (Advanced Placement)

African American Studies in select U.S. high schools through 2024, whereas by the spring of 2025, exams will be available to all students.

Livingstone College faculty member, Dr. Da'Tarvia Parrish, served as a course reader for the exam, June 22-24, 2023, in Virginia.

She holds degrees in English and Humanities with ethnic concentrations in African American Studies and Africana Women's Studies. With all the recent buzz around AP African American Studies, Dr. Parrish stated, "As a native of Florida, I am quite disappointed in the leadership of Governor DeSantis and his political grandstanding at the expense of a fundamental right to a quality and



holistic education. So, when I was presented with this opportunity, it was incumbent upon me to lend my time and expertise to a more than worthy cause that is monumental at this time in American history, and essential to America's future."

As the program enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school, AP courses can only launch if colleges and universities commit to awarding college credit and placement to students who achieve qualifying AP Exam scores. For AP African American Studies, more than 200 institutions have committed through credit and placement policies and the numbers are growing. The College Board says, "We expect AP African American Studies to have a significant positive impact on college course enrollments within the field. Research consistently shows that students who take AP courses are more likely to take additional related coursework in college and to major or minor in that discipline."

Currently, there are 38 AP courses in seven subject categories, whereas each course is modeled on a comparable introductory college course in the subject. Administered in May at testing locations all over the world, AP courses not only allow students to enhance their college-level applications, but also save on financing as the courses permit opportunities to shorten their baccalaureate graduation requirements.

The College Board is an American nonprofit organization formed in 1900 as the College Entrance Examination Board to expand access to higher education, and it is most popular for administering the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). To learn more, visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

## Clinton College's Division of Religious and Ministry Studies Receives \$30,000 Gift



Rock Hill, SC - The Division of Religious and Ministry Studies recently received a gift of \$30,000 from The Rev. Dr. Laticia Hill Godette. This gift is to help support students who are currently enrolled or enrolling in the Division of Religious and Ministry Studies.

Dr. Godette is the first woman to serve as a Presiding Elder in The New Jersey Annual Conference of The A.M.E. Zion Church and the owner of Godette Health. She is a



philanthropist who has given away more than \$1 million in the last two years to help students, preachers, churches, and colleges such as Livingstone College and Hood Theological Seminary. Dr.

Godette says she gives because she believes God blesses her to be a blessing to those in need.

"We are thankful for this gift from Dr. Godette that will help students continue their education," said Rev. Dr. Jerrett Fite, Chair of the Division of Religious and Ministry Studies. "These funds will provide scholarships and other resources to help our students be successful."

Growing up in poverty, Dr. Godette became the first person in her family to graduate from college. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health and a Juris Doctorate from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After graduating from Hood Theological Seminary, Dr. Godette committed to helping historically black colleges and universities.





Rev. Dierdre' R. Parker-Rowson  
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# The International African American Museum Opens in Charleston, SC

By Rev. Dierdre' R. Parker-Rowson  
Entertainment & Arts Editor

Charleston, SC - Our students are returning to schools in the era of all-out war on truth telling in History classes. It is imperative that we remain vigilant in ensuring that the collective struggle and accomplishments of our people are told with accuracy, passion, and compassion - not just to *our* children, but to the entire world.



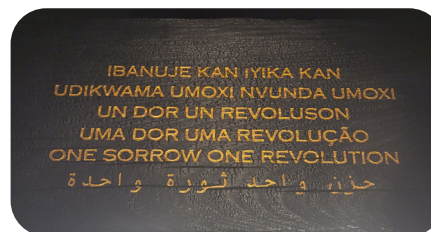
Courtesy: IAAM Marketing

On June 27, 2023, another avenue for our stories to be told opened in the form of the International African American Museum (IAAM) in Charleston, South Carolina. Its mission is to honor the untold stories of our people who disembarked slave ships at the historic site of Gadsden's Wharf.

The museum highlights the impact of the journey of Africans in America, the culture, the history and economy of Charleston, the nation, and the world.

IAAM features nine galleries and memorial gardens, with art, artifacts, and multimedia interactions which create an educational and entertaining experience. The galleries include: *The Transatlantic Experience*, *The Theater*, *Atlantic Worlds*, *Gullah Geechee*, *African Roots*, *Carolina Gold*, *South Carolina Connections*, *American Journeys*, and *Special Exhibitions*.

The exhibits include stories of local Charleston families. One story that was particularly interesting was the story of three brothers who enlisted and fought in the Civil War. Once their service ended, the two who survived, bought land totaling forty-nine acres. The land remains in the family to this day. Their enlistment papers, which included their signatures, are part of the exhibit. There was also a picture that showed the first Emancipation Day church service in Charleston, and indicated that some of the relatives of the brothers were present at that service. Here is what made it even more interesting. As we discussed the significance of what we saw, a young man named Darius Brown asked if we had any questions. He is a descendant of the three brothers. He is also a research assistant for the museum. This is one of the things that is beautiful about this museum. The stories are not told through a "just the facts ma'am" lens. These stories are told by and through people who are a part of and are invested in the culture.



Courtesy: Rev. Parker-Rowson

The entrance to the wharf and the memorial gardens has signs that read, "Please respect this sacred space." The sanctity of this space was honored by a group visiting from as far away as Texas when they began to sing at the wharf. "Hold on just a little while longer..." The voices blended in a beautiful yet somber harmony that transported us in our minds to the *feelings* of hope our ancestors must have clung to as they disembarked various ships on that very spot. The voices transitioned to a passionate rendition of *Total Praise*, and the gathering crowd was reminded of *the Source of our strength* and the *Strength of our life* as we lifted our hands in grateful praise to *God* and in honor of our ancestors who survived so that we can thrive.

The International African American Museum is a top-tier interactive learning experience for children and adults alike. Book your tickets in advance because they sell out quickly. You can find more information on the museum's website - [iaamuseum.org](http://iaamuseum.org).

## Your Next Summer Plan: Visit the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture

By Asia Briana Brown  
Contributing Writer

Charlotte, NC - The first day of school for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools this year is Monday, August 28th. One great place to take your kids to before summer ends is the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts+Culture. Named after civic leader and Charlotte's first African American mayor, Harvey B. Gantt, the Gantt Center functions as a pillar in Charlotte's art community.

The Gantt Center is a fine arts institution that not only houses art galleries which feature African American artists of the past and present, but also creates monthly programming for the public that ranges from live jazz performances to puppetry workshops (Jeghetto's Puppetry Workshop last July was a huge success). One of my favorite exhibitions on display is *Where the Sun Shines* by Charlotte-born artist Stephanie J. Woods. A colorful immersive experience,



WTSS is a replica of Woods' childhood bedroom in East Charlotte, and amid its vivid mixed-media artwork, it delivers stimulating cultural commentary on the significance of hair beads, dyed fabrics, and watermelon. Both adults and children will enjoy this gallery experience.

On the first Saturday of every month, the Gantt Center hosts Family First, a two-hour interactive and instructional event for children and their families. Previous Family First events have featured everything from writing workshops presented by author Kwame Alexander, to eco-jewelry making and African drumming workshops.

Located in Uptown Charlotte, on the Levine Center for the Arts campus (across from the Mint Museum), the Gantt Center sits in a historical intersection on the corner of South Tryon and Brooklyn Village Avenue. The Second Ward neighborhood was formerly known as Brooklyn neighborhood, which

*continued on next page*



used to be a thriving all-Black neighborhood until urban renewal projects razed the community in the 1960s and 70s. Brooklyn was populated with meat markets, hair salons, and the Savoy Theatre, which was Charlotte's then premier movie theater for African Americans.

Even if you do not have a free Saturday to bring your family to the Gantt Center, the museum is open every day—except Mondays—from 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM (on Saturdays, it opens at 10:00 AM). Every Wednesday evening from 5:00 to 9:00, you can receive complimentary admission to the Gantt Center as a part of the Bank of America-sponsored “Wednesday Night Live.”

Before school starts, take your family to the Harvey B. Gantt Center

for African-American Arts + Culture for an engaging experience with African American art, history, and culture. Before you leave the museum, visit the museum's store to purchase branded merchandise, children's books, and diversely-titled books on African American history and contributions.

Also, you can further support Black-owned businesses by purchasing a consignment item from the store, such as hand-made soaps, candles, tote bags, jams, and even BBQ sauce. Whichever item you decide to purchase, you can bring home a memento from the Harvey B. Gantt Center, and share the history, knowledge, and programming that the center continues to provide for the Charlotte community and visiting guests from around the world.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

# This is America: The Striking Down of Affirmative Action, Part I



Rev. Dr. Allison Lee  
Social Justice Editor  
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By Allison N. Lee  
Social Justice Editor

*“Today’s gaps exist because [that] freedom was denied far longer than it was ever afforded.”*

– Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson

Unbelievable. Troubling. Disappointing. Inequitable. The list goes on regarding adjectives that could, should, and do describe the United States Supreme Court's decision to strike down affirmative action in relation to college admissions. Even as I use words that convey shock, there is a part of me that is in no way surprised given the history of oppression in the United States of America, the composition of the current Supreme Court, and recent SCOTUS decisions (the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*) seeking to undo decades of precedent and progress.

On June 29, 2023, “the highest court in the land,” in a 6-3 ruling, made the determination that race cannot be an element in college admissions decisions. This decision came as a result of the 2014 lawsuit filed against Harvard and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill by a group known as the Students for Fair Admissions who alleged that Harvard and UNC practiced “discriminatory quota systems” that unfairly punished Asian American and White students.

What is particularly striking about this ruling is that in it, the majority used the Equal Protection Clause rooted within the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment – initially implemented to fix the prejudicial mistreatment experienced by Black Americans – to then eliminate race-conscious admissions practices that have helped to provide opportunity for Black

and Brown people in a world that often overlooks color unless related to a sport, music deal, or something that enhances the White dollar. In her dissent, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson states,

The Court has come to rest on the bottom-line conclusion that racial diversity in higher education is only worth potentially preserving insofar as it might be needed to prepare Black Americans and other underrepresented minorities for success in the bunker, not the boardroom (a particularly awkward place to land, in light of the history the majority opts to ignore). It would be deeply unfortunate if the Equal Protection Clause actually demanded this perverse, ahistorical, and counterproductive outcome. To impose this result in that Clause's name when it requires no such thing, and to thereby obstruct our collective progress toward the full realization of the Clause's promise, is truly a tragedy for us all.

This decision intentionally takes away life-sustaining measures from a system that was never designed for and is already failing people of color, and thus, the country as a whole. This ruling removes support beams from a structure that has always been shaky. This unfair finding consciously pulls the rug out from underneath and disconnects a lifeline designed forty years ago to increase diversity and level the playing field for minority students who were often overlooked and left out as a result of over 400 years of Black and Brown bodies being viewed and treated as less than our White counterparts, if viewed and treated as anything at all. This is America.





# This is America: The Striking Down of Affirmative Action, Part II

By Allison N. Lee  
Social Justice Editor

*“The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to speak openly and candidly on the subject of race, and to apply the Constitution with eyes open to the unfortunate effects of centuries of racial discrimination.”*

*-Justice Sonia Sotomayor*

There is a generation of people at present whose lives – if no significant changes are taken – will dwell more in the aftermath of the striking down of affirmative action than the implementation of affirmative action. In addition to looking ahead, this ruling determined by SCOTUS begs that we journey through the past, in order to both remember why affirmative action is needed and facilitate thought and discussion around the harm caused without it.

## The History: Civil Rights Act of 1964

After the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1955) ruling, African Americans still struggled to be admitted into undergraduate institutions that were not HBCUs

and to be hired to work at PWIs. In part to remedy this issue, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed. It is considered to have been largely transformative legislation, having “outlawed discrimination on the basis of color, race, or national origin” (Wright, Taylor, Burrell, & Stewart, 2006). Title VI barred discrimination in the college admissions process, financial aid, and recruitment. This was a large step for African American students to receive the same consideration as their White counterparts for scholarships and/or college education.

Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964 paved the way for Title VII, which outlawed discrimination pertaining to employment (Wright, Taylor, Burrell, & Stewart, 2006). Presumably, this would have a direct effect on African American educators and administrators who had experienced the discriminatory hiring, firing, and promotion practices, even on the heels of *Brown II* and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

## The History: Affirmative Action

Despite the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling and the Civil Acts Right of 1964, which should have increased the numbers of minority students and higher education professionals while ensuring that the hiring and admittance process for African American students, faculty, staff, and administrators was equitable, there was still a reluctance at many colleges and universities to recruit African American students, and to hire African American staff and administrators (Wright, Taylor, Burrell, & Stewart, 2006). In order to enforce the various statutes of the Civil Rights Act in institutions of higher learning, a measurable concrete set of guidelines was needed. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed an executive order into law that required the consideration of race by colleges and universities in order to completely abolish any remaining covert state-sanctioned segregation on the basis of race (Back & Hsin, 2019). Thus, Affirmative Action was born, with the goal of ensuring equal hiring practices for minority groups and women. This was the first time in history that an Executive Order prohibited discrimination on the basis of race and gender in employment that was financed by federal monies (Chamberlain, 1989).

With the establishment and enforcement of affirmative action, and in conjunction with the *Adams v. Richardson* case (which alleged that the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare neglected to enforce the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which was created to eradicate discrimination on the basis of race in institutions of higher learning), the United States

started to see an increase in the number of African Americans hired to serve in administrative roles at colleges and universities (Wright, Taylor, Burrell, & Stewart, 2006). This increase in African American hiring began in the 1970s and continued through the early 1980s. During this time frame, African American student enrollment at institutions of higher learning increased from 522,000 to approximately 1.1 million (Rolle et al., 2000). Glazer (2000) posits that due to the 4% increase in students at that time, there was subsequently an increase in African American administrators.



Regardless of the positive goals of affirmative action, it was met with resistance and opposition. Individuals with a meritocratic point of view voiced concern over administrative positions in institutions of higher learning not being widely available for all qualified candidates – regardless of race – to receive equal hiring opportunity (Brown, 1994). Birch (2007) also found issue with members of the majority perhaps being more qualified in work experience or formal education, but still being disregarded relating to hiring due to the position being offered to a minority individual. The mention and hatred of what some White people perceived to be reverse discrimination by

opponents of affirmative action was highlighted in protests, newspaper articles, media coverage, and talk shows on television (Deslippe, 2012).

## Implications + Next Steps

Although it remains to be seen, the aftermath of the most recent SCOTUS decision, will have far reaching consequences. One of those consequences could be the decline of racial diversity within both public and private institutions of higher learning. According to writers, Elise Colin and Bryan J. Cook in their article, *The Future of College Admissions without Affirmative Action*, “In states that have eliminated affirmative action, studies have consistently found declines in the admission and enrollment of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous people. These declines are especially concentrated in selective and flagship institutions” (Colin & Cooke, 2023). Additionally, although this present day ruling affects college admissions specifically, it may ripple into additional spaces that uplift equity and diversity, such as employment.

Many higher education leaders have emphasized their commitment to remain and be even more intentional about diversity at their respective institutions, in light of the affirmative action ban. Research simulations posit that although there are alternatives that can somewhat attenuate the fallout of the ban, none can effectively have the positive impact pertaining to diversity that affirmative action had. Those alternatives are inclusive of: Class-based affirmative action which would take into account the socioeconomic status of students, targeted recruitment at minority schools and areas, and removal of legacy preferences in admissions which often favor White students over Black and Brown students.

Of significant mention is the various calls that have come from officials around the country, in the community, and in the Church for greater financial, political, and social support for HBCUs which could bolster additional support to Black and Brown students, as is their record of doing.

On the banning of affirmative action, former President Barack Obama stated, “Like any policy, affirmative action wasn’t perfect. But it allowed generations of students like Michelle and me to prove we belonged. Now it’s up to all of us to give young people the opportunities they deserve – and help students everywhere benefit from new perspectives.”



# Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Rainbow PUSH Coalition Founder & President, Moves to Emeritus Status & Rev. Dr. Frederick Douglass Haynes III Appointed as New President

By Rainbow PUSH Coalition  
Contributing Writer



Chicago, IL - The Rainbow PUSH Coalition has officially transferred leadership as Reverend Jesse Jackson transitions to emeritus status and Reverend Dr. Frederick Douglass Haynes III is welcomed as the organization's next president. Rev. Dr. Haynes was formally introduced during the Rainbow PUSH Coalition's 57<sup>th</sup> annual conference during an event with Vice President Kamala Harris on Sunday, July 16, 2023.

For the last 57 years, Rev. Jackson has led the Coalition which has global reach and impact. His decision is a result of his ongoing journey with Parkinson's disease. He arrived at the decision after reflecting on his life's work and prayer. While Rev. Jackson will pivot from his role as president, his commitment to continue the freedom movement is unwavering and in his new role as emeritus, he will elevate his life's work by teaching ministers in the social justice movement.

"I am looking forward to this next chapter where I will continue to focus on economic justice, mentorship, and teaching ministers how to fight for social justice. I will still be very involved in the organization and am proud that we have chosen Rev. Dr. Haynes as my successor," said Reverend Jesse Jackson, Founder and President of the Rainbow Push Coalition.

The new president, Rev. Haynes, is a prophetic pastor, passionate leader, social activist, orator, and educator engaged in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and fighting against racial injustice. He has devoted his life to economic justice and empowerment in underserved communities and transforming the lives of the disenfranchised.

Dr. Haynes has served as a visionary and innovative senior pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, for the past 40 years. He considers himself a long-time student of Rev. Jackson and has

spoken to and for Rainbow PUSH Coalition frequently. He has also formed alliances with local and national community leaders, and federal officials, to fight social injustice, domestic violence, and poverty. As a reflection of his commitment to community transformation and social consciousness, Dr. Haynes has served in various leadership capacities in organizations that champion social change and education.

"As a student of Rev. Jackson's, I am honored to be selected for this prestigious and important position. The role Rainbow PUSH Coalition plays today is just as critical as it was in 1963, when the organization was founded. Our communities need organizations like Rainbow PUSH to not only continue the fight for justice and equality, but to shepherd the next generation of advocates into the movement," said Reverend Rev. Dr. Frederick Douglass Haynes III, incoming President of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

Rev. Jackson worked directly with the chairs of the four Rainbow PUSH organizations – including Rainbow PUSH Coalition, PUSH (People United to Save Humanity), PUSH Excel, and the Citizenship Education Fund – to select Rev. Haynes as its next president. Chairs include CK Hoffer, Joyce Tucker, John Graves and Yusef Jackson.

The important work of Rainbow PUSH will continue as Rev. Haynes transitions into his new role.

Rev. Jackson looks forward to focusing on the collection of his papers and archives, a documentary and the teachings of the freedom movement modalities that will help ground the next generation. "If we are to perpetuate equality, it is vitally important that the historical philosophies and techniques are deposited in the minds of the next generation of leaders," said Rev. Jackson. "Each social advocate must realize that their innate quest for equality is not an original concept, but a continuum of the ancestral freedom movement."

## About Rainbow PUSH Coalition

Rainbow PUSH Coalition is a multi-racial, multi-issue, progressive, international organization that was formed in December 1996 by the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. through merging of two organizations he founded Operation PUSH People United to Serve Humanity (estab. 1971) and the Rainbow Coalition (estab. 1984). With headquarters in Chicago and offices in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New York and Oakland, the organization works to make the American Dream a reality for all citizens while advocating for peace and justice around the world. RPC is dedicated to improving the lives of all people by serving as a voice for the voiceless. Its mission is to protect, defend and gain civil rights by leveling the economic and educational playing fields while promoting peace and justice around the world.



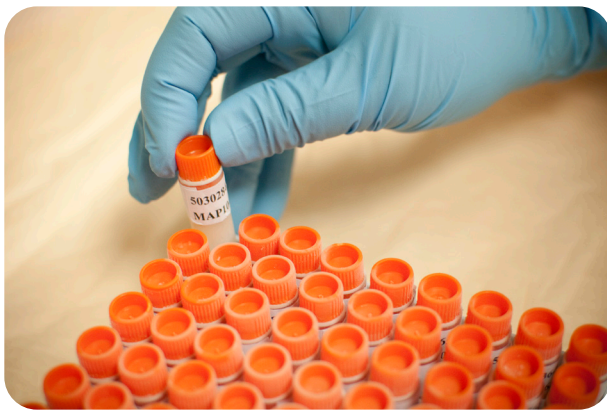


Mr. Daman Deleon  
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# U.S. FDA APPROVES LECANEMAB FOR EARLY ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

By Christine John-Fuller, VP Communications  
Alzheimer's Association - North Carolina

On Thursday, July 6, 2023, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted traditional approval to lecanemab (Eisai/Biogen), brand name Leqembi, for patients confirmed to be in early stage Alzheimer's disease. While the treatment was granted accelerated approval in January 2023, this is the first Alzheimer's treatment to receive traditional approval that changes the underlying course of the disease.



Following the FDA decision, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced their plan to enable access to FDA traditionally approved Alzheimer's treatments. The announcement — which includes additional details about its own low touch registry — is an important development for people living with Alzheimer's disease and their families.

"Alzheimer's Association advocates have tirelessly shared their stories in congressional hearings and in rallies at the White House and in all 50 states about the impact that clinically meaningful treatments

like Leqembi will have on their lives," said Robert Egge, Alzheimer's Association chief public policy officer. "Today is an important advance in making access to this and future treatments a reality."

Alzheimer's — a progressive, degenerative and fatal brain disease — is the most common cause of dementia. For *Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures*, an annual report by the Alzheimer's Association, visit [alz.org/facts](http://alz.org/facts).

- An estimated 6.7 million Americans age 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's dementia, including 180,000 North Carolina residents, a number estimated to grow to as many as 210,000 by 2025.
- Nationally, more than 11 million caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. In North Carolina, 369,000 caregivers provide a total of 533 million hours of unpaid care, valued at a total of \$8 billion.
- One in three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or other dementia.
- Nearly two-thirds of those with Alzheimer's—3.9 million—are women.
- Older non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanic Americans are disproportionately more likely than older whites to have Alzheimer's or other dementias.

#### About the Alzheimer's Association®:

The Alzheimer's Association is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®.

## Protect Your Skin: The Importance of Photoprotection in Communities of Color

By Claudia Quarshie, Keck School of Medicine, USC and  
Dr. Chesahna Kindred, Kindred Hair & Skin Center, Columbia, MD

Sun safety and photoprotection behaviors are known to prevent skin damage by ultraviolet (UV) radiation. The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) encourages the public to practice multiple sun safety tips to protect the skin from damaging UV rays and reduce the risk of skin cancer.

These recommendations include seeking shade when appropriate, wearing sun-protective clothing, using sunglasses with UV protection, applying a broad-spectrum and water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, and reapplying sunscreen every two hours when outdoors or after swimming or sweating.<sup>1</sup> The role of photoprotection in preventing sunburns and the long-term consequences of sun exposure (e.g., photoaging, skin cancer) are well established in fair-skinned populations. However, individuals with melanin-rich skin types are less likely to experience these outcomes, which has shown to affect the perceived importance of practicing photoprotection.<sup>2</sup> For example, there is a common misconception among African Americans and other communities of color that having melanin-rich skin provides protection against the damaging effects of UV radiation. Although this is partially true, African American skin varies from individual to individual and there is evidence that African Americans experience sunburn and skin damage.<sup>3</sup> The same holds true for Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and other communities with skin of color or ethnic skin.

In communities of color, sun exposure is known to cause pigmentary disorders including post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (hyperpigmentation following skin inflammation or injury), melasma (hyper-

pigmented symmetric spots most commonly on the face), photoaging (premature aging with sun exposure), and, less commonly, basal cell cancer (a type of nonmelanoma skin cancer).<sup>2</sup> Thus, there are significant potential benefits of photoprotection in populations with ethnic skin. Although communities of color tend to practice photoprotection by seeking shade and wearing sun-protective clothing, survey and interview-based studies have consistently found relatively low use of sunscreen among these populations. This is likely due to the unfavorable cosmetic appearance of sunscreens based on inorganic filters (e.g., titanium dioxide, zinc oxide), such as greasiness, thickness, and a significant white residue left after application.<sup>2</sup> Tinted sunscreens, which provide protection against both UV radiation and visible light, are a suitable alternative considering that different shades may be available for individuals with ethnic skin. Selecting the appropriate tinted sunscreen shade, which depends on the skin tone and undertone (the hue underneath the surface of the skin that affects the overall skin appearance), is encouraged for the best appearance after application.<sup>4</sup> There are also tinted sunscreens with a "universal shade" that are suitable for most skin types. Research in African American communities also shows a larger variability in the use of sunglasses than in sunscreen or sun-protective clothing.<sup>3</sup> UV radiation is considered a main cause of eye disease and cataracts,<sup>5</sup> which highlights the importance of adequate photoprotection behaviors for the eyes in addition to the skin.

Although photoprotection is known to protect against several conditions in communities of color as discussed previously, it is important to note a considerable exception. UV exposure is not an important risk factor for melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, in melanin-rich individuals. The predominant melanoma subtype seen in this population is acral lentiginous melanoma, and it tends to affect sun-protected



areas including the soles of the feet, palms of the hands, and under the nails.<sup>6</sup> When caught early, skin cancer is highly treatable. The AAD recommends identifying the warning signs of melanoma by looking for the following ABCDEs: Asymmetry (one half of the spot looks different from the other half), Border (the spot has an irregular or poorly defined border), Color (the spot has varying colors from one area to the next such as shades of tan, black, brown, red, or white), Diameter (it is greater than 6mm or the size of a pencil eraser) and Evolving (the spot looks different from the rest or changes in size, shape, or color).<sup>7</sup> For more information about checking your skin for potential skin cancer spots, visit [SpotSkinCancer.org](http://SpotSkinCancer.org).

Regular photoprotection and practice of sun safety behaviors are essential in all populations. Increasing education to dispel common myths in populations of color are essential for the overall skin health of our communities.

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# Back-to-School Tips For Teachers

By Daman De Leon  
Health & Wellness Editor

Many schools will officially open their doors to students this month! While it is important the students have the tools they need to succeed, it is equally important for their teachers to have useful “tools” as well. So, here is a little advice from three experienced teachers on how to get it right on “day one.”

#### Teacher A: Be the Boss

Students want you to be in charge. They might not know that they do, but they do. If the teacher is the boss, they feel safe, contained and looked after. So, my tip is be the boss.

Here’s how:

- Meet and greet at the door – hold back any student not ready to enter (for example, chatting, uniform issues, etc.)
- Have a seating plan pre-prepared (or use boy/girl)
- Have an in-silence activity waiting for them as they take a seat
- Take up a central, commanding position
- Speak clearly and concisely
- Say things with the expectation that they will be followed – be surprised if they aren’t!
- Stop talking if a student is talking over you – wait for silence with a neutral stare
- End the lesson in a controlled manner

If you don’t think you have the confidence for such dominance or if you think that your nerves and anxiety will get in the way, there’s a simple solution. Fake it. Take a deep breath and fake it. You’ll still convince the students and better still, if you keep doing it, you’ll soon convince yourself too.

**The verdict:** Students prefer teachers who are in charge. They rate them as more likeable and better at their job. So, yes, definitely be the boss. But a word of warning: being the boss doesn’t mean being terrifying, “shouty,” or stern. Those approaches are as counter-productive as they are unethical. In fact, being the boss must also include warmth, smiles and kindness.

#### Teacher B: Build a Community

Pro-learning behavior comes from pro-social attitudes, and you get pro-social attitudes if you turn your classroom into a community. Introduce and display the following three principles:

- We are kind to each other
- We respect each other
- We support each other

Ask the students what behavior they would see if those three principles were present in a classroom. Use the following think-pair-share activity:

- Give in-silence thinking time (timed is good)
- Give in-silence writing time (again, timed)
- Get students to share their answers in pairs
- Get the pairs to share in quads
- Get quads to share with the whole class

This exercise will generate lots of deep thinking about your three community principles. However, it’s not over yet. Now, for the really clever bit – drum roll, please. Run a second think-pair-share activity on this question:

- Thinking about the exercise we just did, how effective were we at sticking to the three principles?

You’ve already generated some great learning, but this question will deepen and strengthen that learning. Why? Because the question gets the students to apply the three principles to their own behavior. They’re turning the abstract into the concrete, the hypothetical into the actual, the impersonal into the personal.

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# Technology Gadgets in the Classroom



By Angel Eason  
Lifestyle Editor

August is here and many students are headed back to school. School buses are out and about and school zones are soon to be active. It is time to take the kids shopping to check everything off of their supplies and clothing lists.

For those new to college, it is time to go residence hall shopping for bedding, a micro-fridge, and other living necessities. Bookstores are open on campuses, ready for students to spend hundreds of dollars on textbooks and school swag items in preparation for the first week of school. As classes resume, it is important to know what technology you or your child might encounter. Let us take a look at the latest technology that can be found in the classroom.

## 1. SMART Boards

SMART Boards which are also called interactive white boards are used in the classroom to boost student engagement, accommodate different learning styles, share lessons, and help students succeed (Stealey, 2023).

According to the VARK model, there are four different learning styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and reading/writing (Flemings and Mills, 1992). The SMART board is used to reach different styles through visual display, multimedia content, and writing on the board. Teachers are also able to view the assignments their students are working on in real-time.

“I am able to program the SMART board by adding assignments and I can see the students working on their assignments on their Chrome-

books,” said Thelma Rawls, a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher who is a member of New Foreman Temple A.M.E. Zion Church.

## 2. Tablets and Laptops

It is no secret that the pandemic shifted the way we learn. Remote learning forced school districts to issue over a million laptops to students to use at home. Laptops are used in and out of the classroom for problem-solving, writing essays, taking notes, and submitting assignments.

On college campuses, students are highly encouraged to purchase a laptop or tablet to use throughout their collegiate journey. Tablets are considered a lighter device used for reading, taking notes, and viewing information.

## 3. Virtual Reality

Virtual Reality uses headsets or closed-head mounted displays to transpose the user to a different world. For example, students can take virtual trips to historic sites, museums, other planets, and cities giving them a chance to see how people work and live.

School teachers, are there other devices you would add to this list? If so, share them with Angel at [lifestyle@starofzion.org](mailto:lifestyle@starofzion.org).

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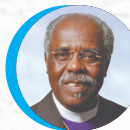
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# Be Smart About Your Back-to-School Shopping



Dana G. Stille  
Financial Freedom Editor  
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By Dana G. Stille  
Financial Freedom Editor

The new school year is fast approaching. Whether you have a student attending K-12 or college, the expenses are about to mount up. Survey data indicates that spending will be lower than it has been nine years. Estimates for spending per child in K-12 are approximately \$600, and

for college students, excluding tuition, room, and board the estimate is \$ 1,367. For families with more than one child in school, these expenses can add up quickly.

In preparation for making back-to-school purchases, here are some tips that you might find useful, and that may help you to cut your costs at the beginning of this school year.

1. Take an inventory of what you have at home. If you are anything like me, you have a stash of pencils, pens, glue sticks, and notebooks already. Check your home office, and your child's backpack from last year before you buy.

2. Prioritize your purchases. Take the time to make a list and put the absolute necessities at the top of that list. For instance, are the newest tech gadgets necessary at this time, or should importance be placed on purchasing books, pens, backpacks, and a calculator?
3. If you shop online, consider using a shopping portal that allows you to earn points toward a future purchase, or cash back. You can use your favorite search engine to find shopping portals. Be sure to do your homework and find the portal that works best for you.
4. If you live in a state that offers a sales tax holiday on back-to-school supplies, consider delaying your purchases until that holiday.
5. When making purchases with a credit card, consider the interest rate on the card, as well as any additional benefits associated with the card. Some credit cards offer great introductory rates, and cash back or additional benefits.

Happy shopping, and have a safe school year.

For a closer look at the consumer spending data regarding back-to-school shopping, visit the National Retail Federation website at [nrf.com](http://nrf.com).

## U.S. Mint Unveils Coin Designs in Honor of Abolitionist Harriet Tubman

By Karen V. Hill, Pres. & CEO of the Harriet Tubman Home, Inc.  
Contributing Writer  
Photos by Brian Thompson, BND Productions, LLC

The United States Mint recently unveiled the design of three bicentennial commemorative coins in honor of Harriet Tubman. The coins were revealed Sunday, July 23, 2023, at the African Methodist Episcopal Zion's (AMEZ) Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society Quadrennial Conference at the New Orleans Hilton Hotel Riverside.



"I am honored to announce the designs of the coins for the 2024 Harriet Tubman Commemorative Coin Program," said United States Mint Director Ventris C. Gibson. "These beautiful designs celebrate the life, achievements, and legacy of an extraordinary woman, and add to the Mint's rich history of telling our nation's story through numismatic art."

Born into slavery in 1822, Harriet Tubman, who lived until 1910, was an extraordinary American patriot who bequeathed her land and legacy to the A.M.E. Zion Church. The denomination established the Harriet Tubman Home, Inc. to be the stewards of her legacy.

"The historic reveal of these coins marks another historic event as it will be led by Ventris Gibson, the first woman and the first African American to lead the US Mint. Harriet is smiling today," stated Bishop Dennis V. Proctor of the North Eastern Episcopal District and Board Chair of the Harriet Tubman Home, Inc. "We, the AMEZ Church, have protected and preserved Harriet Tubman's legacy and have looked for meaningful ways to accurately share the history of her faith and fortitude. The three coins provide such an opportunity."



The three coins are the following denominations: a 50-cent clad, one silver dollar, and a 5-dollar gold coin. The coins represent Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad years, her Civil War years, and the extraordinary 54 years she lived in freedom as well as her many humanitarian acts.

In the tradition of Harriet Tubman, a goal of the coins is to reach beyond the traditional coin collecting community and provide an opportunity for families to own a piece of Tubman history.

The Harriet Tubman Home, Inc. is joined by the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in working with the U.S. Mint to bring the coins to the public.





# Livingstone College Welcomes Back Clifton Huff as Director of Athletics

Salisbury, NC - Dr. Anthony J. Davis announced Clifton Huff as the Athletic Director on July 10, 2023. Huff spent his last six years as the Senior Athletic Director of NCAA Compliance at Clark Atlanta University.

"We're thrilled to welcome coach Huff back to Livingstone," said Dr. Anthony J. Davis, President of Livingstone College. "I have no doubt he will work tirelessly to strengthen athletics at Livingstone and inspire the Stone pride among our students, alumni, and fans."

Huff has a very diverse collegiate background working in almost all aspects of athletics. From Director of Athletics to Academic Enhancement Advisor, Game Operations Director, Sports Information Director, and Track & Field Coach.

Huff also has experience at both the NCAA Division I and NCAA Division II levels.

Huff's wealth of knowledge and experience will make him a welcome addition to any athletic program.

Much of Huff's career was spent at his alma mater, the Livingstone College graduate ('85) contributed to Blue Bears athletics in nearly every way possible.

Huff spent 12 years as the Director of Athletics at Livingstone College, making a major impact with facilities, academics, graduation rates, community involvement, and development. During his tenure, he earned several honors, including being named the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Athletic Director of the Year and earning the Jeannette Lee Athletic Achievement Award in 1997 and 1998. In 1998, he received the Commissioner's Special Recognition Award for leadership.

Huff served as the First Vice-President of the CIAA's Conference Officers from 2005-07, and the President of the CIAA Athletic Director's Association from 1999-2003. Huff served on the CIAA Basketball Tournament Committee from

1999-2007, And as a member 1999-2004 the NCAA Division II Men's Basketball Regional Select Committee. Now, set for his return, he has sights on taking the Lions to new heights.

"There's truly no place like home. My athletic career has come full circle from where it started. I am excited about this second opportunity lead and the challenge to build Livingstone College into a national competitive athletic program," said Clifton Huff

During Huff's tenure as an Administrator at several different colleges and universities where he's been affiliated with three National Champions. 22 Conference titles and hundreds of All-Americans athletes.

As a coach, Huff greatly impacted the Blue Bears program and his career. After taking over the program

in 1991, Huff guided the development of the 2004 NCAA Division II men's 200m dash national champion and the national runner-up in the 400m run. In 2014 and 2015 Women's 4X100 relay runners-ups, and the 2002 and 2014 Women's Indoor 60 meter NCAA national runner-up. In addition, he also coached the development of some 60 NCAA Division II All-Americans, 103 All-CIAA performers, and 28 CIA individual champions. Five of Huff's track athletes were valedictorians of their class.

He was a coach of the 2015 CIAA Indoor Champion at WSSU and his Blue Bear teams were CIAA runners-up 19 times with five Livingstone College teams finishing among the top 25 in the NCAA Division II National Championships. Huff was named the CIAA Coach of the Year four times as a coach. Huff was also honored as one of the CIAA 100 Greatest Athletes & Coaches. He was honored as No. 55 on the prestigious list.

Prior to joining the staff at Clark Atlanta University, Huff spent time at Winston-Salem State(2012-2016) and at NCAA Division I schools in both the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) and the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) - including three years(2009-2012) at Grambling State University as its Director of Compliance and Operations. He also spent two years (2007-2009) at Florida A&M University as the Senior Associate Athletic Director for Operations and Compliance. Huff was instrumental in helping restructure their athletic programs. Both schools were premier universities in Historically Black College and University (HBCU) athletics.

As a student-athlete, Huff had a legendary career, earning numerous conferences, regional, and national honors. He was a standout for the Blue Bears where he was noted as a three-time MVP. He still holds several school records, including holding the school record in the decathlon where he met the 1984 USA Olympic Trial provisional standard.

Huff is a 1985 graduate of Livingstone College and is a three-time inductee into the Livingstone College Athletics Hall of Fame starting in 2006. In the spring of 2014, Huff was inducted into the CIAA Conference Hall of Fame and the in 2015 the E.A. Laney HS Hall of Fame.

Clifton Huff is the owner of Chuckeez Auto Services in Charlotte, NC.





# Chilling Achievements

By Zion Shoulders  
Sports Editor

Every year, some incredible things happen in the off-season of college sports. During the summer, you see players move to new teams, coaches take on different roles, and sometimes coaches even get fired. A lot of people eagerly look forward to these summer months to see what changes will happen in the upcoming season. On June 28, some fantastic news filled the HBCU Sports Community. Starting next fall, The Tennessee State University Tigers will be the first Historically Black University to have a men's club hockey team.

The significance of this achievement might not be immediately apparent to everyone, but it is truly remarkable, not only for sports in general but particularly for HBCU culture. The reality is that sports programs at HBCUs have long suffered from chronic underfunding. From inadequately equipped arenas to limited concession offerings, and from basic team jerseys to constrained travel accommodations, the disparities between HBCUs and prestigious institutions like Duke or St. John's are substantial. Therefore, for an HBCU to embrace one of the most expensive sports to support within its school is a momentous and meaningful step forward.

Let's delve into the world of hockey, a sport that traces its origins to the rinks of Montreal, Canada. From its beginnings, the game of hockey ventured beyond Canadian borders, making its way to countries across the globe. However, despite its global reach, it remains predominantly associated with white players, as exemplified by the National



Hockey League (NHL), where approximately 83.6% of players are of white ethnicity, representing a significant racial majority.

As the sport continues to evolve, there is a growing recognition of the need for diversity and inclusivity. In the 2022-2023 hockey season, only 34 active black players graced the rosters, a relatively low number considering the over 1000 active hockey players in the NHL.

This is precisely why what TSU is doing is so remarkable for Black culture as a whole. It offers a place where individuals can find a sense of belonging, compete, and build together as a family, in an environment where others look like them. "Bringing ice hockey to Tennessee State University is part of our continued commitment to providing our students with new opportunities and broadening their interests in areas where they had limited or no access," said TSU President Glenda Glover. This initiative represents a positive step toward expanding the horizons and inclusivity of a sport historically underrepresented by minority athletes.

In the upcoming 2024-2025 season, the TSU Tigers are focused on building their infrastructure for the future. Their commitment to change and growth is vital in creating a strong community, and TSU is making the right investments for tomorrow's students. With this bold step into the world of ice hockey, TSU is set to make history and inspire a new generation of athletes, elevating the spirit of unity and pride within their HBCU sports legacy. As they embark on this journey, challenges and triumphs are inevitable, but there is no doubt that TSU's position as a pioneer in HBCU sports will be solidified.

## Empowering Athletes: A New Dawn of Giving Back

By Zion Shoulders  
Sports Editor

In the past two years, NIL (Name, Image, and Likeness) has revolutionized the college world, granting high school and college athletes the opportunity to capitalize on their personal brand. Deals have been struck with numerous athletes, covering a diverse range of industries from McDonald's and Nike to food stores, video games, sports companies, and beyond. NIL allows athletes to profit from their own name and likeness, shifting the focus from universities making all the money. Amidst this trend, an intriguing question arises: how do these athletes use their newfound opportunities to give back to their communities?



Auburn football player, Elijah McAllister, is setting an inspiring example for fellow athletes on how to make a positive impact. Through his organization, "All Four One and One For All," McAllister hosted a back-to-school drive in late July, with the goal of providing much-needed school supplies to young students in Alabama.

Witnessing young college students utilize their platform to support others

who once faced similar challenges or circumstances is truly remarkable. McAllister's dedication to making a difference in underserved communities adds even more significance to his efforts. His organization, "All for One and One for All," isn't just for show or recognition. He genuinely lives by its mission and is determined to see young people thrive in life. With a focus on religious practices, the central

mission of his organization is to foster a strong community by nurturing the growth of youth from diverse backgrounds.

Elijah McAllister's drive to make a difference in the world is truly remarkable and seems to come naturally to him. When asked about his main focus in his organization, he replied, "Centralize my passions and use my platform as a football player to do so."



While some may express reservations about NIL, arguing that athletes should prioritize academics and their athletic journey, McAllister's approach emphasizes a crucial perspective. The reality is that universities heavily rely on these athletes to generate revenue. Moreover, there's no reason why athletes shouldn't leverage their platform to uplift themselves and their communities simultaneously.

In addition to hosting a back-to-school drive, McAllister and his organization have been actively involved in various other impactful initiatives. Recently, they successfully conducted their second annual youth football camp, and there are plans to host a Thanksgiving dinner in November.

It's truly inspiring to witness young black athletes making a significant difference in their communities, especially when driven by personal empowerment. Elijah isn't the only athlete making a positive impact on his brand, but his work undoubtedly stands out among the rest.





Rev. Ronald Nathan  
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# Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Africa

By Rev. Ronald A. Nathan  
World Politics Editor

The future of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) is intrinsically linked to that of the African-American community in the United States of America. The conditions faced by one has a knock-on effect on the other. The HBCU are facing unique challenges in 2023 around funding, accreditation, student enrolment, and faculty retention. These exceptional institutions, which has served the African-American community for over a century, are being spoken of in some circles as crises.

Could it be that these crises may cause us to see an opportunity in Africa? There is such a wide blind spot concerning the potentiality of Africa. Why are HBCU's not seeing Africa as a growth region for expanding its reach and influence internationally and securing its future domestically?

It is my surmise that just like the African-American community, the HBCUs are archaic in its relationship with the mother continent and ambivalent about Africa's future.

The low hanging fruit should be to increase recruitment of African students and African-trained faculty members into HBCU institutions at a time of falling numbers in the USA. The evidence shows that in 2018, there were 60,000 African students in China, 27,000 in Russia and 26,500 in the Ukraine, up until recently. What does this evidence tell us? Simply put - the 1,297 officially recognized universities in Africa are unable to meet the higher educational needs of the continent. At present, there are 9 million students enrolled in African universities. For every one student enrolled, there are two potential students who are turned away due to limited university places and inflexible financial plans.

In 2020, African students made up only 3.9% of the foreign-born students in American universities. This highlights a gap that can be filled by HBCUs, and one that can aid President's Biden's foreign policies initiatives geared towards increasing U.S. visibility and development interests in Africa.

Here, I must take the opportunity to salute the HBCU Africa Education Coalition Corp (HAEC), whose aim is to eliminate the disparity of access for African Americans wanting to study abroad in Africa and its Diaspora.

However, there is room for so much more.



European universities have been expanding their reach through creating overseas campuses in African countries and supplementing their programs with online tuition. Institutions such as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, which have universities and other higher education facilities on both sides of the Atlantic, are uniquely placed.

There are great possibilities for our African-based episcopal areas to develop joint initiatives that can impact not only the

profit margins in the USA but also build Africa's infrastructural capacity and its leadership portfolio. The time has come for the HBCUs to give visionary leadership to the African American community towards a greater mutual and fraternal engagement with Africa.

The challenges facing HBCUs can be addressed not only domestically but also internationally. The legacy of the HBCU as educationally liberating institutions for African Americans can also serve Africa's educationally eager masses.





# THE CHURCH REFORMATION: What is it, and will it ever end?



By Mr. Antonio R. Malakia  
President, Elizabeth City District Lay Council  
Contributing Writer

The Reformation: “The Protestants won. So, why are we not satisfied? And, why are we still redefining the Church?”

This article will give you a glimpse of what the Church Reformation, a.k.a. Protestant Reformation, is. I will give a brief on how and why it started, a brief on some of the emerging denominations, and a brief on where it is today. I will, of course, talk a little bit about the Methodist Church – (just to squeeze it in the midst of the reformation process).

In 2017, Dr. Stanley M. Hauerwas, Gilbert T. Rowe Emeritus Professor at Duke Divinity School, wrote: “Roman Catholicism is rich and vibrant. But, someone has to keep the Church honest.”

The Church is always in a process of reformation as it tries to live closer to Christ’s teachings. However, Christians often disagree. Occasionally, movements break away; and, sometimes, different churches emerge. With the advent of the printing press in the 1450’s, the Bible became increasingly available, and a call arose to reform the superstitious practices of the laity and introduce a closer following of Scripture. There was also a protest against corrupt church practices and a move toward reforming the religious life.

Over the centuries, particularly in the office of the papacy, the Catholic Church had become deeply involved in the political life of Western Europe. The resulting intrigues and political manipulations, combined with the Church’s increasing power and wealth, contributed to the bankrupting of the Church as a spiritual force. Abuses such as the sale of indulgences (spiritual privileges) by the clergy and other corruptions undermined the Church’s spiritual authority.

People like Erasmus, Huldrych Zwingli, Martin Luther, and John Calvin saw the corruption, and tried to stop it. Reform movements were created, and then a major break occurred in the 1500’s. Out of these reform movements came new churches, henceforth called “Protestant” Churches. It should be pointed out that the Catholic Church has stressed the pa-



pacy, sacraments, and the controlled use of Scripture; whereas, the Protestant Churches have stressed each individual’s relationship with Christ without a priest or pope acting as intermediary, and the primacy of Scripture as the foundation of preaching, teaching and salvation. The Protestants made the Scripture available in the vernacular, not just in Latin.

Martin Luther (a German monk and theologian) was the first person to translate the Bible into German. The posting of his 95 theses at Wittenberg is seen as the start of the Protestant Reformation. This happened in the year 1517. He started the Lutheran Church, which is the first Protestant Church. John Knox brought Luther’s ideas to Scotland and founded the Presbyterian Church. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 recognized Protestants, and is supposedly seen as the end of this reformation process. Was it really the end of this process?

Out of the Protestant Reformation, various denominations came into existence in the decades to follow. Episcopalians, Methodists, and Baptists are among many. Episcopalians are the American wing of the Anglican Church. They are highly liturgical and generally quite liberal. Methodists stem from John Wesley. Their focus is on Holiness. They tend towards the Armenian doctrine, that “Jesus died for everybody, not just believers, and that our free will is what allows us to follow God.” Also, most are quite liberal. Baptists tend to be non-liturgical. They believe that autonomy belongs to individual churches, not some hierarchy. They focus on credo-baptism (a.k.a. Believer’s baptism), and they range from liberal to conservative.

Methodism began in the mid-eighteenth century in Britain, due in large part on the strong leadership of John Wesley (around 1739). Mr. Wesley, an England Priest, is the founder of the theology, structure and enthusiasm of Methodism. At a prayer meeting in 1738, John Wesley discovered that a new relationship with God comes through faith in Christ rather than through our own efforts.

The African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church had its start in 1787 when officers and members of St. George Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, segregated its growing Black membership by asking them to sit in the gallery of the building. First called the Free African Methodist Society, the A.M.E. Church itself was officially formed in 1816 in Philadelphia by Richard Allen, who was consecrated as its first Bishop.



Around the same time as Richard Allen was setting up the A.M.E. Church in Philadelphia, another branch was being organized in New York City. In 1796, James Varick and others formally organized the African Methodist Episcopal Church in New York. James Varick was elected and consecrated as its first Bishop in 1822. To avoid confusion with the Philadelphia branch, the word “Zion” was added to the title by the General Conference of 1848, making it the A.M.E. Zion Church (Zion being the name of the Mother Church in New York City, erected in 1800).

The Christian Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.) Church was organized in 1870 in Jackson, Tennessee by formerly enslaved members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Methodist Episcopal and the Evangelical United Brethren Churches joined in 1968 to form the United Methodist Church.

Well, back to my story on the Church Reformation. Will the process ever end?

If the Protestant Reformation has been successful, then why are there still Catholics out there? Most of the reforms that Protestants wanted Catholics to make have been made. For instance, indulgences are no longer sold. A few Protestant denominations might still be anti-Catholic. Some still think that Catholicism has satanic origins. I personally do not agree with this thinking. However, I do not understand why someone would be or become Catholic, especially since Catholicism does not admit the direct personal relation between someone and Christ without an intermediary, and does not admit the free grace of God. Yet, over the years, many intellectuals, especially those who have studied theology, have become Roman Catholics. It is believed that they convert because Catholicism is supposed to be an intellectually rich theological tradition which is better able in negotiating the acids of our cultures.

In his writings, Dr. Stanley Hauerwas stated, “That the Reformation has been a success, however, has put Protestantism in a crisis. Winning is dangerous – what do you do next? Do you return to Mother Church? It seems not. Instead, Protestantism has become an end in itself, even though it is hard to explain from a Protestant point of view why it should exist. The result is denominationalism in which

each Protestant church tries to be just different enough from other Protestant churches in order to attract an increasingly diminishing market share. It’s a dismaying circumstance.”

The multitude of churches’ creation, i.e. the emergence of various protestant denominations, appears to be an evolving form of business creation in such that some of those who can preach find it a source of money-making in the name of Christianity. New Protestant Churches are being formed everywhere. Pastors, ministers, and preachers have been leaving their churches in order to form new churches, convincing members to follow them because they will provide them a better way of worshipping and a better way to salvation, or simply they will bring them closer to God. (As a side note: The increase in the number of new churches appears to have contributed to the decrease in membership in our existing churches.)

I’ll also add the following information. In November 2022, the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church approved disaffiliation requests by 249 of its churches, clearing the way for those congregations to join the Global Methodist Church or some other denomination, or to become non-denominational. Churches leaving the United Methodist Church said they were driven out by a progressive movement among United Methodists in the United States, especially as it pertains to the Church’s willingness to ordain gay and lesbian clergy members and conduct same-sex marriages. This break-up allowed North Carolina Methodists to end decades of debate on which viewpoint is right, and it has allowed each side to concentrate on following their deep theological convictions to honor God in the way they best know how.

As long as some of us think that we can relate better to Christ’s teachings by continually redefining the Church in our own terms and thinking that we can serve Christ better than others, then the Church Reformation will continue. It is my belief that nobody knows when or if it will ever end. At least not in the foreseeable future.

The end! Or is it?

*(Note: Mr. Malakia prepared this article in February 2023.)*

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