

# THE STAR OF ZION


SEPT 2023 | VOL 147 NO. 9 | STAROFZION.ORG | THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH



# Self-Care

EDITION





**Official Voice of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**

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

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

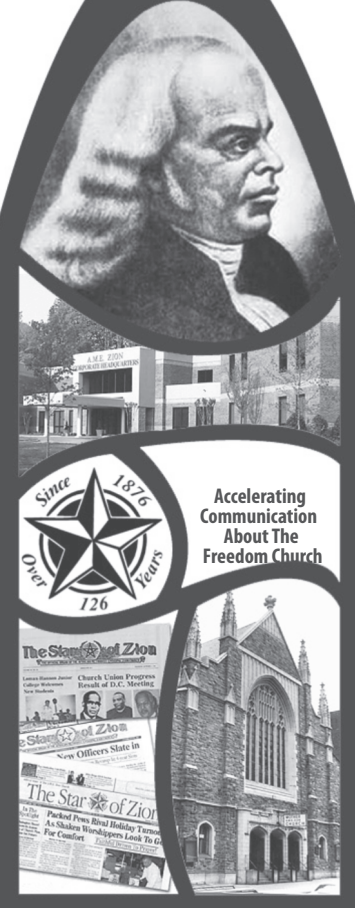
**THE STAR OF ZION**  
(ISSN 0038-9870)  
PUBLICATION NUMBER  
05 19-200

The Official organ of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Periodicals Postage Paid at Charlotte, North Carolina.

Founded in 1876 and published once monthly from The A.M.E. Zion Church Headquarters, 3225 W. Sugar Creek Rd., Charlotte, NC 28269.

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

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



★ The Star of Zion ★

**COMMUNICATIONS BOARD**

- Chairman:**  
Bishop George D. Crenshaw
- First Vice Chairman:**  
Bishop Brian R. Thompson, Sr.
- Second Vice Chairman:**  
Bishop George E. Battle, Jr.
- Third Vice Chairperson (Layperson):**  
Ms. Marilyn Graham
- PIED** Rev. Dr. David A. Williams  
Ms. Carlous Tyrance
- ENC** Rev. Dr. Florence S. Brown  
Ms. Nora K. McNeill
- MW** Rev. Todd Jarrett  
Ms. Martha Scudder
- NE** Rev. Kenneth Lewis  
Mrs. Mattie Taylor
- SA** Rev. Sandra Sistare  
Ms. Marilyn Graham
- MA** Rev. D'Andre W. James-Daniels  
Mrs. Debra P. Dennison
- AL/FL** Rev. Dr. Erskine Faush, Jr.  
Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson
- SWD** Rev. Gary Adams  
Ms. Pamela Brown
- WD** Rev. Kaloma Smith  
Mr. Clyde Ellis Virges
- CSA** Rev. Seth Moulton  
Mrs. Melanie Parker
- WWA** Rev. Sharon Mitchell  
Mr. Daniel Brown
- EWA** Rev. Johnny Ruff  
Mr. Nse Joseph Edem

- Editor in Chief**  
Mr. Darin Kent  
[Editor@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Editor@StarOfZion.org)
- Director of Sales Marketing & Strategy**  
Rev. Samuel Brown  
[Admin@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Admin@StarOfZion.org)
- Zion Spotlight Editor**  
Mrs. Debra Chappelle-Polk  
[ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org](mailto:ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org)
- World Politics Editor**  
Rev. Ronald Nathan  
[WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org](mailto:WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org)
- Health and Wellness Editor**  
Mr. Daman Deleon  
[Health\\_Wellness@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Health_Wellness@StarOfZion.org)
- Social Justice Editor**  
Rev. Dr. Allison Lee  
[SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org](mailto:SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org)
- Entertainment & The Arts Editor**  
Rev. Dierdre R. Parker-Rowson  
[Entertainment\\_Arts@StarofZion.org](mailto:Entertainment_Arts@StarofZion.org)
- Financial Freedom Editor**  
Dr. Dana Stilley  
[FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org](mailto:FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org)
- Lifestyle Editor**  
Ms. Angel Eason  
[Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org)
- Sports Editor**  
Mr. Zion Shoulders  
[Sports@StarofZion.org](mailto:Sports@StarofZion.org)
- Star of Zion Office**  
704-688-2577  
[Office@StarofZion.org](mailto:Office@StarofZion.org)
- Subscriptions Department**  
704-688-2561  
[Subscribe@StarOfZion.org](mailto:Subscribe@StarOfZion.org)
- SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
One Year - \$38.00 Single Copy - \$4.00  
Bundle (50 Copies): \$100.00

**Notice to Star of Zion Reporters  
Article/Ad Submission Deadline Dates**

- October 2023 Issue.....September 15,2023  
November 2023 Issue.....October 15, 2023  
December 2023 Issue.....November 15, 2023  
January 2024 Issue.....December 15, 2023  
February 2024 Issue.....January 15, 2024

**IN THIS  
ISSUE  
PAGES**

LOOK  
INSIDE

**03-14**  
ZION SPOTLIGHT

.....

**15-16**  
EDUCATION

.....

**17-22**  
SOCIAL JUSTICE

.....

**23**  
ENTERTAINMENT & THE ARTS

.....

**24-26**  
HEALTH & WELLNESS

.....

**27**  
LIFESTYLE

.....

**28-29**  
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

.....

**30**  
FINANCIAL FREEDOM

.....

**31-32**  
SPORTS

.....

**33-34**  
OPINION

.....

**34-35**  
OBITUARIES

**BE A BLESSING**  
THE RIGHT TO GRIEVE: Jesus Did

Submitted By Leona Nicholas Welch

We mean well. We want to comfort. We want to uplift and be encouraging. Being Christian and Bible believers, we want to offer inspiring words. But even in our best and most sincere intentions, we often do just the opposite when it comes to responding to someone whose loved one has died. This statement might raise a few eyebrows, but in the midst of the pain and loss of someone else's loved one, we sometimes miss the mark.



Far too often the kinds of words and expressions of inspiration we offer when someone has lost a loved one, are just not effective. In our desire to help, we recite commonly used adages and quote familiar scripture meant to assuage someone's grief and put them in a spiritual space. And again, it is all so sincerely well-meant; but it is as though we want to take away the grief. We cannot.

It is as though we hold the person responsible for "getting passed it," or "getting on" with their life immediately when what they really need is to take some time, to roll back the film of the person's life, and allow their grief to roll with it. At the start of a season of grief what most people need is a few select close family, friends, and/or a spiritual director to simply be a presence. Most do not want or need to be bombarded (as loving as it is meant) with crowds of people wanting answers and anecdotes about the deceased one's life and death.

Perhaps, in some cases, the most helpful thing to do is to stay home at first and send a quiet text or a quick phone call, with the words, "I am here. I am praying, and I love you. Feel free to call when you are up to it." If you are expected to show up and it is obvious that your presence is needed, please go. Be a calm, loving presence. Sometimes all that is wanted is a hug, and your loving, caring face.

Never attempt to stifle or short-cut someone else's grieving time or expressions of loss and sorrow. True, there are those times when you might have to intervene diligently and with great discernment when someone is immobilized or in a state of desperation or even danger from their grief. For the most part, allow people to grieve the way they need to.

Remember when Jesus showed up at the graveside of his friend, Lazarus? What He did not do was attempt to mitigate Mary and Martha's grief. What he did do was to grieve with them. Jesus wept (John 11:35). The biggest blessing you can be to someone who has lost a loved one is to simply be there and give them their right to grieve.



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

# MUSC Pharmacy Student Takes 2nd in National Business Case Competition

Submitted by Linda Powe Jones  
Contributing Writer

Two Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) students spent part of their summer forming a team for the Eli Lilly Business Case Competition. The Student National Pharmacists Association (SNPhA)

National Convention was recently held in New Orleans, LA and after succeeding through two preliminary rounds, the McLamb-Siddique team SkinCARE pitched their product to a panel of Eli Lilly judges.

Sherri McLamb, along with teammate Aisha Siddique, were awarded second place in the National competition. Sherri McLamb of Rock Hill, SC, is the daughter of the Presiding Elder of the Columbia-Camden District, Reverend Dr. Alvin and Lady Vanessa McLamb. Sherri attends New Vison A.M.E. Zion Church of Charleston, SC.



“It’s a tremendous accomplishment and a testament to the hard work and commitment of the students and their faculty advisors,” said Phillip D. Hall, the dean of MUSC College of Pharmacy. “It is quite a recognition when your business case impresses a panel of business people. It shows the students put together a very sophisticated and compelling case.”

SkinCARE (which stands for Community Advancement for Racial Equality) created a service integrating pharmacy and biotechnology in order to leverage pharmacists and increase patient access to specialty medications in dermatology and beyond.

The students were an excellent team for this achievement. McLamb is a third -year pharmacy student and she is also the president of the MUSC College of Pharmacy SNPhA chapter. Siddique is a second-year pharmacy student and serves as president-elect of the college’s chapter Industry Pharmacists Organization.

As a student pharmacist, McLamb has the opportunity to apply her clinical knowledge, clinical experience, and problem-solving skills to address real world business challenges faced by the pharmaceutical industry.

The Columbia-Camden District is extremely proud of Sherri and to this we say, “To God Be the Glory.”



Fall

## Virtual Opening Convocation 2023

Friday, September 15, 2023

6:00 - 7:15 pm.

The Speaker will be :

Rev. Dr. Clifford Barnett, Sr., '80

Pastor, Warner Temple A.M.E. Zion Church

Member of the Wilmington, N.C. City Council.



Go to Hood’s website for upcoming information:

<https://www.hoodseminary.edu/news/fall-2023-opening-convocation>.

# Two Zionites Receive Congressional Gold Medals

By Rev. Dr. Claude A. Shuford  
Contributing Writer

Montgomery, AL - On July 16, 2023, the National Montford Point Marine Association Mobile Chapter 33, presented the family of Assistant Cook Leon McLemore with the Congressional Gold Medal. The presentation was made at Mount Zion A.M.E. Zion Church in Montgomery, AL, where the Rev. Dr. Claude A. Shuford is Pastor. Bro. McLemore and his family have deep roots within the A.M.E. Zion denomination.

Leon McLemore was born in Montgomery, Alabama, on July 17, 1923. In 1943, at age 20, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in Macon, Georgia. During WWII, he was among the first African American recruits trained at Montford Point in North Carolina. In December 1943, Bro. McLemore qualified as a Rifle Marksman with special military qualifications and served as Cook. His service was in the Asiatic Pacific Area from February 1944 to Dec 1945. Upon discharge, he was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, an Honorable Service Lapel Button, and a Certificate of Satisfactory Service (Character of Service Excellent).

Bro. Leon McLemore died on December 25, 2009, at the W.F. Green State Veterans Home in Bay Minette, Alabama.

On July 15, 2023, the Montford Point Marine Atlanta Chapter 5 presented the Congressional Gold Medal to the family of Corporal Willie James (Jack) Patterson at the Southern Trace Clubhouse in Leeds, Alabama. Bro. Patterson was born on December 12, 1924, in Camp Hill, Alabama. He professed his faith in Christ at an early age and was a member of Jennings Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church. Bro. Patterson served in World War II and the Korean War. He received an honorable discharge after completing many years of services. Bro. Patterson departed this life on March 19, 2008. His three daughters (Emma, Sylvia and Carrie) and three sisters (Pearline Holston, Gloria Marbury and Louise Collier) have remained A.M.E. Zion members at Jennings Chapel in Camp Hill, Alabama and Mount Zion A.M.E. Zion Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

## Congressional Gold Medal Recipient



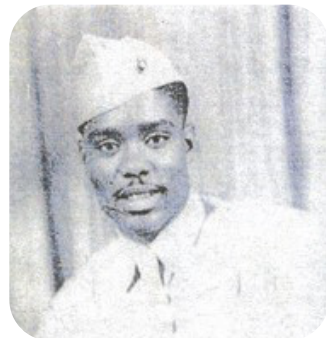
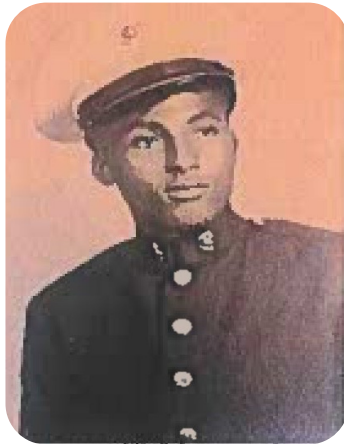
**Leon McLemore** was born in Montgomery, Alabama, on July 17, 1923, to the late Marie Turner, the oldest of four children (two deceased and a surviving brother, Frederick Dickerson). Leon attended and graduated from Loveless High School. On June 23, 1943, at age 20, he enlisted in the US Marine Corps in Macon, Georgia. During WWII, he was among the first African American recruits trained at Montford Point in North Carolina.

Leon qualified on December 9, 1943, as a Rifle Marksman with special military qualifications as Cook and Rifleman. His service was in the Asiatic Pacific Area from February 1944 to Dec 1945. Upon discharge, he was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, an Honorable Service Lapel Button, and a Certificate of Satisfactory Service (Character of Service Excellent).

Upon returning home after his discharge, Leon attended Tuskegee Institute (Tuskegee University), where he graduated in 1948 with a degree in Tailoring. Leon moved to Ogden, Utah, where he was introduced, hired, and served 40 years as a Dining Car Waiter for Union Pacific Railroad.

Leon loved to talk about his experiences; he could hold an audience with the stories of his travel across the country and the celebrities he met. Leon often said that he lived a good life, and it was because of two strokes he was forced to retire.

Leon was a peaceful man; he never complained about his circumstances and often endured pain in silence. During the last weeks of his life, he professed that he was in the hands of the Lord. He died on December 25, 2009, at W.F. Green State Veterans Home in Bay Minette, Alabama, where he was well beloved by the staff.



## National Montford Point Marine Association History

Since 1775, the United States Marine Corps has served our country in peace and war. Today, the Marine Corps continues to serve as a Force in Readiness, prepared to go wherever the national interest requires. Throughout its proud history, the Corps has had the finest of young Americans. These Marines have made the Corps one of the world's most respected military organizations. The Montford Point Marine Association is proud to be a part of these traditions.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Congress decided that a long-standing policy, which had denied participation of a large segment of the population from active or inactive service in the Corps, should be abolished. As a result of a presidential directive, Black men were recruited for duty with the Marine Corps. These men of color from all states were trained at Montford Point, a part of Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, the largest Marine base in the eastern United States. Approximately twenty thousand Black Marines received "boot camp training" at Camp Montford Point from 1942 to 1949, when desegregation in the armed forces was accomplished.

Twenty years after World War II, in the summer of 1965, an enterprising group of Marine veterans from the Philadelphia area formed and developed plans to hold a national reunion of Montford Pointers. The late Attorney Cecil B Moore, then president of the largest chapter of the NAACP and later a Philadelphia City Councilman, was a member of this founding group. On September 17th and 18th, at the Adelphia Hotel in downtown Philadelphia, over 400 former Marines, retired and active duty Marines representing 17 states, attended this reunion. The patriotic response led to the establishment of the Montford Point Marine Association, Inc., a non-profit veteran organization, chartered in Pennsylvania. Chapters were immediately organized in several major cities.

**National Montford Point Marine Association, Inc.**

**Mobile Chapter #33**


*Presents the*

**Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony**



To the family of  
Montford Point Marine

*Assistant Cook*

**Leon McLemore**



Rev. Claude A. Shuford, Pastor  
Sunday, 16 July 2023  
Mount Zion AME Zion Church  
455 W. Fred D. Gray Avenue  
Montgomery, AL

# The Virginia Annual Conference Holds 157th Session

By Ms. Angel Eason  
Virginia Annual Conference Reporter  
Photographs by Mr. Falandius Pass

Newport News, VA - The 157th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference was held June 22 - 26, 2023, at the Marriott Hotel in Downtown Newport News, Virginia. Bishop W. Darin Moore serves as the Presiding Prelate. Mrs. Devieta Moore serves as the Missionary Supervisor. There are three districts under the Virginia Conference: the Newport News District (under the leadership of Host Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Vincent Jones), the Norfolk District (under the leadership of Presiding Elder Rev. Kenneth Crowder), and the Petersburg District (under the leadership of Presiding Elder Rev. T. Kenneth Venable).



Pictured from left to right: Presiding Elder Rev. T. Kenneth Venable, Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Elder Rev. Kenneth Crowder, and Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Vincent Jones

The Communion Service ushered in a special anointing that filled the room. Rev. Sharon Hall, Pastor of Greater Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, delivered the communion meditation, “Scars of a Servant (Galatians 6:17-18).”

The Lay Council Luncheon was held in the afternoon hour and officers were installed. New members received their stoles during the special ceremony led by Mr. William English, the Virginia Conference Lay Council President.



Bishop W. Darin Moore challenged the pastors and lay with a powerful word, “A Pastor’s Prayer for the Church (Ephesians 1: 15-23),” during the Episcopal Address. He shared that the church is under attack and asked those present - physically and virtually- to prioritize prayer.

The Christian Education Service was held on Thursday evening. Rev. Samuel Warren, pastor of Hood Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, delivered the sermon - “You Were Made for This (Ephesians 2:4).” The Stoling Ceremony was held for Christian educators, led by Rev. Dr. Sandi B. Hutchinson.

On Friday morning, Rev. Sheryl Murdaugh, pastor of Madison Temple

A.M.E. Zion Church, delivered the morning meditation, “Are you Running on Empty (1 Kings 17:1,7).”

The Missionary Convocation was held on Friday afternoon. Mrs. Sandra B. Crowder, the International President of the Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society, shared a preview of the Quadrennial Convention. Ms. Renee F. Pullen presented on Parliamentary Procedures.

The Missionary Candlelight Service was held on Friday evening. Evangelist J.E. Harrison delivered a powerful message, “Don’t Burn Out (Matthew 25 6:9).”

Saturday morning, the Christian Educators hosted the Christian Education Convocation led by Rev. Dr. Sandi B. Hutchinson, Mid-Atlantic Co-Episcopal Director and Virginia Conference Director. Each district shared reports celebrating women in various industries leading the way.

Lay Council recognized the scholarship winners from each district. Each recipient received \$5,000 for the academic year.



Pictured from left to right: Mr. William English, Mr. Brandon T. Ross, Ms. Aniyah C. Hicks, & Bishop W. Darin Moore

The scholarship recipients are:

Ms. Aniyah C. Hicks, Petersburg District, member of the Zion Chester A.M.E. Zion Church

Mr. Brandon T. Ross, Newport News District, member of Greater Walters A.M.E. Zion Church

Mr. Bobby B. Sutton, Jr., Norfolk District and, member of the St. Thomas A.M.E. Zion Church

The Home Missions Banquet was held on Saturday night. The theme was “Celebrating an Evening of Thankfulness - Showcasing a Sneaker Ball.” “Zionites” of the Virginia Conference showed up in bling sneakers and casual denim. It was a Home Missions Banquet to remember.

“This was my first year serving as Virginia Conference Home Missions President,” said Mrs. Regina Rivera, President of the Virginia Conference Home Missions. “We had an awesome time during our Sneaker Ball. It was good to see everyone having lots of fun. The food was good, the decorations (Mrs. Lynette Feely) looked great, and the atmosphere was filled with happiness in knowing that we had reached our goal.”

Bishop Darin W. Moore shared a powerful message during the Sunday worship service. The multigenerational Ushers shined during the Grand March and had everyone on their feet, led by Dr. Cynthia Hurdle. The conference wrapped up with the reading of appointments. The closing hymn was “God be with you until we meet again.”

# It Takes God and a Village to Raise a Child



**By Rev. Gloria Steptoe**  
**Petty Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Louisiana Conference**  
**Contributing Writer**

New Orleans, LA - In the perilous times that we are living in, many of our youth and children are being influenced by the devil. A variety of vicious acts and crimes are being committed by younger children. When God is missing from the home, and there is no church involvement, the children are open to be influenced by the devil. Matthew 24:11 ESV says, "And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray." However, Matthew 19:14 KJV says, "But Jesus said, suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Proverbs 22:6 New KJV says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." 2 Corinthians 4:4 NIV says, "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." It is our job to assist the children in coming to God.

God gave me the vision to sponsor a Bible Camp for 30 to 35 children ages 5-11. The focus was on children who were not attending church or Sunday school from the communities of Amite and Roseland, Louisiana. I went out into the community and distributed applications to parents, so they might enroll their children in the camp.

The camp was a major undertaking, because it required funds, a meeting place, and volunteers.

The funds would be required to purchase kid-friendly Bibles for each child. Bags were required to put their Bibles and other items in. Also, food would be needed to feed volunteers and children daily. I went into prayer and asked God to supply the provisions for the Bible Camp. When God gives you a vision, he also provides provisions.

I ordered Bibles and bags. Some Bibles were for ages 5-6, and others for ages 7-11. The younger children had small story Bibles, and the older children had Kids NIV Bibles. We had the Bibles, and bags, but we still needed food, craft material and prizes, and a building to house the camp. As I spoke with friends, businesses, and associates, God touched the community members and they responded.



**The children are painting their creations from the "Creation" on canvases.**

The Mayor of Amite, LA, Mr. Walter Daniels, donated so that we could use the Amite Community Center for the week. Sandra's Cleaning Service, located at 705 Rue Chalet of Hammond, LA, donated generously for food and craft materials. Vennie L. Burton Outreach Ministry of Roseland, LA, donated for crafts and food. Irma's Florist and Gifts of Amite, LA, donated funds for food. Personal donations were given by Mrs. Shirley Sanders of Kentwood, LA, Mrs.

Linda Hart of Arcola, LA, and Mrs. Cornelius Knight of Amite, LA. My husband, Melvin Steptoe, also donated his prayers, support, travel, and shopping.

Just when I thought that God had given me his best, it got better! He sent volunteers who were educators, Sunday School teachers, and three teenage ladies who volunteered for the week. The volunteers and instructors were Leshia Hampton, Linda Hart, Ada Tracie, Linda Watson, Leandra Ward, Betty Hammer, Tyra Cook and Delores Topps. The teenage volunteers were Aleigha Womack, Akiah Womack, and Harmony Tracie.

The Bible Camp was held for one week in the Amite Community Center. We reached our spiritual goal, but fell a little short of 35 children, which was our numerical goal.

Each morning, one of the children would read the scripture of the day and lead the prayer. We would then do our morning praise with kid-friendly Bible songs. We had story time for our 5-6 year old, 7-8, and 9-11 year old groups. The children were taught Bible-based lessons with activities where they wrote, answered questions, and expounded on the lesson. Crafts were created, followed by lunch. The children volunteered daily to bless the food and dismiss from Bible Camp.

The children studied The Lord's Prayer, where they made prayer booklets and Prayer Pizzas. The Prayer Pizzas were created in relation to the prayer. The red pizza sauce was a symbol that reminds us of covering our prayers with the blood of Jesus. The pizzas were put into the oven symbolizing that when we send our prayer up to God, we have to wait for an answer to the prayer.

The children also made arks to demonstrate how Noah built the ark and how he put two perfect animals of many kinds into the ark. They used perfect animal crackers and placed them into the ark. Those that were imperfect were eaten. The children also studied the "Fruit of the Spirit." To culminate the activity, the children demonstrated the attributes as they participated in the "Fruit of the Spirit Relay." They used Swiffer Sweepers and fruit pucks to move their fruit without using hands or feet. The first team to move all of their fruit from the back of the building to the front, won. Both teams received medals because we are all winners in Christ Jesus.



The children studied baby Moses and the Creation. The culminating activities were "Creation," where the children painted on canvases something that God created in those 6 days. Other crafts were lighthouses, which was related to our scripture of the day, Matthew 5:14-15, demonstrating that "you are the light of the world." The children made UV bracelets to demonstrate how the "SUN" changes the beads the same way that the "SON" changes us when we give our life to him. Even though we don't see the change that Jesus makes in us all the time, it is always there. This was demonstrated by the UV beads glowing in the dark. Even though we were not in the sun the beads were still influenced by it.

The culminating activity was a summary of the week's lesson and we made hummers. The hummers made a humming sound when twirled. We were humming all for Jesus.

Praise be to God! The children enjoyed the Bible Camp and asked, "Can we do this again next year?" Our closing song was, a kids' version of "This Little Light of Mine," with the words, "I'm going to let my little light shine every day, every day and in every way. On Monday, He gave me the gift of love. On a Tuesday, His peace came down from above. On a Wednesday, He told me what to say. On a Thursday, He taught me how to pray. On a Friday, He gave me a little more faith. On a Saturday, He gave me a lot more grace. On a Sunday, He gave me the power divine to let my little light shine."

A grandmother told me that she had heard the song all day. We have just made the devil mad, as we trained the children in the way that they should go!

# 179th Session of the New England Annual Conference Convenes in Massachusetts

By Rev. Robin Woods-Barrant  
Contributing Writer  
Sis. Shelley Henry  
Contributing Photographer

Westborough, MA - The New England Annual Conference convened from June 15-17, 2023, under the sophic leadership of the Right Reverend Dennis Vernon Proctor. The conference was held at the Double Tree Hotel by Hilton in Westborough, MA, and hosted by the Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church of Worcester, MA.

No stone was left unturned in welcoming conference participants efficiently and enthusiastically. After experiencing virtual Annual Conferences for three years, it felt like we were attending a big family reunion in person. As a consequence, participants didn't, as often as expected, take advantage of their hotel rooms being down the hall or an elevator ride away. Instead, it was not uncommon to see small groups of conference-goers gathered in fellowship. Conference attendees have known Bishop Proctor to use time judiciously throughout his tenure as our episcopate, but some wondered if that would change given the NEC was reduced to three days. Bishop Proctor, however, has a shepherd's heart. Thus, he ensured that his flock had time to relax and fellowship by structuring the conference to maximize time while making certain all that needed to occur took place, including the election of delegates and alternates to the General Conference.

The highlight of the Annual Conference is receiving spiritual directions from our episcopal leader. Bishop Proctor's directives teach and encourage clergy and laity alike as he articulates a vision for the New England Conference. Bishop Proctor titled his episcopal address,



"Remember Lot's Wife: The Danger of Taking God's Grace for Granted." He made the following points: 1) Be careful of thinking that your family legacy gives you an exemption from the will of God, 2) You can be in the right place, hearing the right message and yet never adhere to God's standard, 3) Mrs. Lot made the right step, she left Sodom but Sodom hadn't left her, though Sodom wasn't evident, there was still within her, a residue of Sodom, and 4) Lot's wife had a good cover but it wasn't enough and she lost her life. Bishop Proctor is a masterful preacher and teacher so the Conference erupted in praise and adoration to God as he concluded his Episcopal Address.

Other highlights of the New England Conference included the following preachers: the annual sermon given by Rev. George Woodruff, the Education Message given by the Rev. Dr. Leroy Perry, the Missionary Convocation Meditation given by Rev. Samuel Saylor, Sr. and the Missionary Night Message given by Rev. Samuel Blanks. The New England Conference was blessed by the missionary activities on Friday led by our queenly Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. D. Diane Proctor. The day also included a wonderful celebration for our own Sis. Vanessa Clayton, outgoing General Chairman, Life Members Council, WHOMS. The New England Conference concluded with the Reading of Appointments for Conference and District lay and clergy positions, including pastoral assignments. The members of the NEC gathered for holy conferencing and the Spirit of God hovered over a hotel transformed into a worship space.



**Columbus Day Weekend 2023**  
October 6, 7 & 8  
Hotel Rooms are free for all Acolytes

## NATIONAL ACOLYTE Festival

Washington, D.C.

Rev. Dr. R.J. Chandler Sr.  
Director of Acolytes  
acolytesamaz@gmail.com  
302.359.3860

Register for CATHEDRAL HOTEL

Rev. Patrick A. Barrett, II, General Secretary  
www.cedamezion.com

**OCT. 6 FRIDAY**

THE ACOLYTES PRESENTS  
TURN UP 4 THE GLOW UP  
LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

## GOSPEL 90-90 LIVE Concert

7PM

boe BODY OF EVIDENCE

**HEADLINER: BODY OF EVIDENCE**  
SPECIAL GUESTS: FREEDOM TEMPLE AMEZ REV. TYQUAN ALSTON

**DONATION \$25**  
Acolytes Free

**Union Wesley AMEZ CHURCH**  
1860 Michigan Ave NE,  
Washington, DC 20018  
Rev. Dr. Brian Relford, Pastor

**OCT. 7 SATURDAY**

WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL  
8:00AM

**Zion Excellence Gala**  
6:00PM

**SPEAKER: THE RT. REV. ERIC LEAKE**  
SOUTHWESTERN DELTA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

**DONATION \$25**  
Acolytes Free

**Union Wesley AMEZ CHURCH**  
1860 Michigan Ave NE,  
Washington, DC 20018  
Rev. Dr. Brian Relford, Pastor

**OCT. 8 SUNDAY**

**John Wesley AMEZ CHURCH**  
(National Church of Zion Methodism)  
1615 14th St. NW,  
Washington, DC 20009

Rev. Dr. Christopher Zacharias, Host Pastor  
**WORSHIP 10:00AM**  
Rev. Dr. Alvin T. Durant, Host Presiding Elder  
Washington, District

**PREACHER: THE RT. REV. W. DARIN MOORE**  
MID-ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
**HOST BISHOP**

**Acolyte Installation Service**  
**Dedication of Acolyte Memorial**

Mrs. Deveta C. Moore  
Missionary Supervisor



## The 30th Quadrennial Convention of the WH&OMS Convenes in New Orleans

By Camryn Ivey  
 WH&OMS Director of Communications  
 Photography by Brian Thompson  
 BND Productions, LLC

New Orleans, LA - Oh, what a beautiful and blessed sight to see as the Missionaries and Saints of Zion came marching into the 30<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Convention of the WH&OMS held in the New Orleans at the Hilton Riverside Hotel, where Angela Davis-Baxter served as chair, and Missionary Supervisor Sheila W. Monroe served as co-chair. We were welcomed by our hosts, Bishop Eric L. Leake, and Missionary Supervisor H. Jean McMurray Leake of the Southwestern Delta Episcopal District.

On July 22- July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, missionaries and Zionites from various cities, states and countries abroad gathered, with many new first-time participants, to celebrate their respective departments. There were events and celebrations held recognizing Missionaries and highlighting their work in communities and beyond.

To kick off the Convention, a Mardi Gras parade took place to embrace the culture of New Orleans, Louisiana. It was a wonderful and joyous sight to see. Colorful umbrellas, festive Mardi Gras - style music and marching prepared us for the week ahead. Though jammed packed with many meetings and activities, the moments were memorable and lasting.

Listed are reflections and contributions from members of the Executive Board:

"I also learned so much about other episcopal areas and the mission work they are doing. We have many anointed people in Zion!" - Mis-

sionary Supervisor H. Jean McMurray Leake.

"The Life Members Celebration with a sea of Missionaries in white with stoles filling the ballroom sanctuary." – Joy Foster, elected Life Members Chairman

"The use of this technology made our business sessions move in a very timely fashion." – Effie B. Woodard, elected Recording Secretary

"From the explosive WH&OMS Quadrennial 2023-2029 theme introduction by Rev. Dr. Gwendolyn E. Boyd calling us to action to the all-inclusive Departmental presentations/events, every day was extraordinary." – April Davis, elected Superintendent Buds of Promise

"The success of the 30<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Convention Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society was a testament that the missionaries, both stateside and abroad, continue to demonstrate their love, commitment, and support for the work of missions and to "Win the World for Christ." – Missionary Supervisor Lovetta J. Holmes

"We honored our ancestors as Young Adults, Mrs. Nicole Charles, powerfully sung "Stand Up", featured in the Movie Harriet, and we ended the night dancing at the Bling Ball with our tennis shoes!" – Karlease Smalls, elected Coordinator of YAMS

"The AIP Expo/President's Gala! It was our first event—my benchmark—trusting that if we began well, we would end well!!! Yes! I'm praising God for a wonderful 30th Quadrennial Convention from beginning to end!" – Missionary Supervisor D. Diane Proctor

"My favorite highlight was posing for a picture with my beautiful Sorors, Rev. Gwendolyn Boyd, the 22nd National President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and our WH&OMS International President, Mrs. Sandra Crowder." – Patty Smith, elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President





“The late-night Youth activities gave them opportunities to get to know youth throughout the connection.” – Melva Polk-Wright, Secretary Youth Missionaries

“The WH&OMS 30th Quadrennial Convention was unimaginably empowering and impactful beyond words! I am eagerly looking forward to how God will bless our time together in 2027!” – Missionary Supervisor Felica Thompson

“To witness the phenomenal and purposeful reports of the Executive Board was a highlight since the health pandemic threatened to halt the work of the Society, which it did not. I will forever remember Rev. Dr. Gwendolyn E Boyd, Exploration of the Theme Presenter, for reminding us to “Keep Going” and to continue the journey as Truth Tellers.” – Sandra Crowder, International President

As I serve in this position as the youngest Communications Director, my election gave me the momentum and encouragement necessary for the next four years. I do decree and declare, and it is so, that the best is yet to come. As we enter this Quadrennial, we will strive forward

with our theme, “Reaching the Masses in an Ever-Changing World, the Journey Continues.”

Here are the names of the newly elected officers:

Dr. Peggy Owens, First Vice-President

Rev. Patty Smith, Second Vice-President

Mrs. Effie Woodard, Recording Secretary

Ms. Karlease Smalls, Coordinator Young Adult Missionary Society

Mrs. April Davis, Superintendent Buds of Promise

Mrs. Joy Williamson-Foster, Chairman, Life Members Council

Ms. Camryn Ivey, Director of Communications

# Missouri Annual Conference convenes in St. Louis

By Georgette Williams  
Contributing Writer

St. Louis, MO - The 134<sup>th</sup> Session of the Missouri Annual Conference was held Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> through Saturday July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 in St. Louis, Missouri. The host church was Washington Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, where Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon is the Pastor, and the Presiding Elder is Rev. Carrol A. Johnson.

Every session started with intercessory prayer facilitated by Rev. Theodore Woolridge. The opening Communion Service was held at noon on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon presided. After the opening hymn "Because He Lives," scripture, prayer, and the selection "God Is" from the "Voices of Zion" of Washington Metropolitan, Presiding Elder Johnson introduced Bishop Michael A. Frencher, who introduced Rev. Shannon Hancock, the preacher for the service. The hymn of preparation was "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing." Rev. Shannon Hancock preached from the subject, "We Gather Together to Ask the Lord's Blessing." The scripture reference was Luke 22:14-20.

read, the conference officially opened. Mrs. Gelenia Frencher greeted the conference. A tentative date for the 2024 conference was set, as well as the dates of the check-up meetings. After a short break, Bishop Frencher gave the Episcopal Address from the subject, "Sharing Our Faith." The key word for this year is "Intentional." Responses were made from representatives of the laity, ministers, and presiding elders.

The Welcome program was led by Jeri R. Young. After scripture, prayer, and hymn, "This is the Day." We received greetings from our guests. Rev. Gary Adams provided the response to the welcome. Closing remarks were given by Rev. Witherspoon and Bishop Frencher, who also gave the benediction. We sang the Wesleyan grace and retired to the lower level for a delicious dinner served by the catering staff of Washington Metropolitan, headed by Cynthia Davis.

The agenda for Thursday morning included reports from the presiding elders, pastors, and delegates. Mrs. Gelenia Frencher was given the "Harriett Tubman Award" by Presiding Elder Johnson. "The Sojourner Truth Award" was given to Monica Goodlett. "The Drum Major Award" was given to Bishop Michael A. Frencher. After the budget and treasurer's reports, election of treasurer and recognition of visitors, there was a short break before the Memorial Service. Rev.

Kenneth Pegue presided over the service. The opening hymn was "Blessed Assurance." After the scripture and prayer, Rev. Carroll Johnson presented the Bishop, who introduced the preacher, Rev. Butler B'ynote'. The hymn of preparation was "How Great is Our God." He preached from the subject, "Living Through Limitations." The scripture reference was from Acts 28:30-31. The roll call of the deceased was read, after which the visitors were recognized. After closing remarks and the benediction, we moved into the Lay Convocation.

Debra Payne presided over the Lay Convocation. District reports were provided by Rhonda Buford from Kansas City and Deborah T. Graham from St. Louis. The stoning ceremony included candidates La-Toya Sheppard, Joann West, and Gracie Cooper. We continued with conference business and heard all required reports.

Rev. Dr. Anthony K. R. Gibson facilitated the "Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Reporting Training." All who attended the conference, unless previously excused, were required to attend the training. There was a break for dinner and then we returned for the



The sacrament of Holy Communion was led by Bishop Frencher and Presiding Elder Johnson. Visitors were recognized and Bishop Frencher called for the reports from the Committee on Rules, the Nominating Committee, and the Credentials Committee. After the roll call was

Christian Education Worship Service.

Rev. Leshia Sams presided over the Christian Education Worship Service. The opening hymn was "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our

Love.” After scripture and prayer, Presiding Elder Seth Martin Moulton presented Bishop Michael A. Frencher, who introduced the preacher. The hymn of preparation was “Blessed Quietness.” Rev Frances Spearman preached from the subject, “Train Up a Child – Teach!” The scripture reference was from Proverbs 22:6. We ended the service with the Christian Education benediction.

Rev. Theodore Woolridge presided over the Evangelism Convocation on Friday morning. The opening hymn was “I Love to Tell the Story.” After scripture and prayer, Presiding Elder Johnson presented the Bishop, who then presented the preacher. A solo was rendered by Georgette Williams entitled “Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus.” Rev. Dianne Patterson preached from the subject, “Are You up for the Assignment?” The conference secretary, Rev. Shannon Hannock, read the announcements and visitors were recognized.

The Missionary Convocation followed with Jeri R. Young presiding. After the scripture and prayer, the missionaries sang “You are My Strength.” Joyce Boyd presented the Missionary Supervisor Gelenia Frencher, whose address was entitled, “Are You Up For Mentoring With Agape Love?” Reports were presented from Joyce Boyd (Kansas City) and Jeri R. Young (St. Louis) in the form of a creative skit. After the Missionary theme song, the Stoling Ceremony was held. The roll call for the candidates was read by Life Member’s Chairpersons from Kansas City (Johnnie Mae Byers) and St. Louis (Lucy White). Mrs. Gelenia Frencher vested and charged the candidates. Bishop Frencher offered the prayer of dedication. Mrs. Frencher presented the Bishop, who presented the speaker. After a selection by Cynthia Davis, “This Day,” Rev. Leshia Sams preached from the subject, “Watch Me.”

After lunch, delegates and alternates to the General Conference were elected for both the ministers and laity.

On Friday night, we celebrated our Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. Gelenia Frencher. Ruth Gilliam introduced the Master of Ceremonies, Mrs. Loretha Young. Our episcopal leadership was ushered in. After prayer, scripture, and welcome, we were blessed with two musical selections. Rev. Rebecca Skinner sang “For Every Mountain,” and Christopher Scott sang “My Soul’s Been Anchored.” Mrs. Frencher

was presented with gifts and a special skit entitled “Show Her Love,” written by Mrs. Jeri R. Young. After comments from the Bishop and Mrs. Frencher, we enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by the catering staff.

On Saturday morning, the youth worship service was held, led by Marquez Howard. We were blessed with scripture and prayer by our youth, as well as a liturgical dance by Jasmine Hughes to “War Cry.” Presiding Elder Carrol Johnson presented the Bishop, who introduced the speaker, Roman Brown. After a selection, “I’m the Child of a King,” by Alivia and Gabriel Woolridge, he spoke from the subject “A Letter to our Youth on Growth.” The scripture reference was from II Peter 3:18.

All unfinished conference business was completed and we took a break for lunch.

The “Sending Worship Service” was led by Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherpoon. The hymn of praise was “All Hail the Power of Jesus Name.” After scripture and prayer, the Missouri Conference Mass Choir sang, “Jesus Will,” with soloist Rev. Rebecca Skinner. Presiding Elder Johnson presented the Bishop. The Missouri Conference Mass Choir sang, “You’re the Lifter,” with soloist La-Toya Sheppard. Bishop Frencher preached from the subject, “The Mission Mandate.”

Visitors were recognized and the Courtesy Committee gave its report. The charge to the pastor and other appointees was given by Bishop Frencher.

The conference officially closed at 2:51 p.m.

A special thanks goes out to the Tech Team (Krista Holmes, Annissa McCaskill, Virgil Owens, Frederick Saunders, and Richie Williams), musicians (Keith Fowler, Rev. Michael Murray, Cynthia Smith, Georgette Williams, and Richie Williams) and photographer (Richie Williams).

To God be the Glory for the things He has done!

March 14—17, 2024 Louisville, Kentucky

12th Quadrennial  
Connectional Lay Council Convocation

Save the Date

Marriott  
LOUISVILLE EAST

Joseph King Davis, Jr.  
CLC International President

# Albemarle Conference Lay Council Hosts Annual Black & Gold Banquet

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



Elizabeth City, NC - On April 22, 2023, the Albemarle Conference Lay Council held its annual Black & Gold Banquet at Mt. Lebanon A.M.E. Zion Church in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. It was a fun, spirit-filled, well attended event, the highlight of which was the keynote speaker, Dr. Larry B. Johnson, CLC Regional Director of Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District and Chair of the Connectional Lay Council Education Committee.

In attendance were Mr. Hank Dobson (CLC Regional Director of Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District), Presiding Elder Rev. Fondella Leigh (Edenton District), Mr. Julius Walker Jr. (President of Albemarle Conference Lay Council), several pastors, ministers, officers, and guests.



The Black and Gold Banquet is an awards event which began in 2001 under the Episcopal Leadership of Bishop George Battle. The banquet was the vision of Sister Jessie Riddick (currently Rev. Jessie Riddick), who envisioned a time to recognize local lay persons for their many

good works to the conference and to memorialize a former president, Mr. Buford Dunlap Jr. It was initially named the Buford Dunlap Awards Banquet. However, after a few series of revamps, the name was changed to the Black and Gold Awards Banquet in 2013. The Lay Council expanded the awards to name outstanding lay persons and past presidents as a means to capture its rich history and pay homage to those who worked tirelessly in Zion. Since its inception, the banquet has recognized and honored pastors and lay persons.

Ms. Keisha Dobie (Secretary of the Edenton District) served as Mistress of Ceremony. The program included a memorial tribute by Ms. Alice Clagon, a poetic reading by Mr. Robert Hickson, and a recognition of the Conference Centenarian (Mr. Albert Davis Sr., 100 years old, of Porters Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church) by Ms. Katie Walker. Our Keynote Speaker, Dr. Larry B. Johnson, delivered an outstanding message focused on the Quadrennial Theme component, "Serving Our Flock."



The program included presentations of awards to our "Outstanding Lay Persons" of the year - Mr. Mark Brown Sr. (Elizabeth City District) and Ms. Agnes Blount (Edenton District). In addition, several door prizes were given.

Musical renditions were performed by the Washington County Male Chorus and the Dempsey Brothers Group. A musical tribute to the Centenarian Honoree was performed by Rev. Mario Kilpatrick. The food was catered by Wyommie Gallop Catering Service of Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Our prayer, as written in the program pamphlet, was "Dear Lord, Thank you for today. May you go before me and lead me. I pray that I would allow your Holy Spirit to guide me today and that I would be a light to others. May your light shine through me and may your love bless those around me. I pray that I would be patient, kind and considerate. I pray that your character would flow from me as I put others first. Use me as a vessel for your glory. In Jesus name. AMEN."

Many thanks to Ms. Katie Walker (First Lady and Secretary of the Albemarle Conference Lay Council) for putting together a beautiful program pamphlet.

## Zion Gathers for a Historic Faith & Practice Summit

By Mrs. Renate Lee  
Contributing Writer

New Orleans, LA - The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church gathered at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel for the inaugural Faith & Practice Summit on July 21, 2023. Bishop George W. C. Walker, Sr. opened the Summit with a reminder of the call to commitment by exegeting and lining the great hymn of the Church, "A Charge to Keep I Have," written by Charles Wesley.

Being prompted by the Holy Spirit, the Board of Bish-



ops of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church set aside time at the conclusion of the Connectional Council for our beloved Zion to gather for the purpose of examining and evaluating our faith and practice. We are grateful for their wisdom and courage. This conversation could be offensive to some, but is an opportunity to remind us of who we are as Methodists—a reminder of who God called us to be as the body of Christ. The desired outcome of the work done by the appointed Faith & Practice Commission is to inform the Board of Bishops as they wrestle with crafting the Episcopal Address for the Fifty-Second General Conference.

In the wisdom of the Chair of the Summit, the Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore, and our Senior Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Kenneth Monroe, the Commission was formed with representation from all twelve episcopal areas, which included one clergyperson and one lay person. The members of the Commission were effectively led by two Co- Executive Directors, Ms. Portia Jacobs, Episcopal Director of Christian Education for the Eastern North Carolina, and the Rev. Dr. Brian Relford, Pastor of Union Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church, Washington, D.C.

There were five crucial areas to examine as part of this work: 1) The Authority of Scripture, 2) Sacramental Theology, 3) Virtual Worship and Digital Discipleship, 4) Spiritual Gifts and Shared Ministry, and 5) Radical Hospitality Rooted in Our Identity. Members of the Commission chose areas to focus on and began meeting in March 2023. Each subcommittee produced a white paper with different perspectives, a bibliography of sources used in the research, citations, and recommendations. Their findings were shared at the Summit. An advisor was assigned to each subcommittee to help ensure sound doctrine and varied perspectives. Our very capable advisors were Rev. Dr. Reginald D. Broadnax, Rev. Dr. Vergel Lattimore, Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Tribble, Rev. Dr. J. Elvin Sadler, Rev. Dr. Dominique A. Robinson, and Rev. Patrick Barrett.

One of the epic moments of the Summit was the keynote address by Rev. Dr. Joy Moore, Professor of Biblical Preaching, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Academic Dean at Luther Seminary in St Paul, Minnesota. Dr. Moore spoke on the theme, “Zion - Deeply Rooted and Distinctly Relevant.” She challenged us to open our eyes and our hearts to find God in the space God has given us influence. Dr. Moore said that we live in a world that is hostile everywhere, but “we are to bear God’s image in the world.” We were further admonished not to give the world a word but to give the world our witness.

The scholarly work produced by the members of the subcommittees was a

labor of love and will prayerfully result in our beloved Zion moving into a place where “we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.” (Eph. 4:14)

“Stay focused, serve faithfully, and stand firm.”

The Rt. Rev. Kenneth Monroe

Faith & Practice Commission Members:

- Eastern North Carolina – Rev. Nathaniel Cox and Mrs. Renate Lee
- Piedmont – Dr. Daran Mitchell and Mrs. Barbara Rush
- North Eastern – Dr. Odinga Maddox, II and Mrs. Sundae Black
- South Atlantic – Rev. Lelar Johnson and Mr. Demond Nichols
- Mid Atlantic – Dr. Adrian Nelson and Mr. Domonique Turner
- Central Southern Africa – Rev. Julian Pridgen and Mrs. Christina Penrose
- Mid-West – Dr. Richard Gadzekpo and Mrs. Sally Bard
- Alabama – Florida – Dr. Sondra Coleman and Mr. Ron Marshall
- Western West Africa – Dr. Richard Chapple and Mrs. Jamesina Ruff
- Eastern West Africa – Dr. Montina Jones
- Western – Dr. Brandon Fisher and Mrs. Patricia Hunter
- Southwestern Delta – Rev. Gwendolyn Peters and Mr. Malcolm Russell



# The A.M.E. Zion Church Partners With Gloop to Strengthen Faith With Technology

## The A.M.E. Zion Church Partners with Gloop



**BOULDER, CO** - Gloop, the leading technology platform dedicated to connecting the faith ecosystem and releasing its collective might, announced its new partnership with The A.M.E. Zion Church, one of the largest African American denominations in the United States and abroad. The A.M.E. Zion Church will now leverage the Gloop platform to find new and better ways to meet its evangelism and discipleship needs.

The A.M.E. Zion Church, a world-renowned African American religious institution, was established in 1796 and today has a membership of 1.4 million, with approximately 1,600 churches in the U.S. and over 6,000 churches globally. It played a key role in the slavery abolition movement during its early formation with Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglass as key leaders and has remained highly influential through the 1960s civil rights movement, and in the lives of marginalized people around the world today.

“We are delighted and excited to partner with Gloop, the trusted platform that releases the collective might of the faith ecosystem,” said Dr. Eleazar Merriweather, the executive director of Church Growth and Development of the A.M.E. Zion Church. “Our partnership with Gloop is all about helping the A.M.E. Zion Church faith leaders increase outreach, connection, and discipleship. We know how hard our church leaders are working, so we have hand-curated resources in the A.M.E. Zion Church Empowerment Hub on Gloop, with training resources they need for church growth and development.”

The A.M.E. Zion Church first noticed the Gloop platform at work in support of the nationwide He Gets Us campaign, which was widely publicized in this year’s Super Bowl ads, by Dr. Elvin Sadler, General Secretary-Auditor of the Denomination. The A.M.E. Zion Church partnership with Gloop gives all churches within the denomination the ability to connect with people in their local neighborhoods who are seeking to connect with a local church to ask questions, receive prayer, and, in many cases, just talk to someone. In addition, church leaders and volunteers will have access to training provided by Gloop partner the American Association of Christian Counselors to help them be more equipped to serve people with specific needs like mental health struggles.

“It’s an honor to partner with such a significant denomination as the A.M.E. Zion Church that’s an established leader in the community and a forward-thinking innovator in the faith ecosystem,” said Christopher Nelson, director of business development at Gloop.

As part of the partnership, A.M.E. Zion churches will also leverage free texting on Gloop, allowing them to communicate with new people and members at scale, as well as using the Barna Church Pulse to help them better know and serve their leaders and members.

“We anticipate that our partnership with Gloop will help us increase engagement, evangelism, and discipleship — three very important areas of focus for us,” said Dr. Eleazar Merriweather. “As the culture around us continues to rapidly evolve, God continues to call us to cast the net of the Gospel through a digital missionary viewpoint. Now our members will be able to more effectively use the Gloop platform to connect with their congregations, new visitors, and leaders. Our mission hasn’t and will not change — but our approaches to doing it more effectively must continue to evolve.”

Gloop is the trusted platform that releases the collective might of the faith ecosystem. As a leading technology innovator, Gloop connects people, partners, world-class content, funding opportunities, and more to help ministries achieve their goals and change more lives. Gloop is based in Boulder, Colorado, employing a team of more than 150 people.

**PLEASE PLACE YOUR AD for the**  
**SOUVENIR JOURNAL**

The Commemorative National Acolyte Festival Souvenir Journal is designed to raise funds and offset costs for the festival as well as for scholarships. Please send your donation to CED Givelify "Acolyte Ministry" and submit your AD to the Dropbox link or email by September 15, 2023: [acolytesamez@gmail.com](mailto:acolytesamez@gmail.com)

**ADs starts from**

- Front Inside Cover: \$750.00
- ~~Back Inside Cover \$500.00~~
- ~~Back Cover \$1000.00~~
- Half Page: \$100.00
- Full Page: \$200.00
- Quarter Page: \$75.00
- Patron: \$50.00

**Sponsorships**

- Platinum: \$5,000.00
- Gold: \$3,500.00
- Silver: \$2,000.00



Rev. Sam Brown  
Education Editor  
Admin@StarOfZion.org

# Clinton College Hires New Director of Performing Arts



By Kristen Brown  
Contributing Writer

Rock Hill, SC - Clinton College has hired Mrs. Mary Knox as the new Director of Performing Arts.

Mrs. Knox joins the Clinton College family from the Lancaster County School District, where she served as the Instructional Specialist of Visual and Performing Arts. Prior to her time in Lancaster, she was the choral director for Indian Land High School, where she taught various choirs, piano, guitar, and dance classes. After seven years in the classroom, she was selected as District Teacher of the Year for the Lancaster County School District (2018-2019).

“We are extremely excited to have Mrs. Mary Knox, our new Director of Performing Arts, join our team in the Division of Student Success and the Clinton College family,” said Dr.

Brown, Vice President of Student Success/Dean of Students. “Mrs. Knox brings a wealth of talent, experience, and knowledge to the Department of Performing Arts. We know our students and the campus community will benefit from her commitment to providing students with new opportunities to excel in the Arts and showcase our student’s talent in new and diverse programming.”



Knox earned a Bachelor of Music Education in 2010 and a Master of Music in Choral Conducting in 2012 at Winthrop University. While at Winthrop, she studied voice with Professor of Music Emeritus, Lorraine Gorrell and Dr. Kristen Wunderlich. During her graduate studies, she served as the Graduate Assistant for Dr. Katherine Kinsey, then Director of Choral Activities, and presently Professor of Music Emeritus.

An experienced dancer, Mrs. Knox studied dance for 15 years while growing up in Charleston, SC. She is the founder of Vocal Movement, a non-profit organization that provides music education to underserved communities. She serves as the Liturgical Dance Director at Freedom Temple Ministries and is a member of the Theta Eta Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.

Mrs. Knox lives in Rock Hill, SC, with her husband, Antonio Knox, and their four sons, Antonio Jr., Maxwell, Xander, and Langston Knox.

## Clinton College Appoints Interim Vice President of Academic Services

By Kristen Brown  
Contributing Writer

Rock Hill, SC - Dr. Ifeanyi Ugboaja will step into the role of interim vice president of academic services for Clinton College.

Dr. Ugboaja previously served as Clinton’s Associate Vice President of Academic Services and Division Chair of Business and Leadership. He replaces Dr. Toneyce Randolph, who accepted the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs role at Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia.

“Dr. Randolph was an asset to the growth of our academic department, and we are grateful for her hard work and dedication to the mission of the College,” said Dr. Lester McCorn, President of Clinton College. “Having worked alongside Dr. Randolph, Dr. Ugboaja will do an excellent job during this transi-



tion. I have the utmost confidence in his ability to continue to push the department forward as he is very familiar with our college and its needs.”

With over 15 years in academia, Dr. Ifeanyi Ugboaja has held various roles that have contributed to the growth and development of educational institutions. He has a business background and a Doctorate in Management and International Business. His unwavering commitment to enriching the student journey and fostering a culture of success has consistently propelled his professional trajectory.

“I embrace this opportunity to contribute with a sense of honor and humility. My commitment to Clinton College lies in maintaining the principles and core values that define this beloved community,” said Dr. Ugboaja. “I am fully committed to continuing the success and prosperity of Clinton College, and I am looking forward to the collaborative and transformative impact we will create together.”

# Morris Brown College: “A Ray of Hope”

**Rev. Samuel Brown**  
Education Editor

For well over a century, Historically Black Colleges, and Universities (HBCU) have been a citadel for Black culture and uplift. To the communities they serve- a beacon of hope, inspiration, and an aspired destination for many in pursuit of their goals and dreams. Throughout the United States, the presence of these institutions of higher learning have insured the cultivating and sustaining of the Black middle and upper classes. In their daily operations HBCUs foster a holistic sense of community amongst Black people by effectively being centers of learning and earning vis-a-vis the employment and education opportunities they offer. There are many examples of entire families, communities, and generations mobilizing upward because of their affiliation with an HBCU.



Credit: Bitu Honarvar / AJC-

In our tumultuous past, these schools have been havens of refuge and peace for those wanting to escape the vicious jaws of white supremacy. Birthed out of a people's determination to better themselves, the HBCU is a testament to resilience and faith.

Much of the rich history that fills the narrative of these storied academies begins with faith. Churches, missionary associations, and other faith-based entities played a vital role in their establishment and continued development. For example, more than 60% of the top three Black Methodists denominations' respective budgets are used for supporting their various universities, colleges, seminaries, and secondary schools all around the world.

Morris Brown College was founded by the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Atlanta, Georgia. The college is unique among HBCUs as it is one of the few that have, since inception, been solely under Black patronage. On January 5, 1881, during the North Georgia Annual Conference at Big Bethel, Rev. Wesley John Gaines introduced a resolution calling for the establishment in Atlanta of an institution for the moral, spiritual and intellectual growth of Negro boys and girls. The steps between the resolution and the opening were few and simple: the Georgia Conference was persuaded to join the endeavor.

An assembly of trustees from both conferences convened at Big Bethel Church and selected the Boulevard site as the school's home. In May of 1885, the State of Georgia granted a charter to Morris Brown College of the A.M.E. Church.

Over the years, Morris Brown has had strong leadership from people such as Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, the 12th bishop of the AME Church, who served as a board chair and chancellor for the school; Harvard-trained John H. Lewis, who was president of the college from 1920-1928 and 1951-1958; and Bishop William A. Fountain Sr. and his son W. A. Fountain, Jr. The Fountains helped develop programs at Morris Brown in music, classical arts, English, science. They transitioned the school into a four-year college, phasing out its elementary and high school and normal programs. The Fountains were also instrumental in negotiating the agreement that allowed Morris Brown to move to the AUC (Atlanta University Center Consortium).

Even though the college faced its share of challenges and graduated students despite them, there was a significant shift in 2002 when the college lost its accreditation. This blow was followed by bankruptcy, land sale, and incidents of vandalism and arson. However, with determination and perseverance, a few dedicated faculty members remained to instruct students in the remaining operational building on campus.

Twenty years later on March 26, 2022, after almost two decades of operating as an unaccredited institution Morris Brown, regained its accreditation through the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools. With the return of federal financial aid programs, the school received more than 250 students when it opened its doors.

The rebirth of Morris Brown College is a testament to the perseverance and determination of its leaders, including the school's current president, Dr. Kevin James, who have kept its

doors open and the dream alive for almost 20 years.

This year, the incoming freshman class participated in the AUC Olive Branch Ceremony, breaking a 20 year hiatus. This ceremony is to foster unity among the other schools in the AUC - Spelman College, Morehouse College, and Clark-Atlanta University.

This unity celebration and merchandise release come after the college also announced Dr. Toneyce Randolph as the new Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

“As we navigate through a transformative phase known as THE HARD RESET, we are elated to welcome Dr. Randolph to our team,” Dr. Kevin James, President of Morris Brown College, said in a press release.

Randolph has extensive experience with accreditation, student advancement, governance, financial stability and academic affairs as it relates to HBCUs, seemingly making her fit to help lead Morris Brown during its renaissance.

It should be noted that Morris Brown is the only HBCU to regain accreditation after losing it. This is an example of what great teamwork, vision and determination can do!



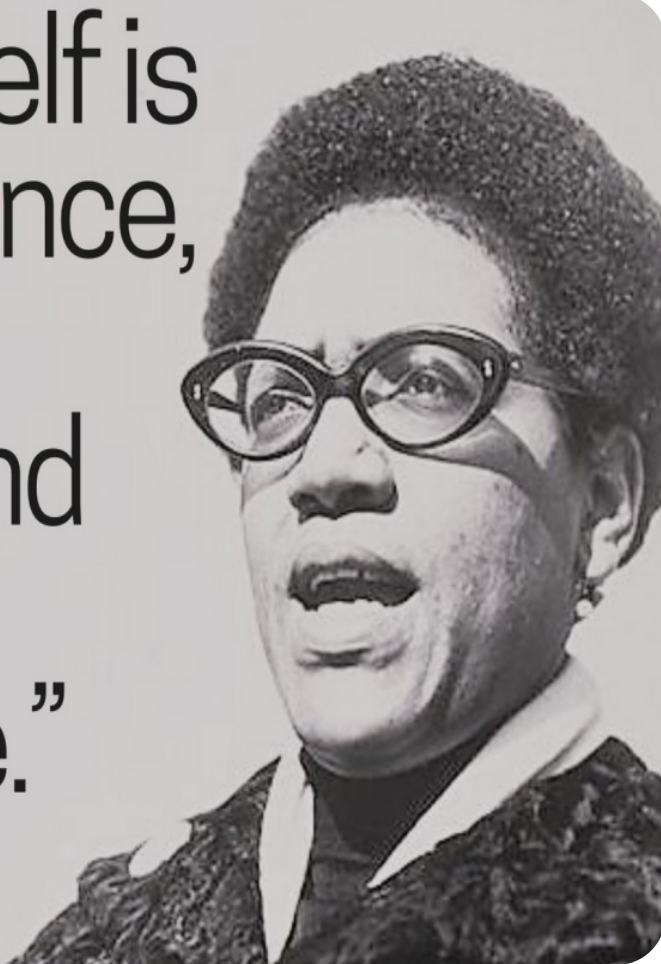


Rev. Dr. Allison Lee  
Social Justice Editor  
SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org

# Self-Care & Social Justice

“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”

AUDRE LORDE



By Allison N. Lee  
Social Justice Editor

While pausing to contemplate the societal condition of Black & Brown bodies across both the construct of time and within the United States of America, specifically, it is not difficult to quickly grow weary - weary in mind, exhausted in body, and fatigued in spirit. The collective and individual realities of persons of color that are evident through experience, manifested by way of micro-aggressions, circulated in the media, and encountered in overt interactions that compel us (appropriately so) to dive into waters and swim at lightning speed to protect and defend one another have a way of pulling from capacity.

Similarly, when taking the time to reflect upon, be present for, and participate in social justice causes in order to,

...achieve equality, political rights, and social inclusion by advancing policies and practices that expand human and civil rights, eliminate discrimination, and accelerate the well-being, education, and economic security of Black people and all persons of color,

as outlined in the mission set forth by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); although the work *is* meaningful, participants often become burned out, need a significant break, and must focus on mediating *doing* so that it is not to the detriment of personal wellbeing.

Poet, writer, and equal rights activist, Audre Lorde, as she was battling cancer while supporting and leading movements of resistance, penned a reminder on the importance of recognizing that *overextension of self* is dangerous. Lorde states,

“I had to examine, in my dreams as well as in my immune-function tests, the devastating effects of overextension. Overextending myself is not stretching myself. I had to accept how difficult it is to monitor the difference.

Necessary for me as cutting down on sugar. Crucial. Physically. Psychically. Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”

Witnessing atrocities and injustices heaped upon Black & Brown bodies is taxing *and* very much a reality faced. Social justice is needed + critical in this climate *and* is demanding in every way. In the words of Audre Lorde, “...*caring for self is an act of political warfare.*” For wellbeing, longevity, and the bare minimum – survival – it must be taken seriously and implemented regularly. Below are eight questions to consider with respect to self-care and social justice.

1. What does caring for wellbeing say about feelings/perspective of self?
2. If self-care is a struggle for you, why?
3. What does burnout look like for you? How do you recognize it?
4. How can championing social justice cause stress in your life?
5. How do you care for self in the midst of social justice work?
6. How do you remain accountable to self around boundary-setting and care?
7. Are your communities (personal/professional/etc.) supporting you in the ways needed? How do you advocate for self/can you better advocate for self?
8. List ways in which you practice self-care. Notice common themes. For example, mostly purchasing items as a way to release. Challenge yourself to switch up self-care methods from time to time.

Self-care and social justice should not be mutually exclusive. May we be intentional about looking after totality of self. May we apply boundaries, even and especially toward the causes and people that we love. May we be reminded that caring for self should not be viewed as an option, but a necessity.



## Is God Calling You for More?

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

**Discover More!**



913-253-5084

**spst.edu**

## NAACP Honors Dr. Hazel N. Dukes with Spingarn Medal

By Debra Chappelle-Polk  
Contributing Writer



New York, NY - On August 3, 2023, Dr. Hazel N. Dukes received the NAACP Spingarn Medal. The award was presented by her friend, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, at the 114<sup>th</sup> National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts. Sec. Clinton commended Dr. Dukes for her many decades of service to the people of New York and dedication to bettering the lives of Black Americans across the country. "She joins a long list of distinguished awardees who have not given up in a world that doesn't always respect the intelligence or personhood of Black women," Clinton said. "It would be literally impossible to count the number of lives she's touched but I know personally how much she has touched mine, and I will always be grateful for her wisdom, her humor, and her grace."

The Spingarn Medal is the highest NAACP award. It was established in 1914 by the late Joel E. Spingarn, the then NAACP Chairman of the Board of Directors. It was given annually until his death in 1939. The medal is awarded for the highest or noblest achievement by a living African American during the preceding year or years in any honorable field. Photos of previous Spingarn medal recipients were displayed on screen throughout the evening and include: Mrs. Daisy Bates (Little Rock Nine), Myrlie Evers-Williams, Earl G. Graves Sr., W.E.B DuBois, George Washington Carver, Charles Drew, Jackie Robinson, Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse L. Jackson, Maya Angelou, Oprah Winfrey, Cicely Tyson, Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, Quin-

cy Jones, and the Honorable Nathaniel Jones.

National Board of Directors Chairman Leon W. Russell, Vice Chair Karen Boykin-Towns, and President & CEO Derrick Johnson, shared remarks reflecting on Dr. Dukes' illustrious activism, career, and the immense impact she has had within the association and in her community through her various leadership roles.

"Dr. Hazel Nell Dukes, the 108th Spingarn medalist, exemplifies the resolute spirit of Black Americans, shattering barriers and making invaluable contributions to our nation," said NAACP National Board of Directors Chairman Leon W. Russell. "A mother, leader, civil rights activist, and authentic friend, she embodies the essence of transformative leadership. Her indomitable spirit and unwavering dedication are an inspiration to all. In a world where women have been marginalized and underestimated, Dr. Dukes stands tall as a living testament to strength, courage, and determination. She proves that there is always a light if we dare to see it, and if we are brave enough, we can become that light ourselves."

A video chronicling the 70 years of service of "Mama Dukes," as she affectionately called, was shown, and the song "I'm Coming Out" was played as Sec. Clinton bestowed the medal. In accepting the award, Dr. Dukes said, "First, I give glory to God for his grace, for without him, this 91-year-old woman would not be standing before you. Over these past few years, God has blessed me with incredible honors, accolades and love." She also thanked God for her one and only son, Ronald, and asked him to stand.

Dr. Dukes said she was overwhelmed with joy and gratitude to be

included among this distinguished list of Spingarn medalists. "This medal serves as a recognition of my life's work and reflects on those who have walked with me over the past 70 years. To know my name is etched in NAACP history and American history alongside the civil rights legends who came before me is a humbling honor. These 70 years have not been easy. They have been filled with pain, hardships, and tribulations. But the struggles of those who paved the way serve as a powerful reminder that we must take bold steps to confront racism and tirelessly advocate for civil rights. We must continue fighting the good fight. Throughout my time as an NAACP leader, my greatest privilege has been to mentor those growing up in the association. I hope my legacy leaves a roadmap for younger generations to learn from and use as they carry this movement forward." She acknowledged New York politicians and civil rights leaders, and she thanked them for their support, and "for always giving me a seat at the table."

Rev. Dr. Anthony Davis, president of Livingstone College, was among the invited guests. Dr. Dukes acknowledged and thanked Rev. Dr. Malcolm J. Byrd, Senior Pastor at Mother A.M.E. Zion Church, where Dr. Dukes is a frequent visitor. Dr. Dukes and Rev. Byrd have been friends for many years. They often attend community board and legislative meetings together and walk arm-in-arm at national rallies and marches.

The affiliation between the NAACP and the A.M.E. Zion Church is longstanding and well-documented. It is a kinship dating back decades that still exist today. Many clergy and members from episcopal districts across the country are card-carrying members of the NAACP.

Congratulations to Dr. Hazel N. Dukes.

## Ban or Ballot – Interconnected Struggles for Justice and Democracy

By Rev. Dr. Hannah Broome  
Contributing Writer

As the nation marks the 60th anniversary of the pivotal March on Washington, a timely reflection on the intricate relationship between voting rights and historical memory becomes imperative. The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., renowned for his pursuit of equality, deeply resonates as we grapple with the ongoing struggle for equitable access to the ballot box in the United States. Celebrating the memory of this iconic leader is not enough; true homage lies in tangible legislative changes that ensure the preservation of democratic values.

The history of voting rights in the United States reveals a complex evolution over two centuries. Suffrage has been a contentious issue marked by exclusion and incremental progress since the nation's inception. Even today, the echoes of past inequities reverberate through matters of accessibility and fairness in voting. Despite strides in recognizing the right to vote for most citizens, restoring voting rights to formerly incarcerated individuals without punitive measures remains a pressing concern.

Moreover, the class disparities in the voting process cannot be ignored. Socioeconomic factors like income and employment influence citizens' voting ability on election day. Election Day planning often burdens certain demographics, as lower-income areas face reduced polling stations, no paid time off to vote, and longer waiting lines. The 2013 Supreme Court decision exacerbated this issue by contributing to the reduction in polling places, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities.



Interestingly, the unrelated issue of book bans profoundly connects with voter suppression. The act of suppressing "freedom knowledge," while distinct from overt attempts at voter restriction, shares a common goal: to weaken democracy by silencing voices and erasing vital histories. By disregarding the interwoven narratives of "Black history" and "American history," such actions detach the present from the painful past, undermining the very essence of democracy.

The 2020 election vividly demonstrated the lengths some politicians would go to disenfranchise Black, Brown, and poor voters. The indelible images of long lines testify to citizens' determination to participate in their democracy despite systemic barriers. Just as voter suppression weakens the democratic fabric, censoring history perpetuates divisions and threatens

the very foundation of our society.

A comprehensive understanding of history unveils the intricate connections between voter suppression and the erasure of marginalized voices. From the days of Reconstruction to contemporary struggles, the recurring theme is one of violence, rule manipulation, and the undermining of democratic values. Voting is a fundamental right and a vehicle of memory and change.

As we honor Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy and the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington, the urgency of bridging the gap between celebration and legislative action becomes evident. To preserve our democracy, we must recognize the parallels between the fight for voting rights and safeguarding historical narratives. Only by weaving these threads together can we hope to forge a future that respects the struggles of the past and secures the promise of a just and equitable society.

# Progression and Reconstruction

**By Camryn Covington**  
**Connectional VICYC Southeastern Regional Vice President**  
**Contributing Writer**

As the Southeastern Regional Vice President, this year's task was to expound upon regional progression, as well as both local and district council re-establishment. While thinking about the dedication and effort that goes into such simple sounding yet intricate and time consuming assignments, Proverbs 5:10 instantly dropped into my spirit. In the New International Reader's Version, the scripture says "Strangers will use up all your wealth. Your hard work will make someone else rich."

Upon first reading, one may view the verse and interpret it to mean that if you tirelessly devote yourself to the upbuilding of others and their circumstances, then they will drain you until you have found yourself pouring from an empty cup. I, however, found the scripture to have both a positive and negative connotation. In hindsight, the scripture to me also says that so long as you are following the path of words, actions, and intentions set before you, people around you will benefit from your obedience. As I reveal in this writing the intentions placed on my heart which will be followed by a series of obedient actions that will speak just as loud as words, allow me to uncover a portion of my vision for progression and reconstruction in this article.

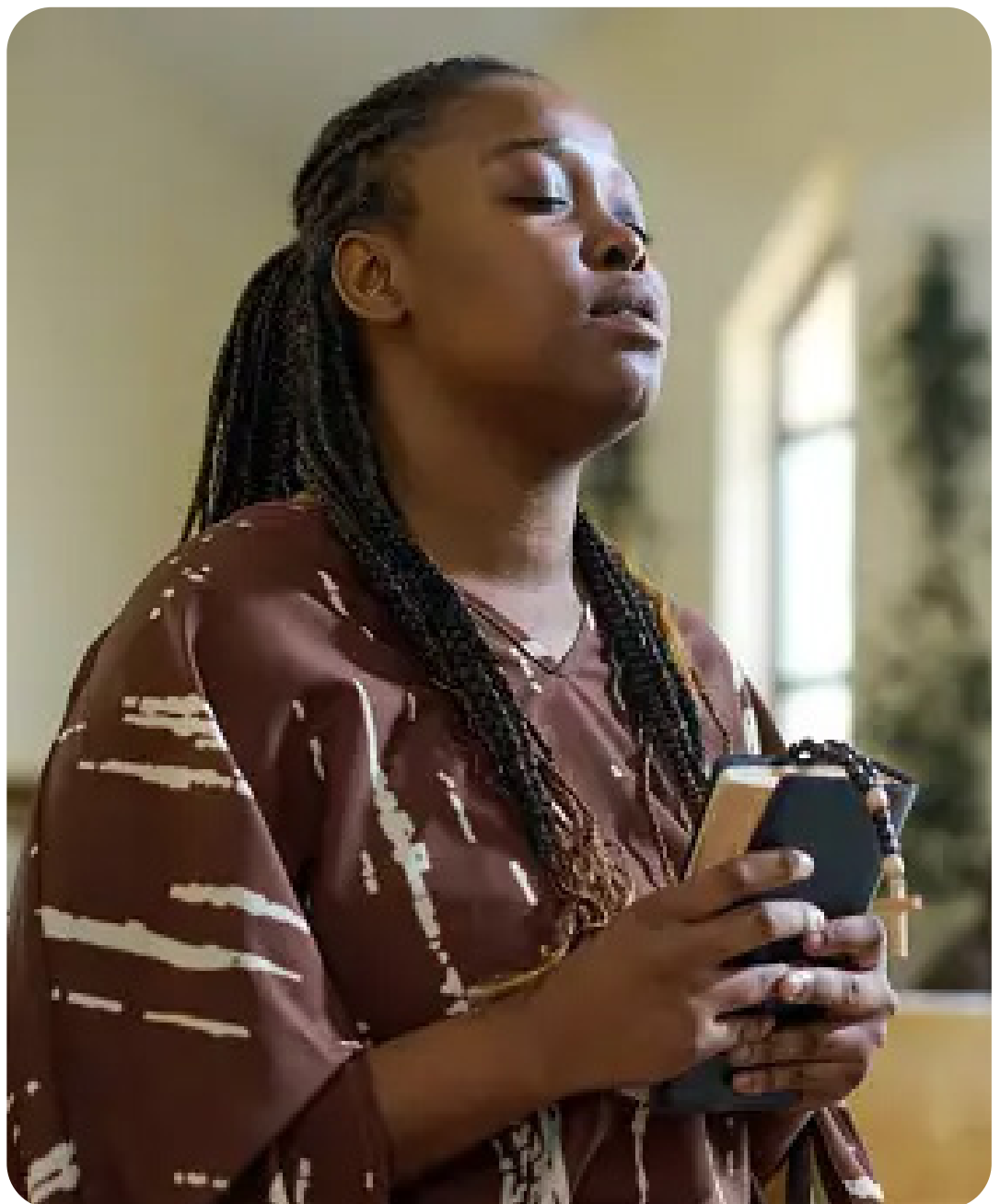
The amount of youth frequenting the church has endured tremendous deterioration. This unfortunate fact brings me to our first topic of discussion, which will be progress within the region. Disregarding the title of "Vice President" and speaking solely from the perspective of a youth, I feel as if a relationship between the youth and elders of Zion is both a desire and a necessity. To begin to see a true transformation in the church – let alone regional progress- it is only sensible that the first step in the process be waging the gap between those spearheading the church and those who will rise as the new leaders of the church. Across the board, a pivotal action prompting youth to revive their presence within the church would simply be an invitation from those leading us. For many youth today, the sad truth is that church is to us as David was to Goliath. The awful difference is that in reality, the youth as a whole have yet to unveil the same courage to face their giant as David did his. For example, one deterrent in preventing youth of Zion from blossoming in Zion is fear of judgment from our elders as many worry that elders will guide not with compassion and thorough instruction, but with criticism. Simply extending the warm invitation to unite in fellowship and the teachings of Christ is a key barrier needing to be broken for that to change. After youth are invited back into the church, the work to keep us there will only increase, but the first and possibly most important move - welcoming the youth - would ignite the flame that starts the fire.

While it is imperative that youth grow comfortable learning and adapting to church, it is just as important to establish a level of learning and adaptation to the youth themselves. An all too common misconception is that the youth of this day and age wish to be babied and catered to in various aspects, church being at the top of the list. In regards to the church, youth do not yearn to be catered to; rather we solely covet the goal to be embraced, educated, and understood by the individuals holding the positions and doing the work that will soon become our responsibility to handle. Following that very understanding, education, and embracing from our elders, we can both bring youth back into the church as

well as prompt youth to be active in the church in a variety of ways.

To start with, we will begin to see much larger turnouts in youth at events, such as CED Regional Meetings. Regional meetings are a strong way of showcasing what the youth of Christ can do in fellowship with our ACE & YACM counterparts, as they include events such as youth workshops and platforms for electing youth officers. At the regional meeting hosted by the Southeastern Region this past April, youth actively engaged in a workshop where they were given a platform to address mental health and the role it shares in the divisiveness of the church. They also heard feedback from adults in the church who were willing to hear, understand, and educate them. Events and opportunities such as this across regions will allot for a strong and solid foundation for the youth of Zion, and a positive united front for the youth and our elders. Different opportunities that I am looking to propose in my region as a starting point to achieving these goals are: widespread mentorship events, innovative volunteering segments, virtual youth bible study sessions, prayer calls, and monthly reflection check-ins. Varying courses of action such as those listed above are vital to bringing youth back to the church, and setting a strong foundation for a primary personal goal within my region which is building a firm regional cabinet.

As youth discover a feeling of home and safe space within the church, they will become more active and engagement will rise, thus creating space for youth to desire to serve on cabinets and councils. In the next writing, I will focus on the re-establishment of youth councils. Thank you, Zion, for taking the time to read this article.



# The Importance of Advance Care Planning

By Allison N. Lee  
Social Justice Editor

## What

It goes without saying that disparities among Black and Brown people directly correlate to housing, food, education, income, and social status – all of which can and do influence health and in turn, longevity of life. Critical to communities of color is the need to be aware of and actively engage advance care planning. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, advance care planning is defined as,

...doing what you can do to ensure that health care treatment you may receive is consistent with your wishes and preferences should you be unable to make your own decisions or speak for yourself. There are several written documents available for us to express our care wishes and/or appoint a surrogate decision-maker if we become unable to make our own decisions. Equally important is making sure that our surrogate knows and understands our care preferences.

Advance care planning involves completing and filing paperwork that details who you would want to be your decision-maker if you were unable/do not have the capacity to make decisions for yourself. It is also involves completing and filing paperwork that specifies how you would want to be cared for in end of life situations (hydration/food/etc.). It can often be thought of as *Who* and *What* documents. *Who* do you trust to make decisions on your behalf and *what* do you want to take place? Advance care planning, also known as Advance Directive(s)/Healthcare Power of Attorney/Living Will allows our respective voices to be heard throughout processes concerning self.

## Challenges

Advance care planning is so essential, needed, and often left undone that the CDC considers it to be a public health crisis. The most common barriers to completion of advance care planning are:

1. *Cognizance* - Many people are unaware of advance care planning regarding health, outside of organ donation or Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR). When people think about end of life, thoughts often move toward drawing up a will regarding how and to whom property/assets would be released to upon their death. It is important that we as a community are intentional about creating opportunities to learn about advance care planning.
2. *Taboo* – Before advance care planning can be dealt with, the reality that without question, we will all die one day, must be faced. Although death is a known fact, *dealing* with matters around perishability and standing face-to-face with mortality can and does trigger people in a way that evades discussion, action, and counsel on the subject. This is both understandable and a challenge associated with

advance care planning.

3. *No Desire* – Sometimes, people do not care one way or another what happens once they are unable to make decisions for themselves and/or trust whoever the decision falls to will simply do what is best. The challenge in not filling out advance care planning paperwork, is that it can place a strain on next of kin who the decision would then naturally fall to if there has never been a conversation and there is no documentation.
4. *Help Needed* – Advance care planning can be overwhelming. Individuals may intend to fill out the documents, but get held up on a particular section, need clarity regarding wording, admit understanding initially, but were actually unclear when it was being explained by a medical provider, or are unaware of who to seek assistance from.
5. *Cultural* – Due to a longstanding suspicion of the medical system and that system's intention around caring for people of color, minorities as a whole can be distrustful toward health providers and hospitals in general, as well as, documents involving end of life.

There are various other hindrances as to why individuals do not fill out, have notarized, and place advance care planning documents on file. As a community, it is of prime importance that we continue to recognize and deal with challenges in order to promote awareness and completion of advance care planning.

## Benefits

Advance care planning offers many benefits for both the patient/person whom this concerns, and for their loved ones and medical team. Five of the top benefits are listed below:

1. Aids individuals in ensuring that their preferences are at the forefront.
2. Enables healthcare providers to lead conversations and decision-making around desires of the patient.
3. Reduces the stress associated with family members having to do what they think is best versus doing what the individual has already decided they would want.
4. Helps to avoid ethical dilemmas.
5. Places individual in the best place to die a “good death.”

Advance care planning matters for the individual/patient involved, family members/loved ones, and medical staff who are striving to do what is in the best interests of the patient and what the patient would desire. Documents vary by state – they are available through medical care providers, offices, hospitals, and often, Secretary of State websites. This is a friendly and gentle reminder that if you have not obtained, completed, and ideally placed on file your advance care planning documents, there is no time like the present. As we look toward the future spiritually, socially, economically, and in all other ways, let us also incorporate decisions that involve our health.

## Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Moves 2025 Convention from Orlando, FL

By Eric Christopher Webb, DDiv., CPLC  
Director of Communications/Editor of The Sphinx  
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

DALLAS, TX – Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. General President Dr. Willis, L. Lonzer, III recently announced the relocation of the Fraternity's 99<sup>th</sup> General Convention and 119<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention from Orlando, Florida, scheduled to take place in 2025, due to

Governor Ron DeSantis' harmful, racist, and insensitive policies against the Black community.

The announcement, which was made on the first day of its 97<sup>th</sup> General Convention and 117<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in Dallas, Texas, amplifies the Fraternity's convention theme, “Strengthening the Brotherhood and Standing for Social Justice.”

“Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. has an unmatched legacy of social justice, advocacy, and leadership for the Black community,” said General President Dr. Willis L. Lonzer, III. “In this environment of manufactured division and attacks on the Black community, Alpha Phi Alpha refuses to direct a projected \$4.6 million convention economic impact to a place hostile to the communities we serve. Although we are moving our convention from Florida, Alpha Phi Alpha will continue to support the strong advocacy of Alpha Brothers and other advocates fighting against the continued assault on our communities in Florida by Governor Ron DeSantis.”

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Conventions generate approximately \$4.6 million in economic impact.

Back in July, the Florida Board of Education approved a controversial new K-12 curriculum for African American history, which erases Florida’s role in slavery and oppression, blames the victims, and declares that African Americans who endured slavery benefitted from the horrific and torturous institution.

The Fraternity joins a broad coalition of organizations protesting Florida’s barrage of harmful and discriminatory policies on protests, voting rights, education, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. In May, the NAACP issued a travel advisory, calling Florida “openly hostile” to African Americans.

ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY, INC.

ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY, INC. MOVES 2025 CONVENTION FROM ORLANDO, FL. DUE TO GOVERNOR DESANTIS' HARMFUL, RACIST AND INSENSITIVE POLICIES AGAINST THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

**BREAKING NEWS**

@APA1906NETWORK #APA1906NETWORK

Men of Distinction

APA1906.NET

**AMEZTV**  
ENGAGE! EXPLORE! EMPOWER!

**Subscribe Today**

<b>\$48</b> YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION	<b>\$70</b> STAR OF ZION & AMEZTV BUNDLE SUBSCRIPTION	<b>\$90</b> STAR OF ZION, QUARTERLY REVIEW & AMEZTV BUNDLE SUBSCRIPTION
------------------------------------	--	--

COMING SOON TO

Roku amazon fireTV Apple tv androidtv Google Play iOS

WWW.AMEZ.TV | INFO@AMEZ.TV



Rev. Dierdre' R. Parker-Rowson  
Entertainment & The Arts Editor  
Entertainment\_Arts@StarofZion.org

# Bubble Therapy

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

Self-care is thought of as self-*ish* if you've got deadlines and donut sales. It is difficult to find a moment for yourself wedged between homework, house work, bath times, bedtimes, bible study, and quarterly conference. This concept of self-care is relatively new to *me*. If you did not grow up enjoying the freedom of generational wealth, then I suspect you may have a similar testimony. In order to acquire things that were not the necessities, I had to go to work. I wanted to go to cheerleading camp, and that required special shoes, socks, pom-poms, pins, and things. If I wanted to have those things, I would have to pay for them myself because it simply was not in my parents' budget. So, I went to work at age 14 washing dishes at a local restaurant, and cleaning rooms at a motel on the beach.

We work long hours, then we plan family outings so that we don't lose connection with those we love. However, even that becomes work. We find ourselves so exhausted that self-care seems optional. Self-care is not just going to the nail salon or taking a hike. Those are good things, but there is more. Self-care is also paying attention to your mind and spirit. What that looks like for you can only be determined by you. I can only tell you what it looks like for me - blowing bubbles.



I had to find a way to care for my mind and spirit after experiencing a series of unfortunate events. Pre-vaccine Covid, losing my good friend to cancer in 2021, then my sister and my father within three months of each other last year. It put some scars and weight on my heart. After a particularly difficult therapy session (faith without works is dead), I went outside and blew bubbles. As I watched the bubbles float up into the air, I felt the weight begin to lift from my heart.

Blowing bubbles helped me release the stresses of the day. The tension in my mind gave way and creativity flowed through revelation and became a poem.

Blowing bubbles became *my* self-care. I blew them in the morning as rush hour traffic zoomed by. I blew them when the school bus returned its rambunctious riders safely home. I blew them whenever I needed to release the thoughts that carried the weight, that hovered like pending rain and corroded pain. I blew them so much that my neighbor gifted me with a kit to blow giant bubbles. I collect machines that blow them continuously, wands in different shapes and sizes. I have big containers and small containers of bubble solution. I give them away to kids and to adults. You see, bubbles are like troubles. They capture your attention as they float through your life and create cataclysmic prisms that swirl around you mind and collect light. Then, they suddenly pop. It reminds me that troubles, like bubbles, are only temporary.

I'm so glad bubbles don't last always.

## Spirit-Lead Creativity: The Ministry of Rev. Dr. Rosa Smith-Williams

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

*So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; Genesis 1:27a*

Siler City, NC - Corinth A.M.E. Zion Church of Siler City, NC, hosted its first dinner theater entitled "*The Long, Long Journey There and Back*" on August 12, 2023. This show featured a multigenerational cast, which included clergy, lay, and community members. Through poetry, song, dance, and drumming, the cast took us on an emotionally informative journey from the beautiful shores of the Mother Land, through the horror of the middle passage, to the rigors of enslavement. However, we did not stop there. We moved through the Civil Rights Era with its raised fist protests to today's cries of "Stay woke" and "I can't breathe."

This multi-media approach to ministry was as visually beautiful as it was sacred. And it was sacred. Creativity is sacred. As children of the Most High, we are *creatively* created with creativity as a part of our DNA. Yet, while this was new to Corinth, it was something that has always characterized the ministry of their pastor, Rev. Dr. Rosa Smith-Williams.

When asked how she became interested in such "outside the box" ministry, she told of how, as a teacher at the High School for Visual and Performing Arts in Houston Texas, she directed plays for African American and Hispanic Heritage observances.



"I know that we share our gifts and talents in a myriad of ways," said Rev. Smith-Williams. "As African Americans, we are multi-talented people who express ourselves through song, dance, music, and the spoken and written word. I wanted to share these gifts with the community and to spark creative energy within each person. I felt the leading of the Holy Spirit to introduce the idea of theater to my congregation in 1995. Theater provides an opportunity for self-expression, community outreach, and a path to address societal concerns and history. We were a small congregation of senior citizens who needed to know that nothing is impossible with God. If we are willing to try, God is willing to do the impossible, to replace complacency with new energy, and to replace doubt with new hope."

Having always been an inquisitive child, it is a conversation she had with her mother that keeps her creative fires burning. Upon discovering some new information, she exclaimed, "I didn't know that," to which her mother replied, "Baby, what you don't know will make two worlds."

"I realize how little I know, and how important it is that I listen to the Highest Power," she said. "I have often been slow to respond to some of the leadings of the Holy Spirit, but as I get older, I am more prone to respond to it quickly, for I know God has a plan that I simply need to follow."

As a fellow creative, this writer desired advice on how to cultivate such forward thinking ministries in churches where members may be few.

"I have seen God open closed doors," she said. "I have seen God put roofs on churches and new floors and ceilings in buildings with congregations that thought it impossible to accomplish. As ministers, we must never underestimate what God can or will do. Simply stated, trust God, let the Holy Spirit lead you, and follow."



Mr. Daman DeLeon  
Health and Wellness Editor  
Health\_Wellness@StarOfZion.org

# Hypertension: A Silent Assassin

**Daman De Leon**  
Health & Wellness Editor

Image consultant and social media personality Kevin Samuels was one of the leading “YouTubers” on the rise. Engaging his listeners with direct, witty-fiery rhetoric attracted many viewers and subscribers to his ever-evolving yet somewhat controversial advice on 21<sup>st</sup>-Century dating. Racial disparities were highlighted within the dating market, as well as expectations and roles. Mr. Samuels received a lot of criticism for his output. However, upon his passing in May of 2022, there was an abundance of mixed responses, some positive and some not so positive. It was later discovered that the culprit to Mr. Samuels untimely, unfortunate demise was hypertension.

Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is one of the leading causes of death for African Americans, primarily males, between the ages of 48-65 years of age. The racial disparity in hypertension and hypertension-related outcomes has been recognized for decades with African Americans with greater risks than Caucasians. Blood pressure levels have consistently been higher for African Americans with an earlier onset of hypertension. While awareness and treatment levels of high blood pressure have been similar, racial differences in control rates

are evident. The higher blood pressure levels for African Americans are associated with higher rates of stroke, end-stage renal disease and congestive heart failure. The reasons for the racial disparities in elevated blood pressure and hypertension-related outcomes risk remain unclear. However, the implications of the disparities of hypertension for prevention and clinical management are substantial in identifying African American men and women with hypertension risk and warranting interventions focused on these differences. In addition, focused research to identify the factors attributed to these disparities in risk burden is an essential need to address the evidence gaps. The racial disparities in hypertension and hypertension-related disease outcomes have been related mortality morbidity risks compared with their white counterparts. These excess risks from elevated blood pressure have a dramatic effect on life expectancy for African-American men and women which is significantly less than for Caucasian Americans. Stroke mortality risks are two-fold greater for African Americans.<sup>1</sup> End-stage renal disease is five times more common for African-American men and women. In addition, the age of onset of diseases such as stroke is considerably earlier for African Americans. For example, a



45-year-old African-American man residing in the Southeast has the stroke risk of a 55-year-old white man in the Southeast and a 65-year-old white man residing in the Midwest.<sup>1</sup> While high blood pressure affects all segments of the population, high blood pressure rates are more prevalent among African-American men and women. The increased prevalence and relative risks constitute significant population attributable risks. Specifically, the population attributable risk for hypertension and 30-year mortality among white men was 23.8% compared with 45.2% among black men and 18.3% for white women compared with 39.5% for black women. These excess disease risks have been long recognized and reported from the Evans County Heart Study and the Charleston Heart Study<sup>5</sup>, which were both initiated in 1960 specifically to study these racial disparities in cardiovascular disease in adults. Similarly, the Bogalusa Heart Study assessed the racial differences in children and young adults. More recently, the Jackson Heart Study has been established to assess cardiovascular risk factors in this population. Further, the REasons for Geographic And Racial Differences in Stroke (REGARDS) study has further documented and confirmed the racial and geographic differences in awareness, treatment, and control of hypertension. With these large epidemiology studies, high blood pressure has been a common significant factor associated with the excess disease burden for African Americans.

Factors associated with the racial disparities are lifestyle, diet, genetics, and body mass. While clinical guidelines and prevention strategies recognize the racial disparities in risks from hypertension, the evidence from clinical trials and clinical studies is often inadequate and insufficient with regards to high-risk populations such African Americans.<sup>47</sup> Likewise, there remains evidence gaps for the factors associated with the disparities. Thus, the evidence-based guidelines for prevention, treatment and management of hypertension inadequately address the excess risk of high blood pressure for African Americans. Research that exclusively focuses on the methods of African Americans and other minority groups to control hypertension suggests the following:

- (1) Diet – reducing salt intake and increasing levels of Iron, Zinc, and Vitamins A, B12, and C, are known to regulate Blood as week as Blood Sugar Level
- (2) Exercise – 2-3 days of cardiovascular exercise greatly reduces the risk of Hypertension. The best form of cardiovascular exercise is simply walking for 30-45 minutes at the minimum
- (3) Stress – managing Stress and a Stress-related life.
- (4) Annual Physical Checkups

We only have one body, and we are to be good stewards (1. Cor. 9:27).

## References

- Howard G, Prineas R, Moy C, Cushman M, Kellum M, Temple E, Graham A, Howard V. Racial and geographic differences in awareness, treatment, and control of hypertension: the REasons for Geographic And Racial Differences in Stroke study. *Stroke*. 2006;37:1171–1178.
- Hertz RP, Unger AN, Cornell JA, Saunders E. Racial disparities in hypertension prevalence, awareness, and management. *Arch Intern Med*. 2005;165:2098–2104
- Jones DW, Hall JE. Racial and ethnic differences in blood pressure: biology and sociology. *Circulation*. 2006;114:2757–2759.
- Calhoun DA, Booth JN, Oparil S, Irvin MR, Shimbo D, Lackland DT, Howard G, Safford MM, Munter P. Refractory hypertension: determination of prevalence, risk factors, and comorbidities in a large, population-based cohort. *Hypertension*. 2014;63:451–458.



# Pastoral Care vs. Ministry Burnout: Who wins?

**Daman De Leon**  
Health & Wellness Editor

Sermon preparation. Sermon Delivery. Church Budgets. Sick-and-Shut-In visits. District Conferences. Annual Conferences. General Conferences. Quadrennial Conferences. Local Community endeavors. Lay Council, Christian Education, and Treasury Dept. delegation. Clergy counseling. Laity Counseling (including marriage, pre-marital, collegiate, or any other type of counseling offered). Conferences with the Presiding Elder(s), Conferences with the Bishop(s). Conferences with General Officers....

All of the above IN ADDITION TO maintaining your personal life, fulfilling your spouse's needs (mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical), providing a fulfilling presence in your children's lives, bills, assisting with homework, bills, balancing the family budget/checkbook, bills, tending to sick family members, bills, putting out "fires", and bills, bills, and more BILLS.

Ministry Burnout is a very real issue that does not warrant enough attention.

So, just what is "Ministry Burnout"?

Burnout is the inability to manage or maintain our energy (and emotional and mental resources) that leads to failure. People don't burn out because they're weak. They burn out because they overdo it and live stressed out for so long that their bodies take over in defense. By the time your body takes over, though, it's usually too late. If you are responsible for staff and pastors, how are you caring for their well-being?

There are certain signs and symptoms that pastors and church staff can recognize in themselves. However, more often than not, those closest to you will notice these signs before you do.

- Tiredness
- Insomnia
- Short emotional fuse (anger or crying)
- Addictions (escapes)
- Desire to retreat from others
- Loss of interest
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Cynicism
- Numbness
- Illness
- Short attention span

You may be experiencing difficulties yourself, perhaps to the point of needing hospitalization, or you may be in significant emotional distress, yet you, the pastor, feel you must carry on. You do "your duty" instead of taking care of your most basic needs. Even when counseled by your spouse or a close friend to take a break, you continue to work, even overwork.

What does the Bible say about that? Here are a couple of verses: "But Moses' father-in-law said to him, 'What you're doing is no good. You will surely wear yourself out, as well as these people who are with you, because the task is too heavy for you. You cannot do it alone, by yourself.'" (Exod. 18:17, 18, TLV). "And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat" (Mark 6:31, ESV).

While burnout manifests a little differently in each person, these symptoms are common warning signs. Unfortunately, they overlap with the symptoms of depression, making self-diagnosis even harder. In times of stress and depleted resources, our body retreats into a fight or flight mode. This is our body's natural reaction to stress. If this fight-or-flight response continues week after week, month after month, you will eventually burnout. One big cause of burnout is a lack of rest coupled with non-existent boundaries between work and home.

It is easy to view the signs of burnout as temporary, to convince yourself that they're necessary for success or to minimize them for a time by seeking the excitement of something new. For that reason, it's important to also watch for behaviors that might put you at risk for burnout and not just the symptoms.

## Prevention

- Create clear boundaries between work and home, as well as work and vacation/rest.

In our new work-from-home world, boundaries between work and home have become almost non-existent. Work tools like email, social media, and communication/productivity apps now follow us everywhere on our smartphones.

Take concrete steps to create clear boundaries on your smartphone and electronic companions (iPad, laptop, smart watch). For example, consider getting a work number for your phone or a dedicated work phone. Set times to check and respond to emails, turn off reminders and notifications, and set your phone aside when you are not working.

Additionally, create a space (or spaces) in your house—if you are working from home—where work stuff lives. When you are done working, walk away.

- Learn how to be more productive during work and how to rest and unplug.

Learn when your most productive time of the day is. Some people function best in the morning, others in the afternoon. Protect that time and schedule draining or challenging tasks during those hours. Outsource or delegate tasks outside of your skillset.

Create clear divisions in your day. For example, divide your work day into chunks of time (25 minutes, 90 minutes, etc.) and take true breaks in between. Additionally, establish and enforce a clear beginning and end to your day.

Finally, do not multitask! Turn off distractions and find ways to focus on one task at a time.

## Treatment

If you find yourself experiencing any of the signs of ministry burnout, stop. Take a step back from your emotions, and don't make any rash or quick decisions.

Spend deliberate time in prayer and worship. Then, seek out the rest that your body needs.

Take concrete steps to care for your physical self: sleep, rest, eat healthy, and find small ways to exercise (short walks are a good start).

List the things that God has done for you in the past. Cultivate an attitude of gratitude for God's gifts in both your personal life and your ministry.

Recalibrate your expectations and ask God for humility. You cannot do everything, and you don't need to. Other people can help, and the world will keep spinning without you. Everything depends on God, not you.

Finally, connect with a mentor, friend, and family members to seek out encouragement and ministry for yourself.

Ministers and church staff pour out their lives caring for others and they often fail to care for themselves. Proper and deliberate self-care is not only a good idea, it is crucial for a long, healthy, and productive career in ministry. Learn to avoid it now, and take concrete steps to reverse it if you've already burned yourself out.

## References

- *Self-Care: How to practice Self-Care and avoid Ministry Burnout*, Tiffany Henning, SPHR, CRPC
- *René Drumm and Petr Činčala, "SDA Pastor Health Qualitative Study Report: What Can and Must Be Done to Save the Health of Adventist Pastors" (unpublished report, North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Department, 2021)*





Ms. Angel Eason  
Lifestyle Editor  
Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org

# Life be Happening (AKA Lifing): How to Incorporate Self Care

By Angel Eason  
Lifestyle Editor

Life, sometimes, is a hot mess, and it is important to make time for self-care. I had the opportunity to speak with Charnelle Cook, a national certified counselor and licensed professional counselor in Virginia about self-care.



You can be a Christian and go to therapy. Sometimes, we need professional intervention. A therapist is going to be able to help you develop the tools to manage mental illnesses. There are Christian Counselors that you can seek out. Prayer works along with seeking out professional help. We do not have to carry things on our own or put them on our family and friends.

## What is the first thing someone can do when life is a hot mess?

I hope everybody has 1-2 trusted people in their inner circle, friends and family. They should not be your therapist, however. For heavier situations, I recommend seeking out a therapist.

## What is self-care?

Self-care is the thing that makes you feel grounded and good. For example, exercising, beauty routines (going to get your hair done), picking up a new hobby, and taking a nap are forms of self-care. Whatever you need to reset. This looks different for everyone. For example, some people go for a run for self-care. I would not do this (laughter).

## In what ways can someone with a busy lifestyle incorporate self-care practices?

Schedule self-care practices in the routine. For example, once a month, I map out my exercises; what days will be rest days, go to the gym, or go to Pilates. I recommend sitting down and reviewing your schedule and adding in self-care. Scheduling is key when you have a busy lifestyle.

## What are your thoughts on Christians embracing therapy?

## What are some self-care practices that are free?

1. Go for a run
2. Go for a walk - I find this to be peaceful
3. Read books - if you do not have any on your bookshelf, go to your local public library and get a library card to rent books for free
4. Try a fun recipe with the groceries you have
5. Go for a drive (in moderation)

## What is your last piece of advice about self-care?

Self-care is absolutely necessary. If you enjoy physical activities, I highly suggest that you make time for them, even if it is only two days a week. Maintain your personal self. For example, get your nails and/or hair done.

To find your self-care practice, you have to try out different things. For example, I have friends who do their nails. If you do not have time to cook, look into meal delivery services. Find out what will make your life easier and or/feel better.

It is imperative that we do things for ourselves. We pour into people so much and it is important to set aside time for ourselves.

# Self-Care: Why I Hired A Life Coach

Rev. Dierdre Parker-Rowson  
Contributing Writer



September is Self-Care Awareness Month.

Self-care is the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own health; the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, particularly during periods of stress.

When I think of self-care, my mind goes immediately to my life coach. When I first met her, I knew that she had the gift to see right through my façade of "I'm okay and I'm on my way." I wasn't ready to be seen. My brokenness had begun seeping through like a red Koolaid stain on a white dress. Unsightly. I was carrying a lot of baggage. I had suitcases filled with previous traumas, broken relationships, betrayals, and disappointments. Yeah, I had some baggage.

Now don't get it twisted, I freely gave my testimony. I talked about my baggage in my sermons, and in my poetry. I was willing to tell anybody who would listen that the only distance between good and God is simply **OH!** While acknowledging something is a huge step, healing is something else entirely. I was not healed.

Right about now, you may be asking yourself, "Why didn't she just take it to da Lawd in prayer?" I did. That's why I engaged the services of a Life Coach that I knew was spiritually grounded. *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2).*

I learned that working with a life coach is not for the faint of heart. There was homework, accountability, and self-reflection. I told her that I would *one day* like to write and produce a one woman show

about my life. She said, "One day is not on the calendar. Pick a date." This wasn't a bullying tactic. It was a complex conversation that led to creating the action items needed to accomplish that goal.

Life coaching is not therapy. Life coaching is practical application of goal setting strategies that you walk through with a person who is trained to help you clearly define your goals and guide you as you take steps to reach those goals. The endgame, though, is more than accomplishing goals. It is to help identify the things that get you off track. Once those things are identified, you can work with your coach to establish an action plan so that when you show signs of being stuck, you have a strategy to move beyond what is slowing your progress.

\*Coach 'Prena walked with me through some of my most difficult healing journeys. In 2012 I was homeless. I spent forty-four days in the Salvation Army Homeless shelter. The emotional toll that it took on me was my little secret. So, I thought. She had me give my homeless self a name. She had me write a eulogy for my homeless self. She had me conduct a funeral for my homeless self, with guests! I didn't *want* to do that. I just wanted to forget it. But as I worked through writing the eulogy it allowed me to reflect on the things that led me to that place. As I eulogized my homeless self, I was able to recognize that my homelessness was just a brief episode in my life. It could only define me if I let it.

Life coaching helped me so much, that I went out and got certified, too.

What are you doing for self-care?

(\*Suprena Lenise Hickman is RN, BSN, MBA, is the owner of Sweet Escapes by Suprena, Co-Founder of GRITS (Girls Rocking in the South LLC), founder of Escape 2 Sisterhood LLC, Owner Operator of Sankofa Training and Wellness Institute. If you'd like to learn more about her services, visit her website at [www.suprenahickman.com](http://www.suprenahickman.com).)

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



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



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



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



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



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



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



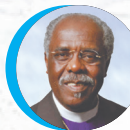
**Bishop Joseph Johnson (Retired)**  
 45 Awesome Ridge, Garner, NC 27529  
 Ph: (704) 877-9646  
 Email: djjj85@windstream.net



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

**GENERAL OFFICERS**

**Rev. Dr. J. Elvin Sadler, General Secretary-Auditor**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax: (704) 688-2549; Email: jesadler@amezion.org

**Rev. Al Hamilton, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Finance**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax: (704) 919-5580; Email: alchamilton@amezion.org

**Rev. Julius Walls, Chief Operating Officer / Business Manager**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax: (704) 688-2541; Email: jwalls@amezion.org

**Mr. Darin Kent, Chief Communications Officer  
Editor, The Star of Zion**

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

Ph: (704) 599-4630, ext. 2577; Email: cco@amezion.org

**Rev. Dr. D.B. Cannon,**

**Dept. of Global Missions Office & Missionary Seer Editor**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770 Ph: (704) 599-4630;

Email: dbcannon@amezion.org For articles/info: missionaryseergm@gmail.com

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

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

Ph: (704) 599-4630 Fax: (704) 688-2550; Email: pbarrett@amezion.org

**Dr. Eleazar Merriweather, Director  
Dept. of Church Growth & Development**

P.O. Box 217258, Charlotte, NC 28221

Ph: (704) 599-4630; Fax: (704) 688-2547; Email: emerriw721@amezion.org

**Rev. George E. McKain, Director of Public Affairs & Social Concerns**  
P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

Ph: (704) 599-4630, ext. 316; Email: GEMcKain2@amezion.org

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

**FORMER GENERAL OFFICERS**

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

**JUDICIAL COUNCIL**

**The Hon. Adele M. Riley, President**

625 Ellsworth Drive, Trotwood, Ohio 45426  
Email: mariley310@yahoo.com

**Rev. Dr. Reid R. White, Jr., Vice-President**

6608 Cartwright Drive, Columbia, SC 29223

**Rev. Dr. Lisa T. McDow, Esq., Clerk**

Post Office Box 2541, Wilmington, NC 28402-2541

**Rev. Dr. Derrick R. Anderson, Chaplain**

4650 Shookstown Drive, Kannapolis, NC 28081

**Rev. Dr. Richard Austin, Esq.**

1415 Earlham Drive, Dayton, OH 45406

**Dr. Marsha C. Grayson, Esq.**

88 Roberts Street, Philadelphia, PA 15219

**Dr. William Stokes**

5821 West Tree Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507

**Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Tolbert, Sr., Esq.**

104 Black Avenue, Bessemer, Alabama 35020

**Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey**

502 Ferndale Drive, Salisbury, NC 28147

**CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL**

**Mr. Joseph King Davis, President**

1018 Southpoint Crossing Durham, NC

Ph: (919) 236-3740; Email: jkdjr1911@frontier.com

**Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis, 1st Vice President**

419 Eberle Way, Matthews, NC 28105

Ph: (704) 321-7022; Cell: (704) 562-0402; Email: CLC.FVP@gmail.com

**Mrs. Connie Bell Wright, 2nd Vice President**

822 Polk Street, Charlotte, NC 28206

Cell: (704) 724-2759; Email: CLC2VP.ConnieBellwright@gmail.com

**Mrs. Mireille Landrum, Recording Secretary**

506 Lincoln Crest Cir., Austell, GA 30106

Ph: (678) 809-5253; Cell: (678) 420-8919; Email: clcsecretary11@gmail.com

**Mr. Ned D. Highsmith, Financial Secretary**

125 Kenneth Carter Rd, Clinton, NC 28328; Ph: (910) 592-4294; Cell: (910) 590-9284; Email: clcfinancialsecretary@aol.com

**Mrs. Cynthia White, Treasurer**

1257 W. 27th, Norfolk, VA 23508

Ph: (757) 235-2475; Email: clctreasurer11@aol.com

**Mr. Jerry McCombs, Chaplain**

P. O Box 1444Newton, NC 28658

Ph: (828) 310-6918; Email: clcchaplain21@charter.net

**Mrs. Lula K. Howard, President Emeritus**

4009 Landside Dr., Louisville, KY 40220

Cell: (502) 494-9527; Email: Lmkhoward330@gmail.com

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

**Mrs. Sandra B. Crowder, International President**

100 East Ocean View, Suite 1110, Norfolk, VA 23503

PH: 757-761-6280 Email: sandracrowder@yahoo.com

**Dr. Peggy Lindsey-Owens, First Vice President**

503 McLean Street, Raeford, NC 28376 Ph: 910-875-5803;

Email: mspeggy@earthlink.net

**Rev. Patricia "Patty" Surratt-Smith, Second Vice President**

PO Box 1424, Shelby, NC 28151 Ph: 704-281-1544;

Email: ladypattysmith@gmail.com

**Mrs. Rosetta J. Dunham, Executive Director**

P.O. Box 26846, Charlotte, NC 28221-6846

Email: rodunham@amezion.org

**Mrs. Effie B. Woodard, Recording Secretary**

108 Effie Lane/PO Box 662, Broadway, NC 27505 Cell: 919-356-6608;

Email: effiebwoodard@gmail.com

**Ms. Verdelle Cunningham, Treasurer**

1 Dally Road, Unit 208, Hillsborough, NJ 08844

Ph: (917) 742-5565; Email: oliver1447@att.net

**Ms. Karlease M. Smalls, Connectional Coordinator of YAMS**

1436 McBeth Drive, Kannapolis, NC 28038

Ph: (H) 704-298-0487; (C) 917-371-3464 Email: karleasemalls@yahoo.com

**Ms. Melva Polk Wright, Connectional Secretary, Youth Missionary Society**

438 Parkview Court, Unit C, Salisbury, MD 21804

Ph: (443) 880-5728; Email: principalmelva1960@gmail.com

**Mrs. April C. Davis, Connectional Superintendent, Buds of Promise**

9233 Mountain Aire Circle, Charlotte, NC 28214; Home: 704-394-0577; Cell:

980-298-0298; Email: apriladavisforbuds@yahoo.com

**Mrs. Jo-Ann Monroe, Connectional Secretary, Bureau of Supply**

40 East Sidney Ave., #12B, Mt. Vernon, NY 10550

Ph: 914-224-7621; Email: jom4supply@gmail.com

**Mrs. Joy Williamson Foster, Connectional Chairman, Life Members Council**

229 Academy Lane, Middletown, DE 19709

Ph: 302-563-0222; Email: mailto:Joy2023LM@gmail.com

**Ms. Camryn Ivey, Director of Communications**

1610 Cox Road, Matthews, NC 28104

Ph:704-907-0208; Email: camrynivey@gmail.com

**INTERNATIONAL MINISTERS  
& LAY ASSOCIATION**

**President, Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon**

4556 Behlmann Farms Blvd., Florissant, MO 63034

Ph: (314) 533-0316; Email: anwitherspoon1@gmail.com

**First Vice President, Mrs. Lula K. Howard**

4009 Landside Dr., Louisville, KY 40220-3080

Cell: (502) 494-9527; Email: lmkhoward330@gmail.com

**Second Vice President, Rev. Dr. Myrtle Bowen**

12006 Othman Court, Ft. Washington, MD 20744

Ph: (301) 237-7755; Email: PEBowen50@gmail.com

**Executive Director, Rev. Dorothy Patterson**

48 West 17th Street, Bayonne, NJ 07002

Ph: (551) 206-1499 Email: Kleinz1@aol.com

**Secretary, Ms. Marie Denise Niles**

718 Decatur Street, Brooklyn, NY 11233; Ph: (917) 373-5237

Email: mdn929@gmail.com

**Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Carlous E. Tyrance**

11508 Turnstone Ct., Charlotte, NC 28226

Ph: (704) 541-5237; Email: ctyrnc@bellsouth.net

**Treasurer, Rev. David T. Miller**

P.O. Box 6753, Harrisburg, PA 17112

Ph: (717) 712-4709; Email: revdmillersigma@icloud.com

**Financial Secretary, Rev. Dr. Maurice Harden**

6101 Clarks Fork Drive, Raleigh, NC 27616

Ph: (704) 202-8437; Email: pastormharden@gmail.com

**Chaplain, Rev. J. Martin Boulter, Sr.**

114 Pelham Lane, Fort Mill, SC 29715

Ph: (803) 448-7100; Email: jmboulter@compurium.net

**DEPARTMENT OF  
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**Rev. Johngerlyn "Jonse" Young, President, President**

**Assembly of Christian Educators (ACE)**

1663 Coalcar Ct. SE, Kentwood, MI 49508

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

**Bro. Dion Harris, Chairperson**

**Young Adults in Christian Ministries (YACM)**

Email: Djharris2012@gmail.com

**Mr. Ezekiel A. Perez, President**

**Varick International Christian Youth Council (VICYC)**

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

**Mr. Andre Griffin, Parliamentarian (VICYC)**

Phone Number: (336) 660-8745 Email: griffinatf@gmail.com

**COLLEGES**

**Livingstone College, Rev. Dr. Anthony Davis, President**

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

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

**Clinton College, Dr. Lester A. McCorn, President**

1029 Crawford Road, Rock Hill, SC 29730

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

**Hood Theological Seminary, Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President**

1810 Lutheran Synod Drive, Salisbury, NC 28144

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

**Lomax-Hannon Junior College, Rev. Wallace L. Noble, President**

725 Conecuh Street, Greenville, AL 36037; Ph: (334) 382-2115

**A.M.E. Zion University, Rev. Mulbah Gray, President**

P.O. Box 1960, Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa; Ph: 011-231-261-071

**Hood-Speaks Theological Seminary, Dr. Donald J. Ekpo, President**

Ndon Ebom, Uruan.LGA, P.O. Box 2503, UYO, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

**INTERNATIONAL PRESIDING ELDERS'  
COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Rev. Dr. Anthony K.R. Gibson, International President**

7399 N. Shadeland Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46250; Ph: (317) 362-5387

Email: 7thInternationalPresident@gmail.com

**Rev. Dr. Florence Brown, First Vice President**

Post Office Box 1646, Lumberton, NC 28358

Ph: (910) 612-7948; Email: Fsbrownies@gmail.com

**Rev. Fondella A. Leigh, Second Vice President**

239 Woodville Rd, Hertford, NC 27944; Ph: (252) 312-8733

Email: edentondistrictamez@gmail.com

**Mrs. Tojuna McLendon, 3rd Vice President**

6020 Kempton Court, Salisbury, Md 21801

ph: (704) 796-2979 Email: tojunamac41@yahoo.com

**Rev. Dr. Willa Estell, Executive Secretary**

414 Smokey Mountain Drive, Maryville, TN 37801

Ph: (865) 335-7527; Email: we41602@aol.com

**Rev. Lelar H. Johnson, Treasurer**

7 Spring Hollow Drive, Crystal Springs, MS 39059

Ph: (601) 573-4636; Email: brooks4L@yahoo.com

**Rev. Alonzo Braggs, Recording Secretary**

38780 Orchid View Place, Apt. 303, Palmdale, California 93550-6526

Ph: (661) 227-4816 or (910) 262-8382; Email: alonzobraggs@gmail.com

**Rev. Dr. Evalina Huggins, Chaplain**

3921 23rd Place, Temple Hills, MD 20748; Ph: (301) 980-8793

Email: Evalina45@gmail.com

**Rev. Dr. Erlinda Dobson, Parliamentarian**

2920 NC Hwy 55 West, New Bern, NC 28562; Ph: (252) 670-1127

Email: pedobson@newberndistrict.com

**Rev. Dr. Joel D. Miles, Senior Advisor to President**

8400 S. Damen Avenue, Chicago, IL 60620; Ph: (773) 405-6375

Email: revjdmiles@yahoo.com

**Rev. Hanna Broome, Chief Strategist**

P.O. Box 26181, Fayetteville, NC 28314-2967; Ph: (864) 525-4679

Email: hrb8792@gmail.com

**Rev. Derrill Blue, Chief Technology Officer**

39 Warwick Ave, Rochester, NY 14611; Cell: (405) 821-1333

Fax: (585) 546-1652, Office: (585) 546-5007; Email: derrillblue@gmail.com

**Rev. Rochelle McEntyre, Assistant Recording Secretary**

702 Whitehead St., Key West, FL 33040. Email: rochellep16@aol.com

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

**Rev. Patty Smith, President**

PO Box 1424 Shelby, NC 28151;

Ph: (704) 281-1544; Email: ladypattysmith@gmail.com

**Rev. Robin Stitt, First Vice President**

3705 Rosedown Drive Matthews, NC 28105

</

# Financial Wellness: Examination, Education & Exercise



Dana G. Stille  
Financial Freedom Editor  
FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org



By Dana G. Stille  
Financial Freedom Editor

Self-care is often broadly defined as a deliberate practice or act that one engages in to be sure that our needs are met. In most cases, those needs relate to one's physical, emotional, or mental health. When I think about the term 'self-care,' I usually begin planning a day of relaxation, prayer, deep breathing, a lot of sleep, and healthy food. Today, these practices are not uncommon, as the concept of self-care has grown tremendously since it was first introduced in the medical community in the 1950s and adopted by the Black Panthers in the 1960s during the Civil Rights Movement. The isolation periods during the Covid-19 pandemic reignited the concept and has led many to frequently examine their self-care routines and prioritize their wellbeing.

No one would argue the importance of physical, emotional, and mental health. However, we must not forget to engage in self-care to maintain our financial health also. Financial wellness, like other forms of self-care, often requires examinations, education, and exercise!

During the examination phase, I encourage you to consider your financial goals. Are you saving for a rainy day, a special trip, or college tuition? Maybe you are not saving at all. Next, you may want to assess your tolerance for losing money. Are you comfortable with investing some funds in the stock market or is savings more appropriate for you? Do you have too much credit card debt? What is your credit score?

Once you have answered some of the questions above, spend some time educating yourself about the different options available that will help you reach financial freedom. There is a plethora of financial information at your fingertips. You might enjoy listening to a podcast, or reading a financial journal or book, or speaking with a professional money manager. Also, during the education phase, spend time reviewing your current spending habits. Track every expense and income. Do your habits support you reaching the goals that you have or will you have to make changes? Don't forget to educate yourself on the interest rates of your credit cards. Are they the same? Should you be using the one with the lower rate more often? Are there perks associated with some cards and not others?

And lastly, exercise your power. If you consistently make your credit card payments on time and have a good credit score, you may be able to negotiate a lower interest rate. Simply contact your card provider and ask for a lower rate. Be sure to point out your stellar history with the company and any lower rates that other companies may have offered you. Be diligent in this request. Ask to speak with the manager or call back if the first attempt fails. You may also request a temporary rate reduction, which could provide some financial relief if your credit card balance is high.

As you continue on your pathway to financial freedom, don't forget to add financial self-care into your routine: Examination, Education, & Exercise.



Bryan Crawford  
Sports Editor  
Sports@StarofZion.org

# Quanera Hayes Joins Team USA in World Athletics Championships

By Bryan Crawford  
Sports Editor

Livingstone College has a deeply rooted sports history. The Blue Bears football team played in the first ever Black college football game back in 1892. Norries Wilson, a Livingstone alum, was the first Black head football coach at an Ivy League school when he coached at Columbia University for five seasons. Former NFL running back Natrone Means was a running backs coach and offensive coordinator at the school, and another NFL legend – and arguably Livingstone’s most notable alums is Ben Coates, who won a Super Bowl with the Baltimore Ravens in 2000, before returning to Salisbury to be the head football coach at his alma mater.

However, as great as these athletes are, they may have to make room at the top of the mountain for a hometown ‘shero.’”

Quanera Hayes is one of the most decorated athletes to ever come out of Livingstone College. In 2016 she won a gold medal in the 4x400 meter race at the World Indoor Championship in Portland. A year later she won gold again in 4x400 meter races at both the World Relays in the Bahamas, and the World Indoor Championships in London. She followed-up those spectacular performances with a 2021 gold medal in the 400 meter



Courtesy: NCAA

race in the Diamond League track and field event. She also won the 400 meter race at the Olympic Trials in June of 2021, which qualified her to race in the 2021 Olympics which was delayed because of the pandemic – two years after the birth of her son Demetrius.

The balancing act between being a professional athlete and a mother is no easy feat, but Hayes hasn’t lost her competitive edge and desire to compete on the track; and she’ll have an opportunity to once again represent the United States at the World Athletics Championships in Budapest this month. Hayes was one of 138 athletes named by USA Track & Field to compete in the event.

The Hope Mills native is part of the relay pool, and a member of a Team USA squad that picked up 13 gold medals, nine silver medals, and 11 bronze medals from last year’s World Championships in Oregon, in addition to comfortably winning the inaugural World Team Trophy.

Hayes brings her experience, individual accomplishments to an already deep and talented squad that is capable of winning gold medals in their respective events. The nine-day competition at the National Athletics Centre in Hungary, and from all of us here at the Star of Zion newspaper, we’d like to wish Hayes good luck and we can’t wait to see her return home with another gold medal around her neck.

## Sudden Cardiac Arrest & the Importance of Self-Care in Sports

By Bryan Crawford  
Sports Editor

A shockwave rippled throughout the world of sports when news broke that Bronny James, son of NBA superstar LeBron James, suffered cardiac arrest during a basketball workout at the University of Southern California where he is a freshman on the basketball team. James was rushed to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center where he was later released. The news immediately invoked memories of Buffalo Bills Safety Damar Hamlin, who suffered cardiac arrest on live television after being hit in the chest in a game against the Cincinnati Bengals.

Hamlin says specialists told him his heart stopped as a result of a direct blow at a specific point in his heartbeat which caused him to go into cardiac arrest.

It is still unknown what caused Bronny James’ 18-year-old heart to suddenly stop beating, but as an elite athlete with access to high-level doctors who are closely monitoring his condition – we know that like Damar Hamlin, James is receiving the best medical care available to him. But these two situations also highlight a bigger problem when it comes to health care and sports.

According to the American Heart Association, sudden cardiac arrest claims the lives of 350,000 Americans every year, including 7,000 young people under the age of 18. It is also the number one cause of death for student athletes, who are three times more likely to experience sudden cardiac arrest than non-athletes. Experts say most cases are due to genetics rather than specific injuries, and suggest that any student athlete with a family history of a hereditary or congenital heart condition, receive an electrocardiogram screening (ECG) before training or com-



Courtesy: Gregory Payan/AP

peting for a specific sport.

Dr. John Higgins, a professor of cardiovascular medicine with McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston, who is also a cardiologist for the Houston Rockets, says an ECG can significantly raise the detection rate for many of the conditions that cause sudden cardiac arrest from 25% at best, to about 80%. Dr. Higgins says while an ECG isn’t perfect, it can

reveal much more information than a general medical history and a physical.

Studies also show that 56% of people survive a sudden cardiac arrest event if it happens at a gym or fitness center, compared to 34% in public outdoor spaces. And according to the European Society of Cardiology, sudden cardiac arrest victims are also nine times more likely to survive when an AED (automated external defibrillator) is nearby.

While there are risks associated with any sport, many doctors in the medical community still believe that exercise is medicine, and sports still offer more health benefits than risks. But it’s still important, whether young or old, athlete or non-athlete, to never take your health for granted.

# Clinton College Names Faulkner Head Volleyball Coach

By Kristen Brown  
Clinton College Media Contact

Rock Hill, SC -- Clinton College has named Tangela Faulkner as head volleyball coach.

Coach Faulkner has a vast love for coaching players as her way of giving back. With over twelve years of coaching, she has assisted more than 50 players with playing on the collegiate level. She was named Coach of the Year in the Quad County 3A Division while coaching at West Johnston High School in Benson, North Carolina.

"We are extremely excited to have Coach Tangela Faulkner, our new Head Women's Volleyball Coach, join our team in the Division of Student Success and the Clinton College family," said Dr. Angelyne Brown, Vice President of Student Success/Dean of Students. "Coach Faulkner brings a great wealth of knowledge and genuine energy to the volleyball program. We know our students and



the campus community will benefit greatly from her commitment to excellence and dedication to preparing our student-athletes to win on and off the court."

A University of Mount Olive graduate, Faulkner is in the Athletics Hall of Fame as a two-time all-conference honoree for both basketball and volleyball. Ranked fifth in the nation in scoring with a school record of 22.4 points per game and averaged 9.7 rebounds per game as a junior, scoring a total of 605 points, the second-highest season total in school history. Faulkner became the only Trojan women's basketball player to score 1000 points in two seasons. She led her volleyball team in kills and blocks as a junior. She finished second in the conference in hitting percentage and fifth in kills as a senior, helping UMO win its only volleyball conference championship.

Coach Faulkner has no reservations in discussing her reason for why she coaches. "This is my ministry, and I want to equip young athletes with the same tools that someone equipped me with," said Faulkner. "If God hadn't blessed me with a full scholarship, I would never have been able to attend college. I want to help every child I impact have the same opportunity!"



Rev. Ronald Nathan  
World Politics Editor  
WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org

## WORLD POLITICS

# Prostate Cancer, Black Men, and the Black Church

By Rev. Ronald Nathan  
World Politics Editor

Prostate cancer is a worldwide health burden. Prostate cancer is a cancer that is common among men during middle and late life and its incidence increases considerably with age.

Persons living in underserved communities access health and medical services less and at later stages than other persons in society whether they live in Australia, India, Jamaica, South Africa, the United Kingdom or the United States of America.

Persons of African origin and descent who are disproportionately represented in underserved communities experience even greater health disparities. This is partially the reason why for example, men of African descent are diagnosed with prostate cancer at a more advanced stage and have higher levels of mortality rates. We cannot dismiss the fact that race in the United Kingdom and the United States of America in particular, is correlated with socioeconomic status, and lower socioeconomic status is correlated with increased cancer risk and poorer outcomes.

Furthermore, clinical researchers have also discovered that there are certain genetic associations that causes the unique susceptibility of 'Black' men to prostate cancer. Given these factors the statistics regarding prostate cancer and Black men is absolutely astounding and the attitude of the Black Church bewildering.



African-American men are at an increased risk for developing prostate cancer over white men. One in six African-American men will develop prostate cancer in his lifetime. Overall, Black men are 1.7 times more likely to be diagnosed with—and 2.1 times more likely to die from—prostate cancer than white men. They are also slightly more likely than their white counterparts to be diagnosed with advanced disease.

Black men may also be harmed by racial bias in preventive care, as they are less likely than white men to be offered the option of having a PSA (prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test, and are more likely than white men to be told that the benefits of the PSA test are uncertain.

One in four of Men of African and Caribbean descent in the United Kingdom will get prostate cancer in their lifetime in comparison to one in eight in the white population.

The Caribbean population have the highest prostate cancer rates in the world (26.3 per 100,000) closely followed by sub-Saharan Africans (10 per 100,000), whereas Asians have the lowest (2.5 per 100,000). CaP is estimated to be the leading cancer in incidence and mortality amongst African Caribbean (AC) men across the world and this is expected to continue to increase hence why this still remains an important international health-care issue.

With such a high prevalence of Prostate Cancer among Black men, why is the Black Church so silent about this health care issue? It has not gone unnoticed, especially in the United States of America that church attendance is a factor that has been linked to better health and physical functioning, lower hypertension prevalence and blood pressure and mortality. Churches are typically places where males are valued and receive emotional, psychological, and behavioral resources that can be leveraged during stressful situations, including disease management



and recovery and that participation in organized religious services have been linked to hope, resilience, stress mitigation, and enhanced longevity.

Glynis Brewster-Nathan, a British-based Health Coach and leader of the Global Wellbeing Enablers organisation, states, “The Black Church must be intentional in its’ support of Black men and their care of their bodies, which is the temple of God. This support has implications for men, their families, their churches and their communities.”

Irrespective of what the health authorities say or do, the Black Church has to speak up loudly in calling for justice in health research, education and services for vulnerable communities. Advocacy for greater research and services must target the needs of African descendant communities, including their deep suspicion of white medical and health providers.

Thomas A. Farrington, the founder of the US - Boston-based Prostate Health Education Network (PHEN) said church-based awareness, which can lead to treatment, is “one of the most critical pieces of the puzzle.”

The Black Church must be a first port of call for information about prostate cancer. Information leaflets, health clinics, support groups, library of films and videos and theological undergirding for health initiatives. Testimonies from prostate cancer survivors should be featured in morning services and not only in the men’s meetings. The creation of a greater awareness of prostate cancer will go a long way to remove the taboo and silence in the church and in the community.

The Black Church has to also put its money where its mouth is and allo-

cate a budget for its Health and Wellness committee. These funds should be used to leverage other financial resources available from ecumenical, state, federal and national agencies in the fight against this and other cancers.

Our members must to take to the streets, write letters to their political representatives, and lobby our legislatures for greater financing for Community Education and Engagement concerning Prostate Cancer.

Early detection of prostate cancer through the availability of PSA testing (prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing is critical but there is much more that can be done.

A group of churches in a city can organize for the Clinical Research professor from the nearest Historically Black Colleges and Universities to come in and share on the many other prostate cancer treatments and options including: active surveillance, surgery, radiation therapy, hormone therapy, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, and ultrasound. Some clinical studies trials are evaluating new treatments such as cryosurgery and Focal Laser Ablation and others are researching new drugs, different combinations of treatments, and new approaches to radiation therapy or surgery.

The Black Church can also play a critical role in supporting families living with prostate cancer. The whole family is impacted by prostate cancer. The Black Church has historically come to the aid of Black communities at times of risk and vulnerability. In an age of skepticism about the usefulness of black religious institutions a prostate cancer initiative may open new avenues for collaboration with the local community.

## OPINION

# sankofa

Looking Back to Move Forward

## CULTURAL GIFTS FROM AFRICA ENDURE

Written by, Dr. Delores Smith

Submitted by, Rev. Dr. Sarah Fleming

It has been traditional during Black History Month to concentrate on the many contributions of Afro-Americans. These contributions are noteworthy and should be emphasized as often as possible. However, it would be erroneous to avoid highlighting the original culture which gave Afro-Americans their beginning.

Therefore, in a series of writings, I and a colleague of mine at Youngstown State University will be sharing some of the glorious past of Alkebu-lan (meaning Motherland and commonly referred to as Africa), and how the retention of its culture by Afro-Americans has continued to contribute to the progress of the world.

The world for the most part, has accepted the findings of Dr. Leaky, noting that the earliest civilization of man started around the Upper Nile, and that great kingdom emerged from this beginning. With this in mind, I’d like to invite you on a trip down the Nile, exploring the cultures created and the developments which still remain a wonder to man.

Beginning with Ethiopia, also known as Kush or Nubia, you enter (in ancient times) a region of great farms and herds of cattle. The landscape is so beautiful that it is often referred to as being the Garden of Eden, with its sturdy forest, artistic gardens and orderly civilization. It is the kingdom once ruled by Solomon along with his most respected Nubian queen, Sheba. It was peaceful land and ideal to be credited with being the oldest Christian nation in the world.

The people of Ethiopia were known for caravans and not unlike our children of today, many of the young yearned to explore

their surrounding environments. Consequently, many of them would venture into other regions, always following the river, cultivating the lands and incorporating the cultures found.

The developed skills of the Nubians were in farming, irrigation and herding. Taking them skills into new areas, the people branched into other parts of Alkebu-lan and eventually settled in Egypt. The close proximity to Greece, Italy and Saudi Arabia soon gave Egypt the reputation of being the melting pot of cultures. Once in Egypt, all citizens became Egyptians. Although Egypt was known for its diverse ethnicity, the dominant culture was Nubian. In fact the longest rule of Egypt was by Nubian monarchs, Ramses II ruled for 66 years with his most beautiful Queen Nafatari.

During the reign of these Nubian monarchs, some of the world’s most renowned contribution were made. To explore just a few:

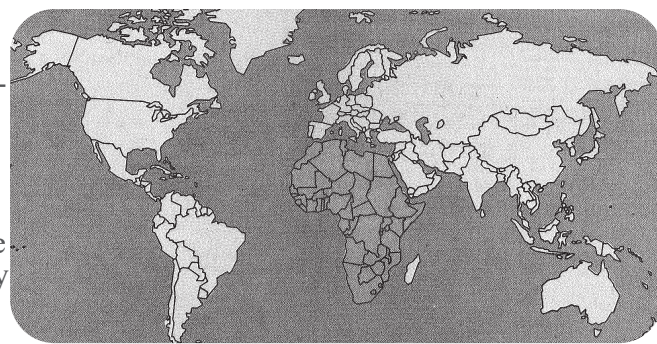
- 1. The introduction of the first solar calendar ever made by man, having 365 1/4 days to the year and three seasons. Each season consisted of four months... It was introduced by the indigenous Africans of Kush (Ethiopia) and Sais Egypt) in 4100B.C.E. (Before Common Era).
- 2. The pyramid age, 2780-2270 B.C.E. gave the world the most ancient of the Pyramids and was built by Pharaoh Zozer with Imhotep being the chief architect.
- 3. Imhotep of Egypt (a very dark Nubian), known to the ancients as “The God of Medicine,” was the first recorded great medical man (physician) known to mankind and was prime minister during 2300 B.C.E.
- 4. Queen Hatshepsut, ruled Egypt during 1555 B.C. E. and was known the world over during her lifetime as one of Egypt’s most efficient monarchs. It is further acknowledged that she was Egypt’s greatest administrator and the builder of the world’s first terraced structure.

- 5. In 600 B.C.E. indigenous Africans sailed around the entire continent of Alkebu-lan. The name of the African navigator was Hano.
- 6. In 525 B.C.E. Darius I founded and introduced the system of "money exchange" to Egypt and the indigenous Africans of the Nile Valley.
- 7. During the well-known reign of Amen-hotep (Akhenaton, Ikhnaton), the concept of the Trinitarian God was introduced. He called it the "virtues" or the "God in Three Virtues." It was also during this period that the indigenous Africans of the Nile valley (Egyptians and Cushites) developed a Planned Parenthood "Fertility control Recipe." It is a prescription for a medicated tampon designed to prevent pregnancy.

These contributions are not commonly known to modern man and can be further explored in a series of texts noted below.

Education was a high priority of the black man of the Nile as can be witnessed by the many universities established during the dynasties of Before Common era. It was the custom that at the age of 7, males born to royalty were put into the university to study the Egyptian Mystery System (Fraternal Brotherhood), where

they did their studies and research in philosophy medicine, astronomy, and the sciences. Should these males determine to be priest, they were required to remain in the university for 40 years.



While this highly civilized culture was expanding, there was still movement across the continent of Alkebu-lan where other glorious kingdoms were founded.

Should you wish to expand your knowledge further, I suggest the following reading list:

Ben Yosef Jochannan "Black Man of the Nile and His Family," Diop, Cheikh-Anta. "The African Origin of Civilization." DeGraft-Johnson, J.C. "African Glory." London, 1954.

## OBITUARIES

# Presiding Elder Adolphus Addison Young, Jr.

## July 13, 1947 – July 29, 2023



Adolphus Addison Young, Jr., age 76 of Roanoke, Virginia transitioned this life for Eternity on Saturday, July 29, 2023, of complications of his twelve-year Liver Transplant at the University of Virginia Medical Center, in Charlottesville Virginia. He was born on July 13, 1947 in Bluefield, WV. He is the son of the late Adolphus Addison Young, Sr. and JANE MILDRED WOODY-YOUNG

He received his early schooling through the McDowell County School System where he was a 1965 Graduate of Kimball High School, Kimball, WV. He received his bachelor's degree from Bluefield State University where he studied Business Administration. He was a Veteran of the United States Army serving in the Vietnam War in Thailand. He was employed 42 years with the State of WV where he retired as the Branch Manager and Counselor with the State Vocational Rehabilitation Center in Welch, WV.

He was a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church where he was an Ordained Elder and served as a Pastor for over 28 years in the Bluefield District. He pastored Kyles' Chapel, Elbert, WV, Lebanon Chapel, Lebanon Virginia, Clinton Chapel Jenkinjones, WV, Tynes Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church Rocky Gap, Virginia and First AME Zion Church, Bluefield, West Virginia.

Adolphus was appointed Presiding Elder of the Bluefield District by the late Bishop Milton Alexander Williams in September 2002. He was appointed the Administrative Elder of the East TN and Virginia Conference by Bishop Williams and has served the East TN & Virginia Conference for 23 years under Bishops Warren M. Brown, Richard Keith Thompson, and W. Darin Moore. He has served as the Conference Treasurer for the past 16 years. He served on numerous boards within the Conference.

Adolphus was a Life Member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

He was the former Alpha Phi Alpha State Director Of WV. He was the Chapter

Secretary of Alpha Zeta Lambda for over 35 years.

He was a Life member of Kimball High School Alumni Association and Bluefield State University Alumni Association He was an avid Historian with a great Love of Black History and the History of his Beloved McDowell County.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one (1) sister Dorothy Young-Bigelow. He is survived by his beloved and devoted wife, Reverend Justina Young of 48 years of the home. He has one son, "his namesake" Reverend Adolphus A. (Terry) Young, III of Allentown, Pennsylvania.

He has four sisters, Clovia Thompson, Fort Washington, Maryland, Vondelere (Harold) Scott, Keystone, WV, Lisa L. (Eugene) Carrington, Macon, Georgia, Carlotta Mildred Young, and Samuel H. Young, Keystone, WV.

He has seven (9) Godchildren. "His first Son and Nephew" Harold Scott, Jr., David A. Patterson, Kendra M. Calloway, Alicia D. Weaver, Tiffany A. Martin, Charlene N. French, James C. Calloway, Megan Y Hill, and Jennifer N Hill. His special Kids: Ashley J. Charles, E-Wray Charles, and Eric A. Smith.

He has a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins. Mother-in-law – Elizabeth O. Gresby and Special Mothers-in-love, Reverend Lula G. Williams & Family and Mrs. Georgia Thompson. Special Friends & Family - Samuel & Tanya English, Hazel Patterson, William and Mary Calloway, Sharon & Arthur Brooks, Judy & Larry Mulkey, James and Leslie Matthews, Bernadine Tucker, Lucille & Freddie Thompson, M. Luther & Diane Hill, Patricia Montgomery, Melvin & Josephine Perrow, and Reverend Van Scott

Homegoing Services for Adolphus Addison Young, Jr. will be Saturday, August 5, 2023, at Greater Mt. Zion Pentecostal Church, 104 Park Street, Bluefield West Virginia. The Viewing and Omega Service is scheduled from 10 am -11 am. The Celebration of Life service is scheduled for 11:00 am. Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church, Officiating.

Entombment will follow at the Restlawn Memorial Garden, Bluefield, WV. The Cravens-Shires Funeral Home Bluewell WV is in charge of arrangements.

# Rev. Dr. Barbara Ann LaToison

## January 21, 1955 - July 23, 2023

It is with heavy hearts and profound sadness that we bid farewell to Rev. Dr. Barbara Ann LaToison. On July 23, 2023, the world lost a remarkable woman while heaven rejoices to receive a faithful, loving, and loyal servant of Christ. The beloved wife, mother, preacher, and teacher lived 68 years.

Barbara was reared in the small town of Wilmot, Arkansas. She was raised to love the Lord with all her heart and practiced her faith at John Wesley African

Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. She accepted Jesus as her Savior at the age of 12 and served fervently as a Sunday School superintendent and singing in the choir. At fifteen, she served as the church's delegate to the Arkansas Annual Conference and did so every year until she was 22 years old. At 18, she was assigned by the Bishop to be the District Director of Youth, where she offered leadership and coordination of youth ministry for 8 churches. At 21, she was elected by the Arkansas Annual Conference to serve as its delegate to the General Conference, where she served on the Secretariat, and Budget

and Apportionment Committee as well as the Resolutions Committee.

Barbara studied at the University of Arkansas at Monticello in the area of Speech Communication and Psychology. She not only joined Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, but was a charter member that helped to begin the legacy of that sorority at UAM. Barbara's love for words, language, and presentation landed her a spot on the debate team as well as other social groups the university had to offer. While in college, she began a journey of motherhood that changed her life when her first child, Taryne Sherida Metcalf came into the world. On May 16, 1981, Barbara Ann Metcalf wed Abelardo "A.J." LaToison and had Silvanus Joseph LaToison, Ruth Dorothy LaToison, and Deborah Aida LaToison.

Barbara was ordained an elder in The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and she and her husband founded Holy Ghost A.M.E. Zion Church in Houston, TX. Barbara also served as the proud pastor of Walls Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Houston, St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Church in Dallas, TX, and Grace Temple A.M.E. Zion Church in Little Rock, AR. At her passing, she was the pastor of Alleyne A.M.E. Zion Church in Alexandria, VA.

Reverend Dr. Barbara Ann LaToison found great purpose in her ministry as a presiding elder. She served as Presiding Elder of the Houston-San Antonio, Dallas-Fort Worth, and the Little Rock-Hot Springs Districts. The church eventually honored her service by electing her as the 6th President of the Presiding Elder's Council, where she served for eight years. Barbara exemplified a reverence for God and a passion for God's people. Her churches, districts, and the Presiding Elder's Council made progress as she provided leadership with three ideas in mind: Transformation, Innovation, and Expansion.

Barbara was a true scholar demonstrating her academic prowess by com-



pleting her master's degree in Pastoral Counseling at Houston Graduate School of Theology and completing her Doctor of Ministry from Southern Reformed College & Seminary in Houston, TX. While matriculating at Houston Graduate School of Theology, she also acted as a faculty member for multicultural counseling and as the Assistant Director of library services. At 66, Barbara completed her chaplaincy certification at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. While pastoring and serving as a presiding elder, she was the Administrative Staff Chaplain and was promoted to

Chief Chaplain Resident. One of Barbara's distinct joys in ministry and vocation was providing pastoral care and counseling to hundreds of people who were drawn to her expertise.

The late Rev. Dr. Barbara A. LaToison was preceded in death by her mother, Clote Lewis; her father, John T. Metcalf; her special aunt with whom she shares a name, Barbara Ann Metcalf; and several siblings. Barbara leaves behind her husband, Abelardo J. LaToison; their 6 children Jacques Marquis LaToison, Yaphet Abelard LaToison I, Taryne Sherida Dismuke, Silvanus Joseph LaToison, Ruth Dorothy LaToison Ifill, and Deborah Aida LaToison; their 15 grandchildren David Jamar Ridley Neal, Jacqueline Marquette LaToison, Jacques Marquis LaToison II, Uzziah Amadeo LaToison, Lisa Denise LaToison II, Jasmine Sierra Clark, Keith Darden Clark III, Cyrus Costello Clark, Amaya Alexi LaToison, Yaphet Abelard LaToison II, Alexeev Xavier Dismuke, Micayah Annalise LaToison Ifill, London Asad LaToison Ifill, Zhanelle Sade Paige, Santiago Andres LaToison Mendoza; 11 great-grandchildren; and a whole host of family and loved ones across the world.

Please continue to keep the La Toison Family in your prayers.

## Presiding Elder Charles A. Hawkins

January 25, 1967 – April 24, 2022



Presiding Elder Charles A. Hawkins was born on January 25, 1967, in Welch, WV, to Deacon Charles L. "Tom" Hawkins, Jr. and Presiding Elder Doretha Scales Hawkins. Charles was the youngest and only son of five children. He answered God's final trumpet call on April 24, 2022, in Lexington, Kentucky.

Charles was educated in the West Virginia Public School System and furthered his education at The Washington Business School for Professional Development. He later studied at the Lomax Bible Institute in Arlington, VA, and completed

the course in 2003 with a degree in Biblical Studies. Charles continued his studies yearly through the Leadership Training Institute within the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District.

He always had a love for music and played tuba and bass drums in the high school band. He was gifted with natural musical talent and taught himself to play the keyboard and piano. Charles joined Clinton Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Jenkinjones, WV, at an early age and later became the Minister of Music.

After graduating in June of 1985, Elder Hawkins moved to Temple Hills, MD, and continued his musical interest by playing the keyboard for several local R&B bands and performing in several Gospel stage plays. He found employment with Swankin and Turner Law Firm in Washington, DC, until he became a full-time pastor. Elder Hawkins preached his initial sermon on the 3rd Sunday of September 1988 at Foggie A.M.E. Zion Church in Marlow Heights, MD. On November 27, 1993, he married his soulmate, Mrs. Lydia Ford Hawkins.

Charles worked and served in many capacities of the church, starting in the junior choir, junior usher board, choir director, local preacher, Pastor, and Presiding Elder. At his passing, he was the Presiding Elder of the Bristol District

within the East Tennessee and Virginia Conference and Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District and president of the Greater Kingsport Ministerial Alliance.

Elder Hawkins' Ministerial History is as follows: Served as Pastor at the following churches; Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church - Kingsport, TN (current), Hood Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church - Bristol, VA, Jones Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church - Greenville, TN. As Presiding Elder of the Bristol District, he oversaw the following churches: Bethel A.M.E. Zion, Browns Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Harris Anderson A.M.E. Zion, Hood Memorial A.M.E. Zion, Jones Memorial A.M.E. Zion, Robinson Memorial A.M.E. Zion, and Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Church.

Elder Hawkins preached in many states and churches within various denominations during his ministry, understanding that there is only one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. He conducted several services, workshops, and revivals where lives were changed and souls were blessed. He was a loving and dedicated son, brother, husband, father, musician, preacher, Pastor, mentor, and friend. Many, including other pastors and members outside of his congregation, would say that Elder Hawkins was THEIR Pastor! He had an incredible love for people and ministry with a humble servant's heart and a considerate, approachable, and compassionate demeanor.

Charles was preceded in death by his parents; mother-in-law, Mrs. Ruth Ford; sisters, Bishop Camille (Kay) Williams and Charlene (Candy) Hairston; niece, Tia Hairston; and nephews, Delshone Ross and Kevin Hairston.

In addition to his wife, Presiding Elder Hawkins is survived by his children, Stephanie (Shawn) Banks of NC, Hayden Thompson of MD, Ursula Huff, Quindalyn Perry, Payton Thompson, and Scott Huff, all of TN; grandchildren who were "Pop Pop's sweet babies and big guys," Zay, Jalaunis, Duvale, and Kingzley all of NC, and Ariel, Julian, and Amaya all of TN; sisters, Lynda Walker (Welford, deceased) Johnson and Marilyn (Ronald) Kennedy all of MD; sisters-in-law, Linda (William, deceased) Alvarez, Lera (Fred, deceased) Williams, and Lisa Ford, all of NYC, and Ruth (Mack) Handy of VA; brothers-in-law, Keith Hairston Sr. and Yealdo Ford of NC, Francisco Ford of NYC, Raphael (Brenda) Ford of MD, and Fernando (Sarah) Ford of NYC; and special brother, Bishop Frederick (Aiesha) Brown of NC; along with a host of godchildren, nieces, nephews, other relatives, colleagues, and friends.

Presiding Elder Hawkins truly lived his motto of "I want to do the best I can, to do the best I can for the Master!"



## THE INAUGURATION OF OUR 13TH PRESIDENT SEPTEMBER 20-24, 2023

### DR. ANTHONY J. DAVIS

Join us in welcoming Livingstone  
College's 13th president, Dr.  
Anthony J. Davis,  
Wednesday, Sept. 20, through  
Sunday, Sept. 24, 2023.



### Scheduled to appear:



Bishop  
William Barber



Dr. Johnnetta Cole



Malik Yoba



Jeffrey Osborne



Brian Courtney  
Wilson



Bishop  
W. Darin Moore

#### September 20, 2023

##### STEM Engagement Day

Featured Speaker Justin Shaifer  
10:00 a.m., Varick Auditorium

#### September 21, 2023

##### Community Outreach Day Foster Care Event

10:00 a.m., Varick Auditorium

##### Panel Discussion

Followed by Historic Front Lawn Fellowship

#### September 22, 2023 (Inauguration Day)

##### Investiture Ceremony

10:00 a.m., Varick Auditorium

##### Inaugural Ball

6:00 p.m., City Club Gibson Mill  
Concord North Carolina

#### September 23, 2023

##### Health and Wellness Event

Sponsored by our First Lady, Dr. Jacqueline Davis  
11:00 a.m., School of Hospitality and Culinary Arts

##### Golf Tournament

1300 Lake Wright Road, China Grove, NC 28023

#### September 24, 2023

##### Gospel and Worship Brunch

10:00 a.m., School of Hospitality and Culinary Arts

President **13**

For more information, please visit  
[Livingstone.edu/presidential-inauguration/](http://Livingstone.edu/presidential-inauguration/)