

THE STAR OF ZION


NOV 2023 | VOL 147 NO. 11 | STAROFZION.ORG | THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH



Thankful



And Blessed!



THE STAR OF ZION

Official Voice of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

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

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


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

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


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


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

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



Accelerating Communication About The Freedom Church





★ The Star of Zion ★

<p>COMMUNICATIONS BOARD</p> <p>Chairman: Bishop George D. Crenshaw</p> <p>First Vice Chairman: Bishop Brian R. Thompson, Sr.</p> <p>Second Vice Chairman: Bishop George E. Battle, Jr.</p> <p>Third Vice Chairperson (Layperson): Ms. Marilyn Graham</p>	<p>Editor in Chief Mr. Darin Kent <i>Editor@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>Zion Spotlight Editor Mrs. Debra Chappelle-Polk <i>ZionSpotlight@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>World Politics Editor Rev. Ronald Nathan <i>WorldPolitics@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>Health and Wellness Editor Mr. Daman De Leon <i>Health_Wellness@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>Social Justice Editor Rev. Dr. Allison Lee <i>SocialJustice@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>Entertainment & The Arts Editor Rev. Dierdre' R. Parker-Rowson <i>Entertainment_Arts@StarofZion.org</i></p> <p>Financial Freedom Editor Dr. Dana Stilley <i>FinancialFreedom@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>Lifestyle Editor Ms. Angel Eason <i>Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>Star of Zion Office 704-688-2577 <i>Office@StarofZion.org</i></p> <p>Subscriptions Department 704-688-2561 <i>Subscribe@StarOfZion.org</i></p> <p>SUBSCRIPTION RATES One Year - \$38.00 Single Copy - \$4.00 Bundle (50 Copies): \$100.00</p>
---	--

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

December 2023 Issue.....	November 15, 2023
January 2024 Issue.....	December 15, 2023
February 2024 Issue.....	January 15, 2024
March 2024 Issue.....	February 15, 2024
April 2024 Issue.....	March 15, 2024

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGES

03-18

ZION SPOTLIGHT

.....

19-22

EDUCATION

.....

24

SOCIAL JUSTICE

.....

24-25

ENTERTAINMENT & THE ARTS

.....

26-28

HEALTH & WELLNESS

.....

28

LIFESTYLE

.....

30-31

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

.....

32-33

WORLD POLITICS

.....

34

OBITUARIES

.....

35

COMEDY CORNER

.....

When Geese Take Flight

By Adlee Hodges
Photo by Gary Bendig on Unsplash

Have you ever paid attention to the behavior of birds? Well, on a cool, crisp day in the early Fall several years ago, I took time to observe a gaggle of geese who had stopped at a wetland area to rest, feed, and water themselves.

On this particular morning, I was on my daily walk around the park when I noticed that a group of geese had gathered across the street. Standing at two trees near the road several yards from the group were two geese, which I imagine were the guards or centurions—whose job was to warn the group of any impending danger.



So, there they stood at attention. One at a tree to the south and the other at a tree to the north, though both trees were in very close proximity to each other. Great strategy, I thought. Each goose was strategically positioned to observe movement coming toward them in either direction. My curiosity got the best of me, and I crossed the street to observe, but I stood a good distance from the guards. They saw me, and perhaps in their minds, I was an enemy—possibly I was a bit too close for comfort. Within a minute or two of my standing in my spot, one of the guards made a sound, and both casually turned and walked toward the group. As they got closer to the group, I noticed all of the geese beginning to quietly and calmly move about, and they quickly arranged themselves into some noticeable order. I wondered what would happen next.

There was a leader out front who honked several times, and the assembly continued. Then, lo and behold, the geese took flight in a PERFECT V-FORMATION. It was a splendid sight to see. It was, in fact, magnificent. I watched them soar into the sky as their wings seemed to dance on the waves of the wind. They banked to the left, and after a while, they banked to the right, and then they were off into the great beyond. Their movement was like a very gracefully choreographed dance with the wind. I thought this was one of the most majestic wonders of nature. It was, by far, one of the most beautiful sights I had ever seen—the geese taking flight.

Such organization, such precision, such obedience. Each goose knew its position in the formation. I wondered--how did they know? Who assigned them their spot? Who assigned the task of the guard to the two geese? How did the guards know what to do and when to do it? How was the leader selected? Did they have to earn that spot by proving their dominance in the group? The questions in my mind were endless.

I hoped that I would have had an opportunity to observe the geese in the exact location the following year, but much to my chagrin, that would never happen because the university nearby built a parking lot for students where the geese had probably been coming for centuries. What a pity they will have to find another suitable location to rest, water, and feed themselves as they migrate south for winter.

Maybe now, in another place at another time, I will get to experience the majesty of geese taking flight.

Note: Adlee is an active Shaw Temple A.M.E. Zion Church member in Smyrna, Georgia. The above observance took place and was written in September 2006 in Gary, Indiana, where she was a member of St. Luke A.M.E. Zion Church.



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

Thanksgiving



Walking (1969) By Charles Alston

By Debra Chappelle-Polk
Photo by Charles Alston Image From The Natl. African American Museum Of History

New York, NY - In October 1863, months after signing the Emancipation Proclamation earlier in the year, President Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving an official holiday. Before the Emancipation, Thanksgiving was when slaves often tried to escape due to the end of the crop season. However, with the new law, Thanksgiving became a time when newly freed Blacks could unite. For many in the Black community, Thanksgiving began as a church-based celebration wherein pastors often preached about our struggles, hopes, fears, and triumphs.

On November 30, 1876, Rev. Benjamin W. Arnett*, a well-known minister at Urbana, Ohio's St. Paul A.M.E. Church, gave a stirring sermon that addressed the importance of Thanksgiving but also called on America to treat its free Black citizens with fairness and dignity in the coming years.

“And in America, the battlefield of modern thought, we can trace the footprints of the one and the tracks of the other. So let us use all of our available forces, and especially our young men, and throw them into the conflict of the Right against the Wrong. Then let the grand Centennial Thanksgiving song be heard and sung in every house of God; and in every home may thanksgiving sounds be heard, for our race has been emancipated, enfranchised and are now educating, and have the gospel preached to them!”

The tradition continues today. On “Thanksgiving Sunday,” Black ministers are still preaching sermons about our struggles, our hopes, our fears, and our triumphs. Black ministers preach sermons about the goodness of God and ask congregants to share the bountifulness of God with others.

Sunday School children perform and, in some cases, write skits about what Thanksgiving means to them. Many churches serve dinner to members and community residents on Thanksgiving Day.

I grew up in building 60 at the Abraham Lincoln Housing Projects in Harlem, New York City. Naming housing projects after dead presidents was popular in the 50s -- Jefferson, Wilson, and Taft, to name a few. On Thanksgiving morning, the kids in building 60 would run up and down the steps, floor to floor, and pop in for an early morning sweet treat at the Jones' in apartment 9A and sample the pan drippings from Miss Mary's baked ham in apartment 7F. It was a 14-story “high-rise,” and we made the rounds. Of course, we were admonished to save some room for dinner. It was an elevated building, but it was more fun racing up and down the stairs. And, back in the day, it was safe to race up and down the stairs. In fact, on Thanksgiving, everyone left their doors open, and you could smell the aroma of sweet potato and apple pie wafting throughout the entire building. Around 5 o'clock, after romping around with my friends, I sat down at the dining table in my parents' apartment to eat Thanksgiving dinner with the grown-ups.

I don't live in the Lincoln Projects anymore, and can't race up and down the steps anymore, but I still smile when I think of those times and thank God for another day to say thanks.

**Arnett was an active civil rights proponent and a Pennsylvania State Equal Rights League member. He was also a member of the National Convention of Colored Men, and in 1872, he became the first Black man to serve as a foreman for an all-white jury. Reference: Like BlackAmericaWeb.com on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram*



National Acolyte Festival: Another Weekend of Glory

By The Star of Zion

The Bishop Stephen Gill Spottwood Acolytes of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (BSGSAAMEZC), under the dynamic, visionary leadership of the Rev. Dr. R.J. Chandler Sr., is exceeding expectations! With Mr. Robert Goodman (Chair of the National Acolyte Festival Committee) and the Acolyte Task Force, Dr. Chandler led the team in the planning and execution of the National Acolyte Festival. In 2021, Zion spoke loudly at the 51st Session of the General Conference when she unanimously ratified GC51-28-2020 (To include the Acolyte Installation Ritual in the Book of Discipline), GC51-R62-2020 (To establish the Acolytes of the AME Zion Church under the authority of the Christian Education Department) and GC51-R63-2020 (To establish the observance of Acolyte Sunday on any Sunday at the discretion of the local church). Since then, the BSGSAAMEZC has had a series of Acolyte Virtual Conferences, Virtual Fireside Chats with the Bishops, and Leadership Meetings, just to name a few. Dr. Chandler has reorganized this traditional juvenile ministry of service and breathed new life into it across Zion, and by God's grace, he is on fire for His glory!

With excitement, exuberance, and passionate energy, young people between the ages of eight and 21 traveled as far as Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to Buffalo, NY, to attend the National Acolyte Festival in Washington, DC. The festival boasted 158 registrants, where over 80 people were acolytes. Through sponsors, in-kind donations, and offerings, over \$40,000 was raised to pay for meals, transportation, and lodging at the four-star Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center.



MEZC participated in this ecumenical worship experience.

To add to this historic day, 90 pre-registered guests left the National Cathedral early to attend a special tour of the White House. Dr. Chandler successfully arranged this once-in-a-lifetime experience for our young people. There, Bishop Eric Leake led the youth, parents, and the Star of Zion through the halls of Greek Revivalism and Victorian architecture. We experienced the Red and Blue Rooms and learned about the rich history of our nation. For many, this was the first time that we visited the White House, and we will never forget that Dr. Chandler made this dream a reality for our young people. A few of our youth said that they could see themselves living in the White House as President of the United States.



On Friday, October 6, the acolyte leaders were tremendously blessed by the music ministry of the Voices of Freedom of Freedom Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Rev. Tyquan Alston, and the St. Paul AME Zion Church and the Body of Evidence Go-Go Band. Each psalmist sings under the anointing of God. The Lord moved mightily at the Union Wesley AME Zion Church, where the Rev. Dr. Brian S. Relford is the pastor. Through the efforts of this powerful worship experience, many young people rededicated their lives to Christ.

On Saturday, October 7, Dr. Chandler met with the acolyte delegation in the lobby of the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center to provide direction, explain the itinerary, and answer questions. Then, he led in prayer. Next, the acolytes and their families boarded a 55-passenger luxury bus and 15-passenger vans provided by Union Wesley and Galbraith AME Zion Churches to go to the National Cathedral. Proudly, the National Cathedral announced that the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church had the largest delegation out of over 700 Acolytes throughout the nation. Zion was well represented as BSGSAA-

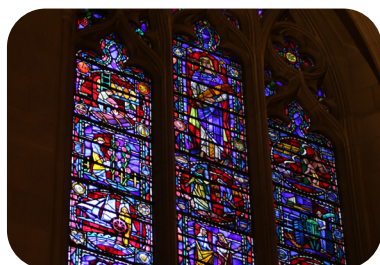


Immediately following the White House Tour, the entire Acolyte delegation converged at the African American Museum, where people learned about their rich heritage and history. This educational experience is memorable. Later that evening, the acolytes attended the first "Zion Excellence" Gala at Union Wesley AME Zion Church. Young people dressed up in beautiful gowns and suits as they attended this high-class affair. The Rt. Rev. Eric Leake, looking debonair in his tuxedo, preached powerfully and practically! His inspirational message was well received by all. The Acolyte Task Force honored the St. Luke AME Zion Church of Buffalo, NY, where the Rev. Kevin Demar Coakley is the Presiding Elder and Pastor. As a result of their community service, they were awarded \$1000.00 to fund and support their Acolyte ministry.



On Sunday, the BSGSAAMEZC participated in Sunday School and worship at the John Wesley AME Zion Church Page, where the Rev. Dr. Christopher Zacharias is the pastor. The Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore taught and preached under the anointing! His message titled, "God Choose You," electrified the congregation and set the church on fire! He installed 50 acolytes and called each of them by name as he shook their right hand and lifted them to their feet from kneeling at the chancel rail. Afterward, Bishop Moore dedicated the Acolyte Memorial, where the Acolytes honored the late Bishop Spottswood, Rev. Dr. Kathryn G. Brown (Former General Secretary of Christian Education), Rev. Adrienne Newton (Chief Acolyte), and Mr. Gregory Carey.

This weekend was a mixture of high and low worship experiences. The eclecticism fosters an environment of praise and worship without pretense. In any church, Acolytes follow the lead of the Pastor, whether in robes or not, but they must be uniform. Acolytes are not to be utilized only in high worship and liturgy but in foot-stomping charismatic experiences. There is a place for our young people in various forms of worship. Zion history has been made, and the Star of Zion looks forward to the next initiative. To God be the glory!!!



THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

THE BISHOP STEPHEN GILL SPOTTSWOOD ACOLYTES OF THE AME ZION CHURCH

DONATION

\$20

\$CEDofAMEZion

Givelify



VIRTUAL

NOV. 12

6:00PM



BODY OF EVIDENCE



REV. TYQUAN ALSTON

SUNDAY NIGHT

turn up/glow up GOSPEL GO-GO CONCERT

SPECIAL GUESTS: Freedom Temple AME Zion Church



Union Wesley AME Zion Church
1860 MICHIGAN AVE NE, WASHINGTON, DC 20018
Rev. Dr. Brian S. Relford, Pastor



Facebook Platforms: SOZ, Acolytes, Pastor RJ Chandler, CED

Columbus Day Weekend 2023

NATIONAL ACOLYTE Festival

Washington, D.C.

Thank you to our sponsors



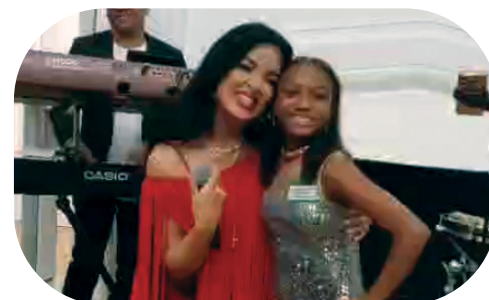
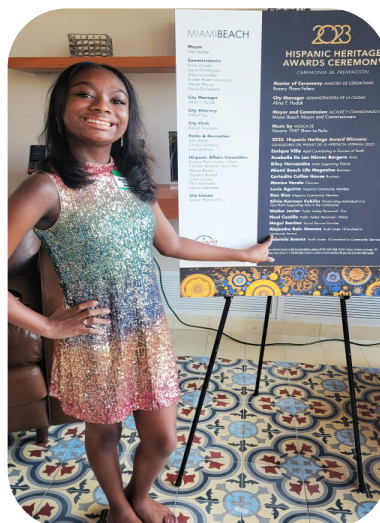
5th Generation Zionite Youngest Recipient In History To Be Honored By The City Of Miami Beach, Hispanic Affairs Committee

By Teneramie C. Jiménez
Miami Beach, FL

A hearty congratulations to 6th grader Alejandra Rain Jiménez, who was baptized in the AME Zion church, continuing the legacy of her family's roots in Zion. Her great-great-grandfather was a preacher in the AME Zion church in the late 1800s, making her the 5th generation in Zion.

Alejandra Rain Jiménez, age 11, is the youngest in history to be honored by the City of Miami Beach, receiving the 2023 Hispanic Heritage Award for Community Service in the Youth under the age of 18 category. This award honors individuals of Hispanic origin who live in Miami Beach and make a positive impact with a record of outstanding service and/or achievement.

Alejandra and other award recipients, including an Emmy-Award-winning News Anchor, business owners, artists, educators, public safety personnel, and philanthropists, were honored during Hispanic Heritage Month in Miami Beach, Florida.



 Saint Paul School of Theology

Is God Calling You for More?

Answer the call with a Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree at Saint Paul School of Theology. Our on-campus, online and hybrid learning program prepares you for a life of leadership and service in an ever-changing world.

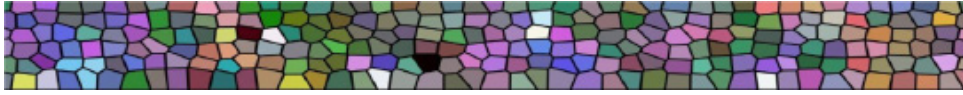
Discover More!



913-253-5084
spst.edu



The Mosaic of the 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference



By LaVerna Hargrove, Cape Fear Conference Reporter

The 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference was held October 12-14, 2023, hosted by St. Luke A.M.E. Zion Church, Wilmington, NC, pastored by Reverend Dr. Jermaine Armour. Reverend Dr. Alexander Jones was the host Presiding Elder. The 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference compares to a mosaic work of art. A mosaic is composed of finely crafted components with specific functions, space, and hues used to create a beautiful picture or convey a message. In this case, the components are committees and ministries. The purpose of an annual conference is to inspire, motivate, instruct, and report the state or condition of the churches and ministries that comprise the conference. The 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference was held in the 1200-seat venue of Macedonia Baptist Church, 4925 New Centre Drive, Wilmington, NC.

The Cape Fear Conference is comprised of the Wilmington District, led by Reverend Dr. Alexander Jones, Presiding Elder; the Lumberton District, led by Reverend Dr. Terry L. Jones, Presiding Elder; the Wilson District, led by Reverend Dr. Michael Bell, Presiding Elder; and the Goldsboro District, led by Reverend Dr. Andrew D. Brown, Presiding Elder.



It is the tradition of the Cape Fear Conference that the annual conference is hosted by a church on one of the four districts in rotation. The planning of this year's annual conference began when Reverend Jermaine Armour, pastor of St. Luke, volunteered to be this year's host. Volunteers were asked a year in advance to redesign their calendars to take three days of vacation or leave time from their jobs to meet the needs of the church. Plans to form the finely crafted and defined ministries for the Annual Conference began when the leaders of the different ministries expanded and tailored their work to this event. Having pastored St. Luke for ten years, this was Reverend Armour's third time hosting a Cape Fear Annual Conference, but he quickly admitted that there is no 'cookie cutter phone-it-in' plan. Plans for the Cape Fear Annual Conference must be tailored to the environment in which it takes place. This year, that environment included not only the theme and program given by Senior Bishop Kenneth Monroe, Presiding Prelate of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District, but it also included a venue that could accommodate the more than 300 registered attendees in a venue that seats over 1200, rising numbers of the new Covid 19 variant, an inflated economy, and a need for a secure environment. The fifty volunteers who stepped up to the challenges of hosting the 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference were galvanized under the mantra "**It's my pleasure (to serve).**" This mantra was based on the scriptural foundation of Genesis 11, where the people could accomplish anything as long as they spoke the same language. Rev. Armour said, "When they speak the same language, we can communicate the importance of convening a meeting that demonstrates radical hospitality and glorify God in excellence." The leaders of each of the committees formed the Annual Conference Operations Team chaired by Sister Pamela Evans. The committees were Security and Safety (Mr. Keith Williams), and Greeters Ministry (Janice Williams), Media (Nathaniel Young, Randall Emerson, and the Macedonia Baptist Church Media Team), Food (Lenora Young), Medical Team (Juanita Hansley), Maintenance (Men's Ministry of St. Luke and the Macedonia Baptist Church Team), Information and Vendors (Pamela Evans), Music Ministry (Reverend Celeste Navarro), and Usher Ministry (Trudy Evans). All St. Luke volunteers were dressed in black and white.



The **Security and Safety** for the conference became the responsibility of the Men's Ministry of St. Luke. These duties are certainly in the wheelhouse of Keith Williams, its president, as he is a retired detective and motorcycle police officer of the Indianapolis, Indiana Police Department with 25 years of experience. The 11 volunteers working in 4-hour shifts not only directed

traffic into and out of the venue, but they provided shuttle service to and from the Wingate Hotel and to the parking lot, secured the parking area and the building, and with the aid of the Macedonia Baptist Church Team sanitized the building following each of the three sessions. Helping to shoulder the tasks of safety for the conference was Tyrell Hansley, Vice President of St. Luke's Men's Ministry.



The Greeters Ministry, comprised of 15 volunteers led by Janet Williams, was on duty inside and outside of the venue to welcome the attendees to the 112th Annual Cape Fear Conference. They set the tone for this conference with their 'downhome' welcome to not only the church but to the city as well. The key to their success was flexibility. They were everywhere! They served in 4-hour shifts as runners, assistants to any other committee as well as greeters.

The Media Teams of Nathaniel Young, Randall Emerson, and the Macedonia Baptist Church, through the use of Zoom and social media platforms, made it possible for all of Zion to be present at this 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference. According to the team, the virtual reach was great! Virtual attendees sent chats, messages, or shared responses to the video team. There were many 'Hallelujahs' and 'Amen' responses to the sermons and teachings presented.

The Medic Ministry, led by Juanita Hansley, composed of 4 licensed nurses, was able to care for any urgent and emergency situation, from a splinter to CPR. The duties of these 4 nurses included having a presence in the congregation. The nurses were on duty 1 hour before the services began and concluded their shift a half hour after the services ended. They were easily identifiable by their blue T-shirts.

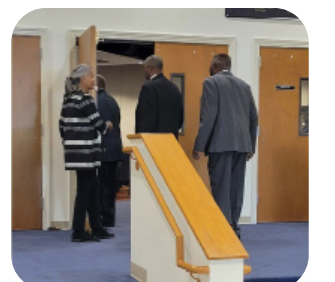
The Food Team was led by Lenore Young. The food was catered by Middle of the Isle Catering of Wilmington, NC, and served by a volunteer Food Team from St. Luke for breakfasts for the bishop, his guests, and cabinet and one luncheon for the entire conference.

The Information Table provided the answers to the 'How do I get to . . . ?' 'Where is the nearest . . . ?' 'Do you have . . . ?' 'And When will the Food Truck be here?' Questions are usually asked by out-of-town visitors. **The vendors** included the Varick Bookstore, Novant Health, The NC Department of Insurance, The American Red Cross, Weebo's and Cheesesteak, Etc. Food Trucks. The Bookstore made available resources for all departments of the church as well as the tools for pastoral care. Novant Health provided information on prostate cancer screening. Novant Health also provided an on-site ambulance. The NC Department of Insurance provided information on the changes to Medicare and how these changes may affect us. The American Red Cross was visible to ask for blood donations from African American donors as there is a great need in this area. They provided information on where blood could be donated and answered questions that may have prevented one from becoming a donor.

The 360 photo Booth was there to capture selfies or groups of friends who wanted to memorialize their presence at the 112th Annual Cape Fear Conference.

Weebo's and Cheesesteak, Etc. Food Trucks added to the variety of food available to the attendees without having to leave the conference area. Their menus included everything from a lite sandwich to ox tails with rice and gravy.

The music for this event was the responsibility of the Wilmington District Choir, with assistance from Mt. Pleasant A.M.E. Zion Church Choir, Riegelwood, NC (Lumberton District), and St. James A.M.E. Zion Church Choir, Goldsboro, NC (Goldsboro, District). The Wilmington District Choir was directed by Reverend Celeste Navarro. The Wilmington District Choir (a.k.a. the pre-



siding elder's choir) was organized in January 2023 by appointment of Rev. Navarro by Presiding Elder Dr. Alexander Jones. Reverend Navarro brings her more than 15 years of experience as the director of the Warner Temple Choir. The 27-member choir, composed of both lay and clergy, has had four appearances to date. Reverend Navarro draws from the catalog of songs that the choir members already know to create a comfort level from which she works in introducing new music to the group. She builds on the established leadership roles that the members have in their local church choirs. "The work of directing the choir is made easy by trusting the direction of the Holy Spirit; the excitement and joy in being a part of this new ministry; and the choir's trust in my ability to lead." The musicians are Reverend Juan Hankins, keyboardist; Rick Middleton, guitarist; Ronnie Williams and Brent Faison, percussionists.

This newly ordained energetic minister says that the choir is not an addition to her schedule; it is an extension of what she does. She is also the Director of Music at Warner Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, Wilmington, NC. She says the only requirement for membership in this choir is to be "a member of the Wilmington District and to be able to make a joyful noise." The introduction of the Wilmington District Youth Choir brought waves of praise as these 27 youths ranging in age from 6 to 20 sang: *We've Come To Lift Him Up* in three-part harmony. Reverend Navarro is anointed to work with adults and with youth.



The Usher's Ministry was led by the Cape Fear Conference Director of Ushers and Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District Director of Ushers, Trudy Evans. Trudy Evans is a veteran director of ushers as this is her 4th Cape Fear Annual Conference directorship and more than 30 years serving the local, district, and episcopal area in the Usher Ministry. The Usher Ministry was comprised of 14 ushers from across the Cape Fear Conference, both veterans and first-time annual conference ushers. The 'doorkeeper' duties of the ushers were expanded to giving directions to locations not only in the venue but in the city, extended time standing, guiding attendees to specified seating areas, and maintaining decorum in meetings. The ushers served on a rotating schedule, with some ushers serving as reserves.

The planning for this most successful Cape Fear Annual Conference started with a small group of leaders who brainstormed ideas; then, the teams were expanded to share the vision and assign tasks. The planning process was at times intense because not only was it necessary to have Plan A, but Plan B in case Plan A faltered and, in some instances, a Plan C to cover eventualities and details not covered in Plan A or B. Presiding Elder Jones served as a consultant to the Annual Conference Operations Team. The presidents of the ministries, teams, and as many volunteers as were available were given a walk-through of the venue one month prior to the Annual Conference. Their stations were set up the Wednesday before the Annual Conference began.

The presidents of each of the committees and ministries reported to the Chair of the Annual Conference Operations (ACO) their questions, comments, ideas, and needs to execute their portion of the plan; the chair communicated to the pastor issues as they arose. The ACO Chair and the pastor arrived at a solution with input from the committee or ministry president. The committee or ministry president communicated the solution or any changes to the members of the committee or ministry. The ACO Chair communicated any changes to the other committee and ministry presidents, and they, in turn, to their members. This allowed volunteers to serve in areas other than their primary area when necessary. Funding was handled by the Finance Chairperson for the Annual Conference.

Rev. Dr. Armour, while earning his Master of Arts in Christian Education and the Master of Divinity Degree at the Interdenominational Theological Center of Atlanta, Georgia, found his strength in Parish Administration, that is, using best practices to help congregations adapt to the systematic change model. This focuses the congregation on the why of what we do rather than on what we do. Dr. Armour credits this training as what served him well in planning and the successful execution of the 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference.

Into this organized and welcoming setting, Reverend Dr. Kenneth Monroe, Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church, Presiding Prelate of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District, and the South Atlantic Episcopal District, convened the 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference. On Thursday night, October 12, the Communion

Service was given. The Communion message by Reverend Maria Lacewell of Mt. Zion A.M.E. Zion Church, Elizabethtown, NC (Lumberton District) was from the scriptural foundation Matthew 26: 36-45; the message was entitled *It's All in the Cup*. Senior Bishop Kenneth Monroe, Presiding Prelate, and Bishop Eric Leake were the celebrant and Co-celebrant, respectively, for

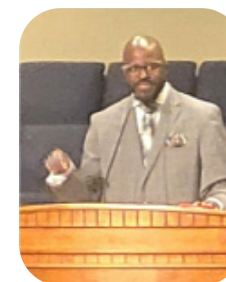
the Holy Communion. Following the Holy Communion Service, Reverend Dr. Kenneth Monroe declared the 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference in session. Reverend Dr. Eric Leake, Bishop of the Southwest Delta Episcopal District, served as the Associating Bishop.



Bishop Kenneth Monroe gave The Episcopal Address on Friday, October 13, centered on the last element of the quadrennial theme, *Securing Our Future*. Bishop Monroe gave cautions and precautions as to how we can Secure our Future individually and as a thriving church. He concluded with recommendations for transformative leadership of the church, which were received by the conference: Develop systematic plans to attract new members, conduct spiritual gift services, pilot congregational faith demonstrations to bring glory to God, be intentional about financial management, and begin an endowment fund for the church.



Bishop Monroe introduced the concept of the 'Visionary Moment' to the Cape Fear Annual Conference 8 years ago. This is a presentation on a topic that is instructive in addressing a current situation based on Biblical teaching. The presenter of the Visionary Moment was Reverend Dr. Jerret Fite, pastor of Robinson A.M.E. Zion Church, Cheraw, SC. And Chair of the Division of Religious Studies, Clinton College, Rock Hill,



1. The two-part presentation on **Securing Our Future: A Movement of the Holy Spirit** based on the first five chapters of the book of Acts, **In Search of the Holy Spirit** (part 1) and **Knowing What It Looks Like** (part2)

2. Friday Evening, Reverend Dr. Eric Leake, Presiding Prelate of the Southwest Delta Episcopal District, 107th bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church in the line of Succession, continuing the theme "**Securing Our Future**" gave the Annual Sermon, '**Pay Attention, Lest We Drift.**' The scriptural focus was Hebrews 2:1. Bishop Leake presented to the conference situations that can cause one to neglect the instructions we have heard in some way, shape, or form either by omission or by commission; therefore, we must practice what we have heard and with sharpened focus, much zeal, and determination keep our attention on the instructions we have heard about the truth of God's Word until our work is done.

During the session when reports were given, the Dean of Missionary Supervisors, Mrs. Shelia Monroe, introduced the theme of the WH&OMS new quadrennial, "Reaching the Masses in an Ever-Changing World: The Journey Continues": Health Care and Wellness, Equality and Justice, Leadership and Legacy, and Empathy and Compassion. She thanked the Cape Fear Conference for its untiring support spiritually, financially, and physically to the work of the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society. The missionary presidents of the conference presented gifts to Missionary Supervisor Shelia Monroe for her stalwart leadership of the WH and OMS. As the work of the WH and OMS is continuing to reach higher heights, the conference presented a donation to the family of Dahlia, a 10-month-old baby girl who just received a new heart on September 27, 2023, and is recovering with great vim, vigor, and vitality. The Walk for Dahlia was a project begun by Warner Temple of the Wilmington District to help raise awareness of the need for prayers and funds, as Dahlia needed a heart transplant. The response from all over the conference testifies that prayer can change things and to the glory of the God we serve.



The Cape Fear Conference welcomed three new preachers in full connection and admitted one on trial to the conference.

After electing 12 pastoral and 12 lay delegates to the General Conference to be held in July of 2024, making pastoral appointments to the 85 churches of the conference, and appointments to the four presiding elder positions, the mosaic of the 112th Cape Fear Annual Conference was declared adjourned until October 10-12, 2024, when it will be reconvened at St. James A.M.E. Zion Church, Goldsboro, NC. A beautiful mosaic was created, and all involved in its creation were blessed.

Presiding Elder A. Alfred Carson Guest Speaker at NY City District Board Leaders Banquet Conference

By Debra Chappelle-Polk
Zion Spotlight Editor
Photo by Milagros Cintron

New York, NY... It was damp and dreary outside on Saturday, September 23, 2023, but warm and festive inside at Mother A.M.E Zion Church as members and friends attended the 1st Candlelight Banquet recognizing Trustee and Steward Board Chairs from churches in the New York City District for their leadership.

The Banquet was hosted by members of the Stewardess Board, Mrs. Orris Upshaw Grimes, President, and members of the Women's Home & Overseas Missionary Society (WH&OMS), Mrs. Wendy C. Grimes Jones, Local President. The Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson, Presiding Elder of the New York City District, was the guest speaker.

The Honorees were Mr. Rufus Canty, Trustee Chair, and Mrs. Amelia Montgomery, Preacher's Steward, Mother Zion; Mrs. Myrtle Shaw, Trustee Chair, and Ms. Sandra Govan, Preacher's Steward, Caldwell Temple; Mrs. Viola Brandenberg, Trustee Chair and Ms. Mona Baptiste, Preacher's Steward, Shaw A.M.E. Zion.

Ms. Chloe Grimes Jones did a phenomenal job as Mistress of Ceremonies and a perfect fit, as she has a "connection" to both organizations. (Chloe is the daughter of Mrs. Wendy Grimes Jones and the granddaughter of Mrs. Orris Upshaw Grimes.) Mrs. Elsa Magruder Smith read the scripture. Ms. M. Denise Niles and Mrs. Wendy Grimes Jones followed with the occasion and greetings, respectively. Rev. Dr. Malcolm J. Byrd, Senior Pastor of Mother Zion, welcomed everyone and introduced his mother, Mrs. Elsie Byrd, who was visiting from North Carolina. He also commended the Trustee Board and Steward Board Chairs at Mother Zion for their harmonious working relationship. "There is no competition between the two Boards, as there has been in the past."

Before introducing Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson, Rev. Byrd acknowledged First Lady Mrs. Dorian Carson and daughters Alexandria and Alexis. He said PE Carson has been traveling non-stop from Alabama to Livingstone College in North Carolina to Washington, DC to attend the conference of the Congressional Black Caucus, "and now he's at Mother Zion to pay tribute to the Honorees."

Presiding Elder Carson thanked Rev. Byrd and the Committee for inviting him to be the guest speaker. He read from Micah 6:8: "He has shown you, O mortal, what



Secretary of the Navy,
Mr. Carlos Del Toro

On September 17, 2023, the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), Carlos Del Toro, named the ninth John Lewis class Replenishment Oiler (T-AO 213) ship after Ms. Harriet Tubman. Ms. Tubman was a member of Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church (renamed Harriet Tubman A.M.E. Zion Church) in Auburn, NY. The next oiler ship, bearing her name, will be built in San Diego, CA, in late 2025. The oiler ships supply fuel to the Navy's operating carrier strike groups. They can carry a load of 162,000 barrels of oil plus a significant amount of dry cargo to supply deployed Navy ships.

is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

He said good leaders must do what is right in the church and do what is right in the community. The Lord requires us to do justice in God's house and outside of God's house and to love mercy. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but have not love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." 1 Corinthians 13:1. PE Carson said to be a good leader, you must also be a good follower. He praised the Honorees for being good leaders, good followers, and for "walking humbly with your God."

Mrs. Elizabeth Chappelle-Meeks presented the honorees with framed Certificates of Recognition. Due to a recent medical issue, Rufus Canty, Chair of the Board of Trustees at Mother Zion, was not in attendance. His ears, however, were no doubt ringing as his excellent leadership as Board Chair was acknowledged, and prayers for his speedy recovery were lifted.

Mrs. Amelia Montgomery, who spoke on behalf of the honorees, is Mother Zion's first female Preacher's Steward. Mrs. Montgomery thanked Rev. Byrd for the appointment and for his confidence in her to serve as Preacher's Steward. She said she was honored to serve in this capacity and thanked everyone for the recognition. Rev. Denise Davenport, Pastor at Caldwell Temple A.M.E. Zion, also praised Mrs. Montgomery for being Mother Zion's first female Preacher's Steward. Everyone laughed when she said, "It can't be easy being Rev. Byrd's Preacher's Steward." She added it was gratifying to see that three of the Honorees are women.

Prof. Antwane Harrison, Director of the Music Ministry at Mother Zion, and saxophonist Kayade Morris provided the musical entertainment for the afternoon. The Fellowship Hall was elegantly decorated with white and navy-blue tablecloths, blue and gold plates, and silverware. Floating candles in glass vase centerpieces blue and gold star-shaped balloons completed the candlelight atmosphere. There was more than enough food to satisfy every palate, plus a red velvet and coconut sheet cake. The guests were also given "Thank You" bags with scented candles and blue crystal mints. A QR code was provided for guests to view the Commemorative E-Journal.

In his closing remarks, Rev. Byrd once again thanked members of the Stewardess Board and WH&OMS for hosting the Candlelight Banquet, which he described as "lavish and splendid."



(left to right)- Ms. Karen Hill, President and CEO of Harriet Tubman Home, Inc., for The AME Zion Church, and Ms. Karen Kreiger, Secretary of HTH, Inc., Board

The Secretary of the Navy Names Ship After A.M.E. Zion Member Harriet Tubman

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

On September 17, 2023, the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), Carlos Del Toro, named the ninth John Lewis class Replenishment Oiler (T-AO 213) ship after Ms. Harriet Tubman. Ms. Tubman was a member of Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church (renamed Harriet Tubman A.M.E. Zion Church) in Auburn, NY. The next oiler ship, bearing her name, will be built in San Diego, CA, in late 2025. The oiler ships supply fuel to the Navy's operating carrier strike groups. They can carry a load of 162,000 barrels of oil plus a significant amount of dry cargo to supply deployed Navy ships.

The first eight Replenishment Oiler ships from the John Lewis class bear the names of the following civil rights leaders and social activists: Harvey Milk, Earl Warren, Robert F. Kennedy, Lucy Stone, Sojourner Truth, Thurgood Marshall, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. For her work as an abolitionist, conductor on the Underground Railroad, and Union Army service, Ms. Tubman deserves this honor to join this group. Harriet Tubman helped hundreds of enslaved people escape from the American South in the 1800s and cared for wounded soldiers during and after the war.





(left to right) The Secretary of the Navy, Ms. Tina Wyatt, great-great-great grandniece of Harriett Tubman, Mr. Douglas Mitchell, great-great grandnephew of Harriet Tubman, Rev, Dr. Melanie Miller, member of HYH, Inc. Board

The SECNAV named the USNS Harriet Tubman at an Emancipation Celebration at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Church Creek, MD. The SECNAV brought comments to hundreds of attendees, including Ms. Tubman’s Great-great-great-grandniece, Ms. Tina Wyatt, and great-great-grandnephew, Mr. Douglas Mitchell. Mr. Del Toro stated, “Her legacy deserves our nation’s continued recognition, and our fleet benefits from having her name emblazoned on the hull of one of our great ships.” During the ceremony, Harriet Tubman’s great-great-great-grandniece, Ms. Wyatt, accepted the role of sponsor for the USNS Harriet Tubman, which entails establishing a relationship with the crew and the ship for the rest of her life. During her remarks, Ms. Wyatt stated, “Harriet Ross Tubman is a symbol of faith, freedom, family, democracy, and love. Aunt Harriet’s legacy is an inspiration to a higher calling within us all, and overall, how we are enabled by sharing love for others and self,”



SECNAV NNOA President Midshipmen -The SECNAV with the President of the NNOA and Midshipmen from the US Naval Academy

The Honorable Ventris Gibson, the first Black Director of the United States Mint and a Navy Veteran, also in attendance, presented the designs for the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Commemorative Coins scheduled for release for sale between January and February of 2024. According to Dr. Gibson, “The designs will be featured on a \$5 gold coin, a \$1 silver coin, and a half dollar clad coin, as authorized by Public Law 117-163, in recognition of the bicentennial of Harriet Tubman’s birth. All designs were created by United States Mint Artistic Infusion Program Designers and sculpted by United States Mint Metallic Artists.”

Others in attendance included visitors to the National Park for the occasion, Midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy, US Navy personnel and veterans from all the Armed Forces, National Park Service Director Chuck Sams and other employees of the National Park Service, Maryland State Officials, Ms. Karen Hill, President and CEO of the Harriet Tubman Home, Inc. for The A.M.E. Zion Church, Ms. Karen Kreiger, Secretary of the Board for HTH, Inc., and myself, Rev. Dr. Melanie Miller, HTH, Inc. Board Member, who brought remarks on behalf of Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, Board Chair for HTH, Inc. and the Presiding Prelate of the North Eastern Episcopal District, and The A.M.E. Zion Church.

As a former Navy Chaplain, I was honored as a member of The A.M.E. Zion Church, where the free Harriet Tubman bequeathed her property in Auburn, NY, to reflect upon Harriet Tubman’s unyielding display of the core values of military service, honor, courage, and commitment. I concluded my remarks in this way:

As Tubman led others to freedom, they encountered rain, sleet, hail, wind, and cold. Their clothes were tattered and soaked along the way. The soles of their feet gradually replaced the disappearing soles of their shoes.

They ran out of food and water, so hunger often overtook them. Several of her followers sat on the ground and told Harriet they could not go through the storm. But Harriet’s response echoed scripture in 2 Kings 7:4, “Why sit here and die?” Especially when the promise of freedom is ahead of you.



The Honorable Ventris Gibson, Director, U.S. Mint, presenting the designs for the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Commemorative Coins

The naming of the USNS Harriet Tubman and the release of the Harriet Tubman coins are the resounding effects of her following quiet but firm directive with a gun, “Get up and move.”

Her legacy says we must not stop here.

Her legacy sets the stage for us in this nation to become commanders in our own right. There is much that threatens our freedom, our livelihood, our sanity, our spiritual wellness, and our faith in God. Still, when we choose not to sit here and die in culture, tradition, history, bigotry, all the isms of the world, and conformist behavior, we have heard and responded to Harriet’s command: Get up and Move.

Harriet Tubman, in perpetuity, commissions us all in these new beginnings to continue to get up and move forward to freedom lest we die.

We must get up and move, following the mandate to love our neighbors.

We must get up and move so all receive their inalienable rights.

We must get up and move with purpose and power.

Even if we do not get up, We must move with confidence and faith.

We must move in service to our fellow citizens.

We must move and say No to wrong and Yes to right.

We must move and change me too, to Not me.

We must move and vote in all elections.

We must move and develop moral integrity and positive value systems that filter down through the generations.

We must move to speak truth to power to achieve social justice for all.

We must get up like Harriet and move to liberate the masses from the perils of life, and freedom’s ring, freedom’s ring, is eternal. I pray this day empowers us to get up and move, for there will be Fair Winds and Following Seas for this beautiful ship and blessings upon all. Amen. God bless you!



Director Chuck Sams, National Park Service bring remarks



USNS John Lewis (T-AO 205)

Bishop George W.C. Walker, Sr. and Bishop W. Darin Moore Celebrate with Little Rock A.M.E. Zion on Their 140th Church Anniversary!

A Time of Praise and Thanksgiving: Together We Can

By Reverend Diane Commander

CHARLOTTE, NC The Ministerial Staff, Officers, and Members of Little Rock

A.M.E. Zion Church praise God for sustaining, redeeming and never leaving us throughout these 140 years. The history of Little Rock A.M.E. Zion Church is so grand and glorious that the essence of its greatness can never be fully captured or retold. Little Rock has been truly blessed with ardent and eloquent pastors, two of which became Bishops, Bishop J. C. Hoggard and Bishop George Junius Leake, III. “So many courageous, dedicated, and visionary men and women have made immeasurable contributions to this bright “Star of Zion that only small highlights can be shared”. “Accomplishments made in the past and even now would not be possible without the blood, sweat and tears of our ancestors who laid a strong foundation with their resources, commitment, and dedication. Through spiritual will and fortitude, they bought land and built facilities that we now occupy; their prayers, determination and amazing faith in God allowed them to overcome the difficult and challenging times of their day. They have bequeathed to us a marvelous legacy that we must embrace and maintain”, said Dr. Walker.



The original church property was purchased for a sum of four hundred and twenty-five dollars on May 31, 1884 (corrected deed filed June 10, 1893). In 1906 under the Pastorate of Rev. W. R. Douglas, the frame structure was moved across Seventh Street. The brick edifice, which is now the Little Rock Cultural Center, was completed in 1911. The edifice was a blended manifestation of the turn of the century Greek and Romanesque architectural style. The old Little Rock Church building is a remarkable reminder of an exuberant expression of faith and commitment of God’s people to God’s Glory.



The new Sanctuary and Education wing were completed in October 1981. Rev. William White who pastored Little Rock for 16 years, led members and friends in a reverent and stately procession from the Old Little Rock Church into the new edifice on Sunday, December 6, 1981. Rev. Dr. James R. Samuel followed Rev. William White and pastored Little Rock for 16 years, making improvements to the Church and Education Wing.



Dr. Dwayne A. Walker was appointed Pastor and regained possession of the old church building in 2005. In 2006, he became the Founder of the Community Development Corporation, and through his excellent leadership, a partnership between the Little Rock Community Devel-

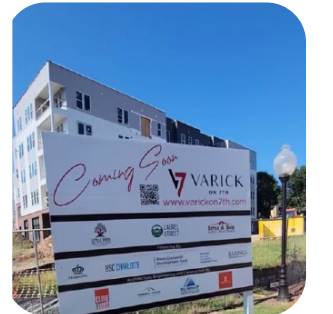
opment Corporation and the Charlotte City Council was facilitated to build a 105 unit, five-story apartment building, “Varick on 7th” (where 52 of the units will be affordable housing). The groundbreaking ceremony for Varick on 7th was held on April 28, 2021. At the ceremony, Councilman Malcolm Graham remarked on the significance of this project in which the community, the city and the Church will all benefit. He further stated that the city will also support the project by completely furnishing three of the affordable apartments. May God be glorified for His manifold blessings.



Progress is continuing at the construction site for the Varick on 7th Apartments. Through Dr. Walker’s vision and effective leadership to reduce homelessness in Charlotte, affordable Housing is rising in uptown Charlotte, North Carolina which is located on the Little Rock Campus, within walking distance to public transportation, city/county government and jobs. For the apartment dwellers with privately owned vehicles, paid parking will be available with the proceeds transferring to Little Rock.



We thank God for our Pastor, Reverend Dr. Dwayne A. Walker who guides his flock with love, inspirational and effectual leadership.



We praise God for Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr. Presiding Prelate of the Piedmont Episcopal District for returning Dr. Walker to us in June 2023 for his 19th Pastoral Appointment.

Under Dr. Walker’s leadership Little Rock has 51+ ministries that serve the needs of its members (in-reach), and the community at large (out-reach), to win souls for Christ. Little Rock’s 2023-2024 theme is Excellence in Ministry: TOGETHER WE CAN! Ephesians 4:11-16, whereas God is Glorified • Jesus is Magnified • The People are Edified • Faith is Fortified • and Ministry is Multiplied. The Little Rock church family continually worship God physically, mentally, spiritually, and virtually. Through the assistance of technology, we are fulfilling the spiritual needs of our church family. Through Zoom we continue to hold Bible Study sessions for our youth and children, as well as board and ministry meetings.

Ministries collaborate to consistently provide boxes of food to the community and other churches, as well as hot meals, toiletries, and clothes to the homeless. Toiletry items, Blessing Bags containing food and clothing are given to the homeless and anyone in need during our bi-annual Community Prayer Walks. “I will Bless the Lord at all times; His Praise shall be in my mouth. (Psalm 34:1)

Little Rock’s 140th Anniversary Celebration began with a very powerful, electrifying and spirit-filled three-night Fall Revival, September 5-7, 2023. We were blessed to have Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District and the 99th Bishop in the Line of



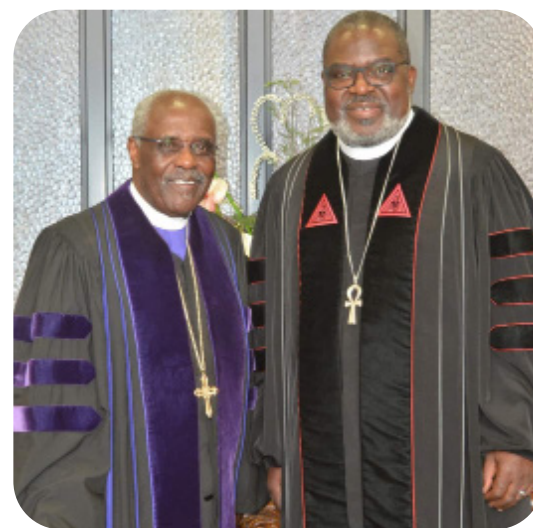
Success return to Little Rock for his 19th year as our Guest Revivalist. Accompanying Bishop Moore during the three-day Revival were his loving mother, Mrs. Connie Farrow and his son, Dion.



Through Bishop Moore's inspirational, and transformational sermons, members and visitors can testify: "we were truly revived again". We were blessed with the attendance of Rev. Dr. Wardell Henderson, Presiding Elder of the North Charlotte District and his lovely wife and first lady of the district, Mrs. Myrtle Henderson. Mr. Gilbert McRae, Leader of Leaders, and the Council of Leaders serve as Chairpersons for our Church Anniversary.



Our 140th Anniversary Celebration culminated on Sunday, September 10, 2023. We were honored to have Bishop George W.C. Walker, Sr, Retired Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church, and Dr. Walker's father as our Guest Preacher. Bishop Walker's powerful, thought-provoking sermon blessed all in attendance.



Our Ministerial staff members participated in the Litany. We were wonderfully blessed by the Sanctuary Choir led by our capable Minister of Music, Mr. Sid Oliver, our Band Koinonia, and our Audio-Visual Ministry team.



Oh God we love You, we adore You, we praise You, we Bless Your Name for leading and guiding us through these 140 years. God Gets the Glory!

A Lesson in Going from Spiritual Restoration to Transformation

By Rev. L. Shawni Basnight
Photos by Helena Roscoe and Dontae' Williams

Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church of Elizabeth City, NC, under the leadership of Pastor L. Shawni Basnight held their first Spiritual Restoration Retreat on Saturday, October 7, 2023, from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The morning kicked off with a fellowship breakfast and an icebreaker activity involving both adults and youth called "Bible or Not." Our youth, Tre'Quon McPherson and Keona Williams, were exceptional at discerning whether specific quotes, phrases, or scriptures were from the Bible or not. In a society where the boundaries of the world seem to blur with our faith, it is amazing and quite encouraging to see our young people able to discern biblical truth from secular and worldly views.

For the morning session, Pastor Basnight taught the various inward spiritual disciplines (meditation, prayer, fasting, and Bible study) and outward spiritual disciplines (simplicity, solitude, submission, and service) as outlined in Richard Foster's book, *Celebration of Spiritual Discipline: A Path to Spiritual Growth*. We ended the morning session with a fun team-building activity - a church "Escape Room" created by our very own church members, Tre'Quon McPherson, Helena Roscoe, and Dontae' Williams. The retreat participants worked together to find and decipher biblical clues from various locations around the church. The Escape Room was a fun way to acknowledge each person has a vital role to play in the church, from the creativity of those who set up the Escape Room, to the young people searching high and low for clues, to the wisdom of the elders, and everyone in between who contributed thoughts and ideas to help us ultimately "escape." If we are ever to be free from the grasp of Satan, then we must all work

together to escape his bondage. That's a great lesson for all of us to learn!

We continued the day with a wonderful lunch, enjoying the camaraderie and fellowship of like-minded participants. For the afternoon session, we had a prayer service based upon the theme "Rebuilding Our Faith Walls" with various individuals leading corporate prayers in 7 key areas: Youth and Children, Spiritual Growth/Discipleship, Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church, Unity, Local Community, Nation and World, and Leadership. Afterward, we had breakout sessions for alternative ways of individual prayer by kneeling at the altar, peaceful prayer walks, or coloring prayer mandalas. The prayer service was a continuation of our inaugural "Prayer Lives Matter" prayer service we started in July; it was such a huge hit that it has become a regular 5th Sunday event. Overall, it was a truly spiritual revival for our souls. If true spiritual transformation is ever going to occur in our lives, we must replenish our spiritual wells and allow ourselves to grow beyond superficial faith to plant seeds of hope with deep roots. Our end goal is to watch our spiritual maturity move from tired and lifeless to spiritual restoration and renewal of our minds to the ultimate transformational phase of experiencing transformative breakthroughs and deliverance.



CLERGYWOMEN IN ZION: DOING MINISTRY IN THE COMMUNITY ISN'T AN OPTION, IT IS A MANDATE FROM CHRIST

By Rev. Robin Woods-Barrant

New York, NY... This latest article in *The Clergywomen in Zion* series is written by Rev. Robin Woods-Barrant, Pastor of John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church in North Attleboro, MA. Rev. Woods-Barrant talks about her journey into ministry and the importance of doing God's work through ongoing acts of giving both in the church and the community.

My ministry journey began long before I accepted my "call" to the preaching ministry. Like so many who grew up attending one of the churches in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion denomination, I loved the fellowship with my church family; I loved that we worshipped, studied, and engaged in creative, theatrical, and playful tasks together. If asked to state where the line was between my receiving spiritual nurture and my being of service, I am unable to say; what I do know is that participating in the various Christian Education Department, WHOMS, youth, and young adult ministries at my church helped me to grow spiritually with my discovering the more I served, the more blessed I felt. I loved my local church, Mount Olive A.M.E. Zion Church, Waterbury, CT., where the Rev. Dr. Harrison Bonner was pastor during my childhood and for decades after until he retired from the pastoral ministry. I loved learning about the A.M.E. Zion Church on the district, conference, and national levels. I intended to continue to serve God as a layperson in the church for the rest of my life because of how enriched I was by my many experiences. I recall being asked around the age of 16 or 17 why I spent so much time at church.

My reply was the high the person asking got from alcohol and marijuana, I got without those substances, and I didn't have to concern myself with the unpleasantness of coming down off my spiritual high. In my junior year of college, I received what I knew to be a "call" to the ordained ministry. I tried to shake it off but to no avail. I began to wonder if my life would go in a different direction than I had planned. To my surprise, my college friends were encouraging of my entering ordained ministry. Months after receiving my "call," I finally got up the courage to tell my mother about it, and to my shock, she said, "Oh, girl, I've known for years."

When I told other family members, they, too, responded they always knew I'd go into ministry. I began to think everyone knew before I did, which may well be the case, illustrating the saying God doesn't tell us anything until we are ready to receive that information. Yes, I got my answer; my life would go in a different direction than I had planned.

I thought when God changed the trajectory of my life, it would be less satisfying; please forgive my ignorance; I was only 21 years old at the time. I've known for decades that not only was I completely wrong about my life being less satisfying, but my life has been far more satisfying than I had imagined.

I have been an ordained elder in the A.M.E. Zion denomination for nearly 40 years, serving at various times as a psychiatric hospital chaplain, a college chaplain, and an associate pastor despite having graduated from a women's college where I picked up the unpleasant habit, for some, of challenging long-held gender role stereotypes and practices in our very traditional denomination. Obviously, my unconventional ways didn't stop God from opening doors for me, allowing me to do ministry in different settings, in four different annual conferences, two of which were outside of the United States; additionally, I've been a pastor in the denomination for more than 15 years while also launching a successful mental health practice. I have never stopped loving the A.M.E. Zion denomination and all the ways I have learned and grown spiritually, professionally, and personally since my early years. I grew in these ways because I was blessed to have numerous women and men see something worth nurturing and challenging in me, so I rose to higher personal and spiritual heights. I benefited from the practice in the African-American community and the A.M.E. Zion denomination to pour into children because of our historic commitment to strengthening and encouraging those with potential. Optimism would have me believe that African Americans still embrace this ethic. If that is so, the



Black Church is not dying, as some have said, because the Black Church is still the only community organization where large numbers of Black people of different socioeconomic backgrounds, educational levels, and family structures gather and are on equal footing.

Many of our churches bemoan the lack of children, youth, and young adults in our congregations. I am convinced that if we offer them something they experience as

valuable and meet personal and spiritual voids, they will find their way to our churches again.

I have served as pastor of John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church for ten years and have made it a hallmark of my ministry to have an inward focus on teaching and strengthening the spiritual life and understanding of church members while loving and reaching out to the community members.

In bygone years, the latter was called evangelism. Our outreach is specific to our community's needs and our congregation's strength. Still, we have embraced an evangelistic focus because too many isolated and hurting persons in our communities need to know that Jesus loves them, and we do, too. In recent years, we partnered with the N. Attleboro Board of Health to host a Covid-19 Clinic. We contribute monthly to N. Attleboro's Food Pantry and serve meals bi-monthly to people who are food insecure. Doing ministry for the community isn't an option; it is a mandate from Christ, so when a local merchant describes us "as the little church that does so much for the community," it made my year. You don't need to do what we do, but every church in Zion, those with 500 or more members and those with only five members can assess their community's needs and do one or two things to meet them.

You don't have to do it alone. Partner with a community group or agency, or another church, even one outside of Zion, to meet the needs of the people in your community; doing so will go a long way to alleviating the sense of abandonment, loneliness, and aching hearts of so many. As we approach Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas, there is no better time to get busy serving God. Before diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) was a popular phrase, the A.M.E. Zion denomination was actively doing DEI work and teaching our members to value ourselves and our contribution to this nation. Let us not relinquish our responsibility to continue doing so to local, state, or federal governments or corporate stakeholders. May the A.M.E. Zion Church continue to shine light on the works of God's hands in people's lives both in and out of church walls; doing so is the least we should do for our Sovereign Lord.

The Reverend Robin Woods-Barrant has been the pastor at John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church, North Attleboro, MA, since June 2013. She serves on numerous committees in the New England Conference and Boston District.

Pastor Woods-Barrant is a native of Waterbury, CT., where she received her early education. She furthered her education at Smith College, Yale University Divinity School, and the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. Prior to her first pastoral charge in 2007 at New Life AME Zion Church, Brockton, MA., Rev. Woods-Barrant served as an evangelist for more than 20 years in the New England Conference, the Michigan Conference, and then returned to the New England Conference during which time she wrote regularly for the STAR OF ZION. Pastor Woods-Barrant is married, and they are the proud parents of three young adult children.

Veterans Day: Honoring Unknown Soldiers

By Rev. Dr. Melanie Miller

Contributors: Ms. Rhonda Cardwell, Ms. Marrea Evans, Ms. Carolyn Jacobs for Nazarene AME Zion Church, Mrs. Barbara Lynch Johnson, Rev. Janet Jones, Ms. Linda McRae, Mrs. Tangia Douglas Milsap, Sis. Cynthia Owens, Mr. Joshua P. Russell, and Mrs. Anna Shuford

On November 11, 1918, a ceasefire agreement between the Allied Powers and Germany at Compiègne, France, was signed at 11:00 a.m., bringing World War I, also known as the Great War, to an end. Two years later, unidentified soldiers were buried at Westminster Abbey in London and the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. A year later, an unknown American soldier killed in World War II was buried at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. On June 4, 1926, Congress passed a resolution that this reoccurring date, November 11, would be commemorated annually in recognition of the treaty executed in 1918. That date was observed as Armistice Day until 1938, when it became a federal holiday in the United States called Veteran's Day. Congress intended this day to be a day of "thanksgiving and prayer, and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations."

The service of Black people in the United States Armed Forces began decades before that horrific day in 1919, when thousands of lives were lost before the peace agreement was penned, and more would die days after the ink had dried. Black people served as early as the Revolutionary War, some while enslaved. Many unknown members of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church served as early as the Civil War, some as newly freed slaves. Though they served as bravely as the White service members, many served as unknown soldiers, though not buried in a tomb or laid to rest in a six-foot grave. Often, their service was dismissed, unacknowledged, sometimes denied, ignored, and usually not compensated as their White counterparts. Many history books have omitted them, and their service is rendered invisible, and their identity as Blacks or individual service members went unknown.

Many Black Americans carried out heroic acts and dedicated themselves to the cause of freedom. Yet, due to bigotry, discrimination, segregation, and sometimes even violence, whatever the racist thoughts, actions, policies, and practices at the time, those veterans' Black bodies were deemed unworthy to serve for the cause of freedom, fight alongside white soldiers, or to wear the military uniform. For a long time, this treatment has caused cultural mistrust between the Black community and the United States Armed Forces.

Stories like that of Sgt. Isaac Woodard is a prime example of the treatment and challenges Black servicemembers and veterans faced. Sgt. Woodard served in the United States Army for over three years in the Pacific Islands during World War II. He received several awards for his service and an Honorable Discharge in February 1946. As a proud soldier, Sgt. Woodard chose to wear his uniform as he traveled home to North Carolina by bus after his discharge. He asked the bus driver to stop so that he could use the restroom. The driver denied his request and hurled a racist verbal assault against him, including calling him "boy. Sgt. Woodard demanded that the driver treat him with the dignity and respect he was entitled to. At a stop in Batesburg, South Carolina, the driver called the local police, who arrested Sgt. Woodard. Led by police chief Lynwood Shull, the police brutally beat him and deliberately blinded him while in their custody. Sgt. Woodard's treatment was not only an act carried out against a Black service member in uniform but reflected the violent oppression of Blacks in the South. His case was the impetus for civil rights litigation across the nation. On September 19, 1946, a delegation of civil rights leaders led by Walter White, the Executive Director of the NAACP, briefed President Harry S. Truman on the racial violence, ongoing discrimination, and continued mistreatment that Black military personnel faced not only while serving in the military but also when they returned home. Though Sgt. Woodard's case was the focus of the brief, the high number of unjust convictions by court-martial of Black Soldiers, the requirement to develop Black flight surgeons to support and care for the famous Tuskegee Airmen because White flight surgeons would not, and the blatant disrespect of Black officers was a part of the dialog. President Truman expressed that he was unaware that things were as terrible as they had reported and that something needed to change this.

President Truman signed Executive Order 9981 on July 26, 1948, which integrated the United States Armed Forces. Though discrimi-

nation continued despite the Order, it declared to the nation and the world that there would be equality of treatment and opportunity for all individuals in the Armed Forces, regardless of race, color, religion, or national origin. The NAACP, led by Executive Secretary Walter White and A. Philip Randolph, served on the frontlines of the campaign to fight discrimination in the military backed by the Order. The passing of Executive Order 9981 and its campaign reflects the determination of a nation to move the service of Black Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and Coast Guardians from unknown to valued protectors of our country. Interestingly, the signing of Executive Order 9981 precedes any federal actions during the civil rights era to address and counteract discrimination against Black Americans and other people of color.

July 26, 2023, commemorates the 75th Anniversary of Executive Order 9981. The NAACP President and C.E.O. Derrick Johnson released the following statement in remembrance of the momentous occasion:

"Today, we commemorate the Association's decades-long commitment to veterans' rights and the realization of racial equality in all aspects of life. The signing of Executive Order 9981 marked a major milestone in the progress of our nation, creating a path forward for just treatment and recognition of Black members of service. Representation within our armed forces continues to have a profound significance in affirming the importance of diversity and fostering an environment that reflects the ideals of a more inclusive and equitable society."

Despite the historical and cultural challenges Black service members have encountered throughout the years, The A.M.E. Zion Church members continue to enlist or become commissioned officers in the United States Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy, and National Guard. Initiatives like Executive Order 9981 and the hard work and dedication of those committed to the cause of recognizing all of God's creation with dignity, respect, and recognition that even though their name was unknown, their service would leave an indelible mark on the cause for freedom for all Americans. Notable members of The A.M.E. Zion Church who served in the United States Armed Forces include,

Rev. Dr. Myrtle Bowen, Colonel, Retired served in the United States Air National Guard. She is the first African-American woman Chaplain promoted to the rank of Colonel. She is the Presiding Elder of the Harrisburg District of the Philadelphia-Baltimore Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District.

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Crowder, Lieutenant, served in the United States Navy and received an Honorable Discharge. He is the Presiding Elder of the Norfolk District of the Virginia Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District.

The late Rev. Joseph A. Davis, Colonel Retired, joined the United States Army in 1953. As a Chaplain, he cared for Soldiers and their families in Germany, Korea, and Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Rev. Davis was an ordained elder in The A.M.E. Zion Church and retired as a Presiding Elder. He was a member of Galbraith A.M.E. Zion Church, Philadelphia-Baltimore Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District.

The late Bishop Louis Hunter, Sr., Specialist, served in the United States Army with the 101st Airborne on the frontlines of the Vietnam War. He was elected the 93rd Bishop in the line of succession. He was a member of Shaw Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, Smyrna, GA, Georgia Conference of the South Atlantic Episcopal District.

Rev. Dr. Vergel T. Lattimore, Brigadier General, Retired, United States Air Force and Air National Guard. He is the first Black Chaplain to attain the rank of Brigadier General. He is the President of Hood Theological Seminary, Salisbury, NC.

Rev. Dr. Lorenza Meekins, Major, Retired, served in the United States Air Force and retired with an Honorable Discharge after 16 years of service. He is the Pastor of Hood Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, Richmond, VA, Petersburg District, Virginia Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District.

Rev. Dr. Stephen Pogue, Airman, enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1984. He is the Pastor of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mount Vernon, NY, New York City District, New York Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.

Rev. Eli Smith served as a Chaplain in the United States Army and received an Honorable Discharge for his service. He is the Pastor of Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, Jersey City, NJ, Jersey City District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.

The late Ms. Harriet Tubman, Specialist, served in the United States Army as a nurse, spy, and scout during the Civil War. Her most notable accomplishment during military service was commanding over 300 soldiers and navigating three-gun boats up the Combahee River to free over 750 enslaved people. She served valiantly in her civilian life as an abolitionist and conductor on the Underground Railroad. She was a member at Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Auburn, NY, now known as Harriet Tubman A.M.E. Zion Church, Western New York Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.

The following veterans are receiving additional honor at the request of their families or friends.

Rev. Alonzo Braggs, Staff Sergeant (Retired), served 20 years in the United States Army in the Communications Electronics Signal Corps. He received an Honorable Discharge upon retirement. His deployments include Somalia, Haiti, Panama, and Honduras. Assignments include Germany, Korea, Fort Liberty, and Fort Eisenhower. The Army awarded him the German rifle marksmanship medal, 18th Airborne (A.B.N.) Corps Soldier of the Year and the Meritorious Service Award. He pastors Peoples A.M.E. Zion Church of the Los Angeles District, Southwest Rocky Mountain in the Western Episcopal District.

Mr. Nathaniel Briggs, Sergeant, Specialist Fifth Class, was drafted into the United States Army in 1968, shortly after completing high school in Bronx, NY. He completed boot camp at Fort Jackson, SC, and was shipped off to fight in the Vietnam War. Upon discharge from the Army, Mr. Briggs joined the New Jersey National Guard for an additional 13 years, where he attained the rank of Sergeant. He received an Honorable Discharge. He was employed with Ford Motor Company for 32 years. He is an active member of the Bergen County, NJ, Branch of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), where he has served as President and now as the Chairperson of the Veteran's Affairs Committee for New Jersey. His parents initiated the Brown v Board of Education school desegregation lawsuit in Clarendon County, SC. He is the founder of the Veterans of Faith Ministry at Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Hackensack, NJ, where he is a proud member. Varick Memorial is in the Jersey City District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Mr. Ronald Crapp, Sergeant, E5, served in the United States Marine Corps as a Motor Transportation, Logistics Vehicle System (L.V.S.) Operator from October 1993 to October 2003. He received an Honorable Discharge. His awards include the Good Conduct Medal, Sea Service Medal, and National Defense Service Ribbon. He is a member of St. Julia A.M.E. Zion Church, Jacksonville, NC, Central North Carolina Conference, Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District.



Mr. Joe Louis Cromartie, Master Sergeant E-8, served in the United States Army as a 92A50 Logistics Quarter Master. He retired with an Honorable Discharge. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, three Army Commendation (ARCOM) Medals, two Army Achievement (A.A.M.) Medals, three Professional Development awards, the Overseas Medal, and seven Good Conduct Medals. He is a member of Evans Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, Fayetteville, NC, Central North Carolina Conference of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District.



IN MEMORY OF Mr. Banks Douglas, Sergeant, Technician E5. Mr. Douglas served in the United States Army during World War II (WWII) from July 1944 through June 1946. He served with the 3758th Quarter Master (QM) Truck Company as an Automotive Mechanic and Truck Driver. He received an Honorable Discharge for his service. His awards include the Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal and Germany Clasp, Honorable Service Lapel Button WWII, Sharpshooter Badge with Rifle Bar, and the Marksman Badge with Machine Gun Bar. He was a member of Cameron Grove A.M.E. Zion Church, Central North Carolina Conference of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District.



Mr. Willie Johnson Jr., First Lieutenant, served in the United States Army Signal Corps. He was assigned to the U.S. Army Signal School at Fort Monmouth, NJ, with the responsibility of training enlisted personnel in installing, maintaining, and repairing Signal Intelligence and Microwave Radio equipment. He was Honorably Discharged on June 10, 1966. He is a member of Shrewsbury Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church Red Bank, NJ, Camden District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Ms. Tangia Douglas, Corporal, Specialist Fourth Class, served as an Ammunition Specialist in the United States Army, Women's Army Corps (W.A.C.) from October 1975 through October 1978. She received an Honorable Discharge. Her awards include the M 16-Marksman Rifle Badge, Good Conduct Medal, Overseas Service Medal, and the Women In Military Service For America Memorial Silver Dollar. She is a member of Cameron Grove A.M.E. Zion Church, Central North Carolina Conference of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District.

Rev. Dr. John Givens, First Sergeant, joined the United States Army shortly after graduating high school and retired Honorably after 27 years of service. After attaining the rank of First Sergeant, he was an instructor and manager for the 411th Chemical Company for over nine years. Among his many awards, he received the Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM) for Meritorious Service. His duty stations took him around the world to Europe, Japan, and Korea. After his retirement, his entrepreneurial heart opened one of the few Black-owned car dealerships in New Jersey. He is the Pastor of Shiloh A.M.E. Zion Church, Englewood, NJ, Jersey City District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Rev. Dr. Denison D. Harrield, Jr., Captain, Intelligence Officer, upon graduation from Howard University, was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. He served seven years during the Vietnam War, received a Meritorious Service Medal, and received an Honorable Discharge, having attained the rank of Captain in 1971. He worked for New York Telephone for 18 years. He preached his Trial Sermon in 1976 at St. Paul Church, when it was in Trenton, NJ. He served as Pastor of Antioch Church, Linden, from 1978 to 1989. In 1989, he left N.Y. Telephone to be the full-time Pastor of Wallace Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Summit, where he continues to serve. Wallace Chapel is in the Jersey City District of the N.J. Annual Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.

Rev. Kenneth P. Heyman, Sr., Corporal, Specialist First Class, served in the U.S. Army, attaining the rank of Specialist 4th class as a Combat Engineer. He completed orders at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and the 23rd Engineer Battalion of the 3rd Armor Division, Hanau, Germany. He was Honorably Discharged in 1986 yet, while stationed in Germany, attended the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC), a prerequisite for promotion to Sergeant. He is the Pastor of Shiloh A.M.E. Zion Church (Staten Island), NY, Jersey City District in New Jersey. Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Rev. Larry Ben Jacobs, Airman First Class, served in the United States Air Force Reserve from September 1980 through September 1983. He received an Honorable Discharge after faithful service. Rev. Jacobs serves as the Episcopal Director of the Men of Zion for the Alabama-Florida Episcopal District, Jackson District Men of Zion Director; and District & Conference Director for Project 100. He is the Pastor of Nazarene A. M. E. Zion Church, Citronelle, AL, in the West Alabama Conference of the Alabama Florida Episcopal District.

In Memory of Mr. Arbe Johnson, Private, February 2, 1924 – September 3, 1980. Mr. Johnson lived in Lower Peachtree, Alabama, until he joined the Army in 1942. He served as a Private in the United States Army during World War II from 1942 to 1945. and was Honorably Discharged in 1945. After leaving the Army, he moved to Mount Vernon, N.Y., and was a resident for 35 years. He was an upholsterer for G.B.C. Associates in Yonkers, New York. He was a member of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mount Vernon, NY, New York City District, New York Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Rev. William E. Lawson, Staff Sergeant E6, served as a Race Rela-



tions Facilitator during the Vietnam War in the United States Air Force. He was commissioned to drive a 10-ton forty-foot trailer while in Vietnam. He received an Honorable discharge after eight years of dedicated service. He is the Pastor of St. Luke A.M.E. Zion Church, Linden, NJ, Jersey City District, in the New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Mr. Glenn McCree, Sr., Technical Sergeant, enlisted in the United States Air Force from August 19, 1970, until August 31, 1974, during the Vietnam War Era. He attained the rank of Staff Sergeant before receiving an Honorable Discharge. He joined the United States Air Force Reserves in August 1976 as a Security Police Officer and separated from service in August of 1988. He is a member of Nazarene A. M. E. Zion Church, Citronelle, AL., where he serves faithfully on the Trustee Board, Steward Board and Men of Zion. Nazarene A.M.E. Zion Church is part of the West Alabama Conference of the Alabama-Florida Episcopal District.

Mr. Gary Millsap, Corporal, Specialist First Class, served in the United States Army as a Senior Ammunition Inspector. He retired with an Honorable Discharge after steadfast service during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. For his faithful and devoted service, Mr. Gilsap received the following awards: Army Service Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal with a Bronze Star, four Overseas Service Ribbons, six-time recipient of the Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster (O.L.C.), Army Achievement Medal with two O.L.C., three Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbons, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Parachutist Badge, two Southwest Asia Service Medal with a Bronze Service Star, Kuwait Liberation Medal-Saudi Arabia, and Driver Badge with Completion Bar. He is a member of St. Julia A.M.E. Zion Church, Central North Carolina Conference of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District.



Ms. Ivy Millsap, Lance Corporal, enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in February 1999 as an 1142 Generator Mechanic and licensed High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HUMMWV) Driver. She was discharged honorably in October 2003 and then enlisted in the United States Navy as a Hospital Corpsman in 2004 and served until 2006. She again received an Honorable Discharge for her dedicated service. She was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Ribbon, the Navy Marksmanship Ribbon, and the USMC Expert Rifle Medal. She is a member of St. Julia A.M.E. Zion Church, Jacksonville, NC, Central Northern Carolina Conference of the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District.



Rev. Jimmie Lewis Miller, Sr., Commander, Retired, enlisted in the United States Navy in 1983 as Airman/E3, Aerographer's Mate. In 1987, he was selected for the Enlisted Commissioning Program, commissioned an Ensign, and chosen to attend Nuclear Propulsion Engineer School. He served as a Nuclear Power Submarine Officer aboard the U.S.S. Hammerhead and the U.S.S. James K. Polk. He was the Executive Officer aboard the U.S.S. Rhode Island, Gold Crew, St. Mary's, G.A. and culminated his Navy Career as the Commanding Officer of Navy Recruiting District Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA. He retired with an Honorable Discharge in 2010 after 27 years of loyal service. He is now the Operations Manager for the Navy Junior Recruit Officer Training Corps (NJROTC). He is a Supernumerary Minister at St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Ewing, NJ, Camden District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Rev. Dr. Melanie Miller, Lieutenant Commander, was commissioned Lieutenant Junior Grade and served as a Chaplain in the United States Navy in 2009. She served with the United States Marine Corps in Twentynine Palms at Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS) 373. Dr. Miller later joined the United States Navy Reserves in 2016. She served in Surface Pacific Forces, Navy Reserve Littoral Combat Support, and Navy Recruiting Command and was the first Chaplain Program Officer Recruiter for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She was Honorably Discharged in July 2023. Her awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and the U.S. Marine Corps Fleet Marine Force (F.M.F.) qualification pin. She is the pastor of St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Ewing, NJ, Camden District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Ms. Catherine Lorraine Morris Overby, Staff Sergeant, served in the United States Air Force for eight years. She trained at the 3743rd Women in the Air Force (W.A.F.) Training Center in San Antonio, Texas. She served faithfully in various administrative, technical, and supervisory positions at Air Force bases around the country during a period of racial unrest and discrimination, withstanding all bias because of her color and the injustice and inequality perpetrated against women. She was honorably discharged in 1963. She is a member of the Shrewsbury Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church Red Bank, NJ, Camden District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.

Mr. Reginald S. Owens, Captain, served in the United States Army from 1977 until 1986. After completing Officer Candidate School at Fort Moore in Georgia, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant Radio Signal Officer. While serving his country, Lieutenant Owens received the Army Commendation Medal and the Army Achievement Medal. He was Honorably Discharged in 1986 with the rank of Captain. He has been a member of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mount Vernon, NY, for over 30 years. Greater Centennial is in the New York City District, New York Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Mr. Leon Roberson, Sr., Staff Sergeant, served in the United States Army during the Korean War and the United States Army Reserve as a Squad Leader from 1952 until 1991. For his loyal and devoted service, he received the Combat Infantry Badge. He is a member of Nazarene A. M. E. Zion Church/Citronelle, AL, where he attends service faithfully every Sunday and serves as a Trustee and a member of the Men of Zion. Nazarene A.M.E. Zion Church is part of the West Alabama Conference of the Alabama-Florida Episcopal District.

In Memory of Mr. Melvin Rochester, Sr., Sergeant (E4). Mr. Rochester served in the United States Army from 1954 through 1957. He completed basic training in Fort Lee, VA, and received orders to Fort Polk in Louisiana. He received an Honorable Discharge after serving at Fort Polk. After his discharge, he returned home and married Ms. Constance Watson, and together they raised their four children. He was born and raised in Hackensack, NJ, where he attended Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Hackensack, NJ, until his death. He was the brother of the late Bishop Enoch B. Rochester. Varick Memorial is part of the Jersey City District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Mr. Leverett Russell, Jr., Petty Officer Third Class, received an Honorable Discharge from the United States Navy after serving from 1960 to 1966. He was a Dental Technician as well as a Field Medical Service Technician. He received the Good Conduct Medal while enlisted and during the Vietnam Era. Mr. Russell is a devoted member of the Shrewsbury Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church, Red Bank, NJ, Camden District, New Jersey Annual Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.



Rev. Robert L. Shuford, Senior Master Sergeant, Retired, is a United States Air Force veteran as a transportation specialist. He rendered 22 years of faithful service during campaigns from the Vietnam War to Operation Desert Shield. He retired with an Honorable Discharge. He is the Pastor of Mount Zion A.M.E. Zion Church, Wetumpka, AL, East Montgomery District, Central Alabama Conference of the Alabama-Florida Episcopal District.



Mr. Territo Mark Steward, Corporal, Specialist Fourth Class, served as a Supply and Weapons Specialist in the United States Army. He served in Operation Restore Hope in Somalia (1993-94). He was honorably discharged in 1996, receiving Good Conduct, Army Achievement, and Marine Exploration Medals. He is a member of the Shrewsbury Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church, Red Bank, New Jersey, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.

Rev. Dr. Mary Louise Thompson, Corporal, Specialist Fourth Class, served in the United States Army in the Women's Army Corps from 1962 until 1965 as an Occupational Therapy Specialist. She received an Honorable Discharge for her loyal service. Dr. Thompson is a native of Pittsburgh, PA, and earned six degrees: Ph.D., D.D, M.Div., M.A., BS, and an Associate Arts. She attended Mercer County Community College, Trenton State College, Rider University, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Masters International School of Divinity, and Newburgh Theological Seminary. Dr. Thompson is a Supernumerary Minister at St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Ewing, NJ, Camden District, New Jersey Conference of the North Eastern Episcopal District.

Working God's Plan!

By Angelia J. Poole

Zion's Piedmont Episcopal District leaders gathered in Greensboro, NC, to experience the 2023 Piedmont Leadership Training Institute. We reignited our passion for God's plan in our lives and left refreshed for serving in our respective faith communities. This year's institute informed, encouraged, inspired, and empowered attendees through a wide range of information and revelation from a variety of unique perspectives. The theme: "God Has A Plan For You!" from Jeremiah 29:11.

Bishop Darryl B. Starnes challenged leaders on opening night, declaring, "We prove that we are thriving as a dynamic movement by what we are becoming." This proposition, a summation of his message from 2 Corinthians 3:1-6, was his charge to us as attentive learners, which became our challenge to remain resilient leaders. He encouraged us to willingly embrace becoming competent ministers and admonished us to allow God to lead us by His Spirit, to qualify us through His Son, and to equip us for His ministry. He cautioned us against relying solely on education or training and warned us that ministry without God is detrimental!

It was intriguing to hear Bishop Starnes' interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 through the lens of 2 Corinthians 3:1-6 and then to experience Zion leaders applying that revelation before the institute's conclusion. I found myself working side-by-side with a pastor, discussing our preferences for using our teaching gifts in various ministries while utilizing different operations (i.e., Teaching Church School to Youth). I witnessed pastors yielding their musical gifts - following directions given by leaders who were comfortable and competent in giving or receiving direction. I watched as seasoned leaders, who regularly walk in great authority, openly embraced change after learning what they did not know before.



Dr. Sondra Coleman humbly and humorously shared with us about the struggles of leadership in ministry. Her intimate conversation spoke to the heart of our humanness as she encouraged us to be transparent with God and truthful with ourselves. She reminded us that God will give us unusual assignments that sometimes make no sense to us, but "God will do the impossible when we just do our assignments." Our trusting obedience to God proves we've fully embraced His plan for us.

Dr. Frances Jackson offered us a crash course on parliamentary procedure, and every leader had the opportunity to correct minutes according to Robert's Rules of Order. This interactive session, with several engaging activities, reinforced Paul's directives regarding God's plan for peace (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40) and empowered us to operate efficiently in proper order.

Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr. closed the institute, reminding us of God's mandate: "Making disciples is the business of everyone who has become a disciple." God's plan embraced us despite us. Kingdom growth is directly dependent on our growth. God wants to lead, qualify, and equip us - THAT is His plan! Are we ready to fully engage in His plan and prove our validity as a dynamic movement by what we are becoming? Are we obediently working God's plan?



JOIN US FOR A
ZION
THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church

Chef Davis

WATCH LIVE ON
ALL A.M.E.Z. & STAR OF ZION PLATFORMS

WWW.AMEZ.ORG AND WWW.STAROFZION.ORG

Thanksgiving

FEATURING GREETINGS FROM
THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH EPISCOPAL LEADERSHIP AND A STEP BY STEP COOKING SHOW
BROUGHT TO US BY **CHEF DAVIS, CAROLINA BITES AND CATERING BY DESIGN/HOST OF COOKING AND GRILLING WITH THE DAVIS'S**

<p>TURKEY DRESSING</p> <p>1/4 CUP BUTTER (1/2 STICK) 2 BOIL EGGS 2 STALKS CELERY, COARSELY CHOPPED (ABOUT 1 CUP) 1 LARGE ONION, COARSELY CHOPPED (ABOUT 1 CUP) 2.5 CUPS CHICKEN BROTH 2 PACKAGE (14 OUNCES) PEPPERIDGE FARM CORNBREAD CLASSIC STUFFING 1 PACK GROUND SAUSAGE 1 CUP OF SHREDDED TURKEY 1/4 TEASPOON SALT 1/4 TEASPOON PEPPER 1/4 TEASPOON ACCENT</p> <p>BBQ TURKEY</p> <p>1 12-15LB TURKEY THAWED 1/4 CUP ACCENT 1/4 CUP SEASON SALT 1/2 CUP OLIVE OIL 2 TABLE SPOON BLACK PEPPER 1/4 CUP CRUSH RED PEPPERS 1/2 GALLON COOPERS BBQ SAUCE</p>	<p>COLLARDS RECIPE</p> <p>2-3 LBS. COLLARD GREENS 2 C HOT WATER 2 TBSP. VEGETABLE OIL 1/4 TSP SALT 1/4 TBS BLACK PEPPER 2 BOUILLON CHICKEN CUBES 2-3 TBSP SUGAR 1/2 LB. SMOKE NECKBONES (OR STUFFED SAUSAGE CUT IN 1" LINKS) COOK; THEN REMOVE MEAT FROM POT</p> <p>CANDIED YAMS</p> <p>6 LARGE, SWEET POTATOES 1 STICK BUTTER 2 CUPS WHITE SUGAR 1 TEASPOON GROUND CINNAMON 1/2 TEASPOON GROUND NUTMEG 1 TABLESPOON VANILLA EXTRACT</p>	<p>FRUIT PIE</p> <p>2 STICKS BUTTER 4 EGGS 1 CUP SUGAR 2 TABLE SPOON WHITE VINEGAR. 1 CUP COCONUT 1 CUP RAISINS 1 1/2 CUP PECAN 2 PIE CRUST (350)</p> <p>CRANBERRY SAUCE</p> <p>12 OUNCES CRANBERRIES 1 CUP WHITE SUGAR 1 CUP ORANGE JUICE</p>
---	--	--



THURSDAY NOVEMBER 23, 2023 12PM EST

Livingstone College Installs New President, Dr. Anthony J. Davis

By Kesha Williams, Communications and Public Relations & Dr. State Alexander Vice President of Communications and Public Relations
Photos by Kesha Williams/Livingstone College & Rod Charles/His Will Photography



“As I accept this charge, I will be laser-focused, securing the resources that will fund and fuel our upward trajectory,” Davis said.

Davis assured the audience that greater effort will be made via a scholarship center to help students acquire external scholarships and reduce dependence on student loans. Other plans Davis outlined included a center for teacher development and deployment that propels more Livingstone College graduates to work as teachers in the state’s rural and urban settings. There are plans to strengthen partnerships that will help guide the colleges to STEM careers and partnerships that will guide young people who are departing foster care systems and enrolling as freshmen at Livingstone College.

Livingstone College completed the installation ceremony on Friday, Sept. 22, 2023, of its 13th president, Dr. Anthony J. Davis. Davis is an alumnus of the university who previously served as senior vice president /chief operating officer for Livingstone College. In that role, Dr. Davis was responsible for supervising and providing leadership for the entire fundraising enterprise at Livingstone College. Dr. Davis also managed the day-to-day operations of the institution with the responsibility of providing strategic oversight in key areas on the campus in an effort to create a campus-wide synergy that promotes economic growth, revenue generation, and sustainability.

Davis, a former youth resident of Connecticut’s foster care system, informed the audience attending the inauguration ceremony that many of his adolescent teachers, coaches, and members of his church played inspirational roles in his life that propelled him to leadership. Many of them and several of his family members attended the ceremony.

The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, president and senior lecturer of Repairers of the Breach and co-chair of the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, provided the keynote address. Barber’s other leadership posts include Bishop with the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, Executive Board Member of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ, Professor in the Practice of Public Theology and Public Policy, and Founding Director of the Center for Public Theology and Public Policy at Yale Divinity School.

Lastly, Davis recalled the people who inspired him, as a nontraditional student and veteran from the U.S. Air Force, to earn his bachelor’s degree at Livingstone College. He returned to work as an administrator for the college. With all those inspirational figures in mind, Davis pledged to adamantly lead an institution that has a history of educating the underserved.

During his speech, Barber paid homage to the college’s origin in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. He lauded the college’s commitment to educating students from multiple demographics that have been underserved, as well as those denied entry at mainstream institutions prior to the Civil Rights Era.

“As I accept this assignment, the higher education landscape is complicated and confusing. Some are questioning if higher education is necessary. Some are attempting to turn back the hands of time. But, Livingstone College will make a difference,” Davis said.

“I stopped by to tell you to be president of Livingstone is to know that God takes what the world rejects and uses it to His glory. Livingstone is part of that grand group of colleges called Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Our schools never segregated, never discriminated,” Barber said.

“We have found creative ways to secure capital, and we are investing in revenue-generating assets that will support and sustain growth,” Davis said.

Barber charged Davis to be a leader, not a manager, a president of a college who produces graduates who can stand up and “take on the challenges now” – the challenges of the current era.

“We will manage the current economic model while addressing many of the challenges that plague institutions that are similar in size and scope. We serve a niche in the marketplace, and without a Livingstone College, countless young people and their families will remain trapped at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder with little or no means of escape.”

Davis, who follows Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins as president, is the first alumnus in 25 years to lead the college. Barber lauded Davis for his past record of being a progressive pastor, a fundraiser, and a fighter for justice. Many of the skills Davis developed in past positions, Barber noted, will be essential as a successful college president. After completing the oath of his office, President Davis took the microphone and told the audience he sees a “reimagined Livingstone College.” He forecasted it would be a resourceful, relevant, but respected HBCU.

“We have graduates who have the capacity to compete and to contribute in a global context with confidence and competency. It is today that we fit ourselves for the greater usefulness of tomorrow,” Davis said.

For more information, contact Kesha Williams kwilliams@livingstone.edu or Dr. State Alexander salexan@livingstone.edu



Geek Week Hosted by Livingstone College's Honors Program

By Dr. Da'Tarvia Parrish

The Honors Program of Livingstone College hosted Geek Week October 2 – 6, 2023, with the theme, *Becoming -Belonging - Being: The Academic Evolution of Techno-Humanity*. The week-filled activities fostered opportunities for everyone at Livingstone to engage in professional development opportunities, scholarly initiatives, and friendly academic competitions.

Monday's financial awareness event welcomed Dywane Hall of Society of Financial Education and Professional Development (SFEPD) an organization proclaimed as a global leader in financial education that works to increase financial literacy for all. Facilitated by the Honors Program's student president Madison Wright, over 200 students gathered in Tubman Theatre to explore the values of financial goal setting, credit and debt management, and saving and budgeting; in an effort to gain financial knowledge and skills for a foundation of economic success.

Undergirded with digital brand building, Tuesday's events welcomed MBA Livingstone College student Emile Dogbe-Gakpetor, Lowe's Corporate employee Tim Walker, and Kalyela Joseph of Allstate, all who presented on representation in a digital market. From LinkedIn profiles to purpose-driven activities, the Livingstone College alumni engaged over 100 students, who were introduced to methods of upgrading their digital footprints in the metaverse with headshots and descriptive texts, and key points of design to create and/or enhance their professional appeal.

The campus community gathered in Varick Auditorium at 11:00 a.m. for *I Need A Word Wednesday (INAWW)*, a worship experience hosted weekly for the college. The Honors Program partnered with Campus Minister, Rev. Lloyd Nivens IV for a breast cancer awareness-themed event, to increase knowledge, encourage testing, and support students and employees who have been affected. Immediately following INAWW, Honors Program director Da'Tarvia Parrish facilitated a Public Service Loan Forgiveness workshop. Exclusively for faculty and staff of the college, the event aimed to help with the student loan crisis in America and alleviate financial strains of millions of Americans. Wednesday continued with multiple virtual evening workshops to reach the college's - day, evening, and online students. As president of the Salisbury American Association of University Women (AAUW) branch, Da'Tarvia Parrish led the organization's signature Start Smart presentation, a program specifically designed to teach women how to negotiate salaries for a new job. Kenyanna Wilcox of Ken's Occasion and Occupational Links (KOOL) in Jacksonville, FL presented on professional dress in the interviewing process and in the workplace. From Delaware, Dr. Momodu Taylor's session showcased effective résumé design and presentation, and Rev. Dr. Reginald Boyd of Hood Theological Seminary delved into his expertise of graduate school admissions in efforts to increase awareness and confidence of the graduate application process. As the cost of a college education is a matter of concern for many students and their families, Chanel Quick, the new director of Alumni Affairs shared institutional awards that can aid students in financing their undergraduate education. Closing out the night, Amina Senior of MetLife facilitated a Canva-based vision board party framed in the scripture Habakkuk 2:2. With the goal of creating a digital tool to remind students of God's purpose and plans for their lives, the vision board serves to aid students in steering clear of distractions or discouragements.

Thursday's morning and afternoon schedule consisted of students engaging in paper/poster presentations in Humanities, science, business, and education, from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in Tubman Theatre. From examining the roles of economics in the narrative of Frederick Douglass to exploring the school to prison pipeline, 64 students shared presentations of scholarly thought and digital design, whereas top presenters included English education majors Kamari Scales and Nyla Gil-Cerda, and Business major Jeremiah Brown. The much-anticipated evening event included the annual quiz bowl tournament, sponsored by the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge Club (HCASC). Tournament winners, Team Nexus, won the \$200 grand prize and included players Ellis Dogbe, Jacob Adkins, Chris-



tian Bussey, and Curtxavier Fryson, coached by student Jayden Mongo.

Geek Week's final day was completely focused on voting, E.R.A. – education, registration, activation. Students attended multiple sessions in efforts to learn how to examine candidates' platforms and political records, along with learning the new voter ID requirements for North Carolinians. Honors Program students registered to vote and engaged in a Hi-five challenge that required them to register five friends. Eager to vote on October 25th, students culminated their voting activities with a talent showcase supported by Interfaith America, Rowan Concerned Citizens, Black Voters Matter, and Mission House, highlighting their plans and purpose for voting. Contestant, and second place winner Andrew Foster stated, "I am choosing to vote in this election because of the rights outlined for me in the 14th and 15th amendment in the US Constitution."

Ultimately, Geek Week events are opportunities for all Livingstone College students and employees to acquire professional experience, general knowledge, monetary rewards, and social awareness skills in an academically rewarding environment. To learn more about the Honors Program, visit <https://livingstone.edu/academics/honors-program/>

THE YOUTH MISSIONARY SOCIETY
A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
PRESENTS

Youth

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS
Host a Watch Party

FRIDAY | JANUARY 12, 2024 | 8 PM EST

CELEBRATING 112 YEARS
OF THE YOUTH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

MELVA POLK-WRIGHT
CONNECTIONAL SECRETARY OF YOUTH

Watch Online:
Facebook, YouTube and AMEZTV

ZION
THE AMERICAN CHURCH
OF THE METHODIST CONNECTION



**HTSNAA 1885 Society
Announces
Distinguished Speaker for Annual Dinner:
Corey D. B. Walker, Ph.D.
Dean, Wake Forest School of Divinity.**

[Salisbury, NC] – Hood Theological Seminary National Alumni Association (HTSNAA) 1885 Society is thrilled to announce its distinguished speaker for the upcoming annual dinner, centered around the theme "Making Disciples Utilizing Hybrid Ministry." Dr. Corey D. B. Walker, an esteemed scholar, academic leader, and a leading voice in African American philosophy, critical theory, ethics, and religion, will address this theme, promising an enlightening and thought-provoking experience for all attendees.

Event Details:

Date: November 16, 2023

Time: 6:00 PM

Venue: Hood Theological Seminary – Aymer Center

Tickets: \$85.00 – Contact any member of the HTSNAA Executive Board
or click on **Donate Now below**

For more information about the HTSNAA 1885 Society and the annual dinner
event, please visit

<https://www.hoodseminary.edu/alumni--friends/alumni-association>.



Livingstone College Homecoming Convocation

By Dr. Da'Tarvia Parrish

Class of 1973 and 1998 alumni of Livingstone College processed into Varick Auditorium to the tune of Rondeau de Premiere Suite as they and others gathered for the annual Homecoming Convocation on Friday, October 20, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Linda Morrison Mingo from the Class of 1983 presided over the program as the audience collectively opened with the Negro National Anthem, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing." Filled with golden graduates, programming aligned with the theme, "With GRACE (Gratitude, Altruism, Character, Excellence) From Thee, We are the Class of '73," guided the event as the class agent Larry Sommerville greeted the body. Sommerville noted the class has contributed of over \$300,000 for the next five years to student scholarships, and because of the leadership of President Anthony Davis, they will continue to support the institution. He stated, "We recognize the challenge really becomes one of finances [referencing student retention and graduation rates] . . . We will give each and every year as long as there is breath in our lungs."



Also of the class of 1973, Rev. Gloria Hicks McLaughlin followed with scripture from John 14:7-12, and Rev. Dr. Sidney Davis of the class rendered prayer stating with the help of God, the mighty Blue Bear fears no one and makes pathways for everyone. Under the direction of Christopher Gray and with soloist Virginia Rush, Livingstone College's Gospel Choir inspired attendees with a rendition of JJ Hairston's "It's Gonna Be Bigger" and "It's Changing."

Greetings from governing areas of Livingstone College and platform guests included: Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Presiding Prelate of the Piedmont Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Zion Church, Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, the 13th President of Livingstone College, Dr. Anthony J. Davis, Livingstone College National Alumni Association President Bruce Stanback, Student Government Association President Matthew Clinton, Miss Livingstone College Akera Barnes, Mister Livingstone College Jalen Robinson, and Orlando Ray Mitchell, Class of 1998's agent.

The Class of 1973 continued as John H. Johnson offered reflections, Antoinette Dawson Cody introduced the speaker, and Charletta Mack

Hines sang, To God be the Glory. Chairman of the Board of Trustees/Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church and Presiding Prelate for the Eastern North Carolina and South Atlantic Episcopal Districts, Bishop Kenneth Monroe, was the keynote speaker representing his graduating class. Entitled Adventures of Uncertainty: Making the Impossible Possible with God, Monroe challenged the audience to remember the faith that sustained them in their experiences growing up while facing blatant systemic oppression. He stated, "At the time, racism was not systematic to me. We had Jim Crow laws and segregation. Even the salary and wages were all a part of a system to keep blacks under control." Monroe continued highlighting faith in God leads to unimaginable transformation, whereas believers must focus on faith and teach



future generations of young Black Lives Matter. "A focused eye sees love in the midst of hatred," he added. Monroe's overall message to stay focused, serve faithfully, and stand firm as a people of God concluded with an allegorical tale encouraging all to - pray first, aim high, and stay focused.

Vice President of Livingstone College National Alumni Association Candice Johnson recognized members of the reunion classes from 1953 - 2018. The event concluded with the singing of the alma mater for all gathered and the Benediction by Bishop Monroe. Attendees recessed to the tune of The Prince Denmark's March to the annual tree planting and litany ceremony. Silver graduate and Miss Livingstone College 1998, Ronneshia Abrams Carter of Michigan, stated, "It simply feels good to be home. I'm elated to not only hear about the progress of the institution, but being here, I can also feel it. All praises be to God for Livingstone College."



A Heart for Overseas Mission - The Bartimaeus Project

in Conjunction with the Department of Global Missions of the AME Zion Church

*Advancing the Work of
Overseas Missions*



THE JANIE SPEAKS A.M.E. ZION HOSPITAL

Afrancho, Akumadan, Ghana

and AME Zion Schools across Ghana

PLEASE DONATE TOWARDS OUR GOAL OF

\$40,000.00

Janie Speaks is a faith-based health facility with the following projects: Expansion of the main building, which includes two-Operating Rooms, a Women's/OB Ward, a Men's Ward, and a Neonatal Unit. There are over **615 AME Zion Schools in Ghana**, and many need assistance to provide the quality education they desire for their students. including desks, textbooks, overhead projectors, paper, pencils, and technology



Mission Goal:

1. To support the work of the staff of The Janie Speaks Hospital and the clergy and members of The AME Zion Church as they continue the work begun by The AME Zion Church and reflect the passion and overseas missions work of the late Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. Janie Speaks to ensure the access of quality health care for the citizens of Ghana to help to complete the following projects:
 - a. Completion of the addition
 - b. Enhanced development of the Neonatal Ward
 - c. Establishment of a Dialysis Clinic
2. To assist AME Zion Church Schools in acquiring educational equipment, materials, resources, and staff to provide quality education for their students.

How to Donate:

1) Make checks or money orders payable to:

St. Paul AME Zion Church
1130 Lower Ferry Road
Ewing, NJ 08618
ATTN: For Ghana Overseas Missions

2) Electronically:

Givelify

St. Paul AME Zion, 1130 Lower Ferry Road, Ewing, NJ

CashApp - \$StPaulAMEZEwing

Website: <https://www.st-paulchurch.com>

NOTE: All disbursements will be made through the Department of Global Missions to the Western West Africa Episcopal District for action.

For more information, please contact The Bartimaeus Project via email thebartimaeusproject@gmail.com

On the Periphery: Homelessness, Health, and Hope



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

By Rev. Allison N. Lee, Ed.D., MTS
Social Justice Editor
Photos By Jose Luis Pelaez Inc/Getty Images

Homeless /'hōmləs/

1. having no home or permanent place of residence; condition of lacking stable, safe, and adequate housing.

Homelessness in the United States of America

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, shelter falls into the category of physiological needs – the most basic and fundamental things required for humans to survive. Shelter is of vital importance and a significant piece of the puzzle when considering the well-being of the mind, body, and spirit. Due to the essentiality of housing, of concern is the increasing unaffordability of shelter, interfaced with the reality touted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which is that as of 2022, at least 582,000 Americans were unhoused, an increase of 2,000 people since 2020. Being without a home is a problem that is increasingly on the rise, especially with the costs of being housed at an all-time high.

Homelessness and Health

Just above physiological needs in Maslow's Hierarchy are safety needs, inclusive of health. Health challenges among the unhoused are prevalent due to:

- *Daily Activities*—Some individuals who are unhoused live under circumstances that pose particular problems for developing a treatment plan. For many, it may be difficult to keep a supply of medication while living on the street. For an alcoholic trying to stay sober, a homeless existence may present too many opportunities for drinking. Some former patients complain that neuroleptic medications, prescribed for a schizophrenic illness, may make them too drowsy and interfere with their alertness against the dangers on the streets.
- *Multiplicity of Needs*—In addition to physical and mental health problems and difficulties with such things as housing and income maintenance, those who are unhoused also suffer from drug or alcohol abuse. Any healthcare program for homeless adults should expect that 25 to 40 percent of patients will suffer from serious alcohol or drug abuse problems (Fischer and Breakey, 1986).
- *Disaffiliation*—Although many without homes establish individual support networks outside a family structure, some lack those networks that enable most people to sustain themselves in society. Such isolation often causes (and sometimes is caused by) a limited capacity to

establish supportive relationships with other people. Difficulties in establishing and maintaining relationships can work against the development of cooperation with healthcare providers and may be an important factor in explaining what is often inaccurately described as a “lack of motivation.”

- *Distrust*—In addition to distrust of authority, some who are unhoused are disenchanted with health and mental health care providers. Some have had bad experiences with medications, hospitals, doctors, and other human service professionals and are leery of further involvement.

Homelessness and the Periphery

While being unhoused is an issue with respect to accessibility, covering, and health, in addition to a lack of physical location, those without homes exist on or outside of the periphery of society as well. Homelessness does not just encompass the absence of a set place of residence but also carries and falls into a category often labeled as “less than” by a society that does not just include the unhoused but the impoverished, incarcerated, etc. Bridget Deschenes states, “People experiencing homelessness are often marginalized. This stems from a power differential between those who have housing and those who do not.” This power differential shows up in a way that enforces democracy, working against the unhoused instead of for. The invisible line drawn in the sand between those with shelter and those without shows up in housing, health, career, community, accessibility, decision-making, family, equity, and much more.

In order to decrease the divide, we must consider implementing interventions that have the ability to help rather than harm. Those interventions are inclusive of, but not limited to, housing, income/rental assistance, harm reduction, sensitivity training, access to clinics, mental health support, support networks, etc. Also, it is important that, as a society, we move from a system-centered approach to a person-centered approach. A system-centered approach reinforces the unhoused on the periphery, which is marginalization, particularly if mistakes are punitive in nature and cause continued homelessness and/or marginalization. A person-centered approach assists people in moving beyond being unhoused in a way that ideally lessens disenfranchisement and perhaps even creates space and intentional opportunity for recovery.

As we close in on the 2023 holiday season, where people often think more about those who are unhoused, provide blessing bags, help out in soup kitchens, offer meals, etc., may we continue to actively seek ways in which we can support, shift mindset, petition government, and not just invite but intentionally create and develop space for the those whom society has placed on the periphery to come in closer.

ENTERTAINMENT & THE ARTS

Grief through the Seasons



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

By Asia Briana Brown

Last fall, I released my second poetry collection, Cemetery Psalms. I was grieving the death of my mother, which at the time of my book's release, I had marked sixteen months without her. Mom and I were close, knitted together like a pair of mittens in wintertime. We shared everything. Mom was a safe space: warm, funny, open, and real. Most importantly, she was spiritually attuned to Jesus Christ and always covered me in prayer, wisdom, and vulnerability. Two years later, I am experiencing my third fall season without her.



What I have learned about grief is that the grieving process gets harder, especially after all the anniversaries have passed: Mom's birthday, Mother's Day, and Mom's death anniversary. I recognized this pattern in early

August of this year: the yearning to hear my mother's voice, to talk to her as I so often did—multiple times daily. To not feel her was anguishing, especially as I prepared my bedtime routine. I would never again hear, “Good night, A.”

This past July, I wrote about grieving the death of a loved one in the second year on my website in my article, “The Second: Grieving Mom's Absence” and expressed how strange death is. Grief continually slides on this invisible emotional spectrum where some days, you are yearning for your loved one's comfort, whereas other days, your earliest memories of them collide with the most recent memories leading up to their death.

I learned from other grieving people in GriefShare—a nondenominational program that offers support groups across local churches and whose foundational guidance is rooted in the Bible—that some days will feel like healing progress, whereas other days will reignite the pain, especially

Cemetery
Psalms

Asia Briana Brown

when reliving the death of your loved one.

Cemetery Psalms was an unexpected release, yet poems that I had written years before Mom passed weaved into a tender harmony with grief poems that I wrote following Mom's death in July 2021. I have been told that we grieve different things in life: relationships, loved ones, homes, jobs, pets, et cetera. I have grieved for many of these as well, but my mom's absence is most deeply felt. As I navigate each day without her—while clinging to the Lord God and the love and guidance of close family, friends, and neighbors—my writing helps me to process and heal.

One of my poems from Cemetery Psalms, "Grief Shot," was written less than a month before I marked one year without my mom. "Grief Shot" encapsulates my grief journey. Here is a snippet:

Fresh wounds arise 10 months after yesterday.

Wait, that was Friday.
But I had joy Thursday,
Yet I could not not cry Saturday.

But wait,
you cannot escape the path paved by
Yahweh to reach her by day.
Don't forget!
Isaiah 57,
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18,
Psalm 34:18,
2 Corinthians 1:3-4,
and when the trumpet sounds,
when that trumpet sounds,
you will see her again.

Cemetery Psalms is available for purchase on Amazon.com.

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

By Rev. Dierdre' R. Parker-Rowson
Entertainment_arts@starofzion.org

Holidays are a time for family. As we approach this holiday season, we prepare for multigenerational gatherings where there will be plenty of food, fun, and love. Likely, we will recount the trials and accomplishments of the ones who have passed on, the ones who paved the way for us who remain. We celebrate their legacy. We, as people who have a rich history of resilience, do not always wait for holidays to congregate and celebrate our heritage. We do that through family reunions. Family reunions began after Emancipation when our formerly enslaved ancestors sought to reconnect with relatives who had been torn away by the cruelty of chattel slavery. It became a tradition for us that remains, even today.

Because of the disruption of families that enslavement caused, many families are unable to trace their roots back to the places where our stories began in this country. There are some who, because of the uniqueness of their stories, have access to the recorded history of their ancestors. One such family is the McKoy family of Columbus County, NC. They recently celebrated the life and legacy of Millie and Christine McKoy, conjoined twins born to Jacob and Monemia on July 11, 1851, while under the ownership of Jabez McKay. The family generously invited The Star of Zion to the celebration of the life and legacy of their very famous ancestors.

The life of Millie and Christine McKoy, affectionately known by their descendants as 'Aunt Millie-Christine,' was celebrated with a multimedia program held at Southeastern Community College in Whiteville, NC. This celebration included officials from the university, county commissioners, and descendants of the twins. Students from the surrounding elementary and middle schools performed. There were poetry and dance performances inspired by their lives. The highlight of the day was a special performance by Napoleon Maddox, who is a descendant of Aunt Millie-Christine. He is best known as a hip-hop ambassador, writer, producer, and human beatbox. His artistic practice is the crafting of stories of heritage rooted in parables and shared wisdom. He has a unique way of taking the historical juxtaposed against the contemporary to tell a story that is riveting, informative, and entertaining. His groundbreaking telling of the stories of his great grandaunts was mesmerizing.

After the performances, the audience was invited to the Wyche Gallery to view a sweeping exhibit. The exhibit coalesced the information that the performances alluded to, and a clearer vision of the life of Millie-Christine McKoy emerged for this writer.

The story of Millie-Christine McKoy is fascinating and should be in history books in North Carolina and the entire country. Her/their show value was noticed early in life. From 1852 to 1860, they passed through several owners. Their last legal owner was Joseph Pearson Smith, who reportedly paid \$30,000 for them. At age 14, they were freed after the Civil War and embarked on tours around the world. They were known as *The Two-Headed Nightingale*. Christine sang soprano and Millie sang

contralto. They earned upwards of six thousand dollars a week. They appeared in forty-eight states, often accompanying P.T. Barnum's Circus.

In their own words:

"A great many artists boast of having been before the Queen. Perhaps they have employed great diplomacy to get there. But with us, the case was different. Poor little monstrosities and black babies at that; we were sent for; and that without any influence at court to gain for us a Royal summons."

On June 24, 1871, Queen Victoria presented Millie-Christine with matching brooches.

Free of the bonds of slavery, they chose to remain under the guardianship of their former enslaver's widow upon his death.

"None can mistake our determination in remaining under the guardianship of Mrs. Smith. Our objective is twofold: We can trust her, and what is more, we feel grateful to her and regard her with true filial affection. We will not go with anyone else; where she goes, there will we go; where she tarries there, we will halt. We shall endeavor to imitate that deep devotion which Ruth evinced toward Naomi."

To remain with Smith's widow was their first independently made decision. Millie-Christine freely chose to be put on exhibition with stipulations that there would be no intrusive physical examinations.

Their great nephew, Fred McKoy, called them "the best Christian-hearted person I ever saw... I often wish I could live the life she lived."

In a conversation with Fred McKoy's grandson, Wilson Spaulding, the importance of keeping the story of Millie-Christine and all of those on whose shoulders we stand alive is paramount. Mr. Spaulding caught his passion for the stories of Aunt Millie-Christine from his grandfather.

"I can remember many stories from my grandfather," says Spaulding. "He had hundreds of albums of Millie-Christine. They wanted us to know our people. I am the sixth generation of the McKoy's of Millie-Christine." Mr. Spaulding is 84 years old. His memory is sharp, and his passion, like that of his grandfather, is infecting the next generations. "We must tell our kids about our history of his father," Mr. Spaulding says. "I didn't know he was a black historian. Back in the forties, he told us how to maneuver ourselves through this maze of dealing with white folks."

It is important to tell our stories to the next generation. Even though this writer grew up and took history in North Carolina. I did not know about Millie and Christine McKoy until their descendant, Rev. Kenneth McKoy, shared their story with me. He knew because someone shared their story with him.

On October 8, 1912, Millie passed away due to tuberculosis. Eight hours later, Christine joined her in death.

"We are indeed a strange people, justly regarded both by scientific and ordinary eyes as the greatest natural curiosities the world has ever had sent upon its surface. Physicians who have examined us say our formation or rather malformation is much more remarkable than the physical condition of the Siamese Twins."

May the legacy of Millie and Christine McKoy continue to live on.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

Psalm 139:14





Mr. Daman DeLeon
Health and Wellness Editor
Health_Wellness@StarOfZion.org

Hypertension: A Silent Assassin

By Daman De Leon, Health & Wellness Editor
Photos by annebaek/Getty Images/iStockphoto

The holidays are the time of year when what I call the two “Fs” are exceedingly common: Feasting and Fellowship. “Soul Food” is commonplace on our dinner tables, and a health-conscious diet tends to fall by the wayside. Hypertension, AKA High Blood Pressure, is a condition that negatively affects more than 28% of Americans and approximately 46% of African-Americans as a group.

Researchers do not have a definitive answer to this question, but some believe the following things have something to do with it:

- **Genetic factors.** High rates of high blood pressure in Black people may be due to the genetic makeup of people of African descent. Researchers have uncovered some facts: In the U.S., Black people respond differently to high blood pressure drugs than do other groups of people. African Americans also seem to be more sensitive to salt, which increases the risk of having high blood pressure.
- **Environmental factors.** Some scientists believe that high blood pressure in Black people is due to things unique to the experience of African Americans. Black people worldwide have high blood pressure rates similar to that of white people. But in the U.S., the difference is dramatic: 41% of African Americans have high blood pressure compared to 27% of white Americans. In addition, Black people in the U.S. are more likely to be overweight than Black people in other countries. Some experts think that social and economic factors – including discrimination and economic inequality – are responsible for this difference.

Several Factors weigh in on some major contributions to this condition:

- Increased age
- Excessive weight
- A family history of high blood pressure
- Having diabetes
- Inactivity
- Lots of salt and fat in your diet
- Not getting enough potassium
- Smoking

Your doctor can easily measure blood pressure. A blood pressure reading includes two numbers, one written on top of the other.

The top number is called your systolic blood pressure. This number represents the force of blood through your blood vessels during your heartbeat.

- **119 or below is the normal** systolic blood pressure.
- **120-129 is elevated.**
- **130-139 and greater is Stage 1 high blood pressure.**
- **140 and higher is Stage 2 high blood pressure.**
- **180 or above is a hypertensive crisis. Call 911 immediately.**

The bottom number is called your diastolic blood pressure. This number represents the force of blood through your blood vessels in between heartbeats while your heart is resting.

- **79 or below is normal diastolic blood pressure.**
- **79 or below, combined with 120-129 systolic, is elevated.**
- **80-89 is Stage 1 high blood pressure**
- **90 and greater is Stage 2 high blood pressure.**

If you have high blood pressure, consult your doctor to find which combination of treatments works best, given your individual health and



lifestyle. Your treatment plan is likely to include the following elements:

- **Follow the DASH eating plan.** The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet plan includes eating less fat and saturated fat, as well as eating more fresh fruits and vegetables and whole-grain food. Limiting alcohol consumption can also help lower your blood pressure. A dietitian can help you find ways to meet these goals without giving up your favorite foods.
- **Limit salt intake.** Because Black people seem more sensitive to salt, it makes sense to watch how much salt you eat. Table salt and sodium used in processed foods are the two sources of sodium in your diet. Consult a dietitian to learn how to select and prepare tasty, low-salt meals.
- **Watch your weight.** Being overweight increases your risk of high blood pressure. Following the DASH eating plan and getting regular exercise can help you lose weight. Ask your doctor to help you determine a goal. Your doctor can also refer you to other health-care professionals for help in setting up a weight loss plan.
- **Quit smoking.** Tobacco smoke can make blood pressure rise. It can also directly damage your heart and blood vessels. Talk with your doctor about ways to quit.
- **Medication.** Your doctor may prescribe medication to control your high blood pressure. It's common to take more than one drug to treat the problem. Your doctor may ask you to switch drugs or change the dosage until you find a combination that works best to control high blood pressure with the least side effects for you. Drugs used to treat high blood pressure include:
 - Diuretics**, reduce the amount of fluid in your blood by helping your body rid itself of extra salt. This type of blood pressure medication should be used in most cases to treat high blood pressure.
 - Calcium channel blockers, ACE inhibitors, and alpha-blockers** help keep your blood vessels from tightening up. Your doctor may want to start with calcium channel blockers by themselves or in combination with diuretics.
 - Beta-blockers** prevent your body from using the hormone adrenaline by blocking the cell receptors for it. Adrenaline is a stress hormone. It makes your heart beat harder and faster. It also makes your blood vessels tighten. All of this makes blood pressure higher.
- It is also important to note that blood pressure alternates throughout the day, depending on one's activities. Check your blood pressure as often as recommended by your doctor.
- Follow your treatment plan consistently. Let your doctor know right away if you have problems with part of the plan. Your doctor may refer you to other healthcare professionals who can help.
- See your doctor as often as requested. Bring your blood pressure records to show your doctor how well the plan is working.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about medication side effects. Know when to call your doctor if there is a problem.

Your knowledge about the risk of high blood pressure is the first step in controlling this condition so you can remain as healthy as possible for years to come.

References

Hypertension in blacks.

Hildreth CJ, Saunders E. *Md Med J.* 1991 Mar;40(3):213-7. PMID: 2008167

Health and the black person: an annotated bibliography. White EH. *Am J Nurs.* 1974 Oct;74(10):1839-41.

Black/white differences in response to antihypertensive therapy. Materson BJ. *J Natl Med Assoc.* 1985 May;77 Suppl(Suppl):9-13.

The Healthy Churches 2030 Conference Equips Faith Communities to Respond to Racial Health Disparities

Celebrating Ten Years: Nov. 13-16, 2023

In response to the alarming health disparities affecting Black Americans, the Healthy Churches 2030 Conference equips Black faith communities and families to become community hubs for health awareness, education, and support. The four-day virtual conference, running Nov. 13-16, will provide dozens of expert presentations and educational sessions for faith and community members, pastors, deacons, missionaries, elders, public health and medical professionals, caregivers, advocates, and more. Registration is available at www.HC2030.org.

The conference is presented by The Balm In Gilead, Inc., a 35-year-old organization that mobilizes faith communities to respond to health crises in Black communities. "Faith communities are the oldest, most important, and most ubiquitous institutions that Black people own, lead, and fund," says Dr. Pernessa C. Seele, the founder and CEO of the organization. "Their potential and influence to lessen the impact of systemic disparities and improve the health status of African Americans is unmatched."

The conference provides a unique setting for faith and public health representatives to work together toward solutions aimed at reversing and eliminating health disparities. The Healthy Churches 2030 Conference will focus on many conditions documented as having a worse impact on African Americans as a result of systemic racism, including higher rates and inadequate treatment for infant and maternal morbidity, cardiovascular disease, mental health conditions, Alzheimer's, and other diseases.

Healthy Churches 2030 is founded on the principles of Healthy People 2030, an initiative of the Department of Health and Human Services. The focus of Healthy People 2030 is the elimination of health disparities and creating equitable opportunities for people to live healthy lives.

Below are just a few of the featured guest speakers:

Dr. Pernessa C. Seele
Founder & CEO
The Balm In Gilead Inc, Richmond, VA

Bishop Horace E. Smith, MD
Senior Pastor, Apostolic Faith Church
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Northwestern University, Chicago, IL



The Right Reverend Dr. Yvette Flunder
The Presiding Bishop
The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, San Francisco, CA

Bishop Rudolph W. McKissick, Sr.
Pastor Emeritus, Bethel Baptist Institutional Church
Founder/CEO, Mindful Meditation Ministries, Inc.
Jacksonville, FL

Winnie Byanyima
Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General
UNAIDS and the United Nations

Robert A. Winn, MD
Director and Lipman Chair, Oncology
Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Rev. Tony Lee
Founder and Senior Pastor
Community of Hope AME Church, District Heights, MD

Michelle D. Hare

Certified group exercise instructor, Personal trainer
American Council on Exercise, Atlanta, GA

Dr. Barbara L. Shaw
Chair, Board of Directors
The Balm In Gilead Inc., Baltimore, MD

Pamela Price, RN
Deputy Director
The Balm in Gilead, Inc, Richmond, VA

Cary L. Goodman
Program and Development Consultant
The Balm In Gilead, Inc, Richmond, VA

Saidi Mpendu, MD
Country Director
The Balm In Gilead Inc - Tanzania

Registration for Healthy Churches 2030 is required and costs \$50 per person, covering all four days of the conference. Special rates of \$35 per person are available for groups of 20 or more. For more information, visit www.healthychurches2030.org.

Holiday Family, Fun, & Fellowship: How Essential is it?

By Daman De Leon
Health and Wellness Editor

In the “hustle-and-bustle” of today’s world, it’s very easy to overlook that family time and fellowship with loved ones. Family values is a catch phrase often used by politicians on the right, but the term is very subjective. What are family values? Well, that often depends on the culture, and in the United States, a country made up of hundreds of different ethnic groups and nationalities, there is bound to be some disagreement on what family values are. When politicians use the word family values, they are often referring to the traditional two-parent family, consisting of a mother, father, and biological children. But this is not even realistic these days with the high rate of divorce.

In many cases, marriages involve stepchildren and stepparents, and sadly, in some communities, the two-parent family is not the norm. In the African-American community, about 70 percent of children are born out of wedlock and often raised in single-parent homes. Studies also show that out-of-wedlock birth rates in the white and Latino communities are also on the rise, making the two-parent family increasingly rare. However, just because the out-of-wedlock birth rate is high in the African

American community, it does not always mean that African Americans have poor family values. In many cases, although black fathers are not married to their mothers, they often have relationships with their children and care for them. In addition, many African-American men care for non-biological children.

African-American family life has several distinctive features related to the timing and approaches to marriage and family formation, gender roles, parenting styles, and strategies for coping with adversity. Some of those distinctive features include, but are not limited to, education, spiritual beliefs, and economics.

References

- Barbarin, O. (1983). “Coping with ecological transitions by black families: A psycho-social model.” *Journal of Community Psychology* 11:308-322.
- Chapman, A. B. (1997). “The black search for love and devotion: facing the future against all odds.” in *black families, 3rd edition*, ed. h. p. McAdoo. Newbury Park, ca: sage.



Ms. Angel Eason
Lifestyle Editor
Lifestyle@StarOfZion.org

LIFESTYLE

Fall/Winter Activities for the Family

Fall is here, and it is the best time of year to eat sweet potato pie, drink hot chocolate, and go Christmas Caroling with family and friends. Below is a list of family-friendly activities to indulge in during arguably the best time of year.



1. **Apple picking** - Google the words “Apple Picking” and see what pops up near you. This is fun for all ages.
2. **Run through a corn maze.**
3. **Host a potluck** - Ask your family and/or friends to bring a fall dish.
4. **Volunteer at a food bank** - This time of year, food banks are really busy preparing for the holidays. Share with your children and/or grandchildren the importance of giving back and find a local food bank to assist. Ask your church family to join you. Call the local food



bank first to see what volunteer opportunities are available and what information they need from you.

5. **Christmas shopping**
6. **Have a fall photoshoot** - Have you tried using your smartphone for photos? Try it if you want to save money. Photos will look great. All you need is a tripod or a person to assist.
7. **Attend a local college football game.**
8. **Have a movie night.**
9. **Learn about the importance of Christmas; Jesus is the REASON for the season!** - Host a play or event at your local church honoring Jesus and all that He has done for the world.
10. **Bake a sweet potato pie.** - A traditional southern dish. There are so many recipes on the internet for this one. Talk to a fellow church member, as their recipe might be better than Google’s.



SAVE THE DATE

Join us for the historic joint retreat for CHAPLAINS
endorsed by the Historically Black Methodist Churches:
The CME, AME and AME Zion Churches



Thursday-Friday, January 11-12, 2024

Crowne Plaza Ravinia Hotel
4400 Ashford-Dunwoody Rd, Dunwoody, GA
Rate: \$149 per night + tax

Ask For The “Philips School Of Theology Meeting Rate” When You Book
(Nearest airport: ATL – Hartsfield Jackson)

Retreat Registration \$75
(Thursday dinner and Friday lunch included)

Register at:
<https://bit.ly/chaplain-retreat>
by November 30, 2023.

Purpose:
Black Methodist Chaplains coming together to enhance relationships, embrace our history and empower our presence for bold and relevant service.

Theme:
“Engaging the Challenges of Culture, Church and Vocation”

Schedule at a Glance:

Thursday, January 11 th from 4 – 8 pm
Opening Worship, Introductions, Summary of the Theme/Purpose, Dinner

Friday, January 12 th from 9 am – 3 pm
Meditation, Presentations/Continuing Education, Lunch, Closing Session

Hosted by the Denominational Chaplain Endorsers:

Bishop Teresa E. Snorton, The CME Church
Bishop Jeffrey Leath, The AME Church
Dr. Vergel Lattimore and Dr J. Elvin Sadler, The AME Zion Church

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



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



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



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



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



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



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



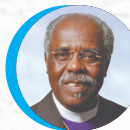
Bishop Joseph Johnson (Retired)
 45 Awesome Ridge, Garner, NC 27529
 Ph: (704) 877-9646
 Email: djjj85@windstream.net



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



10. Bishop U. U. Effiong
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



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



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

GENERAL OFFICERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rev. Dr. D.B. Cannon,

Dept. of Global Missions Office & Missionary Seer Editor

P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770 Ph: (704) 599-4630;

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

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

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

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

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

P.O. Box 217258, Charlotte, NC 28221

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

Rev. Dr. 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

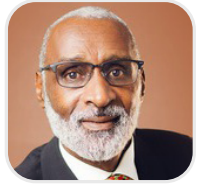
Fax: (585) 546-1652, Office: (585) 546-5007; Email: derrillblue@gmail.com

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



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

Dementia & The Black Church

By Ronald Nathan
World Politics Editor
Photo By Getty images/FG Trade



There are some illnesses that are making their presence known in the churches that African Americans attend, which we rarely name or acknowledge. One such condition is dementia. Many times, we brush the subject away with a joke. Take, for example, when Brother Harry (not his name) could not find his way back to his seat after receiving communion, we snigger; or when Sister Steph (not her name) came to church late because she got lost on her way to the church, she has driven to for thirty years, we may just roll our eyes. These incidents, however, should be taken seriously as they can be a telltale sign of dementia brought on by the early effects of Alzheimer's disease.



So, let's demystify the subject as this month is Alzheimer's month in the United States of America. Why does it seem like we are hearing more of this disease than in times past? Well-aging is a worldwide process showing improved healthcare successes over the last century. Many people live longer and healthier lives, so there is a greater proportion of older people. It is important, however, to state that dementia is not a part of normal aging.

Dementia is a general term for a decline in mental ability, such as memory, reasoning, or other thinking skills, which are severe enough to interfere with our daily lives. Alzheimer's is a specific disease that is the most common cause of dementia. Some of the regular signs of dementia are:

- Memory loss
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks
- Problems with language
- Disorientation to time and place
- Poor or decreased judgment

- Problems keeping track of things
- Misplacing things
- Changes in mood and behavior
- Trouble with images and spatial relationships
- Withdrawal from work and other social activities

There are 55 million people worldwide living with dementia, with 10 million new cases being diagnosed every year. It is said to be the fastest-growing disease in the world. Nations are waking up to the fact that this is a costly disease. It is estimated that the global cost of dementia is US\$1.3 trillion.

For those diagnosed with dementia, there are practical things we can do that could help us manage the symptoms; to date, there is no definitive cure for dementia.

Those practical things include:

- Staying physically active.
- Eating healthily.
- Stop smoking and drinking alcohol.
- Get regular check-ups with your doctor.
- Write down everyday tasks and appointments to help you remember important things.
- Keep up your hobbies and do things that you enjoy.
- Try new ways to keep your mind active.
- Spend time with friends and family and engage in community life.

Furthermore, it is important to plan ahead of time. Over time, it may be harder to make important decisions for yourself or your finances:

- Identify people you trust to support you in making decisions and help you communicate your choices.
- Create an advance plan to tell people what your choices and preferences are for care and support.
- Carry your ID with your address and emergency contacts when leaving the house.
- Reach out to family and friends for help.
- Talk to people you know about how they can help you.
- Join a local support group.

Of course, each individual should make provision for their health. The family unit is also responsible for contributing to the care of family members when ill-health strikes. However, the Black Church is uniquely placed to assist persons of faith with dementia or those caring for persons living with dementia. This includes facilitating open discussions on all the issues surrounding a disease that affects black elders twice as much as white people. Mentioning this condition in sermons, bible studies, and discussion groups is extremely helpful and assists in removing any stigma that may be attached to dementia or Alzheimer's. The Black Church should act as a signpost to gaining help by providing up-to-date information through literature or videos. Early diagnosis of any disease is of vital importance. We are aware from other studies that African Americans then access medical services later than every other ethnic group in the United States of America.

Creating a Dementia support group is vitally similar to cancer support, sickle cell, etc. Not only for the assistance of those with dementia but also for their caregivers. Research has shown that Black dementia caregivers were 69% less likely than White caregivers to use respite services, although the need for dementia care relief is considerable among Black families.

It is imperative that the Black Church, as the body of Christ, values all its members—even those who are challenged by the mental deterioration that comes with dementia.



Official Statement

Of The Board of Bishops Of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church On The Hamas Attacks & The War In Israel & Palestine

*“The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.
My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.”
(Isaiah 32: 17,18 NRSVue)*

The A.M.E. Zion Church, “The Freedom Church” joins with our sisters and brothers in Israel and Palestine to lament the violence that is devastating the lives of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian men, women, and children. The slaughter of innocent lives at a Festival of Peace and Love in Israel on October 7, 2023 was evil and must be condemned. There is no justification for the murdering of children, the elderly, and innocent civilians whether they be Israeli or Palestinian. All hostages, including our fellow American citizens, must be treated humanely and released as soon as possible.

Some argue that it is too soon to address the existing systemic injustices that have fueled the cycle of violence in Israel and Palestine, suggesting that it may lead to a false moral equivalency between resistance and terrorism, between self-defense and brutal, hate-driven attacks. We disagree. Two truths can be held simultaneously. Persons of moral clarity can fiercely condemn acts of terrorism by Hamas while also speaking out against the collective punishment of the people of Gaza and the life threatening conditions imposed upon the Palestinian population. Israeli and Palestinian lives are of equal value, and each of their lives matter.

We must reject hate in whatever form it manifests itself. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. correctly stated; *“Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”*

Our prayers are offered for all of those directly impacted by the death of loved ones and the thousands who have been and will be injured in body and spirit, physically and emotionally. We agonize with the families of those held hostage and are deeply concerned by the displacement of more than a million Palestinians who have been cut off from most water, food, and electricity.

The A.M.E. Zion Church has been calling for justice for the Palestinian people for decades. We had earnestly hoped for a two-state solution allowing the people of both Palestine and Israel to live and prosper, freely and securely side by side. Although such a resolution seems further away now than ever, we refuse to surrender to ultimate despair. Both Israeli and Palestinian children deserve a future of freedom, security, and economic opportunity. The failure to work towards peace will inevitably continue this vicious cycle of oppression, destruction, and death.

As the Israeli government executes its war on Hamas, we forcefully remind them that Hamas is not the Palestinian people. As our partners in freedom and justice protest on behalf of the Palestinian people, we strongly caution that our righteous demands not be hijacked by those who would wantonly kill babies.

To all our beloved Jewish, Muslim, and Christian sisters and brothers, along with others of goodwill, may we strengthen our resolve, deepen our unity, pray for justice and peace, and recommit to act together against hatred, racism, antisemitism, and Islamophobia.

May the lives of all people and the memories of all the victims ever be a blessing. Precious Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers!

**Yours in the cause of salvation, liberation, and justice; we are the Board of Bishops
of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church - The Freedom Church:**

Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr., President
Bishop Kenneth Monroe, Senior Bishop
Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr.
Bishop Dennis V. Proctor
Bishop Mildred B. Hines (Deceased)
Bishop W. Darin Moore

Bishop Seth O. Lartey
Bishop George D. Crenshaw
Bishop Hilliard Dogbe
Bishop Uduak Effiong
Bishop Brian R. Thompson, Sr.
Bishop Eric Leake

Bishop Joseph Johnson (Retired)
Bishop Marshall H. Strickland (Retired)
Bishop Nathaniel Jarrett, Jr. (Retired)
Bishop George W.C. Walker, Sr. (Retired)
Bishop Samuel Chuka Ekemam, Sr. (Retired)
Bishop Warren Matthew Brown (Retired)
Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr. (Retired)

DONE THIS THE 17TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2023

Mary E. Taylor

July 21, 1936 - September 13, 2023



Mary E. Taylor was born Mary Elizabeth Scott on July 21, 1936, to Henry and Sophia Scott in St. Louis, Missouri. She is the oldest of three siblings.

She was educated in St. Louis Public School System. Upon the passing of her mother in 1945, she, her sister and brother were adopted by her aunt and uncle Luxola and the Reverend Charles S. Williams. The family eventually moved



to Omaha, Nebraska where she completed her secondary and high school education graduating from Lincoln High School in 1954. She received her degree in Practical Nursing from St. Catherine's Hospital, Omaha, Nebraska. Mary matriculated at the Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio, with a B.A. in Political Science, 1977 and has done studies for the Masters in Religious Education, at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. She met and married the love of her life, Walter J. Taylor, Jr. on July 1, 1956. Walter was in the United States Air Force (USAF) and was stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, so they moved to Dayton, Ohio in 1959. To this union, a daughter was born, Sheila Marie Taylor on March 19, 1962. She is the grandmother of Ashanti J'Leah Walden and Great-grandmother (GG) of Iris Elizabeth Carr.

Mary was employed as a Private Duty Nurse for over 30 years for Freeman, an Architect, and Dorthea Pretzinger, of Kettering, Ohio caring for their youngest son Richard who was a Hydrocephalic Paraplegic who passed at the age of 50. Upon his death Mary continued to work taking care of Dorothea until her death.

In 1960, she became a member of the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church under Reverend D.R. Miller. She served in many Ministries in her 62 years. Past Parent Body President, Woman's Overseas Missionary Society, St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, a member of the Trustee Board when the church was built at its current location on Laurel Drive, Member of the Chancel Choir, Deaconess, Trustee Aide Club in which she one of the Founding Members, 6th International President of the Lay Council (1993-1997), A.M.E. Zion Church where she established several Councils overseas. Other outstanding accomplishments include the establishment of J'Leah's Closet (in the name of her granddaughter) in which donated children and adult clothing was sent overseas to Trinidad-Tobago and Barbados through the Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Zion Church. In 1997, she completed a \$50,000.00 grounds beautification project at the Harriet Tubman Memorial properties in Auburn, New York, for the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Home for the Aged and other church activities which provided clothing for the needy and food banks that feed the hungry.

In 1977 she became a member of Eta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated, Lambda Chapter. On the local level she served as Chapter Basileus, Secretary, Chatelaine and Parliamentarian. In 1991, she was elected Northern Region Director where she served from 1991-1995. She was instrumental in establishing the first undergraduate chapter of Eta Phi Beta at Central State University in 1982. Her daughter was one of the 12 Charter Members of Beta Eta Chapter.

Mary was very active in her community, church, civic, and civil rights life. She established a tutoring program for math and reading, and a preventative drug program for parents and children through the Dayton Section of the National Council of Negro Women. She also started the first Pancake Breakfast in the West Dayton Area with all proceeds going to feed the hungry and assist the homeless. This project is now City-wide.

Mary E. Taylor is a Life Member of the National Council of Negro Women. She was Past President of NCNW Dayton Section, Assistant State Convener for Ohio, and Chairperson of its 40th Anniversary. She is also a Life Member of NAACP where she served as Unit Secretary and as 2nd Vice President. A member of NAACP since 1968, she participated in Voter's Registration and Membership activities. For many years, she chaired the Annual Radio-thon and served on the Freedom Fund Banquet Committee. She gave many hours on a day-to-day basis in the local office serving the needy and elderly with information on civil rights concerning jobs, education, and racial discrimination.

This active lady is affiliated with many religious, civic, and civil organizations; namely the World Methodist Council, Executive Committee; the General Board and Foundation Trustee of the Ohio Council of Churches; World Federation of Methodist Women; President of Church Women United in Greater Dayton, Executive Board; and Vice Chair, Planning of the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, Wilberforce, Ohio.

Mrs. Taylor is the recipient of over 34 awards too numerous to list. One she was very proud of, she received May 18, 1991, from Dr. Arthur E. Thomas, President of Central State University in recognition of her Outstanding Service as National President of the CSU Parents Association. A World traveler, she traveled to 5 continents to include Africa, Asia, South America, Europe, and North America.

Her Motto for Life was "If I could help somebody along the way, then my living will not be in vain".



SHARING THE TRANSITION TO ETERNAL REWARD

Dr. Mary Taylor

FORMER INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT
CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL
A.M.E. ZION CHURCH



CELEBRATION OF LIFE SERVICES
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

VISITATION: 10:00 TIL 11:00 AM
FUNERAL: 11:00 AM

Mt. ENON MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
1501 WEST 3RD STREET
DAYTON, OHIO 45402

INTERMENT:
VA NATIONAL CEMETERY

SERVICES ENTRUSTED TO:
THOMAS FUNERAL HOME
4208 SALEM AVE
DAYTON, OHIO 45416

EXPRESSIONS MAY BE FORWARDED TO:
HER DAUGHTER:
MRS. SHEILA TAYLOR WALDREN
2900 FOREST GROVE
DAYTON, OHIO 45406

CAUGHT UP TO MEET HIM

(Man In congregation thinking to himself that lately, Pastor seems to be endowed with a little more power than usual. His sermons are usually good and impactful, so it's nothing new for him to bless us with the word the way he is doing, but it seems to be something different right now. Anyway, I feel like now is the perfect time to invite my co-worker, whom I've been bragging about the church to. Co-worker after accepting the invitation, and I thought was enjoying service)

Co-Worker: Wow, brother you were so right about the power your Pastor has. I am literally watching people walk up to greet him, and after talking to him for a second, they're walking away, TREMBLING with what has to be the power of the Lord!"

Brother: Amen, brother, would you like to meet him?"

Coworker: "I think so, I'm truly inspired"

Brother: "Walk right up. He is friendly!"

(Coworker walks up to Pastor with a handout)

Pastor: "Hallelujah, how are you? Happy to have you!"

(Coworker spins around and begins to walk away, holding his face. Brother looks on in confusion.)

Brother: "That powerful, huh?" he laughs.

Coworker: "Please go greet your Pastor"

(Brother greets Pastor and realizes what's been going on.)

Brother: "I can't believe what I thought was power was...was..."

Coworker: Brother, I don't know how to tell you this, but that's not power. That's a smell that is spinning us around and away."



THE STAR OF ZION

CHRISTMAS ISSUE AD

PLACEMENT PRICING

FULL PAGE AD	HALF PAGE AD	QUARTER PAGE AD
❄️ \$250	❄️ \$175	❄️ \$87.50

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS NOVEMBER 15, 2023

(Above Ad Pricing Available For Non-Campaign/Full Color Only)

Visit www.starofzion.org/ads-publishing or scan QR code for our most recent Pricing and Publishing Guidelines.
 For Graphic Design services, Special Placement or more information please email Sales@starofzion.org.

MR. DARIN KENT, EDITOR IN CHIEF, THE STAR OF ZION



52ND

QUADRENNIAL
GENERAL CONFERENCE

JULY 24-28

2024

OTE

REV. DR.
MELANIE MILLER

*Zion's
Strong Future*

VOTE ZION'S VOICE FOR CHANGE

JEREMIAH 29:11

FOR BISHOP

STRENGTHEN TAKE ACTION REFOCUS OPTIMIZE NEUTRALIZE GROW

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: WWW.MILLER4BISHOP.COM

