

Season's Greetings Zion!

It's time to spread and share peace, love, and positivity among friends & family.
We hope you enjoy our Annual Christmas Greetings Issue for the holiday season...

THE STAR OF ZION

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Merry Christmas



**HAPPY
KWANZAA**

and A Blessed New Year!



Mrs. Debra Chappelle-Polk
Zion Spotlight Editor
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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.

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Article/Ad Submission Deadline Dates

January 2024 Issue.....December 15, 2023
 February 2024 Issue.....January 15, 2024
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 April 2024 Issue.....March 15, 2024
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The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Receives 1.25 Million Dollar Grant

By The Star of Zion News

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, one of the nation’s oldest African-American denominations, has been awarded a \$1.25-million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.

Continuing in the heralded legacy of its founder, Bishop James Varick, world-renowned abolitionist prognosticators Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth, and steeped in the rich tradition of liberation and justice, as “The Freedom Church,” the grant seeks to assist the Denomination in leading preachers to recapture



the art of relevant, compelling, and contextual preaching to its congregations and communities.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is one of 81 organizations being funded through the competitive round of Lilly Endowment’s Compelling Preaching Initiative.

The grant will be housed and facilitated through the Of-

office of the General Secretary-Auditor, The Reverend Dr. J. Elvin Sadler, and assisted by the Rev. Dr. Dominique A. Robinson. Dr. Sadler, the Program Director, states, "The A.M.E. Zion Church has been blessed with a rich tapestry of prophetic preachers, who have helped to shape the landscape for communities during some of the most critical times in our nation's past, and we look forward to recapturing this rich legacy, as we chart the course of preaching for future generations. We are grateful to Lilly Endowment for honoring us with this opportunity!"

Dr. Robinson further states: "It is a tremendous honor, opportunity, and sacred responsibility to contribute to the rich legacies and cultural significance of African American preaching and the prophetic witness of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. I am elated and committed to stewarding this grant as Program Manager. This project aims to educate, equip, and empower Zion preachers through rigorous scholarship, research, collaboration, and engagement while ensuring our role in maintaining, shaping, and building the landscape of contemporary Black preaching and inspiring generations of communities to come." Bishop Eric L. Leake, Chairman of the Administrative Board, Records, Statistics and Archives, and the Office of the General Secretary-Auditor, states: "Preaching is



a sacred and special call for the men and women of God! Therefore, this is a great, awesome, and timely opportunity for The A.M.E. Zion Church to receive the Compelling Preaching Initiative grant! This grant will help preachers in every generation to sharpen the skills, gifts, and ministry of preaching in times like these. In this season, it is important that the tradition of preaching, in the African American tradition, through the gospel of Jesus Christ, be held in high esteem! How exciting!"

Capturing the spirit of prolific denominational voices of the past, such as Bishops J.W. Hood, Alfred Gilbert Dunston, George Junius Leake, Charles H. Foggie, W. Darin Moore, and the Reverend Drs. Richard Council, Ocie Brown, and William O. Carrington, who Dr. Gardner C. Taylor said was one of the greatest preachers he had ever heard, the grant will seek to recapture the spirit of such prolific giants while providing new methods for preaching to ever-evolving cultures through national and regional events, mentoring and preaching labs, to shape further the art form of compelling preaching in an ever-evolving culture. This will be done by offering training on the connectional and episcopal levels, establishing peer preaching cohorts, and making resources accessible through multi-media platforms for homiletical development.

For further information, please contact the Office of the General Secretary-Auditor at KayGabriel@AMEZion.org.

CAMPBELL CHAPEL HONORS ITS FIRST FEMALE PASTOR

By The Star of Zion

October 8, 2023, was a special day for Campbell Chapel AME Zion Church, Bloomfield, Kentucky. It observed "Harriet McElvaney Day" with a program of tributes, accolades, presentations, and proclamations as it observed the accomplishments of its first female pastor in its 148-year history. Mrs. Janice Stivers served as the Mistress of Ceremony.

Rev. McElvaney was also honored by people from all over the Kentucky Conference as they acknowledged over 60 years of service as a musician, Christian Educator, teacher, and pastor.

The guest speaker of the hour was Rev. Erich V. Shumake, Pastor of Taylortown AME Zion Church and Presiding Elder of the Bardstown District, Kentucky Conference. His sermon was taken from James 2:19-29, 26, A Faith That Makes A Difference. This was attested to by many people of the Kentucky Conference, including a letter, read by Ms. Candice Lewis of Campbell Chapel, from Bishop and Mrs. Michael Angelo Frencher, who said in part, "Thank you, Campbell Chapel, for setting aside this day to honor this woman of God who has blessed so many people in so many ways."

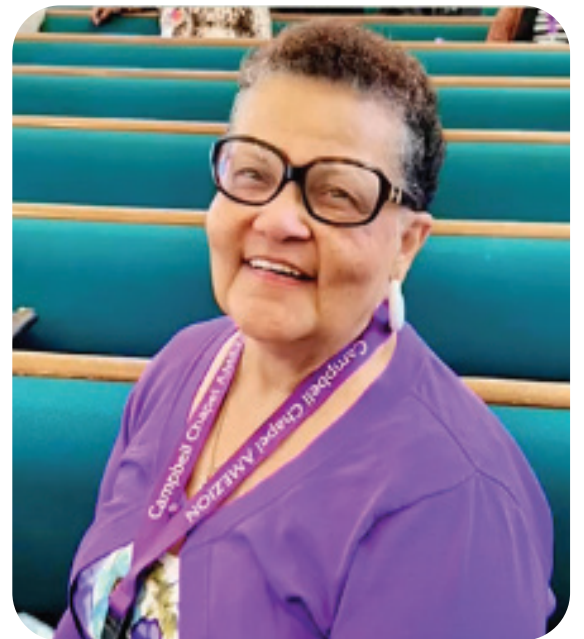
Words of appreciation were also given by Rev. Dr. O. Lacy Evans, Presiding Elder of the Louisville District, Rev. Tanisha Durrett-Simpson, Rev. George Phillips, Rev. James C. Tutt (Presiding Elder Emeritus), Rev. Charles Mitchell of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Mr. Leo Stivers, Preachers Steward of Campbell Chapel, Mr. & Mrs. Bill McReynolds (Zion Temple, Madisonville, KY) and Mrs. Lula Howard, who chronicled her journey starting at Stoner Memorial AME Zion Church playing for the Youth Choir at the age of 12.

The Taylortown Choir beautifully sang "Great Is Your Name" and "He's

Done Enough," very appropriate for this occasion.

Rev. Carolyn Thompson, current Pastor of Campbell Chapel, read a proclamation from Governor Andy Beshear, of the State of Kentucky honoring Rev. McElvaney as a Kentucky Colonel, the highest honor given to lay persons in Kentucky. She said in part, "I can't fill Rev. Mac's shoes, but I'm bringing new shoes to Campbell Chapel."

In her closing remarks, Rev. McElvaney stated she was humbly appreciative of this honor, but in everything, she has tried to be obedient to the Lord who placed her in this service. She attested to the words of Andre' Crouch, "Just let me live my life, let it be pleasing, Lord, to Thee; And if I gain any praise, let it go to Calvary." Rev. McElvaney retired from active pastoring in June 2023 after Campbell Chapel hosted the 157th Session of the Kentucky Annual Conference. It was a joyous occasion with all praise, honor, and glory going to our Almighty God for all He has done!



Merry Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

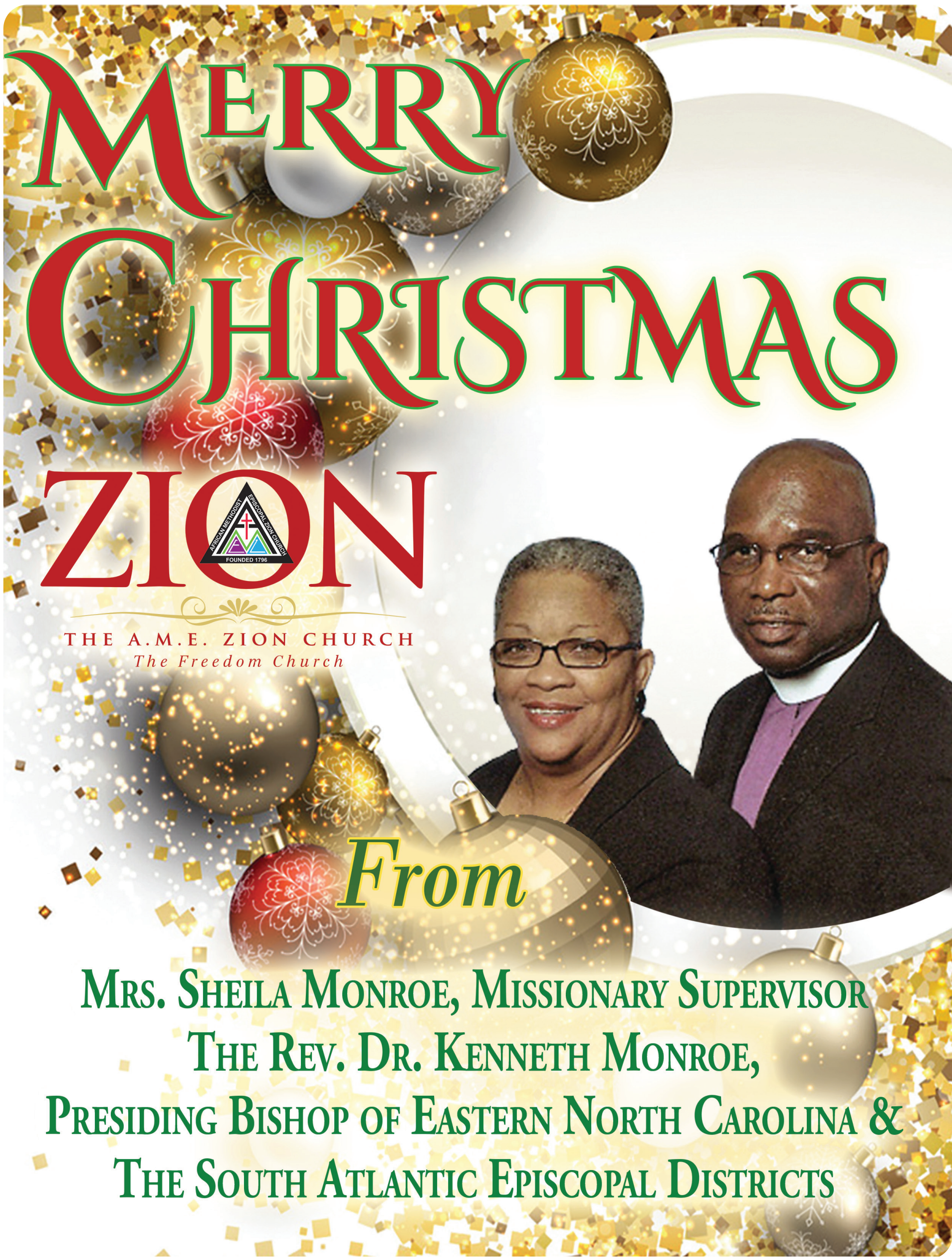
MAY THE PEACE & BLESSING OF CHRISTMAS BE YOURS
& MAY THE COMING YEAR BE FILLED WITH
HAPPINESS.



BISHOP & MRS.

MICHAEL A. FRENCHER, SR.

**PRESIDING PRELATE & MISSIONARY SUPERVISOR
OF THE MIDWEST EPISCOPAL DISTRICT**



MERRY CHRISTMAS ZION



THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church



From

MRS. SHEILA MONROE, MISSIONARY SUPERVISOR
THE REV. DR. KENNETH MONROE,
PRESIDING BISHOP OF EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA &
THE SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICTS

A LEADER IN FAITH AND BUSINESS

REV. JERRED MCDANIEL

Rev. Jerred McDaniel, a proud native of Montgomery, Alabama, has drawn upon his deep-rooted Southern experiences to shape his extraordinary life journey.

Currently, Rev. McDaniel serves as the proud pastor of the esteemed men and women of the First A.M.E. Zion Church in Pasadena, California, a role he assumed on July 2, 2017.

Beyond his pastoral duties, Rev. McDaniel is a respected businessman. For an impressive 14 years, he served as the Regional Director of Human Resources for Selig Enterprises, a period during which he demonstrated a unique ability to combine his professional and spiritual aptitude, resulting in a fourfold increase in the company's compounded revenue. His business acumen complements his calling to lead others through a capable, Spirit-led leadership approach that uncovers inner potential and inspires others to tap into their God given potential.

Rev. McDaniel is also a noted intellectual, having graduated from Troy University. There, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Management and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management.



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BUT THAT'S NOT ALL!

In more exciting news, we were delighted to announce the launch of Next Level Consulting Los Angeles (NLC), now LIVE and fully operational.

Our corporate headquarters is located in Pasadena, California, however NLC proudly serves the entire Greater Los Angeles area.

Our mission at Next Level Consulting Los Angeles is to unlock your potential through a comprehensive range of consulting services. Leading the charge is our passionate and visionary CEO, Jerred McDaniel, who brings his dedication to excellence and empowerment to set the tone for our mission to elevate individuals and businesses to their next level.

Joining Jerred is our esteemed Senior Human Resources Consultant, Alice Youn. With her deep expertise in Human Resources and unwavering commitment to client success, she adds a dynamic dimension to our team.

Alice, with her extensive background in Human Resources from prestigious California hotels, brings invaluable knowledge and strategy to the Next Level Consulting Los Angeles.

Alice's academic background is equally impressive. A graduate of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, with a Bachelor's in Hotel Administration, she later pursued a Master's in Human Resource Management from the esteemed University of Southern California. This academic prowess, combined with her practical experience, makes Alice an invaluable asset in the HR consulting realm.

Whether you're an individual seeking personal growth or a business aiming for new heights, Next Level Consulting Los Angeles is here to provide unwavering support. Allow us to be your partners in success, as you take that crucial first step toward a brighter future.

We are extremely excited for you to explore our comprehensive services, and discover how we can make a meaningful difference in your journey. Together, we grow. Together, we succeed.

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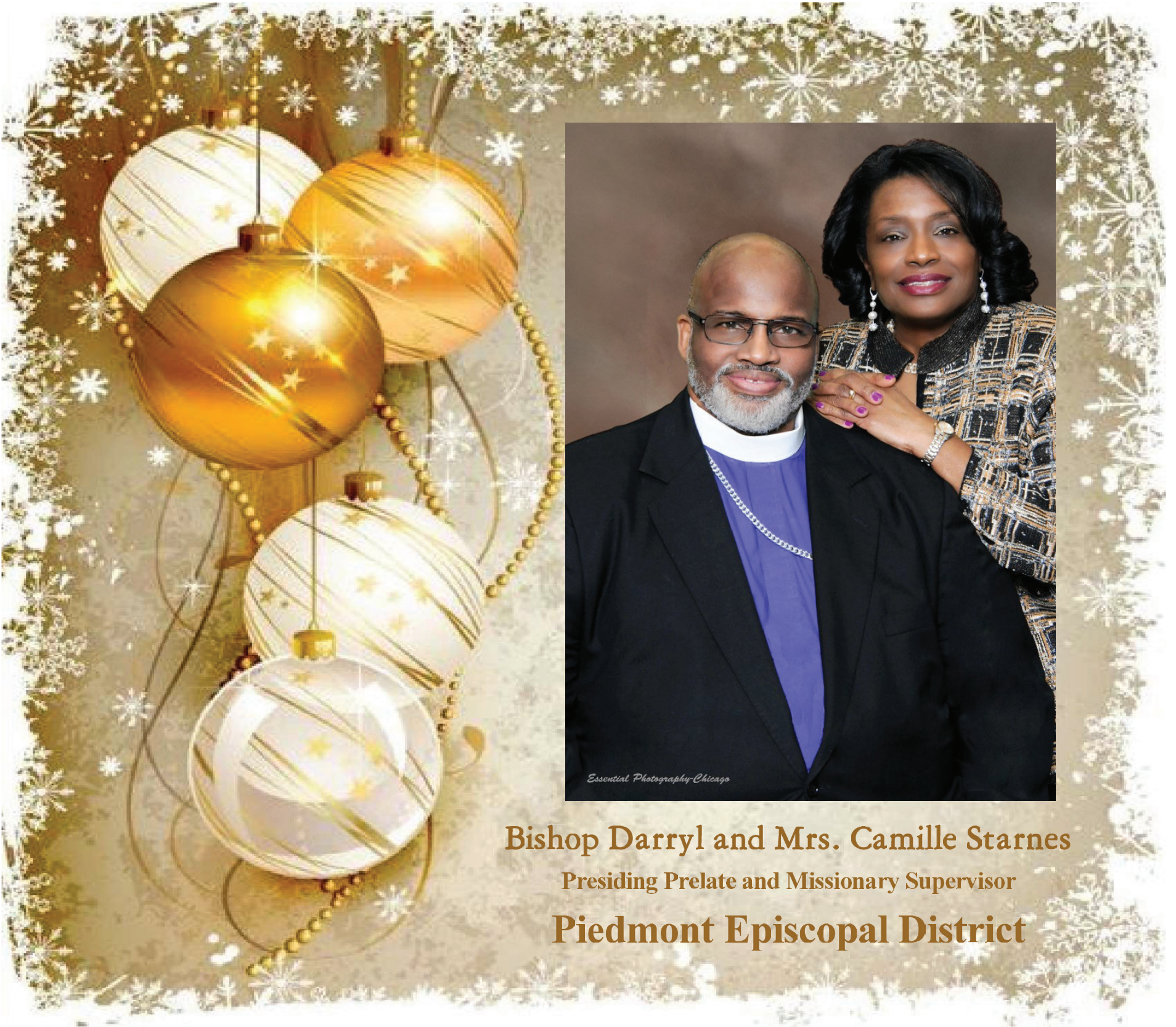
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Bishop Darryl and Mrs. Camille Starnes
Presiding Prelate and Missionary Supervisor
Piedmont Episcopal District

Merry Christmas

FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS





Merry
CHRISTMAS

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

With Love

**Bishop Dennis V. Proctor,
Missionary Supervisor D. Diane Proctor and
the North Eastern Episcopal District**

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that
ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." –
Romans 15:13

ZION



THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church

BISHOP W. DARIN MOORE, PRESIDING PRELATE
MRS. DEVIETA C. MOORE, MISSIONARY SUPERVISOR
& THE MID-ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT



**MERRY CHRISTMAS &
A HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**May God continue to richly bless you with hope, joy,
and peace throughout the coming year.**

"For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

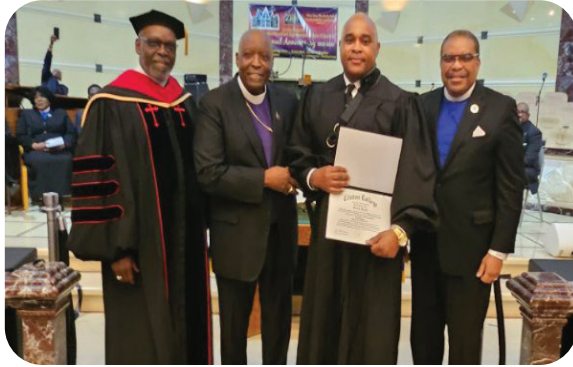
Isaiah 9:6

Celebrate Clinton College's First Certificate in Ministry Studies Graduates



By Dr. Alvin McLamb

In the Fall of 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Presiding Elder of New York City District, Rev. Dr. A. Alfred Carson, Rev. Dr. Marvin Hooks, and Rev. Dr. Quavon Newton, began a collaboration with President Lester A. McCorn and members of his Cabinet on the idea of an accredited course of study for ministers in District Studies in the A.M.E. Zion Church. Dr. Reginald Broadnax, the then Division Chair for Religious Studies, was also instrumental in identifying and designing the most relevant course of study for the program. This collaboration gave birth to the first online program to enable ministers to take college-level courses, earn a certificate, and then use those credit hours towards an Associate's or Bachelor's Degree in Religious Studies.



Two of the three students to be to complete all course requirements and earn the first-ever Certificate of Ministry Studies Degree from Clinton College came from the New York District of the North Eastern Episcopal

District. They were Tamiko Coleman, an associate minister at St. Peter's A.M.E. Zion Church, and Derek Scott, an associate minister at Calvary A.M.E. Zion Church. On Saturday, October 28th, Dr. McLamb presented them with their Certificate during the North Eastern Episcopal District's combined Check-up Meeting at Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church, Middletown, CT.

As a result of the collaboration to start a Certificate in Ministry Studies Program for District ministers, Clinton College now also offers a Certificate in Pastoral Leadership and Development for ministers in Conference Studies and a Certificate in Educational Ministry for the Laity of the



Church. Additionally, Clinton College offers Associate and Bachelor Degrees in Religious Studies and Business Administration, an Associate Degree in Arts and Early Childhood, as well as several additional certificates in Business. All of these programs are fully online and taught by experienced college professors, several of whom are members of The A.M.E. Zion Church.

For more information on all of Clinton College's online programs, go to clintoncollege.edu or contact Dr. Alvin McLamb at amclamb@clintoncollege.edu or call (803) 909-8181.

HOLIDAY 2023

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM HOOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HTS Hood Theological Seminary

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY
WITH PEACE AND LOVE FOR THE YEAR TO COME.



'Glory to God in the highest
heaven, and on earth peace
among those whom he
favors!' - Luke 2:14

MERRY
Christmas
to all our Zion Family!

**Bishop & Mrs.
George D. Crenshaw**

**Presiding Bishop & Missionary Supervisor
of the Alabama-Florida
Episcopal District**



ZION
THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church

WISHING YOU TO BE FILLED WITH HIS LOVE AND WRAPPED IN HIS PEACE AS WE CELEBRATE THE MIRACLE OF HIS BIRTH.



Love & Peace & Joy

BISHOP & MRS.
HILLARD DOGBE
PRESIDING PRELATE
AND
MISSIONARY
SUPERVISOR
OF THE
WESTERN WEST
AFRICA EPISCOPAL
DISTRICT



Witherspoon Wins School Board Election



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

By Rev. Allison N. Lee, Ed.D., MTS

“A victory for me is a victory for the students in CMS. We will continue to improve the outcomes for students within the school system.” – Rev. Dr. Monty Witherspoon

On Tuesday, November 7, 2023, Charlotte native Rev. Dr. Monty Witherspoon was elected to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) Board of Education. Dr. Witherspoon is a newcomer to the CMS Board, blazing the trail as he took one of the top spots in a race of 14 candidates and came in with 12.4% of the vote. Witherspoon was elected alongside Liz Monterrey, who also came in with 12.4% of the vote, and incumbent Lenora Shipp, who led the vote with 14.75%.

Although Witherspoon is new to the CMS Board of Education, he is a lifelong proponent of learning. Having matriculated through the K-12 system and having earned a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies from Zion’s chief institution, Livingstone College, a Master of Divinity from the Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center, and a Doctorate from Drew University, Dr. Witherspoon has long been in spaces that speak to and directly developed his passion for critical thinking and instruction. Dr. Witherspoon is an advocate for education reform and is a regular participant in conversations that deal with policy and education. In the community, he is a member of the Black Political Caucus and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated.

Believing that opportunity and schooling should be accessible to all students, Dr. Witherspoon offered himself to the students, parents, and educators of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System in order to take an active part in helping each student to graduate high school either prepared to attend an institution of higher learning, or join the workforce “with a quality education in a safe learning environment regardless of their zip code.”

Inequity in the school system has long been a concern within the American model of education. Geographical location – which is often related to socio-economic status and/or culture - has since the beginning of time dictated the type of school students have attended, quality of textbooks, instruction received, funding offered, and opportunities available. Renowned civil rights activist and the president and founder of the National Action Network (NAN), Al Sharpton stated,

There’s no reason why children in inner cities or rural areas do not receive the same quality education or opportunities as those in suburbs or wealthy neighborhoods. If we truly believe in giving all citizens a chance to pursue happiness and pursue their goals, then we cannot continue to marginalize entire groups of people.



MONTY
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Having heard about the disparities taking place in the school system and upon reflection regarding personal experience, Dr. Witherspoon ran on the platform of:

- **Student Achievement:** Providing every student with a quality education regardless of Zip Code
- **Safe Learning Environments:** Developing strategies to create safe learning environments for every student
- **Support for Teachers:** Working conditions and staffing structures that promote effective teaching and professional growth
- **Strong Community Coalitions:** Partnering with community stakeholders and community service providers to help meet student needs and

- **System-wide Accountability and Transparency:** Building trust through openness with regard to board business and decision.

In addition to being a dedicated advocate for education, a husband, father, and community leader, Dr. Witherspoon is the pastor of the Steele Creek AME Zion Church seated squarely within Charlotte, NC. When asked about the intersection of education and ministry, Dr. Witherspoon stated, I see my new role with the school board as an extension of my role as a pastor. I have been involved in the community and as an educational advocate for years. Now, I have a chance to serve on a new level as the voice for the kids in my congregation and their parents. I see this as a unique opportunity and a continuation of the work that I already do in conjunction with the Steele Creek congregation. Our church has helped with housing transitions, supported families that have clothing and school supply needs, adopted two schools, and we coordinated with a local school guidance counselor to serve where and when needed.

In looking ahead, Dr. Witherspoon shared that the Church can start to get involved in three ways:

1. Get involved in the voting process – register, vote, and volunteer.
2. Educational Advocates – “We need every church to have at least one educational advocate who can help parents and folks in the community to navigate their respective school district. You don’t have to go to a high-poverty school. There are parents who are affluent and do not know how to navigate the school system with suspensions, curriculum, etc. Educational advocates in the church make a difference.
3. Presence – “Congregations need to get involved more by showing



up at meetings (school board, PTA, etc.) and being a presence. It says a lot when we show that we are invested in the education of our children.”

Witherspoon is to serve a four-year term and will be sworn in on December 12, 2023.

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Songs of Preparation



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



By Rev. Dierdre Parker, Entertainment & the Arts Editor

Music is an important part of any worship experience. It can shift the atmosphere from chaotic to consecrated. Music prepares our hearts in a unique way for communion with God. Music, especially singing, allows a part of our hearts to speak to God through the only instrument that is not man-made. Our human voices. Singing allows us to express our love for God with our entire being. It soothes our spirits and draws us closer to each other in corporate settings.

Music is a part of who we are as Zion Methodists. This is especially evident in the way we prepare for our Annual Conferences. The preparation of music is as important as making sure that the fried chicken is crispy and juicy for lunch.

I recently came across a flyer on Facebook that was essentially an all-call for singers and musicians to form a combined choir for the North Carolina Annual Conference. Because I love good music, and because I miss singing in the choir anyway, I decided to reach out to the organizer of the rehearsal to discuss what preparing music for an annual conference is like.

I met with the director of the combined choir, Mrs. Carole Downing, and some of the other members of the choir and had the opportunity to ask them a few questions about what music as worship means to them.

SOZ: Mrs. Carole, how important is music ministry to you?

Carole Downing: Music ministry is very important to me. I've grown up with music all my life. I've always been in the church, the youth choir, the young adult choir, and the adult choir. I started taking piano lessons at the age of nine and learned how to read music. At the age of fourteen, I started going around to different churches playing the piano. They would pick me up and take me to churches in the James City area until I got my license in chorus and in the band. I just had my 40th class reunion, and I still have my clarinet from 40 years ago. I don't play it anymore, but I still have it. So I've been doing music all my life.

SOZ: What about you, Ms. Wanda? How important is music ministry in your life?

Wanda Poole: It is very important to me. My mother always dragged us around with her when she sang, so it's embedded in me. That's something that she always liked to do.

And I started out in the children's choir. When I moved back home, I came back and joined the choir. I love music. I play seven instruments.

SOZ: Seven? Oh, wow!

Wanda Poole: Yes, seven. They're all woodwinds. I was a music major when I first started college, but then I changed. But I'm strictly instrumental, not vocal.

Mrs. Laurean Wilson also joined us while she was doing her hair. This is a testament to the dedication of these ladies to make sure that the worship experience was what it needed to be for all of those who attended this annual conference. They each have other pursuits but are dedicated to making sure that the ministry of music is truly ministry and not merely entertainment.

SOZ: Ms. Lorean, how important is music ministry to you?

Ms. Lorean: It is very important, especially now as a minister myself. I preached this past Sunday, and the soloist sang a song that was right in line with what I preached.

This was such a lovely discussion with these ladies about the songs that help to usher us into worship. Songs like "Oh, how I love Jesus," and "Lord I'm Available to you," or just the refrain "Oh come let us Adore Him." There is something about the lyrics of these songs that reminds us of the faithfulness of God. They wrap us in the comfort of God's love and God's presence. They remind us that He rejoices over us with singing, and we can join together in the spirit, and for that moment, we become one with the

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Christmas in Zion

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FEATURING SPECIAL CHRISTMAS-THEMED MEDITATIONS & PRESENTATIONS FROM VARIOUS A.M.E. ZION EPISCOPAL DISTRICTS

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



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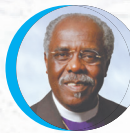
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"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1 :4).

Merry & Christmas
Prosperous New Year

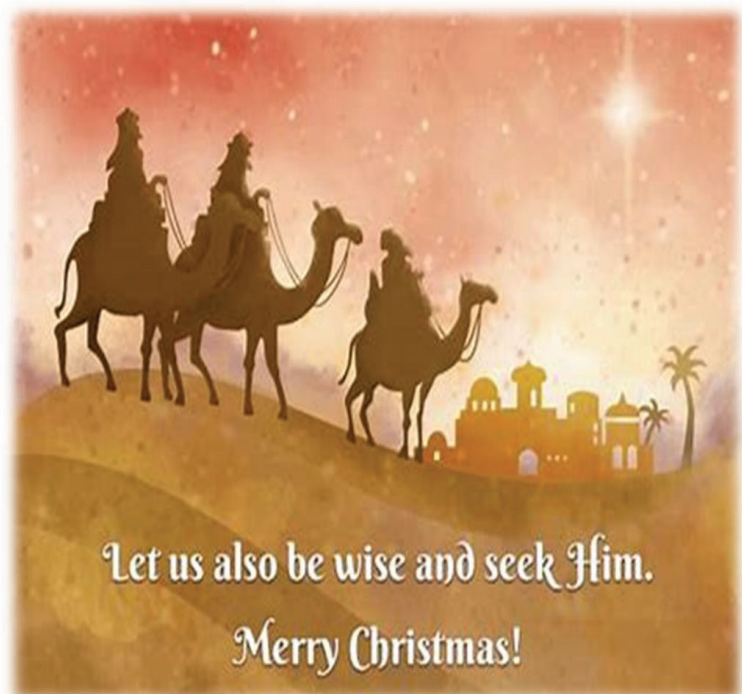


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God gave His greatest gift to us
on that first Christmas day
and may the wonder of it always
guide and light your way...

Wishing you

Joy & Peace
AT CHRISTMAS
AND THROUGHOUT
THE NEW YEAR

*Bishop Brian R. Thompson,
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& Missionary Supervisor
of the
Western Episcopal District*

ZION
THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church





Because of Jesus, we have Peace
that surpasses all understanding,
We have joy that is unspeakable,
We have love that is
everlasting and unconditional, and
We have nothing to fear,
but so much to hope for!

May Christ be experienced and praised!



Bishop Eric Leake & Missionary Supervisor
Jean McMurray-Leake & The Southwestern
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Dana G. Stilley
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Give the Gift of Financial Freedom



By Dana Stilley, Financial Freedom Editor

The Christmas season is upon us! Christians across the world look forward to a wonderful Christmas Day with family and friends, celebrating the gift of Jesus Christ. Often called the most wonderful time of the year, the hustle and bustle of the season brings excitement, hope, joy, and peace. In preparation for Christmas Day, countless hours are spent preparing guest lists and menus and searching for the ‘perfect’ gift for our loved ones— a gift that reflects our true admiration and love.

On average, a person spends approximately \$1,000 each year on gifts, food, and holiday decorations during the Christmas season. Most of the funds are spent on gifts, with gift cards and money topping the chart as the most popular. Gift cards have grown in popularity over recent years as purchasers are fond of giving the recipient the opportunity to make a purchase of their choice at a time when they want to. Gift cards eliminate concerns about choosing the wrong gift. Gone are worries about whether the recipient needs or likes the gift and whether it is the right size, color, or style. For those reasons, giving gift cards

seems to be money well spent. However, a recent report by Credit Summit highlighted that 67% of consumers in the United States have at least one unspent gift card. Moreover, the total amount of unspent money on gift cards equates to approximately \$21 billion.

Instead of purchasing additional gift cards this season, perhaps you will consider one of these options instead:

- Begin a small savings account or a college for a child
- Purchase a US savings bond
- Open a small investment account and teach about long-term investing
- Invest in share(s) of a stock or mutual fund

Building wealth through saving and investing generally helps one reach the time in their life when there is enough to provide adequately for the household and to give generously and joyfully to God’s work. In this season of giving, consider giving a gift that promotes financial freedom.

Livingstone College's Athletic Hall of Fame

By Star of Zion News

The 2023 Athletic Hall of Fame, a celebration of Livingstone College, had a surprisingly unique dose of fame added to its listing of homecoming events. On Saturday, October 21st, at the School of Hospitality Management and Culinary Arts, former Livingstone athletes gathered with their family and friends for brunch, honoring five alumni who exhibited extraordinary athletic skills during their years of performance. Hosted by former athlete and assistant 2000 CIAA Championship women's basketball coach Dr. Kellee Watkins, the division of athletics under the leadership of Clifton Huff honored the All-American 4x400 relay team: Denise Brown Ferguson, Sharonda Anderson, Tiffany Forbes Percentie, and Yolanda Faye Morgan. A special recognition for alumnus and Salisbury police officer Lieutenant Corey Brooks was presented on behalf of his heroic efforts demonstrated in saving a citizen from a burning vehicle earlier in the year.



In addition to the four women of track and field and officer the audience came to celebrate, guests were pleasantly surprised with the presence of former Duke University college standout and NBA professional Zion Williamson of the New Orleans Pelicans. There to support his mother, Sharonda Anderson, Zion enthusiastically met and engaged with alumni and friends, elevating the level of exceptional athleticism to the event. Zion's father, Lateef Williamson, was also a college standout as a member of the Livingstone College 1997 and 1998 CIAA Championship football teams. Referencing her positive Livingstone College experience, noting the support of coaches and friends, Anderson stated she realized the rest of the sports world could be the opposite of her undergraduate experience. She explained, "Navigating media is a difficult task," and thanked Livingstone College for its love.

President Anthony J. Davis thanked the inductees for committing to their alma mater and challenged them to build a greater legacy for future Blue Bears through recruitment and donorship.





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Struggle for the Soul of Palestine

By Rev. Ronald A. Nathan, World Politics Editor

There is no justification for the slaughter of one thousand four hundred Israelis and the kidnapping of two hundred innocent people from Israel by Hamas fighters on October 7, 2023. Israel's reaction based on the natural and international law of self-defence is warranted. However, the world community has a part to play in the reduction of excessive force being used in the Gaza Strip, whether it is done in the name of self-defence or in a fit of revenge. At present, the death toll is heading towards tens of thousands, including the death of 4,104 children in Gaza. That is where we are at at this very moment, and that should be where this conflict should stop.

The idea that the solution to Israel's national security problems is the total annihilation of the political, military, economic, and social fabric of the Palestine state is totally unwarranted and wrong.

The Black Church has to raise its voice and articulate its views for a cessation of fire and the immediate return of hostages and opening up of routes for the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid. It is important, however, that we be mindful that ideas associated with the historical Israel of the Old Testament influence our assessment of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For example, it is critical that we are aware of the probable bias that comes with holding the liberation motif associated with the Exodus story and Egyptian slavery as we consider the current Israeli-Hamas conflict.

It behooves us to recognise that the international community has as much to do with this longstanding conflict as Hamas fighters and the Israeli army. The British colonial foreign policy reflected in the Balfour Declaration and mandate of 1923 and the United Nations' adoption of Resolution 181 in 1948, which called for the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, implicates the international community.

Both of these decisions changed forever the demographics of the population of the region and justified the British confiscation of Palestinian lands, which were then handed over to Jewish settlers fleeing European anti-Semitism and Nazism.

The fundamental principle held by the United Nations and all the signatories of the resolution was that the result would be a democratic constitution that would guarantee the human rights of all its citizens without distinction as to race, language, or religion. On this matter alone, the two-state solution has been an abysmal failure. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has claimed tens of thousands of lives, displaced millions of people, and unleashed untold destruction of property.

The Black Church, through its leaders and political representation, has to urge the combatants to stop the killing now. We must call for a diplomatic solution to this persistent conflict that can easily escalate into a regional war.

As we pray for the soul of Palestine, Psalms chapter 122 and verse 6 urge us to 'Pray for peace in Jerusalem. May all who love this city prosper. Implicit in any prayers for righteousness, justice, love, and forgiveness in Jerusalem is peace for all those who call that land their home, whatever their ideology, leadership, or religion. Both states of Israel and Palestine claim Jerusalem as their capital city; thus, there are conflicting claims to sovereignty over the city, its regions, and access to its holy sites.



Destruction of the Palestine Tower in Gaza following an Israeli airstrike. Photo by Palestinian News & Information Agency (Wafa) in contract with APImages, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=138775579>

Peace, however, is more than the absence of violence and the presence of security in the state of Israel. Peace is an ongoing experience of harmony between families, neighbours, and nations. A prayer for peace in Israel, therefore, is also a prayer for Palestinian well-being and prosperity.



A woman and children, all injured, try to get to the safety amid destruction and chaos caused by Israeli airstrikes on Bureij refugee camp in Gaza

Photograph taken by Mustafa Hassona/Anadolu/Getty Images

Sen. Murdock's Open Letter Condemning Hamas' Attack on Israel

By Senator Natalie Murdock

I want to be clear in my unequivocal condemnation of Hamas' horrific and ongoing attack against innocent Israeli civilians. The indiscriminate murder of Israeli people, the kidnapping, and ongoing hostage-taking of Israeli citizens are abhorrent. Beyond the lives lost and shattered, Hamas' actions have traumatized millions of Jews all over the world, including those in our own community.



I know that many people right here in Durham have family and friends who have been murdered, kidnapped or injured in these attacks.

To my Jewish constituents: I know this has been one of the hardest weeks you have ever experienced. Your lives will forever be changed. I know that you have had to mourn while watching clips of your fellow Americans chant antisemitic slurs. I know your social media feeds are unbearable.

I know you have had to have unimaginable conversations with your children. I know that you feel heartbroken and unsafe. I know that these children could have been your children. I know that this event brings up millenniums of persecution and genocide. I am a witness to your pain, and I stand in solidarity with

you. I am here to listen, and will do everything in my power to help you be safe here in North Carolina.

To be clear - I stand firmly against Hamas, a group of violent extremists who have sworn to kill all Jews in Israel and beyond.

This was a grotesque act of terror.

My heart aches for Palestinians in my district and abroad whose lives will be forever changed by this week's events. I am deeply saddened by the scale of civilian deaths in Gaza, hundreds have been killed, hundreds of thousands of people are currently displaced, and millions are at risk in the days and weeks to come. Millions are in dire need of food and supplies, humanitarian assistance should be provided.

As a Black American, I understand what it means to feel this sense of terror and dread in my body, in history, in society. Racism and antisemitism are deeply tied together. Islamophobia is on the rise.

Our unity is the only way through.

I wish our Jewish community a r'fuah shlemah - a complete renewal of body and spirit - as you process this terrifying act of terror.

In Peace and Solidarity,
Senator Natalie Murdock

THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH CONNECTIONAL
VIRTUAL NEW YEAR'S
EVE SERVICE
2023

WITH
BISHOP MICHAEL A. FRENCHER, SR.
MIDWEST EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

DECEMBER 31
2023
@ 11PM EST

FEATURING MIDWEST EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
MUSIC MINISTRY

ZION
THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

SPONSORED BY
THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH



Bishop George and Mrs. Iris Miller Battle

Retired Senior Bishop and Missionary Supervisor

Merry
Christmas

May God fill your life with love, joy and peace. May your Christmas sparkle with moments of laughter and goodwill.

Our family wishes for you a new year full of contentment and joy.

Have a Merry Christmas.

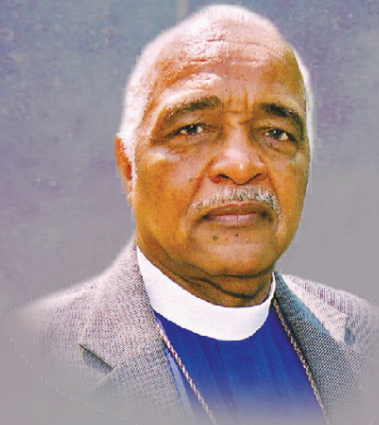


Happy Holidays

Rejoice

*As We Celebrate
The Birth of Our Saviour*

JESHUA



Bishop Marshall
H. Strickland
Elected 1992 - Retired 2004



*May your best gifts this holiday
be of love, peace, Happiness.
May the Grace & Peace of our
Lord be with you.*



Bishop & Mrs. Nathaniel Jarrett
Elected 1996-Retired 2008

*Merry
Christmas*

"For unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given. And the government shall be upon His shoulders. And His name shall be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." – Isaiah 9:6

Christmas Greetings

TO ALL OUR ZION FAMILY



Bishop & Mrs. George W.C. Walker, Sr.
Elected 1988 - Retired 2012

WISHING ALL A MERRY

Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

May you find peace, love,
and the true spirit of the
Holiday Season



Bishop & Mrs. S. Chuka Ekemam, Sr.
Elected 1988 - Retired 2012

Merry Christmas

*Wishing all of Zion
peace, joy and prosperity
this Holiday Season
and in the coming year.
God bless.*



Bishop & Mrs. Warren M. Brown
Elected 1996 - Retired 2012

Merry Christmas

God's Blessing Upon You and Your Family
This Holiday Season

**Bishop & Mrs. Joseph
Johnson**

Elected 1992 - Retired 2004





Merry Christmas *Greetings*

from the Department of Records and
Research of the African Methodist
Episcopal Zion Church



Rev. Dr. & Mrs. J. Elvin Sadler
GENERAL SECRETARY- AUDITOR

Blessed Christmas to All

**From
The A.M.E. Zion Publishing House**



Carla Jackson
Customer Service Associate



Chamos Thompson
Assistant to COO
Coordinator of Publishing House



Rev. Julius Walls, Jr.
Chief Operating Officer

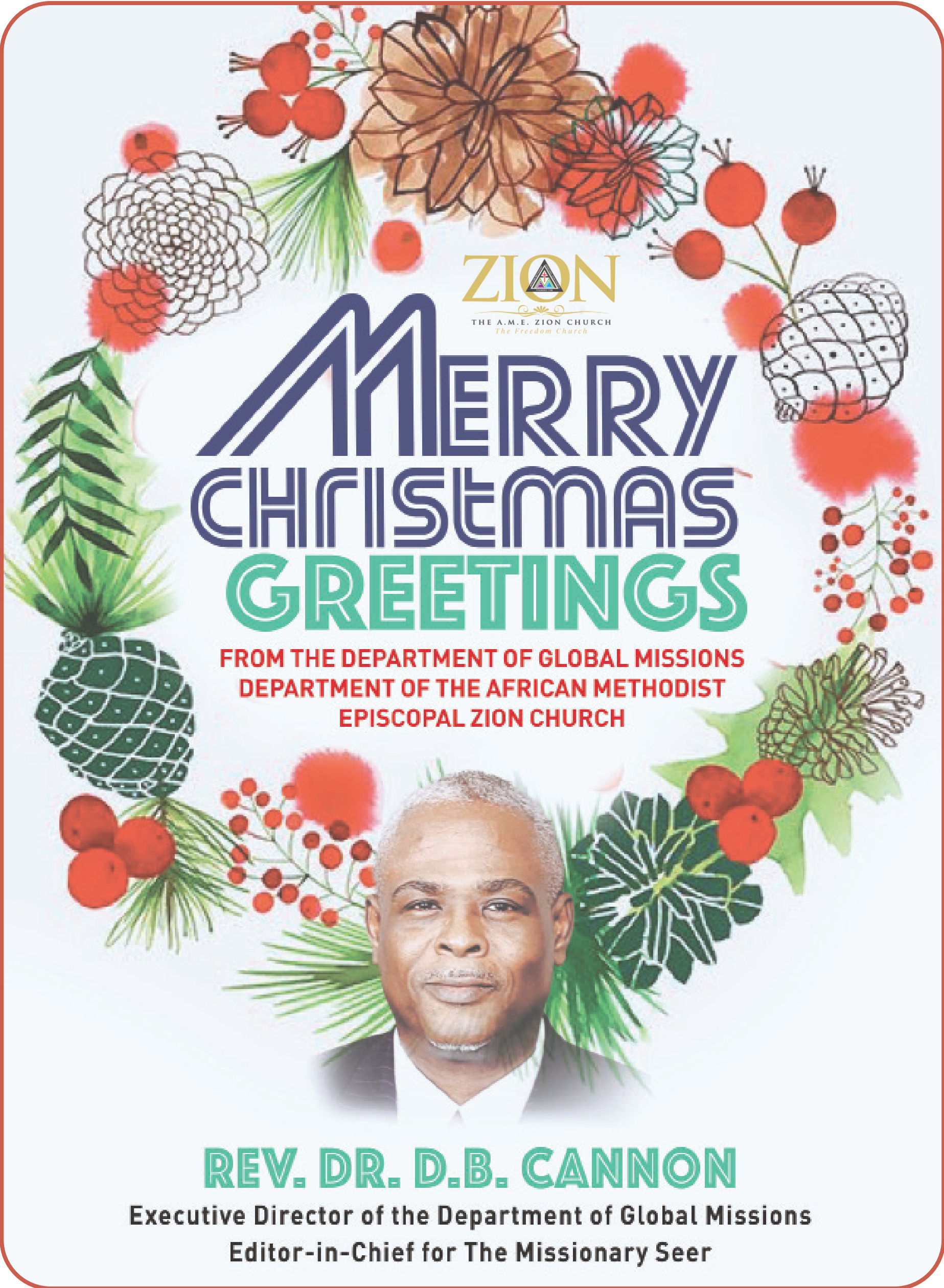
Rejoice...

**IN THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS, WHICH IS PEACE,
THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS, WHICH IS HOPE,
AND THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS, WHICH IS
LOVE.**



*Rev. Al & Marguerite
Hamilton*

Chief Financial Officer



ZION
THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church

MERRY CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL MISSIONS
DEPARTMENT OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH



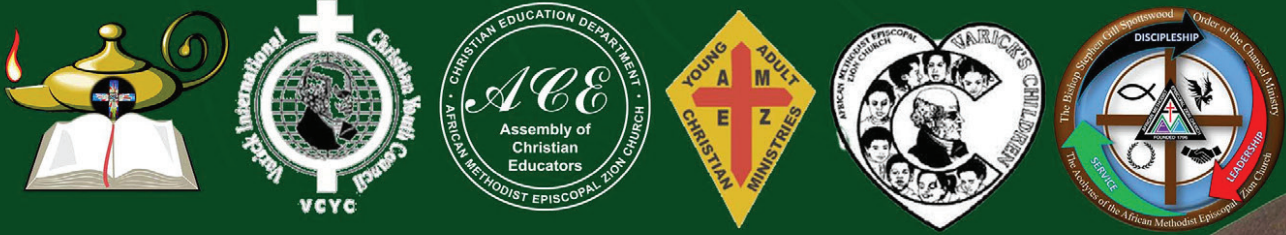
REV. DR. D.B. CANNON

Executive Director of the Department of Global Missions
Editor-in-Chief for The Missionary Seer

Merry Christmas

& A HAPPY NEW YEAR

May the love, joy and peace of Christ surround you and your families during this Christmas season and throughout the New Year



from Rev. Patrick A. Barrett, II
& the Christian Education Department

Merry Christmas

from

the Department of Church Growth and Development

"But the angel said to them,

"Do not be afraid.

*I bring you good news that will
cause great joy for all the
people.*

*Today in the town of David a Savior
has been born to you;
HE is the Messiah, the Lord"*

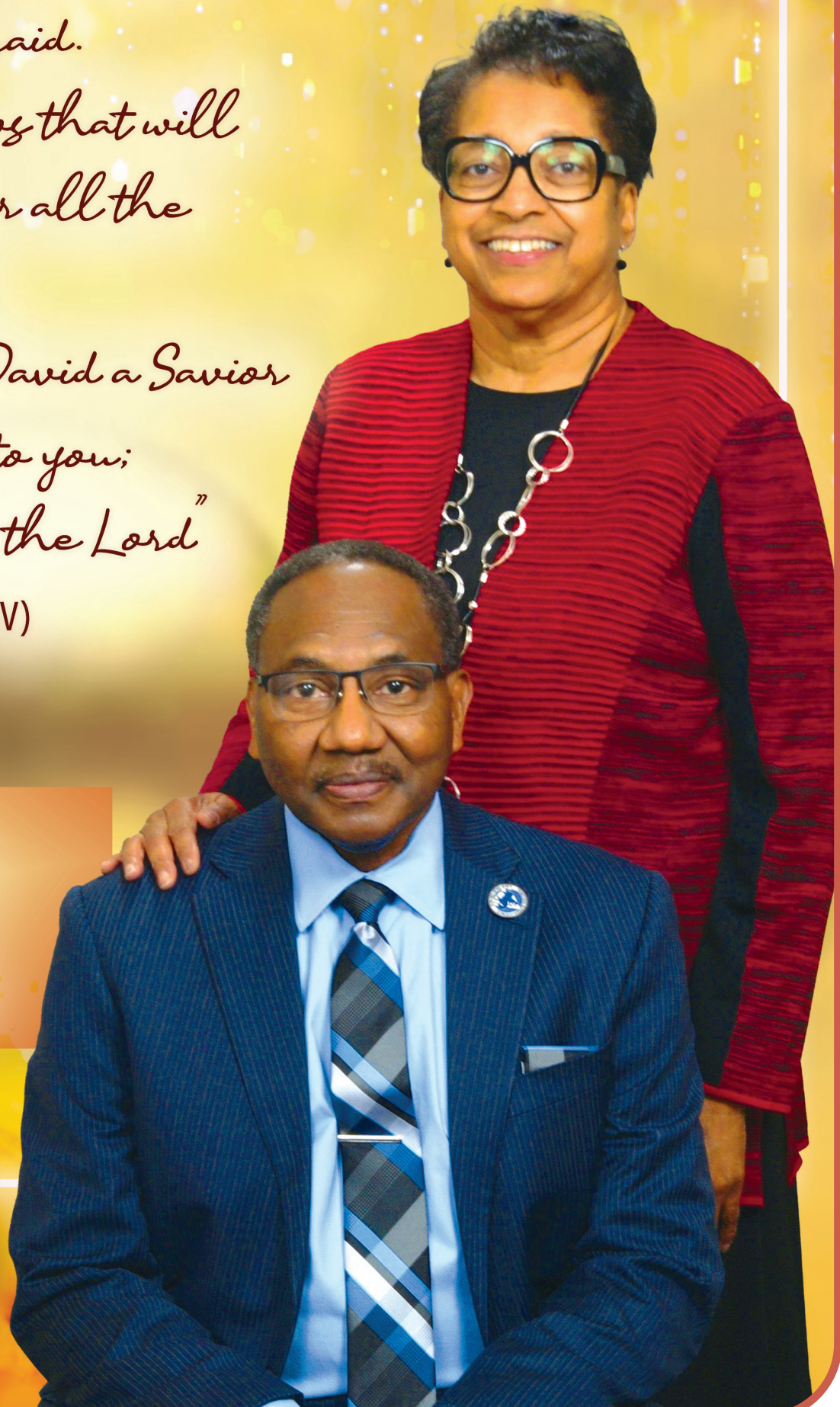
Luke 2:10 - 11 (NIV)

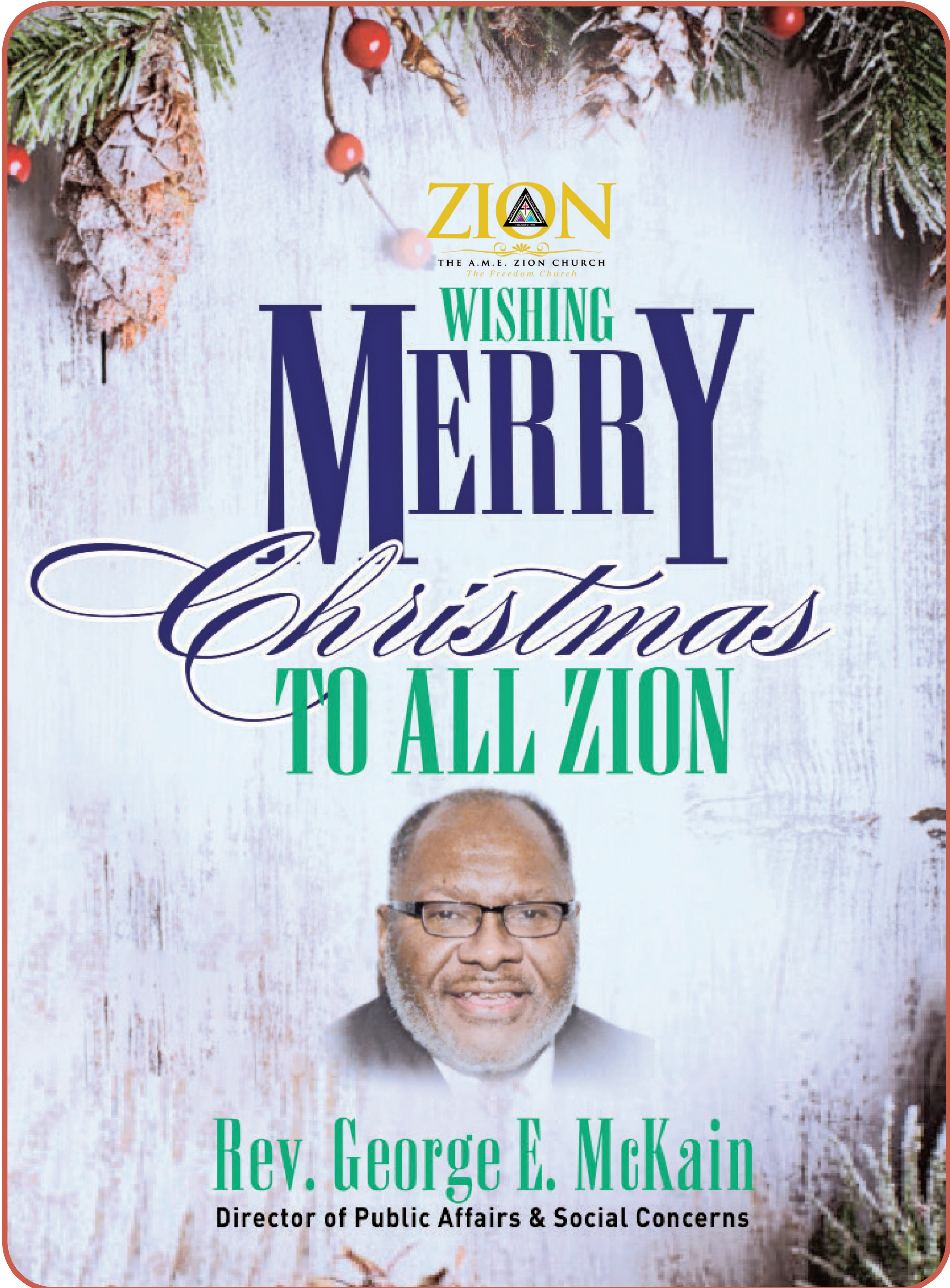
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rev. Dr. Eleazar Merriweather

Administrative Board

Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Chair





ZION

THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
The Freedom Church

WISHING

MERRY

Christmas

TO ALL ZION



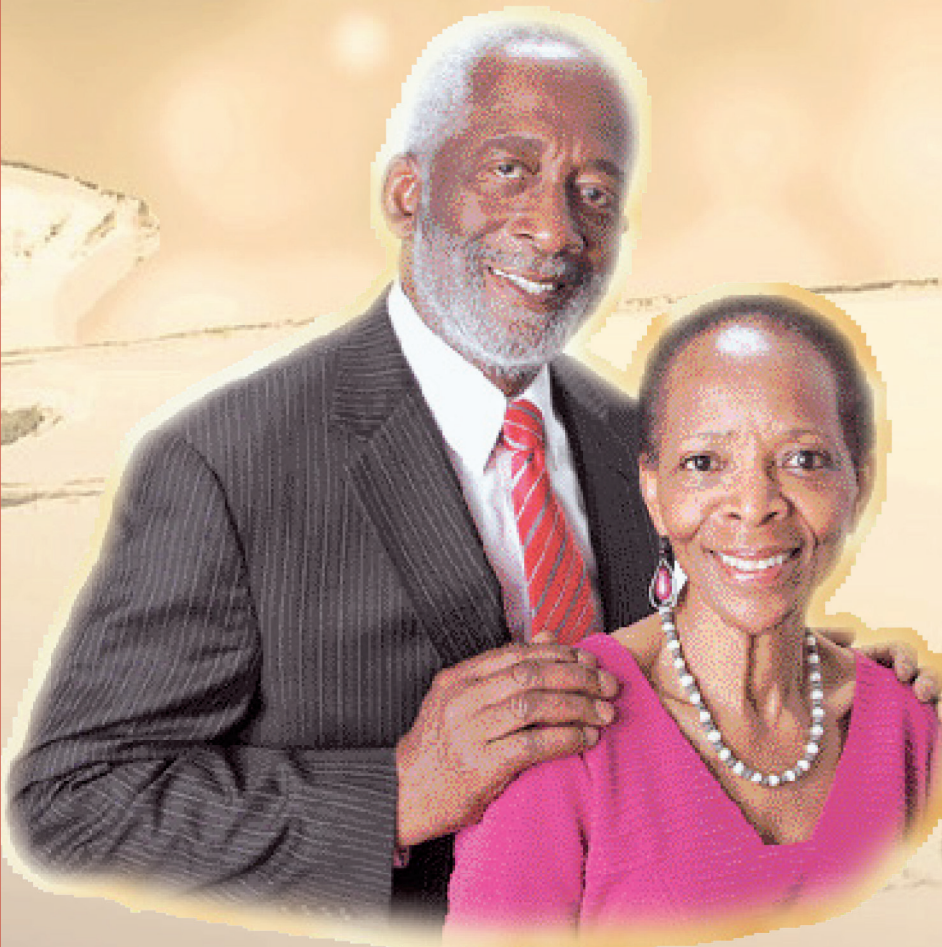
Rev. George E. McKain

Director of Public Affairs & Social Concerns



Season's Greetings

May your Christmas sparkle with moments of love, laughter and goodwill, And may the year ahead be full of contentment and joy.



**Dr. & Mrs. David
Aiken, Sr. & the Zion
Benefits Services
Inc.**



*Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year*

THE KENT FAMILY

May the joy of Christmas fill your home with love, and may the New Year bring abundant blessings. Wishing your family peace, joy, and the light of His word throughout the season and beyond.

Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! – John 1:29

THE WOMEN'S HOME AND OVERSEAS MISSIONARY SOCIETY
WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU A...



Merry Christmas

H A P P Y N E W Y E A R !

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in
Him,
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy
Spirit -

Romans 15:13



"MAY GOD GRANT YOU PEACE AND SERENITY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON. GOOD WILL, GOOD HEALTH, AND GOOD TIDINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR TO COME. FROM OUR CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL FAMILY TO YOURS, WE WISH YOU A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR."



Joseph King Davis, Jr.

**THE CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT,**

& Executive Board, and Staff



#zionexcellence
#acolytesamez
#zionpride

MERRY Christmas

The Christian Education Department



THE BISHOP STEPHEN GILL SPOTTSWOOD ACOLYTES OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH PRESENTS

BURNING FIRE

23rd MARCH VIRTUAL 11AM-4PM EST 2024 CONFERENCE

Rev. Dr. R.J. Chandler Sr.
Director of Acolytes

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice of Vacancy



The Board of Connectional Trustees of The A.M.E. Zion Church announces the retirement of the Executive Director of Zion Benefits Services.

The Search Committee for Zion Benefits Services will begin the process of interviewing candidates for the position of Executive Director.

The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- Ten-plus years of experience in the financial services industry
- Series 6 and 7 licenses
- Five-plus years senior management experience
- Experience handling revenue in excess of 2.5 million dollars
- Able to pass a background check.

- Satisfactory Credit Score
- Knowledge of A.M.E. Zion Church Discipline, governance, and Polity a plus.
- Three references from previous colleagues, one of which should be a direct supervisor. If a member of The A.M.E. Zion Church, recommendations from their Pastor, Presiding Elder, and Presiding Bishop.

The Executive Director will serve on the General Officers Team as a collaborative partner and report to the Chair of the Board of Connectional Trustees.

All inquiries must be made to the Office of the General Secretary-Auditor by filling out the application packet at <https://www.ameziongsa.com/general-officers> by **(January 15, 2024)**.

For further information, contact Dr. Kay Gabriel in the Office of the General Secretary-Auditor at kaygabriel@amezion.org or (704) 688-2574.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
AME ZION CHURCH

DEC
27-30

THE GREAT
EXCHANGE



RALEIGH, NC

Bishop Sherman Blandon
Dr. Otis T. McMillan · Dr. Danielle Brown
Rev. Nathaniel Cox · John P. Kee

register at
bit.ly/Truthville2023

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





Merry
Christmas
& Happy New Year

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:
and the government shall be upon his shoulder:
and his name shall be called Wonderful,
Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting
Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

REV. DR. ANTHONY N.
WITHERSPOON



ZION4WARD 
WITHERSPOON FOR BISHOP 2024





Merry Christmas

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO
US A SON IS GIVEN: AND THE
GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS
SHOULDER: AND HIS NAME SHALL BE
CALLED WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR,
THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING
FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

- ISAIAH 9:6

REV. DR.

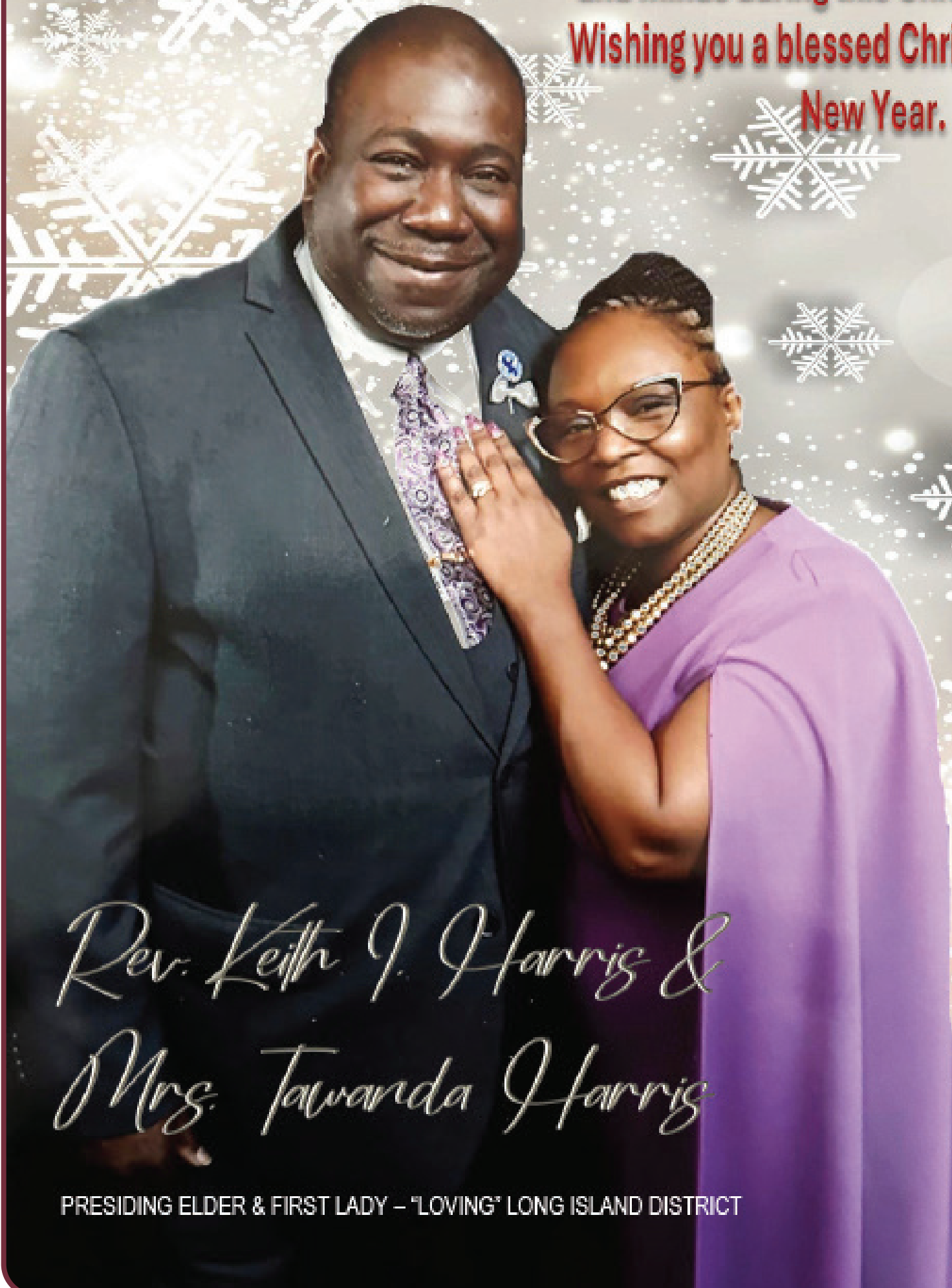
EVALINA HUGGINS

EPISCOPAL CANDIDATE

FOR MORE INFO VISIT: [HUGGINS4BISHOP2024.COM](https://huggins4bishop2024.com)

Merry Christmas

May the love and joy of Christ fill your hearts
and minds during this Christmas season.
Wishing you a blessed Christmas & Happy
New Year.



Rev. Keith J. Harris &
Mrs. Tawanda J. Harris

PRESIDING ELDER & FIRST LADY - "LOVING" LONG ISLAND DISTRICT

LITTLE  ROCK
A.M.E. Zion Church

Excellence In Ministry:

TOGETHER, WE CAN...!

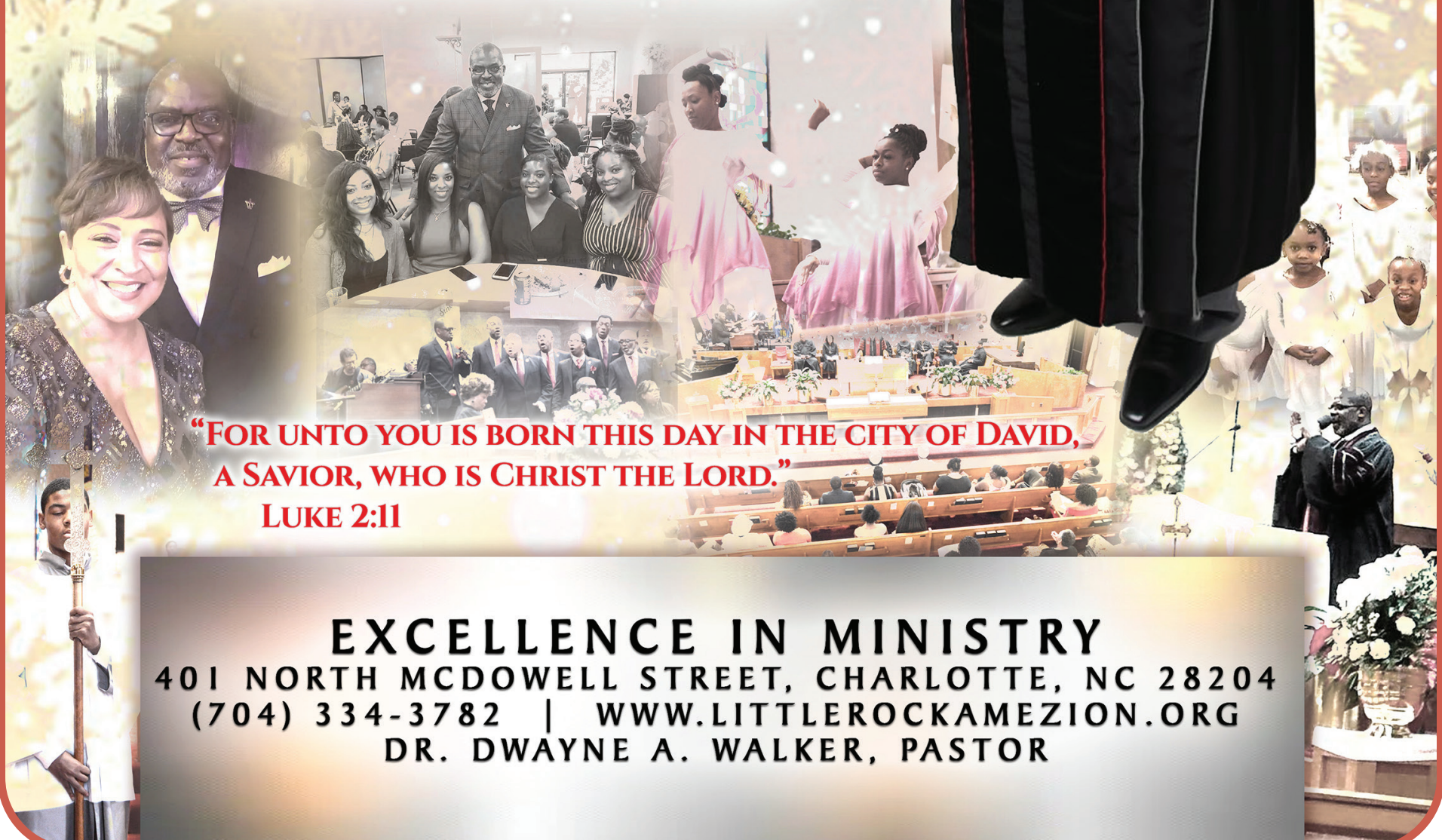
Ephesians 4:11-16

Dr. Dwayne A. Walker, Pastor

*May the
Love, Joy
and Peace*

that Jesus brings be yours
today and always!

**Rev. Dr. & Mrs. Dwayne A. Walker
and the Little Rock Church family**



**“FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY OF DAVID,
A SAVIOR, WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD.”**

LUKE 2:11

EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY

401 NORTH MCDOWELL STREET, CHARLOTTE, NC 28204

(704) 334-3782 | WWW.LITTLEROCKAMEZION.ORG

DR. DWAYNE A. WALKER, PASTOR

Merry Christmas

From

The Detroit Western Michigan District



P.E. Dwight & Mrs. Mia Gutridge

St. Paul, Detroit, John Wesley, Southfield, Lomax Temple, St. Paul, Toledo, St. Luke, Greater St. Peter, Blackwell, Clinton Chapel Metropolitan, St. Peter, Walls Memorial Chapel, Calvary, Legget Chapel, Hilliard Chapel, John Wesley, Muskegon

*"For Unto Us A Child Is Born, Unto Us A Son Is Given
(Isaiah 9:6)*



“FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN; AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDERS”



JULIAN & DEBORAH PRIDGEN

Merry Christmas

ST MARK AME ZION, DURHAM NC

Christ
the saviour
is born

Isaiah 9:6


Rev. Dr. Marvin Dewitt Hooks

First A.M.E. Zion

Brooklyn, NY

Hooks4Bishop.com





Wishing You a
Joyous Holiday Season
and a New Year filled with
Peace & Happiness

Rev. Dr. Stephen W. Pogue & Lady Iris Pogue
Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church

Unto us a Child is Born ...

*Merry
Christmas
and a Blessed
New Year*

from

Rev. Dr. Charbreen Batten Mapson

&



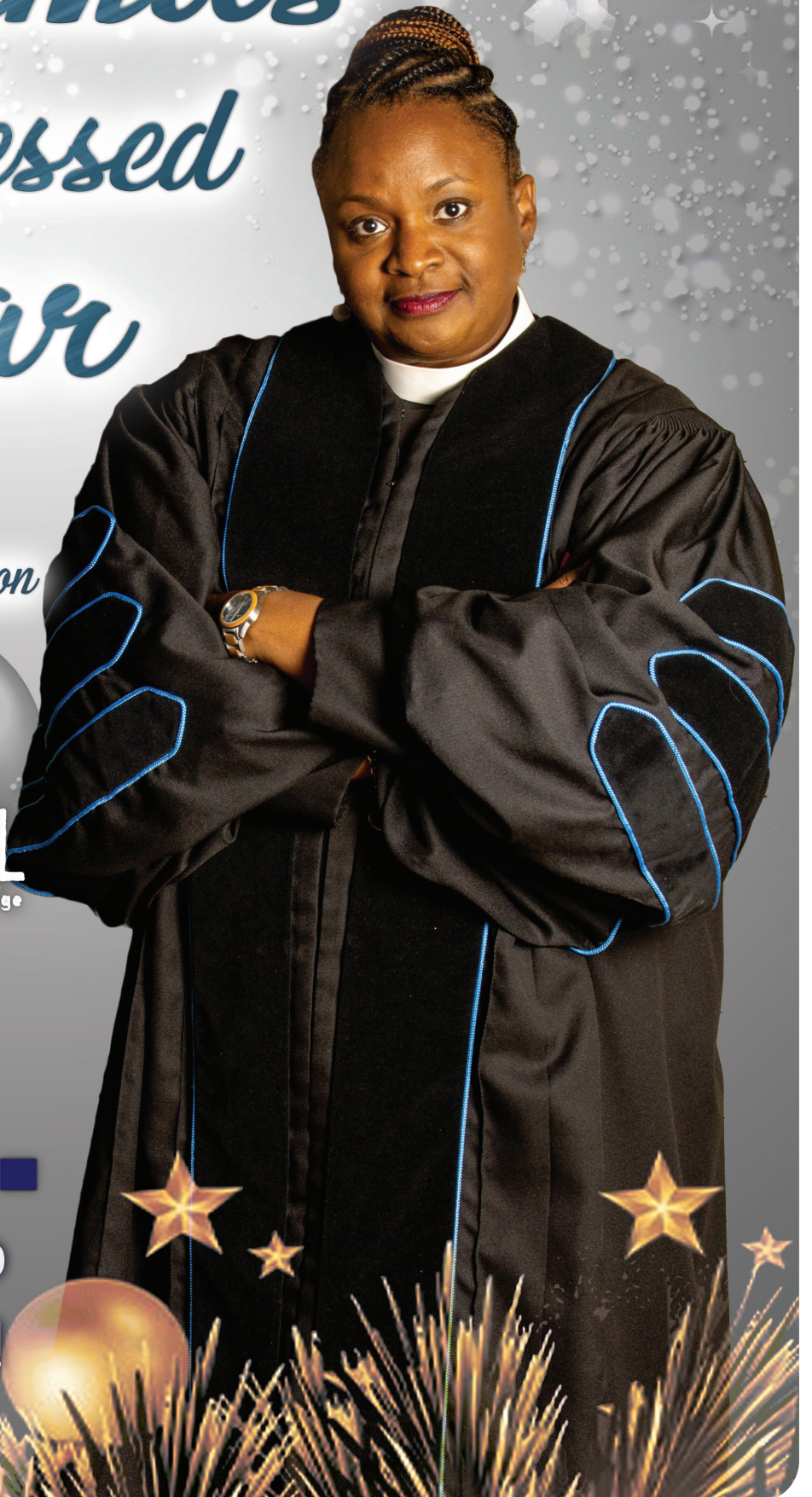
PRICE CATHEDRAL

There's a miracle on the corner of 12th and Orange

PLAN 1.

MAPSON FOR BISHOP

...She has a PLAN for Zion!





**Continued Blessings of peace
during this season of Advent,
Christmas, and the coming year!**

Love,

Dr. Daran & Rev. Lynn Mitchell

SIMON TEMPLE

AME ZION CHURCH



WE WANT TO WISH
OUR ZION FAMILY

Merry
& A PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR.
Christmas



Isaiah 9:6 KJV

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall
be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,
The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

UNIVERSITY
AME Zion Church
REACH | CARE | GROW

WE PRAY YOU HAVE A MERRY

CHRISTMAS

AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR!



From Pastor Kaloma A. Smith, First Lady Larin Smith,
Henry William Maurice Smith, and the entire
University Church Family.

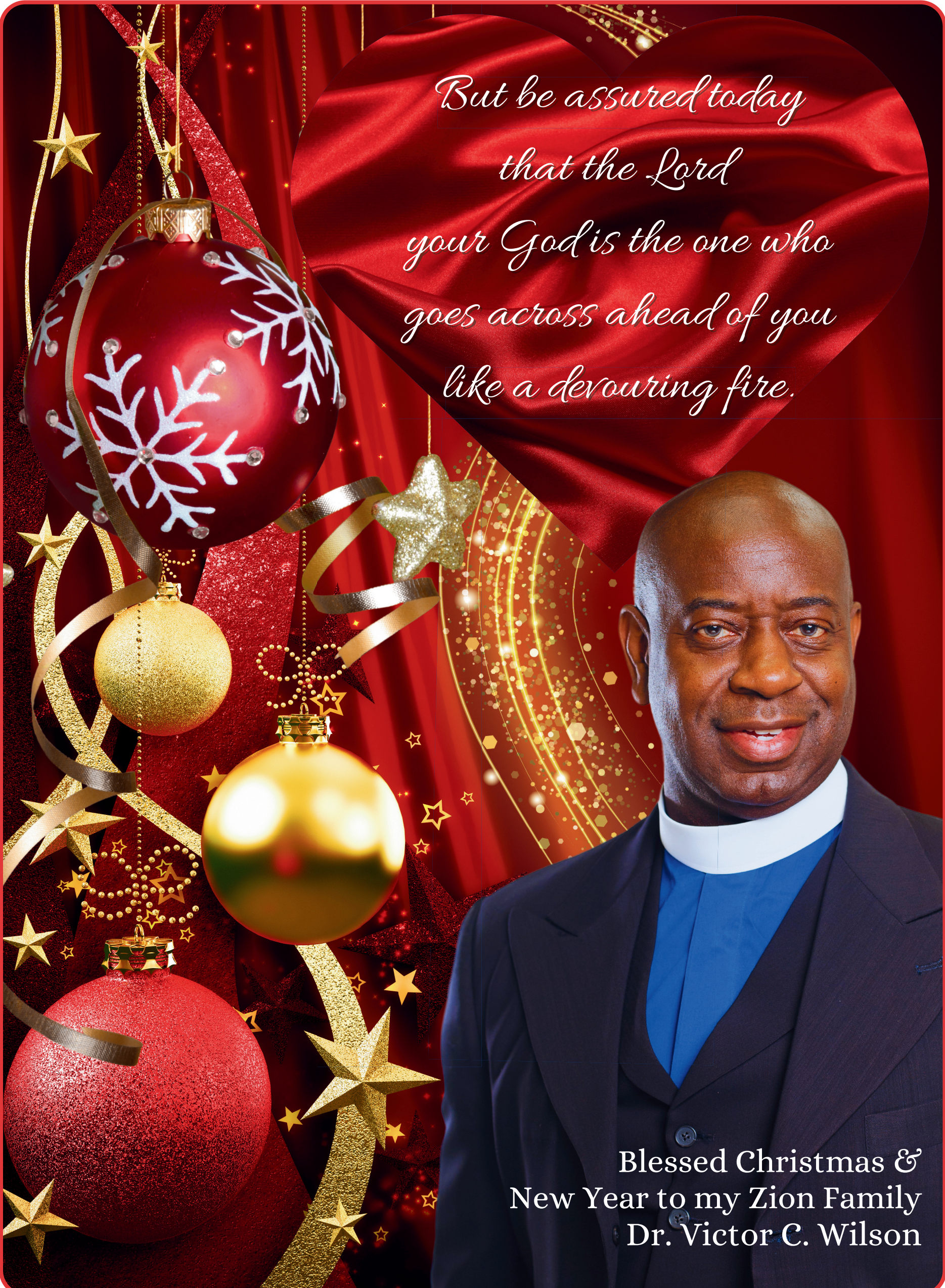


MERRY
Christmas

**FROM REV. ELDREN &
LADY STACHIA MORRISON**

**“TOGETHER, WE ARE STRENGTH FOR
TODAY AND BRIGHT HOPE
FOR TOMORROW”**

M
REVEREND ELDREN
MORRISON
FOR BISHOP 2024



*But be assured today
that the Lord
your God is the one who
goes across ahead of you
like a devouring fire.*



Blessed Christmas &
New Year to my Zion Family
Dr. Victor C. Wilson

Season's
GREETINGS

From Our Family to Yours



Rev. Gary D. Adams, Sr. & Family

CANDIDATE FOR BISHOP 2024

Merry Christmas

And A Happy New Year

"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE,
GOODWILL TOWARD MEN." - LUKE 2:14 NKJV

REV. DR. A. ALFRED CARSON
MRS. DORIAN M. CARSON
ALEXANDRIA AND ALEXIS CARSON

