

THE CONNECTION

RHANDI M. STITH, EDITOR

"FORTIFYING OUR FAITH WHILE FOCUSING ON OUR FUTURE THROUGH: WORSHIP, LEADERSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND STEWARDSHIP"

HEALTH AND WELLNESS THOUGH MOVEMENT

By Yvonne Baskerville, Walk/Run Chairperson and CLC 1st Vice President



"HEALTH AND WELLNESS THOUGH MOVEMENT"

Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health as it goes well with your soul. (3 John 1:2). One of the objectives of the Connectional Lay Council is to "disseminate information". As the Executive Board of the Connectional Lay Council strives to on-goingly achieve this objective we are excited to announce a new initiative as we prepare to focus both on the last component of our Quadrennial theme, Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on our Future through "Stewardship" and plan for our 11th Quadrennial Convention in 2017.

The initiative is called, "Fit, Fabulous, & Healthy". The initiative is a 3K/5K Walk Run. The Walk/Run will take place within our ten (10) domestic Episcopal Districts and will be held from June 2016 - December 2016. The Walk/Run is open to all members of the A.M.E. Zion Church, our families, neighbors, and friends. The participation goal is 5% of the total Lay Council membership (1,714 people). Each Episcopal Area's target goal is respectively set at 5% of their Lay membership in order to help achieve the aggregate goal. There will be a one-time registration fee of \$15.00. Registration will be done electronically via the CLC web site. Participants will have the option of registering by mail if they prefer. The registration form and pledge form will be available for download on the CLC website (under the Forms tab) by mid-May. The hardcopy registration form should be mailed to the Connectional Lay Council Office in Charlotte, North Carolina two weeks prior to the date of participation. The Regional Directors will serve as the champions for the initiative. They will select one common date for their Episcopal District and the date will be shared with their membership. The recommended time frame for each walk is in conjunction with the particular Leadership Institute. (Either before, during or after the Institute meeting) If no Leadership Institute is planned within an Episcopal District, the Regional Director will select an agreed upon date for their region. The walk can take place either outdoors or indoors. Runners will be accommodated accordingly.

See *Walk/Run* .pg 20

THANK YOU

By Elvira Faulkner-McLwain, Convocation Chairperson



Greeting in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm thank you to Madam President Mary Matthew, for her leadership skills and patience she has shown me during the planning team meetings, and the steering committee members, and to everyone for making the 2016 CLC Convocation a huge success! This was an informative Convocation and filled with excitement, what a blessing from God!

We would like to thank Bishop Kenneth Monroe & Mrs. Shelia Monroe and the Staff, alone with the SAED family for all the love they showed our visiting family.

Thank you ALL for embracing me and showing me so much love as your chairperson. As a team we can say that God is always in the blessing business, and with the encouragement from everyone it was an honor to work with such an awesome team.

A Word From Our President

From the President's Desk

Greetings,

I am most appreciative of your support prior to and during the 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation. I am grateful to Bishop Kenneth Monroe, Chairman Board of Lay Activities; Bishop Michael A. Frencher, 1st Vice-Chairman Board of Lay Activities and all members of the Board of Bishops for your support of the Lay Convocation's successful worship, teaching, interaction, and social fellowship. Additionally, I am grateful to the South Atlantic Episcopal District, all speakers and presenters, Ms. Elvira Faulkner-McIlwain, Convocation chairperson, members of the CLC Executive Board, International Ministers & Lay Association, clergy, laity and to all attendees, thank you for supporting the Lay Convocation. There were 519 registered laity and clergy gathered from Thursday through Saturday, March 17-19, 2016 at the Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center in Rock Hill, South Carolina for the Connectional Lay Council's 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation.



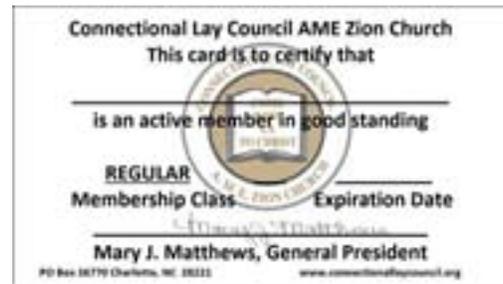
President Matthews

Kudos to Ms. Leondras Davis (Lele), our dynamic Special Project chairperson.

She upgraded her sales on special project items by incorporating a card reader to allow attendees to make purchases using their credit/debit card.

The second printing of the Connectional Lay Council Handbook is ready for purchase. The handbook is available through CLC Special Projects, place your order today. The price is still \$10. I am asking that each local church purchase one for your church.

Please continue to support the Connectional Lay Council with your annual, quadrennial and life memberships. There are members of the laity who expressed concern for not being able to receive a membership card each year their membership is renewed. At the CLC Executive Board meeting last month, I proposed to the board members a new annual membership card for all regular memberships. Persons who renew their memberships annually will receive a white membership card. Those persons who are regular members and have the black card, may hold on to it only if it is sentimental to you, but you will be receiving a white regular membership card each year you renew your membership. The quadrennial member will receive the black membership card and the life members will continue to receive their gold life membership card along with membership pin and certificate. I am hopeful that this change will encourage all of our churches to implement active Local Church Lay Councils to participate in the Christian ministry provided by the Connectional Lay Council.



We have started the process of preparing for the 2017 Quadrennial Lay Convention. Mrs. Yvonne Baskerville, 1st Vice President and chairperson for the convention has already met with the Convention Steering committee. I encourage everyone to start now in making your preparation to attend the 2017 CLC convention. More information coming soon! To provide you with beneficial information and teaching that will be effective for you in lay ministry, e-mail to me your suggestions for lay academy topics for the convention. I would love to hear from you via e-mail, US mail, or text; e-mail: clcpresident10@aol.com; mailing address: PO Box 3155 Sanford, NC 27331; text me at: 910-624-3684. God's blessings and thanks for all you do in lay ministry.



Connectional Lay Council
COME WITH US TO CHRIST
A.M.E. Zion Church



Dr. Dabney N. Montgomery

Interviewed by Lovell Jackson, Chairperson, Communications Committee, New York Conference Lay Council, and Mother A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council President



Dr. Montgomery has been a dedicated member and supporter of Mother A.M.E. Zion Church for 61 years and a member of the A.M.E. Zion denomination since 1929 (87 years). He has witnessed many changes and remained faithful to its ministry. He is a member of Class #4, a member and chaplain of the Lay Council, and a member of the Steward Board. In 1996, he served as General Chairman of the Bicentennial Anniversary of Mother A.M.E. Zion Church. He is the recipient of many awards and proclamations, too numerous to mention. Dr. Montgomery is married to Amelia A. [Neely] Montgomery. They will celebrate 45 years of marriage on October 16, 2016

Q. Dr. Montgomery, can you tell something about your childhood.



Mr. Montgomery, front middle, in 1929 with his family on the porch of their home in Selma, Ala. Top, from left, his mother, Lula, and his father, Dred. Middle row, from left, Fairrow Belle and Mitchell. Front row, from left: Esther, Dabney and Clyde

A: I grew up in Selma, Ala. Our house had three bedrooms and an L-shape front porch. One bedroom was for mom and dad, the second was for the two girls and the third was for the three boys — sometimes four. I had

a half-brother from my father's first marriage who occasionally stayed with us. I was the youngest.

My mom, Lula, took care of the house and the kids. My father, Dred, was a fireman for the Southern Railroad, which meant he shoveled coal into the engine's furnace and kept it hot. His train ran from Selma to Mobile—an overnight trip. At home, we lived by his rules: no dancing in the house, no card playing and, on Sundays, everyone went to church. Watching my father board his train, I wanted to be an engineer when I grew up. But only white men were engineers then and only a few blacks became firemen. That was considered a good job, so we were middle class during the Depression.

Q: What made you go into the Military?

A: I was drafted into the Army Air Corps (now the United States Air Force) in May 1943, at the height of WWII. Although I went to the Draft Board to volunteer, they told me to go back home and wait to be called because my 'number' was approaching the top of the list of draftees; within a few weeks I was drafted.

I served as ground crewman with the 1051st Quartermaster Company of the 96th Air Service Group, attached to the 332nd Air Fighter Group of the Tuskegee Airmen, in Southern Italy from 1943 to 1945.

Q: Did you receive any recognition during your military years?

A: Yes, I was awarded the: 1) Good Conduct Medal; 2) World War II Victory Medal; 3) Honorable Service Medal; 4) Basic Driver and Mechanic Medal; and, 5) European - African - Middle Eastern Campaign with two (2) Bronze Stars Medal.



Highlights of the 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation

By Delores Lancaster, CLC Recording Secretary

The Connectional Lay Council held their 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation March 17-19, 2016, at the Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center, Rock Hill, South Carolina. The theme of the convocation was "Effective Leadership for Zion: Interacting, Inquiring, Informing."

The Lay Convocation began on Thursday, March 17th with a Lay Academy Session which covered two important areas (1) General Conference Delegate Boot Camp, chaired by Rev. Dr. Gregory R. Smith, Executive Secretary of the International Ministers and Lay Association and (2) The AME Zion Church General Conference, chaired by the

Rev. Dr. Kevin McGill. Dr. Smith's presentation was directed to all persons present who are either first delegates or recurring delegates to the A.M.E. Zion Church General Conference. He asked them a series of questions which included – (1) Why are we here? (2) Why did you want to become a delegate to the General Conference? (3) Are you prepared for truth and consequences? (4) Can you be committed and are you prepared? and (5) What is the purpose of the General Conference? He referred each delegate present to the Appendix of the A.M.E. Zion Discipline – page 282 which provides the rules for the General Conference. He also advised the delegates that they must have the most current A.M.E. Zion Book of Discipline, Roberts Rule of Order (most up to date version). All delegates should bring to the General Conference the Book of Resolutions which they will receive from the General Secretary-Auditor of the A.M.E. Zion Church.

Immediately following the Delegate Boot Camp, a panelists consisting of Dr. Claude Shuford, Mrs. Shirley Welch, Mr. David A. Aiken, Sr., and Dr. Shelia Quintana. Dr. Shuford discussed the flow of the resolutions to be presented to the General Conference. He discussed in detail the Legislation Flow Chart in the Discipline on page 285. Mr. Aiken gave a presentation on the handling of those resolutions that have merit and are passed on to the Interface Committees. He discussed in detail the equal representation of the laity and the minister delegates who will be assigned to various committees exclusive of the Episcopal Committee. He advised the delegates present that they should pay attention to the resolutions that affect the committees they are assigned to. Dr. Quintana gave a detailed overview of the General Conference Protocols – (1) Obtaining the Book of Discipline as an E-copy; (2) I second that motion; (3) Basic Parliamentary Procedures; and (4) Accessing

the Conference Floor – the 2012 Book of Discipline, page 283, Rules for Conference Proceedings, Section 17-21. Mrs. Shirley Welch provided information to the delegates on the registration for General Conference processes. After Mrs. Welch's presentation, Dr. Smith came forward and gave a presentation on the Budget, pages 149-155 in the Discipline.

Dr. McGill gave a summation of the presentations presented and thanked the members of the panel for sharing their knowledge of the various topics. He thanked the CLC President for her vision.

The South Atlantic Episcopal District hosted the Convocation and presented a lovely Welcome Program during the evening on March 17th. Greetings were received from the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kenneth Monroe, Presiding Prelate for the South Atlantic Episcopal District, Mr. Lester Belk, Pee Dee Conference Lay Council President; Dr. Maurice Harden gave greetings from the ministers of the South Atlantic Episcopal District, and Dr. Elaine Johnson Copeland, President, Clinton College. Mrs. Yvonne Baskerville, 1st Vice President, Connectional Lay Council responded to the Welcome, given by Mrs. Annie Williams, Palmetto Conference Lay Council President and the various greeting received.

The Communion Worship Service followed the Welcome Program. Rev. Solomon Missouri, Pastor, Hemphill A.M.E. Zion Church, Summerville, Georgia delivered a very powerful message, his scripture text was Daniel 1:9-13. His message was entitled "I'm All Out of Moves." He advised that leadership is learned while you are serving. A few of his key points included (1) Losing is not failure as you learn; (2) Blacks can flip nothing into something; (3) God is not letting me down by upholding me; and (4) The only reason I am here today is because He keeps on keeping me.

Friday, March 18, 2016
GENERAL SESSIONS
Plenary Session I

The Session began with Devotions led by Mr. William Manning, CLC Chaplain; scripture read was Psalm 20. Mrs. Mary Matthews, CLC President, greeted those present. She acknowledged the presents of the General Elected Officers of the Connectional Lay Council; at which time the South Atlantic Episcopal District made presentations to each CLC Elected Officer. During this time, Madam President introduced the CLC Regional

Highlights of the 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation

Plenary Session III

and the Standing Committee Chairpersons.

During this Session the Compilation of the 2016 Proposed General Conference Legislation was presented by Dr. Joyce Perry Edwards and Mr. Isaiah Flowers.

Following Plenary Session I, the Challenge Luncheon was held. Mrs. Renee Felton-Pullen, Second Vice President of the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society introduced the speaker for the Challenge Luncheon, Dr. Sandra L. Gadson, International President of the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society, was the speaker. The title of her message was "Leadership and Service are so Important on This Planet." She advised those present that effective leaders are doers; it is what Jesus did; effective leaders interact (they have an effect on others). Sometimes you need to interact with God all by yourself and we have a calling to do something.

Following Dr. Gadson's uplifting message, the CLC Social and Political Action Chairperson, Mrs. Queen Degraphenreid, presented the initial monetary donation to Hope on the Hill – H = History; O = Overcoming; P = Prosperity and E = Empowerment. Accepting the presentation was Mr. Lester Belk, President, Pee Dee Regional Lay Council.

Plenary Session II

During Plenary Session II, Ms. Patricia Lewis, National Association of Parliamentarians, gave a very detailed presentation on "Parliamentary Procedures for General Conference. Following Ms. Lewis presentation, Rev. Dr. Robert

Johnson, General Secretary-Auditor of the A.M.E. Zion Church, explained to the delegates to the General Conference and others present the importance of the need for all General Conference Delegates to follow the instructions received from the people providing instructions on the voting process.

Mrs. Matthews came forward and thanked the presenters for their presentations. Rev. Dr. Gregory R. Smith recognized the presence of Mr. Jasper McCormick, Mrs. Rosa Alexander and himself as being the only persons present who were present at the First Connectional Lay Council Convocation.

The Episcopal Candidates Forum held during this Plenary Session was chaired by Miss Rhandi Stith Editor, Laity Speaks and the Connection Chairperson and Ms. Lynda Byrd Regional Director for the Mid West Episcopal District. Miss Rhandi Stith, introduced those Episcopal Candidates who participated in the Forum. The candidates seeking the elections to the A.M.E. Zion Episcopacy were Rev. Dr. Derrick R. Anderson, Rev. Dr. Margaret Blackmon, Rev. Dr. George Crenshaw, Rev. Dr. Hilliard K. Dela Dogbe, Rev. Dr. Udak Usen Efiog, Rev. Dr. Richard M. Gadzekpo, Rev. Dr. Paul Stanton Hoggard, Rev. Dr. Barbara LaToison, Rev. Dr. Eric Leake, Rev. Dr. Lester A. McCorn, Rev. Dr. William McKenith, Rev. Dr. Eleazar Merriweather, Rev. Dr. Felix Kwabena Ofofu, Rev. Dr. Staccato Powell, Rev. Dr. Audie V. Simon, I, Rev. Dr. Brian R. Thompson, Sr., Rev. Dr. Jeffrey L. Tribble, Sr., Rev. Dr. Dwayne A. Walker, and Rev. Dr. Anthony Witherspoon.

Saturday, March 19, 2016

The Prayer Breakfast began the programs/sessions held on Saturday, March 19th. The following prayers were given (1) Prayer for the A.M.E. Zion Church Leadership –Mrs. Shelley Henry, Regional Director for the Northeastern Episcopal District; (2) Prayer for Justice – Mrs. Gwendolyn Slade; (3) Prayer for Peace – Mr. Ned Highsmith; (4) Prayer for Forgiveness – Mr. Wallace Teel; (5) Prayer for Unity –Ms. Virginia Gaddy; and (6) Prayer for A.M.E. Zion Church Members – Mr. Olive Dodson. The prayer meditation message was given by Mrs. Mary J. Matthews, Connectional Lay Council President. The title of Mrs. Matthews' meditation was "Prayer: The Precious Gift of God to Man." Key points stressed by Mrs. Matthews were (1) We need to thank people who follow His word; (2) Prayer connects you with God; (3) Prayer can have a more impact than anything you do; (4) Rely on the Holy Spirit; (5) Praise God for who He is; (6) Fast when God leads you to do so and (7) Be Willing to make sacrifices for God.

Plenary Session IV General Officer Candidates Forum

The General Officer Candidates Forum was chaired by Mr. Malcolm Russell, Election Committee Chairperson and Mrs. Katherine Burrell, CLC Regional Director for Mid-Atlantic II Episcopal District. The Candidates seeking election to an A.M.E. Zion Church General Officer Position were:

Highlights of the 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation

General Secretary-Auditor: Rev. Robert Linder and Rev. Dr. J. Elvin Sadler
 Chief Financial Officer: Mrs. Shirley Welch
 Editor, Star of Zion: Mrs. Addie Lisby
 Editor, A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review and Secretary, Department of Historic Preservation and Scholarship: No Candidate
 Secretary-Editor, Department of Overseas Mission and Missionary Seer: Rev. Sonya N. Burns and Rev. Dr. Dwight B. Cannon
 Secretary/Treasurer, Christian Education Department: Rev. Kathryn G. Brown
 Editor, Department of Church School Literature: No Candidate
 Director, Department of Church Growth and Development: Rev. Dr. Otis T. McMillan
 Director of Public Affairs and Social Concerns: Rev. George E. McKain, II
 Secretary-Treasurer, Zion's Benefit Services: Mr. David Aiken

Restructuring Commission Bishop W. Darin Moore

Bishop W. Darin Moore came forward and gave a very detailed presentation on the Restructuring Commission Report. Areas covered include "The Case for Change," "Sub-Committee on Episcopal Re-Alignment," "The Review of Administrative Boards Sub-Committee," and "The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Organizational Chart and COO Job Description (Draft)." Dr. Moore concluded his presentation by providing the Website for the Commission – www.amezrsc.com. He encouraged those present to provide their comments to the Committee on the website.

Bishop G. J. Leake, III Scholarship Luncheon and Fashion Revue

Mrs. Anita Pearson-Royster, Chairperson for the Bishop G. J. Leake, III Scholarship gave a preview of the

Crystal Award which will be presented at the upcoming 11th CLC Quadrennial Convention. She encouraged those present to promote the Award. The Crystal Award contribution is in three levels Gold-\$5,000; Silver-\$2,000; and

Bronze-\$1,000. She acknowledged the presence of Rev. Antoinette E. Joiner, 2015-2016 Leake Scholar. During the luncheon the Black and Gold Fashion Revue was held. The Fashion Revue included Black and Gold Casual Attire, African Attire, Sunday's Best and After Five Attire.

Plenary Session V Christian Discipleship Lay Academy

Rev. Dr. Jeffery Tribble, South Atlantic Episcopal District, and author of book entitled "A Class Manual for Initiation into Christian Discipleship and Welcome into the African Methodist Church." Joining Church vs. Joining Jesus.

The Chairperson of the CLC Social/Political Action Committee presented the Hope on the Hill representative, Mr. Belk, an additional monetary donation from the Convocation attendees.

Mrs. Effie Woodard, CLC 2nd Vice President, gave accolades to the South Atlantic Episcopal District for their outstanding hosting of the 10th Quadrennial Connectional Lay Council Convocation. She further advised those present that the goal set for the registrations were exceeded. Additional accolades were given by Mrs. Annie Williams, President of the Palmetto Conference Lay Council, and Rev. Dr. Tribble and his wife thanked the Council for our coming and presenting such a wonderful program.

Closing prayer was given by Dr. Tribble and the Convocation closed at 4:45 pm.

Remember to use the Lay Council Closing Prayer

Oh, God, our Father, pour out your steadfast love upon us and keep us in your care, now and forever more. Amen.

Written by Miss Mildred R. Faulkner New York Conference

Episcopal Candidates' Forum

All candidates for the Episcopacy were asked 3 questions: 1. As it relates to the office that you are seeking, what do you believe is the greatest challenge? 2. What is your vision to address this challenge? 3. How will you inspire others with your vision and transfer it to them? Below are their responses



Rev. Dr. Derrick R. Anderson
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

My name is Derrick R. Anderson, and I am a candidate for the office of Bishop in our beloved Zion. I believe that the greatest challenge for this office is to provide the servant leadership necessary to strengthen Zion by investing in the growth and productivity of our local churches.

I believe that the idea of a connectional church is biblically sound, and that a connectional church is at its best when it realizes that the connection exist for the local church and not vice versa. I have a vision for reaching every local church with the training, tools and support necessary for their growth and productivity with emphasis on leadership, discipleship and stewardship. Zion must invest in the leadership of the local church by equipping clergy and lay leaders to be effective leaders with a sound understanding of the church and of the duties and responsibilities of their office. Zion must equip each local church to engage in effective discipleship. And finally, Zion's operations(including finances) must be based upon biblical principles of stewardship from the connection down to the local church.

With over thirty years of pastoral experience, I have a track record of investing in the growth and productivity of the local church. Growth and productivity is possible when there is 1) a vision, 2) a faith in God and the people of God; and 3) a plan that allows the people to take ownership of the vision and the plan. With your vote and God's grace, I can put into practice what the Lord has gifted and prepared me to do.



Rev. Dr. Margaret Blackmon
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. Challenges of serving in an episcopal office in a church of followers of Jesus the Christ include working from the vantage point of one among many who seek His vision and hear His voice and respond to the mission and needs of the Church, representing Christ to the people. In addition, the episcopal servant leader is challenged to stand before Christ as one of the representatives of the people.

2. When the mission of Christ and the needs of the Church in Communion and community are

identified and met in ways that are relevant to the people, times and places we are called to serve, individuals, congregations, and communities will experience abundant living through our ministries. Life-affirming, inclusive, visionary, equipping ministries actively engaged in the lives of those they lead to faithful discipleship to become fruitful ministers who accept fiscal accountability and responsibility will contribute to addressing these challenges.

3. Jesus' vision for the Church inspires those who are committed to Him and the Holy Spirit gives the power to make the vision live. As we collectively share "what we see" and "what we hear" with others as members of Christ's body, the transfer, in love, will occur.



Rev. Dr. George D. Crenshaw
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. To formulate a comprehensive plan to address the dwindling memberships in many of our churches. Whereas I understand this issue is not unique to The AME Zion Church, it yet threatens our ability to make a meaningful impact every where the AME Zion banner is raised!

Episcopal Candidates' Forum

2. We must remind our constituency, but especially leaders at every level that qualitative growth always precedes quantitative growth. We must reject the temptation to follow the latest growth strategies and continue to seek to meet the needs of the community holistically!

3. Jesus always emulated what He wanted the disciples to become. I would seek to perform as a bishop that which I have endeavored to perform as a pastor; to facilitate growth both personally and corporately! I would challenge every leader and member to embrace the concept of personal qualitative growth with the expectation that the 'plentiful harvest' would unite with the ministry that sufficiently meets their needs!



Rev. Dr. Barbara A. LaToison
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. I am seeking the office of Bishop. I believe the greatest challenge facing the AME Zion Church is the issue of expansion. According to the Association of Religious Data Archives, there is a sharp decline in AME Churches west of the Mississippi River. Of the eleven states with absolutely no Zion presence, nine are west of the Mississippi. Converse to our churches reality demographics shows that reverse migration is taking place and Blacks are mov-

ing South and West. Additionally according to Nielson, nine of the ten top markets for millennials are west of the Mississippi River. Of the eleven states with absolutely no Zion presence, nine are west of the Mississippi. Converse to our churches reality demographics shows that reverse migration is taking place and Blacks are moving South and West. Additionally according to Nielson, nine of the ten top markets for millennials are west of the Mississippi.

2. My vision to address this challenge is a simply to lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes. Our cords are strengthened as we secure and operate from our core value and transform our strategies and practices that will allow us to serve this present age. This would entail the church becoming relevant and relational as we connect multi-generationally. Using technology and social media we will work to: attract Millennials, bolster the Boomer, and care for the Builders. We will expand as we reattract migrating Zionites and identify the potential for Church plants.

3. I will inspire others by first working with and through our present structure: The Presiding Elder's Council can become the vehicle to identify where Zionites are moving to, the Church Growth and Development to begin the process of identifying the potential church plant; The W.H.&O.M.S can provide resources to help undergird the process; The Lay Council while working to build denominational loyalty can disseminate information to the migrating Zionites about churches already in the area as well as begin the process of training transferees to start ministries where they are relocating; finally, we can be intentional about taking our denominational meetings

where we have little to no presence with the intentionality of making our presence known and drawing those Zionites who have relocated to unite, this is where the Department of Public Relations would play a major part with media blitz and advertisements in the area.



Rev. Dr. Eric Leake
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. I believe the greatest challenge to the office of bishop is developing and overseeing a ministry plan for growth, revitalization and sustainability within local congregations that will increase resources of people who bring spiritual gifts and financial support.

2. The vision I have to address this challenge is equipping and empowering lay and clergy to make Christians disciples and develop Christian Servant Leaders in every generation.

3. I will seek to inspire others with my vision and transfer it to them through the ministry model of the Five Ships of Ministry. This model is designed for church growth and revitalization. The Five Ships entails: Shaping through Discipleship, Submitting through Worship, Sharing through Stewardship, Strengthening through Fellow

Episcopal Candidates' Forum

ship and Serving through Leadership. I will encourage Annual Conferences and Episcopal Areas to embrace this ministry model on all levels. Episcopal Areas to embrace this ministry model on all levels.



Rev. Dr. Lester A. McCorn
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

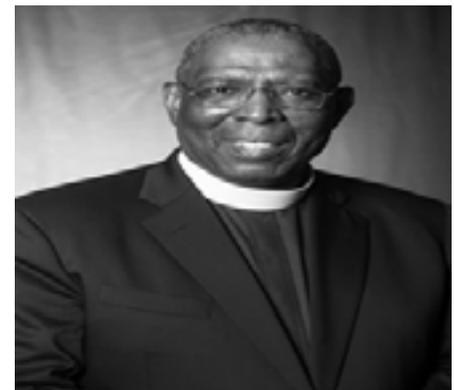
1. I believe our greatest challenge is making the AME Zion Church relevant to the needs of millions of disaffected, disconnected and disillusioned African Americans (especially millennials) who no longer see the Church as a necessary element of their spiritual development, moral obligation or social liberation. The Black Church in general and the AME Zion Church in particular is not viewed as viable or a necessary aspect of their human fulfillment. Instead the Church is being viewed as insensitive, intolerant, irrelevant, outdated and obsolete. We must recapture the prophetic zeal and powerful witness of "The Freedom Church," building on our historic strengths and current opportunities in order to serve this present age.

2. I believe that as a spiritual leader I must be attuned to the social, economic and political issues that affect the well-being of our community, sacred and secular. Operating the church in

a vacuum of self-preservation is a sure way of hastening our demise. We must adopt John Wesley's mantra, "The World is My Parish." As a Bishop I would insist on a comprehensive strategic plan for the episcopal area focused on the mandate of Luke 4:18-19. It would begin with proper training and empowerment of clergy and lay leaders, who will be involved in facilitating and developing the plan. We would do a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis of our internal and external environment. We would then implement a strategy to address our plight and improve our potential in the areas of worship, fellowship, discipleship, stewardship and leadership. Our focus would be on our future, mapping out the resources -- human, financial, capital and political -- needed to guarantee our viability in the 21st century. A demographic study of our area will be a key component of the plan, looking especially at trends that impact the next generation of our community. The plan will be thoroughly shared and disseminated across the area in order to get buy-in. The goals will be realistic and measurable, being monitored quarterly and annually. Leaders will be held accountable for their performance as it relates to goals and objectives. Revisions and adjustments will be made regularly to ensure maximum effectiveness and success in ministry. The entire process -- from formation to implementation to execution to evaluation -- will be undergirded with prayer and praxis. I would seek to institutionalize the vision in a more permanent ministry school for the area, with satellites in every Presiding Elder district.

3. I will share the vision in Check-Up Meetings, Annual Conferences and Leadership Training Institutes. Year One (1) will be spent teach-

ing and preaching vision and developing the plan. Year Two (2) will be spent in communicating and disseminating the plan. Year Three (3) will spent in implementing the plan. Year Four (4) will be spent in evaluating the plan from the Episcopal District level to the Conference level down to the local church level. I will enlist Presiding Elders, Pastors, Clergy and Lay leaders to embrace the vision, develop the vision, share the vision and carry out the vision. A strategic planning team will shepherd the entire process to ensure full participation and ownership.



Rev. Dr. William McKenith
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. The greatest challenge for the office that I am seeking is church growth and relief from connectional and district claims for local churches. The two are interrelated. Church growth increases tithes, offerings and special giving. Zion does not have a well developed and orchestrated and effective evangelistic campaign that utilizes conference resources to grow our local churches.

2. We need to create a culture of best practices in fiscal responsibility, empowerment of the people for evangelism, and measured

Episcopal Candidates' Forum

productivity. I refer to this vision as R.E.A.P. Evangelism is at the heart of R.E.A.P. Conferences need to develop a well orchestrated and effective evangelism campaign that is formulated, developed and financed on the conference level, and coordinated and implemented on the district level, for the sake of growing our local churches. We cannot look to local churches to finance evangelism, they're already overburden. This means that conferences need to provide full financial disclosure and analyses of Conference resources to enhance the stewardship of those resources, in order to garner the funds to finance evangelism. And if we are going to finance evangelism, we need to hold accountable those responsible for evangelism.

3. How will you inspire others with your vision and transfer it to them? The vision would be articulated through biblical preaching and teaching of certain texts that relate to obedience, evangelism and God's providential care. Then I would take a collaborative approach to developing this ministry; by determining a mission statement, setting goals and objectives. We would roll out this ministry one district at a time, revising our tools and plans as the ministry matures.



Rev. Dr. Eleazar
Merriweather Candidate for

the Episcopacy

1. I firmly believe that the greatest challenge the need to return the maintenance of sound doctrine and the proper practice of our polity. Innate to the twin towers is church growth and financial stability. The lack of the same are manifested in church decline, financial challenges, all of which are merely or symptoms or derivatives of the greater problem, but not problem within themselves.

A. Consider this same insight of renown leaders: Regarding doctrine, the Apostle Paul said, "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1 Timothy 4:16). John Wesley said, "I do not fear that the people called Methodist shall ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. I only fear that they shall exist as a dead sect having the form of religion, but not the power thereof, and that undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast to the doctrine, discipline, and spirit, with which they first set out" (Reality of the Black Church, p. 31). Maxie Dunnam said, "The most critical thing in the Church today is the recovery of its identity by reclaiming its doctrine." James Weldon Johnson echoed the same thought when he stenciled "Lift Every Voice and Sing": "Keep us forever in the path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee. Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee."

B. Regarding polity, Bishop Walls said, "Much of our polity is practiced too partially still, and must be restored universally to our Methodism. Unless we restore the essentials of Methodism, we will destroy it. John Wesley said, "What is the purpose or end of polity? Is it not to bring

souls from the power of Satan to God, and to build them up in his fear and love? Polity, then, is so far valuable as it answers these ends; and if it answers them not, it is nothing worth." In other words, every position in our church was established primarily to ensure church growth and financial stability because the leaders of the Church as the "Standard Bearers of the Movement" (John Wesley).

2. I believe God has given me insight and passion to recapture and restore the doctrine and polity of our Church.

A. I would place heavy emphases on the teaching and learning the basic essentials of our faith, that is our doctrine and polity, and stress the same to Presiding Elders, Pastors, Ministers, Lay Leadership, stewards, trustees, class leaders, etc.

B. Restore the class meeting system: "It has sometimes been talked of doing away with class-meetings, but the day that "wicked Haman" builds that gallows, if he is not hung thereon, the power and strength of Methodism will dangle there from. To abandon or neglect either, contradicts the name Methodism; these give it birth". (Bishop John B. Small, Code on the Discipline). Teach proven biblical principles regarding financial stability. "Unless the finances of the Church are properly managed, the entire work will be embarrassed. The living spiritual condition of the Church, however, guarantees financial success: God first—and success will follow as a consequence" (Code on the Discipline, Bishop John B. Small, page 130, Section 36). Also, I would teach the importance of Operating funds, cash reserves, long-term savings, endowment, etc.

3. Teach it as an essential biblical mandate. Provide oppor-

Episcopal Candidates' Forum

tunities for open discussions, questions (town hall meetings) and seek input from the entire episcopal district. I believe that it is critical to engage the people, and if we engage the people, we will empower the people, and if we empower the people we will enfranchise the people. The same concept is expressed in Exodus 18:12-26 and our church polity.



Rev. Dr. Audie V. Simon I
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

The greatest challenge for those seeking the Office of Bishop is being able to inspire hope and not confirm despair. We are living in some very challenging times. African-Americans are dealing with unemployment, under-employment, racism, discrimination, lack of health care and so many other challenges.

a continuity funding and revenue system creating dependable and predictable revenue and funding year after year. I would also work with others to create staff accountability and team building system, putting the right people with the right skills in the right positions at the headquarters.

I would remind the people that this is The Lord's Church. I would use a no stress engagement system inspiring members of the general church to take action and not just attend a church but to be the church. I would remind the members that so many people are counting on Zion and the members of Zion to be what God has created us to be. I would use social media and other media outlets to constantly communicate the vision to the membership.



Rev. Dr. Staccato Powell
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. I earnestly believe that once the role and process are embraced, there are not challenges that I would consider to be great challenges.

2. Once the role and process have been embraced, I must become intentional about church growth and church planting and repopulating the pews and expanding the borders of existing conferences and establishing new conferences in unchartered areas.

3. To strategically write the vision and make it plain. Which will involve creating a document delineating a concrete course of action which will include a timeline with measurable benchmarks.

Many of the persons who are facing challenges are looking to the church for help and answers. They are looking to the church for solutions. We must be able as a world church to not only provide solutions for the members of our Zion but we must provide solutions for the world.

My vision to address the challenge is to create systems that will help us to grow and minister to the present age effectively. I would create a strategic planning system aligning our ministry with our personal values. Working with others I would create an integrated outreach system that would include multiple marketing and outreach activities generating new converts for the Kingdom and members for Zion. I would create a lifetime communication system, regularly communicating with Zionites thorough social media and multiple touches. Working with the CFO and the Board of Bishops I would create



Rev. Brian R. Thompson, Sr.
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. I seek the office of Bishop at the General Conference of 2016 in the life of the AME Zion Church. I believe the greatest challenge, as a Bishop is to revive and transform the mindset, the mandate, the ministry and marketing of many of our local churches. I believe we must move from a Church mentality to a Kingdom mentality for

Episcopal Candidates' Forum

our denomination not only to be relevant but the bigger challenge if we are not careful we will soon find our church nonexistent in comparison to the to great foundation that we have stood upon for so many years.

2. My vision to address these challenges is to deploy the principals that we have been given by God at the Simon Temple AME Zion Church that have produced tangible results. My vision is to establish a practical model for church growth to revive and sustain congregations for future growth. This will allow us to not only meet the needs of our seasoned saints and nurture our youth and young adults. I'd also deploy proven principles that we are using in Fayetteville, NC to not only keep 40 year olds and under but cause them to flock to our congregations.

My vision is to create revenue opportunities inside and outside our denomination that revitalize our cash flow within the local churches as we bring relief to our connectional budget.

I desire to work with and enhance our vital tools of ministry like Christian Education to revive our teaching within the connection for ministers and laity, so that we can enhance the knowledge of the whole body of Christ which will help us empower all of the body of Christ!

It is my goal to develop a business model for our churches that will follow the models of our discipline while making doing business such as negotiating contracts, securing loans, demanding lower interest rates and running the local church as well as the denomination in Godly stewardship.

I believe in creating a denomination wide technology platform so that we can not only call ourselves a connection, but we can truly be connected through a national ministry streaming of local congregations, a national text and e-mail system free

to the denomination as well as local churches, so we not only can publish information instantly but won't have to use the grape vine method for critical issues.

3. I will inspire others with this vision and transfer this vision to the Episcopal area as well as to the denomination by working with the total connection as well as the Episcopal area I'm assigned. We must teach, empower and utilize the gifts of all persons "we are many parts but one body". God has allowed me to do all these things in the local church so I've proven that it can be done. I believe what you've done as a pastor you will do as a Bishop.



Rev. Dr. Jeffrey L. Tribble, Sr.
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

I believe that the greatest challenge facing the A.M.E. Zion Church is how to faithfully respond to a changed situation-- a "Post-Christian" culture in which the society that we are ministering to is resistant to the Gospel and even hostile to the Christian Church. This environment represents a spiritual, cultural, and theological challenge to the survival and growth of the Church. The result of this changed cultural environment for ministry has been the familiar symptoms that we all see and experience at all levels of the church: membership loss (es-

pecially of youth and young adults), insufficient financial resources for ministry, and a loss of influence in our witness to the world. Hence, the greatest challenge of a Bishop is to mobilize attention, energy, and resources to lead the Church in faithful transformation of people, of churches, and of the Connectional Church.

2. My vision is to be a servant leader who helps lead the transformation of Zion Methodism in a diverse and changing world. To do this, I believe that we must preserve the DNA of Zion that is the best of our spiritual heritage, traditions, and wisdom; discard and rearrange traditions that no longer serve us well; and create an inclusive and inter generational environment for discovering new ministry approaches to best serve this present age. In this DNA metaphor, I highlight three core commitments that will contribute to Zion's transformation on personal, congregational, and Connectional levels.

D – Discipling people to follow Jesus Christ as agents of transformation in the Church and in the world (Matthew 28:19-20);

N – Nurturing lifelong learning as the engine of transformation (Romans 12:1-2); and

A – Administering God's Church with integrity, the essential element of transformation (Psalm 78:72).

3. a. To personally disciple a team of presiding elders who are accountable to disciple pastors who then must disciple class leaders who then disciple members through small group ministry.

b. To promote sustained presiding elder excellence, pastoral excellence, and lay officer excellence by nurturing lifelong learning as our ministry rises and falls on the quality of our leadership.

c. To pray for fruitfulness and measure our discipleship efforts through check up meeting metrics

Episcopal Candidates' Forum

such as the number of: baptisms, conversions, worship attendance, small group and Christian education attendance, and participants in outreach and witnessing.

d. To be the chief missional strategist for my Episcopal area, working with a team of Elders and laity to lead in church transformation and church planting.



Rev. Dr. Dwayne A. Walker
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

I believe the greatest challenge facing the Church is a pervasive identity crisis. When you don't know who you are, then you don't know what you are supposed to do. As we consider the culture we are called to minister to, we can't help but notice the crime, promiscuity, moral decadence, social, political, and economic oppression, racism, sexism and other acts of discrimination that are rampant and out of control in society. It is apparent that the ministry and message of the church is missing. We have allowed ourselves to become involved in doing everything,

but BE the Church. We have been commissioned by Jesus in Matthew 28: 16-20 to "Go into all the world and make disciples..." Jesus also said we are to be the "salt of the earth and the light of the world..." I truly believe that if we return to remembering and fulfilling our purpose, the world would be a much better place to live.

The vision of "Elevating Excellence in Ministry" is one that has the objective of encouraging and empowering the local church to revisit our purpose and fulfill the objectives of the ministry which is to seek and save the lost. God will bless us as we deliberately obey His mandate for our ministry. Glorifying God through worship, Magnifying Jesus through Evangelism, Edifying People through Christian Education, and Fortifying Faith through Prayer will produce a Multiplied Ministry because Healthy Churches Grow and can make a difference.



Rev. Dr. Anthony
Witherspoon Candidate for

the Episcopacy

1. I believe the greatest challenge is helping our denomination to see the need for bridging gaps across a multi generational spectrum. Our denomination is aging, often times failing to reach out to younger generations while simultaneously taking very seriously the contributions made by pillars of the church, collectively. Young Adults, especially are willing and able to contribute time, talent and treasure with proper mentoring from persons who have already experienced what they presently experience.

2. I intend to bridge gaps cross generationally by establishing partnerships, collaborative groups, and transitional ministry opportunity that foster an appreciation for recognizing/accepting the gifts of others, without the fear of any group(s) being ostracized.

3. The inspiration for this vision will come to fruition through small group discipleship, including time and space throughout Episcopal gatherings, forums, as well as including next steps/time lines in the strategic plan for the area for which I am assigned. The planning process for which this is to take route and be transferred with generations to follow will require openness, transparency and honesty, coupled with intentionally systematically putting the vision in motion.

Indigenous Episcopal Candidates' Forum

All candidates for the Indigenous Episcopacy were asked 4 questions: 1. As it relates to the office that you are seeking, what do you believe is the greatest challenge? 2. What is your vision to address this challenge? 3. How will you inspire others with your vision and transfer it to them? 4. What work are you presently engaged in Africa that is improving the quality of life and ministries of the A.M.E. Zion Church that qualifies you to be elected a Bishop and serve in Africa? Below are their responses



Rev. Dr. Hilliard K. Dela
Dogbe Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. As Bishop for the Western West Africa Episcopal district, the greatest challenge for the church in the episcopal area has to do with discipleship, inadequate financial resource for missions and ministry and human resource capacity, all of which impinge on church growth and development.

2. My vision for dealing with these is multifaceted. By prayer and meaningful engagement with all aspects and dimensions of the Church, I envision developing appropriate strategies toward enhancing existing structures and systems to make them functional and relevant; streamlining the strategy document through education and sensitization to allow for ownership at the grassroots/local church level; enhancing the capacity of the leadership through training and educational supports; empowering the youth to be worthy ambassadors of Christ through spiritual and temporal immersions, including

scholarship grants; empowering our local churches and schools to become relevant in the communities. I also envision seeking partnership with governmental and non-governmental agencies, engaging business initiatives and partnering with other churches within and without toward harnessing and mobilizing resources for the work of kingdom building.

3. By way of education, establishing channels of communication that allow for a free flow of information, and making documents and materials accessible to all irrespective of their status or position in the Church, while entrusting leadership to persons with appropriate skill sets and holding them accountable.

4. Presently, I the pastor of Aggrey Memorial A. M. E Zion Church, Mamprobi, where I have served for the past four years. Preaching and teaching, as we strive to improve the quality of life of the membership to grow in faith, hope and love has been our hallmark. By virtue of my training and expertise as a counselor, I have sought ways to always engage all; supporting, encouraging, directing, confronting and helping all within and without our congregation to find meaning and value in life through various ministry programs and activities that are inclusive, relevant and life-enriching. Through our scholarship program, we continue to empower the youth and young adults by supporting their education and apprenticeship training; an aged ministry

that seeks to embrace the aged and improve their quality of life, etc. My ministry here is not only limited to the congregation but we have consistently found ways to be relevant in the community through different outreach ministries such as community health care, blood drives, child development center, mission parades, etc. with a focus on improving the quality of life of our members and the community.

I also serve as Chief of Staff to Bishop Lartey, and in this capacity not only am I responsible for coordinating all the activities of the Bishop, but also offer support to the Ministers and Elders, and for that matter, the local churches, districts and conferences in our Episcopal area. With regard to the latter, supporting and working with other pastors and leaders of the church is something I have been involved in throughout my ministry in the episcopal area since Bishop Brown appointed me to the Bishop's training team in 1999.

I am also an Adjunct Lecturer at Trinity Theological Seminary, where I teach courses in the area of Pastoral Care and Counseling. In this regard, I help to provide training to our ministers; raising quality Christian leaders for the work of missions and ministry. In this capacity, and the other capacities noted above, I have also been involved with the ecumenical church community here in Ghana at many level

Indigenous Episcopal Candidates' Forum



Rev. Dr. Uduak Usen Effiong
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. The greatest challenge of the ministry, especially in Eastern West Africa Episcopal District, is the need for capacity building for ministerial and lay leadership that would drive consolidation and expansion programs of the Church in the area.

2. To address this challenge, my vision is, among others, to:

- a) organize and sustain training institutes to address different ministries of the church;
- b) strengthen existing ministerial training institutions;
- c) explore means of helping our ministers receive advanced training in ministry in the United States in order to strengthen our linkage with our heritage.

3. The hallmark of leadership is to inspire others to cultivate their energies, talents and resources toward the attainment of set goals. Hence, I intend to give the area effective leadership anchored on, but not limited to, effective stewardship, mentorship, teamwork, and dependence on the leading of the Holy Spirit. With these, it is expected that the people would be inspired, and resonate with the vision. And the church would be blessed and Jesus Christ glorified.

4. Presently, I serve as Bishop's Deputy in the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District. This entails

travelling though out the area, by authority of the Presiding Prelate, to encourage the work of the ministers and lay leaders. Furthermore, I am a full professor of physics education at the Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. This has offered me great opportunity to mentor youths in and out of Zion. As professional teacher, and preacher of the gospel, I have had the opportunity of offering godly counsel to students, parents, community leaders and rendering other leadership services within the university and community that have endeared the AME Zion Church to many, all to the glory of God.



Rev. Dr. Richard M. Gadzekpo
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. The greatest challenge relating to the office of Indigenous Bishop of the Western West Africa Episcopal District, is funding for the work of Ministry.

2. My vision to address the above referenced challenge is to create economic stimuli through the implementation of profitable businesses that create outstanding revenue streams and long term revenue generation to fund the work of ministry. We will create a strategic partnership to address capital funding. We will create jobs and empower the people of the Episcopal District so as to free

money for Home Missions in the United States and ultimately earn our right to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Nations by God's good Grace and to His Glory.

3. To inspire others to embrace the vision and ultimately transfer the vision, we will seek to highly cultivate the gifts and talents of others or employ their gifts and talents to achieve the goals and objectives. In other words, we will help both laity and clergy recognize that "each individual's gift matters" and educate them that they have something to offer to help bring about the vision. When individuals are part of a vision and own it, implementation becomes easy and success is ensured.

4. No answer to question.



Rev. Dr. Felix Kwabena Ofose
Candidate for the
Episcopacy

1. I believe the greatest challenge to the office that I am seeking is how to effectively handle matters in the transition from the present system into the new system of indigenous leadership.

2. My vision to address this challenge is to establish permanent episcopal office and provide leadership that will enhance our mission in the episcopal areas. I hope this will produce growth and help us to be self-supporting.

Indigenous Episcopal Candidates' Forum

3. I will inspire others by sharing my vision with them and encourage them to join me to work and attain our goal. I will invite those in the episcopal area and the entire denomination to support us with prayer and fasting. As stated in the Bible, "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it." Psalm 127:1

4. I am serving as the pastor of Bishop Williams AME Zion church at Asamankese, Ghana. I am

leading the congregation in the building of a sanctuary. The aim is to move our worship from a classroom, and enjoy worshipping in a sanctuary. The project was started at the beginning of the year and has reached the roofing level. The project is debt free.

I play significant role in the activities of the Osenase District of the church. I preached the Annual sermon at the District Missionary Convention.

I teach at the Conference Studies,

and I am actively involved in activities of the Mid-Ghana Conference.

I am the coordinator of the Adult Education program of the church in Ghana. The objective is to provide education to Zionites and non Zionites who did not benefit from the formal education system. Through this program the church in partnership with the non-formal education sector of the government is making education available at no cost to millions.

General Officer Candidates' Forum

All candidates a General Office with opposition were asked three our questions: 1. As it relates to the office that you are seeking, what do you believe is the greatest challenge? 2. What is your vision to address this challenge? 3. How will you inspire others with your vision and transfer it to them? Below are their responses

CANDIDATES FOR GENERAL SECRETARY-AUDITOR



Rev. Dr. Robert E. Linder

I believe the greatest challenge for the office of General Secretary is the collection and storage of accurate data from across the denomination. Investment must be made into a system that will allow for storage and the digitization of our records and information.

My vision is to have an office that is able to retain for future generations the records pointing to our history. To accomplish this I will seek to the best of my ability resources to fund such .



Rev. Dr. J. Elvin Sadler

Regarding the office of General Secretary Auditor, I believe that the greatest challenge will be to totally automate the office in the areas of records and statistics and the Book of Discipline.

It is my vision and belief that we can create forms and documentation that are easily accessible, user friendly and interactive (Quarterly Conference, Statistical Forms, Evaluation forms, etcetera). Developing these forms will give us real time information and provide us with relevant information to help ministries to know and understand trends and shiftings in culture and society that may contribute to

church growth and more effective practices for ministry execution.

It is also my vision that the office can be automated by creating an accurate up-to-date database for ministers and churches. We must have a clearing house that provides us with accurate information for any number of verifications, such as dates of birth, dates of Ordinations, etcetera. And finally, automating the Book of Discipline will provide greater access to the doctrine and discipline of our church that can be easily accessed through multiple mobile platforms (phones, tablets, etcetera).

It is my belief that one of the most effective ways to inspire others and get people to buy into a vision is by displaying and modeling success of the vision. As people understand the vision and it's importance to the overall denominational vision and why it is necessary to integrate the vision to provide for greater ministry effectiveness and then see the results of the vision, people will catch (adopt) the principles of the vision, or similar principles, and begin to apply the principles to the way they do ministry.

General Officer Candidates' Forum

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

EDITOR, STAR OF ZION

EDITOR, A.M.E. ZION
QUARTERLY REVIEW AND
SECRETARY DEPARTMENT
OF HISTORY, PRESERVA-
TION AND SCHOLARSHIP



Shirley Welch
Incumbent



Addie L. H. Lisby
Incumbent

No Candidate

SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL MISSIONS AND EDITOR, MISSIONARY SEER



Rev. Sonya N. Burns

1. One of the greatest challenges for the Department of Global Missions is how to broaden the distribution of information gathered and shared by the department.

2. My vision in response to this challenge includes creating a website that contains pages where information can be accessed. A website will make it more accessible to members of the A.M.E. Zion Church and others who have an interest in global missions. Also a website allows the information to be updated regularly.

3. My website, www.revsnbglobal.com, is an example of how information can be distributed and updated. I am willing to share the tools I used to create my website and the resources I used to gather information.



Rev. Dr. Dwight Bernard
Cannon

1. I believe the greatest challenge that I face, as I seek the office of Secretary-Treasurer of the Department of Global Mission and Chief Editor of The Missionary Seer, is that of keeping missions a priority for our ZION and making sure that

ZION does not forget the exigency of nor lose the enthusiasm for the work of missions. Keeping missions a priority means not only asking, "Can we afford to do missions today?" It also means we must ask, "Can we afford not to do what God commanded us to do?" We must fight to keep missions on the forefront of our agenda... and if we must fight...we need a CANNON!

2. My vision to address the challenge of keeping missions a priority is to build upon the legacy of my predecessor by following the "Mission of God" (Isaiah 61:1-3 & Luke 4:18-19) and allowing for intentional implementation of all the 21st Century tools, at my disposal, that will enhance the dissemination of our mission curriculum. This means embracing the technological advances that will connect ZION globally. It also means publishing and pushing the Missionary Seer to be a real, recognizable and relevant literary resource for all missioners and every mission-minded reader!

General Officer Candidates' Forum

3. I believe my experience with and enthusiasm for missions will inspire others to see the urgency and ultimate attention mission deserves. My 7 years of living and working on the mission fields give me the mission-experience,

mission-tolerance, mission-comprehension and mission-sensitivity that will create a positive platform to promote Zion's mission agenda throughout our denomination and the world! My passion will be demonstrated through preach-

ing, publishing, serving, sharing, teaching and testifying about how I set out to make a difference in our mission enterprise but it was missions that made a difference in me! I believe my excitement for missions is contagious!

**SECRETARY-TREASURER
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT**

**EDITOR, DEPARTMENT
OF CHURCH SCHOOL
LITERATURE**

**DIRECTOR,
DEPARTMENT CHURCH
GROWTH AND
DEVELOPMENT**



Rev. Kathryn Brown
Incumbent

No Candidate



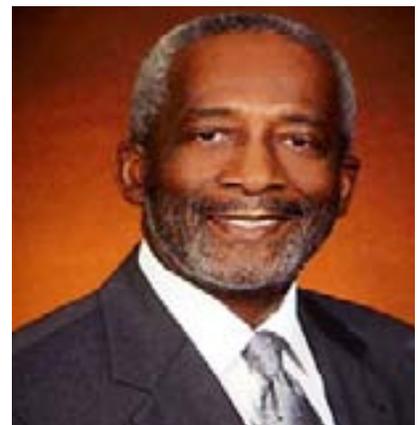
Rev. Dr. Otis T. McMillian
Incumbent

**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC
AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL
CONCERNS**

**SECRETARY-TREASURER
OF ZION'S BENEFIT
SERVICES**



Rev. George E. McKain II
Incumbent



Mr. David Aiken
Incumbent

Spotlights on CLC Executive Board Members Martha Scudder and Patricia Walton



In 2013, Bishop Seth O. Lartey requested that I serve as the Western West Africa Regional Director. I am thankful to Bishop Lartey and Rev. Dr. Richard Gadzekpo for their leadership and support. This was just prior to the start of the CLC Convention, so I will always be grateful to the im-

mediate past CLC President, Dr. Yvonne Tracey, for her patience and assistance to ensure that I was prepared for my responsibilities for the convention. Although I only served on the Executive Board with Dr. Tracey a short time, it was a tremendous experience working with someone with so much knowledge and such a high energy level. I am continuing to learn as I now serve with a great team under the leadership of Ms. Mary J. Matthews.

Never would I have imagined as I grew up in Rockford, TN attending a circuit church would I have the opportunities that have been afforded me because of my experiences within the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. I was fortunate to have two exceptional mentors, the late Rev. Dr. Gloria S. Moore and the late Bishop Clinton R. Coleman, who introduced me to the breadth of the AME Zion Church. They encouraged me to attend training institutes and connectional meetings which significantly contributed to my growth and knowledge of our great church. As a result of my work and experience in the church, it enabled me to grow to heights in my professional career that I may otherwise not have been able to achieve.

As a lifetime member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, I have served in several capacities on the local, district and conference level. I received my first District appointment as District Director of Children from the late Bishop C. R. Coleman. That appointment was followed by Tennessee Conference Director of Christian Education. I currently serve as Chairman of the Board of Christian Education for the Tennessee Conference and as Maryville District Director of the Youth

See Scudder .pg 22

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6 NIV))

In late fall of 2012, I received a call from Mrs. Yvonne Tracey, 9th CLC General President. She informed me that my

name had been given to her by Mrs. Maxine Davis, Greensboro District Local Lay President, to serve as the Regional Director for the Eastern West Africa District. She went on to say that Bishop Michael A. Frencher the newly elected prelate, for that area had agreed with my being the Regional Director.

I felt humbled that they had faith in my ability to do whatever was required of me.

Since 2012, I have worked with Bishop and Mrs. Frencher in doing whatever task they had in store for me. Bishop Frencher is my Bible teacher and my friend.

In July 2013, I attended my first Executive Board meeting which was held during the Tenth Quadrennial Lay Convention in Montgomery Alabama. To say the least, it was a new experience, so much to learn, see and do.

SEPTEMBER 2014, I served as the Program Chairperson at the Quadrennial Evangelistic Retreat Leadership Luncheon of the Connectional Lay Council in Norfolk, Virginia.

I am a member in good standing at Trinity A.M.E. Zion Church in Greensboro North Carolina. I have been a member for over 40 years serving in whatever organization where I am needed.

It was in the summer of 1979 that my good friend invited me to join the Lay Council. Since that time I have served in several leadership positions, the latest was as local President. I am now the Lay President of the Greensboro District in the West Central North Carolina Conference, Piedmont Episcopal District.



Connectional Lay Council Membership Thrust

By Effie Woodard, 2nd Vice President and Membership Chairperson



CAMPAIGN MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS NEEDED

In order for us to keep our memberships on target, we are launching a Campaign on renewing expired memberships. The challenge is that each Episcopal area is to

encourage and act upon getting their Episcopal area back to our 75% benchmark. In our recent Report, most areas are down from our benchmark.

Each Episcopal District along with the Regional Director and their Membership Chair is ask to work intentionally with the Conference Directors by giving awards to the Conference and Districts that have substantially exceeded their benchmark by June, 2016. This can be accomplished if we work together to make it happen! It is a CAMPAIGN FOR THOSE THAT HAVE EXPIRED TO RENEW! However, we are not excluding any who wish to come on board as new members. We welcome all!

We can make our goal in 2017 of 50,000 card-carrying members. Keep the gate open by maintaining those that are current and renew those who wish to continue to be a part of this ministry. As you may be aware, the Quadrennial for Connectional Lay Council is just around the corner, 2017. It is imperative that your active membership be the key. RENEW! RENEW! RENEW! NOW! We need your help!

....Walk/Run *Continued from page 1*

This new initiative has three purposes: (1) to help our members to become better stewards of their health by becoming more intentional about practicing and sustaining a healthy lifestyle for improved well being,(2) to provide financial support for the convention and (3) to generate funds to donate to a community organization in the host city where our convention will be held.

The bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 6:19 that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within us whom we have from God. As people of a faith based community, it is essential that we are good stewards of our temples and all God has given us dominion over. Laity of Zion won't you accept the challenge to become "Fit, Fabulous & Healthy" by participating in the Walk/Run. This challenge is not just a one-time investment in the Connectional Lay Council but hopefully it will become

a long-term investment by the laity in good health and well- being. It is fact that some of the benefits of physical exercise are stress reduction, mood elevation and weight loss among other things. And yes, another added benefit is enhanced stewardship. Can we count on you?

More detailed information will follow in the coming weeks and will be available on the CLC web site and from the Regional Directors.

....Montgomery
Continued from page 3

Q: What made you go into the Military?

A: I was drafted into the Army Air Corps (now the United States Air Force) in May 1943, at the height of WWII. Although I went to the Draft Board to volunteer, they told me to go back home and wait to be called because my 'number' was approaching the top of the list of draftees; within a few weeks I was drafted.

I served as ground crewman with the 1051st Quartermaster Company of the 96th Air Service Group, attached to the 332nd Air Fighter Group of the Tuskegee Airmen, in Southern Italy from 1943 to 1945.

Q: Did you receive any recognition during your military years?

A: Yes, I was awarded the: 1) Good Conduct Medal; 2) World War II Victory Medal; 3) Honorable Service Medal; 4) Basic Driver and Mechanic Medal; and, 5) European – African – Middle Eastern Campaign with two (2) Bronze Stars Medal.

Q: I understand that you are a graduate of Livingstone College. Can you tell us about your experiences.

A: In 1946, I enrolled in Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina, after serving in the Army Air Corps, and earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Religious Education in 1949.

I am a Charter Member of the Sphinx Club and one of the first to be inducted into the Gamma Mu Chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, on the campus of Livingstone College. He is a lifetime member of the Alpha Gamma Lambda Chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

On February 2, 2007, I received the Prestigious Outstanding Alumni Award from Livingstone College; on February 4, 2010, I was inducted into the United Negro College Fund "Share Your Love and Service" in Celebration of Livingstone College Leaders' Hall of Fame and on May 2, 2015, Livingstone College conferred upon me the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters for my many contributions to the College, as a Tuskegee Airman, and my activism in the Civil Rights Movement.

Q: What was the most difficult aspect of participating in the military?

A: The most difficult aspect of the military was obeying orders ---- period!! You could not say, "I'll do that tomorrow." When you were given an order, you obeyed. If you refused, you would be punished. There was no option for debate. However, after you followed the order [that you did not agree with], you could respectfully complain, without consequences.

Q: When did you join Mother A.M.E. Zion Church?

A: I joined Mother Zion in June 1955, and encountered an unusual incident. For example: I joined the church during the 11 a.m. morning worship service and, at 3:30 p.m., I was assigned to a job [downstairs] in the Junior Church to teach a Sunday School class. The consequence of such action was based on fellow graduates of Livingstone College, who were also members of Mother Zion. They knew my background and immediately took me to the Sunday school superintendent, Miss Mamie Green, and said to her, "Here is a Sunday school teacher for you." At 1:30 p.m., I was assigned to a class of all boys and continued to teach (rising to superintendent of the Junior Department), until retirement in mid-1999.

I was promoted as Director of the Junior Church in 1974, by The Reverend Dr. George W. McMurray, and faithfully served in that capacity until retirement in 1999.

Q: Who was Senior Pastor of Mother Zion, at that time?

A: The Senior Pastor was The Reverend Dr. Benjamin C. Robeson. He was the brother of the renowned, singer/civil rights activist Paul Robeson, who was also a member of Mother Zion and he taught an adult Sunday school class.

Q: What was so special about Mother A.M.E. Zion Church to you?

A: I majored in Religious Education at Livingstone College (which is an African Methodist Episcopal Zion institution), and knew the history of Mother Zion Church so, for that reason, it logically became part of my conclusion to become a member of the Mother Church of the denomination. The motivation became a focus in my study.

Q: What were the needs of youth, in general, at that time?

A: Their most urgent needs were discipline, Bible study and the application of the Bible to their everyday lives and practices. That is why Sunday school is the foundation of religious instructions.

Q: Dr. Montgomery who started calling you Uncle Dab? How did you get that name?

A: My niece Elaine Prewitt of Fayette, Alabama. In conversations with her, I promised that if she became an honor student in High school and graduated with honors, I would treat her to a trip to New York.

-- the essential materials to Christian living.

Q: Dr. Montgomery, please tell us about the Mother Zion/John Street Methodist Church tour. How did you become involved in becoming the tour guide for Mother Zion conducting tours to John Street Methodist Church?

A: I realized that many Mother Zion members did not know the history of the organized church. Members had been coming to church for years but did not know: 1) Mother Zion Church's origin, nor, knew about John Street Methodist Church and where it is; 2) did not know the location of the house the forefathers rented for four years; and, 3) during that time, raised money to buy a lot to build their own church. Through the study of Bishop Walls' book and conversations with the Pastor at John Street Methodist Church, I was able to locate the exact spot of that house and thought this noteworthy information was amazing and the members should be educated about their church history. We didn't start at John Street; we walked out of John Street and started at another location. Locating that exact spot was what I was in search of. I researched for months and months [possibly years] and was blessed with the help of a close friend, who, at the time was an architect for the City of New York, made it possible to go through City records to find the exact location. Therefore, it is important that we know the history of Mother Zion Church to build an archive for the generations to come.

I suppose (as a result of my research) the duty of conducting tours was given to me, starting with The Reverend Dr. George W. McMurray.

Q: What location was that, Dr. Montgomery?

A: The location of the rented house was on Cross Street, which is now a park and in that park is a basketball court. (Before the park, it was a through street.) The location is right around the corner from 26 Mulberry Street, which is now a funeral parlor. However, in the 1770s, Cross Street was where Black people lived and was known as the 5th Ward. Cross Street was cut off in 1955 to develop the park.

Q: How did you feel being recognized as an Historian of Mother A.M.E. Zion Church?

A: It wasn't a title that I asked for, but I was humbled to be recognized as such. I suppose those who referred to me, as Historian, felt it added another dimension to Mother Zion's ministry to have a Historic Society. I felt then, as I feel now, that everyone should know where he or she comes from. It's our duty as members of Mother Zion, or any institution, to know the history behind the organization to which they belong. I made it my mission to research in order to impart information about our church history to all who signed up for the tour. Numer-

ous churches and schools took advantage of the opportunity.

Q: Dr. Montgomery, I understand that you wrote a Resolution. Can you tell us about that.

A: In 1992, I authored a Resolution to the General Conference to celebrate 'The Day of Pentecost' throughout the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. It was passed in the 1996 General Conference and now stands as a mandate of the A.M.E. Zion Church denomination. This Day of Pentecost celebration takes place on the Sunday nearest the fiftieth day after Easter.

Q: Dr. Montgomery what awards and commendations have you received as an Original Tuskegee Airman?

A: In August 2006, he was selected as a contributing member of The History Makers; a Chicago-based organization that has the largest archival collection of both well-known and unsung African American History Makers. The Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.) acquired this documentation as permanent Repository of the History Makers Collection. Dr. Montgomery's life story is recorded in this document.

On March 29, 2007, President George W. Bush awarded the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor to the surviving 300 Documented Original Tuskegee Airmen, under the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C.

In June 2009, Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney, of New York, entered into the Congressional Record



(Proceedings and Debate of the 111th Congress), Washington, D.C., a sequence of Dabney N. Montgomery's military and civil rights experience, declaring him an "American Hero." It passed, unanimously. On May 22, 2012, he was inducted into the New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame, by New York State Senator Bill Perkins.

Q: Dr. Montgomery, you recently donated very precious artifacts to The Smithsonian Institution National Museum of African American History and Culture, in Washington, D.C. Tell us what you donated and why you did that?

A: You have to know where you came from in order to know where you are going.

I took a leave of absence from my job with the City of New York and joined the march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, March 21-25, 1965, with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and I served as one of Dr. King's bodyguards. At the end of the march in Montgomery, an inner voice (which was the voice of God) said to remove the heels from my shoes to keep as a memento of my involvement in the march. I found that strange, but I removed them and saved the tie I wore. After I married, my wife Amelia had them put in a wooden shadowbox, along with an address book containing Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Atlanta address,



to preserve their historic value. Upon hearing that the Museum was in search of artifacts from moments in Black history, we submitted an application in August 2015 to offer the wooden shadowbox as a gift. The Museum dispatched a specialized fine arts shipping company to come to our home to pack and ship the items to a temperature controlled warehouse building [to acclimate], in Maryland, before moving on to the next process. After thoroughly examining the items and going through the process of authenticity, they were accepted by the Collections Committee of the Smithsonian Institution in January 2016.

My wife and I contributed these items as a compo-

nent of American History containing vital information that should be preserved forever and donated to an institution for the world to see. What better place to give it? As you can see, God had a plan for those heels back in 1965.

The Smithsonian Institution National Museum of African American History and Culture is scheduled to open September 24, 2016.

Q: Dr. Montgomery, where did you meet Martin Luther King, Jr. and when?

A: I met Martin Luther King, Jr. in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1952, through a wonderful woman named Mrs. Adams, who befriended me while I was teaching Sunday school in Union Methodist Church. (Each Sunday, I also taught Sunday school at 1:30 p.m., at Columbus A.M.E. Zion Church.) I was in Boston to study Ballet and the Flamenco dance at The Boston Conservatory of Music; Reverend King was at Boston University studying for his Ph.D. Mrs. Adams knew Reverend King (both were natives of Atlanta, Georgia) and had adopted him as her godson. She also adopted me as her Godson. One Sunday she said, "You are invited to my house next Sunday to have dinner and to meet my other godson - a wonderful young man." The following Sunday, I arrived at her home in Roxbury, Massachusetts and when I walked in, she said, "Brother Montgomery, I want you to meet my other godson Martin Luther King, Jr. and his fiancé Coretta Scott." We spent a wonderful afternoon together and had a wonderful meal.

Coincidentally, Coretta Scott was from Marion, Alabama, 30 miles from Selma, Alabama where I was born. Coretta was a member of an A.M.E. Zion Church, in Marion. We discovered that we knew many of the same people. And, years later, I discovered that she was the first cousin of a member of Mother Zion, whose 2 sons were in my Sunday school class and Junior Church.

That is how and where I first met Martin Luther King, Jr. I did receive an invitation to their wedding, but was unable to go; instead I sent them a gift. I have said many times, "If I knew Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. King would be famous one day, I would have saved their invitation." What a keepsake that would be.

Q: Dr. Montgomery, this interview is for an article in the Connectional Lay Council newsletter. What advice or guidance would you give to the Laity of the Mother Church?

A: 1) To be good Bible students and to Love God, with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself; and, 2) with the church as a vehicle, we could witness God as He is. The church is the vehicle to construct our connection with God above.

From Special Projects

By Leondras Davis, Special Projects Chairperson



We thank you for all you have done and are doing to support Special Projects. We are working hard to meet the supply and demands.

Stoling

Many of our Lay Councils are planning to stole members at their Annual Conference and we

want to be ready to meet your needs. If you know or plan to stole at your annual conference, it would be helpful to know the name of your conference, the month and date, even if you don't have the exact number of members to be stoled. Keep in mind, all current Life Members desiring to be stoled will need to be verified (you may include their LM number if known) and persons interested in becoming new Life Members will need to include payment for Membership and cost of the stole at the same time. The cost per stole is \$50.00 + S/H. Please use the stole ordering form when placing your order. When sending in a group order, it may be helpful to have all the stoles sent to one person.

General Conference

General Conference is on the horizon...If there are items you would like to have us bring to the General Conference for you, please feel free to contact me via e-mail no later than June 30th.

Consignment Sales

When sending in money or paying for items on consignment please include that information so we will be able to properly credit you or the RD. If you are a Conference or District President and you have received items from your Regional Director (RD), please indicate that source, so the amount you are paying can be deducted from their consignment. Thanks to all who are responding to pay your consignment balances in a timely manner. For all who still have consignment items, please let me know if you need more time or contact me

directly at Lpsivad@gmail.com.

Social Media/Facebook

We are making an effort to keep you informed via social media...be sure to check out our FB page: CLC/Special Projects. Be sure to include it on your programs, church bulletins and announce at your Lay Academies and Regional Meetings. Feel free to leave comments but DO NOT place orders on FB.

Stole Goal Challenge

Remember the Stole Goal Challenge goes on until June 30th! There is still time to meet your goal. Each RD's goal is 2x the number of Presiding Elder Districts in your Episcopal District (ie, if you have 12 PE Districts, the Stole Goal would be 24). Congrats to the RD's that have either met or exceeded their goal. Several are only 6 or less away. You can do it!!!

In Case You Didn't Know...

We can now accept your debit and credit cards when transacting a sale in person. You must sign and can get your receipt via text or e-mail. This has not been set up in the CLC Office as of yet. The office currently receives your checks and cash.

Are You Lay Council Ready?

Black Oxford LS Shirt - \$35.00

LC Study Guides - \$10.00

Gold T-Shirts - \$10.00

LC Handbooks - \$10.00

Insulated Totes - \$10.00

LC Medallion - \$15.00

Travel Bag - \$20.00

Purse hanger - \$10.00

Garment Bag - \$38.00

Stay tuned for new arrivals!

Here to Serve!!!

Lele Davis

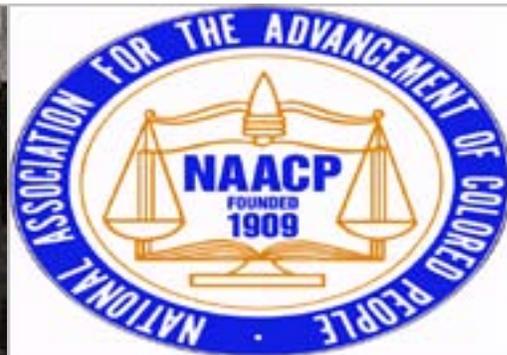
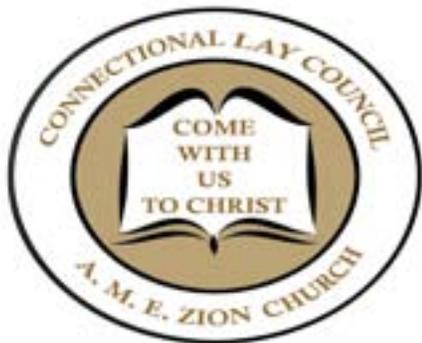
CLC/Special Projects

Lpsivad@gmail.com

704.562.0402 cell/text

Continuing Our “Freedom Church” Legacy: CLC Becomes Life Member Of The NAACP

Submitted by Queen Degraphenreid, Social Political Action Committee Chairperson



THERE WAS ALWAYS A “CONNECTION” BETWEEN THE NAACP AND THE AME ZION CHURCH. AT THE FOUNDING MEETING OF THE NAACP IN 1909, THE ONLY BISHOP OF ANY DENOMINATION REPRESENTED AT THIS AUGUST BODY WAS OUR OWN –BISHOP ALEXANDER WALTERS.

NAACP MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.

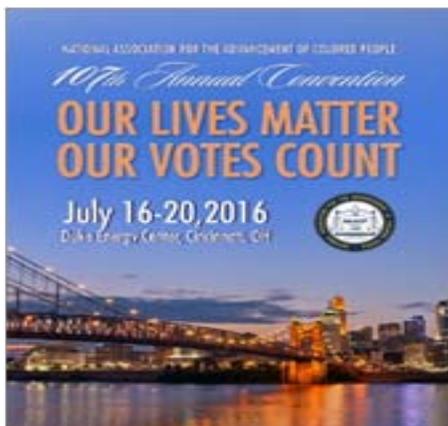
Vision Statement

The vision of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race.

Objectives

The following statement of objectives is found on the first page of the NAACP Constitution - the principal objectives of the Association shall be:

- To ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens
- To achieve equality of rights and eliminate race prejudice among the citizens of the United States
- To remove all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes
- To seek enactment and enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights
- To inform the public of the adverse effects of racial discrimination and to seek its elimination
- To educate persons as to their constitutional rights and to take all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof, and to take any other lawful action in furtherance of these objectives, consistent with the NAACP’s Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution.



- The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People will hold the 107th Annual Convention in Cincinnati, OH on July 16-20, 2016.

Cincinnati has been a successful host for previous NAACP conventions, most notably the 2008 convention which featured Senator Barack Obama among its prominent speakers. Given that the convention again comes to Cincinnati in an election year, there will be a lot of attention given to voter registration, voter education, and Get Out the Vote efforts. Additionally, much attention will be given to the effort to restore the Voting Rights Act.

The Lay Council Prepares Us for Action: We Need More Young People

Submitted by Sarah Kinard



In March, from the 17th to the 19th the A.M.E. Zion Church held its 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation at the Monroe Transformation Center in Rock Hill, South Carolina. The theme was "Effective Leadership for Zion: Interacting, Inquiring, Informing." This theme permeated throughout each and every session that was offered.

Ever since my first Convocation eight years ago, I have eagerly awaited each one. As a younger (not so young), member of Zion, I have grown to appreciate being in the midst of lay leaders, General Conference delegates, and people who are serious about the business and future of our denomination in the United States and abroad—racially and politically.

Although I am not a delegate, I do know that if one is serious about learning the inner workings of the A.M.E. Zion Church, the Lay Convocation is where the action unfolds! There are academies, boot camps, sessions on laws and resolutions, and parliamentary procedures. There was even time to meet and greet candidates who are running for "general offices" and for the episcopacy.

....**Scudder**

Continued from page 15

Missionary Society. Special thanks to Bishop Darryl Starnes and Rev. Dr. Willa Estell for the opportunities they are providing me.

I am a lifetime member of Mt. Pleasant AME Zion Church, where the Rev. L. Samuel Brown is the pastor. Under his current leadership and the exceptional leadership for 12 years of Rev. Dr. Richard Gadzekpo, I have continued to grow in my relationship with Jesus the Christ and in my service to the community and church. At the local level, I am an Exhorter and I serve as Preacher's Steward, Sunday School Superintendent, member of the Usher Board, and member of the Lay Council.

Perhaps my greatest achievement may be the opportunity to design and lead the rebuilding effort of the church where I grew to be the person I am today. It's no longer a circuit church, but it is still the church with a mission to become a strong multi generational community oriented church, focused on mentoring the next generation for life and ministry. If I am able to be a mentor and provide the same opportunities and exposure of this great church to others, that Rev. Gloria S. Moore and Bishop Clinton R. Coleman provided to me, then I believe I will have met a major goal that I have as a lay person in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. To God be the glory!

....**Walton**

Continued from page 15

Rev. Dr. Michael E. Ellis is my presiding elder and we serve under the leadership of the Right Reverend George E. Battle.

I am married to John H. Walton, my faithful, loyal, traveling companion. It takes a special kind of love to be willing to go wherever your spouse needs to be in the service of our Lord and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church without grumbling or complaining. We have one adult son, John Michael Walton.

The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid. Psalm 27:1

Regional News

Piedmont Episcopal District Bishop George E. Battle, Jr. Presiding Prelate

Mrs. Sandra Williams, Regional Director

Western North Carolina Conference Lay Council Convenes at Little Rock

By Gloria Joyner Johnson

On April 2, 2016, under the leadership of the conference President, Mr. Jerry L. McCombs, the Western North Carolina Conference (WNCC) of the Piedmont Episcopal District, Bishop George E. Battle, Jr. Presiding Prelate and Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church, met at the Little Rock A.M.E. Zion Church where the pastor is Dr. Dwayne Anthony Walker and the host Presiding Elder is Dr. James M. Sloan. The Little Rock Sanctuary Choir led by Dr. William Cummings, moved those in attendance to a place of worshipful praise in song.

The business session included the required reports which also included the membership report, the Albert S. Stout, Sr. Memorial Scholarship Fund report, and the district presidents' reports from the Charlotte, Lincolnton, North Charlotte, Salisbury, Winston-Salem and Statesville Districts. Convocation highlights were brought by Ms. Sandra Williams, Regional Director of the Piedmont Episcopal District. The nominating committee recommended the current officers serve for the upcoming conference year. The majority agreed and the officers for the WNCC Lay Council for the 2016-2017 conference year are:

- Mr. Jerry L. McCombs..... President
- Ms. Le-Le Davis.....1st Vice President
- Mrs. Connie Bell-Wright.....2nd Vice President
- Ms. Essie Crawford.....Secretary
- Ms. Marva Bailey.....Financial Secretary
- Mrs. Doris Griffin.....Treasurer
- Mr. Harold Wilson.....Chaplain

Mr. Larry Melton was the presenter for the Lay Academy. Mr. Melton, a graduate of Livingstone College who went on to play for the Washington Redskins of the National Football League, is the CEO of L.D. Melton Financial Services in Charlotte, N.C. The information on living benefits available through Accelerated Benefits

Riders was new to many as indicated by the questions. Although eager for more, time constraints limited further discussion. However, contact information gifts were provided by Mr. Melton and his staff.

At the conclusion of the meeting/academy, the attendees were treated to a delicious meal prepared by the Little Rock Culinary Ministry headed by Mrs. Mattie Klutz.

Stroll to the Polls During Primary Early Voting

By Gloria Joyner Johnson

As the pastor, Dr. Dwayne A. Walker tasked the Lay Council to take the lead in assuring every member, friend and visitor of Little Rock A.M.E. Zion Church was registered to vote, hundreds of voter registration application forms were made available at all entrances/exits to the church since the beginning of the year.

Due to the legislation passed by the legislators in Raleigh, N.C., early voting was reduced to ten days. There was only one weekend for early voting for the March 15, 2016 Presidential Preference and General Primary.

Therefore, after communion worship service on Sunday, March 6, 2016, Dr. Dwayne A. Walker led members on a "Stroll to the Polls". Sample ballots from the Board of Elections were provided for everyone to review and take with them to the polls. Some strolled the three blocks, while those unable to walk the distance, drove or were driven to be counted as early voters. Upon approaching the polling place, many of the candidates for judge and other local, regional and/or state positions who had worshipped with the congregation throughout the year, greeted us as we arrived. The poll workers were expecting the congregation, but expressed some uncertainty as this was the only Sunday for early voting.

Among the many candidates who have worshipped at Little Rock during this season, Roy Cooper, the current Attorney General for the state of North Carolina who is the Democratic candidate for Governor and District 12 Representative to the U.S. House of Representative, Alma Adams.

The push is on to get out the vote for the June Primary and the General Election in November.

Regional News

Mid Atlantic II Episcopal District

**Bishop Richard K. Thompson
Presiding Prelate**

Mrs. Katherine Burrell, Regional Director

The Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference Lay Council Black and Gold Banquet

By Katherine Burrell, Regional Director

A Black and Gold Gala was held Friday March 4, 2016, with over 200 in attendance, to honor the faithful and diligent service of the past presidents of The Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference Lay Council. The Gala was held at the Double Tree by Hilton in Philadelphia, PA.

The honorees were Ms. Mozella B. Ritter of Pennsylvania Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church, who served from 1989-1996, Mr. Edward L. Pearson of Alleyne Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church who served from 1997-2005 and Mr. Gilbert F. Turner of Grace Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church who served 2006-2015. Mrs. Lorraine Toler, the widow of the late Mr. James R. Toler of Brentwood A.M.E. Zion Church, received the award posthumously for Mr. Toler, who served from 1985-1988.

The Conference Lay Council President, Mrs. Katherine Burrell was the Mistress of Ceremony. Devotions were led by the Chaplin, Mrs. Wilma Newby. The opening hymn Blessed Assurance- this is my Story, was appropriately selected as we were there to tell the stories of the honorees. The Daughters of Miriam, Liturgical Dance Ministry of women over fifty from our local churches in Philadelphia ministered to the honorees and guests by dancing to Every Praise is to Our God by Hezekiah Walker, under their current dance instructor and mentor Mrs. Ravelle King. A musical selection, Evergreen by Barbara Streisand was given by Mr. Earl Simmons. Ms. Sarah Kinard gave a highly spirited recitation of Praise God by Edna Tatum and Billy Preston.



Ms. Ritter was presented by Mr. Harold Wilder. One of Mozella's many accomplishments was the program guide she created to equip laity for practical lay ministry.

Mr. Pearson was presented by Ms. Renee Pullen. During his tenure Ed instituted "the Lay recognition banquet" to honor local lay leadership.



Mr. Turner was presented by Mr. Donald Baldwin. Gil was instrumental in establishing the Samantha M. Wormley Memorial Scholarship Program for the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference.



Mrs. Burrell presented Mrs. Toler with the posthumously award for Mr. Toler. Mrs. Toler told us of her husband's service, traveling the conference with Mr. Ezell Myers Harvell establishing Lay councils at the local churches. The first four Life Members of the Connectional Lay Council from The Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference were from the Washington District.



The evening was a time of fellowship and relaxation that was enjoyed by both laity and clergy dressed in their finest Black and Gold, coming together to celebrate the laity of whose shoulders we stand upon today.

We give God the Glory for the opportunity to honor these sons and daughters of Zion.

The 11th Lay Recognition Award Luncheon Philadelphia-Eastern Shore District Lay Council.

**Ms. Barbara Bennett, President
Rev. Dr. William Kelly, Presiding Elder**

The 11th Lay Recognition Award Luncheon was held by the Philadelphia-Eastern Shore District Lay Council. Their theme was "Dedicated Servant of God: Love That Makes a Difference." The Mistress of Ceremony was Ms. Barbara Bennett. She stated, "That the honor belongs to each of you, for only through the Grace and Mercy of God; we are able to celebrate the labors of a few of His vineyard workers."

Regional News



The honorees were:

- Ms. Jovoinia Hamilton, Alleyne, Philadelphia
- Ms. Lois Louise Ketih, James Varick, Philadelphia
- Mr. David Cromedy, Liberating Power, Bridgeville, DE, a young adult making a difference
- Ms. Patricia Maddox, Mt Hope, Princess Anne, MD
- Ms. Pamela Jamison, New Hope – Mission Outreach, Philadelphia, PA
- Ms. Phyllis Thomas, St. James, Salisbury MD
- Ms. Cresandre Barkley, St. John, Ross Point, Laurel, DE
- Ms. Tracy Teagle, St. Mark, New Town, PA
- Ms. Dorothea Elaine Day, St. Paul, Media, PA
- Ms. Dorothy McKinney, St. Paul, Salisbury, MD
- Ms. Gwendolyn Lawson, Scott, Wilmington, DE
- Mr. Larry A. Turner, Sr., Trinity Delta, PA
- Ms. Leslie Evans Johnson, Union, New Castle, DE
- Ms. Charity Christabelle Baldwin, Wallace Temple, Rhodesdale, MD
- Ms. Julia Walton, Wesley, Philadelphia, Pa

The awards were presented by Mr. Donald Baldwin, Rev. Keitha Wiggins Kennedy and Rev. Dr. William E. Kelly, Presiding Elder.

Philadelphia-Eastern Shore District has a unique position, that of the Lay Council Queen, Dr. Lore Chambers the current Queen, proudly wearing her crown gave the challenge message. Her message follows below.

Remarks were given by Katherine Burrell, Regional Director, congratulating the Lay Council on their successful celebration. She stated that it takes all of us, young, old, men and women, as shown in the honorees, working together to build God's Kingdom. Mrs. Burrell assured everyone that we would be back next year because there is still plenty of work to be completed in God's vineyard.

After serving as president for 11 years Mrs. Bennett

had announced that she would be stepping down at the end of this Annual Conference, in May. She gave thanks and high praises to her district officers for their support during the past 11 years she served as president.. As Ms. Bennett departs the president's position she says, "I leave the District Lay Council in the arms of God's chosen disciples who are anxious to continue God's work in this vineyard."

The new officers for conference year 2016-2017 are:

- Pat Griffin, President
- Dianna Swift, 1st Vice President
- Santha Neal, 2nd vice President
- Deborah Stanley, Secretary
- Dr. Lorel' Chambers, Financial Secretary
- Olivia Williams and Patricia Briddell, Chaplains

His title was "Whatever God Gives You is Discipleship". He reminded us that Jesus was the only true disciple and He never gave into temptation; he was obedient to all that God gave Him. On the other hand, Esau gave into his feeling of hunger and thought he would perish without receiving food soon. By giving into a moment of hunger he gave up a chance of becoming a disciple for God. Rev. Smith stated we need to be mindful of the temptations around us and not to give in so we can be good disciples of what God gives us.

**Lay Council Banquet
April 10, 2016
"I Challenge You"**

The following Challenge Message was given by Dr. Lore' Chambers at the Philadelphia Eastern Shore Lay Recognition Luncheon. Dr. Chambers is a member of St. James A.M.E. Zion Church, where the Rev. Dr. David McLendon is her pastor. It is something that all laity should hear/read and take on the challenge. Dr. Chambers will past her crown on to the next Lay Council Queen in December 2016.

It is indeed a privilege for the people of God to assemble themselves together. It is an honor to continue to represent you as your Lay Queen on this auspicious occasion.

As we quickly approach a new conference year, I

Regional News

challenge you:

1. To increase your prayer life. Take the time to pray for yourselves, your family, friends, your Pastors, your Presiding Elders, the Bishop and this wonder AME Zion organization that; we will continue to do the will of God.
2. I challenge you to be true worshipers. To worship God with your time, talent and your treasures. To be obedient and be doers of the word.
3. I challenge you to make disciples. The power to grow our churches rests with us. There is power in the pews. There are more of us than there are Pastors. Let's replicate ourselves. Go out and tell someone about Jesus. I know I'm preaching to the choir, but sometimes we need to be reminded not to get comfortable with the status quo, but to help to save a dying world.
4. Challenge you to reach forth your hands to mentor our children. We need to encourage them to turn off the technology and have face to face conversations again. Relationships are built by human contact. They need to know that we are tuned into them and that we care about their futures.
5. Challenge you to speak boldly about the condition of our churches. Let's look beyond ourselves and see the needs of our fellow worshipers and our communities. We must be good stewards over that which God has given to us.
6. I challenge you to stir up the gifts that God has so graciously bestowed upon us all. If you don't use it, you will lose it. God is looking for vessels He can use.
7. I challenge you to work while it is day, for night time is truly coming when no man can work.
8. I challenge you to uplift and undergird your Pastors. Theirs is a daunting task that does not end at 5:00 p.m. when most of us get off work. What can you do to help them forward the ministry?
9. I challenge you to continue to give service above self. It's not about us, it is about what God has called us to do. No matter the task, continue to work as unto the Lord. It is only what we do for God that will last.
10. To the next Lay Queen, I challenge you to put God first, love your church and support your community.
11. Finally, I challenge you to love one another as Christ loves the church. Be kind one to another and know that love is the greatest gift we can ever give.

I pray your health and strength and wish you Godspeed.

**North Eastern Episcopal
District**
Bishop Dennis V. Proctor,
**Presiding Prelate (New York, Western
New York and England)**
Bishop Mildred Hines
**Presiding Prelate (New England and
the Bahamas)**
Ms. Shelly Henry Regional Director

Laity 101
 By Shelly Henry, Regional Director

This year Northeastern Regional Lay Council meeting took place on Saturday April 16, 2016 in Buffalo New York at St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church where Presiding Elder Rev. G. Michael Tydus is the pastor. Presiding Elder Rev. Tydus was so kind as to open the doors of St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church right after their district conference which closed the evening before the regional meeting. This is and was greatly appreciated. Mrs. Joyce Harrington the Western New York Conference Lay President and Mr. Reggie Ingram the Buffalo District Lay President were the best hostess and host a regional director could ask for. These two were a great tag team who made sure everything was in place and in order. We felt welcomed as we walked in the door. The meeting was well attended and all of the Northeast Region was represented.

Before indulging into the first course of our meeting we needed to be fed and blessed with the Word of God which was given by Rev. Reginald D. Smith, pastor of Blackwell A.M.E. Zion Church in Jamestown, New York. Rev. Smith scriptures came from the books John 8:31-32; Genesis 25:29-34; and Deuteronomy 21:15-17 and his title was "Whatever God Gives You is Discipleship". He reminded us that Jesus was the only true disciple and He never gave into temptation; he was obedient to all that God gave Him. On the other hand, Esau gave into his feeling of hunger and thought he would perish without receiving food soon. By giving into a moment of hunger he gave up a chance of becoming a disciple for God. Rev. Smith stated we need to be mindful of the temptations around us and not to give in so we can be good disciples of what God gives us.

This year's outreach donation went to Durham Memorial Central City Café in the fine city of Buffalo. Durham Memorial feeds and supplies showers to the homeless in the community. With the grace of God, the Northeast Regional Laity was able to bless this ministry with \$350.00. To God be the glory!

Regional News

Not knowing what I should do the lay academy on, God laid on my heart several months earlier to get back to the basics. Just before I was ready to present this regional lay academy I was asked "how do I answer the question; what is laity?" God is truly Amazing! Not knowing this question would be asked the Lord laid on my heart to present a lay academy entitled "Laity 101". The academy was given in the form of I ask the questions and the audience answers them. All questions and answers came from the current and past Connectional Lay Council Handbooks and the book of Discipline and scriptures supporting the answers. To spark more thinking bonus Jeopardy style answers were given for people to ask the question. Yes, trinkets were given to those who had the correct Jeopardy question. This engaged everyone and encouraged more questions and concerns which needed to be addressed.

I'm thankful to God for a meeting that was a blessing not only to me but to those who were in attendance. May God continue to bless the Northeastern Regional Laity.

The Jackson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church Hosts – The 2015 Annual Love Feast Vespers And Fellowship

Submitted by: Lovell C. Jackson, New York Conference Chairperson of the Communications Committee, and President Local Lay Council Mother A.M.E. Zion Church

On Saturday December 19, 2015 the New York Conference Lay Council gathered together at the Jackson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church Hempstead, New York for their Annual Christmas Love Feast Vespers and Fellowship Luncheon.

The opening and Vesper service was presided by Ms Eleanor Poole, Long Island District President. The Prelude played by Mr. Leonard Carter, Director of music. The Reverend Malcolm J. Byrd, Pastor did the Call to Worship, following the singing of "Rejoice Ye Pure In Heart". Mr. Ira Golden, Foster Memorial AME Zion Church Lay Council President and Connectional Lay Council Financial Secretary did the reading of The Old Testament. Mrs. Katherine Mahoney, Westbury AME Zion Church Lay Council President did the reading of The New Testament. "Hosanna in the Highest" hymn followed the reading.

The Welcome address was given by Mrs. Jackie

Edwards, Clinton Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council President following the singing of "Am I a Soldier of the Cross". Mrs. Marie Baxter, Mt. Hope A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council President gave the prayer. The History of Love Feast was done by Mrs. Willis Gibson Lake, St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council President. The Homily titled "Have You Ever Tried to Measure So" was given by the Reverend Malcolm J. Byrd, host pastor.

Prior to the celebration of the Love Feast "The King of Heaven His Table Spreads" hymn was song by all in attendance. Reverend Byrd's explained to all that because of the similarities between the Love Feast and Holy Communion, it is good to make clear that this is not the sacrament at which an ordained elder presides, but is a simple sharing of food which is bread and water that can be distributed by a lay person. At this time Reverend Byrd called on Ms. Rhandi Stith New York Conference Lay Council President and Ms Eleanor Poole to lead the celebration of the Love Feast in which each person took a piece of bread from one loaf and a cup of water. Once everyone had his or her share of food a prayer was given by Reverend Byrd.

The New York Conference Lay Council Outreach Project was the Bethany House in Roosevelt, New York. A shelter for woman and children that has five houses and had been in operation for 37 years. At this time Mr. Charleton Davenport, New York Conference and Long Island District Lay Councils 1st Vice President gave the introduction of gifts that were collected through out the New York District for the Bethany House to Ms. Theresa Sparrow Guild who is the Director and Residential Coordinator of the Bethany House.



Regional News

Reverend Keith I. Harris Presiding Elder of the Long Island District gave the remarks. The Reverend Isiodoa Branch, Presiding Elder of the Westchester also gave remarks and led us in singing "This Might Be The Last Time"

The Vespers ended in saying the Lay Council closing prayer that was followed by the luncheon.

The 2015 Lay Council Love Feast and Vespers at The Jackson Memorial A.M.E Zion Church was well attended. The history of the Love Feast very educational, the Vespers along with Reverend Byrd's homily was spiritually up lifting for all who attended.

The New York Conference Lay Council – Lay Academy "The Man In The Mirror"

Submitted by: Lovell C. Jackson, New York Conference Chairperson of the Communications Committee, and President Local Lay Council Mother A.M.E. Zion Church

On Saturday February 6, 2016 at St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion Church New Rochelle, New York the New York Conference Lay Council Board members, local church officers and guest gathered together for the Lay Academy with this year's focus being "Discipleship". Our presenter was Reverend Melvin Mungin, Pastor of the St. Paul's A.M.E. Zion Church, Spring Valley New York.

Rev. Mungin presentation was on "The Man In The Mirror". The first question posed to us as Laity was "Are You the reason people are leaving the church"? As we gave this some thought and continued discussing why we felt people were leaving or not returning to our church. Is it because we show lack of love toward visitors by not smiling, not greeting, and no contact? Do we show lack of love in the membership, lack of grace (continually confronted about behavior) and no one tries to get to know them. When new ideas are presented to us why are they not welcomed in any of the organizations? How do we explain who we are and why do we do what we do? We are to remember that everyone who comes to our church is different and his or her needs should be handled differently. But first we

need to get to know them.

In our church today do we make it a point to greet visitors, and if they return do we reach out to get to know them better? Are we supportive when new members have questions and new ideas? What kind of example do we set for visitors and new members about the level of love within the membership?

As members of the church are we able to detect the dysfunctional behavior in our church that members have gotten used to and see as normal? What type of response do we have when these behaviors rear their ugly head? Do we sit back and silently watch and just shake our heads? What kind of steps as members of the church do we take to shield new members from this type of behavior or at least explain it away?

When someone new comes forward to join the church, the congregation is admonished: The persons before you desire to be received on Probation, and it is needful for me to remind you that your lives should be holy examples to them that they may take no detriment from you, but that through your help they may have reason to give thanks to God that they were led into this fellowship.

All that attended the Lay Academy participated in serious thought and long dialog; we enjoyed discussing these questions that were presented. The admission that yes we are guilty to some of these habits and asked for continued discussion on this topic at a later date. In participating in the discussion it caused us to realize that we need to change some of our habits that we have gotten use to if our church is to survive and move into the 21st Century.

At the end of Rev. Mungin presentation we were asked to read the last passage for thought:

I'm starting with the man in the mirror
I'm asking him to change his ways.
And no message could have been any clearer
If you want to make the world church a better place
Take a look at yourself, and then make a change.
- Michael Jackson

Regional News

The New York Conference Lay Council Academy "How Can We Keep/Get Back Our Young Adults in Zion"

Submitted by: Lovell C. Jackson, New York Conference
Chairperson of the Communications Committee, and
President Local Lay Council Mother A.M.E. Zion Church

The New York Conference Lay Council held a Lay
Academy on April 2, 2016 at St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion
Church in New Rochelle, New York. The New York
Conference Christian Education department was also
attended the Lay Academy.

The title for the Lay Academy was "How Can We Keep/
Get Back Our Young Adults in Zion". There were six



(l-r) Delroy Smith, Kartina Brown, Andrew Simpson, Karen Johnson, Lawrence Cotton, Elizabeth Chappelle-Meeks and Matthew McGuire.

presenters and a moderator. The presenters were two
Young Adults that are very active in their A.M.E. Zion
Church, two Young Adults that attended church occa-
sionally and two who were active in the A.M.E. Zion
Church and left the denomination. The Moderator Mr.
Delroy Smith, Westchester District YACM Chairperson
asked the following questions.

Questions

1. Those that attend The A.M.E. Zion Church regu-
larly and are active why?
2. Those that stop attending The A.M.E. Zion
Church why do you feel that the A.M.E. Zion
Church was not a place for you and did why did
you leave?
3. Those that attend The A.M.E. Zion Church every
now and then why?

Karen Johnson's response:

She left the church because was call by God to do
Missionary work elsewhere.

The youth in the Church are not taught how to

Evangelize.

There is no Missionary work at home or overseas.
Politics has superseded the word of God.

Lawrence Cotton's response:

The young and old are not together.
Too much gossip about other members or other
churches.

Members being rude to other members and persons
coming into the church.

No one could explain why trips are made to the
Harriet Tubman Home.

No one could explain the difference between A.M.E.
and the A.M.E. Zion Church.

More inferences put on Anniversaries then the word
of God.

No Youth Choir.

The trust system should be in place for the youth.

Andrew Simpson's response:

He left church because people were judgmental and
hypocritical.

He had no deep connection with others.

The church had no idea what others were going
through in their daily life.

His physical and mental needs are not met

A support system needs to be put in place for the
youth to help them grow.

Young adults Lack a first hand faith of their own

He came back to church once he had life changing
events in his life dealing with finances and family.

Lack of first hand faith of their own that leads to life
changing events in your life and a relationship with God.

Allow the youth to grow so that the Bible will be ap-
plicable.

The youth need to live their life and not question God.

Back in the day the fight was Civil Rights now it is eco-
nomics, people's needs need to be met where they are.

He Feels the love, support and understanding at his
church.

He Feels the deep connection and concern at his
church.

Elizabeth Chappelle-Meeks' response:

Attend church because the Worship service has been
changed by the Pastor.

The music now reaches all generations.

Communications is not good.

As a young adult Sunday is the only day of rest.

Regional News

Katrina Brown's response:

I go to church to stay in my mother's house.

I attend church because it's my home.

I had praying parents and grandparents.

Being reminded why I was needed and being an example for my peers.

Going to church to help my friends through life and being a friend to them.

Learned I had to lead by example.

What was not allowed in the older generation is now allowed in the younger generation because the younger generation is growing up with their children.

The older generation does not understand what the younger generation goes through to get to church. Then once they get there they are judged.

Listening to the younger generation and be the one they can trust, because the younger generation does not trust anyone.

Matthew McGuire's response:

I am the sometimes guy in going to church

Being lazy in going in going to church on Sunday mornings.

Once a young person goes out on Saturday night or work all week going to church is not a priority.

Sundays was left to making money.

Priorities are misled when being a young adult.

Maturity plays a big part in going to church.

I had to think real hard about why I should go back to church and is it important.

The younger generation should be given leadership rolls early so that it will help them later in the life.

Being here and observing the Lay Academy discussion has convinced me that I need to go back to church and I will be going back to church.



The New York Conference Lay Council for this conference year focused on Discipleship. This particular Lay Academy was well attended by the New York Conference Lay Council and Christian Education Departments. After each presenter spoke there was a question and answer period. There was some agreements and some disagreements, however it was very informative for all. It was asked that a continuation on this topic be held again in the near future.

"" Breaking Down The Walls and Surviving The Hurt"

By Joyce Harrington, North Eastern Episcopal District Reporter and Lay Council President, Western New York Conference

In January following the death of a young well loved youth at the St. Luke AME Zion Church, the lay council with the support of the Youth Department sponsored a Workshop entitled "Breaking Down The Walls & Surviving The Hurt".

The workshop was opened to the district and the local community.

Rev. James Lewis began his presentation with Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. His ex focus was taken from Solomon. Rev. Lewis a trained instructor in Pastoral Care Bereavement had a gentle but caring way of engaging the young people in attendance.

Rev. Alan Core continued the training by sharing additional information and answering questions from persons in attendance. An important part of the workshop dealt with being prepared. Participants were given a booklet that they could fill out.



(l-r) The Rev. Alan R. Core, Owner & Director of Alan R. Core Funeral Home, Cynthia Barber, president of the St. Luke AME Zion lay council and The Rev. James A. Lewis, III, Director of Pastoral & Spiritual Care, ECMC

Regional News

Mid Atlantic I Episcopal District

**Bishop Louis Hunter, Sr.
Presiding Prelate**

Mrs. Helene Zacharias, Regional Director

By Anita Rankin, Mid Atlantic I Episcopal District
Reporter

At the New Jersey Conference the Lay Academy focused on the Young Adults with a two man you adult platform. The focus was on our Young Adults, and had a 2-man young adult platform. They addressed some of the issues our young adults see in our churches. Laity Sunday was another opportunity to bring forth our Y.A.I. (Young Adult Initiative). Our Y.A.I. Chairperson was our worship leader for our Annual Conference Lay Day Service and celebration. The speaker for the hour was a 28 year old, from Price Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Atlantic City, NJ. His message, "You Reap What You Sow", was received by all generations and brought the worshipers in God's house to their feet. Eleven Life Members were stoled at this celebration. We are proud to report that two of New Jersey's Pastors were among the stolees as supporting Life Members of the Lay Council. Several New Jersey Churches also sent in monetary support for the Camp Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center.

The Jersey City District Lay Council continues to uplift the CLC efforts to entice others to "Come with Us to Christ." They hold their annual Grandparents' Luncheon to recognize those who offer families so much wisdom and knowledge and at the same time they foster a bond with the pastors and congregations to get the Lay Council message out. The local officers make regular church visits to (1) support the local presidents; (2) give a "face" to the Lay Council; and (3) promote the Lay Council mission.

The Camden District also had their Grandparents' Luncheon. This event as always was well supported by laity and clergy. New Jersey's Laity was in great attendance at the Holy Conclave, held at Clinton Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Newark, NJ, the IM & LA Summit in Raleigh, NC, and the Board of Bishops and IM & LA Meeting in Rock Hill, SC. There were least 15 New Jersey members to attend the Lay Convocation, which included 2Y.A.I. members.

The Ohio Conference had an outstanding Lay Academy to kick off during our Annual Conference. The presenter was our Regional Director's daughter, our Conference 1st Vice President, Gloria Cook, who kept the audience interested and engaged. Needless to say the

presentation was very well received.

The Cleveland District of the Ohio Conference held its winter Lay Academy in December and the Spring Lay Academy will be held in April. The subject of Discipleship, in keeping with our theme, was discussed. The officers of the various Lay Councils throughout the district have been encouraged to obtain a new handbook.

The Akron District supplied each local Lay Council with a copy of the new handbook accompanied with suggestions on how the information can be used. The Regional Director and the conference First Vice President, who was the Laity Day speaker at one of the local churches, presented each new local officer with a medallion. This church's lay council has made tremendous progress in getting organized and moving forward.

The Allegheny Conference is our biggest challenge. We lost our conference president and no one, to date, has stepped up to assume the responsibility. This has caused a great fluctuation in our membership numbers. Hopefully, we will find an answer soon.

Our goal is to increase our active lay councils to previous levels (at least 80% this year) and to identify a new conference president in the Allegheny Conference

Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District

Bishop Louis Hunter Sr., Presiding Prelate (Cafe Fear Conference)

Bishop Kenneth Monroe, Presiding Prelate (Central North Carolina and Virgin Islands Conferences)

Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate (North Carolina Conference)

Bishop Darryl B. Starnes Presiding Prelate (Albermarle Conference)

Mr. Hank Dobson, Regional Director

Albermarle Conference Celebrates Its 4th Annual Black & Gold Laity Hall Of Fame Awards Banquet

Submitted by Sister Jessie M. Riddick
Albermarle Conference President

The Albermarle Conference recently celebrated its 4th annual Black & Gold Laity Banquet Hall of Fame Awards

Regional News

on Saturday, April 23, 2016 at Mt. Lebanon AME Zion Church, Elizabeth City, North Carolina, Reverend Lenton D. Rhodes, Pastor, Sister Jessie M. Riddick, Conference President.

Mrs. Sharon McNair, President of the Edenton District and Ms. Debora Rosebrough, President of the Elizabeth City District served as the Mistress' of Ceremonies. Mr. Robert Smith, Minister of Music of Mt. Lebanon AME Zion Church, provided the music.

Guest soloist were Mr. Dempsey Brothers, Local Church President from Moses Temple AME Zion Church and Mrs. Alice Calgon, Life Members Chairman-WHOM (Edenton District) Other program participants were: Ms. Audrey Shields, Conference Chaplin, Ms. JaVita Bryant, Local Church President-Bay Branch AME Zion Church.

Laity that were honored were each presented and introduced by their pastors, which a short bio was read for each honoree. They were as follows: The John Faulk Service Award- Mr. Edward Holley of Whiteville Grove AME Zion Church, presented by Reverend William Bonner, Sarah Pierre/Clayonne Blackwell Spirit Award- Mr. David Parker- Porter's Chapel AME Zion Church, presented by Reverend Jasper Gaskins, and The Buford Dunlap Leadership Award- Mrs. Judith W. Cooper, presented by Reverend Dr. Lenton D. Rhodes, (this award is the highest award given to a Local Church President).

The Special Presidential Award this year for outstanding service was awarded to Mr. Edward Holley of Whiteville Grove AME Zion Church, and it presented by the conference president Sister Jessie M. Riddick. All honorees were greeted by Reverend Jerry Jones, Conference Director of Lay Activities and Mr. Julius Walker, Assistant Director of Lay Activities.

A delicious dinner was catered by Adkins Catering Services of Elizabeth City, NC and there were over 195 Laity in attendance. To God be the glory for all He has done for the Laity of the Albemarle Conference.

Remarks were given by Sister Jessie M. Riddick, Conference, Reverend Jerry Jones, Conference Director of Lay Activities, Reverend Theadore Headen, Presiding of the Elizabeth City District and Reverend Walter Leigh, Presiding Elder Edenton District.

The Lay Council Closing Prayer followed.

Fun Day

Submitted by Rayshad Grimes, North Carolina Conference Lay Council Youth Representative

On April 9, 2016 the North Carolina Conference Lay Council held its Annual Youth Fun Day at Keyesville A.M.E. Zion Church, Washington, NC, Rev. Sylvia S. Teele, Pastor. The devotional service was open with a congregational hymn followed by the invocation/welcome by Mr. Rayshad Grimes.

The day begins with the youth and adults gathering in the sanctuary of the church where instructions were giving concerning rules and regulations for the day. The activities consisted of a mock egg hunt for the babies, a playground for all ages, football, kickball, basketball, art and crafts, and board games. The adults enjoyed Bible Trivia/Bible Discussion.

All districts were represented. Lunch was served. It ended with the children and adults receiving gift bags. Thank you to all persons who donated the food, drinks, all games, and their time. A special thank you to Mr. & Mrs. John Murrell for bringing their grill from New Bern, NC to Washington, NC. Thank you Rev. Sylvia Teele for allowing us to use your church, and for getting permission from Emmanuel Baptist Church for the use of their facilities. A special shout out goes to Presiding Elders Dobson, Brown, Walton and to Presiding Elder Jacobs who invited us to spend the day on his district.

Thank you Bishop Moore for making this charge available and Mrs. Virginia Gaddy for appointing me, and giving guidance as well as help.

Get ready Beaufort District we will see you next year!

Raleigh District Lay Council Honors Unsung Hero Lay

By Janet Howard, 2nd VP, Raleigh District Lay Council

The Raleigh District Lay Council, under the leadership of Mrs. Daphne Lloyd Feldman, President, presented the Unsung Hero Lay Recognition and Praise and Worship Music Celebration on Saturday, April 16 at Rush Metropolitan AME Zion Church, Raleigh, NC. Ms. Frances Johnson, 1st Vice President, emceed the program that recognized laity and ministered to our souls through praise and worship music featuring the Drops of Grace and the Raleigh District Preachers' Choir.

Regional News

The Raleigh District church Lay Councils submitted nomination forms of church members who demonstrated the Lay Council's purposes: 1) deepening the spiritual life of the laity; 2) disseminating information; 3) cultivating denominational loyalty; 4) expanding the denomination through education and evangelism; and 5) promoting any other interest of the Kingdom of God. The nomination criteria also included active membership in a Lay Council for at least three years. Lay Councils were asked to nominate members who quietly and consistently, without mentioning their work, give their time, their skills and their resources cheerfully to help deepen the spiritual lives of others, to perform extra educational, evangelistic and denominational duties and to volunteer for outreach projects. Nominees could be Lay Council members who hold no church office; yet, they are reliable, faithful and strive to deepen their spiritual life and deepen the spiritual life of others.

The Eastern NC Lay Council Regional Director, Mr. Hank Dobson, New Bern District, Mrs. Thomasena LeGrand, Central North Carolina Conference (CNCC) Lay Council President, Durham District and Mr. Joe Cromartie, CNCC Lay Council Treasurer, Fayetteville District graciously served as the nomination reviewers. Seven Zionites from three churches were nominated for the Raleigh District Unsung Hero Lay Recognition. The two nominees from Avery Grove AME Zion Church, Smithfield, NC, Rev. Linda Lock, Pastor, were Mrs. Bettie Williams and Mrs. Mary Williams. Mrs. Mary Williams is the Avery Grove Lay Council President. The Douglas Chapel, Rev. Marcus Williams, Pastor, Holly Springs, NC, Ms. Betty Sue Wilson, Lay Council President, nominee was Mr. Caleb McKinnie. Union Chapel AME Zion Church, Franklinton, NC, Mrs. Yvonne Parker, Lay Council President and Rev. Allen Moore, Pastor, submitted four nominees: Ms. Pennie Fuller, Mr. Roy Mitchner, Ms. Vernell Moore and Mrs. Yvonne Parker. All nominees received a beautifully framed certificate signed by our CLC President Miss. Mary Matthews, the Raleigh District Presiding Elder, Rev. Lawrence R. Turner Jr., and the Raleigh District Lay Council President, Mrs. Daphne Lloyd Feldman.

After reading the nomination forms and addi-



Mrs. Bettie Williams
Avery Grove



Mrs. Mary Williams
Avery Grove

tional letters of support, the three reviewers ranked each nominee. The 2016 Raleigh District laity recognized as Unsung Hero awardees follow:

Some of the outstanding extra-mile activities of these awardees included inviting and transporting 4-5 new visitors monthly, serving in community soup kitchens, regularly donating to and distributing food from local Food Banks, providing community outreach for evangelistic events, ministering to community elderly, traveling 75 miles at least 3 times weekly to volunteer, beautifying church grounds, volunteering at a Senior Community Center, and providing incentives for the youth ministry. The awardees received a beautiful wood grain certificate plaque, a Lay Council medallion and a cash award.

The Drops of Grace, under the direction of Reverend Paul Atlas, Bethel AME Zion Pastor, Spring Lake, NC, blessed the attendees through their powerful praise and worship music ministry. "Genesis" and "It Is Well with



My Soul" were a few of the songs that ministered to our hearts and spirit.

The Raleigh District Preachers' Choir, founded by Presiding Elder Lawrence R. Turner Jr., and under the direction of pianist and vocalist, Rev. Dr. J. C. White, Kesler AME Zion Church Pastor, Henderson, NC, blessed us with their renditions of several spirituals. Rev. Dr. Donald Cozart, Norrington AME Zion Church, Lillington, NC also lent his talented vocals as a soloist.



Mr. Caleb McKinnie
Douglas Chapel



Mrs. Yvonne Parker
Union Chapel

Regional News



The Raleigh District Preachers' Choir, founded by Presiding Elder Lawrence R. Turner Jr., and under the direction of pianist and vocalist, Rev. Dr. J. C. White, Kesler AME Zion Church Pastor, Henderson, NC, blessed us with their renditions of several spirituals. Rev. Dr. Donald Cozart, Norrington AME Zion Church, Lillington, NC also lent his talented vocals as a soloist.

With more than 100 people in attendance, President Feldman provided gifts to appreciation to the churches with the highest attendance: Grace AME Zion Church, Raleigh, Rev. Dr. Staccato Powell, Pastor & Ms. Delphyne Freeman, Lay Council President; Norrington AME Zion Church, Lillington, Rev. Dr. Donald Cozart, Pastor & Mr. William Watson, Lay Council President; Solid Rock, AME Zion Church, Wake Forest, Rev. Jason Ruff, Pastor & Mrs. Maureen Perry, Lay Council President and Avery Grove AME Zion Church, Rev. Linda Lock, Pastor & Mrs. Mary Williams, Lay Council President.



L-R - Chaplain Ernest Terry; Treasurer, N. Kathi McNeill; 2nd VP, Janet Howard; President, Daphne Lloyd Feldman; 1st VP, Frances Johnson; Financial Secret

Presiding Elder Turner presented to President Feldman and the Treasurer, Ms. N. Kathi McNeill, a donation of \$1300 from District pastors and churches. Also, the Lay Council thanks Avery Grove, Norrington and Union for their additional financial support.

Even though our CLC President, Ms. Mary Matthews, was attending another event out of town, she sent

via President Feldman her statement of support and congratulations to the nominees, awardees and Lay Councils. The Raleigh District Lay Council also thanks Mr. James Feldman, photographer/videographer, Mrs. Tama Bouncer, Financial Secretary & photographer, Mr. Robert Dunn, photographer, the Drops of Grace, the Raleigh District Preachers' Choir, the clergy and laity of the Raleigh District for their love and support.

South Atlantic Episcopal District

**Bishop Kenneth Monroe,
Presiding Prelate**

**Mrs. Glenda Davis-Canteen,
Regional Director**

**Shaw Temple Lay Council Honors Walter
Bellamy**



The Shaw Temple AME Zion Lay Council established the Walter and Helen Bellamy Academic and Community Service Award to honor the legacy of Mr. Walter Bellamy and his widow, Helen. Mr. Bellamy was a man of God, son, husband, father, NBA Hall of Famer, and community leader. He was a long time committed member of Shaw

Temple, a lifetime member of the Lay Council and served as Second Vice President of Shaw Temple Lay Council for many years. Also, he was President of the Atlanta District Lay Council and was inducted into The Laity Hall of Fame on the Connectional Level for his service and leadership.

The award was created with the understanding that all students, given the right opportunity and challenged with high expectations, can rise above their immediate circumstances and reach their highest potential. To be eligible for the award, individuals must demonstrate the following: high academic achievement, a strong spiritual foundation, and community involvement. Walt Bellamy and his widow, Helen, have always been committed to the community and community service. We believe that the awardees should continue to honor that commitment. We are honored to continue his legacy through the youth of today.

Regional News

We are soliciting donations to help fund the Walter and Helen Bellamy Academic and Community Service Award. Your tax deductible donation can be made payable to Shaw Temple AME Zion Church (WHBACSA written on the memo line) and mailed to P. O. Box 235, Mableton, Georgia 30126.

Mid West Episcopal District **Bishop Darryl B. Starnes,** **Presiding Prelate** **Ms. Lynda Byrd, Regional Director**

Michigan Conference:
Chicago District

The Chicago District Lay Council celebrated its 31st annual Black History seminar in February. This year's theme focused on the African-American artist and author and was titled "Through the Eyes and Lens of Black America: A Celebration of the Arts." Presentations were given on artists, filmmakers, collagists, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, James Van Der Zee and Gordon Parks. Summary commentaries and slides on their life and work brought their genius to life! A practical participatory demonstration of collage was also available. Additionally, two published authors, Jocelyn Delk-Adams and Tracy Vinson reported on their experiences as both regular and self-published authors. Award-winning photographer Henry Simmons was delightful in telling of his experiences with the Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Daily News and Ebony magazine. Special thanks to St. Mark Chicago, Martin Temple, Caldwell Chapel, Fisher Memorial and Daniel Chapel for their participation and for Greater Walters who acted as hosts to the seminar.

Fisher Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Evanston, Illinois

This year the church hosted a seminary student from Garrett Theological Seminary, Ms. Keri Rainsberger who is completing a Master of Divinity degree. As part of the developmental plan for cross-cultural ministry established at Fisher, the laity was challenged with the establishment of a Lay Site Committee that is responsible for collaborating and mentoring the student intern. The ministry has engaged her in instruction and dialog with the congregation about important practices related to ministry, leadership, pastoral counseling, personal/professional wellbeing and worship in the church.

The Lay Council conducts all fifth Sunday worship ser-

vices, attends cohort Bible Study, leadership retreats and leadership summits at Garrett and combined worship services with other Methodist congregations.

Additionally nine new Life Members were stoled on the fifth Sunday in January! To God Be The Glory!

Detroit District

Frank Westley Jackson III continues his outstanding leadership of the Detroit District Lay Council. The Lay Council hosted "Super Saturday" at John Wesley AME Zion Church in Southfield Michigan. At that session, the Reverend Frank Westley Jackson IV brought the message. The event was originally scheduled to be held at Blackwell, Flint. It was moved because of the water crisis. The District Lay Council voted to send our Flint Church a financial donation.

Prior to conducting the business meeting, Ms. Carol Carter, Chair of the Special Projects Committee, gave an excellent lecture on the history of the Lay Council and its purposes.

On March 12, 2016, the Detroit District Lay Council held a business meeting and Lay Academy at St. Paul, Toledo. At the Lay Academy, John Wesley's "Four Means of Grace" was discussed. The last part of the academy targeted practical applications of the five objectives of the lay council as a discussion point.

The Reverend Dwight Gutridge, pastor of St. Paul, Toledo and the Reverend Michael Nelson, Chair of the Michigan Conference Board of Lay Activities, brought remarks. Each spoke about the need for a strong laity in our denomination

Western Michigan District

The Western Michigan District held its "Know your Bible, Know your Church" academy at Hilliard Chapel. Mr. Joseph Taylor conducted the academy; Presiding Elder Gaylyn S. Wilson and Pastor Bobbie Overton served as facilitators.

The 2nd Annual Laity Interfaith Luncheon was held on April 16, 2016; the luncheon was hosted by St. Luke AME Zion Church (Grand Rapids, Michigan) Lay Council under the leadership of local president Mrs. Vernita M. Perry.

Regional News

Tennessee Conference

Mr. Elijah Bowman, Jr., continues his outstanding work as Knoxville Conference President.

The Knoxville District remains committed and eager to see that the Lay Council is about Kingdom Building. Their main mission continues to be that of training, equipping, growing, and encouraging local lay leaders, as well as disseminating information throughout the district.

Monthly meetings hosted by First A.M.E. Zion Church in Knoxville assist in planning for the district. An outreach ministry is scheduled each year.

The Knoxville District purchased the Connectional Lay Council Handbook for Conducting Interactive Thematic Lay Academies.; one copy was purchased for each church and additional copies were available upon request. Handouts and discussions continue to be centered around the theme of Discipleship. Several District officers as well as Chattanooga District President David Jenkins, were blessed to travel to Rock Hill, South Carolina to participate in the Connectional Lay Council Convocation March 18-19, 2016

High and College Graduates were acknowledged on Friday, April 8, 2016 at the Knoxville District Conference hosted by Edgewood Chapel.

The Annual Chili/Soup Fellowship Fund raiser was held at Lomax Temple on Friday, January 29, 2016 and proved to be fun for all in attendance. The District ordered and distributed the Knoxville District T-shirts to support, encourage, high-light the "Laity" of the A.M.E. Zion Church. Plans are already underway for the Annual Lay Round-Up Membership drive as well as Laity Sunday, scheduled for October 2016.



(l-r) District Ministers supporting the Laity! Left to right: Rev. Larry Brinson, Knoxville District Presiding Elder, and Pastor, Clinton Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Rev. Dr. John A. Butler, Rev. Donna Butler, Rev. Michael J. McNair, Pastor, First A.M.E. Zion Church, and Rev. Victor E. King, Sr., Pastor, Edgewood Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church.



(l-r) David Jenkins, Chattanooga District President, Lynda Byrd, Mid West Episcopal District Regional Director and Elijah Bowman, Jr. Knoxville District President at 10th Quadrennial Lay Convocation

Alabama/Florida Episcopal District

**Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, Sr.
Presiding Prelate**

Mr. Ben Bolton, Regional Director

By Rose M. Thomas, Reporter
West Alabama Conference

The Alabama/Florida District of the Connectional Lay Council is very anxiously awaiting the General Conference. We will be represented by several of our Local Officers when the Quadrennial Convention convenes in July in Greensboro, NC. The Lay Council continuously strives to keep the membership informed of what's going on in Zion. In January we had a Lay Academy focusing on Leadership. We had a special presentation by Mr. Isaiah Flowers in preparation for the General Conference. Because our leader Mr. Ben Bolton, insists that we are cognitive of what's going on in Zion. In February we celebrated Founder's Day at Lomax Hannon in Greenville, Alabama. Throughout the District we paid homage to our Presiding Prelate Bishop Dennis V. Proctor and our Missionary Supervisor Mrs. D. Dianne Proctor. March 17-19 we attended the Lay Convocation in Rock Hill, SC. The Alabama/Florida District was very well represented with over 65 Lay Members in attendance. Many came by way of chartered buses as well as other modes of transportation. Although, the year has just begun we are constantly on the move to greatness in uplifting the Lord.

Regional News

**Southwestern Delta
Episcopal District
Bishop Mildred B. Hines,
Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Stephany Ricks-Fields
Regional Director**



The North Little Rock Chamber of Commerce has collaborated with North Little Rock High School and local businesses to offer students career planning skills through its Leadership Renaissance program. Leadership Renaissance is a program offered to 11th graders

designed to identify emerging leaders and expose them to community issues and opportunities. The program provides participants with a historical perspective of their community, familiarizes them with local leaders and helps foster a commitment for community involvement. This year, its 21st year, Jordan Clark of Payne Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Little Rock, Arkansas was selected to participate.

Jordan is in the 11th grade and maintains a 3.75GPA. He is active in the church, school, and local community. Jordan served as Secretary for the Little Rock / Hot Springs District Youth Council of the Southwestern Delta Episcopal Area last year and is active in the district's Christian Education and Missionary ministries. He helped coordinate the youth's 2014 Salvation Army toy drive and helped raise monies which were used to purchase toys and clothing for a local family.

Jordan is a member of his high school's BETA and Mu Alpha Theta clubs. He is a member of his high school's Quiz Bowl team and has won several commendations for his academic performance. Jordan plays the clarinet in his high school band and also plays the clarinet in the Rocktown Community Band. Jordan is a member of the Donaldson Academy Scholars Program and participates in college studies once a month. Jordan and his brothers are also very active in their community and have

partnered with several organizations to raise funds for local charities Big Brothers / Big Sisters, Salvation Army, Dorcas House, United Way and others.

Jordan strives to encourage other young men and women to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and ALL other things shall be added unto you as instructed in Matthew 6:33. He is the epitome of positivity and we are truly glad he is a child of God and one of our own!

**Western Episcopal District
Bishop W. Darin Moore
Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Rynette Nixon, Regional Director**

Shiloh A.M.E. Zion Church
Monrovia, California

CHRISTMAS SHOES

One child wrote, "Thank you so much for the shoes". Another child said, "I want to thank all the people at that church". Still another child wrote, "Thank you. Now I have more than one pair of shoes".

These are quotes from the thank you letters from elementary students in the Monrovia, California United School District who received a new pair of shoes just before leaving for the Christmas Holiday.

Under the direction of the pastor, Rev Dexter L. Feely, the Laity of Shiloh AME Zion church purchased, wrapped and gifted athletic shoes to 46 students. These children were selected by social workers in each of the elementary schools in the district. Each pair was personalized as to size and style for each child. It was heart-warming to see the smiles and tears as each child opened his package. The blessing that each child received was nothing compared to the blessing that we each were able to witness ourselves.

In addition, at the request of Pastor Rev Dexter Feely, during the month of February, the Laity of Shiloh A.M.E. Zion church donated over 450 cans of food to the Foothill Unity Center in Monrovia, CA. As we collected them we stacked them in front of the altar until they were picked up by the Center. It was very uplifting to watch the numbers grow each Sunday during a four week period. We recognize that food pantries need support throughout the year, not just at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Regional News

First A.M.E. Zion Church
Los Angeles, California

The Local Lay Council of First A.M.E., Zion Church, Los Angeles honored two of the long standing members, Sister Alice Wilson and Sister Flake December 12, 2015 at a banquet to celebrate their 90th birthdays and their countless years of service to First A.M.E. Zion Church, Los Angeles.

Western Episcopal District

Bishop W. Darin Moore
Presiding Prelate

Mrs. Patricia Walton, Regional Director

On Saturday, July 25, 2015 the missionaries of Eastern West Africa joined with the Friends of Eastern West Africa, along with members of the Board of Bishops, Executive Board of the W.H. &O.M. Society, General Officers and other friends of the A.M.E. Zion Church, gathered at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel in Orlando Florida to honor Mrs. Gelenia A. Frencher, missionary Supervisor of the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District. This Quadrennial celebration was a very joyful and jubilant affair.

Annual Conferences

Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr. and Mrs. Gelenia A. Frencher, traveled to Nigeria on October 6, 2015 to carry out their Episcopal assignments in Eastern West Africa Episcopal District. During these five weeks, five Annual Conferences were held and several churches were visited. In the Mainland Nigeria Conference a new church edifice was completed and dedicated and in the Nigeria

Conference a new church edifice was very near completion. This new church has among other things, an office for the Bishop and Presiding Elder. There are many other churches in the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District that are in the process of building and renovating their existing buildings. This is a major undertaking because the funding for these projects are very scarce but nevertheless because of the commitment and dedication of the people who have a mind and heart to carry out the Lord's ministry, the work continues.

On November 4, 2015, the bishop and Missionary Supervisor met with the Bishop's Deputy, Administrative Assistants and Field Workers of each of the eleven Annual Conferences to discuss the launching of the construction of a New Mission House (Empowerment Center) in Ndon Ebom, Nigeria. The new Mission House/ Empowerment Center is proposed to be a multi-functioning building which will have residence housing as well as rooms for health care/medical teams visiting the area on medical missions

Quadrennial Overview: To God be the Glory for the things he has done. These past 3 years have had many challenges and difficulties. Most of these challenges came in the form of difficult travel over rough terrain and encountering congested traffic in many of the cities and villages. But in spite of the challenges, the work and ministry of the Eastern West Africa prospered because the people were dedicated and committed to the work of mission.

This report is presented using selected statements from the information shared by the Missionary Supervisor for the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District, Mrs. Gelenia Aaron Frencher.

PIEDMONT - Regional Reporter - Gloria Joyner Johnson gloriajoynerjohnson@yahoo.com

MID ATLANTIC II - Regional Director- Katherine Burrell Katherine Burrell@yahoo.com

NORTH EASTERN - Regional Reporter - Joyce Harrington Jhat17@aol.com

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA - Regional Reporter - Sonya Powell sonypower@hotmail.com

MID WEST - Regional Reporter - Debra Payne eyeonsparrow2@aol.com

MID ATLANTIC I - Regional Reporter Anita Rankin skipperrankin@aol.com

ALABAMA-FLORIDA - Regional Director - Ben Bolton boltonben@yahoo.com

SOUTH ATLANTIC - Regional Director - Glenda Davis Canteen gdaviscanteen@bellsouth.net

SOUTHWESTERN DELTA - Regional Director - Stephany Ricks-Fields sfields2009@comcast.net

WESTERN - Regional Director - Rynette Nixon rlnixon@comcast.net

WESTERN WEST AFRICA - Regional Director - Martha Scudder marthascrudder@gmail.com

EASTERN WEST AFRICA - Regional Director - Patricia Walton Walpat1@gmail.com

2016 Fit, Fabulous & Healthy! 3K/5K Walk/Run

Time- TBD

Registration \$15.00

Online Registration Available

Location: Within Respective Episcopal Areas

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL

"...they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint".



"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."
1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NKJV)

10th Lay Convocation - March 17-19, 2016



Rev. Dr. Margaret Blackmon

Candidate for Bishop
2016



Margaret Blackmon for Bishop

MB

*Strengthening The
Local Church Through:*

- ◊ *Faithful Discipleship*
- ◊ *Fruitful Ministry*
- ◊ *Fiscal Accountability & Responsibility*



Facebook.com/ Margaret Blackmon

Twitter M. Lee Blackmon

(252) 412-1432

drpearlnoir@gmail.com

*We praise God for the Connectional Church:
our heritage, hope, and structure for reaching the
world for Christ.*



Dr. George D. & Laureanna Crenshaw

*Pass through, pass through the gates!
Prepare the way for the people.
Build up, build up the highway!*

Isaiah 62:10



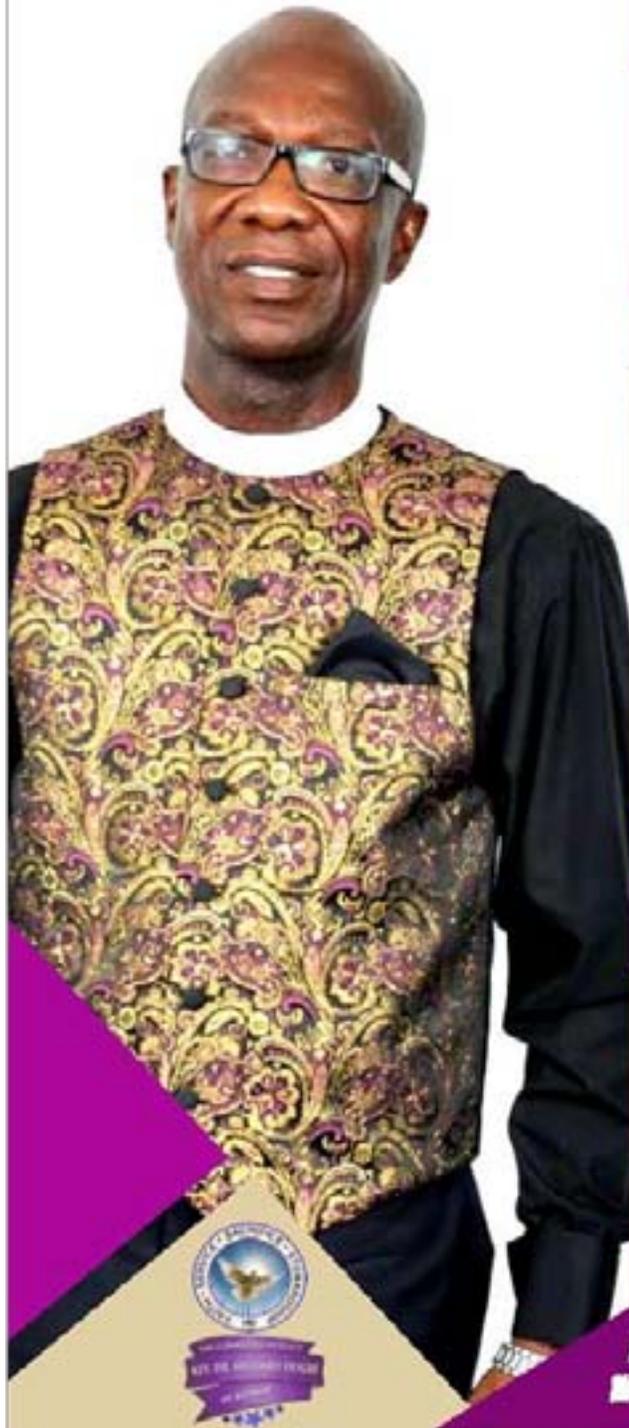
*Dr. George D. Crenshaw
for Bishop 2016*

Rev. Dr. Hilliard **Dogbe**

Hilliard for Bishop 2016

(Candidate for Indigenous Bishop for WWAED, 2016)

**GOD'S SERVANT:
Tried , Tested & Trusted**



Rev. Dr. Dogbe lives and works in Accra, Ghana in the Western West African Episcopal District (WWAED) where there is ample evidence of his proven ministry. Currently, he serves in many capacities, including:

- Chief of Staff and Protocol of Western West Africa Episcopal District, responsible for managing the Bishop's office, planning and coordination of all operations and activities and other assignments emanating from the Bishop within the episcopal area.
- Pastor in Charge of the Aggrey Memorial A.M.E Zion Church, Mamprobi - Ghana
- Adjunct Lecturer in Pastoral Care and Counselling at Trinity Theological Seminary, Ghana
- International Supervisor of Field Education, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton NJ

Hilliard had the privilege to study in two prestigious schools in the United States where he excelled, and had opportunities and a contract to stay and build a good career and a prosperous economic future. He however chose to turn down the contracts and head back home to serve the Church immediately he completed school; quite a remarkable evidence of great sacrifice even in the midst of debts accumulated as a result of his studies in the United States. As he has often said, his has been "a ministry characterized by faith, service, sacrifice and stewardship" as he continued to live among the people, serving God and our beloved Zion in the WWAED.

Rev. Dr. Dogbe has proved himself throughout his ministry as a loyal servant, a faithful pastor, a passionate preacher, a skilled counselor, an effective Christian educator, a visionary leader, a patient yet determined church builder and an astute administrator. His modesty, honesty and unpretentiousness, coupled with the abundant evidence of his tremendous service and great sacrifices for the church are sufficiently reflected in his works and deeds across the WWAED.

As someone who walks the talk, Rev. Dogbe takes his Christian faith seriously and exhibits his Call in every good way to lift up Christ, even as he seeks the wellbeing of all people. He manifests his integrity as a preacher and teacher of the gospel with poise. Hilliard is indeed a faithful steward of God and a loyal servant of the church.

We humbly solicit your prayerful support and humbly ask that you consider voting for Rev. Dr. Hilliard Dogbe as your preferred candidate for Bishop, Indigenous Bishop for WWAED. Kindly share your conviction with other elected delegates to this historic General Conference

You may engage Rev. Dr. Hilliard Dogbe at hdogbe@hotmail.com or (+233) 24-782-2440. For more information on him and his candidacy please visit: www.hilliarddogbe.com and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/hilliarddogbe.

Thank you and Stay Blessed!!

Committee to Elect Rev. Hilliard Dogbe as Bishop –
Indigenous Bishop for Western West Africa Episcopal District

[HDOGBE@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:HDogbe@hotmail.com)
WWW.HILLIARDDOGBE.COM

[FACEBOOK.COM/HILLIARDDOGBE](https://www.facebook.com/hilliarddogbe)
[TWITTER.COM/HILLIARDDOGBE](https://twitter.com/hilliarddogbe)

Congratulations & Best Wishes *to*

**The President and Members of the Board of Bishops,
General Officers and Delegates**

of the

THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

on our

50TH QUADRENNIAL GENERAL CONFERENCE

July 20 - 27, 2016

at the

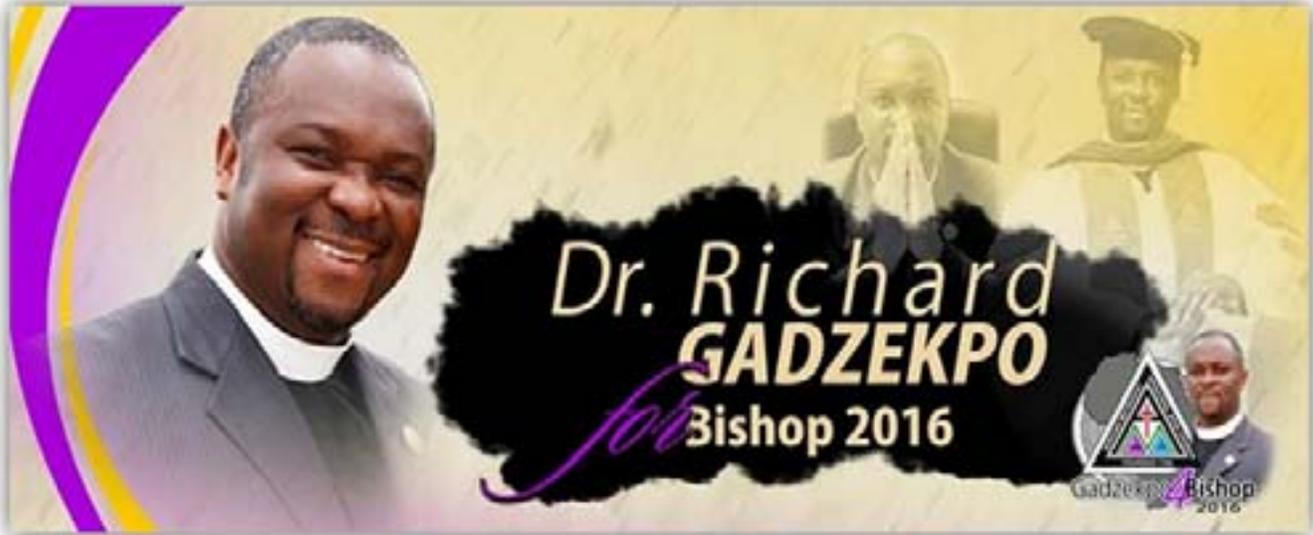
Koury Convention Centre, Greensboro, North Carolina, USA.



"...As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15)

Rev. Dr. Uduak U. Effiong
Eastern West Africa Episcopal District

Candidate for Bishop, 2016
in the
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church



Vision:

To improve the capacity of the local church and the welfare of Pastors to practice faithful Stewardship, Education, Leadership Development, Evangelism, Enterprise Development and Prayer (S.E.L.E.E.P).

Gadzekpo for Indigenous Bishop of the WWAED.

*Rev. Dr. Richard MawuliKomla Gadzekpo
&
Mrs. Noreen DzifaAku Gadzekpo*

Peace and Blessings From

REV. DR. ERIC LEAKE
FOR BISHOP 2016

THE BALANCED MINISTRY:
LEADING AND PRAYING ON PURPOSE R⁴



Reverend Dr. Eric Leake for Bishop

African Methodist Episcopal Zion

1529 Tina Lane
Flossmoor, IL 60422
(708) 724-3017
leake4bishop@gmail.com

Renewed Faith | Revitalized Congregations | Responsible Ministries | Relational Impact

McKenith for Bishop 2016

Strengthening Zion through Maximizing Resources and Empowering People!



Diversity in Experience!

61 Years Young with 36 Years of Marriage
Ph.D. Theological and Religious Studies-Drew University
Secretary/Editor Quarterly Review and Historical Society
Justice, AME Zion Judicial Council
20 Years A Pastor
25 Years Fortune 500 Experience

OFOSU FOR INDIGENOUS BISHOP

WESTERN WEST AFRICA A.M.E.2 - 2016

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
FOUNDED 1796

**EXPERIENCED
DEDICATED
VISIONARY
CHARISMATIC
LEADERSHIP**

"For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace....."
Isaiah 62 : 1

*Matt 16.18 And I say also unto thee that thou art **Simon** Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church*



SIMON



Simon for Bishop 2016



REVEREND BRIAN R. THOMPSON *for* BISHOP

Ministry Highlights

- ★ Husband of Rev Felica Thompson & Father of Alexis and Brian II
- ★ Over 22 years pastoral experience
- ★ Grew congregation from 400 to over 3,000 members in 15 years
- ★ Built a 1500 seat sanctuary to accommodate explosive growth to transition from 3 services to 2 services
- ★ Created a stream of revenue for church by obtaining 10 unit strip mall adjacent to church property
- ★ Grew church budget from 100k to a multi-million dollar budget annually through tithes & offerings
- ★ Created course of study available to lay and ministers of Simon Temple where local bible college offers accredited classes at no charge
- ★ Led Fayetteville's pastors coalition's movement to overturn city's agenda to discriminate against bus riders in the city

My vision is to establish a practical model for church growth to revive and sustain congregations for future growth. This will allow us to not only meet the needs of our seasoned saints but nurture our saints 18 years old and under. I'd also deploy proven principles that we are using in Fayetteville, NC to not only keep 40 year olds and under but cause them to flock to our congregations.

My vision is to create revenue opportunities inside and outside our denomination that revitalize our cash flow within the local churches as we bring relief to our connectional budget.

I desire to work with and enhance our vital tools of ministry like Christian Education to revive our teaching within the connection for ministers and laity, so that we can enhance the knowledge of the whole body of Christ which will help us empower all of the body of Christ!

It is my goal to develop a business model for our churches that will follow the models of our discipline while making doing business such as negotiating contracts, securing loans, demanding lower interest rates and running the local church as well as the denomination in Godly stewardship.

I believe in creating a denomination wide technology platform so that we can not only call ourselves a connection, but we can truly be connected through a national ministry streaming of local congregations, a national text and email system free to the denomination as well as local churches, so we not only can publish information instantly but won't have to use the grape vine method for critical issues.

www.thompsonforbishop.com





CANDIDATE *for* BISHOP 2016



TRIBBLE
for TRANSFORMATION
Bishop 2016

REV. JEFFERY L. TRIBBLE, SR., PH.D.

EDUCATION



- Howard University
B.S. Mechanical Engineering
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Mechanical Engineering, Graduate Studies
- Hartford Seminary
Black Ministers' Certificate Program
- Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (G-ETS)
Master of Divinity
- Northwestern University
Joint Program with G-ETS, Ph.D.

PROFESSOR OF MINISTRY



Garrett-Evangelical
Theological Seminary
2000-2007

Columbia Theological
Seminary
2007-Present

PRESIDING ELDER MINISTRY

- 2008 – 2013 **Presiding Elder**
Augusta District, Georgia Annual Conference
- 2009 – PRESENT **Executive Board**
A.M.E. Zion Presiding Elder's Council
- 2013 – PRESENT **Presiding Elder**
Atlanta District, Georgia Annual Conference



ENGINEER



- 1982-1985 Stone and Webster
Engineering Corporation
- 1984 Licensed Engineer-in-Training
in the State of Connecticut
- 1985-1987 Energy Networks, Inc., a
subsidiary of Connecticut
Natural Gas

AUTHOR

Published Books, Chapters, and Articles written for Church
Use and Theological Education



- "Joining Jesus: A Class Manual for Initiation into Christian Discipleship and Welcome into the A.M.E. Zion Church"
- "Transformative Pastoral Leadership in the Black Church"
- "Greenhouses of Hope"
- "Preaching God's Transforming Justice Lectionary Commentary"
- "Feasting on the Word Lectionary Commentary"

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP



1991
1997 **PASTOR**
St. Andrew A.M.E.
Zion Church, Gary, IN

1997
2000 **PASTOR**
St. Mark A.M.E.
Zion Church, Chicago, IL

2007
2008 **CO-PASTOR**
New Vision A.M.E.
Zion Church, Suwanee, GA

TALK TO GOD • TALK TO OTHERS • VOTE TRIBBLE FOR TRANSFORMATION FOR BISHOP 2016

Learn More at TribbleForTransformation.com



Greetings!

from Dr. Dwayne A. Walker

Candidate for Bishop 2016
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

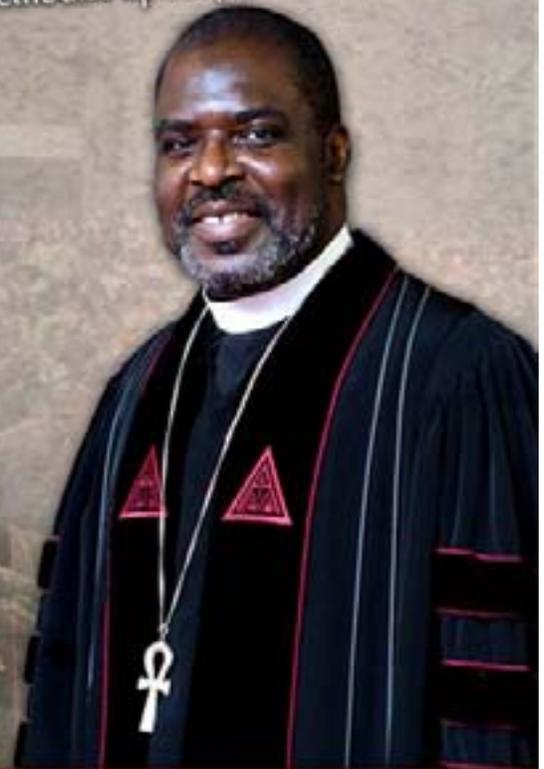


WALKER FOR BISHOP 2016

ELEVATING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY

www.walkerforbishop2016.com

"Walk about Zion" Psalm 48:12-14



Continued Blessings
to the
A.M.E. Zion Church

Please remember me as you cast your vote!

"Walk about Zion, And go all around her. Count her towers;
Mark well her bulwarks; Consider her palaces; That you may tell it to the generation following.
For this is God. Our God forever and ever: He will be our guide Even to death."

Psalm 48:12-14 (NKJV)