

**AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ELEVENTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
CENTRAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

117TH SESSION

Intentional about Ministry-Generation to Generation



**“A Social Justice and Liberating Faith”
“Prayer, Praise, Proclamation and Prophetic Engagement”
“Exalting Christ, Expanding His Church, Empowering His People”**

September 27 – September 30, 2016

The Rt. Reverend Adam Jefferson Richardson, Jr., Presiding Bishop
Mrs. Connie Speights Richardson, Episcopal Supervisor
The Reverend Hartford Lee, Presiding Elder, Daytona Beach District
The Reverend Henry Postell II, Presiding Elder, North Orlando District
The Reverend Valarie J. Walker, Presiding Elder, Orlando District
The Reverend Nathan Mugala, Host Pastor
Allen Chapel AME Church, Daytona Beach, Host Church

Conference Minutes

*The Rev. Caroline D. Shine, M. Div., Chief Conference Secretary
The Rev. Dr. Missiouri McPhee, Conference Secretary*

Conference Minutes **Thursday, September 29, 2016**

Devotion: Began at 8:25 a.m. and was led by the Sister Stephanie Frances, Greater Mt. Olive, Merritt Island. Sister Frances presented Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr. who greeted the Conference, acknowledging our Supervisor, Connie Richardson.

CONFERENCE INSTITUTE:

PRESENTATION ON CONGREGATIONAL RIGHT AND PASTOR EVALUATION

Present: Bishop Adam Jefferson Richardson, Jr.

Bishop Richardson informed the Conference that Bill 14 **did not pass** in the 50 Quadrennial of the General Conference, but it holds valuable information for operation with the 11th Episcopal District Churches (See Bill 14 below).

Bill 14

Title: CCRights and Pastoral Evaluation

Reference *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2008*, Pages 112-123, Sections VI-VIII

Intent: To establish a starting point for evaluating the variety of leadership roles of pastors, to the end that pastors will be encouraged to perform at their optimal best, serving conscientiously, effectively, and being held accountable to the denomination and the congregations being served.

RATIONALE

The Church is both organism and organization. It is spiritual; it is business. This blend, at the core our being, requires checks and balances to insure pastoral and congregational effectiveness to be among the highest priorities and ideals to which Christians aspire. The evaluation that calls pastors to account for leading effectively must be related to a biblical standard of excellence, having a shepherd's heart, as well as the best-practice expectations of the people who desire to see the congregation in which they worship, work, grow and flourish in peace and love in Christ. The Book of Discipline provides a standard of pastoral performance and expectations, but does not provide a mechanism by which the pastor is actually interviewed, identifying skill deficits for ways to grow and improve. Pastors have only been evaluated informally on the basis of doing what is required for the Conference (i.e. paying the budget), and a "vote of confidence" (or not) in the Fourth Quarterly Conference, perhaps a pre-conference letter of support to the Bishop, but rarely a question of competence. This initiative brings balance to the decades old "Pastors' Bill of Rights." Bishops are evaluated by the Episcopal Committee

IX. EVALUATION OF PASTORS

Pastors shall be evaluated twice per year in each local congregation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Purpose

Organizational structures require routine evaluations at the executive levels of management: holding everyone accountable, to develop quality leadership, to engage in best practices, risk-taking, and innovation in order to determine the structural health of the organization. It is a necessary process for establishing benchmarks for improvement in the leader and in the organization being led. The evaluation of pastors is a necessary step in taking the ministry of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to greater heights in faithfulness to our calling and our historic ministry.

Process

A Committee on Evaluation shall be one of the standing committees of the Board of Stewards. The evaluation should be scheduled prior to the Second and Fourth Quarterly Conferences. The Committee on Evaluation, consisting of three to five Stewards, shall sit with the pastor to consider benchmarks of ministry goals and objectives, as well the effectiveness of the leadership style of the pastor. This is not intended to be an inquisition or an opportunity to undermine the authority of the pastor, but to engage in mature, Christian dialogue to help the pastor improve in competencies that will assist the congregation in creating an environment of love, fruitful ministry, and of reaching its fullest potential at being the beloved community of faith. The evaluation should consist of the following areas of pastoral concern:

The Pastor as Liturgist: Evaluators are encouraged to share their impressions and their perceptions about worship that is inspiring and serves as a continuing impetus for spiritual formation in discipleship.

The Pastor as Preacher: Evaluators are encouraged to offer honest reflection about the sermons, evaluating sermons on being thoughtful, persuasive, motivating and helpful in expressing the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ.

The Pastor as Shepherd: Evaluators are to consider the pastor's ability to listen; to determine if the pastor shows a level of mature understanding; if the pastor is proficient in counseling, if the pastor is trustworthy on matters of confidentiality; if the pastor demonstrates a loving, caring demeanor; and whether the pastor is diligent with appropriate pastoral visitation.

The Pastor as Teacher: The evaluators should determine if the pastor conducts regular Bible study, and whether the pastor is faithful to Methodist/Wesleyan theology, Discipline and Community Discipleship?

The Pastor as Administrator: The evaluators are to ascertain if the pastor has given attention to structure, organization, human resources, financial resources, property resources and of best practices regarding effective, results-oriented administration.

The Pastor as Resident Theologian/Ethicist: The evaluators are expected to discern if the pastor shows evidence of being interested in studying and pursuing the deep things of God on matters related to matters in the community on what he or she perceives God to be saying and doing, and what God is expecting of us?

The Pastor as Representative: The evaluators are expected to determine if pastor is committed to matters of justice issues in the community, is present in ecumenical settings, has familiarity with those in seats of power, is willing to work with members and leaders of other faith traditions for the greater good, and is open to working with and for the left-out and marginalized.

The Pastor as Programmer: The evaluators are to seek honest reflection on whether the pastor gives evidence of imagination; whether the pastor provides guidance and assistance to volunteers or paid staff members, and whether the pastor shows ability to design programs, delegate and designate responsibility for implementation and satisfactory outcomes.

The Pastor as Relationship Builder: The evaluation team is to determine if there is evidence of sincere Christian fellowship, a sense of we-ness among the congregants, an atmosphere of trust, communal and respect.

The Pastor as Prophet/Advocate: The evaluators should determine whether the pastor engenders a commitment to the mission of the church, operates within the scope of biblical ethics, justice, the rule of law, showing evidence of gifts of the Spirit, a regard for the poor and oppressed, a passion for education and economic democracy.

The Pastor as Steward: The evaluators should determine whether the pastor is model of excellent stewardship, faithful in tithes and offerings, and is first among the contributors.

The Pastor as Leader: The evaluators should consider the pastor's gifts of vision, ability to plan, strategize, articulate the vision, stand as an example, and represent the embodiment of love.

Results of the interview will be shared with the Presiding Elder and will form the basis of the Stewards' vote of confidence, or lack thereof, at the Fourth Quarterly Conference. It will also serve the purpose of measuring improvements in the performance of duty in a wide range of pastoral leadership competencies; and will become a useful and objective tool for the Presiding Elder in making recommendations to the Bishop regarding pastoral appointments.

Submitted by *Bishop John Hurst Adams and Bishop A. J. Richardson*

BISHOP'S DISCUSSION:

In our system, every elected and/or appointed leader in the church comes before the Quarterly Conference. Pastors' characters are evaluated at the seat of the Annual Conference. Bishops appear before the Episcopal Committee to give an account of their work. Even in the days of the Class Meetings The question was asked of the leaders regarding the character of their members. What has transpired Pastors balked at the idea of being evaluated on anything. When we go to the polls on November 8th we are evaluating the character of the candidates in terms of their fitness to serve as President.

Bishops John Hurst Adams & Adam J. Richardson collaborated on this bill. Bishop Adams was concerned with the Congregational Rights, that the pastor:

1. Provide a good sermon every week
2. The members are visited when they get sick
3. Show members that they are loved and respected.

When these things are not done, there ought to be some repercussions.

Some of what's happening to AME is happening to the entire Church. We have to work harder to get our message out there. We have to demonstrate that we really do follow the definition of the Holy Spirit, but we have differing opinions about the how the Holy Spirit is manifested. He recommended to read the book: "Crazy Christians: A Call to Follow Jesus," by The Most Reverend Michael Bruce Curry, 27th Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church.

Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr. responded the following to Rev. Charles Jackson inquiries about the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit can be found in the place of studies. It is a comforter. The Comforter is strength, and can be shown in just speaking truth to power. We should think of Holy Spirit in both heart (emotion) and head (intelligence). The Pastor's report should speak to what happened spiritually in the Church. The Church is both organization and organism. There should be a reason for consideration to move a pastor to another charge, which would include: 1) a cause 2) sickness-refrain from moving sick pastors to another charges 3) unproductivity and toxic environments. Worship is both emotions and mind, and causes us to think deeply. Holy Spirits helps us in our hope. In the last few years, we have copied many concerts and brought those things into the church. As Methodist preachers, we should never turn to face the pulpit until we kneel before he Lord in the seat.

Bishop Richardson recognized the presence of Sis. Lenora Mobley. She arose and gave thanks for the many calls and cards she received while she was ill.

Social Action, Rev. Jeffrey Dove, Committee Chair (9:56-10:20)

[report attached to minutes]

Rev. Dove thanked the churches that are third party registration organizations. We are going into phase two which includes telephone and canvas banks. The Souls to the Polls date is October 30, 2016, which is a 5th Sunday. As of today, we have 115 churches that are certified for this purpose.

Action by the Conference:

Rev. Glenn B. Dames moved and the Rev. Octavious Smith seconded to adopt the Committee Report with high commendation to the Chair for the great work he is doing— Motion Carried.

Bishop Richardson thanked Brother Wes Lathrop, Executive Director for Faith in Florida who was in attendance. Mr. Lathrop briefed the Conference of his work background, which included his work with Rev. Mark Tyler, Pastor of Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. Dove asked that we use the www.AME-V-alert.org. Bishop Richardson stated that Ms. Jacquelyn "Jackie" DuPont-Walker, Director of Social Action Commission is one of the main driver on this initiative. Mrs. DuPont-Walker "pioneered in desegregating a major university, and has trail blazed on behalf of women and people of color in many arenas". <http://www.aaaeonline.com/jacqueline-dupont-walker>. She is daughter of the Rev. King Solomon DuPont and Eleanor Jiles DuPont, born in Tallahassee, Florida. Her father, King Solomon DuPont – AME Itinerant Elder, civil rights leader and logging truck company owner. <http://blessedtommorrow.org/leader/jackie-dupont-walker>.

READING OF THE WEDNESDAY MINUTES (10:20-10:40 AM)

Bishop Richardson then called for the reading of the Wednesday minutes by the Conference Secretary. The Wednesday Evening minutes were deferred to be read on Friday morning.

APPROVAL THE WEDNESDAY'S MINUTES

Morning Minutes-Devotion through North Orlando Pastor Report

Moved/Seconded by Rev. Lorenzo Law/Rev. Jeffrey Dove that this portion of the minutes be adopted by the Conference with any necessary corrections. Having addressed all unreadiness, the motion carried.

Ecumenical Service Minutes-

Moved/Seconded by Rev. Dr. Glenn Dames/Rev. Ronald Williams that this portion of the minutes be adopted by the Conference with any necessary corrections – the motion carried.

Afternoon Minutes

Moved/Seconded by Rev. Dr. Dames /Rev. Octavius Smith that this portion of the minutes be adopted by the Conference with any necessary corrections – the motion carried.

Ministerial Efficiency Committee Report (10:40 - 11:00 A.M.)

Matter regarding superannuation

The following Itinerant Elders requested that retirement be granted *from active ministry per the 2012 Book of Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, section 13, paragraph A (Mandatory Location), pages 113-114.

1. The Reverend Willie James Denmark- Referral Matter 2016-117-01
2. The Reverend Thomas Moses Connelly - Referral Matter 2016-117-02
3. The Reverend LeVerk Youmans - Referral Matter 2016-117-03
4. The Reverend Larnce Sylvester Williams - Referral Matter 2016-117-04

Reverend Ursula Norris Referral- 2016-117-05 -Disposition of Request-Member in good and regular standing. *Bishop Richardson clarified that this committee regarded Rev. Norris' letter to rescind the previous letter that she submittal regarding withdrawal.* Committee requested that Rev. Norris' seconded letter be accepted.

Sister Rebecca Arlana Thompson Referral 2016-117-06

Sister Thompson requested in writing to withdraw from the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Recommendations:

- The committee recommends that the name of The Reverends Willie James Denmark, Reverend Thomas Moses Connelly, Reverend LeVerk Youmans, and Reverend Larnce Sylvester Williams request for retirement be granted.
- The Reverend Norris initial letter be rescinded, and her second letter be accepted.
- Sister Rebecca Arlana Thompson's name be dropped from the roll of the Central Annual Conference.

Action by the Conference:

Revs. Dr. Glenn B. Dames/Lorenzo Laws moved and seconded to accept the Ministerial Efficiency Committee Recommendations for the above listed items–Motion Carried

In the Matter of the Reverend Shawn Brock 2016-117-07

The Reverend Shawn Brock requested from the 9th Episcopal District with presentation of a copied Transfer Certificate dated November 24,1999 to the Tampa Conference of the 11th Episcopal /district signed by the Right Reverence Zadekiah L. Grady.

Bishop recommended that the MEC put the matter of hold until they could obtain the information and definitive language to respond for the Conference held. Rev. Shine inquired in the new legislation applies in this case. Bishop Richardson that it would. The MEC will present the findings on Friday of the Conference.

Trustee Committee Report (10:40 - 11:00 A.M.)

Action by the Conference:

Revs. Dr. Rhella Murdaugh/Gloria Houser moved and seconded to accept the Trustee Report–Motion Carried

Bishop Richardson stated that he does not favor the selling of property, except for extraordinary reason. He would rather see property be use for income production or outreach activities. He stated that we should put a moratorium on selling property until we do a serious evaluation of valid use and we investigate the intended consequences.

Evangelism Committee Report (11:00 - 11:20 A.M.)

Action by the Conference:

Revs. Lorenzo Laws/Jeffrey Dove moved and seconded to accept the Evangelism Report–Motion Carried

Bishop Richardson informed the Conference that he is the Connectional Chair Evangelism and Church growth. He complemented Retired Presiding Elder Mary Robinson for her Church Grow Seminar and training program, that has infiltrated the Florida Conference.

Bishop announced that is working on a new dashboard for the 11th Episcopal District's Churches

**117th Session
of the
Central Annual Conference
Thursday, September 29, 2016
Service of Ordination,
Superannuation of Preachers and Holy Communion**

Procession began at 11:40 a.m. with the ordinands, Board of Examiners, ministers of the Central Conference, followed by Bishops Adam Jefferson Richardson, Jr. and Frank Madison Reid III, who was elected the 138th elected bishop in the AME Church on July 11, 2016 during the 50th General Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Excellent Worship in Music was rendered by the Central Conference Choir under the dynamic direction of Sis. Gloria Leeks with three selections: *Hallelujah*, *You're Worthy to Be Praised* *Worthy to be Praised*, and *Determined*.

The anointed preacher for this most sacred of occasions, the Rt. Reverend Dr. Frank Madison Reid, III, preached directly to the ordinands from the subject, "Called to Rediscover Conversion" (Luke 22:31-34). Bishop Reid explained that one cannot be called of God and committed to God's work without first having been converted. Bishop Reid further explained that conversion is a lifelong process. After Bishop Reid's thought provoking sermon, nine persons came to the altar for prayer.

Service of Ordination

Itinerant Deacons (1:28 p.m. – 1:36 p.m.)

The following persons were ordained Itinerant Deacons in the African Methodist Episcopal Church: The Reverends **Darold Anthony Ingram, Jr.** (*Luke 22*) and **Charlotte Dunston Williams** (*Luke 22*).

Itinerant Elders (1:37 p.m. – 1:55 p.m.)

The following persons were ordained Itinerant Elders in the African Methodist Episcopal Church: The Reverends **Audrey Lenette Greene** (*Acts 2*) and **Dr. Jamin Ahmad Powell** (*Acts 2*).

Service of Superannuation (1:56 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.)

Retirees

- 1) The Reverend **Thomas Moses Connelly, Jr.** has been ordained for 24 years having received his Diaconate orders in 1992. The Reverend Connelly has been privileged to serve as pastor of six congregations. The Reverend Connelly concludes his pastoral ministry at Saint James, Inverness.

- 2) The Reverend Willie J. Denmark has been ordained for 23 years having received his Diaconate orders in 1993. The Reverend Denmark has been privileged to serve as pastor of thirteen congregations. The Reverend Denmark concludes his pastoral ministry at Mount Zion, Brooksville.

Service of Communion (2:00 p.m. – 2:31)

The congregation was privilege to be served communion by the newly ordained Itinerant Deacons and Elders.

The program participants are listed in the official Conference Worship Guide. There were 375 persons in attendance and 295 persons were communed at the Service of Ordination, Superannuation of Preachers, and Holy Communion of the 117th Session of the Central Annual Conference.

Announcement(s)

- (1) The Conference will resume tonight at 7:00 p.m. with the Lay Witness Worship Experience;
- (2) The business of the Conference will resume at 8:30 a.m. on Friday
- (3) Agenda for Friday, September 30, 2016 (Morning Session)
 - a. Devotion
 - b. Reading of the Minutes
 - c. Administrative Reports
 - d. Literary Reports

The benediction was pronounced at 2:35 p.m.

Visitors

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| Supervisor Marlaa M. Reid | Ms. Faith Reid |
| Presiding Elder Ralph Wilson (Ret.) | Presiding Elder Mary W. Robinson (Ret.) |
| Presiding Elder Tony Hansberry | Presiding Elder James O. Williams, Sr. |
| Presiding Elder Elizabeth Yates | Presiding Elder Lee Plummer |
| The Rev. Dr. Julius McAllister, Jr. | The Rev. Anton Elwood |
| The Rev. Karl Smith | The Rev. Eddie Moise |
| The Rev. Dr. David W. Green, Sr. | The Rev. Henry E. Green, Jr. |
| The Rev. Robert Jackson, III | The Rev. Henry E. Green, III |
| The Rev. Nathaniel Robinson, III | The Rev. Latanya Floyd |
| The Rev. Dr. Santarvis Brown | The Rev. Ronnie Clark |
| The Rev. Pierce Ewing | The Rev. Thomas L. Franklin |
| Bishop William A. Lee | Mrs. Laurastine Lemon |
| Mr. Wes Lathrop, Executive Director of Faith in Florida | |
| Atty. Natasha Goodley, African-American Outreach Coordinator for Hillary Clinton | |

**117th Session
of the
Central Annual Conference
Conference Minutes, Thursday, September 29, 2016
Annual Lay Witness Service
7:00 P.M.**

The Conference Lay celebrated in Praise and Worship. The Sanctuary was arrayed across the pulpit and pews persons dressed impressive arrays of blue and white. The Allen Chapel AME choir rendered eclectic music from “Everything is working together for my Good” and “The Blood Still Works”, accentuated with Praise in the Dance by the New Bethel AME Church, Altamonte Springs Praise team

Brother Valene Croskey brought a powerful message to the Conference entitled “Be Encouraged, it is great to be an AME. He remarked that Acts 1:2 calls us to be witnesses. He also stated that we should be good Samaritans. He gave a provoking example of time when the church was called to be a good Samaritan, and he had to add a dime to make the action fulfill. In his thought to be frustrated about the request for a dime, God reminded him that he gave him the dime, and he kept finding dimes to remind him of God’s providence. Bro. Croskey then brought the Conference to their feet as he sang Be Encouraged.

The program participants are listed in the official Conference Worship Guide. There were 305 persons in attendance at the Lay Witness Worship Experience of the 117th Session of the Central Annual Conference.

Sister Ella Gilmore, Conference Lay President and Patricia Wright, Episcopal Lay President gave their remarks to the conference. Bishop Adam Richardson, attired in his “Lay Wear” gave concluding remarks.

Announcement(s)

The concession stand is open;
Breakfast is from 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. tomorrow;
Persons have the opportunity to register to vote, tonight. Persons are on the grounds to assist with that effort.

The Lay benediction was pronounced at 9:02 p.m.

Visitors to the Conference
West and East Coast

Notes of Thanks from the Secretarial Staff:

To Bishop Adam Jefferson Richardson, Supervisor Connie S. Richardson, Presiding Elder Hartford and Bernice Lee, Presiding Elder Henry and Beverly Postell, II, Presiding Elder Valarie Walker, Rev. Terence Gray, Host Pastor, Saint Mark AMEC, Host Church, Ministers, Conference Officers, spouses, and all of the fine people who make up the 117th Session of the Central Conference, Rev. Caroline D. Shine, Chief Conference Secretary and Assistant Conference Secretary, Rev. Dr. Missouri L. McPhee want to thank you for once again having the confidence to entrust this tremendous responsibility of recording the vital proceedings, worship experiences, and critical conference history in our hands. We are humbled and appreciative to serve you another year. It has been our pleasure!

Thank you, Bishop and Supervisor Richardson for once again navigating us through this extraordinary week filled with spirituality, compassion, structure, wisdom and timeliness. You made us laugh, and made us all comfortable, and demonstrated the providence of God in word and deed.

Thank you!

To God is the Glory for the things that He has Done! Hallelujah!!

Humbly submitted, Central Conference Secretarial Servants

Rev. Caroline D. Shine, Chief Conference Secretary

Rev. Dr. Missouri L. McPhee, Assistant Conference Secretary