

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

118TH SESSION

Annual Conference Theme

“Called, Consecrated, and Commissioned to Serve – Generation to Generation”



Connectional Quadrennial Theme of the AME Church

“A Social Justice and Liberating Faith”

Episcopal District Motto

“Called, Consecrated, Commissioned to Serve: Generation to Generation”

October 3, 2017 – October 6, 2017

**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, Host Presiding Elder, North Orlando District
The Reverend Valarie J. Walker, Presiding Elder, Orlando District
The Reverend Ronald E. Williams, Sr., Host Pastor
New Bethel AME Church, Orlando, Host Church
The Reverend Terence R. Gray I, Host Site Pastor
Saint Mark AME Church, Orlando, Host Church**

Conference Minutes

*The Rev. Caroline D. Shine, M. Div., Chief Conference Secretary
The Rev. Dr. Missiawri McPhee, Assistant Conference Secretary
The Rev. Arthur Davis, Jr., M. Div., Assistant Conference Secretary*

**118th Session
of the
Central Annual Conference
Conference Minutes
Wednesday, October 4, 2017**

The Conference was led in devotion at 8:17 a.m. by the Revs. Sandara E. Williams, and Charlotte Dunston Williams, and Sis. Shalonda Doughty. The Rev. Sandara E. Williams presented the Bishop to the Conference at 8:33 a.m.

The Bishop's Moment

The Bishop indicated that the Conference Institute with Monique Richardson, Esquire is **MANDATORY** for all pastors, preachers, and those who work with youth in the church. Bishop Richardson expressed concern that he did not see enough pastors and preachers in attendance at that time. Therefore, to give those persons time to meet the Conference Institute, the Bishop called for the reading of the previous day's minutes.

Bishop led the Conference in a brief prayer for healing for Sisters Alice Jackson from Hurst Chapel, Orlando who had to be taken to the hospital on an emergency basis this morning.

READING OF THE PREVIOUS DAY'S MINUTES (8:43 a.m. – 9:53 a.m.)

Rev. Caroline Shine, Conference Secretary announced that the minutes will now be housed on the Central Conference website at www.centralconference11th.org. We will post the draft minutes and replace it with the approved minutes during the conference. The website was created at Bishop Richardson's request from 117th Session of the Annual Conference.

APPROVAL THE PREVIOUS DAY'S MINUTES

Tuesday Morning Minutes-Organization [portion of minutes up to 11:30 a.m.]

It was moved by the Reverend Jeffrey Dove and properly seconded by the Reverend Ronald E. Williams, Sr. that this portion of the Opening Day's Minutes be adopted by the Conference with any necessary corrections. Having addressed all unreadiness, the motion carried.

Tuesday Morning Minutes [Board of Examiners' Report 11:30 a.m. – 12:09 p.m.]

It was moved by the Reverend Jeffrey Dove and properly seconded by Ms. Evone Jackson that this portion of the Opening Day's Minutes be adopted by the Conference with any necessary corrections. Having addressed all unreadiness, the motion carried.

Tuesday Afternoon [Board of Examiners' Report Continuation (2:27 p.m. – 3:34 p.m.) and continuing with Pastoral Reports for the Stewardship Committee, North Orlando and Orlando Districts up to 4:48 p.m.]

It was moved by the Reverend Patrick Joseph Sasnett and properly seconded by the Rev. Jeffrey Dove that this portion of the Opening Day's Minutes be adopted by the Conference with any necessary corrections. Having addressed all unreadiness, the motion carried.

Tuesday Evening Minutes – Opening Worship (7:05 p.m. – 9:24 p.m.)

It was moved by the Rev. Ronald E. Williams, Sr. and properly seconded by the Rev. T. Patricia Nelson that this portion of the Opening Day's Minutes be adopted by the Conference with any necessary corrections. Having addressed all unreadiness, the motion carried.

The Bishop's Moment:

Bishop Richardson expressed his sincere thanks to the secretarial staff for their hard work and due diligence.

Bishop Richardson again expressed his disappointment in the lack of attendance by the pastors and preachers at the Conference Institute as the subject matter is extremely important and has legal ramifications for the Episcopal District. Bishop Richardson stated that every pastor, preacher or layperson having contact with children must take the designated class provided through Protect My Ministry. The training must either be taken through the Institute's training or online.

The Bishop presented Attorney Monique Richardson at 9:54 a.m. and commented that this training would be offered every two years with the next training happening in 2019.

Attorney Monique Richardson (9:54 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.)

Attorney Richardson conducted the 40-minute Child Sexual Abuse Prevention training during this session. The conference attendees were directed to sign the related distributed form stating they have undergone the training. Those not in attendance must complete the training online. Some things included in the training were statistics, descriptions of applicable behaviors, vulnerabilities, church liabilities, reasons children may not tell, warnings to children about inappropriate behaviors towards them, and the church's need to develop policies around these. She stated that the United Methodist Church has developed some "Prevent Child Abuse" policies that might be useful in helping to customize the local church's policies. Please contact Attorney Richardson immediately if confronted with an actual or potential case for the needed response.

Attorney Richardson informed the conference about the Clergy Penitence laws that requires clergy to hold counseling (professional and spiritual) confessions confidential. The privilege of this law belongs to the confessor. The Rev. Willie N. Barnes, Jr. asked Attorney Richardson if she would provide the legal definition of "clergy." One would fall under this definition if the other person reasonably believed them to be, no matter if they

possess other bi-vocational employment or credentials. Again, please consult her if in doubt.

Clergy Penitence is not extended to laypersons. By law, the laypersons must report child abuse. The Department of Children and Families abuse notification number is 1-800-96-ABUSE. 9-1-1 can also be called. Failure to report abuse is a **THIRD DEGREE FELONY** in the State of Florida.

Bishop Richardson stated that Attorney Richardson would review each submitted form signed today, and they will be placed under lock and key at the Eleventh District Office. This will be repeated every two years.

Orlando District Pastoral Reports Continued (11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.)

Presiding Elder Valarie J. Walker presented the remaining Orlando District churches from the previous day.

Bishop's Moment: Bishop Richardson commended the Mt. Olive, Trilby church family and its pastor, the Rev. Dawn Harris. We did not give up on this church, and with two members it has done an outstanding job in its fundraising and opening the church up to the community for ministry by providing food and meeting space for Alcoholic Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous.

Presiding Elder Valarie J. Walker, standing with the Orlando District pastors and members, sang "What a Mighty God We Serve" and offered a fired-up prayer for Bishop Richardson.

Bishop Richardson said to all pastors and members of the Orlando District, who were then standing, that on behalf of entire AME Connection, we expressed our deepest gratitude for your sacrifices, energy, creativity, and great work. We honor your fine work in making these wonderful reports. Surely the best in Christ Jesus is yet to come in Christ.

Rev. Dr. Mark Crutcher rose to give high commendation to Presiding Elder Valarie J. Walker for her outstanding leadership.

Daytona Beach District Pastoral Reports (11:32 a.m. – 11:34 am.)

Presiding Hartford Lee began the Daytona District churches readings with Mt. Zion, Orange City, with the remaining church reports to be read after lunch.

Adjournment

Bishop Richardson stated that the Ecumenical Service would begin in 10 minutes. The Conference adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

**118th Session
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Ecumenical Worship Service
11:53 A.M.**

The gathering was called to worship for the Ecumenical Worship Service by the Presiding Elder Valarie J. Walker at approximately 11:53 a.m. The worshipers were led in spirited selections by the New Bethel, Orlando Choir.

The Rev. Dr. J. Roy Morrison of the Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church, Orlando preached a theologically sound, well-crafted, fire-baptized sermon based on Ephesians 1:1-3, entitled, "Connected by Spiritual Blessings". In his exegesis and deliberation of the text, Dr. Morrison discussed that "saints" are "saved sinners" who are now heavenly citizens, walkers and worshipers because they believe in Christ Jesus, and are merely pilgrims here. Christ chose us, adopted us, and caused us to be acceptable. There is a difference in being in union, uniformity, and unity. Christ is calling us to be in union with Him and in unity with each other. He slow-walked the conference from pausing reflections to standing acclamations of praise, worship and thanksgiving in response to the preached word.

The program participants are listed in the official Conference Worship Guide. There were 373 persons in attendance at the Ecumenical Worship Experience of the 118th Session of the Central Annual Conference.

Visitors to the Ecumenical Worship Experience

Presiding Elder James O. Williams, Sr. (Pro Tem Presiding Elders' Council/West Coast)

The Rev. Mark Griffin (East)

Members of the Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church, Orlando

Adjournment: The Bishop provided instructions to reconvene at 3:30 p.m. The Benediction was pronounced at 1:43 p.m.

**118th Session
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***The Church at Work
3:30 P.M.***

The Conference was led in devotion at 3:15 pm by the Bro. Anthony McClendon, Bro. Freddie Miller, and Sis. Shalonda Doughty. Sis. Shalonda Doughty presented the Bishop to the Conference at 3:30 pm.

Bishop Richardson reconvened the Conference at approximately 3:30 p.m. Bishop remarked that the last devotional song “What a Friend we have in Jesus” took us “way” back with the old Baptist tune. Many congregations are now unfamiliar with the tune, and he thanked the devotional team.

Daytona Beach District Pastoral Reports (3:32 p.m. – 4:47 p.m.)

Presiding Hartford Lee presented the remaining Daytona District churches for report readings.

Bishop Moments:

Bishop commended the Reverends Dove and Barnes for the high number of accessions, as well as all other churches in the same vein. These are commendable and reflect good evangelism.

Bishop stated that line item for “monies raised for all purposes” in the pastor reports needs to be expanded into two separate line items; 1) monies raised by the congregation and 2) monies received from grants, special outside donations, and business incomes. He stated that the seemingly inflated numbers on this line alone (beyond the church’s strength) could negatively affect budgetary allocations causing the church to be overly taxed. He asked that the Conference work on making the separation. These issues were displayed in some church reports. On the other hand, monies collected by the congregation to assist families should be included in the “monies raised by the congregation” line item.

The Conference offered a prayer for the Mt. Zion AMEC, DeLeon Springs that the insurance adjustors provide proper analyses of damages to the church.

Bishop Richardson stated that the national average for church attendance is about 35%,

Rev. Willie Mae Joma shared her need to take care of her ailing husband, who has survived catastrophic medical conditions, and she requested to be “located.” She thanked Presiding Elder Hartford Lee, the Revs. Nathan Mugala, R. D. Daniel, and Willie Branch, Jr., and her district colleagues who have supported her. She thanked the conference for the opportunity to have served.

At the conclusion of the Daytona Beach District’s readings, Bishop Richardson asked all pastors and members of the Daytona Beach District to stand, and he said that on behalf of entire AME Connection, we expressed our deepest gratitude for your sacrifices, energy, creativity, and great work. We honor your fine work in making these wonderful reports. Surely the best in Christ Jesus is yet to come.

The Rev. Nathan Mugala rose to give high commendation to Presiding Elder Hart Lee and Consultant Lee for their dynamic leadership.

Announcement(s):

The Sons of Allen witness will begin tonight at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment: The business session was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

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The Sons of Allen: "Bold, Brave, Believable"
7:00 P.M.

The Bold, Brave, and Believable worship experience began with the illustrious Sons of Allen (SOA) attired in burgundy blazers, gray slacks, white shirts, and burgundy ties as they marched triumphantly into the sanctuary with singing. The SOA choir led the Conference in uplifting songs. Rev. Jeffrey Dove, Episcopal SOA coordinator led "I got a Testimony" followed by the choir singing "I am Depending on God." The St. James AME Church, Titusville choir sang "Walk around Heaven all Day" and "The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation."

The Rev. Arthur Davis, Jr., pastor of Saint James AME Church, Titusville preached the sermon "Being Sifted, But Still being Able to Stand." The sermon text was Luke 22:31-32. He prefaced the soul-stirring, arousing sermon by singing "When Peace like a River" and preached that Satan wants to put us to sleep, but we must be ready to stand. The Lord has come to build us up, and we must hang in there with Him when we are being sifted. Jesus cares for us and we must care for each other.

The SOA Central Conference \$500 scholarship was presented to Taylor Jackson of Greater Allen Chapel, Melbourne, a FAMU student and grandchild of their member, Mr. Charles W. Jackson. The scholarship was accepted by the pastor, The Reverend Lorenzo Laws.

The Rev. Jeffrey Dove presented Bishop Richardson, and expressed that he appreciates how he models ways a husband should treat his wife. Bishop Richardson recognized Supervisor Richardson and the fine group of SOA in attendance. He remarked on Rev. Dove's growth in Christ (similar to that of Peter) and that he is confident that he made the right decision in appointing him to this position. He encouraged Rev. Dove to keep on letting God use him.

Bishop acknowledged the outstanding preaching of the Rev. Arthur J. Davis, Jr. in the Worship experience tonight. Bishop thanked God for those who participated in worship and in leading in song.

Presentation of the Bishop's Award by Bishop Richardson

Business & Professional Service Award presented to Mr. Timothy Hankerson, Allen Chapel AME, New Smyrna Beach (The Rev. Jeffrey Dove, pastor). Mr. Hankerson was recognized for his Classic Car Detail and Food Business services. His outreach to the

community and the hiring of past incarcerated person supports this notable award. Brother Hankerson presented Bishop Richardson with a Sons of Allen cap with his name printed on the side.

Extraordinary Community Service Award presented to Brother Turner Clayton, Jr. for his service in law enforcement and in the community as Seminole County NAACP president, and other outstanding service. He was intrinsically involved in the arrest of George Zimmerman in the shooting of Trayvon Martin and bringing high profile to the case. He is a member of Allen Chapel AME Church, Sanford (The Rev. Octavius Smith, pastor).

Bishop allowed both recipients to speak in response to their noted achievements and selections. Both gave honor to God as their source. Brother Turner also thanked Presiding Elder Valarie J. Walker

Bishop Richardson also thanked the Conference SOA President, Brother Jessie McDaniel and recognized the presence of the Rev. George A. Hardy, Episcopal Assistant Coordinator for SOA.

Announcement(s):

The Conference will reconvene promptly on Thursday morning at 8:30 a.m. with the Conference Institute.

Visitors to the Sons of Allen Worship Experience

The Rev. Kirk Bogen (West Coast)

The Rev. Jacqueline Bogen (West Coast)

The Rev. George A. Hardy

The program participants are listed in the official Conference Worship Guide. The attendance was 290.

Adjournment: The benediction was pronounced at 9:20 p.m.