



# THE LAY EXPRESS



**Second Episcopal District ~ African Methodist Episcopal Church  
WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE LAY ORGANIZATION**

**Website: <http://wncclay.org/>**

*"Laity walking humbly with God to do justice and to love kindness"*

*Micah 6:8 (ESV)*

**VOLUME VI**

**JANUARY 2020**

**ISSUE 1**



*From  
the desk  
of..*

*Penny S. Oliver, President*



*Our Lord and our God. We joy in Thee. Without Thy Help we could not face unafraid the year before us.*

God stand between the years. The Light of His presence is flung across the year to come – the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness. Backward, over the past year, is His shadow thrown, hiding trouble and sorrow and disappointment.

I encourage you to dwell not on the past – only on the present. Only use the past as the trees use God’s sunlight to absorb it, to make from it in after days the warming fire-rays. Store only the blessings from God, the light of the world.

I encourage you to bury every fear of the future, of poverty for those dear to you, of suffering, of loss. Bury all thought of unkindness and bitterness, all your dislikes, your resentments, your sense of failure, your disappointment in others and in yourselves, your gloom, your despondency, and let us leave them all, buried, and go forward to a new and rise life.

Remember we must not see as the world sees. God holds the year in His Hands – in trust for you. But God shall guide you one day at a time.

Leave the rest with God. We must not anticipate the gift by fears or thoughts of the days ahead. Each day God WILL supply the wisdom and strength.

*Happy New Year . . . I Dare You to Trust God.*

2020 Lay Organization Membership Drive is in full force. Lay Membership is \$6.00. We encourage you to join us, where God is our foundation, and your voice and presence is counted. Our next Lay conference meeting will be held at **Persimmon Grove AMEC, 403 Dolly Madison Road, Greensboro, NC at 10:00 a.m. on January 11th.**



## **WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE LAY ORGANIZATION**



January 2020

Happy New Year! I greet you in the Mighty and Matchless name of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ!

The Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization 2020 membership drive has begun! Membership dues are \$6.00 for adults. Membership dues must be current for voting and election privileges. **The election of offices for the Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is scheduled for April 11, 2020 at 10 am at St. James AMEC, 1501 North Patterson Street, Winston Salem, North Carolina 27105.**

Membership dues must be received **on or before March 20, 2020** or post marked **no later than March 18, 2020** for election and voting privileges. Please send your membership dues and names to the Credential/Membership Chair, Sister Shontea Smith, 1808 Chapel Hill Road, Apt A9, Durham, NC 27707.

Let us be in fervent prayer for our nation and its people, as we pray for the world in which we live. Thus, I implore YOU, to join the WNCCLLO, let us put on the Mantle of Unity and use all of our God-given gifts of the Spirit. Let us work together to allow God to be lifted up and glorified as we operate in the mission and purpose of our Lay Organization:

1. To proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ (Mark 16:15);
2. To advance the present ministry of Jesus Christ, particularly as it is embodied by the mission of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (2 Corinthians 5:14-20; see mission, vision, and purposes at <http://www.ame-church.com/about-us/mission.php>);
3. To encourage Bible study and to uphold the Bible as our only source for faith and doctrine (2 Timothy 3:16-17; see article of faith #5 at <http://www.ame-church.com/about-us/beliefs.php>);
4. To promote an understanding of The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012 as an organized source of our laws, government, and belief statements (1 Corinthians 12:4-6; <http://www.ame-church.com/about-us/structure.php>);
5. To teach good stewardship and respect for constituted authority (Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Timothy 2:1-7);
6. To engage the laity in social action ministry, reaching beyond the walls of the Church to champion goodwill toward all (Galatians 6:9-10). The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2016.

I thank you for your willingness to serve!

The Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization  
Sister Penny Oliver, President



*Penny S. Oliver, President*

*Betty Parker, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*

*Diane Foy, Recording Secretary*

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE LAY ORGANIZATION

**It is Election Year for the WNCCLO!**

The Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization election will take place Saturday April 11, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. for the offices of the Lay Organization

**Host Church: St James A M E Church  
1501 N. Patterson St.  
Winston Salem, N.C. 27105**

If you are seeking an office in the WNCCLO complete the *Letter of Intent*. The *Letter of Intent* a copy of *Article VI NOMINATION and ELECTION PROCEDURES, sections 1- 8 and Article IV Membership* are on the website <http://www.wncclay.org/>.

Mail the *Letter of Intent* with the signature of the Local Church President to the nominating committee chair. The certified letter must be postmarked or received by the chair of the Nominating Committee no later than March 11, 2020 (1 month) prior to the convening of the Conference Meeting, April 11, 2020.

**2020 Nominating Committee:**

Sis. Stephanie Gause

Sis. Shontea Smith

Bro. John Smith

Bro. Dale Wragg

Sis. Gertrude Upperman: Chairperson Email- [gjupper@aol.com](mailto:gjupper@aol.com)  
4509 Harvard Ave, Greensboro, N. C. 27407 Cell 336-337-5495

Thank you for your willingness to serve!

Sister Penny Oliver,  
President WNCCLO

Sis. Gertrude Upperman  
Chairperson of 2018 Nominating Committee

**Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization**

**2020 Election Year**

**LETTER OF INTENT**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

I am a paid member in good and regular standing at: (see Article IV – Membership)

**Name of Church:** \_\_\_\_\_

I have attended at least (4) four Conference meetings of WNCC Lay Organization in the past (2) years: **Yes** \_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_

1. \_\_\_ I am presently serving as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the WNCCLO.

2. \_\_\_ I plan to seek the same office in the upcoming election in 2020. I have served in this position for \_\_\_ years beginning in \_\_\_\_\_. According to the Constitution and By-Laws, I cannot serve more than (8) eight Years.

3. \_\_\_ I do not plan to seek re-election to the position I have held.

4. \_\_\_ I wish to have my name placed in nomination for the position of:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete the following information if you plan to seek an elective office.

Listed below are my qualifications for this position that responds to the requirements in the WNCCLO Constitutions and By-Laws. (see the Constitution and By-Laws @ [www.wncclay.org](http://www.wncclay.org) that list the requirements and qualifications for your elected office). Feel free to attach another sheet of paper, if needed, for more space.

**Nominee Signature**

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Print Nominee Name**

**Local Church President Signature**

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mail Letter of Intent to:**

**Gertrude Upperman**

**Or**

**Email to [gjupper@aol.com](mailto:gjupper@aol.com)**



*“NEW YEAR BLESSINGS 2020” from Bishop James L. Davis and Mother Arelis B. Davis*

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/2ndame>

# FREEDOM'S EVE

SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The first Methodist Watch night service in the United States probably took place in 1770 at Old St. George's Church in Philadelphia, a church of which Richard Allen, the founder of the African American Episcopal church, was a member. African American Methodists celebrated Watch Night prior to Freedom's Eve because Allen and other African Americans celebrated Watch Night Meeting services at St. George's Church and also at Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

While acknowledging the Methodist starting point, many African American Christians link their celebration of the tradition to December 31, 1862, "Freedom's Eve." After the Union Army was victorious at the Battle of Antietam on September 22, 1862, Lincoln issued a preliminary proclamation that declared that all slaves in "any state or designated part of a state . . . In rebellion against the United States shall be then,



thenceforward, and forever free." Many blacks in the North and South as well as both free and enslaved blacks anxiously waited for Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation to become effective on January 1, 1863. The Sunday before that "Day of Days," Frederick Douglass expressed to his audience at Rochester's Spring Street AME Zion Church his elation at "the glorious morning of liberty about to dawn upon us." On December 31, 1862, Watch Night services occurred throughout the United States.

Wide alert with anticipation, many blacks dared not and perhaps could not sleep throughout the late night hours because they wanted to watch "the night turn into a new dawn." As they watched, many slaves reflected on their hardships and toils, mourned the memory of their ancestors and loved ones who died in slavery, and exuberantly thanked and praised God for allowing them and their descendants to watch the night of captivity pass.



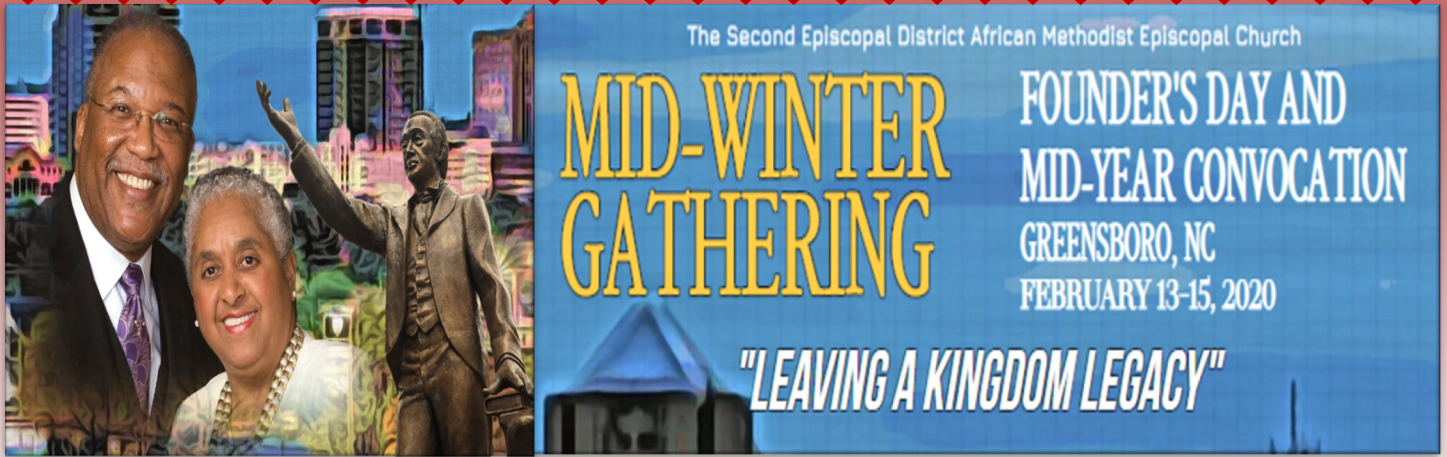
Nearly one hundred and fifty years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, many African American Christians continue the tradition of gathering into mainline Protestant churches on New Year's Eve to celebrate Watch Night. During their Watch Night services, many African Americans probably do not specifically celebrate Freedom's Eve per se in the sense of reflecting on their ancestors' freedom from slavery. Yet, the direct link between Freedom's Eve celebrations and Watch Night undoubtedly has both explicit and implicit impact on many African American Christians' observance of the tradition. Many African American Christians consistently bring in the New Year inside of a church, starting their service between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

On one hand, some African American worship leaders fully honor the Freedom's Eve tradition during Watch Night. On the other hand, many African American Christians from various denominations including Methodist, Baptist, and Pentecostal churches implicitly reflect the spirit of Freedom's Eve celebrations by bringing in the New Year with jubilation and praise, praying, shouting, and thanking God for allowing them to live and survive another year as they anticipate the fulfillment of their hopes and God's promises in the New Year.



James Levert Davis, Servant Bishop † Arelis B. Davis, WMS Supervisor





<https://www.ame2.com/>

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3121 West Gate  
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Greensboro,  
North Carolina  
27407



**Group Name:** AME Mid-Winter Gathering 2020

**Group Room Rate:** \$134.00 per night (*Double & King*)

**Group Rate Cut-off Date:** *January 13, 2020*

November 26, 2019

To: *Second Episcopal District Book Authors*

The Second District will be offering an opportunity for book authors to present their works. An author's corner will be held at the upcoming Winter



Gathering in Greensboro North Carolina. Only active pre-registered clergy or lay members of the District, may take advantage of this unique opportunity. During the meeting you may give a brief (two minute) overview of your book. The book must have been published sometime within the last 18 months. You can also display your book at the shared free table. The amount of space available at the free table is dependent upon the number of authors who choose to use the shared space. If you prefer you can choose to pay the vendor price for a separate table. Authors are responsible for bringing their own books to sell, signage, and display stands. Authors will negotiate prices and engage in all their respective sales transactions. For your convenience, the hotel has WIFI which you may access for wireless modes of payment.

Please send the completed registration form to [revlindamouzon@verizon.net](mailto:revlindamouzon@verizon.net) by **Monday, January 13, 2020** if you intend to participate. We look forward to this exciting new venture.

*"If there's a book that you want to read,  
but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it."  
Toni Morrison*

*"Oh, that my words were written!  
Oh, that they were inscribed in a book!"  
Job 19:23*





## SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT AUTHOR REGISTRATION FORM

Thursday February 13, 2020 ~ Sheraton Greensboro at Four Seasons

All registration materials must be received in advance for your book information to be included in the Mid-Winter Gathering booklet.

Please complete this form and return by **JANUARY 13, 2020** as an e-mail attachment to [revlindamouzon@verizon.net](mailto:revlindamouzon@verizon.net)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/ CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE (AREA CODE) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

### BOOK INFORMATION

*Circle One Genre:    Fiction    Nonfiction    Poetry    Children's Book*

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

BRIEF DESCRIPTION (2-4 Sentences): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PUBLISHER: \_\_\_\_\_

COPYRIGHT YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_ ISBN# (13 digits) \_\_\_\_\_



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The Paramount celebrates Black History Month  
honoring the:

**150-YEAR COMMEMORATION  
OF WYATT OUTLAW**

**FREEDOM TALKS\***  
**FEBRUARY 2, 2020 AT 3:00 PM**

**WYATT OUTLAW SCREENING\*\***  
**FEBRUARY 7, 2020 AT 7:00 PM**

**ALL EVENTS ARE FAMILY FRIENDLY AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**SPONSOR:**

**\*\*AFRICAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL ARTS & HISTORY CENTER (AACAHC)**

**SUPPORTED BY:**

**\*CULTURE MILL & SAXAPAHAW SOCIAL JUSTICE EXCHANGE with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation  
WAYMAN CHAPEL AME**

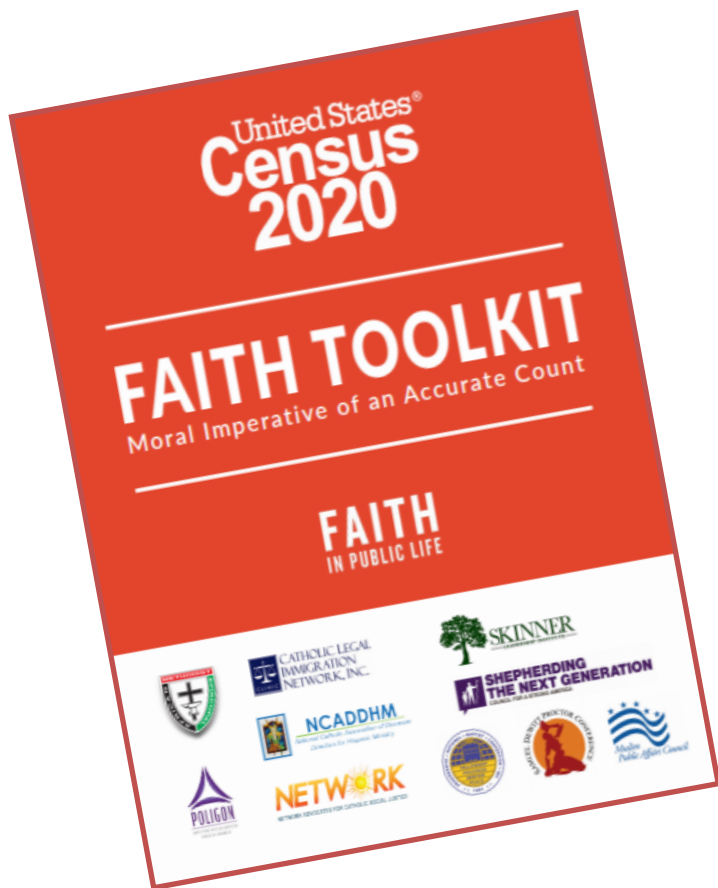
**\*\*TICKETS \$5 FOR SCREENING; SPONSORSHIP AND PROCEEDS ARE FOR AACAHC**

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE  
**LAY ORGANIZATION**



**Saturday, September 12, 2020 @ 10:00 a.m.**

WNCC-LO is accepting bids for our annual Prayer Breakfast. All bids must be submitted before April 4, 2020. For consideration, event spaces must seat comfortably at least 250 people.



Introduction \_\_\_\_\_

Why Become a Faith Census Ambassador? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is Hard to Count \_\_\_\_\_

Get Out the Count in Your Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Talking Points on the 2020 Census \_\_\_\_\_

Important Dates \_\_\_\_\_

Frequently Asked Questions \_\_\_\_\_

Useful Sacred Texts for Census Work \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Resources \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 1 -  
Census Faith Ambassador Flyer - Children Count \_\_\_\_\_

Sister Barbara Myers, WNCC Lay Organization 3rd Vice President, is the Chairperson for the Census 2020 project.

Local Lay presidents, please contact Sister Myers by email, [babsgurls@gmail.com](mailto:babsgurls@gmail.com), or phone 828-205-7405 immediately to schedule a conference call for this project.

*This information can be viewed, in its entirety, on the WNCC Lay Organization website.*

<http://www.wncclay.org/index.php>

## Introduction

April 1, 2020, is "Census Day." The enumeration starts in most of the country in March 2020. Our goal is to ensure every adult and child in the country is counted, regardless of race, faith tradition, immigration status or economic status.

This toolkit is designed to help faith leaders like you ensure that everyone in your community is counted so that your local schools, roads and hospitals get their fair share of funding and your community receives fair political representation at all levels of government.

The 2020 Census will be the first high-tech Census, with an online response option. Additionally, the Census Bureau has faced funding constraints throughout the planning process. And if the courts don't intervene to stop the Trump Administration, this could be the first Census to ask a citizenship question of all households in 70 years.

As a faith leader, you are an incredibly trusted messenger who can help educate and mobilize your congregation, your colleagues and your entire community to rise to this challenge.

This "Get Out the Count" program is based on the understanding that faith communities have a unique moral voice and are trusted community leaders and resources. As such, these communities and their leaders are poised to be key messengers in turning out our communities to be counted in the 2020 Census, no matter the obstacles, so that everyone of our neighbors is fairly and accurately counted.

A coalition of national religious denominations and organizations, in partnership with Faith in Public Life and Shepherding the Next Generation to form the 2020 Census Faith Council, will work together to lead public education efforts regarding the 2020 Census, advocate for a fair and accurate count, and recruit 1,000 Census Faith Ambassadors across the country and particularly in Hard to Count communities to be community leaders in educating their neighbors about the importance of being counted in the 2020 Census.





# **The 128th Session of the Western North Carolina Conference**

Tuesday, May 5, 2020 (All Day)  
to Saturday, May 9, 2020 (All Day)

*Embassy Suites by Hilton Greensboro Airport  
204 Centreport Drive, Greensboro, NC 27409*



# SECOND DISTRICT LEGACY FEST & PLANNING MEETING

**MAY 28-31, 2020**

**EBENEZER AME CHURCH**

**7707 ALLENTOWN RD~FORT WASHINGTON, MD 20744**



- 5 | 28      2nd District Ordination
- 5 | 29      Dedication of New Building
- 5 | 30      2<sup>nd</sup> District Pentecost
- 5 | 31      Pentecost Sunday

When Pentecost Day arrived,  
they were all together in one place.  
...They were all filled with the Holy Spirit  
and began to speak in other languages as  
the Spirit enabled them to speak.

Acts 1:1



## **GENERAL CONFERENCE 2020**

Office of the General Secretary/CIO

Rev. Dr. Jeffery B. Cooper

### **Registration Fees for Observers**

\$115 – June 2019 – Dec. 31, 2019

\$120 – January 1, 2020 – March 31, 2020

\$125 – April 1, 2020 until start of Registration  
at 2020 General Conference

**Note: AME member card is required for discount**

*Student with Valid ID:*

\$50 – Increases to \$60 at site of the General Conference

*Youth – (Age 5-18):*

\$25 – Increases to \$35 at site of the General Conference

*Delegates and Alternates: Register through their District Office*





# AME SOCIAL ACTION COMMISSION



## Wake Up: AME Statement on the impeachment of Donald Trump

Yesterday the House of Representatives voted, for only the third time in history, to impeach the President of the United States. It was a sad day for the nation. It was a great day for those who believe in the Constitution, the rule of law and celebrate political officials who dare to take their oath of office seriously.

As the Social Action Commission and the servant leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal Church watched the impeachment's proceedings and vote, we remembered that we were one of the first in 2016 to warn the nation, and the world, about the looming "Trump Tyranny." Yet, we take no solace in the fact that God's revelation about Trump's lack of Constitutional character and his divisive and destructive policies would push our nation away from democracy and toward dictatorship were right.

As we watched the political courage of the Democrats, and the fawning cowardice of the Republicans, we reflected on the words of the Third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson: "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever."

As the nation saw the House move closer and closer to yesterday's vote, we heard from Republican leadership in the Senate that they had no intention of having a trial based on the Constitutional principles of impeachment - the basis for the vows that every Senator must take. In other words, they have decided to be blind to the Constitution's liberating light of justice, deaf to the voices of those who knew that the impeachment process was needed to protect the nation from dictatorship, and dumb to the need for the American people to hear the truth. The African Methodist Episcopal Church trembles for our country when we reflect that God is just and that God's justice will not sleep forever.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had a powerful and life-changing sermon entitled "Remaining Awake Through A Great Revolution." Will the Republican Party and its supporters continue to take the sleeping pills of white supremacy and privilege, or will we all hear God's divine alarm clock calling us to stand up, speak up, and show up for freedom and justice for all?

We call upon our AME Constituencies and all people who believe in democracy, justice, and peace to join us in the following:

1. A day of prayer and fasting for our nation. Let us pray that God will heal our land.
2. Contact both of your Senators by email and phone call to register your belief that the trial in the Senate should be a real trial with witnesses and cross-examinations so the country can get the facts.
3. Inquire of your Senators, "Do they believe that any person who holds a political office is above the law?"
4. Organize your church, faith community, family, and community for the upcoming 2020 Elections. Encourage, equip, and empower them to stay inspired and involved to do their part in the spiritual, political, and economic revival of our nation and world.

*"Awake, awake, put on your strength, O Zion! Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for the uncircumcised and the unclean shall enter you no more. Shake yourself from the dust, rise up, O captive Jerusalem; loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter Zion! For thus says the Lord: You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money." Isaiah 52:1-3 (NRSV)*

**Bishop Harry L. Seawright, President of the Council of Bishops**  
**Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Senior Bishop**  
**Bishop Gregory G. M. Ingram, President of the General Board**  
**Bishop Frank M. Reid III, Chair of the Commission on Social Action**  
**Mrs. Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker, Director of Social Action**

**Source:** *The Christian Recorder*

December 19, 2019

Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III  
Mrs. Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker



# U.S. Postal Service Issuing Gwen Ifill Black Heritage Forever Stamp Jan. 30

**What:** The 43rd stamp in the Black Heritage series honors Gwen Ifill, one of the nation's most esteemed journalists. The stamp art features a photo of Ifill taken in 2008 by photographer Robert Severi. Art director Derry Noyes designed the stamp. The Gwen Ifill stamp will be issued in panes of 20. The stamp dedication ceremony is free and open to the public. News of the stamp is being shared with the hashtags **#GwenIfillForever** and **#BlackHeritageStamps**.

**Who:** Ronald A. Stroman, Deputy Postmaster General, U.S. Postal Service and Dedicating Official

**When:** Thursday, Jan. 30, 2020, at 11 a.m. EST

**Where:** Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1518 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20005

**RSVP:** Dedication ceremony attendees are encouraged to RSVP at [usps.com/gwenifillblackheritage](https://usps.com/gwenifillblackheritage).

**Background:** Gwen Ifill was among the first African Americans to hold prominent positions in both broadcast and print journalism.

After graduating from college in 1977, Ifill worked at The Boston Herald American, The Baltimore Evening Sun, The Washington Post and The New York Times. In 1994, she took a broadcast job at NBC, where she covered politics in the DC bureau. Five years later, she joined PBS; she became the senior political correspondent for "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" and moderator and managing editor of "Washington Week" — the first woman and first African American to moderate a major television news-analysis show.

In 2013, she became co-anchor of the "PBS NewsHour," part of the first all-female team to anchor a national nightly news program. Ifill died in 2016. Among Ifill's honors were the Radio Television Digital News Foundation's Leonard Zeidenberg First Amendment Award (2006), Harvard's Joan Shorenstein Center's Goldsmith Career Award for Excellence in Journalism (2009) and induction into the National Association of Black Journalists Hall of Fame (2012). In 2015, she was awarded the Fourth Estate Award by the National Press Club. She received numerous honorary degrees and served on the boards of the News Literacy Project and the Committee to Protect Journalists, which renamed its Press Freedom Award in her honor.

The 2016 John Chancellor Award was posthumously awarded to Ifill by the Columbia Journalism School. In 2017, the Washington Press Club Foundation and the "PBS NewsHour" created a journalism fellowship named for Ifill. Her alma mater, Simmons University, opened the Gwen Ifill College of Media, Arts, and Humanities in 2018.

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through The Postal Store at [usps.com/shop](https://usps.com/shop), by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724), by mail through [USA Philatelic](https://usa.philatellic.com) or at Post Office locations nationwide. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

**Source (December 31, 2019):** *The Christian Recorder* is the official newspaper of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the oldest continuously produced publication by persons of African descent.

**Bishop Vashti M. McKenzie, Chair of the General Board Commission on Publications**

**Rev. Dr. Roderick D. Belin, President/Publisher of the AME Sunday School Union**

**Mr. John Thomas III, Editor of *The Christian Recorder***

# \* A TEACHABLE MOMENT \*

Submitted by: Jacqueline C. Kanipe  
WNCC Lay Organization ~ Director of Lay Activities

## Lay Witnesses: Fulfilling and Walking

Fulfilling and Walking, has been written by Connectional Lay Organization President, Mrs. Valerie Gary Bell. She is a member of First Manassas A.M.E. Church, Manassas, Virginia. This message is printed in the Connectional Lay Organization Study Guide 2019-2021.

**Prayer:** Dear God keep our eyes focused on you for direction as we seek to be a visible and credible witness to your goodness, your mercy and your kindness. Amen.

**Scripture:** Go and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age.  
Matthew 28:19-20 (MSG)

...and what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8 (NASV)

The Biennial theme has changed from “Laity Fulfilling the Great Commission” to “Laity walking humbly with God to do justice and to love kindness.” The question that we must all ask ourselves is, How do we, as Lay witnesses find the commitment to Evangelism within the context of a Social Justice agenda?”

President Bell states “as we survey the verbs, the action words of both themes, we find our purpose and direction.”

In the Great Commission, Matthew implores the believers to go out, to teach and train without hindrances of people who are from different cultures or ethnic backgrounds. While teaching and training people we know and are familiar is much easier, that is not what the scriptures are asking us to do. However, the more challenging task comes with the reassurance that Jesus will be with us as a constant source of refreshing.

Acting or promoting fair, just treatment and loving or practicing compassion/mercy from a posture of humility are attributes that should be byproducts for those who have been a witness, experiencing spiritual intimacy with God. The promotion or advocacy of justice or fair treatment of humankind extends the spirit of God into communities that are in pain. It points hurting humanity to a source of comfort that the world cannot provide. That is the connection between Evangelism and social justice.

If we take our call seriously to be a “witness,” then we will be encouraged and empowered to move from being an observer to being a doer. The action of doing justice extends the body of Christ into our communities that are filled with hate. The promoting of justice and fairness to humanity lifts a God-focused standard.



# History of Gaston Chapel

African Methodist Episcopal Church

102 Bouchelle Street ~ Morganton, NC 28655



Gaston Chapel AME Church, a congregation born out of a group of slaves who stole away in a densely wooded area called the “groove” located in what is now the historic Jonesboro Community of Morganton, to worship. Another member interviewed stated, “before Gaston Chapel, we had to go into the woods to pray.” Thus, the humble beginning of Gaston Chapel AME Church.

Gaston Chapel was founded in 1872 by a courageous group of African Americans of Morganton who stepped out on faith and decided to build a place of worship to serve their spiritual needs. Gaston Chapel is the oldest extant and first substantial black church constructed in Burke County. The very first structure is described as a “little white wooden church” that sat on the upper side of where the present church structure now sits. At that time the church was referred to as the “Colored Methodist Church” and was governed by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South an all-white religious group. Gaston Chapel was named in honor of Rev. Moses Gaston, a slave preacher who was blessed with leadership ability, courage and the ability to capture the trust and confidence of his members.

The building that sits at the corner of Bouchelle and East Union Streets was completed sometime around 1911. Most of the labor to build the structure, was done by the men and women of the church. The men laid the brick and mortar and the women supplied the meals and moral support. From 1911 until the spring of 2013, Gaston Chapel remained almost structurally unchanged. There was certainly a need to expand, remodel, renovate or do something to meet the growing needs of the church and its 200 plus members.

Under the pastoral leadership of former minister, Rev. Ronald J. Knight, a plan was launched to expand with a new fellowship hall, kitchen, and Sunday school rooms and pastor’s office. The existing sanctuary was enlarged, and a brand-new choir loft was added. This project was a dream come true for the entire church family. It was a chance to combine the old with the new. The Gothic turn-of-the-century ecclesiastical architecture and Romanesque influences remain and were integrated with the old Premier boiler room that has been transformed into a state-of-the-art multipurpose facility. Gaston Chapel is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Rev. Alphonso E. McGlen is the current Pastor Gaston Chapel.

( Excerpts from writings by Allen W. Fullwood / Submitted by Mary L. Roseboro)

# Western NC Conference Christmas with Bishop James L. Davis and Mother Arelis B. Davis



St. Joseph AME Church ~ Durham, NC  
December 14, 2019





# Mark Your Calendars



## Upcoming Events



**January 12, 2020.....11:00AM.....NC Central University Sunday & Founder's Day  
Sit-in Worship Service for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Alpha Zeta Omega Chapter**  
St. Joseph AMEC, 2521 Fayetteville Street, Durham, NC ~ Rev. Dr. Jonathan Augustine, Pastor

**January 19, 2020.....11:00AM.....Centennial Celebration  
Sit-in Worship Service for Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Eta Beta Zeta Chapter**  
St. Joseph AMEC, 2521 Fayetteville Street, Durham, NC ~ Rev. Dr. Jonathan Augustine, Pastor

**January 19, 2020.....2:30PM.....Annual Lay Day Program  
Speaker: Sister Angela Elam, Director of Public Relations, WNCC Lay Organization**  
White Cross AMEC, 4604 Lebanon Road, Efland, NC ~ Rev. Myraette McGibboney, Pastor

**January 19, 2020.....10:00AM.....Family and Friends Day  
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Nancy Crews, U.S. Navy Chaplain**  
St. James AMEC, 1501 N. Patterson Avenue, Winston-Salem, NC ~ Rev. Shelton Miles, Pastor

**January 23, 2020.....6:30PM.....Open "Community Conversation"  
Speaker: Dr. Eddie Glaude, Princeton University Professor and MSNBC Commentator  
(Dr. James A. Forbes' spring class, through Duke Divinity School)**  
St. Joseph AMEC, 2521 Fayetteville Street, Durham, NC ~ Rev. Dr. Jonathan Augustine, Pastor

**January 24, 2020.....7:00PM.....Lay Teachable Moments  
Speaker: Sister Penny Oliver, President, WNCC Lay Organization**  
St. James AMEC, 520 Method Road, Raleigh, NC ~ Rev. Phyllis Royal, Pastor

**January 25, 2020....."We Can Handle Grief Together"  
11:30AM (meet/greet) 12:00-2:00PM Free Seminar**  
**Speaker: Minister Gale Smith Noble, Springdale AMEC, Burlington, NC**  
Caswell County Senior Center, 649 Firetower Road, Yanceyville, NC

**January 25, 2020.....Circle of Sisters' "Black Pearls of Wisdom" Fellowship Luncheon"  
1:00PM-3:00PM ~ Honoring sisters who are 70 years+ before December 31, 2019**  
Greater Bethel AME Church, 5232 The Plaza, Charlotte, NC ~ Rev. Dr. Abdue L. Knox, Pastor  
Contacts: Sisters Janice Hazeley (540) 220-3185 / Ruth Youngblood (704) 521-9887 /  
Petrina Jordan (704) 545-3395



# Mark Your Calendars

## Upcoming Events



**January 26, 2020.....3:00PM.....Annual Men’s Day Program**  
**Speaker: Rev. Percy McIntyre, Pastor of Poplar Grove AMEC, Greensboro, NC**  
Johnson Chapel AMEC, 431 Woodlawn Road, Mebane, NC ~ Rev. Timothy Boone, Pastor

**February 16, 2020.....11:00AM.....Black History Observance**  
**Speaker: Judge Larry Brown of Alamance County**  
Springdale AMEC, 5554 S. NC Highway 62, Burlington, NC ~ Rev. Bridgette Gloster, Pastor

**March 14, 2020 .....10:00AM.....WNCC Lay Organization Meeting**  
Bethel AMEC, 200 N Regan Street, Greensboro, NC ~ Rev. Dr. Clay Barrow, Pastor

**March 31, 2020 ..... Lay Organization Evangelism Sunday**

**April 11, 2020 .....10:00AM.....WNCC Lay Organization Meeting**  
St. James AMEC, 1501 N. Patterson Avenue, Winston-Salem, NC ~ Rev. Shelton Miles, Pastor

**April 24, 2020.....6:00PM.....White Cross AMEC 138th Anniversary Banquet**  
**Speaker: Rev. Dr. Conrad Pridgen, WNCC Western District Presiding Elder**  
Mebane Arts and Community Center, 633 Corregidor Street, Mebane, NC  
Rev. Myraette McGibboney, Pastor of White Cross AMEC, Efland, NC  
Donations: \$25 / Tickets: Sis. Gail Graves-(336) 675-4345 / Sis. Rosella Crisp-(336) 684-2665  
*Please email Bro. Kenneth Woods ([kwoods6@centurytel.net](mailto:kwoods6@centurytel.net)) to place an ad in the Anniversary Book*

**April 26, 2020.....11:00AM / 3:00PM.....White Cross AMEC 138th Anniversary Program**  
**11AM Speaker: Rev. Myraette McGibboney, Pastor**  
**3PM Speaker: Rev. Dr. Anita Thompson, WNCC Eastern District Presiding Elder**  
White Cross AMEC, 4604 Lebanon Road, Efland, NC

**May 5-9, 2020 ..... 128th Session of the WNC Annual Conference**  
Embassy Suites by Hilton (Airport)—Greensboro, NC

**May 28-30, 2020 ..... 2nd District Legacy Fest & Planning Meeting**  
Ebenezer AMEC, 7707 Allentown Road— Fort Washington, MD

**July 8-15, 2020 .....AMEC 51<sup>st</sup> Quadrennial Session General Conference**  
Orange County Convention Center, 9800 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819

# Happy New Year

A new year is about to unfold  
With new opportunities to explore  
Doors will open for new experiences,  
New adventures with the Lord

Remember not the former things,  
The things of this past year,  
The Lord will do new things in us,  
Much more than we are aware.

-M.S.Lowndes



*Birthdate:*  
*January 15th*



*January 19, 2020*

PRAYING GOD GIVES YOU A

*year of favor*

FULL OF HIS UNENDING LOVE.

May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us...

PSALM 90:17a

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Articles, church history, events,  
and hidden figures to be consid-  
ered for the **February** THE LAY EX-  
PRESS newsletter:

**DEADLINE— JANUARY 26<sup>th</sup>**

Email to Sister Angela Elam  
[allendur@aol.com](mailto:allendur@aol.com)