New Members Orientation Packet



GREENWOOD

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL

Church

Rooted in faith, Growing in grace,
Serving in love

Greenwood AME Church, 8005 Donnell Road, Memphis, TN 38053

Rev. Fekecia L. Gunn, Pastor

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Welcome

From Pastor Fekecia L. Gunn

Dear New Member,

Greetings and welcome to **Greenwood African Methodist Episcopal Church**. It is a joy to welcome you into this community of faith as you begin this new chapter of connection, growth, and service. Greenwood is a church family committed to helping people grow deeper in Christ, stronger in faith, and more connected to one another.

This new member orientation packet has been prepared to help you learn more about who Greenwood AME Church is, what the African Methodist Episcopal Church believes, and how you can become an active part of this ministry. Membership is more than having your name on a roll; it is an invitation to worship faithfully, grow spiritually, serve joyfully, and live as a witness to the love of Jesus Christ in the world.

At Greenwood, the life of the church is shaped by values that call us to be rooted, cultivated, planted, nurtured, tended, flourishing, and harvesting. These values remind us that spiritual growth does not happen by accident. As believers, we are grounded in God, formed through worship and the Word, strengthened through fellowship, and sent out to serve others with compassion and purpose.

As your Pastor, it is my prayer that you will find Greenwood to be a place where your faith is strengthened, your gifts are affirmed, and your life is encouraged. There is room for you here to grow, to ask questions, to build relationships, and to discover how God is calling you to serve in this season of your life. The church is at its best when every member is engaged in worship, discipleship, stewardship, and ministry.

This orientation process is an opportunity to begin that journey with clarity and confidence. As you review these materials, take time to reflect on the meaning of Christian discipleship and the responsibility and joy of church membership. It is a blessing to walk alongside you as together we seek to honor God, strengthen the body of Christ, and make a difference in our community.

Your Personal Information

Your Name:_____

Your Class Leader's Name:_____

Your Class Leader's Phone #:_____**Email:**_____

Your Class #:_____ **Your Envelope #:**_____

The Class Leader Ministry

What are class leaders? A class leader is a person assigned to oversee a group of twelve or more members to discern their spiritual and physical well-being.

Why do I need a class leader? Class leaders are the pastoral arm of the Church. It is very difficult for pastors to know the whereabouts and well-being of all of their members at any given time, which is why the class leader ministry is so vital to the effective functioning of the church.

How can I find out who my class leader is? If you don't know your class number or class leader's name, you should contact Sis. Velma Smith, Class Leader Coordinator at (901) 837-8366.

When should I contact my class leader?

*Thought to remember**.....** If every member of my Church was just like me, what kind of Church would My Church be?*

<u>You should contact your Class Leader when you are:</u>

- Sick
- In the Hospital
- Going through challenging times
- In need of prayer or communion

<u>You should contact your Class Leader if you are:</u>

- Having trouble working through faith issues or church doctrine
- In need of spiritual direction
- Interested in learning more about the various ministries of your church
- Planning to join a new church

<u>You should contact our Class Leader if you have:</u>

- Missed attending class meeting
- Not been in church for at least two Sundays
- Questions about the sermon, church programs or activities
- Relocated to another geographical region
- Changed your address or telephone number
- Joined another church

<u>You should contact your Class Leader if you want to:</u>

- Become more involved in the spiritual life of the Church
- Join a ministry, auxiliary or choir
- Report the birth of a child
- Report a death in the family

Get Connected at Greenwood AME Church

God ↔ Church ↔ Community

Your Greenwood AME Church family wants to ensure you stay connected to the people you've chosen to unite with as a believer in God's kingdom. To do this, please complete a **New Member form** with your personal information: mailing address, home/cell/work phone numbers, and any other details to help us reach you effectively.

Our Communication Methods

At Greenwood, we use simple, direct ways to share church activities, events, and updates:

Sunday Announcements
Listen for important updates during worship services—our primary way to keep everyone informed.

Text Messages
Quick alerts for urgent prayer requests, service changes, or special events. Provide your cell number on the New Member form to opt in.

Social Media
Follow us on **Facebook** for photos, devotionals, event recaps, and ministry spotlights. Search "Greenwood AME Church Millington" or ask the church office for links.

We **do not share** your personal information with external organizations or other members unless needed for official ministry contact (e.g., class leader outreach).

Stay Engaged

Membership means staying connected! Complete your form today, join our texts, follow us online, and listen each Sunday. Together, we're **rooted in faith, growing in grace, and serving in love**.

For questions, contact:

Church/Pastoral Questions:
Pastor Fekecia Gunn | pastorfgunn@gmail.com **|** (817) 266-9381

Financial Questions about your donations contact
Sis. Geraldine Williams | financials4greenwood@gmail.com

Or the Church Office at greenwoodamemillington@gmail.com | (901) 829-3197

BE COMMITTED AT GREENWOOD AME CHURCH

Worship | Christian Education | Fellowship | Outreach

Worship

Worship celebrates the divinity of God. It recognizes God for who He is, what He has done, and for what we are expecting God to do. God admonishes everything and everyone that has breadth (Psalm 150) to praise Him. We honor God when we engage in praise and worship. We honor God when we praise Him with the fruit of our lips (Heb. 13:15); we can also honor God through our everyday tasks (Col. 3:23) such as esteeming those who are in authority over us (Heb. 13:17) or submitting to our spouse (Eph. 5:22-23) or by not provoking our children (Eph. 6:4). As you can see, worshipping God is not limited to singing songs on Sunday or lifting up holy hands in worship. Worshipping God is a lifestyle that requires believers to be constantly and continually connected to God through the Holy Spirit.

Christian Education

Engaging in a life that loves learning is not an option for the believer, but it is a requirement by God. 2 Timothy 2:15 records, *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth."* By embracing study of God's word, believers are equipping themselves for not only sharing and spreading God's word to persons in their circles of influence, but they are also preparing themselves as vessels of God's future blessings. In other words, the more we study God's word and come into a knowledge of what God expects from us, the more we tailor our lifestyle choices to align with God's word. As a result, God will open up opportunities for us to serve him through our gifts that will bless and encourage others. Therefore, all members, especially new members, are expected to be involved in learning about God's word so that they can draw others to God through their Christian witness. In order to know God in an intimate way, believers will have to study God's word daily, attend Sunday School, bible study, and Sunday worship services.

Fellowship

Fellowship is a mutual sharing of our relationship with Christ with other believers. Hebrews 10:25 records, *"not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* In order for believers to grow together as a fellowship, a concerted effort to spend time together in godly pursuits will have to be a priority of the leadership. Such fellowships might include small group study, men and women's bible studies, seminars and workshops, and church outings. Our prayer is that you will make a concerted effort to be present at fellowship opportunities that will help to create lasting bonds with other believers in your new church family.

Outreach

Our outreach signals to the world that we are the arms, hands, feet, eyes and mouth of God. When we use our financial resources, spiritual gifts and natural abilities (talents) to address the needs of the disenfranchised in society, we are saying to them that God is not dead, God is alive, and he is using Christians (those who believe in Jesus and the message of the cross) to draw sinners to repentance, and to minister to the social, psychological, physical, spiritual and emotional wellness of people. Each member of Bridge Street is expected to join at least one ministry and to use their gifts to accomplish the mission of those ministries. Whether it is clothing and feeding the hungry on Wednesdays, visiting Rikers Island on Sundays, visiting the ill and homebound on Mondays, every member of Bridge Street is needed to fulfill God's mission for the church.

OUR CORE VALUES

Our core values—Rooted, Cultivated, Planted, Nurtured, Tended, Flourishing, and Harvesting—shape Greenwood AME Church's ministry by providing a living framework for spiritual growth, community engagement, and leadership development.

GROUNDING VISION AND CULTURE

Core values act like the soil that determines what will grow. They establish Greenwood's ministry culture—clarifying *who we are*, *what we believe*, and *how we serve*.

GUIDING MINISTRY DECISIONS

Just as a gardener decides how to cultivate based on soil and season, these values provide a standard for decisions about programs, leadership, and outreach. They help ministry teams focus on what produces long-term fruit, rather than short-term activity.

DEEPENING DISCIPLESHIP

Planting and growth imagery invites members to see themselves as spiritual gardens God tends. "Rooted" and "Cultivated" emphasize personal discipleship and openness to God's shaping. They remind us that healthy ministry begins with healthy roots in Scripture and prayer.

FOSTERING HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Values like "Nurtured" and "Tended" call the church to care for one another's growth—emotionally, spiritually, and relationally. This creates an environment where people are seen, supported, and restored, reflecting the compassion of Christ.

ENCOURAGING MISSION AND EVANGELISM

"Planted," "Flourishing," and "Harvesting" carry evangelistic power. These values remind us that our mission is to plant seeds of faith in the community and to celebrate the harvest God produces in transformed lives.

SUSTAINING LONG-TERM GROWTH

Because values outlast programs, they help anchor ministry through transitions. Like perennials, our values keep regenerating life and direction even as seasons change in leadership, community need, or church focus.

Salvation

Salvation is a free gift of a Holy God to a sinful world. It is obtained only by believing in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and receiving Him into your heart. It is an act of faith. One cannot work his way to Christ, nor can a person buy salvation. It is a personal decision. No one else can save a person. Church membership is not salvation but should be a natural result of salvation. Salvation changes the heart, the mind, and every part of a person. We become new creatures in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The "gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Romans 1:16). It is the "good news" of Jesus paying the price for our sins on the cross – and that is the power of God. In order to save man from sin and torment, God had to sacrifice his only Son (John 3:16). We need not worry about being good enough to be saved, because a person never reaches that degree of excellence. If we could, we would have no need of salvation. Every person comes to saving grace in the same way "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Salvation crosses all denominational lines. No religious movement of the Christian faith can claim a monopoly on salvation. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13) Simply stated, Christians are saved through faith in Jesus Christ. There are four basic steps in receiving salvation. They are Believe, Turn, Look, and Trust.

1. BELIEVE

Believe that God loves you, and that He gave His only Son Jesus Christ to die for your sins and the sins of the entire world and through His death you will receive eternal life. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* John 3:16

2. TURN

Turn from your sin to God. Many have tried to escape the consequences of sin, but turning to God is the only way. The word repent is used to describe turning from sin. Christians must repent of their sin in order to receive forgiveness for them. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* John 1:9; *"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* Acts 2:38; *"I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."* Luke 5:32

3. LOOK

Look to Christ as the only provision for the forgiveness of your sin. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for sin in full. He died to bring us back to God. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Even though we were dead in our sins, God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love He had for us, gave us life together with Christ. Remember it is by grace and not by achievements that you have been saved. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:5-9). Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). God has provided the way, the only way, but man must respond to that provision.

4. TRUST

Trust in Jesus Christ. By faith receive Him as your personal Savior. The bible says… "Yet to all whom received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

We must openly confess our faith, and trust in Christ Jesus. "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (Romans 10:9-10) Right now you can have this new life in Christ Jesus, by receiving Him as your personal Savior.

Our Beliefs

The basic foundations of the beliefs of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church are found in The Apostle's Creed and The Twenty-Five Articles of Religion.

In our tradition, there are several documents that help inform our distinctive understanding of the Christian faith. We rely on The Book of Doctrine and the Discipline of the AME Church; The AME Hymnal; The AME Book of Worship; Episcopal Salutation; Historical Statement; Articles of Religion; and The Life, Experience and Gospel Labors of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen.

The 10 Commandments

(New International Version of the Bible)

The 10 Commandments - God's Revelation in the Old Testament. The 10 Commandments are found in the Bible's Old Testament at Exodus, Chapter 20. They were given directly by God to the people of Israel at Mount Sinai after God had delivered them from slavery in Egypt.

"And God spoke all these words, saying: 'I am the LORD your God…

Commandments relate to our "vertical" relationship with God

Commandment 1: You shall have no other gods before Me.

Commandment 2: You shall not make for yourself a carved image--any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

Commandment 3: You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

Commandment 4: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Commandments relate to our 'horizontal" relationship with one another

Commandment 5: Honor your father and your mother.

Commandment 6: You shall not murder.

Commandment 7: You shall not commit adultery.

Commandment 8: You shall not steal.

Commandment 9: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Commandment 10: You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in GOD the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. The third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of GOD the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Church Universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

The Apostles' Creed can be divided into (10) succinct areas of belief:

1: **Belief in God the Father.** [God is Creator of humankind and is the first member of the Trinity.] Genesis 1; Psalm 8; Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:19

2: **Belief in Jesus as the Son of God.** [Jesus is Messiah, which means Savior of humankind, and is the second member of the Trinity.] John 1:18

3: **Belief in the Immaculate Conception or Virgin Birth of Jesus through Mary.** [Jesus was conceived not through natural means but through supernatural means via the Holy Spirit.] Matthew 1:18, 20; Luke 1:27

4: **Belief in the Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.** [Jesus died by crucifixion, he experienced a physical death, and was resurrected from the dead after three days in the grave.] Matthew 27:33-66; 28:1-11; Mark 16:14-19

5: **Belief in Jesus sitting at the right hand of God as the Ultimate Judge of the living and the dead.** [After death, Jesus ascended to the Father where he will reside until the Second Coming where he will judge the quick and the dead.] Mark 16:19, Rev. 20:12, Rev. 22:12, Matthew 25:32, Romans 14:10, 1 Corinthians 4:5

6: **Belief in God the Holy Spirit.** [The Holy Spirit is our Comforter, and He is the third member of the Trinity.] John 15:26; Acts 2

7: **Belief in the Universal Church as God's Ordained Institution for sharing, receiving and promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** [Those who are saved by God's grace become the vehicles by which God's love and grace are shared throughout the world.] 1 Corinthians 14:33, 12:12-27

8: **Belief in the Holy Eucharist or Sacrament of Communion as sharing or partaking in the body and blood of Jesus.** [Communion both reminds us of Jesus' blood sacrifice to save us from destruction and to forgive us for our sin. These are the chief reasons for celebrating the sacraments of bread and wine; to remember God's grace toward us.] Psalm 11:1; Hebrews 10:25

9: **Belief in the Forgiveness of Sins through Jesus Christ.** [It is only through the shedding of Jesus' blood on the cross that we are forgiven of sins.] 1 John 1:9

10: **Belief in Eternal Life or Life Everlasting, which is only available through relationship with Jesus Christ.** [At the end of this earthly life we know that we have an eternal home with God, not made with hands, that is only available to us through belief in and relationship with Jesus.] Luke 20:36; Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:15-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; John 3:15

THE 25 ARTICLES OF RELIGION

Verbiage after "IN ESSENCE" is *a summarisation of the Articles by the Rev. Andrew White, from the "Know Your Church Manual"*

1. OF FAITH IN THE HOLY TRINITY

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; he maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this God-head, there are three persons of one substance, power and eternity; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. **IN ESSENCE:** There is but one living and true God. He is the maker and preserver of all things. We experience the one God through three aspects of His personality; namely, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This threefold aspect of God, we call the Holy Trinity.

2. OF THE WORD OR SON OF GOD, WHO WAS MADE VERY MAN

The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the God-head and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who suffered,was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men. **IN ESSENCE:** In Christ two natures --Divine and Human-- are joined together in one person. In other words, Jesus is truly God and truly man.

3. OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

Christ did truly rise from the dead, and took again his body with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and sitteth until he returns to judge all men at last day. **IN ESSENCE:** Christ truly arose from the dead and ascended into heaven.

4. OF THE HOLY GHOST

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God. **IN ESSENCE:** The Holy Spirit is of one substance with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is one of the three aspects through which we experience God.

5. THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES FOR SALVATION

The Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

The Names of the Canonical Books:

- Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth
- The First Book of Samuel The Second Book of Samuel The First Book of Kings
- The Second Book of Kings
- The First Book of Chronicles The Second Book of Chronicles The Book of Ezra

- The Book of Nehemiah The Book of Esther The Book of Job
- The Book of Psalms The Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher Cantica, or Songs of Solomon Four Prophets, the Greater Twelve Prophets, the Lesser

All the books of the New Testament as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical. **IN ESSENCE:** The Holy Bible contains all we need to know to be saved. *(Also, 39 OT Books & 27 NT Books)*

6. OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and the New Testament, everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and man. Wherefore, they are not to be heard, who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises? Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments, which are called moral. **IN ESSENCE:** The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; in both Old and New Testaments eternal life is offered to mankind.

7. OF ORIGINAL OR BIRTH SIN

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk) but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually. **IN ESSENCE:** All men have inherited evil impulses from their ancestors. This corruption of the nature of every man is called "original sin." It goes back to Adam, the first man.

8. OF FREE WILL

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore, we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God; by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will. **IN ESSENCE:** Every person is free to choose right or wrong; but even if he chooses to do right, he must have God's help to live a good and holy life.

9. OF THE JUSTIFICATION OF MAN

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, by faith, and not by our own works or deservings; wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort. **IN ESSENCE:**We are saved by faith in Christ and by that faith alone. Good works cannot save us.

10. OF GOOD WORKS

Although good works, which are the fruit of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments: yet are they pleasing and

acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that they by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree is discerned by its fruit. **IN ESSENCE:** Good works are the fruits of our faith in Christ.

11. OF WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION

Voluntary works, besides, over and above God's Commandments, which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for His sake than of bounden duty is required; whereas Christ said plainly," When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants." **IN ESSENCE:** The belief that one can do more good than God requires is called "works of supererogation." We do not believe in this doctrine. No one can do more than he ought to do or be better than he ought to be.

12. OF SIN AFTER JUSTIFICATION

Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and by the grace of God, rise again, and amend your lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can do no more sin as long as they live here; or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent. **IN ESSENCE:** A Christian may depart from grace and fall into sin again. But those who truly repent receive God's forgiveness and rise again to a good and holy life.

13. OF THE CHURCH

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same. **IN ESSENCE:** The Visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men and women in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered.

14. OF PURGATORY

The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshipping, and adoration, as well as images, as of relics, and also invocations of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant of the Word of God. **IN ESSENCE:** We do not believe in the idea of purgatory, which is the doctrine that there is a place other than heaven or hell where souls go after death to be cleansed of sin. Nor do we believe in the worship of images, relics and saints.

15. OF SPEAKING IN THE CONGREGATION IN SUCH A TONGUE AS THE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, (to have public prayer in the Church,) or to minister the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people. **IN ESSENCE:** Public worship and the sacraments should be conducted in a language the people can understand.

16. OF THE SACRAMENTS

Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord, in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the corrupt following of the Apostles; and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign, or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that received them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith. **IN ESSENCE:** There are only two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospels: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

17. OF BAPTISM

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church. **IN ESSENCE:** Baptism is the sign of regeneration of the new birth. It marks the beginning of the Christian life. Infants and children, as well as adults, should be baptized. A. The modes of baptism shall be sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. No one is greater than another. B. Under no circumstances shall anyone be Re-Baptized (Re-Christian-Baptism). This is strictly prohibited by the church. C. All peoples shall be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

18. OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a Sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch, that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped. **IN ESSENCE:** The Supper of the Lord is a symbol of Christ's suffering and death for us. The bread and wine are not changed into the actual body and blood of Christ; they represent His broken body and shed blood.

19. OF BOTH KINDS

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people: for both parents of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike. **IN ESSENCE:** Both the bread and the wine are to be given to the people in the Lord's Supper.

20. OF THE ONE OBLATION OF CHRIST, FINISHED UPON THE CROSS

The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacraments of masses, in which it is commonly said that that priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit. **IN ESSENCE:** The sacrifice of Christ is for the sins of the whole world, both original sin and actual sin. There is no other satisfaction for sin but that alone.

21. OF THE MARRIAGE OF MINISTERS

The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore, it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness. **IN ESSENCE:** The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law to abstain from marriage. Therefore, it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry.

22. OF THE RITES AND CEREMONIES OF CHURCHES

It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have always been different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant of the Word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the Church and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular Church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies so that all things may be done to edification. **IN ESSENCE:** It is not necessary that the rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same or exactly alike. Every denomination has a right to adopt and use a ritual of its own, but the rites that have been established by the church should be faithfully observed by its members.

23. OF THE RULERS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The President, the Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of State, as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America[1], according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the constitution of their respective states and the Councils of States delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America, and by the Constitutions of their respective States. And the said states are a sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

It is acknowledged that the African Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in the United States. However, the African Methodist Episcopal Church is an international Christian body with constituents around the world, and a Christian witness that is both parochial and global.

Article 23 presumes the duty, loyalty and patriotism of our constituents, as citizens of sovereign nations, to obey just laws, to recognize and respect the organizational structure, and to uphold the Constitution of the country or nation-state in which our members hold the rights and privileges of citizenship. Further, obedience to Civil Government is one of the principle duties of all persons, and was honored by our Lord and His Apostles. Though differing in form and policy, all just governments rightfully commend the obedience, loyalty, support, and defense of all Christian men and women they control and protect. **IN ESSENCE:** The United States is and ought to be a free and independent nation. All righteous governments should be supported and defended by Christians.

24. OF CHRISTIAN MEN'S GOODS

The riches and goods of Christians are not common as touching the right, title and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally, to give alms to the poor, according to his ability. **IN ESSENCE:** Christians have a right to own private property. However, every man should give liberally of his possessions to help others.

25. OF A CHRISTIAN MAN'S OATH

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord, Jesus Christ and James, His apostle: so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth. **IN ESSENCE:** Christians should not swear. They may take oath, however, as may be required by the courts of the land.

The Lord's Prayer: 8 Components for Understanding How to Pray

Matthew 6:6-13 & Matthew 11:2-4

The Lord's Prayer is a Pattern for Prayer

Myles Munroe describes prayer as ***"…approaching God in order to ask Him to accomplish His will in the earth."***

Components of the Lord's Prayer

1. **Our Father**
    a. We are to never bring ourselves to prayer; rather, we are to bring other people's concerns with us.
    b. When we pray we are to identify who we are praying to. Father denotes "Source" and by praying to the Father we acknowledge that He is the Source from which our needs are met.

2. **In Heaven**
    a. Helps us remember that we are not praying to someone on earth; rather, the Source of our strength is in Heaven.
    b. Recognizes that our help is from outside the earthly realms.
    c. Understands God is greater than we are and that it is only through His Son that we are able to receive what we stand in need of.

3. **Hallowed Be Your Name**
    a. Hallowed means to reverence, set apart or sanctify.
    b. Denotes Holiness.
    c. By glorifying the father and acknowledging His Holiness we are able to move into a position of worship.
    d. When we pray we should use different names of God to describe who he is to us and to bring us into a position of gratitude & worship.

4. **Your Kingdom Come, Your Will Be Done**
    a. We understand that it is not about us but about God's kingdom.
    b. We understand that while we may be praying for one thing, God's response may be something totally different.
    c. We understand that though we have a right to ask for anything and everything we think we deserve, we also realize that only God's will will prevail.
    d. We understand that it is only when we look beyond our own needs to the needs of others that God will begin to break forth and move in our individual situations.

5. **Give Us Our Daily Bread**
    a. We are praying for God to do whatever He needs to do to work all things together for our good.
    b. We are not asking God for food; rather, we are asking God for everything that is necessary for our spiritual, emotional and health wellness.

6. **Forgive Us Our Sins, For We Also Forgive**
    a. Prayer is not an isolated activity between us and God; it takes into consideration our relationship with others.
    b. Must reconcile with our brother/sister continually before going to God in prayer.
    c. Must forgive others as God has forgiven us if we are to experience victory in prayer.
    d. Must forgive others so that we are freed from the bondage of sin which may result from feelings of being violated and misunderstood.
    e. Having good relationships is one of the keys to answered prayer.
    f. Pray and fast so that God will reveal to you all the hurt, bitterness, and anger you are holding against people so your prayers are not hindered
    g. Forgiveness frees prayers so they are answered.
    h. God is looking for clean hands and clean hearts (Ps 24:2-4) and he will not respond to us if we regard iniquity in our hearts (Ps 66:18).

7. **Do Not Lead Us Into Temptation**
    a. We are to ask God for wisdom so that we won't put ourselves in situations that will cause us to compromise our relationship with him.
    b. We are to ask for strength and wisdom to stop making bad decisions and to stop going into bad situations that will tempt us to sin.
    c. We need to be alert to the temptations and weaknesses that could harm our relationship with God and our testimony for Him, things that Satan will exploit to cause us to stumble.

8. **Yours Is The Kingdom, Power & Glory**
    a. Consider the benediction or the blessing.
    b. Agrees with God that what has been prayed will be manifested.
    c. Believes in the Omnipotent, Omnipresence, Omniscience of God.
    d. Believes God's Word will not return void but shall accomplish the purpose for which it set out.
    e. Believes God will watch over His word to perform it in our life and the lives of others.
    f. Believes that God is able to manifest from nothing, something that we did not have the power to even conceptualize.
    g. Believes that God is able to do exceeding abundantly more than what we ask or think.
    h. Count the prayer as DONE!

Bible Structure + Divisions

The Bible is divided into two main parts - the Old Testament and the New Testament. Testament means covenant or mutual understanding or agreement.

The Old Testament contains 39 books. It records the history and religious literature of the Jewish people who believed in one God who was loving and just. The Old Testament is full of promises that God would send a deliverer to his people, someone who would bring freedom and redemption.

The first book of the Old Testament is called Genesis, which means beginning. Starting with the creation, the book of Genesis includes many of the themes that are developed later in the Bible. The hope of a great deliverer is first found here, while the last book of the Old Testament - Malachi - closes the Old Testament.

BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis	2 Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
1 Samuel	Song of Solomon	Habakkuk
2 Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
1 Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
2 Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
1 Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

The New Testament contains 27 books including gospels, history and letters. Gospel basically means good news.

The four gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - tell of the birth, life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus. The book of Acts is like a short history. It tells of the spread of Christianity.

The letters are from Christian leaders to individuals and to churches. They deal with things like living as a Christian, why Jesus had to die and how we are all equal in the eyes of God. The last book of the New Testament is Revelation. It's also a letter but it's written in a very different style to the earlier letters.

BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew	Ephesians	Hebrews
Mark	Philippians	James
Luke	Colossians	1 Peter
John	1 Thessalonians	2 Peter
Acts	2 Thessalonians	1 John
Romans	1 Timothy	2 John
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	3 John
2 Corinthians	Titus	Jude
Galatians	Philemon	Revelation

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

The AME Church recognizes and observes two holy sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion. The modes of baptism are pouring, sprinkling, and immersion. Regardless of the mode administered, baptism is a powerful symbol of regeneration and initiation into the community of faith – Christ's Church. Holy Communion services as a memorial of the death and suffering of Christ and celebrates the abundant life we have through Him.

To baptize by immersion is to plunge the whole person into water. Baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Submerging believers under water is symbolic of the death and burial of Jesus Christ. The emergence from the water portrays the resurrection and life of Jesus Christ. Finally, water baptism is also a witness to the world that one is no longer united with the devil, but united with Christ.

The sacrament of baptism publicly declares that you belong to Christ. The sacrament of baptism signals to the world that you have made a decision to begin a new life; one that will intentionally focus on living righteously for Christ as per the Holy Scriptures.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Supper of the Lord is a sign of the love that Christians ought to have for one another and our redemption by Christ's death. The bread that we break is a partaking of the body of Christ and likewise the cup is a partaking of the blood of Christ. In the AME doctrine, the Supper of the Lord is administered to all Christians alike.

The Lord's Supper was instituted on the night our Lord met with His disciples to keep the annual Passover and also the same night in which he was betrayed. During the Lord's Supper, Jesus took the opportunity to inform His disciples that they would no longer need to celebrate the Passover as they traditionally had because after tonight, he was going to become their Passover lamb. His body was going to be sacrificed and broken for them and his blood was going to be shed for them.

Before we partake in the Lord's Supper in a meaningful way, it is essential that we engage in an honest self-examination: unconfessed sin, examine our minds to ensure our thoughts are of the ministry of Christ, and examine our motives to see if what we do and say is pleasing to God and for his Glory.

History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church has a unique and glorious history. It is unique in that it is the first major religious denomination in the Western world that had its origin over sociological rather than theological beliefs and differences.

In 1787, Rev. Richard Allen, the founder and first bishop of the AME Church, along with Absalom Jones, and a band of followers withdrew from the St. George's Methodist Church in Philadelphia because of the unkind treatment and discrimination to worshipers of African descent. Allen and the others began worshipping in a blacksmith shop. They founded the Free African Society, which was the beginning of the AME Church.

Our Founder



Richard Allen learned that other groups were suffering under the same conditions. After study and consultation, five churches came together in a General Convention, which met in Philadelphia, PA, April 9-11, 1816, and formed the AME Church. The name African Methodist came naturally, as Negroes at that time were called Africans and they followed the teaching of the Methodist Church as founded by John Wesley. The young Church accepted the Methodist doctrine and Discipline almost in its entirety.

Richard Allen was born on February 14, 1760 in Philadelphia, PA. He was born into slavery; his family was the property of a wealthy Philadelphia lawyer, Benjamin Chew. Later Richard and his family were sold to Stockley Sturgis in Delaware. Sturgis allowed Allen to learn to read and write and through his reading he became interested in religion and attended local Methodist meetings until people objected. Sturgis then allowed Methodist meetings on his plantation and Allen soon found that preaching was his calling, and is said to have influenced Sturgis' own conversion to the Methodist religion. In 1783, Richard Allen purchased his freedom and moved back to Philadelphia.

He began preaching and regularly worshipped in the Methodist church. However, he and other black worshippers faced opposition from some of the white members of the church. Instead of forcing the issue, Allen left the Methodist congregation and in 1787 he began his own congregation where people could worship without restriction and harassment. As the free black population of Philadelphia grew, Allen continued to devote his efforts to bringing increasing numbers of black people into the Methodist religion.

Allen was an organizer of the Free African Society, a group that fostered self-help and selfdependence. He established day and night schools, and was co-organizer of the first Masonic lodge for colored men in Pennsylvania.

From 1797 to his death on March 26, 1831, Allen operated a station on the Underground Railway. This work was continued by Bethel Church until Emancipation. Bishop Allen was married to Sarah Bass Allen and was the father of six children - Richard Jr., James, John, Peter, Sarah and Ann.

Our Name

The AMEC, or African Methodist Episcopal Church, is Methodist in its beliefs and was founded nearly 200 years ago to give blacks their own place of worship. AMEC members hold to Bible based doctrines similar to those of other Christian denominations.

African. The word African means that the church was organized by people of African descent and heritage. It does not mean that the church was founded in Africa, or that it was for persons of African descent only. It simply means that those Americans who founded it were of African descent, and we proudly recognize this fact.

In the year 1787 Richard Allen, our founder, and a group of dark-skinned Americans of African descent were forced to organize themselves into a separate group for their own spiritual, social, educational and general growth and development. At that time the word Negro or colored had not yet come into general use in reference to those of us who are now called American Negroes. All of our ancestors of that day were referred to as Africans. This particular group of Americans of African descent, under the leadership of Richard Allen, constituted the first and founding members of our church.

Methodist. Our church is a member of the family of Methodist Churches. Richard Allen, our founder and first active bishop, felt that no religious group or denomination would suit the capacity of his people as well as Methodism did. He was impressed with its emphasis upon the plain and simple gospel which the unlearned could understand, and its orderly system of rules and regulations which the under-developed needed. He felt that Methodism had what we needed to encourage us to make progress, to worship God freely, and to fill every office which was available in church and in our total community.

Episcopal. The word “Episcopal” refers to the form of government under which our church operates. The episcopal form of government means that the chief executive and administrative officers of our denomination are our Bishops. Their authority is given to them by the General Conference. Stated briefly, their responsibilities are to oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of our church, including presiding over annual conferences, making pastoral appointments, ordaining deacons and elders, organizing missions, and generally promoting the interest of the denomination.

Church. The Christian Church is a community of people who believe in God and who have accepted Jesus Christ as the Guide and Master of their lives. We who make up the Christian Church believe that God, through Jesus Christ can transform individuals in such a way as to cause them to want to be like, think like, and act like Jesus in every area of their daily lives. We also believe that there is a divine power, referred to as the Holy Spirit, which enables the willing person to become a true and effective servant of God, as Jesus was a true and effective servant.

Jesus Christ is the spiritual head of the Christian Church. The AME denomination and the local church of which you are a member represent an organized group of Christian believers

who are studying, learning, growing, serving and further developing themselves into effective Christian servants. This is a part of what it means to be a Christian.

Our Mission

The mission of the AME Church is to minister to the social, spiritual, and physical development of all people.

The Church engages in carrying out the spirit of the original Free African Society, out of which the AME Church evolved: that is, to seek out and save the lost, and serve the needy through a continuing program of (1) preaching the gospel, (2) feeding the hungry, (3) clothing the naked, (4) housing the homeless, (5) cheering the fallen, (6) providing jobs for the jobless, (7) administering to the needs of those in prisons, hospitals, nursing homes, asylums and mental institutions, senior citizens' homes; caring for the sick, the shut-in, the mentally and socially disturbed, and (8) encouraging thrift and economic advancement.

Our Objective

In order to meet the needs of every level of the Connection and in every local church, the AME Church shall implement strategies to train all members in: (1) Christian discipleship, (2) Christian leadership, (3) current teaching methods and materials, (4) the history and significance of the AME Church, (5) God's biblical principles, and (6) social development to which all should be applied to daily living.

Our Emblem and Motto



The emblem displays characteristics that can be equated to a significant aspect of the African Methodist Episcopal doctrine and belief.

The shape of the emblem is in the form of a three- pointed shield. The three points are symbolic of the original Church motto, "God our Father, Christ our Redeemer, Man our Brother."

A new motto, "God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, the Holy Spirit Our Comforter, Humankind Our Family", was adopted at the 2008 General Conference in St. Louis, MO.

An anvil and cross occupy the center of the Emblem. The anvil represents the blacksmith shop in Philadelphia where the first AME Church was established and the cross represents the Church.

Our Responsibility

The AME Church believes in serving God and the world through Worship, Fellowship, Missions, Evangelism, Stewardship, Education, Publications, and Welfare. Our membership believes in:

- Discipleship - committing your life to Christ
- Witnessing - telling what Jesus has done for you
- Giving - supporting the work of the church
- Participating actively in church affairs

- Representing the church in daily activities and
- Personal Growth as a child of God

Our Structure

The African Methodist Episcopal Church is a connectional organization. Each local church is a part of the larger connection.

The Bishops are the Chief Officers of the Connectional Organization. They are elected for life by a majority vote of the General Conference, which meets every four years. Bishops are bound by the laws of the church to retire following their 75th birthday.

Presiding Elders are the assistants, like middle management, whom the Bishops appoint to supervise the preachers in a Presiding Elder's District. A Presiding Elder District is one portion of an Annual Conference, which in turn is one part of the Episcopal District over which a Bishop presides. In the Presiding Elder District, the appointed Presiding Elder meets with the local churches that comprise the District, at least once every three months for a Quarterly Conference. The Presiding Elder also presides over a District Conference and a Sunday School Convention in his or her District. At the end of an Annual Conference year, the Presiding Elder reports to the Bishop at the Annual Conference and makes recommendations for pastoral appointments.

Pastors receive a yearly appointment to a charge (church), on the recommendation of the Presiding Elder and with the approval and final appointment of the Bishop. The pastor is in full charge of the Church and is an ex-official member of all boards, organizations and clubs of that Church.

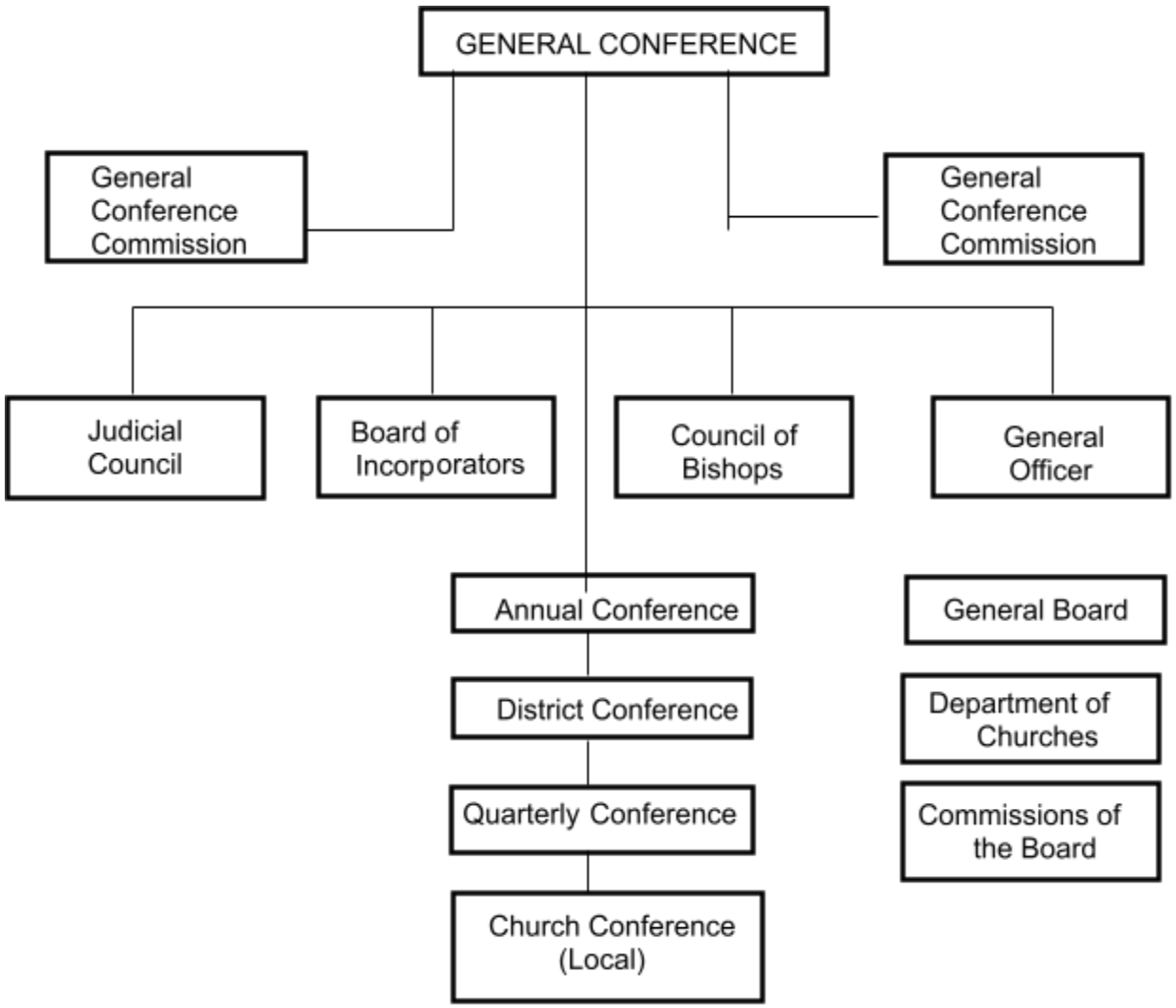
The Four Horsemen of the AME Church

The Four Horsemen of the AME Church are the four pillars upon which the Church was built. Their contributions were instrumental in the Church's development.



- **Richard Allen** - Founder and first Bishop of the AME Church.
- **Daniel A. Payne** – Sixth Bishop of the AME Church and the first to have formal theological seminary training. He is credited with establishing the Church's attention toward trained ministry.
- **Henry McNeal Turner** - Twelfth Bishop of the AME Church. Helped recruit colored soldiers for the U.S. Army in the Civil War. Was appointed Chaplain of Negro Troops in 1863 by President Lincoln and the first Chaplain of the regular U.S. Army by President Johnson.
    - Turner organized AME Churches all over the state of Georgia and West Africa and South Africa.
- **William Paul Quinn** - Fourth Bishop of the AME Church. Did monumental work as a great preacher and missionary: preaching, traveling and organizing churches in the "Western Mission" which included Missouri and Kentucky.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE AME CHURCH



The Annual Conference

The Annual Conference is the basic unit of the Connectional Church. It meets once a year to receive reports of Pastors, Presiding Elders, and Committees. It is composed of Ministerial Members, one Lay Member from each Pastoral Charge, and is presided over by the Episcopal Bishop. Some of the other duties of the Annual Conference are as follows:

1. Elect Ministerial Delegates to the General Conference.
2. Examine candidates for the Ministry. Admit and ordain those who qualify.
3. Assign Pastors of the charges.
4. Receive all funds for connectional purposes and send the same to the treasurer of Connectional Church.
5. Attend all other Connectional and Annual Conference business.

The District Conference

Just as each Episcopal District is divided into a number of Annual Conferences, each Annual Conference is divided into a number of Districts. Each of these districts is presided over by a Presiding Elder appointed by the Bishop of the Episcopal District.

The Presiding Elder's District is made up of a number of Churches of the Annual Conference. Whenever the Pastors of these Churches and delegates from these Churches meet at the call of the Presiding Elder, the meeting is called a District Conference. If the meeting is called to deal with Sunday School or Allen Christian Endeavor work, it is called Sunday School and A.C.E. Convention.

Quarterly Conference

One of the most important Conferences of the A.M.E. Church is the Quarterly Conference. It is in this Conference that the over-all plans and policies of the local Church are considered and determined. The Quarterly Conference is the supreme governing body of the local Church, and the means by which the local Church is tied to the Connectional Church. The Presiding Officer of the Quarterly Conference is the Presiding Elder. S/He is the only Officer present who may not be a member of that particular local Church. S/He is present and presides as a representative of the A.M.E. Church as a whole.

The Episcopal District

For convenience and administrative purposes, the AME Church as a whole is divided into areas called Episcopal Districts, and one Bishop is assigned to preside over each of these. Each Episcopal District is composed of a number of Annual Conferences.

Presiding Elders

The Presiding Elder is the official of the A.M.E. Connection charged with the responsibility of seeing that each local Church under his/her Supervision understands and complies with the policies and program of the Connection. The Bishop appoints the Presiding Elder.

The position of a Presiding Elder is administrative and advisory through the District Conference and Church School Convention: an in-service training for Pastors, Local Preachers, and Lay Workers.

We are a part of the 13th Episcopal district with
Bishop Jeffery B. Cooper, Sr. and
Supervisor, Rev. Joanne E. Williams-Cooper, M.D.

We are a part of the South Memphis District in West TN Conference with the
Presiding Elder, Rev. Hilda Taylor

A Geographical Overview of the 20 Episcopal Districts

The AME Church has about 2.5 million members in 20 Episcopal Districts with thousands of congregations in more than 39 countries in North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

District	Geographical Area
1st	Philadelphia, New Jersey, New York, New England, Delaware, Bermuda
2nd	Maryland, Washington, DC, Virginia, North Carolina
3rd	Ohio, West Virginia, West Pennsylvania
4th	Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Minnesota, Iowa Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan
5th	Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri
6th	Georgia
7th	South Carolina
8th	Mississippi, Louisiana
9th	Alabama
10th	Texas
11th	Bahamas, Florida
12th	Arkansas, Oklahoma
13th	Tennessee, Kentucky
14th	Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Cote D' Ivoire, Togo, Benin
15th	Cape, S.W.A. (Namibia), Kalahari, Eastern Cape, Queenstown, Angola
16th	South America, Caribbean, London
17th	Southeast Zimbabwe, Southwest Zambia, Northeast Zambia, Northwest Zambia, Zambezi, Congo Brazzaville, Katanga, Kananga, Kinshasa, Mbuji-mayi, Rwanda, Burundi
18th	Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Mozambique, Northeast Lesotho
19th	South African Provinces of Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal
20th	Malawi North, Malawi South, Zimbabwe, Southwest Zimbabwe, Central Zimbabwe

History of Greenwood AME Church

Greenwood Church originated as a brush arbor church north of Mulberry Road in either 1874 or 1878. A wood frame building which faced the east was constructed. At that time, Mulberry Road was a dirt road and the road to the church was a long and steep trail. Due to the difficulty in reaching the church grounds, the building was torn down in 1924 and the lumber was used to construct a new church at the current site of the Greenwood A.M.E. Church at 8005 Donnell Road, a more accessible location.

This photograph was taken at the dedication of a new brick Greenwood A.M.E. Church building in 1954. The church stewards and stewardesses have the responsibility of preparation of communion, which is served the first Sunday of each month. Note the distinctive hats worn by the members of Stewardesses Society.

The brick building, which still stands, replaced a wooden frame building, which had a steeple bell tower. The Greenwood Church is the historic church home of both the Strong and Stewart families.

Our Stewardship

Stewardship is the act of managing or directing our God-given resources and talents to advance God's kingdom. Every member of Bridge Street Church is encouraged to take seriously their responsibility to be good stewards by contributing to the ongoing functioning of the church through use of their spiritual gifts and their financial giving.

A steward is a keeper, not an owner. S/he handles that which rightfully belongs to another. S/he feels accountable personally for the careful protection and wise use of that which is entrusted to them, and handles the possessions of the owner with more caution and concern than they would if it were their own.

As Christians we are not owners of our earthly possessions; we are users and keepers of God's possessions. One thing we must always remember is that God is the giver of everything on this earth (Ps. 24:1; I Cor. 6:19,20). Whatever we have is a result of God's generosity and we must be a good manager of God's possessions and give an account of all God has entrusted in our hands. We have the responsibility to use all that God has entrusted to us for His glory and not our own.

The Tithe: Giving As God Requires

The Bible teaches tithing as the biblical principle for giving to God. The word tithe means tenth, or 10% of one's increase or income - the tenth part of anything that is devoted and given to God. Out of the 66 books in the Holy Scriptures, 34 of them deal in one way or another with the subject of giving and receiving. Out of 72 references to giving, 48 show God's unequivocal promise of His abundant blessings to the giver (Luke 6:38).

Tithes in the Old Testament:

- God taught Adam and Eve how to tithe in the beginning (Genesis 4:2-7).
- Tithing of Abraham (Genesis 14:17-20)
- Jacob's Tenth (Genesis 28:10-22)

- Levitical Laws to Israel (Leviticus 27:30-33)
- Heave Offering Given to Levites (Numbers 18:21-24)
- Hezekiah Restoring the tithes (II Chronicles 31: 2-12)
- Nehemiah and the tithes stored in the temple (Nehemiah 10:34-39)
- Malachi 3:6-12

Tithes and offerings did not cease under the New Covenant - Law and Grace:

- Religious Leaders (Matt 23:23)
- Two Mites (Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4)
- The Apostle Paul's Teachings (I Corinthians 9)
- The Lord ordained it (Matt 10:10, Luke 10:7-8)
- First Day of the Week (I Corinthians 16:1-2)
- Equality in giving (II Corinthians 8:14)
- It shows their faith in God

A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil, or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord (Leviticus 27:30). Tithing is a primary mechanism by which believers actively participate in building God's Kingdom on earth. Tithing also explicitly acknowledges God's ownership of all we possess, including our time, talent, and treasure. Church members are called to support the life and mission of the church of which they are a part with reasonable contributions proportionate to their income and circumstances. The act of claiming ownership over someone else's property is known as robbing. When we don't tithe, we rob God by claiming ownership over what is rightfully His. Consequently, it can bring the curse of poverty into our life (Malachi 3:8-9).

Below are some scriptures to guide you in your understanding of the tithe:

a. The plan of the tithe (Matt. 23:23; I Cor. 16:2)
b. The purpose of the tithe (Acts 20:35)
c. The plea for the tithe (Mal. 3:10)
d. The principle of tithe and offering (Mal. 3:8)

The Tithe vs. The Offering

"Each person should give what they have decided in their heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7). An offering assumes that we are already fulfilling the basic expectation of supporting the church through the tithe. Therefore, an offering is anything given in addition to the tithe.

The law of tithing is given not so much to benefit the Church financially as much as it is to spiritually bless the tither. Tithing is about faith, not just money. God is not interested in how many robes or TV screens your 10% can purchase. He is interested in the condition of your heart and your willingness to do His will. By giving a regular tithe, we meet the physical needs of the Church so it can feed the spiritual needs of the community (2 Cor. 8:7).

Many congregants are unaware of the vast financial resources it takes to do mission work, organize ministries, or manage God's house (e.g. maintaining water, heat, electricity, custodial and administrative staff, office and janitorial supplies, liability, property and fire insurance, etc). Without the tithe, the church would be unable to support those in need, and it would be unable to meet your need to have the church open during the week and on weekends to host community events.

Your Giving Envelopes + Envelope Number

All new members are assigned envelope numbers. Your envelope number is important and it should be used when you are making donations to the church for your tithe and your offering. At the end of the year, all members are provided a statement of their giving for tax purposes.

There are several categories on the envelope that you should be aware of:

- **General Offering** – is an amount given by a non-tither or non-member toward the support of the church. These members, though consistent givers (that is, they give on a consistent basis less than 10% of their income) are considered proportional givers, not tithers.

- **Class Dues** – in a traditional Methodist Church would support the Pastor's temporal needs. At Greenwood class dues are used to support church-wide fellowships and pastoral initiatives organized to connect congregants with God and each other.

- **Other** - such as special fundraising campaigns allow donors to designate the cause for which they would like to contribute.

GET INVOLVED

There are many ways for you to get involved in the life of your new church! Listed below are some ministries that you may want to consider serving in.

Ministry	**Ministry Leader**	**Ministry Focus**
Lay Organization		Fellowship & Fundraising
Prayer Ministry	Sis. Kather Hayes	Intercede in prayer
Steward Board	Bro. Joseph Perkins	Tends to spiritual and economic wellness of church/members
Stewardess Board	Sis. Gwen Smith	Prepare the sacraments
Sunday School	Bro. Joseph Perkins, Sr.	Provide Christian Education
Trustee Board	Bro. Larry Strong	Manages and cares for facilities
Choir and Band	Bro. Larry Strong	Provide music during services
Women Missionary Society	Sis. Kather Hayes	Mission Work local and abroad
Young People's Department	Sis. Kinn Perkins	Ministry to those 2-26
Usher Board	Sis. Ruthie Wilborn	Usher during services; Fellowship
Greens at Greenwood/Garden	Sis. Ella Fleming	Trains in gardening and food giveaway
Children's & Youth Church	Sis. Leslie Johnson	Provide age appropriate Christian Education to young people

Our Weekly Schedule

Worship Services, Meetings & Activities

DAY	MEETING TIME / NAME OF MINISTRY	LOCATION
SUNDAY	9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (1st Sunday/communion) **After 10:00a.m. Service** Choir Rehearsal (Every Sunday after service) Women's Missionary Society Meeting (3rd Sunday after service) Official Board Meeting (4th Sunday after service)	Sanctuary Sanctuary Sanctuary Fellowship Hall
MONDAY	7:00 p.m. Joint Steward Meeting (2nd Monday)	Fellowship Hall
TUESDAY	6:00 p.m. Steward Board Meeting (2nd Tuesday)	Zoom
WEDNESDAY	6:00 p.m. Stewardship & Finance Mtg (1st Wednesday) 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Meeting (4th Wednesday)	Fellowship Hall Zoom
THURSDAY	6:00 p.m. Intercessory Prayer (Weekly) 6:30 p.m. Virtual Bible Study (Weekly)	Zoom
SATURDAY	10:00 a.m. Joint Steward/Trustee Meeting (3rd Saturday, Quarterly)	Fellowship Hall

New Member Review

Test your knowledge about your faith!

1. **List (3) functions of the class leader.**

2. **List (3) instances when you should contact your class leader.**

3. **List (2) ways you can connect with your church.**

4. **List (2) of Bridge Street's Core Values.**

5. **What is salvation?**

6. **What does one have to do to be saved?** (*Hint*: Read Romans 10:9,10)

7. **Why is it important to be saved?**

_____

_____

_____

8. **How many commandments are there?_____**

9. **Why are the commandments important?**

_____

_____

_____

10. **How many Articles of Religion are there?_____**

11. **What is the significance of the Articles of Religion?**

_____

_____

_____

12. **Why is the Apostles' Creed important to our faith walk?**

_____

_____

_____

13. **Why is prayer crucial to the life of the believer?**

_____

_____

_____

14. How many books make up the bible?_____

a. **How many books are in the Old Testament?_____**
b. **How many books are in the New Testament?_____**

15. What are the (2) sacraments observed by Methodists?

_____

_____

16. Who is the founder of the AME Church?_____

17. What is the Mission of the AME Church?

_____

_____

_____

18. What is the Motto of the AME Church?_____

_____

19. How many Episcopal Districts comprise the AME Church?_____

20. When was Greenwood AME Church organized?_____

21. Who is the Pastor of Greenwood AME Church?_____

22. What (3) ways can we exercise our stewardship?

_____

_____

_____

23. Why should believers tithe?

_____

_____

_____

USING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

...to grow your church

God calls believers into fellowship with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Believers are admonished to assemble together and encourage each other as we work diligently to spread the good news of the gospel. Every member is therefore responsible for not only spending time in prayer seeking God's direction and purpose for their life and the use of their spiritual gifts and talents, but members also have a responsibility to identify ministries within the church that are a good fit with their gifts and talents.

When we use our gifts and talents to serve God, we not only bring glory to God's name, but we equip the body with the tools necessary to live a more fulfilling life in Christ (Read Ephesians 4:11-16; Romans 12:48; I Corinthians 12: 4-8, 27-31; and I Corinthians 14:12).

WHERE WILL YOU SERVE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST SO THAT YOUR GIFTS AND TALENTS CAN GLORIFY GOD?

Worship Arts Ministry

- ☐ Choir
- ☐ Musician/Band
- ☐ Creative Arts/Skits
- ☐ Liturgical Dance Ministry

Auxiliaries/Commissions

- ☐ Women's Missionary Society
- ☐ Lay Organization
- ☐ Young Peoples Division
- ☐ Stewardess Board
- ☐ Sons of Allen
- ☐ Richard Allen Young Adult Council

Ministries

- ☐ Class Leader Ministry
- ☐ Garden Ministry
- ☐ Media Ministry
- ☐ Prayer Ministry
- ☐ Ushers Ministry
- ☐ Bible Study

Service Ministries

- ☐ Greens@Greenwood
- ☐ Pastor's Aide Ministry

Christian Education

- ☐ Christian Education Department
- ☐ Sunday School

YOUR NAME:_____

EMAIL ADDRESS:_____

PHONE NUMBER:_____

Please complete this form and return it to Sis. Velma Smith, Class Leaders Coordinator

Welcome to GREENWOOD

Your New Church Home!

www.GreenwoodAMEChurch.com

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are
taken from the NRSV Bible