

Mount Olive
African Methodist Episcopal Church
4630 Old State Rd
Holly Hill, South Carolina 29059
(803) 496-3700

The Reverend Dr. Malcolm O. Simpson, Pastor

MEMBER'S HANDBOOK



AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
DEEPEN YOUR FAITH

Rev. Dr. Malcolm O. Simpson, Pastor

MINISTERIAL STAFF

REV. ELOUISE B. GLADDEN, ASSOCIATE
REV. LINDA K. SUMTER, ASSOCIATE

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

SIS. JOE ANN BROWN, **ASST. STEWARD PRO-TEM**
SIS. CYNTHIA D. CLARK
SIS. D'MAJAH GATERS
BRO. JOSEPH GREENE
SIS. SHASTITY S. HARLEY, **SECRETARY**
BRO. DONALD HARMON, **STEWARD PRO-TEM**
SIS. BERNICE HOWELL
SIS. MARY ANN KEITT
SIS. CANICA NELSON
BRO. JOHN VOID JR.
SIS. SHARON WASHINGTON
SIS. PRISCILLA WITHERSPOON
SIS. MARY S. WILLIAMS
BRO. SAMUEL BROWN, **TRUSTEE PRO-TEM**
BRO. SAM FOGLE, **ASST. TRUSTEE PRO-TEM**

A Hearty Welcome!

We praise and thank God that you have taken interest in Mount Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church! We believe that it is within God's plan that we should come to know you and become part of your life as you also become part of ours. The Mount Olive African Methodist Church Family seeks to be a home of all God's people coming from all nationalities, cultures, and languages.

It is our prayer that you will grow to know God and experience his closeness in our worship service, especially through inspiring relevant messages from the Word of God. If you have not already come to know and experience God in such a close way, we pray that you will come to know him at Mt. Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church. As pastor of this great cloud of witnesses of our Zion, it is my desire to provide you with this new membership handbook to help you become a member that is thoroughly prepared to enjoy the benefits of full membership in our local and global church.

By joining Mount Olive African Methodist Church, you have joined one big family of God's people who enjoy life as a community and enjoys fellowship with God and one another. We are a caring church that seeks to remain true to the firm foundations of the Christian church, as outlined in Acts 2, where we take inspiration for our ministry. In short, you will find us to be a God centered, caring community of individuals who are excited about having the opportunity to extend to you the same love, hope, and joy we have received from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

WELCOME TO MT. OLIVE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH! I look forward to serving you and your family as your Pastor!

In Christian Love and Fellowship,

Malcolm O. Simpson

Rev. Dr. Malcolm O. Simpson

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Church History Overview

Mt. Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church 1872-2024

Mount Olive AME Church, is located in the Providence Community, near the town of Holly Hill, SC. Although written records weren't able to be recorded, our ancestors held closely the rich history of our church dating back to its inception in 1872. Most notably, Mother Cora Fogle who grew up in Mt. Olive and was blessed to see the second construction of our church. In addition, Mr. Thomas "Bubba" Hampton could vividly recall the separation of Mt. Olive AME from Felderville and Friendship AME Churches to establish its presence as a place of worship and school.

In 1918 the church was rebuilt under the leadership of Rev. J.L. Player and 50 years later, Mt. Olive AME Church, originally a circuit church, became a station church at the Annual Conference. In 1977, under the leadership of Rev. J. Bookard, the third and current building was constructed. With this construction and progressive leadership for years to come, Mt. Olive AME Church flourished with the purchase of land for future additions. In 1985, these additions would manifest under the leadership of the Rev. William Hammond with the addition of the choir loft and educational building. Also, during this time, Mother Flossie Gilmore was ordained as the church's first Deaconess and Rev. Elizabeth DuPree became the church's first Ordained Itinerant Elder.

Continuing the work of kingdom building, under the leadership of Rev. Moses Wilson, we paid off previous debt and completed additional renovations, including purchasing additional land, all while remaining debt free! In 2000, Rev. Dr. Albert Jones, continued the growth with additional church renovations, the purchase of additional land and the rebirth of Bible Study. With a growth in tithing and membership, as Rev. Dr. Frank Maddox took the helm, he re-established the Deaconess Board and championed various initiatives such as Love Feast, Children's Ministry, Harvest Hope Food, and Men and Women of Mt. Olive. He also led our very first Brush Arbour service. As we moved forward under the leadership of Rev. Isaac Grant, we were able to eliminate debt, and he led Mt. Olive AME Church during the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Coming in, during the mist of the Pandemic, our current Pastor, Rev. Dr. Malcolm O. Simpson sought to establish stability in the era of this new normal. Revamping our virtual platform was vital to worship service; therefore, he spearheaded numerous technology initiatives, including the installation of a new sound system and establishing Givelify as our new online giving platform. In addition, we have seen growth in new members and returning members and among our youth. In keeping up with the growth of the church, Pastor Simpson has given us the vision of establishing our Family Life Center on the property that so many before us has worked hard to secure.

We are thankful for the legacy of Mt. Olive AME Church and for those men and women of the Clergy who accepted the call of ministry including the late Rev. Elizabeth DuPree, Bishop Darrin Clinton, Rev. Patrick Stephens, Rev. Rommie Williams, Rev. Linda Sumter, Rev. Elouise Gladden, and Rev. Joshua Howell. On a final note, we are indebted to so many people for this great church. We are thankful to God for his grace and mercy, our rich history, and for the accomplishments of the past, present, and those to come!

Pastors that served:

Rev. J. L. Player
Rev. Hemmingway
Rev. Williams
Rev. Wilson
Rev. Harmon
Rev. Nelson
Rev. Gallow Shaw Rev. Taylor
Rev. Hampton Rev. Bennett - 1968
Rev. Jessie Bookard (1968-1982)
Rev. Isaiah Felder (1982-1985)
Rev. William Hammond (1985-1992)
Rev. Moses J. Wilson (1992-2000)
Rev. Dr. Albert Jones (2000-2010)
Rev. Dr. Frank Maddox (2010-2013)
Rev. Isaac Grant (2013- 2020)
Rev. Dr. Malcolm O. Simpson (2020-present)



STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE COMMISSION

STEWARDSHIP is the act of managing or directing our God-given resources and talents to advance His kingdom. Every member is encouraged to take seriously his or her responsibility to contribute to the life of the Church both in serving and in giving. The Bible teaches us to support God's work from the financial blessings that God provides to us. While the Bible makes it clear that the size of one's gift does not determine its worth or importance, it is clear that where our hearts are our treasures will be also.

The Stewardship and Finance Commission is pleased to introduce you to the envelope system of our church. These envelopes are for your tithes and offerings.

These funds are used to provide salaries to the pastor and other church personnel, such as the musicians and sexton. Church funds are also used to maintain church expenses, such as gas and electricity, property insurance and supplies. Besides the different budgetary obligations of the church, the finances support the ministries of the church.

- **TITHES** - 10% of your income to support the operating budget of the Church.

GOD'S MONEY PLAN

Every dollar = 10 dimes

First dime is God's, nine for you.

God blesses the nine so they go farther than 10!

- **GENERAL [PLEDGE] OFFERING** - Offering of any size to support Church operations.
- **BENEVOLENT OFFERING** – In support of the charitable funds of the church, for people in crisis and for people in need.
- **MORTGAGE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN** – In support of payment of the mortgage.

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house. Test Me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." Malachi 3:10-12:

God says, "**Test me.**"

WHY DO WE GIVE?

1. You are a steward, not an owner.
2. Part of worship to God/our response of gratitude to God
3. Acknowledges and honors God as our Source
4. Plant and receive harvest -- reaches people & you receive part of the reward
5. Matt. 6:20 *"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."*
6. Keeps our hearts free from the love of money.

SAMPLE TITHE CHART

Amount	Tithe (10%)	Amount	Tithe (10%)
\$20.00	\$2.00	16.00	1.60
19.00	1.90	15.00	1.50
18.00	1.80	10.00	1.00
17.00	1.70	5.00	.50

MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

To develop/provide a comprehensive and unified program of Christian Education which leads to a knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the values set forth in the Holy Scriptures, the Christian Religion, the Christian Church Universal, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. New Members and Discipleship training are elements of this ministry. It shall work diligently to encourage members to implement and apply these values to their daily living.

CLASS LEADERS MINISTRY

To seek the power of godliness by uniting as members to pray together, meet together, watch over probationers; report those who are sick, and collect for the support of the Gospel.

EVANGELISM MINISTRY

To encourage and organize for church growth; to bring salvation and hope to the lost; to assist the Pastor in leading all people to accept our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through the guiding power of the Holy Spirit.

HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

To warmly greet and welcome visitors to our church while worshipping and experiencing the presence of God.

LAY ORGANIZATION

To stimulate and educate the laity in the total program of the church by creating opportunities to learn our history, study the Discipline, teach and practice stewardship, and encourage financial support of the Church's program.

LITURGICAL DANCE & HANDS OF PRAISE MINISTRY

To present the gospel through dance, mime, and flag ministry in a manner that draws unbelievers and prompts Christians to praise God. The ministry is open to all, regardless of age or gender.

MUSIC MINISTRY

The music ministry serves two functions: 1) To enhance all aspects of worship and for the preservation of our great African American religious musical heritage. 2) To present the gospel in music form in a manner that draws unbelievers and prompts Christians to praise, listen, examine, accept, serve, evangelize, give and depend on Jesus.

PASTOR'S AIDE MINISTRY

To provide support to the Pastor and the first family through special programs. To acknowledge first family special occasions (i.e. birthdays, anniversaries, graduation, etc.).

SONS OF ALLEN

To provide a fellowship in which men can enhance their sense of belonging to the Church, gain understanding and appreciation as they travel along their Christian journey through prayer and bible study.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

To help people grow in the knowledge and experience of God through continual training, as well as individual and collective mission work and advocate for human rights.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

To provide an opportunity/environment for women between the ages of 18-40 to grow spiritually and utilize their gifts to make a difference within their local society, church and community.

YOUNG PEOPLES DEPARTMENT OF THE WMS (YPD)

The mission of the YPD is to serve as tool for the development of healthy Christian leadership skills for youth.

DID YOU KNOW???????

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL FOUNDERS OF THE A. M. E. CHURCH

DANIEL COKER



1780-1846

Name: Given Name---Isaac Wright Later---Daniel Coker

Birthplace: Baltimore County MD

Status: Free Person of Color

Occupation/Training: Minister, Teacher

Abolitionist Involvement: Though born free, his father was a slave, and mother was a white indentured servant. He was still treated as a slave though his mother was not a slave. As a youth, he escaped and went to New York, and changed his name to Daniel Coker. He returned secretly to Maryland and became a preacher. He was able to have assistance from friend who helped him purchase his freedom. Once free he began openly to speak out against the institution of slavery. He taught in the African School of the Sharp Street Methodist Church, and later he taught at the African School of the Bethel African School in Baltimore. He was leader in the black Methodist community, and advocated the establishment of the AME Church, and attended the 1816 conference in Philadelphia which resulted in the establishment of the AME denomination. **HE WAS ELECTED THE FIRST BISHOP OF THE AME CHURCH, BUT DECLINED, AND RICHARD ALLEN EMERGED AS THE FIRST BISHOP INSTEAD.**

He was a spokesperson and leader of the Free Black community in Maryland, and had influence in public and church affiliated sectors. For one year, he was expelled from the Church for unknown reasons. He was restored to his ministerial position a year later. He left America partly funded by the Maryland Colonization Society, moving to Liberia, then later Sierra Leone. He died in Sierra Leone in 1846.

Family: Mother--Susan Coker. Gather Edward Wright

Place of Death: Sierra Leone, West Africa

Publications: *A Dialogue Between a Virginian and an African Minister* 1810, *Journal of Daniel Coker*....1820

<http://www.genealogyforum.rootsweb.com/gfaol/resource/AfricanAm/Coker.htm>

(.... Rev. Daniel Coker was declared the Bishop-elect on the 9th of April, 1816. On the 10th he resigned, or rather, declined the office, and Rev. Richard Allen was chosen in his stead, and was therefore consecrated the Bishop of the A. M. E. Church on the 11th of April, 1816.

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/payne/payne.html#p13>)

ABOUT US - OUR HISTORY

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The AMEC grew out of the Free African Society (FAS) which **RICHARD ALLEN**, Absalom Jones, and others established in Philadelphia in 1787. When officials at St. George's MEC pulled blacks off their knees while praying, FAS members discovered just how far American Methodists would go to enforce racial discrimination against African Americans. Hence, these members of St. George's made plans to transform their mutual aid society into an African congregation. Although most wanted to affiliate with the Protestant Episcopal Church, Allen led a small group who resolved to remain Methodists. In 1794 Bethel AME was dedicated with Allen as pastor. To establish Bethel's independence from interfering white Methodists, Allen, a former Delaware slave, successfully sued in the Pennsylvania courts in 1807 and 1815 for the right of his congregation to exist as an independent institution. Because black Methodists in other middle Atlantic communities encountered racism and desired religious autonomy, Allen called them to meet in Philadelphia to form a new Wesleyan denomination, the AME.

Although largely overlooked, **SARA BASS ALLEN**, the second wife of AME Church founder Richard Allen, was characterized by those who knew her as "a pillar [of] the building, a mother in Israel" whose work enabled Richard Allen and his fellow ministers to carry on their work.



Sara was born into slavery in 1764 in Virginia's Isle of Wight County, but was brought to Philadelphia when she was eight years old. Little is known about her early life, but by 1800 she had obtained her freedom.

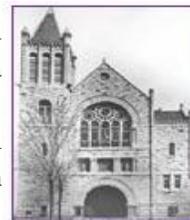
She met Allen in 1800, and they were married within a year. Their first child, Richard Jr., was born the following year, and five others followed: James, John, Peter, Sara and Ann.

Sara's primary work consisted in managing the Allen household and raising the children, but she also actively supported Allen's activism and assisted in the work of the AME Church. With her husband, Sara assisted runaway slaves, hiding, feeding and clothing them in their home and in the church. The bedraggled appearance of the ministers at the AME Church's first annual conference inspired her to organize the Daughters of Conference, officially designated in 1827. These AME women mended the garments of the ministers, gave them food, and provided them with the material support they needed to survive. The work of the Daughters of Conference continued long after Sara's death.

When Richard died in 1831, he had provided well enough for his family that unlike most widows, Sara could afford not to seek employment. Sara Allen died on July 16, 1849 in the home of her youngest daughter, Ann. She was interred beside her husband in a tomb in the lower level of Mother Bethel Church.



The geographical spread of the AMEC prior to the Civil War was mainly restricted to the Northeast and Midwest. Major congregations were established in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington, DC, Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, and other large Blacksmith's Shop cities. Numerous northern communities also gained a substantial AME presence. Remarkably, the slave states of Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, Louisiana, and, for a few years, South Carolina, became additional locations for AME congregations. The denomination reached the Pacific Coast in the early 1850's with churches in Mother Bethel Church Stockton, Sacramento, San Francisco, and other places in California. Moreover, Bishop Morris Brown established the Canada Annual Conference.



The most significant era of denominational development occurred during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Oftentimes, with the permission of Union army officials AME clergy moved into the states of the collapsing Confederacy to pull newly freed slaves into their denomination. "I Seek My Brethren," the title of an often repeated sermon that Theophilus G. Steward preached in South Carolina, became a clarion call to evangelize fellow blacks in Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Texas, and many other parts of the south. Hence, in 1880 AME membership reached 400,000 because of its rapid spread below the Mason-Dixon Line. When Bishop Henry M. Turner pushed African Methodism across the Atlantic into Liberia and Sierra Leone in 1891 and into South Africa in 1896, the AME now laid claim to adherents on two continents.

While the AME is doctrinally Methodist, clergy, scholars, and lay persons have written important works which demonstrate the distinctive theology and praxis which have defined this Wesleyan body. Bishop Benjamin W. Arnett, in an address to the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions, reminded the audience of the presence of blacks in the formation of Christianity. Bishop Benjamin T. Tanner wrote in 1895 in *The Color of Solomon – What?* That biblical scholar wrongly portrayed the son of David as a white man. In the post-civil rights era theologians James H. Cone, Cecil W. Cone, and Jacqueline Grant who came out of the AME tradition critiqued Euro-centric Christianity and African American churches for their shortcomings in fully impacting the plight of those oppressed by racism, sexism, and economic disadvantage.

In the 1990s, the AME included over 2,000,000 members, 8000 ministers, and 7000 congregations in more than 30 nations in North and South America, Africa, and Europe. Twenty bishops and 12 general officers comprised the leadership of the denomination.

ABOUT US – OUR NAME

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.

The church's roots are of the family of **METHODIST** churches. Methodism provides an orderly system of rules and regulations and places emphasis on a plain and simple gospel.

EPISCOPAL refers to the form of government under which the church operates. The chief executive and administrative officers of the African Methodist Episcopal denomination are the Bishops of the church.

THE MISSION

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

THE VISION

At every level of the Connection and in every local church, the AME Church shall engage 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 to serve the needy. It is also the duty of the Church to continue to encourage all members to become involved in all aspects of church training.

THE PURPOSES

The ultimate purposes are: (1) make available God's biblical principles, (2) spread Christ's liberating gospel, and (3) provide continuing programs which will enhance the entire social development of all people.

THE 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 MOTTO

“God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, the Holy Spirit Our Comforter, Humankind Our Family”

Bishop Daniel A. Payne proposed to the 1856 General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church convening in Cincinnati, Ohio that the episcopal seal should include the denominational creedal statement, *God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, Man Our Brother*. This declaration of A.M.E. faith identity became the denominational motto until 1908, when a surge of Pentecostalism in 1906 in Los Angeles at the Azusa Street mission, the former site of First A.M.E. Church, convinced African Methodists to alter the motto. Hence, the 1908 General Conference meeting in Norfolk, Virginia placed on the published minutes, *God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, the Holy Ghost Our Comforter, Man Our Brother*.

The 1912 General Conference convening in Kansas City, Missouri retained the altered statement of A.M.E. belief. The centennial General Conference of 1916 meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, however, made no reference to new the A.M.E. motto, and since that time Bishop Payne's original formulation of the motto appeared on all denominational documents and published materials.

At the 2008 General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri an inclusive motto was adopted and now declares *God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, the Holy Spirit Our Comforter, Humankind Our Family*. The evolution of our motto demonstrates that African Methodists engage in ongoing assessments of our theology and how God speaks to us in changing circumstances.

OUR BELIEFS

The Motto "***GOD OUR FATHER, CHRIST OUR REDEEMER, THE HOLY SPIRIT OUR COMFORTER, HUMANKIND OUR FAMILY***" is a great summary of what the African Methodist Episcopal Church believes.

Also known as the A.M.E. Church for short, the denomination is Methodist in terms of its basic doctrine and order of worship. It was born, through adversity, of the Methodist church and to this day does not differ in any major way from what all Methodists believe. The split from the main branch of the Methodist Church was not a result of doctrinal differences but rather the result of a time period that was marked by man's intolerance of his fellow man, based on the color of his skin. It was a time of slavery, oppression and the dehumanization of people of African descent and many of these un-Christian practices were brought into the church, forcing Richard Allen and a group of fellow worshippers of color to form a splinter denomination of the Methodist Church. To find the basic foundations of the beliefs of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, you need look no further than The Apostles' Creed and The Twenty Five Articles of Religion:

APOSTLE'S 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 Spirit, 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 Spirit, the

Church Universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.
Amen.

ARTICLES OF OUR FAITH

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; the 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.

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.

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.

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.

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	The First Book of Chronicles
Exodus	The Second Book of Chronicles
Leviticus	The Book of Ezra
Numbers	The Book of Nehemiah
Deuteronomy	The Book of Esther
Joshua	The Book of Job
Judges	The Book of Psalms
Ruth	The Proverbs
The First Book of Samuel	Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher
The Second Book of Samuel	Cantica, or Songs of Solomon
The First Book of Kings	Four Prophets, the Greater
The Second Book of Kings	Twelve Prophets, the Lesser

All the books of the New Testament are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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."

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 by those 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.

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.

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.

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.

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 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.

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.

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.

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 administered to all Christians alike.

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.

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.

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 been always 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.

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.

[1] 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.

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.

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.

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 upon the General Conference nearest 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.



1) THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

The General Conference is the supreme body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is composed of the Bishops, as ex-officio presidents, according to the rank of election, and an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates, elected by each of the Annual Conferences and the Lay Electoral Colleges of the Annual Conferences. Other ex-officio members are: the General Officers, College Presidents, Deans/Presidents of Theological Seminaries; Chaplains in the Regular Armed Forces of the U.S.A. The General Conference meets quadrennially (every four years), but may have extra sessions in certain emergencies.

2) COUNCIL OF BISHOPS

The Council of Bishops is the Executive Branch of the Connectional Church. It has the general oversight of the Church during the interim of General Conferences. The Council of Bishops shall meet annually at such time and place as the majority of the Council shall determine and also at such other times as may be deemed necessary in the discharging its responsibility as the Executive Branch of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The Council of Bishops shall hold at least two public sessions at each annual meeting. At the first, complaints and petitions against a Bishop shall be heard, at the second, the decisions of the Council shall be made public. All decisions shall be in writing.

3) BOARD OF INCORPORATORS

The Board of Incorporators, also known as the General Board of Trustees, has the supervision, In Trust, of all Connectional property of the Church and is vested with authority to act in behalf of the Connectional Church wherever necessary.

4) THE GENERAL BOARD

The General Board is in many respects the administrative body and is comprised of various departmental Commissions made up of the respective Executive-Director, the General Secretary of the AME Church, the Chief Financial Officer, the members of the various Commissions, and one Bishop as presiding officer with the other Bishops associating.

5) JUDICIAL COUNCIL

The Judicial Council is the highest judicatory body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is an appellate court, elected by the General Conference, and is amenable to it.

STEWARDS

Composition

- a) The pastor appointed by the presiding bishop to the local church shall be the chairperson of the Board of Stewards. The pastor may appoint a chairperson pro tem to act in his or her absence. All business conducted in his or her absence shall be subject to veto by the pastor.
- b) The number of stewards for each church shall be not fewer than three (3) nor more than nineteen (19).
- c) The pastor in charge shall nominate the number of stewards needed for the mission, circuit, or station and shall submit them to the Quarterly Conference, which shall confirm them or, if it sees fit, reject them.
- d) The stewards so nominated and confirmed shall serve for a term of one year. The same person(s) may be nominated annually.
- e) To be qualified for this office, one must be of solid piety, know and love the Word of God, the African Methodist Episcopal Church doctrine, and *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. He or she must be fruitful and of good natural or acquired ability to transact the spiritual and temporal business of the church. Each person shall have been a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for at least two (2) years, except in case of the establishment of a new congregation.
- f) There shall be appointed a Junior Board of Stewards that shall function under the direction of the pastor and Senior Board of Stewards.
- g) There shall be a training course for prospective stewards under the supervision of the pastor and senior stewards.

The Duties of Stewards

- a) They shall make an exact account of all money or other provisions collected for the support of the pastor of the mission, circuit or station.
- b) b) The salary of a full-time minister shall be negotiated by the pastor and the steward board. The negotiated salary and benefit package shall be commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of the local congregation. The following benefits apply to those ministers who are full-time servants of the church. They shall be adhered to per *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* and open for negotiation in other cases. The benefits include, but are not limited to: pension or retirement, insurance(s): health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance; self-employment tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel; connectional, episcopal district, conference, inner parish, and all other related official duties.
- c) They shall seek the needy and distressed in order to relieve and comfort them.
- d) They shall make accurate reports of every expenditure of money, whether to the pastor, church, sick or poor.
- e) They shall attend the Quarterly Conference of their circuit or station to give advice, if asked, in planning for the circuit or station. They shall attend committee meetings for the disbursing of money to churches and give counsel in matters of arbitration.
- f) They shall write circular letters to societies of a circuit when occasion requires to let them know the state of temporal concern at the last Quarterly Meeting to urge them to be more liberal in their contributions.
- g) They shall register all baptisms, marriages and deaths within the congregation.
- h) They shall provide the implements and elements for the Holy Communion.

- i) The Steward Board of each local church in the third quarter of each conference year shall conduct a survey of the membership of the church with the purpose of determining to what extent each member of the church has supported the church financially, attended the regular means of grace, and supported the various benevolent enterprises of the church. The survey shall contain date, name and address, date of birth, active, inactive, probation, student, left with certificate, left without certificate, deceased and class number.
- j) The Steward Board shall investigate all members on the church roll and submit its findings to the Official Board for approval. The Certified Membership Roll shall be forwarded to the Fourth Annual Conference for submittal to the Annual Conference. Each Annual Conference shall forward all Certified Membership Rolls to the General Church Secretary.
- k) They shall be subject to the bishops, elders, deacons, traveling ministers in their circuit or station.

The Accountability of Stewards

- a) The stewards shall be accountable to the Quarterly Conference of their circuit or station, which shall have the power to remove them when they fail or refuse to do their duties.
- b) In the interim of the Quarterly Conference, the minister in charge shall have power to suspend a steward who refuses, neglects or fails to discharge his or her duty, and to fill the vacancy until the next meeting of the Quarterly Conference, which shall dispose of the case.
- c) The Board of Stewards shall have an appropriately labeled church record book which shall contain the registration of all baptisms, marriages, births, deaths, probationers, and full members.
- d) The minister in charge of the circuits and stations shall see that all of these provisions are enforced.

(The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church 2012, Part IV, Section II, p.61-63)

TRUSTEES

The number of trustees of each mission, circuit or station shall not be fewer than three, nor more than nineteen.

Qualifications

Each person to be elected as a trustee shall be eighteen (18) years of age or over and shall be instructed in the duties and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees of the local church. The training shall be completed within sixty (60) days after the election, or prior to the appropriate Quarterly Conference, whichever comes first. All trustees must attend at least three training sessions. A Certificate of Confirmation shall be given to each successful student, to be presented at the appropriate Quarterly Conference, signed by the instructor appointed by the pastor. The nominee shall have been a member of a local church at least six (6) months and a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for not less than two (2) years, except in case of missions or new work. No person who is not a member in good and regular standing in our Church shall be eligible to be elected a trustee.

Mode of Election

- a) Whenever the law of the land requires a specific mode of election, the mode shall be observed in electing trustees.
- b) When the civil law does not intervene, the trustees shall be elected annually by the members of the church.
- c) The minister in charge shall appoint the time and place for holding the election and give notice of the same from the pulpit at least ten days, including two consecutive Sundays, previous to the time of election.
- d) The minister at the meeting for election shall nominate twice the number of persons to be elected. Said persons shall have given consent in writing for their names to be placed for nomination.
- e) Every member of the church eighteen (18) years of age or older and in full communion has the right to vote for the nominees at the election meeting.
- f) No officer, member or person shall interfere with the election of trustees or attempt to disturb or prevent the pastor from holding the election. Those in violation of this law are subject to expulsion from membership.

The Chairperson of the Board

- a) The minister in charge shall be chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the minister's signature shall be necessary to make the acts of the trustees legal.
- b) If the Chairperson of the Board is at any time unable to be present at a meeting, he or she shall appoint a chairperson pro tem, whose signature also shall be legal.

Duties of Trustees

- a) The trustees shall manage all the temporal concerns of the church not otherwise provided for and shall have a treasurer elected by the Board.
- b) They shall guard for the Connection all real estate, churches, parsonages, schools, and any other property obtained by the local church.
- c) They shall make improvements upon the property or real estate when authorized to do so by a majority of the legal members of the church.
- d) They shall secure, by purchase or hire, a house for the pastor's family and also comfortably furnish it. In lieu of this arrangement, the pastor may be given a housing allowance.
- e) They shall pay the moving expenses of the pastor and family from their previous assignment.

Order for Improvement

- a) Whenever improvements are to be made, the pastor in charge shall call together in a Church Conference the voting members of the church, with a majority vote being necessary for the improvements to be authorized.
- b) When a Church Conference has been properly called and a majority of the legal voters of the church are not present, the majority vote of those present shall be considered legal.

Amenable to Quarterly Conference

- a) The trustees shall be members of the Quarterly Conference and shall be answerable to that body for their official conduct. The trustees shall make a report of all receipts and expenditures during the quarter to the Quarterly Conference.
- b) The trustees shall not in any manner obstruct or interfere in any mission, circuit, or station. They shall not prevent or attempt to prevent the bishop, or ministers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church from preaching, expounding God's Holy Word, or serving as pastor. They shall not prevent or attempt the use of the property for religious services or proper activities held from time to time which are recognized by the Annual or General Conference, or by the duly appointed presiding bishop under whose jurisdiction the pastor in charge is stationed.

Effects of Expulsion

Any trustee ceasing to be a member of the denomination, by reason of expulsion or otherwise, shall immediately cease to be a trustee except in cases of debt for which he or she is joint security. In such cases, termination as a trustee will occur when the creditors have been satisfied.

In the interim of the Quarterly Conference, the minister in charge shall have the power to suspend a trustee who refuses, neglects, or fails to discharge his or her duty, and to fill the vacancy temporarily in the manner prescribed in the selection of a trustee until the next meeting of the Quarterly Conference, which shall dispose the case.

Should the suspension be sustained by the Quarterly Conference, the minister in charge shall proceed to fill the vacancy permanently, following the usual mode of election of a trustee.

(The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church 2012, Part IV, Section II, p.63-66)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The idea of Christian Education is deeply rooted in the traditions and history of African Methodism.

Christian Education in the form of Sunday School work was organized in 1794. Richard Allen, founder and first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, organized the first African American Sunday School at Mother Bethel, Philadelphia.

A formal plan for a Sunday School Union did not develop until 1884 when the General Conference, adopted it and elected Charles S. Smith, M.D. as its corresponding secretary.

Christian Education in the form of higher education was established by Rev. Daniel A. Payne, bishop and founder of Wilberforce University in 1856. Rev. Payne is called the Apostle of Education in the AME Church.

Christian Education in the form of youth fellowship was organized by Rev. B. W. Arnett in 1900 as the Christian Endeavor Society. In 1904 the name became the Allen Christian Endeavor League led by Rev. Gregg, led by Dr. J. C. Caldwell in 1908 and Rev. S. Morris in 1920.

Christian education in the form of a connectional organization was established at the 1936 General Conference and Rev. Solomon S. Morris, Sr., was elected to serve as its first General Secretary. The new Christian Education department now combined the functions of the Sunday School and Allen Christian Endeavor.

Under the leadership and direction of Dr. S. S. Morris, Sr., the Richard Allen Youth Council experienced rapid growth among youth leaders and workers. Dr. Morris served as general secretary until 1956.

Dr. Andrew White, who served as assistant to Rev. S. S. Morris, Sr., became general secretary in 1956. Dr. White's writings on the tradition and heritage of African Methodism expanded significantly, and likewise did printed curriculum resources for our Zion. Dr. White held office until 1980.

Dr. Edgar L. Mack became general secretary in 1980. Dr. Mack's passion for ecumenism led him to strengthen interdenominational relationships and to build enduring church partnerships. Dr. Mack held office until his death in 1991.

Dr. Kenneth H. Hill became executive director in 1991. Dr. Hill's pursuit of excellence led to the establishment of the scouting and music ministries in the connectional church and the expansion into technology in the church through several innovative programs. Dr. Hill held office until 2004.

The Direction

The Book of Discipline charges the Department of Christian Education with responsibility for "Developing standards, preparing programs, offering classes, teaching Christian education, publishing material, training people for pastoral ministry and other church vocations" in accordance with the tradition and doctrine of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

THE GENERAL CONFESSION

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness which we from time to time most grievously have committed by thought, word, and deed against Your divine Majesty, provoking most justly Your wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father for Your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake; forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please You in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE TWENTY THIRD PSALM

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord, forever.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.

THE BEATITUDES

(The Gospel of Matthew 5:3-12)

- Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
- Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
- Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
- Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
- Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the sons of God.
- Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
- Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which are before you.

TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Ten Commandments were given to Moses for the children of Israel and are found in the Old Testament of the Bible. Exodus 20:3-17.

- I. I am the Lord Thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shall have no other gods before me.
- II. Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in the water above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth; thou shall not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the father upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.
- III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.
- IV. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six day shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day. Wherefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.
- V. Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
- VI. Thou shalt not kill.
- VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- VIII. Thou shalt not steal.
- IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
- X. Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's house thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

Hear what Christ our Savior saith, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

PARTS OF THE SANCTUARY

THE ALTAR - A place where sacrifice was offered in ancient times. In Christian Worship, it is associated with the sacrament called the Supper of the Lord, the Eucharist, or the Holy Communion.

ALTAR RAIL - A low rail which divides the Nave from the Chancel, and around or before which Communicants kneel, usually on a padded kneeler, to participate in the Supper of the Lord; also associated with ALTAR CALL.

CHANCEL - The space around the altar of a church enclosed by a lattice or railing to pray. It is the area of a church building containing the Communion Table, and often the pulpit, lectern, altar rail, baptismal font and the choir stand.

BAPTISMAL FONT – A container for water to be used in the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism.

PRAYER ALTAR – An elevated place or structure before which prayer may be enacted.

PULPIT - An elevated platform, lectern, or stand used in preaching or conducting a religious service, a raised structure or enclosed platform in a church building or chapel from which the preacher delivers the sermon.

LORD'S TABLE – The table or altar used by Christians to celebrate the Eucharist.

CHOIR LOFT - A gallery for a group of church singers.

AISLE - The side passage of the church which connects the vestibule, narthex, or entrance hall with the Altar end.

NAVE - The essential body of the Church extending from the inner door to the choir or chancel; the part of the Church in which most of the congregation is seated; the central part of a church, extending from the narthex to the chancel and flanked by aisles.

NARTHEX - A portico or lobby of an early Christian church originally separated from the nave by a railing or screen; and entrance hall leading to the nave of a church. The vestibule or entrance hall of a church building next to the entrance into the Nave or main worship area.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP TERMINOLOGY

THIS GUIDE WAS PREPARED TO ACQUAINT YOU WITH AND TO ASSIST YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ORDER OF SERVICE.

PRELUDE: An introductory musical composition to prepare the worshippers for the service; to create the atmosphere for worship and to bring unity to the group. *(Please Stand)*

PROCESSIONAL: A hymn sung during the orderly process of choirs, clergy, etc, to their places.

DOXOLOGY: A short formula of praise to God. *(Please Stand)*
“Praise God from whom all blessings flow” *(Bow head and follow Bulletin)*

CALL TO WORSHIP: A scriptural admonition presented orally or sung in order to call attention to the purpose of the gathering. *(Please Stand and follow Bulletin)*

THE PRAYER

THE PRAYER CHANT: “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus” Or “He is Lord”

SELECTION FROM CHOIR *(Found in Bulletin or Hymnal)*

HYMN: A song of prayer or praise to God. *(Please Stand and follow Bulletin or Hymnal)*

INVOCATION: A short introductory prayer invoking God’s presence, and asking His blessings on the congregation, the minister and the service. *(Please Be Seated)*

RESPONSE: Part of the liturgy said or sung in reply to the minister, the prayer, the Call to Worship, etc. *(Found in Bulletin)*

ANTHEM: The presentation from the choir to God in the service of worship.

SCRIPTURE: The Word of God read from the Holy Bible.

HYMN #69: “FROM ALL THAT DWELL BELOW THE SKIES”

From all that dwell below the skies, Let thy Creator’s praise arise. Let thy Redeemer’s name be sung, through every land by every tongue. Eternal are thy mercies, Lord; Eternal truth attends thy word; Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore; Till suns shall rise and set no more.

DECALOGUE: The “Ten Commandments,” the foundation of Christian morality given to Moses by God. *(Please Stand as the Decalogue is stated In Its Entirety)*

THE DECALOGUE (AME Church on first Sunday)

OR

THE DECALOGUE ABRIDGED *(See Verses with * and Shading)*

***Leader** And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

***People** *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor the likeness Of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water Under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon The children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and Showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that Maketh his name in vain.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou Labor and do all they work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord hath made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law. My soul be on thy guard, Ten thousand foes arise; And hosts of sins are pressing hard To draw thee from the skies.*

Leader Honor thy farther and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Thou shalt not kill.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Thou shalt not commit adultery.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Thou shalt not steal.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Leader Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's Wife, not his manservant, or his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

People *Lord, have mercy upon us, and write these laws upon our hearts. *Nearer, my God, to thee, Nearer to Thee! E'en though it be a cross That raiseth me; Still all my song shall be, Nearer my God, to Thee! Nearer to Thee! Amen.*

***Leader** Hear what Christ, our Saviour saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy should, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great Commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two Commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

***All** *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the Beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen. (Please be seated)*

GLORIA PATRI: A brief ascription (acknowledgement) of praise to the three person of the trinity (Father, Son, Holy Ghost).

GIFTS FOR MISSIONS (Benevolent Offering): An act of sharing our abundance for those less fortunate, or those in need.

WORSHIP... TITHES/OFFERING *(March of Tithers to Alter when called) (Ushers pass collection Basket)*

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *(Please Stand)*

"All things come of these, O lord, and of thine own-Have we given thee. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER: The hymns, chants, responses and prayers engaged in before or after the receiving of financial gifts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: *Secretary reads announcements and visitors Please Stand When asked)*

LITANY: A collection of formularies for the conduct of worship.

SERMONIC HYMN/SELECTION (Hymn of Meditation): A song of praise to God to prepare worshippers for the sermon.

SERMON (PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD): A religious discourse delivered by the minister in connection with Christian truth, for purposes of instruction and illumination.

INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP: Affording the opportunity after a sermon or other worship experience, for participants to publicly accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. *(Please Stand) (Found in Bulletin or Hymnal)*

OFFERING: Presentation by congregants of tithes and offerings.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: A summary of religious belief

The Apostle's Creed. Creed (Please Stand)

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 Spirit, 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 on 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 Spirit, the church Universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body and life Everlasting. Amen.

RECESSIONAL: A formal retirement of the choir and clergy at the close of the worship service.

DOXOLOGY: A short formula of praise to God.

"Praise God From Whom All Blessings..."

Praise God from who blessings flow, praise Him all creatures here below; praise Him above ye Heavenly hosts, Praise Father, son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

BENEDICTION: A blessing pronounced by the officiating minister at the close of a ceremony, a meeting of a worship service. *(Remain Standing)*

STAND, FELLOWSHIP AND DEPART TO SERVE

ABC BIBLE VERSES

As for me and my house we will serve the Lord. (Joshua 24:15)

Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (James 1:22)

Children, obey your parents. (Ephesians 6:1)

Depart from evil and do good. (Psalm 34:14)

Early will I seek thee. (Psalm 63:1)

Forgive and you shall be forgiven. (Luke 6:37)

God gives us richly all things to enjoy. I Timothy 6:17

He that keepeth the Law, happy is he. Proverbs 29:18

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. I John 1:9

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever. Hebrews 13:8

Keept thy tongue from evil. Psalm 34:13

Lo, I'm with you always. Matthew 28:20

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Psalm 100:1

No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. I Corinthians 6:10b

Obey them that have rule over you. Hebrews 13:17

Pray without ceasing. I Thess. 5:17

Quench not the Spirit. I Thess. 5:19

Rejoice in the Lord always. Psalm 33:1

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. Matthew 6:33

Thou shalt not steal. Exodus 20:15

Unto you is born a Saviour. Luke 2:10

Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me has everlasting life. John 6:47

Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye to them. Matthew 7:12b

EXcept a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:3

You shall not bear false witness (lie). Exodus 20:16

Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must come to your house. Luke 19:5

Class Leaders

Among the lay officials of the church, the Class Leader is one of the most important persons in the traditions of Methodism. They work to build a connectional, spirit-filled relationship between the Pastor and every member of the church. The church is divided into classes, which may consist of 10 to 12 members and a Class Leader. The Class Leader prevents the member from being obscure or lost in the crowd. There is constant contact between class leaders and class members through telephone calls, visits, and cards sent by leaders on special occasions.

Class Leaders assist the pastor in maintaining contact with the ongoing life experiences of church members. These individuals are to help you as you grow in the strength of our Lord and Savior and support you in your discipleship.

CLASS LEADERS

DALE BROWN
JOE ANN BROWN
DIANE CLARK
RICKY CLARK
BERNICE HOWELL
MARY ANN KEITT
DOROTHY MYERS
JOSEPH & GEORGIA SMALLS
MARY STEPHENS WILLIAMS
PRISCILLIA WITHERSPOON
MARION WITHERSPOON
MARVIN WRIGHT

Your Class Leader is: _____

You may contact your Class Leader on: _____

If you have any questions, please contact your Class Leader or the Pastor.