**The One Hundred Fifty-Third Annual Session**

**of the**

**VIRGINIA CONFERENCE**

**Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District**

**African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**

**Convening at the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa/Short Pump**

**12042 West Broad Street**

**Richmond, Virginia 23233**

**June 11, 2019 - June 16, 2019**



**Quadrennial Theme: “The Freedom Church:** Refocusing on Our

Purpose, Reviewing Our Practices, **Retooling Our People**, Reaching Our

Potential”

**Rev. Dr. Vincent Jones, Presiding Elder – Newport News District**

**Rev. Kenneth W. Crowder, Sr., Presiding Elder - Norfolk District Rev. T. Kenneth Venable, Presiding Elder – Petersburg District**

**Mrs. Devieta C. Moore, Missionary Supervisor**

**Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate**



Greetings Bishop and Mrs. Moore, Presiding Elders, Pastors, Delegates and Members of the Virginia Conference. I am grateful to God for His healing power and allowing me to be back in position to serve as Conference Secretary for 2019-20. Thank you for your vote of confidence to perform these duties to the best of my abilities. Special thanks to Rev. Adrienna Brooks and Rev. Linda Stevenson who assisted me to ensure the accuracy of all events and nothing major was omitted.

Draft minutes will be uploaded daily (thank you DK!) and available on the website. Printed final copies will be submitted to the Episcopal Office, AME Zion Headquarters and each Presiding Elder while churches will receive a CD no later than 15 Jul 2019. I’m praying that we will have an awesome conference year as we work toward RETOOLING.

Peace and Blessings,

Rev. Rebecca Branch-Griffin

Conference Secretary

Pre-Conference Activities (Lay Council Session) 1PM

Brother William English presided during this session and devotions were led by Brother Hurley Daye. Song, “Onward Christian Laity.” Brother English gave his report and it was received with thanksgiving. The Lay Council Regional Director for the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District, Sister Katherine Burrell assisted Brother English with the Stoling Ceremony. Rev. Dr. Kenneth W. Arrington presided during the election of officers for the 2019-20 Conference year. Officers elected were:

President - Brother William English

1st VP - Sister Carlee Cash

2nd VP - Sister Cynthia White

Secretary - Sister Florence Brown

Financial Secretary - Sister Regina Rivera

Treasurer - Sister Paula M. DeBerry

Chaplain - Brother Hurley Daye

The offering was received by Sister DeBerry, Treasurer and it was blessed with the offertory. Remarks were given by Bro. William English and Sister Katherine Burrell, Rev. Arrington and Bishop W. Darin Moore. Lay Council Closing Prayer was repeated by all “*O God, Our Father, pour out your steadfast love upon us and keep us in your care, now and forevermore, Amen*.” There was a reception and fellowship for all present.

5:00PM – Pastors and Spouses Dinner was hosted by our Episcopal Leaders, Bishop W. Darin Moore and Mrs. Devieta Moore, Missionary Supervisor.

**Tuesday Evening (Communion Service)**

The Ministers of the Virginia Conference processed into the sanctuary as we sang “*All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name*.” St. Thomas provided the music for the Communion service. Presiding Elder. Kenneth W. Crowder served as the Worship Leader and led us in the Call to Worship and Invocation. We sang “*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*” followed by Rev. Cecelia White leading us in the Apostles’ Creed. The Scripture Lesson was read by Presiding Elder Vincent Jones and Presiding Elder T. Kenneth Venable offered the Evening Prayer, followed by a selection from the St. Thomas Choir.

Rev. Alma Coles Charles received the Ministry of Kindness and it was blessed with the offertory. Presiding Elder Kenneth Crowder presented Bishop W. Darin Moore who introduced the preacher for the Communion sermon, Rev. Dr. Joseph Lamb Feely. His topic was “*Misfits at the Table*” (Luke 22:16-18).

Following this anointed message, Rev. Lamb extended the invitation to Christian Discipleship. The Finance Committee received the Communion Offering and it was blessed with the offertory. Bishop Moore was the Celebrant and the Presiding Elders were con-Celebrants for the communion service. At the conclusion of communion, we sang “*It Is Well*” and fellowshipped with one another.

***Bishop W. Darin Moore, 99th Bishop in the line of succession of the AME Zion Church declared that the 153rd annual session of the Virginia Conference was officially opened to conduct the necessary business coming before this Conference.***

**Wednesday, June 12, 2019**

The morning devotions were led by the Evangelistic team followed by greetings from Bishop Moore. He then introduced the Bible teacher, Rev. Alma Coles Charles, Pastor of the St. Paul AME Zion Church in Meridithville, VA. She taught from Romans 12 “**God-centered or Self-centered.”** Rev. Charles, in keeping with the theme *Retooling Our People* stated that we must always be ready to pray and minister to God’s people in addition to living in accordance with God’s will.

Bishop Moore called for the Report of the Rules Committee:

Rev. Dr. Kenneth W. Arrington presented the following report:

1. The first 5 rows across the front would constitute the bar of the conference.
2. We will follow the official printed program of the Annual Conference with necessary changes as directed by our Bishop.
3. We will be governed by the Holy Bible and Robert’s Rules of Order latest edition.
4. All cell phones would be placed on vibration mode or turned off while we are in session.
5. We will exhibit Christian behavior at all times while we are here.

Rev. Dr. Darwin Little offered a motion that the report of the Rules Committee be received and adopted; Rev. Dr. Joseph Perry seconded and the motion was carried.

**Report of Credential Committee**

**Newport News Credentials**

Greater Walters Carol Luster

Zion Southampton – Mary Butts

David Temple – Robert Smith

Beulah Land – Catherine Jordan

Mars Hill – Gloria Holloman

O’ Berry – Phyllis Britt

St Mark – Sallie B. Person

St. Luke – Cheryl Jackson

Hickory Grove – Marion Wiggins

Piney Grove – Patricia Howell

St. Mary – Marcellete Wiggins

Walters Temple – Cynthia Forman

New Life – Candace Hall

 **Norfolk Credentials**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|   |  |   |
| **Church** Metropolitan St. Thomas St. John Greater Metropolitan Gabriel Chapel Brighton Rock St. Joseph Wesley Union Walton Grove Hood Chapel Providence  |             | **Delegate** Jazmin SherardCynthia White Marva Bond Carolyn Simmons Meta Miller Sue WilkersonCynthia MoylerElizabeth Evans Natasha Bryant Florence Brown Jodianne Loveless  |
| Gilmerton Star Sycamore Hill Red Oak Grove  |    | Ray Barber Dorothy Beamon Betty Steward  |
| New Foreman Temple  |  | Angel Eason  |
| St. Thomas Chesapeake   | Shalaura Griffin  |

**Petersburg Credentials**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Hood TempleOak Street  |   | Akhenaton BlyeElizabeth Wilson  |
| Greater Faith Zion Chester White Rock  |    | Jacquelyn B. Kidd Karen SpenceSandra Gordon  |
| Mt Zion Madison Temple St Paul  |    | Regina D. Wilson William Cooper Mattie Walker  |
| Blackwell Temple Taylor's Chapel Paradise  |    | Shelvon Hazelwood Alicent LewisGracie Hardy  |
| New Covenant  |  | Lilly Green Alt  |

Presiding Elder Vincent Jones offered a motion to receive the report of the Credentials Committee; seconded by Rev. Aundrea James and the motion was carried. Bishop Moore gave instructions as they relate to the voting body to ensure the integrity of the voting process is maintained

**Nominating Committee Report –** Presiding Elder Crowder presented the following report:

Secretary – Rev. Rebecca Branch-Griffin

Assistant Secretaries – Rev. Linda Stevenson, Rev. Adrienna Brooks

Chief of Protocol – Rev. John Conwell

Marshalls – Rev. Dexter Feely (Chief Marshall) Rev. Earl James, Rev. Sharon Hall, Brother Walter Butts

Statistician – Rev. Wilmers Williams

Reporter – Rev. Montina Jones

Timekeeper – Rev. Tanya Pass

Musicians – Rev. Brandon Praileau, Ms. Kendra Zollicoffer, Ms. Jessica Bradley

Aide to the Missionary Supervisor – Sister Sandra B. Crowder

Rev. Dr. Christopher Eason offered a motion to receive the report of the Nominating Committee and those persons named would be elected for the conference year; seconded by Rev. John Conwell and the motion was carried.

Roll Call was done by the Conference Secretary, Rev. Rebecca Branch-Griffin. Necessary corrections were made and names of those Pastors/Preachers who went home to be with the Lord this past year were called three times and Bishop Moore offered prayer in memory of each of them. Bishop Moore then gave instructions as it relates to any preacher who wish to honorably withdraw from the AME Zion Church. Their credentials must be submitted for his stamp of approval. One former preacher of the Virginia Conference (Rev. Coston Griffin) has until Saturday (6/15/19) to submit his credentials to be considered honorably withdrawn. Other areas of the Conference Roll were corrected from the floor.

The 2020 Annual Conference District will be held the 3rd week of June, the Norfolk District will host this event and the place will be announced. The first checkup meeting will be September 7, 2019 on the Petersburg District at the Dinwiddie Complex. This will be a fun/family gathering with food and fellowship. On Friday September 6, 2019 there will be a Lay Council Dinner at Greater Faith AME Zion Church to honor Harriet Tubman and the funds received will benefit the scholarship fund. The second checkup meeting will be on December 7, 2019 and it will be a cyber meeting. The third checkup meeting will be held on the Newport News District.

**The Ministry of Kindness** report was given by Rev. Alma Coles-Charles. Rev. John Conwell offered a motion to receive and refer the report. It was seconded by Rev. Dr. Lorenza Meekins and the motion was carried.

**The Treasurer’s** report for the past conference year was given by Rev. Dr. Joseph E. Lamb Sr.

Rev. Dr. Darwin Little offered a motion that the treasurer’s report would be received and referred. It was seconded by Rev. Dr. Lorenza Meekins and the motion was carried. Presiding Elder Vincent Jones offered a motion to elect Dr. Joseph Lamb to serve as Conference treasurer for the next year; seconded by Presiding Elder Kenneth Crowder and the motion was carried.

**Noonday Worship**

The Evangelistic Committee led the worship service. Bishop W. Darin

Moore introduced the noonday preacher, Rev. Kenneth Zollicoffer, Pastor of David Temple. Rev. Zollicoffer preached an anointed sermon from Exodus 14 entitled “*When your tight spot is right spot.*” Following this powerful sermon, Rev. Zollicoffer extended the invitation to Christian Discipleship.

The Finance Committee received the offering and it was blessed with the offertory. Bishop Moore then introduced Rev. Brian Thompson, Pastor of Simon Temple AME Zion Church and Rev. Dr. Melanie Miller; both are offering themselves as candidates for the office of Bishop in 2020. Following the announcements Rev. Zollicoffer offered the benediction.

**Afternoon Session**

The Evangelistic Committee opened the service with songs of praise and worship. Presiding Elder Vincent Jones presented Bishop Moore for the Episcopal Address. We sang “*I Am Thine*” and Bishop Moore challenged us with a thought-provoking preached word!

**Episcopal Address (will be inserted later)**

Following the Episcopal Address, a motion was made by Presiding Elder T. Kenneth Venable that this inspirational address be received with thanks. Seconded by Rev. Rebecca Branch-Griffin. There were several unreadiness; Presiding Elder Kenneth Crowder, Rev. Dr. Darwin Little, Rev. Alma Coles Charles, Sis. Sandra Crowder, Rev. Dr. Sandi Hutchinson, Presiding Elder Medis Warren Cheek, and Bro. William English. All remarks were in the form of thankfulness and the motion was carried.

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Bishop Moore encouraged the Virginia Conference to do something special in the local churches to celebrate our AME Zion History and Bishop James Varick during the October/ November 2019 time frame. He then called for the finance committee. Rev. Darwin Little lead the conference in receiving the Great Offering and it was blessed with the offertory. The following guests greeted the Conference – Presiding Elder Michael King, Presiding Elder Rita Colbert, Rev. Johnathan Counts and Rev. R. J. Chandler.

 **Presiding Elder’s Report Petersburg District**

Presiding Elder T. Kenneth Venable presented a video/PowerPoint of the activities for the Petersburg District for the past year. There was a growth of 24 new members. Following the presentation, Sister Velina Glenn offered a motion to receive the report; it was seconded by Sister Karen Spence. Unreadiness expressed by Rev. Alma Coles Charles and Mrs. Darlene Kiah. Expressions of thanks along with an honorarium were presented to Presiding Elder Venable and Sister Gene Venable. The motion was carried.

**Norfolk District**

Norfolk District Presiding Elder Kenneth Crowder presented his annual report to the conference via video. He highlighted the accomplishments of the Norfolk District throughout the year. There were 60 conversions. Rev. Dr. Lorenza Meekins offered a motion that the report would be received; it was seconded by Rev. Tonya Pass. Unreadiness expressed by Rev. Darwin Little, Sister Fran English along with the Norfolk District Pastors in the form of expressions of thanks along with and honorariums given to Presiding Elder Crowder and Sis. Sandra Crowder. The motion was carried.

**Newport News District**

Presiding Elder Vincent Jones presented a video/power point presentation of activities of the Newport News District for the past year. Following the presentation, Presiding Elder Kenneth Crowder offered a motion to receive the report of Presiding Elder Jones; seconded by Presiding Elder T. Kenneth Venable. Unreadiness expressed by Rev. Kenneth Arrington. Gifts, expressions of thanks and honorariums were presented to Presiding Elder Jones and Rev. Dr. Montina Jones and the motion was carried. Following announcements, Rev. Johnathan Counts (Ohio Conference) offered the benediction.

**Wednesday Evening Service 7:00 P.M (Welcome Program**)

Sister Elaine Logan presided during this service. Brother Hurley Daye introduced the Newport News District Male Chorus who sang two selections. Ms. Aiyana Hinton extended the welcome, followed by another selection from the Male Chorus and a spoken word by Ms. Kendra Zollicoffer. There were remarks from Presiding Elder Vincent Jones and Bishop Moore. Rev. Randy Kiah responded to the Welcome Program with thanksgiving.

We then transitioned into the Worship Service. Presiding Elder T. Kenneth served as the presiding officer for the evening service. Hood Temple and Greater Faith AME Zion Churches provided the music. Rev. Alvania Eason read the scripture, Joshua 6:15-21 and Rev. Dr. Joseph Perry offered the evening prayer. Two selections by the Greater Faith Mass Choir. Bishop Moore introduced the preacher for the evening, Rev. Dr. Vanessa Hicks, Pastor of Mt. Zion AME Zion Church. The Hood Temple Choir rendered two selections. Dr. Hicks’ subject was “What A Difference A Day Makes.” After this powerful message, Rev. Hicks extended the invitation to Christian Discipleship.

The Finance Committee received the offering and it was blessed with the offertory. The following guests greeted the Conference: Rev. Milton Williams, Jr., Presiding Elder Alvin Durant and Rev. Reginald Jones (Gail Jones). Announcements were given, Rev. Hicks pronounced the benediction and the Newport News District hosted a Welcome Reception.

**Thursday Morning**

Service opened with prayer offered by Rev. Dexter Freely. The Praise Team led us with two selections, “*Holy, Holy, Holy and How Great Is Our God.”* Bishop Moore presented Rev. Benjamin Fitzgerald; Pastor of Zion Community Ministries in Suffolk VA. Pastor Fitzgerald taught on the subject of church growth. Using the scripture Matthew 21:18-20, he let us know that we have become prisoners of the comfort. *How many of the churches look like a church, feel like a church, but when Jesus comes to get the fruit there is no fruit. When people come and there is no fruit, they don’t come back. Why would people come back when there is no fruit? The fruit of the spirit, the Holy Ghost. We must live holy because holiness is the personality of God “Be ye Holy, for I am Holy”*

**Reports of the Pastors and Delegates**

**Norfolk District** - There were video reports from each pastor and delegate. Presiding Elder Vincent Jones offered a motion to receive the reports of the Norfolk Pastors and Delegates. It was seconded by Rev. Joseph Lamb and the motion was carried.

**Petersburg District** - There were video reports from each pastor and delegate. Retired Presiding Elder Medis Cheek offered a motion to receive the reports of the Pastors and Delegates of the Petersburg District. It was seconded by Rev. Dr. Lorenza Meekins and the motion was carried.

**Newport News District** - There were video reports from each pastor and delegate. Retired Presiding Elder offered a motion to receive the reports of the Newport News District Pastors and Delegates. It was seconded by Rev. Barbara Merriweather and the motion was carried.

**NOON DAY WORSHIP**

The Praise Team led us in a medley of worship songs. Bishop Moore introduced the preacher for the hour, the Rev. Dr. Timothy Freeman, Pastor of Trinity AME Zion Church in Washington, DC. Presiding Elder Scott Moore ministered in song and Dr. Freeman preached a powerful message. The scripture was Acts 11:5 and his subject was “*Open Doors in Human Hands*.”

*Open doors policies can cause you to miss opportunities. What happen when the things of God are put in the wrong hands? Doors of the church are open and the people are coming in, but the doors goes both ways. The ones coming in is not the only ones who need to be change. We should be able to witness the transformation of the church. The word should be transforming the hands of the one who is using it.*

The Finance Team received the offering and it was blessed with the offertory. Conference guests were recognized*,* announcements were given followed by the Benediction from Dr. Freeman.

**Afternoon Session**

The Praise Team led us in a medley of worship songs. Bishop Moore introduced Rev. Dr. Evelina Huggins, Presiding Elder of the Baltimore District who was the presenter for the School of the Prophets. “Healthy Churches, Healthy Congregations” Romans 12:3-8; 1Corintinians12:18-21; 1Peter 5:1-7. Some signs of Increasingly Healthy Churches and Congregations:

1. A clear understanding of the centrality of the Word through preaching and teaching
2. Having a biblical understanding of the gospel and its relevancy
3. An ability to articulate and live a personal theology

Bishop Moore called for the following reports:

**Evangelism** – Rev. Yolanda Buck gave a PowerPoint presentation on the subject. Evangelism must be intentional and it is not an event. We must embrace their questions and concerns rather than trying to give the answers. When we evangelize and share with others, we must be approachable; and then know what we are talking about. Recommendations:

1. Each church host evangelistic training
2. How to extend a public Gospel invitation (ministerial)
3. Model personal evangelism

Presiding Elder T. Venable that the report will be receive the Evangelism report with thanks it was seconded by Rev. Sheryl Murdaugh. Presiding Elder Crowder had a question concerning recommendation #2. Rev. Buck explained and Bishop Moore expounded on the question and response even more. Motion carried.

**Ushers –** Sis. Sue Wilkersongave the report in the absenceSister Cynthia Hurdle, President of Conference Ushers. She gave a report of the Ushers’ labors during the past year. There was also a workshop for ushers throughout the Conference. Rev. Lorenza Meekins offered a motion to receive the report of the Ushers with the necessary corrections and with thanks. It was seconded by Rev. Alma Coles Charles and the motion was carried.

**Men of Zion** – Rev. Kenneth Zollicoffer gave this report and lifted up the Men of Zion Conference to be held August 7-7, 2019. Rev. Dr. Little offered a motion to receive the report. The Connectional Director, Rev. Scot Moore was present and used a video presentation to elaborate on the conference. Rev. Dr. Darwin Little offered a motion to receive the report. It was seconded by Rev. Dr. Meekins and the motion was carried.

**State of the Country/Social Concerns** – Report was given by Rev. Samuel Warren:

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**State of The Country/ Social Concerns Committee Report**

*Gun Violence: A Socially Concerning Epidemic*

153rd Session of the Virginia Annual Conference

**The Right Reverend W. Darin Moore**

Presiding Prelate

An epidemic is defined as an occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time. While gun violence is devoid of the presence of microbial viruses that are normally present in the occurrence of an epidemic, the United States has long since come to the point where gun violence can and is considered a public health crisis. In terms of reactions to gun violence in our country and especially mass shootings the society has almost come to the point of reacting as I is just the normal way of life in our communities and quite frankly in many of our communities this is the case. From the workplace to the neighborhoods to the schoolhouse and even to our houses of worship, gun violence runs rampant in our modern society. Gun violence is no respecter of person. It is cross generational, interracial, and nondiscriminatory in terms of socio-economic status. Whomever you are and wherever you are you are susceptible to the epidemic of gun violence. The typical reaction is one in which the local media source will identify the shooter, typically as a white male followed by the statement of, ***“Our hearts and prayers will be with the victims.”*** The NRA will typically state that the shooting was not the fault of guns in the country and they too will send their thoughts and prayers to the victims. Two weeks will pass, and we will go on as usual with little or no political action aimed at saving the lives of the people caught in this cultural epidemic of gun violence and premature death.

The Center for Health progress reports that in 2018 there were more than **38,000** people were killed in the United States with another **85,000** gunshot injuries.

Because of the propensity for the American media to pay close attention to mass shooting deaths, it is significant to understand that mass shootings (Where four or more people are killed or injured) are still a relatively small percentage of the gun deaths. In fact, of the reported 38,000 deaths reported, sadly, more that half of those deaths were a result of suicide. Therefore when the gun lobbyist and far right suggest that doctors, who are treating this issue in the hospitals and emergency rooms of our country, stay in their lane, the medical establishment has begun to push back and supply much needed statistic and research on treating this concern as the medical issue that it has become.

**BY THE NUMBERS- FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 2019 By the Gun Violence Archive (GVA)**

According to The Gun Violence Archive, the numbers validated as of June 3, 2019 are astounding:

**22,413 Represents total number of reported gun violence incidents**

**5,907 The number of reported deaths as of June 3, 2019**

**11,338 The number of gun injuries**

**247 Represents the number of children (age 0-11) killed or injured**

**1,119 Represents the number of teens (age 12-17) killed or injured**

**156 Mass shooting reported (Four or more killed or injured)**

**128 Police officer reported shot or killed**

**833 Officer involved incident (subject /suspect shot or killed)**

**GUN VIOLENCE AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY**

Like every other area of life in these United States, gun violence carries with it a unique and significant racial component to the conversation. Seven years ago before the days of “Make America Great Again” then president Barak Obama, while giving a East Wing speech at the Whitehouse following the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, reminded us of the disparity in gun violence occurrences in America when he stated, ***“Every time I think about those kids it gets me mad. And by the way, it happens on the streets of Chicago every day.”*** Although the racial disparity is documented, the voices and leadership of those who represent these communities aren’t fairly represented in the mainstream social and political movements. The situation for African Americans is dire: We make up 14 percent of the population in the Unites States, but we make up disproportionally more than half of the country’s homicide victims. Many times, those who would dare to speak to mainstream society regarding gun violence in minority communities will more than likely be subjected to ridicule and criminalization for their trouble.

In March of last year 11-year-old Naomi Walker, while speaking at the March For Our Lives Rally said, ***“I represent the African American women who are victims of gun violence, who are statistics instead of vibrant beautiful girls of potential.”*** While mass shootings get most of the media coverage and are indeed alarming and worthy of our serious consideration, we must come to the realization as an American people that every life lost is senseless and a tragedy within itself. Be that as it is, the reality as it comes to African American communities, who America mourns, who America blames, and who America praises depends greatly on the color of the skin as America continues to place different values on different lives. The dream regarding cultural equity and gun violence is that no one would be more likely shot and killed as a result of their skin color. However, the medical establishment would report that we are a long way from even realizing that basic threshold of health equity. That might be a good place to start searching for a great America.

**AMERICA’S EDUCATION UNDER FIRE**

In 2012 data was uncovered using ShotSpotter sensor data that tracked gunshots fired near Washington D.C. public schools. **Three hundred thirty-six gunshot incidents during the school day, with over 50% of these occurring less than 1000 feet away from the doors of the public schools.** For these children, what should be a haven of learning and growth, not only fails as such but ironically could be seen as a place of danger. As a result of the realities of gun violence in the immediate proximity of our schools, gun violence in America is without a doubt also an education issue. Psychologist and educational experts have found that childhood and adolescent exposure to gun violence can be linked to feelings of anger, dissociation, disrupts sleep patterns and increases the frequency of mental health conditions like anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

Unfortunately, in our country, it is not too difficult to find school age young people whose lives have been directly impacted by the culture of gun violence that permeates society, especially the inner-city areas. **One study found that in the inner city, over 40% of a sample of 246 youth had seen someone shot or knifed and 22% had actually been witness to a murder.**



That type of trauma negatively impacts school performance. The medical and psychological profession has found that in children it can even alter brain chemistry and development. Children living in areas where gun violence terrorizes communities can experience great difficulties in academic performance and educational and career aspirations. For many children in this culture what should be a time of creativity, discovery, and development becomes an era of loneliness, fear, and survival. Their future has been reduced to just trying to make it to the next day. Instead wondering what they are going to be when they grow up, our young people are simply wondering if they will grow up.

Kimberly Quick, Senior Policy Associate at The Century Foundation shared the following as a summary of the educational layer of gun violence, ***“People who care about education must support smart methods to reduce the number of guns in circulation and to monitor who can get their hands on them. At their worst, guns make it easy for criminals to take the lives of children. But they also directly impact the ability of some children to maximize their potential, to thrive academically, and to experience childhood as it ought to be experienced.”***

**THE FREEDOM CHURCH MUST ACT NOW!**

The freedom church was founded upon the principles of freedom of worship for its people, our people. With freedom of worship also comes the responsibility to be socially aware and active against any individual or cultural activities that would hinder the physical, mental, spiritual, educational, financial, and social development of our people.

We have shown in our report the realization of gun violence in America to not only be a social concern but an epidemic that has long since infected the free society and negatively impacted its people from childhood to adulthood. We as clergy and members of the Freedom Church are challenged by the effects of gun violence in America. To have our voices join in the conversation to end the scourge of gun violence in our communities we must **Act Now:**

* ***Act now by continuing to pray God’s grace and mercy in our communities and the country for the elimination of gun violence in America.***
* ***Act now to develop outreach programs aimed at helping our church communities stem the tide of the wave of gun violence engulfing our communities.***
* ***Act now to teach our congregations the relationship between our communities and our churches. Kingdom building work has to go beyond the dedicated and consecrated walls of our building into the homes and lives of the people.***
* ***Act now by creating opportunities for dialog between our communities and local law enforcement in order to develop relationships aimed at easing tension and hostility between our people and those sworn to serve and protect.***
* ***Act now by being a part of the critical political conversation that is taking place in the state of Virginia, North Carolina and every state where serious law makers are struggling to pass state and federal laws limiting access to guns to those who should not be allowed to carry or purchase.***
* ***Act now by supporting the medical community in their efforts to gain access to funds that will help broaden the areas of mental health in our local communities.***
* ***Act now by holding forums and opportunities for the public to understand all of the negative consequences of living in communities that are terrorized by gun violence.***
* ***Act now by demanding that members of the political establishment keep all communities abreast of any positive strides made against gun violence.***
* ***Act now by giving to non-profit organizations who are fighting for our communities against gun violence.***
* ***Act now by helping our local school boards gain state and federal funds that will allow for more school counselors, especially at the elementary level. These positions will help have programs and services in place if and when our young students need help in navigating dangerous situations at home or at school.***
* ***Act now by making sure that we understand and support all Safe School initiatives initiated by our schools.***
* ***Engage in conversation and implementation of real educational reform that takes into consideration all aspects of growing and developing a healthy child. One who has educational opportunities as well as social and emotional safety whereby dreams and goals for the future can be reached, ensuring a better society for all.***
* ***Act now by making sure that our people are registered and ready to vote in ALL elections, local, state, and federal. We must elect government officials who are ready and able to fight for sensible gun legislation against the gun lobbyist, including the current administration at the White House.***

The role of the Freedom church in this epidemic of gun violence is to do our part to ensure that our communities are as safe as we can possibly make them. We are reminded that like any other aspect of life in America our communities will incur the worse of what negative developments have to offer. We have the opportunity and the responsibility to fight against this plague to our society with all the might that our God will afford us. We must also be reminded that we do not fight alone for in His word he promised to be with us always even until the end of the age.

Most Humbly Submitted

Samuel W. Warren Jr.

The State of the Country/ Social Concerns Committee:

Wilmers Williams, Rebecca Branch-Griffin, Adrienne Brooks, Geraldine Booth, Etta Parham, Carolyn Graddy, Olivia Cooke, Avelyn Chambers, Maxine Raysor, Vanessa Hinton, Antonio Walker, Joseph Whitney, Brandon Praileau, Leon Hutchinson. Tiarra Murdaugh

Rev. Dr. Joseph Lamb offered a motion that the State of the Country/Social Concerns report be received and acted upon. It was seconded by Rev. Willmers Williams and there was an unreadiness expressed by Rev. Willie Dixon in the area of doing something about these issues. Bishop Moore stated that action should be taken with in each local church and how the membership can become involved. The motion was carried.

**State of the Church –**This report was given by Rev. Andrea James.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

To the Presiding Prelate of the Mid-Atlantic, Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore and Missionary Supervisor, Devieta C. Moore, Presiding Elders: Rev. T. Kenneth Venable, Rev. Kenneth W. Crowder, Rev. Dr. Vincent M. Jones Sr., Pastors, Ministers, General Officers (Past and Present), Delegates, Laity, Friends, and Visitors:

The committee on State of the Church wishes to make the following report:

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, “The Freedom Church” stands today on the backs of our foremothers and forefathers such as: Fredrick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and James Varick. Yet, many of the practices and principles that this our **church** have held near and dear to our hearts are being tainted by the works at the hands of the enemy. Erosion of these inspired practices and principles are taking over the minds of those in leadership which is causing a ripple effect down to the people of God. How can this our beloved Zion continue to stand upon a firm foundation, and take in the next generation of people, when a clear vision and path is not being set for its people? What type of people want to join a church where it calls itself the “Freedom Church” but will only offer no more than prayer and is not inclusive of all types of people?, What type of people want to give their lives to Christ when they are unsure where the man or woman of God stands in his/her own relationship with the Savior? (Ashley Charles)

**Retain**…

Small group ministry utilizing the class member system, and use the delineation of classes specified by our Sunday School literature to differentiate spiritual content and life applications with relevant examples to meet the needs of the congregants.

Attending to the means of grace: “public worship of God, ministry of the Word (read or explained), the Lord’s Supper, searching the Scriptures, fasting and abstinence, and family and private prayer.” Discipline (p. 21)

**Replace**…

Indifference and judgmental ways with ***love***. Leadership must foster a loving environment where we look at the inward heart rather than the outward appearance, “Saying that we love one another as Christ loved the church, yet our display of love for God’s people does not show it”.

Example: Inclusive love that is shared with all regardless of race, sexual orientation, age, etc.

(***That “whosoever” invited by Jesus Christ***).

Also, that we can all worship and love our God without fear that the church is going to cast us aside for those things which make those persons who they are.

Lip services, talking about wanting to have a church that wants to change, but does the total opposite. We need to stop thinking that the generation of now, has no clue of what is happen within the church. We need to stop thinking that the church is not dying, when it actually is! Action speaks louder than words.

***Strick adherence to dress attire***

Looking towards being a church that is all inclusive, that does not care about what one wears or how one looks when he/she goes to church on Sunday, but cares about one’s soul salvation and his/her relationship with God. (**How does your soul proper?**)

**Recycle**…

***Paper Pushing to Implementation***

The mission statements have been written, recycle your mindset. Instead of quoting the statement and posting it for everyone to see, implement it in all facets of ministry. Look inwardly, Bishop Moore stated from his first message, “Make Disciples.” Sadly, many believe that the church is only focus on raising money and getting new members instead of making and training disciples for Kingdom building.

***Training Programs***

We need to get back to the basics and really train our people how to evangelize, promote discipleship and how to truly worship God. There are very few members in our congregations that are able to lead a worship service. Pastors and ministers read every scripture, pray every prayer and lead every part of worship rather than empowering their members to do so. We are not equipping the Saints for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ. If we as leaders of Jesus' church would focus on feeding the flock which is among us, not for filter lucre or by constraint but being a Godly example to the flock, then God would really bless our ministries and work to expand His territory.

***Apathy with self-evaluation***

We need to start taking a strong look at each one of our churches and saying why is it that my church is not growing? Why is it that my youngest member is in their 70s? Why are children, youth, and young adults where Zion was the church of their birth, that it is no longer? Posing all of these questions should make all of us begin to look at the bigger picture because we will not have to choose wither or not to keep the church doors open, the church doors will close by themselves at our hands.

***Ordinary with the Extraordinary***

We need to start looking out into our communities and seeing what the needs are. Offering more than just the traditional Sunday School Lessons on Sundays and Prayer Meeting during the week. Offering times and services that are more conducive to not only to the oldest living person in the church but the youngest person also. Not being so focused on assessments when there are people within our church that we don’t even realize are going hungry on a daily basis. We need to start listening to the cry of so many who want to have a relationship with God, but the organized church has become a place no longer where the hurting people come to get healed, or delivered, but where the hurting people continue to be hurt. Being hurt by not just the people within the walls, but also by the man or woman of God. How can a person come looking to be healed and/or delivered to find the man or woman of God is struggling and battling with infinities of the mind. We need to start making sure that the shepherd is fully secured with the whole armor of God before sending him/her to places to minister to the spiritually sick.

***Business as usually with Powerful Programs***

Most of our churches are located in communities that can truly be blessed by the gospel and it's ministries. No longer is it good enough to simply be located on the corner, and come to church to stay within its four walls, but we  need to aggressively pursue ministries that would best serve the needs of that community. We have to be visible in every aspect of their lives from helping them to get saved to helping them find jobs. The church should be the spiritual hub of the community as well as the service center for every member of the community. We need to be known for our works that glorify Christ and our service to our fellow man.

***Trending fads with our foundational principles***

We need to get back to using some of the older practices of assigning junior trustees, stewards, ushers to teach the ways of the church. Not shut the doors on the youths/young adults because you don’t want them to know that Brother or Sister whomever is doing more receiving than giving.

***Our present paradigm and look introspectively***

We need to change our mindset, change our tools, and come to grips with reality. But, continue to stand firm on the word of God under the power and leading of the Holy Spirit in order to keep Zion moving forward.

We must be intentional as Christ was intentional, and not be laid back as we see the state of the Church in these last and evil days. We are living in perilous times, and we must be do what we do with a purpose in mind. Retooling is important in such a time as this. Follow the rules of life that John Wesley felt that every Methodist should by: “***Do no harm, Do good, and Stay in love with God***.”

*Special thanks to Revs: Willie Dixon, Dr. Joseph Perry, and Ashley Charles much of the content was taken from their observations on the State of the Church.*

Humbly submitted,

The Committee on State of the Church

Ronald Cook, Audrey Jones, Dale Seaborne, Della Woodruff, Cheryl James, Joseph Perry,

Katina Williams, Ashley Charles, Willie Dixon, and Andrea James

Rev. Dr. Joseph Lamb offered a motion to receive the State of the Church report with thanks and referred. It was seconded by Presiding Elder Crowder and the motion was carried.

**Conference Trustees** – Presiding Elder T. Kenneth Venable had no written report as there were no items that required action by the Trustee Board. He gave an update on the Dinwiddie property as it relates to upkeep and maintenance. Divine Health, Inc. has made an informal suggestion as how the property can be brought up to standards to meet the needs of the citizens of the area. The cost to maintain the building is $60,000 annually. This report required no voting as it was for information purpose.

**Admission Committee**

Report of the

Virginia Conference Committee on Admissions

153nd Annual Session of the

Virginia Conference

June 13, 2019

Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa Short Pump

To the Right Rev. W. Darin Moore, Mrs. Devieta C. Moore, General Officers both past and present, Presiding Elders, Pastors, Ministers, District Officers, Delegates and this 153rd Annual Session of the Virginia Conference:

On May 4, 2019, the Committee on Admissions met with the following persons instructed to appear before this committee again before going to Holy Orders:

Sis. Elaine Tyson

Bro. Earl James

The following areas were addressed: character/integrity, their call to ministry, their view of ministry, their lifestyle, their views on submission to authority, and their willingness to submit to authority.

This committee supports the recommendation of the Conference Studies committee that these persons appear before the Committee on Holy Orders.

On May 4, 2019, the Committee on Admissions met with the following person seeking admission on trial with credentials to the Virginia Conference, and at this time wishes to make the following report:

**Bro. Ronald W. Sears, Jr.**

Church/Pastor: Gilmerton Star AME Zion Church/Rev. Tonya Pass

Recommended: by the Quarterly Conference to the District Conference; by the District Conference to the Annual Conference

Background Check: Completed

Age: 49

Marital Status: Married, Michele; Three Children: Ronald III, 25; Chelsie, 20; Ethan, 12.

Education:

* Bachelors of Science in Business Management from Norfolk State University
* Six Classes away from Masters in Urban Management from Old Dominion University
* Seminary training at C. H. Mason Bible College

Other Training:

* Professional State Clinician

**Recommendation of this committee:** To be received on trial with credentials from the Church of GOD in Christ (COGIC) once credentials have been examined by Bishop Moore.

On June 12, 2019, the Committee on Admissions met with the following person:

Rev. Robin Mines

The following areas were addressed: character/integrity, her call to ministry, her view of ministry, her lifestyle, her views on submission to authority, and her willingness to submit to authority.

Rev. Mines has completed conference studies.

Respectfully Submitted, the Virginia Conference Committee on Admissions:

P. E., s Kenneth W. Crowder, Vincent M. Jones, Sr., T. Kenneth Venable, Revs. Rebecca Branch-Griffin, Darwin D. Little, Joseph E. Lamb Sr., Kenneth W. Arrington Sr., Dexter Feely, Sandi B. Hutchinson, Adrienne Brooks, Kenneth L. Zollicoffer, and Lorenza Ricardo Meekins, Chair.

**Bishop Moore asked Bro. Ronald Sears to come forward and several questions. Rev. Dr. Meekins offered a motion that Bro. Sears be received on trial, placed in 2nd year studies and referred to the Holy Orders Committee. It was seconded by Rev. Dr. Kenneth Arrington and the motion was carried.**

**Examination Committee**

To the Right Rev. W. Darin Moore Missionary Supervisor, Mrs. Devieta Moore General Offices both past and present, Presiding Elders, Ministers, District Officers, Delegates and this 153nd Annual session of the Virginia Conference.

The studies and examination committee wish to submit the following report:

1st Year Studies

Sis. Stephanie Council, recommendation, advance to second year studies.

Sis. Tracey Marcus, recommendation, advance to second year studies. **Bishop asked both students questions about their experience in studies. Rev. Dr. Little offered a motion that they advance to second year studies. It was seconded by Rev. Dr. Meekins and the motion was carried.**

2nd Year Studies

Sis. Elaine Tyson, recommendation, advance to third year studies, be brought into full connection and referred to Admissions and Holy Orders for election to the office of Deacon

Bro. Earl James, recommendation, advance to second year studies, be brought into full connection and referred to Admissions and Holy Orders for election to the Office of Deacon

**Bishop Moore asked the students questions about their conference studies experience. Rev. Dr. Lamb offered the motion that they will advance to 3rd year studies and referred to Holy Orders for election to the office of Deacon. It was seconded by the Rev. Dr. Meekins and the motion was carried.**

**\*Bishop Moore again called the Admissions Committee on the recommendation that Brother Earl James and Sister Elaine Tyson be brought into full connection. He asked them a set of questions from the 2016 Book of Discipline. Presiding Elder Vincent Jones offered a motion to receive the two candidates into full connection. It was seconded by Rev. Dr. Meekins and the motion was carried. Bishop Moore, the Presiding Elders and the Admissions Committee welcomed them into full connection.**

3rd Year Studies

Rev. Willie Brown, recommendation, advance to fourth year studies,

Rev. Lloyd Griffin, recommendation, advance to fourth year studies,

**Bishop Moore questioned these two students extensively as it relates to the AME Zion faith along with giving instructions on baptism and communion. Rev. Dr. Meekins offered the motion that these students would advance to fourth year studies. Rev. Samuel Warren seconded and it was carried.**

4th Year Studies

Rev. Robin Mines, recommendation, completed fourth year studies.

**Bishop Moore shared with Rev. Mines that she would serve as a Deacon for 2 years before being elected to the office of Elder and he would see her back next year.**

Sis. Reiko Yuge, recommendation, completed fourth year studies and referred to Admissions and Holy Orders for election to Office of Deacon.

**Bishop Moore explained the extenuating circumstances surrounding Sis. Reiko Yuge who is currently in Japan and the necessity of her ordination. Rev. Rebecca Branch-Griffin offered a motion that Sis. Yuge would be elected to the office of Deacon in the AME Zion Church. It was seconded by Presiding Elder T. Kenneth Venable and the motion was carried.**

Humbly submitted,

Rev. Alma Coles Charles, Dean

Rev.’s Dr. Lorenza Meekins, Vince Jones, Rebecca-Branch Griffin, Sandi Hutchinson, Joseph Lamb, Darwin Little and Rev.’ s Samuel Warren, and Dexter Feely, -- Instructors

**Holy Orders Committee –** The following report was given



Holy Orders Report 2019

To the Presiding Prelate of the Mid-Atlantic, Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore and Missionary Supervisor, Devieta

C. Moore, Presiding Elders: Rev. T. Kenneth Venable, Rev. Kenneth W. Crowder, Rev. Dr. Vincent M. Jones Sr., Pastors, Ministers, General Officers (Past and Present), Delegates, Laity, Friends, and Visitors:

The following individuals were recommended to Holy Orders by the Conference Studies committee and met with the committee. The Holy Orders Committee wishes to make the following report:

Bro. Earl M. James

New Covenant AME Zion

Rev. Cheryl James, Pastor

Recommended by the Holy Orders Committee to be elected to the office of Deacon

Sis. Elaine Tyson

Freedom AME Zion

Rev Lloyd Griffin, Pastor

Recommended by the Holy Orders Committee to be elected to the office of Deacon

Rev. Robin Mines

Hood Temple AME Zion Church

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Branch-Griffin

Recommendation: No election at this time

Humbly submitted,

Holy Orders Committee

Rev. Dr. Joseph Lamb, Chairperson

Rev. Andrea Lee James, Secretary

Presiding Elders: Rev(s): Kenneth Crowder, T. Kenneth Venable, and Dr. Vincent M. Jones Rev(s): Alma Charles, Dr. Arrington, and Dr. Darwin Little

Guests of the Conference were recognized, announcements were given and Rev. Betty Bradley offered the benediction.

**Evening Service (Christian Education)**

The Christian Education Service began with the processional of the Christian Educators. Rev. Alma Coles Charles presided. Following the Invocation, we sang “*O How I love Jesus*.” The scripture (Acts 11:21-26) was read by Sister Tracy Marcus and Rev. Betty Bradley led us in the evening Prayer. The Metropolitan Choir rendered two selections. Rev. Dr. Sandi Hutchinson, Conference Director of Christian Education gave her annual report of labors for the past year. Following the report Sister Ashley Charles offered a motion to receive this fine report with thanksgiving and seconded by Rev. Sheryl Murdaugh. The Co-Director of Christian Education for the Norfolk District expressed an unreadiness in the form of a special thank you along with an honorarium. The motion was carried.

The Christian Education Stoling Ceremony was conducted by Bishop Moore, Mid-Atlantic and Virginia Conference Christian Educators. The Zion Chester Choir rendered two selections. Bishop Moore introduced the preacher for the evening, Rev. Dr. Lester McCorn, President of Clinton College, Rock Hill, SC. Brother Jeremiah Hicks blessed us with two soul-stirring praise songs. Dr. McCorn’s subject was “When They See Us” from the scripture 1Samuel 16:6-13 (v7). They should see the authentic and not the artificial. They should see the supernatural and not the superficial. They should see the potential and not the position. When they us, they see our Awesome God!

The Finance Committee received the offering and it was blessed with the offertory. Bishop Moore acknowledged guests, announcements were given and Dr. McCorn pronounced the benediction.

**Friday Morning – Prayer Breakfast**

We gathered at 8AM for the Prayer Breakfast with our focus being on “Totally Committed. Sister Phyllis Britt served as the Worship Leader; Invocation by Sister Donna Gainey; Responsive Reading by Sister Mary Butts. Prayer Leaders were:

1. Rev. Felecia Johnson
2. Sister Cassandra Williams
3. Dr. Patricia Radcliffe
4. Sister Tiarra Murdaugh
5. Sister Gracie Hardy
6. Sister Patricia Whitney
7. Sister Fran English
8. Sister Alexis Hutchinson

Following the meal, Sister Devieta Moore introduced the morning speaker. Sister Dorothy Minter-Saunders sang “I Am Available” and Rev. Yolanda Buck delivered an awesome message on being committed. Scripture was Judges 11:35. She impressed upon us the importance of commitment and keeping our commitment to God no matter what happens. There were remarks from our Missionary Supervisor and we repeated the Missionary Benediction.

**Missionary Convocation**

Sister Elaine Logan was the Presiding Officer and the Praise Team led us in a medley of songs. Sister Mary Butts read the scripture (Matthew 28:18-20) and Sister Phyllis Britt led us in prayer. Sister Devieta Moore presented Dr. Ynika Hines from VCU School of Public Policy who shared the work she’s doing on stress and encouraged us to go to the website and take the survey.

Sister Moore then introduced Rev. Dr. Alice Walker Johnson, Pastor of Clinton AME Zion Church in Rockville, MD. Her presentation was on aspects of Parliamentary Procedure. She defined what it is, shared a systematic plan for the orderly conduct of business. We gathered in small groups and reviewed several elements of parliamentary procedure.

Sister Moore shared information concerning the Missionary Convention next month in Orlando. The deadline to register is June 30, 2019. The (3) Districts gave a creative joint report:

**All Districts – “Soldiers in the Army of the Lord”**

Each District Officer, dressed in army caps and gave a creative battalion summary review of labors as soldiers committed in the army of the Lord! This presentation was enjoyed by all.

The Missionary Supervisor asked for a motion that the reports from the Petersburg, Norfolk, and the Newport News Districts be received with thanksgiving. Motion was offered by Sister Beverly Jones and seconded by Purlie Banks.

Unreadiness from the Newport News District in the form of appreciation to Mrs. Elaine Logan, President.  Unreadiness from the Petersburg District in the form of appreciation to Sister Faye Boisseau, President. Unreadiness from the Norfolk district in the form of appreciation to Sister Sandra Crowder, President and the motion was carried. Sister Crowder presented special gifts to Sister Devieta Moore and Sister Georgia Thompson. The offering was received and blessed with the offertory. We repeated the Missionary Benediction.

**Noon Day Service (Necrology)**

The Praise Team led us in a medley of worship songs. Rev. Barbara Merriweather read the scripture (2 Samuel 9:1-11) and Rev. Dr. Lorenza Meekins offered the prayer. The Committee gave the following report:

**The Necrology Report
of the 153rd Session**

**Virginia Conference
2018-2019**

**Norfolk District**

**Metropolitan**Sara Morris
William Staten

**St. Thomas**Robert Fletcher
Nina Shannon
Virginia Sharp
Gaynelle Fletcher
Gene Hopkins
Rebecca Clark
Presiding Elder Emeritus, Dr. Edmund H. Whitley

**St. John**Thomas David Lassiter
Valerie Chenay Coston
Elizabeth Boone Harvey
Janie Bond Smith

**Gabriel Chapel**Theresa Holmes

**St. Joseph**
Brenda Whitmore Smith
Robin Josey

**Hood Chapel**
Corey Roulack
Norman Edney, Jr.
Annie Reid

**Providence**Elwood Norman

**Gilmerton Star**

Robert Gamble

**New Foreman Temple**
Cora Johnson Head

**22 Souls Transitioned**

**Petersburg District**

**Blackwell Temple**Shirley Dow Harris
Thelma Hazelwood

**Hood Temple**
William Brunson

**Madison Temple**
Michelle Coles

**Mt. Zion**
Darlene Reed

**Oak Street**Luther Potts
Rev. Dr. E. M. Wilson

**St Paul**
Rev. Joseph Rowlett

**Taylor’s Chapel**Alice Hendricks

**Zion Chester**
Rev. John Roane

**10 Souls Transitioned**

**Newport News District**

**Beulah Land**Ricardo Edwards
Pamela Warren

Greater Walters
Costella Hamlin

**Mars Hill**
Essie Ellis

**O’Berry**

Otis L. Brown, Sr.
Bobby Brown

**St. Luke**Walter Boone

**St. Mary**Helen Joyner

**Walters Temple**
Eloise Harris

**Zion Southampton**

Dorothy Turner
Lemuel Warren
Albert Ricks

**12 Souls Transitioned**

Humbly Submitted by the Necrology Committee
Revs. Vanessa Hinton, Johnny Warren, Joyce Brown, Samuel Buck, Clarence Cuffee, Charles Turner, Donald Pollard, Sandi Hutchinson, and Avelyn Chambers

Bishop Moore presented the preacher for the hour, Rev. Tanya Pass, Pastor of Gilmerton Star AME Zion. Her subject was “You’re in Line for a Blessing” and her message blessed the house in a great manner. She reminded us that your past does not determine your future or the blessing God has for you. After the message, she extended the Invitation to Christian Discipleship. The Finance Committee received the offering and it was blessed with the offertory. Bishop Moore acknowledged the guests present, including Dr. James Sadler, General Secretary/Auditor of the AME Zion Church. Rev. passed offered the benediction.

**Friday Afternoon**

The Praise Team led us in opening worship. Presiding Elder Kenneth Crowder introduced the presenter for the School of Prophets, Presiding Elder Evelina Huggins. Her subject was “Retooling for Responsible Evangelism.” **A copy of the presentation can be downloaded at** [**www.bemoreamez.org/evangelism**](http://www.bemoreamez.org/evangelism)**.**

Delegate and Pastor report from St. Luke

**Delegate Voting Process – Dr. James Sadler, General Secretary/Auditor of the AME Zion Church conducted the election process for the Ministers and Lay Delegates. There was prayer before the voting began and the results were as follows:**

**1st Ballot – Ministerial**

**63 votes cast and certified; 33 needed to win**

**Rev. Darwin Little – 23**

**Rev. Samuel Warren – 28**

**Rev. John Conwell – 29**

**Rev. Vanessa Hinton – 29**

**Rev. Tonya Pass – 30**

**Rev. Kenneth Crowder – 34**

**Rev. Dexter Feely – 34**

**Rev. Wilmers Williams – 34**

**Rev. Lorenza Meekins – 41**

**Rev. T. Kenneth Venable – 46**

**Rev. Vincent Jones – 47**

**Rev. Kenneth Arrington – 48**

**Rev. Joseph Lamb - 48**

**1st Ballot – Laity**

**38 votes cast and certified; 20 votes needed to win**

**Brother Glenn Radcliff – 7**

**Sister Jacqueline Bailey-Kidd – 15**

**Sister Della Woodruff – 21**

**Sister Karen Spence – 21**

**Sister Elaine Logan -32**

**Sister Sandra Crowder – 32**

**Sister Velina Glenn – 33**

**Sister Fran English – 35**

**Brother Hurley Daye – 35**

**Sister Ashley Charles – 36**

**Brother William English – 37**

**Rev. Dr. Christopher Eason offered a motion that the 4 candidates with the highest number will be elected as Alternate Delegates (Ministers). It was seconded by Rev. Joseph Whitney and the motion was carried.**

**Sister Cynthia Foreman offered a motion that the 4 candidates with the highest numbers will be elected as Alternate Delegates. It was seconded by Sister Florence Brown and the motion was carried.**

**Alternates – Ministers**

**60 votes cast and certified – 60; 31 needed to win**

**Rev. Darwin Little – 25**

**Rev. Vanessa Hinton – 40**

**Rev. John Conwell – 44**

**Rev. Vanessa Hicks – 45**

**Rev. Tonya Pass – 46**

**Alternates – Laity**

**35 votes cast and certified; 35 votes needed to win**

**Jacqueline Bailey-Kidd – 35**

**Della Woodruff – 35**

**Cynthia Foreman – 35**

**Glenn Radcliff – 35**

**Following the elections, Bishop Moore dismissed all except the ministers and lay delegates (for a brief meeting).**

**Friday Evening Missionary Service**

The Great Commission: A Global Outreach - Personal Calling, Personal Transformation, Personal Instruction and Personal Commitment”

CANDLE LIGHT SERVICE “Processional in White”

WORSHIP LEADER Mrs. Devieta C. Moore – Missionary Supervisor

 Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District

THE PROCESSIONAL “Open the Floodgates” by Demetrius West

THE CALL WORSHIP

**Leader: We come seeking Jesus, the Light of the world!**

People: Shine in our hearts Lord Jesus!

**Leader: We believe in the strength of God to illuminate dark places.**

People: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it.

**Leader: Lord, in this hour of worship, kindle in us the light of your love.**

**ALL: Let your light shine through us now and forever.**

INVOCATION Mrs. Elaine Logan

Oh Lord, may your Spirit fill this place, Let the light of your awesome Presence radiate through us so that we may forever walk in the light of your love, delight in the light of your peace and rejoice in the light of your power. Let the light from the lighthouse shine on all of us in this place. Amen

THE CONGREGATIONAL HYMN “Lift Him Up”

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON Psalm 23 Mrs. Phyllis Britt

THE EVENING PRAYER Rev. Felecia Johnson

CHANT “Hear Our Prayer Oh Lord”

THE MUSIC MINISTRY Greater Walters AME Zion Church

 Litany in Honor of Women Here and Around the World

A 21st Century Africana Worship resource by Stacey Cole Wilson (This litany has been edited for our use)

THE MISSIONARY STOLING CEREMONY Mrs. Devieta C. Moore – Missionary Supervisor

 & Mrs. Georgia Thompson (former Missionary

THE CHARGE “Throw Out the Life”

PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP Mrs. Devieta C. Moore – Missionary Supervisor

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate,

 Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District

THE MUSIC MINISTRY

THE MISSIONARY SERMON Rev. Dr. Kenneth W. Arrington – Pastor

 Greater Walters A.M.E. Zion – Newport News, VA

Topic: “I’ve Got A Reason For My Praise”

Scripture: 2 Samuel 6:12-14, 20-23

Most people praise God not because they are out of their mind but most people praise Him because they are in their mind. God found us in a state of insanity, but tonight he has placed us in our right mind. You will discover the reason when you read 2nd Samuel 6 chapter. The reason you worshipped God was because there were some things you should have not survived. David praised God because God gave him strength to do the right thing.

THE INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP Rev. Dr. Kenneth Arrington

THE MISSIONARY OFFERING WHOMS District Presidents and Presiding Elders

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS/THE RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

THE MISSIONARY BENEDICTION