

		
Bill Number		
Title	AUTHORITY OF ACTIVE BISHOPS	
Submitted by	Bishop Paul J. M. Kawimbe	
Contact	mbom@mweb.co.za	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Section II. AUTHORITY OF ACTIVE BISHOPS, Page 116

Intent

Update text

Rationale

Update text


1 Current Text

2 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Section II. AUTHORITY OF ACTIVE  
3 BISHOPS, Page 116

4 Amended Text

5 A. Active Bishops

6 4. They must register their credentials with the General Secretary/CIO of the church at least 180 days prior to the  
7 opening of the General Conference. Candidates must possess an earned seminary degree from an Association of  
8 Theological Schools (ATS) accredited seminary or, if outside of the United States, an accredited seminary or  
9 University with a theology faculty as determined by the country in which he or she is educated.

		
Bill Number		
Title	CONNECTIONAL SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS	
Submitted by	CHARLOTTE MAXEKE LADIES FELLOWSHIP	
Contact	mbom@mweb.co.za	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

No reference

Intent

To establish as a Connectional Organisation, a proven fellowship of women and who live and serve in Africa, to bring that organization into compliance with the structure and governance of the African Methodist church, and to attach said organization to the Commission on Social action.

Rationale

Among the organizations on the African Continent that provide fellowship opportunities for Christian women, is the Charlotte Maxeke Ladies Fellowship. Although the Book of Discipline of the AME Church has made provision for an organization creating a fellowship of women known as Womens Missionary Society on page 296-352, the AME Church female members of the 15th, 17th, 18th, and 19th Episcopal Districts have for a number of years been operating a similar organization. It is a ministry of women, aimed at conducting studies and recommend resolutions relating to the Christian social concerns which affect the members and neighbours of the church. It also aims to evangelize women for Christian fellowship, outreach and social action. Many of the other denominations in Southern African have their own versions of the organization. This legislation enables the episcopal Districts, Annual Conferences, and Presiding Elder Districts and local congregations to regulate, utilize and expect accountability at each level of governance in the denomination. The Bill also provides for its use outside of the African Continent wherever the African Methodist Episcopal Church has presence through the larger program of Church Growth and Evangelism.

1 Current Text

2 No current text exist

3 Amended Text

4 VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CMLF

5 Charlotte Maxeke Ladies Fellowship [CMLF] is a ministry of women in the AME church who wish to fellowship

6 together. It will serve as a social action support and ministry to ladies and women of the church. It is a ministry that

7 ministers to the physical and emotional being of the women.

8 VISION

9 To be a big and ever growing auxiliary of ladies in the African Methodist Episcopal Church that unifies all in the

10 Church through Spiritual Endeavours.

11 MISSION

12 To create a platform to all ladies and women to reach their pathway in unleashing the potential to do Gods work,  
13 as well as striving for unity and understanding of one another as children of God flourishing in His Kingdom and  
14 their psychosocial needs.

15 To seek to address the needs and concern of the ladies in the local churches who are not members of any womens  
16 organization in the church.

## 17 OBJECTIVES

18 CMLF will recruit Christian women to be advocates for the relevant global religious issues and will also provide  
19 support for women.

20 CMLF will give each member an equal opportunity to optimally utilize their good given qualities/skills to contribute  
21 to the church and to the welfare of their congregation members, families, neighbours and communities.

22 Support and implement the programmes of the church.

23 Promote a positive team spirit and sisterhood within the church.

24 Do out-reach programmes such as spiritual revivals, seminars and workshops.

25 Maintain and sustain the organization by working together as members of the CMLF in the best interest of the  
26 church and its communities.

27 Recognize, acknowledge and support all ladies and women in the church.

28 Create skills, development and training programmes to all CMLF members by:

29 Providing education, training and guidance in all areas of church life; and promoting activities that develop unity,  
30 togetherness and strength for all ladies.

31 Build and maintain UBUNTU within the community of caring ladies.

32 Facilitate and support opportunities for leadership experiences in the church and in the CMLF.

33 Promote activities that result in harmonious working relationship.

34 Endeavour to establish a Christian Standard empowered by the Holy spirit among the CMLF family and the church  
35 at large.

36 Enable growth in stewardship in the church.

## 37 MEMBERSHIP

38 The CMLF is an organization which is open to all ladies and women in church who wants to fellowship together.

39 To all women and ladies who are striving for unity, understanding of one another as children of God flourishing in  
40 His Kingdom.

41 For all women and ladies who wish to reach their pathway unleashing their potential to do Gods work.

#### 42 OFFICERS

43 The elected Officers of the Connectional CMLF and its Divisions shall be:

44 President

45 First Deputy President

46 Second Deputy President

47 Treasurer

48 Financial Secretary

49 Secretary

50 Assistant Secretary

51 Parliamentarian

52 Chaplain

53 Historiographer

54 Director of CMLF Activities

55 Public Relations Officer

#### 56 IDENTITY

57 The colours of CMLF shall be Black and White

58 Need to consider seasons

59 CMLF members shall wear the following gear:

60 Black skirts

61 White shirt/Jacket

62 Black hat

63 Black shoes

64 Black stockings

65 Put on name pins displaying CMLF and own names on the left hand side.

66 OCCASIONS

67 CMLF members shall wear their identity on:

68 CMLF drives

69 Member funerals

70 Local church Holy Communion Service

71 Presiding Elders Quarterly Conference

72 Closing day of the District and Annual Conferences

73 On other official occasion, or when so directed by responsible officers of CMLF

74 PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS FOCUS

75 In line with the legacy of Charlotte Maxeke being the first female probationer, encouraging education to the

76 vulnerable groups and rendering support to women and children, the CMLF has planned the following:

77 In all Districts identify a childrens home for adoption through Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with the said


78 NGO/NPO for support with any means being required.

79 Commit our own professionals to draw a programme towards empowerment of women and youth in our different

80 Districts addressing emotional and social needs. And should be an ongoing programme.

81 Build a relationship with the correctional centre for rejected children to reintegrate them in the community and

82 unify them with their families.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Congregational Rights and Pastoral Evaluation	
Submitted by	Bishop John Hurst Adams and Bishop A. J. Richardson	
Contact	mbush@11thdistrictamec.org	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2008, Pages91-104, Sections VI-VIII

Intent

To establish a starting point for evaluating the variety of leadership roles of pastors, to the end that pastors will be encouraged to perform at their optimal best, serving conscientiously, effectively, being held accountable to the denomination and the congregations being served.

Rationale

The Church is both organism and organization. It is spiritual; it is business. This blend, at the core of our being, requires checks and balances to insure pastoral and congregational effectiveness to be among the highest priorities and ideals to which Christians aspire. The evaluation that calls pastors to account for leading effectively must be related to a biblical standard of excellence, the heart of the shepherds as well as the best-practice expectations of the people who desire to see the congregation in which they worship and work grow and flourish in peace and love in Christ. The Book of Discipline has from the beginning provided a standard of pastoral performance and expectations, but does not provide a mechanism by which the pastor is actually interviewed, challenged for ways to grow and improve in certain areas. Pastors have only been evaluated informally on the basis of doing what is required for the Conference (i.e. paying the budget), and a vote of confidence (or not) in the Fourth Quarterly Conference, but rarely a question of competence. Perhaps a pre-conference letter of support to the bishop. This initiative brings balance to the decades old Pastors Bill of Rights. Bishops are evaluated by the Episcopal Committee

1 Current Text

2 The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2008, Pages91-104, Sections VI-VIII

3 Amended Text

4 INSERT NEW SECTION IX IN SEQUENCE FOLLOWING SECTION VI - THE ITINERANT MINISTRY; SECTION VII THE

5 MINISTERS BILL OF RIGHTS; SECTION VIII MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

6 BEGIN NEW SECTION

7 IX. EVALUATION OF PASTORS

8 Pastors shall be evaluated twice per year in each local congregation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

9 Purpose

10 Organizational structures require routine evaluations at the executive levels of management: holding everyone

11 accountable, to develop quality leadership, to engage in best practices, risk-taking, and innovation in order to

determine the structural health of the organization. It is a necessary process for establishing benchmarks for improvement in the leader and in the organization being led. The evaluation of pastors is a necessary step in taking the ministry of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to greater heights in faithfulness to our calling and our historic ministry.

#### Process

A Committee on Evaluation shall be one of the standing committees of the Board of Stewards. The evaluation should be scheduled prior to the Second and Fourth Quarterly Conferences. The Committee on Evaluation, consisting of three to five Stewards, shall sit with the pastor to consider benchmarks of ministry goals and objectives, as well the effectiveness of the leadership style of the pastor. This is not intended to be an inquisition or an opportunity to undermine the authority of the pastor, but to engage in mature, Christian dialogue to help the pastor improve in competencies that will assist the congregation in creating an environment of love, fruitful ministry, and of reaching its fullest potential at being the beloved community of faith. The evaluation should consist of the following areas of pastoral concern:

The Pastor as Liturgist: Evaluators are encouraged to share their impressions and their perceptions about worship that is inspiring and serves as a continuing impetus for spiritual formation in discipleship.

The Pastor as Preacher: Evaluators are encouraged to offer honest reflection about the sermons, evaluating sermons on being thoughtful, persuasive, motivating and helpful in expressing the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ.

The Pastor as Shepherd: Evaluators are to consider the pastors ability to listen, to determine if the pastor shows a level of mature understanding, if the pastor is proficient in counseling, if the pastor is trustworthy on matters of confidentiality, if the pastor demonstrates a loving, caring demeanor, and whether the pastor is diligent with appropriate pastoral visitation.

The Pastor as Teacher: The evaluators should determine if the pastor conducts regular Bible study, and whether the pastor is faithful to Methodist/Wesleyan theology, Discipline and Community Discipleship?

The Pastor as Administrator: The evaluators are to ascertain if the pastor has given attention to structure, organization, human resources, financial resources, property resources and of best practices regarding effective, results-oriented administration.

The Pastor as Resident Theologian/Ethicist: The evaluators are expected to discern if the pastor shows evidence of being interested in studying and pursuing the deep things of God on matters related to matters in the community on what he or she perceives God to be saying and doing, and what God is expecting of us?

The Pastor as Representative: The evaluators are expected to determine if pastor is committed to matters of justice issues in the community, is present in ecumenical settings, has familiarity with those in seats of power, is willing to work with members and leaders of other faith traditions for the greater good, and is open to working with and for the left-out and marginalized.

The Pastor as Programmer: The evaluators are to seek honest reflection on whether the pastor gives evidence of imagination; whether the pastor provides guidance and assistance to volunteers or paid staff members, and whether the pastor shows ability to design programs, delegate and designate responsibility for implementation and satisfactory outcomes.

The Pastor as Relationship Builder: The evaluation team is to determine if there is evidence of sincere Christian fellowship, a sense of we-ness among the congregants, an atmosphere of trust, communal and respect.


The Pastor as Prophet/Advocate: The evaluators should determine whether the pastor engenders a commitment to the mission of the church, operates within the scope of biblical ethics, justice , the rule of law, showing evidence of gifts of the Spirit, a regard for the poor and oppressed, a passion for education and economic democracy.

The Pastor as Steward: The evaluators should determine whether the pastor is model of excellent stewardship, faithful in tithes and offerings, and is first among the contributors.

The Pastor as Leader: The evaluators should consider the pastors gifts of vision, ability to plan, strategize, articulate the vision, stand as an example, and represent the embodiment of love.

Results of the interview will be shared with the Presiding Elder and will form the basis of the Stewards vote of confidence, or lack thereof, at the Fourth Quarterly Conference. It will also serve the purpose of measuring improvements in the performance of duty in a wide range of pastoral leadership competencies; and will become a useful and objective tool for the Presiding Elder in making recommendations to the Bishop regarding pastoral appointments.



		
Bill Number		
Title	The Annual Conference	
Submitted by	Ralph L. Wilson, 11th Episcopal District	
Contact	vmitchell4@comcast.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Section II-The Annual Conference, item C-Attendance pages 207-208


Intent

To codify what is already a common practice.

Rationale

To give dignity to those persons who retire in Office

- 1 Current Text
- 2 Section II-The Annual Conference, item C-Attendance pages 207-208
- 3 Amended Text
- 4 Add :
- 5 1. The order of roll:
- 6 a. Presiding Bishop (any other active Bishops present)
- 7 b. Retired Bishop(s) (whose membership is in the Conference)
- 8 c. General Officer(s) (whose membership is in the Conference)
- 9 d. Retired General Officer(s) (whose membership is in the Conference)
- 10 e. Presiding Elders of the Conference (in order of appointment)
- 11 f. Retired Presiding Elders of the Conference (in order of appointment)
- 12 Re number current text from numbers 1-3 to 2-4
- 13 FUNDING; There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Connectional Presiding Elders Council	
Submitted by	Ralph L. Wilson, 11th Episcopal District	
Contact	vmitchell4@comcast.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Section VII, Page 442, Article 4 VI-Membership

Intent

To codify what is already being practiced

Rationale

By practice Retired Presiding Elders are members of the Presiding Elders Council.

1 Current Text

2 Section VII, Page 442, Article 4 VI-Membership


3 Amended Text

4 Add:

5 and all Presiding Elders Retired by their Annual Conference shall be eligible for membership in the Presiding Elders

6 Council.

7 FUNDING; There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Exhorters	
Submitted by	Rev. Lois A. Poag-Ray, Ph.D., Dean, Board of Examiners of the Washington Conference, 2nd Episcopal District	
Contact	revccw@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 110 Section XI, The Local Ministry, Division E, Exhorters.

Intent

To provide a more definitive description of the role and duties of the Exhorter in the lay ministry of the A.M.E. Church; and to introduce a training model for Exhorters.

Rationale

Because of the expanding ministry of the church; and the many lay persons licensed as Exhorters without having a clear understanding of their role, and to assist Pastors who are unclear about the role of an Exhorter in the A.M.E. Church, there is a need for greater clarity regarding the purpose and function of Exhorters in the A. M. E. Church.

1 Current Text

2 E. Exhorters 1. Every person applying for license to exhort in any of our societies shallot the quarterly Conference  
3 of their circuit or station a recommendation from the class of which he or she is a member. 2. The Quarterly  
4 Conference shall examine him or her, and if thinks he or she is useful, the presiding elder or chairperson of the  
5 conference shall license him or her to exhort. 3. Exhorters shall be required to employ their talents and time as  
6 teachers in the church school, when it is convenient. They shall manage and lead the prayer meeting under the  
7 weekly appointment of the minister in charge.

8 F. Lay Ministry

9 Amended Text

10 (After the heading, E. Exhorters, INSERT the following:)

11 1. The Exhorter is a licensed lay minister who is uniquely gifted and called to the ministry of exhortation,  
12 sometimes biblically referred to as the ministry of encouragement. He or she is specifically authorized by the  
13 church and qualified by training, to perform certain functions in the operation of the local church which may  
14 include teaching in the church school, leading the monthly Love Feast, and conducting the weekly Prayer Meeting.  
15 Such assignments are never to include performing any of the priestly functions within the church.

2. Governance and Authority of Ministry (Insert statement #1 from the current text; insert statement #2 from the current text; add the following:) The Exhorter works under the supervision of the Pastor in charge, and is amenable to the Quarterly Conference. The license to exhort shall be valid for one year, and is renewable at the first Quarterly Conference of each year, upon the recommendation of the pastor in charge and proof that the Exhorter has participated in the Exhorters Training Program or some other appropriate workshops or seminars that provide training in the areas of local ministry to which the exhorter has been assigned.

3. Exhorters shall be required to participate in a program of training to be offered by the presiding elder district, and if possible, using a program model which provides 20-30 hours of instruction that includes workshops lasting for at least one to two hours in the following subjects: Introduction to Licensed Lay Ministry; Understanding The Role of the Exhorter in the A.M.E. Church; A.M.E. Church Doctrine and History; Workshops on Preparing the Exhortation; A.M.E. Church Polity, Structure, Protocol, & Ethics; Teaching in the Church School; Evangelistic Outreach; Leading Others to Christ; Leading and Preparing for the Love Feast; Leading and Preparing for the Prayer Meeting; Bible Survey The Gospels and New Testament History and Letters; Bible Survey The Pentateuch and Old Testament History; Bible Survey The Old Testament Poetry and Prophets; The Work of Exhortation; Review and Evaluation. It should be noted that the recommended model for an Exhorters Training Program is not designed to be a Bible Course; nor a course in Public Speaking or Church Doctrine; nor a course in Faith Development, Psychology, or Interpersonal Relations. However, such programs should provide the Exhorter with an expanded understanding of the role of the exhorter as a lay minister operating within the overall structure and polity of the A.M.E. Church, and a deeper appreciation of his or her function in the ministry of the local church.

4. An Exhorter, so called, may serve in this position as a permanent lay minister in the local church setting; or at the discretion of the presiding elder, the licensing of an individual to exhort may serve as a preliminary step towards the ordained ministry in the A.M.E. Church.

(Note that this addition to this division of Section XI will require that the heading of the following division be changed from Lay Ministry to Lay Preacher.)

		
Bill Number		
Title	The H.B. Senatle AME Church Centre.	
Submitted by	Bishop Paul J.M. Kawimbe	
Contact	kawimbeforbishop@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 255  
Section VIII. The H.B. Senatle AME Church Centre Johannesburg, South Africa.

Intent

To provide administrative structure for precise operation of the H.B. Senatle AME Church Centre.

Rationale

The current text does not clearly describe the operational structure of the H.B. Senatle AME Church Centre.

1 Current Text

- 2 The affairs of H.B. Senatle AME Church Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa shall be managed by a Board of trustees  
3 dully elected by the Nineteenth Episcopal District.

4 Amended Text

5 NAME

- 6 The name of the structure shall be The HB Senate AME Church Centre (hereinafter referred)

7 PURPOSES

- 8 The centre shall have a fourfold purpose:

- 9 1) As the headquarters of the Nineteenth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.  
10 2) As an income-generating project for the 19th episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.  
11 3) As a centre for community service for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and  
12 4) As a sanctuary, known as the Anna Senate Chapel.

13 ADMINISTRATION

- 14 The administration and policy making responsibility of the centre shall be vested in the Board of Trustees  
15 (hereinafter referred to as the Trustees)

16 MEMBERS OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

- 17 Trustee Board shall consist of the following:

- 18 1) Presiding Bishop of the 19th Episcopal District,  
19 2) The Episcopal Supervisor of the Womens Missionary Society,  
20 3) One Presiding Elder from each Annual Conference,  
21 4) Episcopal President of the 19th Episcopal District Lay Organisation,  
22 5) Episcopal President of the Womens Missionary Society,  
23 6) Pastor of Anna Senate AME Church at 18 Phillip Street,  
24 7) Episcopal president of RAYAC,  
25 8) Episcopal President of Sons of Allen  
26 9) One lay person from each Annual Conference trustees elected by the conference

27 QOURUM

28 Five members shall constitute a quorum. In the case of a declared emergency, the Chairperson and two appointed  
29 trustees shall meet and transact the business of the Trustee Board.

30 OFFICERS OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

31 The bishop shall be the chairperson. The bishop shall nominate from among the members of the board the vice  
32 chairperson, secretary, assistant secretary, and treasurer.

33 MEETINGS

34 The board shall meet once every three months and at the call of the bishop.

35 FINANCIAL YEAR

36 The financial year of the Centre shall end on September 30th.

37 FINANCIAL BOOKS AND AUDITING OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

38 The Trustee Board shall keep proper financial books, which must be audited annually, and the audit report is to be  
39 submitted at the bishops plenary meeting.

40 FUNCTIONS OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

41 To raise and to supervise the raising of funds with which to eliminate the mortgage bond/lease with the Christian  
42 Development Trustee or any other creditor of the board.

43 To encourage the use of the centre by welfare organisations that provide service to the community and;

44 To satisfy the obligatory accounts of the Centre, after which an investment program will be implemented to assist  
45 with church development.

46 ELECTION OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

47 Board members shall be elected at the plenary meeting of the presiding bishop at the beginning of the  
48 quadrennial.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Nineteenth District	
Submitted by	Bishop Paul J.M. Kawimbe	
Contact	kawimbeforbishop@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 230-231, Section VII. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOUNDARIES S. NINETEENTH DISTRICT

Intent

To delete the current text in order to provide the accurate names of the Presiding Elders District of Nineteenth Episcopal District.


Rationale

Names have changed due to expansion of work and easy management.

- 1 Current Text
- 2 Delete current Text
- 3 Amended Text
- 4 Nineteenth District
- 5 1) Orangia Annual Conference
- 6 Consists of the following Presiding Elder Districts: Bethlehem, Bloemfontein, Goldfields,
- 7 Heilbron, Kroonstad and Thaba-Nchu.
- 8 2) East Annual Conference
- 9 Consists of the following Presiding Elder Districts: Wilberforce, DS Modisapodi, Charlotte
- 10 Maxeke, Springs, Highveld and Ilanga.
- 11 3) West Annual Conference
- 12 Consists of the following Presiding Elder Districts: Greater Johannesburg, Potchefstroom,
- 13 Lichtenburg, Khunwana and Mmabatho
- 14 4) M.M. Mokone Memorial Annual Conference
- 15 Consists of the following Presiding Elder Districts: Capital, Polokwane, Ga-Rankuwa,
- 16 Bela-Bela, North-End and Vhembe.
- 17 5) Natal Annual Conference



- 18 Consists of the following Presiding Elder Districts: Durban, Bizana, Midlands and
- 19 Mkhanyakude.
- 20 FINANCIAL IMPACT: NONE

		
Bill Number		
Title	CONVO	
Submitted by	Valerie G. Bell and Selerya O. Moore, 2nd Episcopal District	
Contact	mooresel@verizon.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Presently not in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012.

Intent

To provide a more definitive description of the CONVO process and purpose.

Rationale

Due to the increasing cost of the General Conference, approximately \$8,000.00 per hour; verses the cost to convene a CONVO, approximately \$8,000.00 for the entire gathering, the CONVOS should be the process where proposed legislation is presented, discussed and debated. Thus reducing lengthy deliberations on the floor of the General Conference regarding proposed legislation. Following each CONVO General Board and Commission members, as well as other clergy and laity who attended would be able to be intentional during discussions in their respective Episcopal Districts regarding preparation for voting on legislation to be presented during the General Conference.

1 Current Text

2 NONE

3 Amended Text

4 New Text: Part VII. Section III, Sub-Section E. 1. u.

5 Upon the call by the Council of Bishops, the General Secretary/Chief Information Officer (CIO) shall notify the

6 General Board and global Church that the purpose of the two CONVOS prior to the General Conference shall be to

7 introduce and vet (examine, scrutinize, assess, and/or evaluate) proposed legislation. The said CONVOS shall be

8 held at the sites of the third and fourth Bishops Council and General Board meetings; and shall be 1 days prior to

9 or 1 days after the said meetings. CONVO attendees shall engage in intentional robust discussion regarding


10 proposed legislation. Upon the CONVO attendees return to their Episcopal Districts, attendees are expected to

11 present and discuss said legislation with clergy and laity in their Episcopal Districts.

12 FUNDING: There is no additional cost - Since the CONVOS would be held at the site of the aforementioned

13 meetings that the Bishops and members of the General Board are scheduled to attend. As is the current

14 practice/trend, other attendees would be responsible for their own expenses to attend each CONVO.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Constitution and By-Laws	
Submitted by	Dr. Willie C. Glover, Connectional Lay Organization President	
Contact	drwgc@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part XII, Section III, Page 382.

Intent

To Replace and Update the Constitution and By-Laws Adopted at the August, 2015 Biennial

Rationale

To Incorporate in the 2016 Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church the Current Constitution and By-Laws of the Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

1 Current Text

2 2012 Connectional Lay Organization Constitution and By-Laws completely revised.

3 Amended Text

4

5 ARTICLE I – NAME

6 *Section 1.* The name of this organization shall be the Connectional Lay Organization of the  
7 African Methodist Episcopal Church.

8

9 ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

10 *Section 1.* Mission Statement. The Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church  
11 is commissioned to teach, train, and empower its members for lay ministry, global leadership  
12 and service following the tenets of Jesus Christ.

13

14 *Section 2.* The purpose of this organization shall be to organize and train the laity of the African  
15 Methodist Episcopal Church so that lay persons may maximally utilize their God given abilities  
16 and skills to improve and extend the kingdom, to create happiness, peace, and harmony among  
17 its members.

18

19 *Section 3.* Objectives – To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives are adopted.

20 a. To instill in the membership of the church a love for, and an appreciation of, the history,  
21 traditions, principles and development of African Methodism by encouraging,  
22 motivating, and educating all lay persons.

23 b. To keep forever alive the sacred memory of Richard Allen, the illustrious founder of the  
24 AMEC.

- c. To advocate respect and loyalty at all times to constituted authority and leadership.
- d. To encourage the laity to support the total program of the church in the local congregation, in the community, and throughout the Connection.
- e. To foster a systematic and regular study of *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* and parliamentary procedure, to the end that greater knowledge and information may be disseminated among the laity, and with the further purpose of encouraging lay members to participate more largely in the general functioning and supervision of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- f. To foster, influence, and support all constructive and progressive legislation for the church that promotes the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- g. To encourage development, recognition, and utilization of the most appropriate operational practices and modern technology in conducting the activities of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- h. To promote the spread of personal evangelism through activities designed to prepare lay members for appropriately conveying God's Word.
- i. To provide training in Christian stewardship, which causes lay members to recognize that the connotation of stewardship addresses more than giving money.
- j. To increase the circulation of church periodicals.
- k. To provide for the orderly and systematic training of lay persons, especially officers, in order that they might more effectively perform their service responsibilities.
- l. To promote activities which will result in harmonious fellowship for lay persons throughout the Connection.
- m. To help in the support of the AME educational institutions.
- n. To give financial assistance to the Connectional Lay Economic Development Corporation (CLEDC) in support of Connectional programs.

### ARTICLE III – DIVISIONS

*Section 1.* The Connectional Lay Organization shall be comprised of the Episcopal District, Conference Lay, District of the Annual Conference Lay Organizations, where organized, and Organizations of a Station or Circuit. The divisions shall mirror the responsibilities of the Connectional Organization.

*Section II.* The District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference is optional, and shall only be organized where the Conference Lay Organization determines it to be necessary for the efficient conduct of its business. If such a determination is made, the Conference Lay President shall, after giving fourteen (14) days written notice, inclusive of the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting, to each charge in the district, convene and organize the District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference. The District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference, where organized, shall bear the same relationship to the Conference Lay Organization as the Conference Lay Organization bears to the Episcopal District Lay Organization.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership in this organization is open to all un-ordained members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in good and regular standing, in their local, Conference, and Episcopal District Lay Organizations. Good and regular standing means every member is to be governed by the Constitution of the Lay Organization, pays required dues as set by his/her local lay organization, attends a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the local lay organization meetings, and participates in the Conference, districts of the Annual Conference, and Episcopal District Lay Organization levels.

*Section II.* The Connectional Lay Organization membership to the Biennial Session shall be as follows:

- a. all elected officers of the Connectional Lay Organization.
- b. all persons holding the designation &/or office of President Emeritus.
- c. all Episcopal District Lay Organization Presidents, Directors of Lay Activities and Young Adult Representatives (YAR).
- d. six (6) elected delegates from each Episcopal District Lay Organization, of whom at least one (1) shall be a young adult, ages 18-35.
- e. all Conference Lay Organization Presidents.
- f. six (6) elected delegates from each Conference Lay Organization, of whom at least one (1) shall be a young adult, ages 18-35.
- g. Each president or an elected representative of each duly organized District Lay Organization of an Annual Conference. A duly organized District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference shall be an organization reporting to the Conference Lay Organization's Annual Meeting or which is recognized by the Conference as an organization.
- h. Each president or an elected representative of each organized Station or Circuit Organization.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

*Section 1.* The elected Officers of the Connectional Lay Organization and its Divisions shall be:

- a. President
- b. First Vice President
- c. Second Vice President\*
- d. Third Vice President\*
- e. Recording Secretary
- f. Assistant Recording Secretary\*
- g. Corresponding Secretary\*
- h. Treasurer
- i. Financial Secretary\*
- j. Chaplain
- k. Historiographer\*
- l. Parliamentarian\*
- m. Director of Lay Activities
- n. Director of Public Relations\*

111 o. Young Adult Representative  
112 (\*Elected at discretion of Divisions, see Article III of this Constitution)  
113

114 A. Duties and Responsibilities. The President of the Connectional Lay Organization shall:

- 115 1. Lead with vision and integrity. This includes serving as a spokesperson for laity in the  
116 church, a representative for lay ministry in ecumenical and interfaith gatherings, an  
117 advocate in public policy arenas.
- 118 2. Preside over its Biennial Sessions during regular, special, or emergency meetings, the  
119 Executive Board, and all other official meetings of this organization.
- 120 3. Be the active head of said organization, and shall be responsible for seeing that the  
121 Constitution and Bylaws of this organization, as well as the orders and policies of the  
122 Executive Board, are fully carried out.
- 123 4. Be responsible for expanding and developing lay work throughout the Connection  
124 through channels of the Episcopal District Lay Organizations.
- 125 5. Be responsible for such other duties as may be usual and customary to the position, and  
126 which may be assigned from time to time by the Executive Board, and the directives  
127 approved by the Biennial Session.
- 128 6. Appoint chairpersons of all Standing, Convention, and Ad Hoc Committees.
- 129 7. Serve as a member of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal  
130 Church by virtue of his/her office and
- 131 8. The Connectional President or his/her designee shall preside over all the election of  
132 officers on the Episcopal District level.

133  
134 B. *Duties and Responsibilities. The First Vice President shall:*

- 135 1. Be responsible for Membership Recruitment, Retention/and Coordinate such duties as  
136 assigned by the President and
- 137 2. Assume the complete duties of the President during an absence or when it has been  
138 determined by the Executive Board that the President can no longer perform the duties.

139  
140 C. *Duties and Responsibilities. The Second Vice President shall:*

- 141 1. The Second Vice President shall be responsible for Organizational Effectiveness and  
142 Evaluation/coordinate such duties as are assigned by the President and the Executive  
143 Board.
- 144 2. Serves in the absence of the President and First Vice President, shall preside at all the  
145 meetings and assume all duties of the office of President.

146  
147 D. *Duties and Responsibilities. The Third Vice President shall:*

- 148 1. Coordinate such duties as Personal Evangelism and coordinating those efforts with the  
149 appropriate departments, within the church, and in the absence of the President, First  
150 Vice President, and Second Vice President, shall preside at the meetings and assume all  
151 the duties of the office of President.

152  
153 E. *Duties and Responsibilities. The Recording Secretary shall:*

- 154 1. Serve as Secretary of the Biennial Session and the Connectional Executive Board.

2. Be responsible for recording attendance, accurate minutes of all business transacted during meetings, and for reading and distributing minutes of any previous meetings when called upon to do so by the President.
3. In the absence of the President and Vice Presidents, the Recording Secretary shall preside until a chairperson *pro tempore* is elected.
4. Prepare, for the presiding officer, a statement of unfinished business to come before the meeting and a report of the Executive Board meetings to be presented at the Biennial Session.
5. Hold the bond of the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary.

*F. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Assistant Recording Secretary shall:

1. Assist the Recording Secretary in all duties as outlined above.
2. In the absence of the Secretary, shall perform the duties of the Secretary.

*G. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Corresponding Secretary shall:

1. Insure lay ministry focus through effective communication. This includes sharing congratulations, well wishes, condolences and other news about laity.
2. Report pertinent information to the Executive Board, and reply to correspondence as directed by the President and/or the Executive Board.
3. Maintain a network of internal communications between the Connectional Lay Organization and its subordinate bodies.
4. Compose communication as needed and/or directed by the President. Maintain liaison with the Director of Public Relations to insure publication of pertinent information.

*H. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Treasurer shall:

1. Serve as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee which is responsible for preparation of the organization's budget for the fiscal year.
2. Receive and disburse all funds. Disbursements, shall be made, in accordance with the line item budget approved by the biennial. Expenditures not reflected/listed in the budget must be approved by the President and the Executive Board with appropriate justification.
3. Keep accurate records and give an itemized report at each Board meeting and the Biennial Session.
4. Be bonded and said bond shall be held by the Recording Secretary.
5. Have the accounts audited, annually, by an Audit/Accounting Firm approved by the Executive Board.

*I. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Financial Secretary shall:

1. Maintain an independent set of records of all financial transactions and assist with the work in concert with the Treasurer.
2. Serve as member of the Budget and Finance Committee.
3. Receive and record all funds. All funds shall be turned over to the treasurer within a period not to exceed ten (10) days.
4. Write vouchers countersigned by the President that authorize expenditures, pursuant to

199 the budget passed by the biennial, which are to be paid by the Treasurer.

200 5. Be bonded and said bond shall held by the Recording Secretary

201  
202 *J. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Chaplain shall:

203 1. Make adequate preparation for each Bible Study and Devotional Service, utilizing  
204 creative styles that motivates and draws participants into the worship experience.

205 2. Provide spiritual leadership to this organization.

206 3. Maintain effective communication with the Chaplains on the Episcopal District level.

207  
208 *K. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Historiographer shall:

209 1. Be responsible for gathering, assembling, and maintaining a written and pictorial record  
210 of the activities and achievements of this organization;

211 2. Act as custodian for all photographs, citations, awards, trophies, and other mementos of  
212 the Connectional Lay Organization;

213 3. Compile a written Biennial history of this organization and submit it as a report to each  
214 Biennial Session, place a copy in the archives to be kept in the headquarters of the AME  
215 Church.

216 4. Archives, find place to keep historical records.

217  
218 *L. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Parliamentarian shall:

219 1. Advise the President or presiding officer concerning questions of parliamentary  
220 procedure.

221 2. Be seated next to the President at all meetings.

222 3. Follow The Constitution and Bylaws of this organization, the Doctrine and Discipline of  
223 the African Methodist Episcopal Church and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised,  
224 latest edition, at all meetings.

225 4. Serve as Consultant to the Constitution and Bylaws, Rules, and other committees as  
226 needed.

227  
228 *M. Duties and Responsibilities.* The Director of Lay Activities shall:

229 1. Maintain a close working relationship with the President and the Young Adult  
230 Representative in the planning, developing and implementing of the complete  
231 programmatic thrust of this organization.

232 2. Plan, design, and direct all educational/training programs & other activities of this  
233 organization at the Biennial Session, including but not limited to Training Institute,  
234 Banquets, Luncheons, Scholarships, Awards and Speakers in consultation with the  
235 President and approval of the Executive Board.

236 3. Maintain a working relationship with Episcopal District Lay Directors.

237 4. Be responsible for planning and implementing a training program and course of study in  
238 accordance with the mission, purposes and objectives of the Lay Organization. The  
239 proposed training program and course of study, inclusive of proposed theme and  
240 outline for the study guide, shall be presented to the Executive Board for approval at the  
241 Executive Board Meeting immediately preceding the next Biennial Session.

242 5. The proposed theme and program will be presented at the Fall Executive Board



preceding the Biennial Session for approval. Upon approval, the theme and Study Guide will be available for distribution at the Biennial Session and shall be forwarded from the Connectional Director of Lay Activities to the Episcopal District Directors of Lay Activities within a period not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days after the closing of the Biennial session. Upon receipt, the Episcopal District Directors will immediately forward the course of study to the Conference Directors of Lay Activities.

6. Conference Directors of Lay Activities shall forward the course of study to the District of the District of the Annual Conference, and Station or Circuit Directors of Lay Activities. The training program and course of study shall reach the Directors of Lay Activities within fourteen (14) days after the Connectional Director of Lay Activities has forwarded same.
7. A full report of progress made in the implementation of the course of study and the work of the Director shall be given at each Biennial Session and Executive Board Meeting as outlined in this constitution.
8. Prepare an annual and biennial line item budget to reflect the work of this office for submission to the Budget Committee.

N. Duties and Responsibilities. The Director of Public Relation shall:

1. Oversee the production of the official magazine of the organization, editing, and publishing a monthly periodical containing news of general interest to the laity and news regarding the organization.
2. Solicit and edit articles for the publication on topics that will appeal to, inspire and motivate subscribers;
3. Oversee the entire publication process, including seeking bids from publishers;
4. Provide for promotion, circulation, subscription fulfillment, and advertising solicitation;
5. Prepare an annual &/ or biennial line item budget for the magazine's publication for submission to the Budget Committee.
6. Seek to bring about harmony of understanding between the church and public through the channeling of information to various media.
7. Be responsible for all press releases and public relations for and during any Lay Organization meeting.
8. Disseminate news items of interest received from the Episcopal districts through Newsletter and/or multi-media processes.
9. Oversee the CLO website and any internal or external documents, including all social media networking.

O. Duties and Responsibilities. The Young Adult Representative shall:

1. Be responsible for implementing teaching and training opportunities for Young Adults in conjunction with the Director of Lay Activities, and establishing working relationships with other relevant Young Adult Auxiliaries and Ministries within, and outside the AME Church.
2. Prepare an annual and biennial line item budget to reflect the work of this office for submission to the Budget Committee.
3. Advocate for Young Adults concerns to the Connectional Executive Board and beyond.

- 287 4. Facilitate Lay Organization Young Adults events with approval of the Executive Board.  
288 5. Voice the concerns and visions of a new generation of laity, and serve as a Christian  
289 mentor to a younger generation of African Methodists.  
290  
291

292 Section 2. The Annual Audit shall include the records of all officers handling finances of the  
293 Connectional Lay Organization and shall be conducted by an external licensed, bonded, and  
294 insured Certified Public Accounting firm, which shall report its findings, annually, to the  
295 Executive Board for review and approval. This Audit Report shall serve as the basis for the  
296 Annual Report of the Connectional Lay Organization as required by the General Board. Upon  
297 approval of the Executive Board, the Audit is then presented to the Biennial session which will  
298 include an annual programmatic report from each office with an operational budget.  
299

#### 300 ARTICLE VI – NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCEDURES

301 *Section 1.* All officers and members of the Connectional Lay Organization and its Divisions shall  
302 be members in good and regular standing in their Station or Circuit Organization to participate  
303 in elections and voting.  
304

305 *Section 2.* Any person seeking an elected office in the Connectional Lay Organization must be a  
306 member in “good and regular standing” in the organization and must possess the qualifications  
307 required for the position being sought. Any candidate for elected office, must have registered  
308 and attended at least three (3) Biennial Sessions as a delegate, alternate, or observer within the  
309 ten (10) year period immediately preceding the election year. Registration shall be confirmed  
310 from the official registration records to be provided to the nominating committee upon its  
311 appointment.  
312

313 *Section 3.* All persons seeking an elected office must submit a “Letter of Intent” with  
314 qualifications signed by the Episcopal District President to the Chairperson of the Nominating  
315 Committee. The format for the letter of Intent will be provided by the Nominating Committee  
316 and returned. Letter must be returned by certified mail, its international equivalent and/or  
317 electronic communications postmarked on or before January 15<sup>th</sup> of the election year. This  
318 deadline date will constitute the close of all nominations submitted to the Nominating  
319 Committee. There shall be no nominations from the floor of the Biennial Session.  
320

321 *Section 4.* All candidates seeking an elected office must have demonstrated active participation  
322 on/in the Episcopal District, Annual Conference, Districts of the Annual Conference (where they  
323 exist), and local church levels within the ten (10) year period preceding the election year.  
324

325 Section 5. No elected officer shall hold more than two (2) elected offices beyond the local  
326 organization.  
327

328 Section 6. Members of the Nominating Committee shall be ineligible for nomination by the  
329 committee for any elected position to be filled (where applicable on the local level).  
330

Section 7. The Nominating Committee shall consist of seven (7) persons appointed by the President with nominees to be confirmed by the Executive Board. The President in selecting committee members shall follow these guidelines:

- a. There shall be no more than one person appointed from an Episcopal District; and
- b. Appointments shall be globally inclusive and sensitive to age diversity, at least one (1) person between the ages of 18 - 35, one (1) person from Districts 14 - 20, and all persons must have demonstrated experience with the nominating process as outlined in Article VI, section . Selection of committee members must respect the guidelines that govern the committee's duties and reporting timelines.

#### Section 8. Duties of the Committee

- a. At least nine (9) months prior to the Biennial Session the committee shall call for nominations through a notice submitted for publication in every official periodical of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, inclusive of but not limited to, the Christian Recorder,(printed and online versions); the Connectional Lay Organization's "We Speak, the Connectional Lay Organization website, and any other appropriate printed or online communication. Such Notice shall inform members when, how and where nomination forms can be obtained. Nomination forms shall also be sent to Executive Board members and Episcopal District Presidents for distribution to interested persons. The nomination form shall request biographical data and other pertinent information which will aid in the qualifying of candidates. Such forms shall be returned to the chair of the nominating committee by prospective nominees, bearing the signature of the Episcopal District Lay President, no later than January 15<sup>th</sup> prior to the convening of the Biennial Session.
- b. The committee shall thoroughly examine any and all necessary information regarding nominees for elected offices being sought. Each nominee must be notified of his/her eligibility which signals authorization to campaign for the designated office. From those persons found qualified for the offices being sought, the committee shall prepare a slate of nominees, listing the qualifications of the nominees for offices to be elected at the Biennial Session. On or before January 15<sup>th</sup> or six (6) months prior to the convening of the Biennial Session, (or whichever comes first), the slate will be distributed to the Executive Board of the Connectional Lay Organization for approval prior to being provided to each Episcopal District.
- c. No political campaigning, for office shall take place before candidates are qualified as nominees by the Nominating Committee. Campaigning is defined as placing ads in Souvenir Journals or any AME Church Publication at any level as a candidate, distributing campaign literature/paraphernalia or visits to formal functions of the Connectional Lay Organization or its subordinate bodies with the expressed purpose of campaigning. Participation in unapproved campaign activities will result in valid disqualification for that candidate if confirmed by the Nominating Committee and the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

*Section 1.* Officers shall be elected at the Biennial Session, unless otherwise provided for herein. All elections shall be by secret ballot, (electronic or paper), except in the case where the office is not contested. When there is only one candidate for office the chair can take a voice vote or declare that the nominee is elected, effecting the election by unanimous consent or acclamation. A majority vote shall be necessary to elect. Elected officers shall assume office immediately upon installation. The Installation of Officers shall be the final order of business at the closing Business Session of the Biennial Convention. Any method of election in any division other than by secret ballot, except in the case of uncontested offices, shall be declared null and void by the Connectional Lay Organization.

*Section 2.* Connectional Lay Organization Officers shall be elected to a four (4) year term at the Biennial meeting following the regular session of the General Conference.

*Section 3. Term limitation.* The elected officers of the Connectional Lay Organization and its Divisions shall serve no more than eight (8) consecutive years in the same office.

*Section 4.* If an officer completes a term of office which was vacated by the incumbent due to death, illness, resignation, &/or other conditions approved by the Executive Board, the unexpired portion of the term, will not count as a full term for the purposes of term limitation.

*Section 5. Transition Period.* A transitional period of sixty (60) days or 8 weeks beginning at the close of a Biennial Session is provided for outgoing officers to reconcile files, records, and make inventories before transferring them to incoming officers. Outgoing officers shall complete the transfer of all files, records, books, papers and property belonging to the organization to the incoming officers on or before the end of the sixty day period.

*Section 6. Vacancy in Office of President and/or Vice Presidents.* If a vacancy occurs in the office of President due to death, resignation, disability or temporary inability or other cause, the First Vice President shall immediately assume the office of President, for the unexpired term of office; the second vice-president shall ascend to the office of first vice-president, and the third vice-president becomes second vice-president, leaving the vacancy to be filled in the office of the lowest ranking vice-president. The president shall, with the confirmation of the Executive Board appoint an active member, possessing qualifications for the office of the third vice president, to fill the vacancy if the remainder of the term is less than two (2) years. A majority vote by the Executive Board shall determine the result. If the remainder of the term of office is greater than two (2) years, a special election shall be held by the Executive Board within forty-five (45) days, of the vacancy date, to fill this position. The Letter of Intent shall be sent to the person who last served as Chairperson of the Nominating Committee by each person who wishes to be a candidate for the office of third vice president. All voting shall be by secret ballot (electronic or paper). Any person appointed &/or elected to fill an unexpired term of President shall subsequently be eligible to be elected to two (2) full four (4) year terms in accordance with this constitution and bylaws.

419  
420 *Section 7.* Vacancy of Elected Officer other than President and/or Vice Presidents. If a vacancy  
421 occurs in an elected officer's position, other than President and/or Vice Presidents, due to  
422 death, resignation, disability or inability to serve, the President shall, with the confirmation of  
423 the Executive Board, appoint an active member, possessing qualifications for the office, to fill  
424 the vacancy if the remainder of the term is less than two (2) years. A majority vote by the  
425 Executive Board shall determine the result. If the remainder of the term of office is greater  
426 than two (2) years, a special election shall be held by the Executive Board within forty-five (45)  
427 days, of the vacancy date, to fill this position. The Letter of Intent shall be sent to the person  
428 who last served as Chairperson of the Nominating Committee by each person who wishes to be  
429 a candidate for the vacant office. All voting shall be by secret ballot (electronic or paper). Any  
430 person appointed &/ or elected to fill an unexpired term of office shall subsequently be eligible  
431 to be elected to two full four (4) year terms in accordance with this constitution and bylaws.

432  
433  
434 *Section 8.* Removal of Elected Officer. The Organizational and Officers Effectiveness  
435 Committee shall give its findings annually. Any elected officer, not performing his/her duties,  
436 as outlined in this Constitution and Bylaw, shall be notified in writing by the President, of  
437 his/her failure to perform designated duties, with a copy forwarded to the Chairman of the  
438 General Board Commission on Lay Organization, and the Executive Board. If failure to perform  
439 his/her duties continue for a period of ninety (90) days after notification, the matter will be  
440 referred to the Executive Board for action. If the President is not performing his/her duties as  
441 outlined in this Constitution and By-Laws, he/she shall be notified in writing by the Executive  
442 Board through the Corresponding Secretary of his/her failure to perform designated duties.  
443 The Executive Board, may, in the interim of the Biennial Session remove the elected officer  
444 from office for failure to execute his/her duties and responsibilities. The final decision to  
445 suspend, expel, or remove from office shall rest exclusively with the Connectional Lay  
446 Organization in its Biennial Session. The Organizational and Officers Effectiveness Committee  
447 will give guidelines, implementation and corrective actions when deemed necessary.

448  
449 *Section 9.* Episcopal District Lay Organization Officers shall be elected quadrennially.

450  
451 *Section 10.* Conference Lay Organization Officers shall be elected biennially.

452  
453 *Section 11.* Districts of the Annual Conference Lay Organization Officers shall be elected  
454 biennially.

455  
456 *Section 12.* Station or Circuit Lay Organization Officers shall be elected annually.

457

ARTICLE VIII – QUALIFICATIONS

Each officer shall be responsible for understanding and fulfilling his/her duties and those officers with a budget shall prepare and submit an annual line item budget for approval by the Executive Board.

Section 1. The President.

- a. Qualifications. The President of the Connectional Lay Organization shall have a commitment to lay ministry as demonstrated by:
  - 1. Prior management experience, preferably in non – profit organization.
  - 2. Prior service as either an elected officer of the Annual Conference or local church Organization.
  - 3. Five (5) years of administrative, supervisory, or fiscal management experience.

Section 2. First Vice President.

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the position of First Vice President must possess the same qualifications as provided for the President.

Section 3. Second Vice President.

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the position of Second Vice President must possess the same qualifications as provided for the President.

Section 4. Third Vice President.

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the position of Third Vice President must possess the same qualifications as provided for the President.

Section 5. Recording Secretary

- a. Qualifications. All candidates seeking the office of Recording Secretary must possess:
  - 1. Proficiency in writing and composition of the English language, basic reading competency, editing and record keeping skills.
  - 2. Experience in word processing or other technology (electronic media) available for recording, storing, and retrieving information.
  - 3. Prior secretarial experience or training.
  - 4. Ability to prepare and present minutes and reports.

Section 6. Assistant Recording Secretary.

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the position of Assistant Recording Secretary must possess the same qualifications as required for the Recording Secretary.

Section 7. Corresponding Secretary

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the position of Corresponding Secretary must possess the same qualifications as required for the Recording Secretary and have experience in database management.

Section 8. Treasurer

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the office of Treasurer must demonstrate:
1. Experience in financial management, including but not limited to, the areas of accounting, bookkeeping, and finance, preferably in non-profit organizations.
  2. Five (5) years' experience working with non-profit accounting, finance, and budgeting.
  3. Ability to be bonded.
  4. Experience and knowledge with computerized financial or accounting software and financial accounting/reporting.

#### Section 9. Financial Secretary

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the office of Financial Secretary must possess the same qualifications as those of the Treasurer.

#### Section 10. Chaplain

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the position of Chaplain must demonstrate:
1. A Christian commitment, possess a high level of spiritual maturity, effective interpersonal and communication skills.
  2. Training and experience in Christian Education.
  3. Knowledge of the Bible and the AMEC Hymnal.
  4. Experience in preparing and conducting Bible study and worship.

#### Section 11. Historiographer

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the office of Historiographer must demonstrate:
1. Prior experience with emphasis in research, writing, and publishing historical information.
  2. Proficiency in English is required.
  3. Ability to use technology (electronic media, including video, photos, and other graphics) for data gathering, organizing, record keeping and writing;
  4. Knowledge of record and artifact preservation specific to an organization's founding, operations, projects, and other activities.

#### Section 12. Parliamentarian

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the office of Parliamentarian must demonstrate:
1. They are a registered Parliamentarian in good and regular standing of the National Association of Parliamentarians or an equivalent certification at the time of nomination. Where there are no qualified candidates, the President, with the approval of the Executive Board and for any fee that will be required may contract for such services to be provided, at a competitive rate to the organization as needed. Preference will be given to members of the AME Church in good and regular standing.

#### Section 13. Director of Lay Activities

- a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the office of Director of Lay Activities must

demonstrate:

1. Extensive experience in research, speech, writing and proficiency in the English language, program planning, development, designing, implementation, teaching, training, adult learning, and/or administration, and technology (electronic media, including video, photos, and other graphics) for data gathering, organizing, record keeping and writing.

Section 14. Director of Public Relations

a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the office of Director of Public Relations must demonstrate:

1. A working knowledge of media relations, marketing, sales, prior experience in preparing and distributing press releases.
2. Strong communication skills and extensive experience in English, speech, and journalism.

Section 15. Young Adult Representative

a. Qualifications. Any candidate seeking the office of Young Adult Representative shall:

1. Be between the ages of 18 – 35 at the time of election. Completion of high school and pursuing a post-secondary degree (at the optimum) is required.
2. Demonstrate visionary leadership skills through work experience or volunteer opportunities, especially with Youth and Young Adults within the church or other organizations and;
3. Possess strong abilities to provide training and demonstrate effective communication skills.

ARTICLE IX – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Board of the Connectional Lay Organization, composed of the elected officers of the organization, President Emeriti, and chairpersons of standing committees.

*Section 2.* The Executive Board shall meet at least once but no more than twice, annually, at the time and place designated by the President and members of the Executive Board. The Board shall hold two (2) meetings, immediately preceding and at the seat of, the next Biennial Session.

Section 3. Teleconference Meetings may be held to address specific matters of concern . Notice of the call with a proposed agenda must be issued by the Corresponding Secretary to members of the Executive Board no later than three (3) days prior to the call. Vacancies of officers may not be filled via teleconference call.. (Article VII, section 1)

*Section 4.* The President of the Connectional Lay Organization shall preside over the meetings of the Executive Board, and the Recording Secretary shall serve as secretary of the Executive Board.



590 *Section 5.* The Executive Board shall have the authority to carry on the work of the  
591 Connectional Lay Organization during the interim of the Biennial Sessions.

592  
593 *Section 6.* The Executive Board shall establish the rules and regulations by which it shall be  
594 governed. The Board shall have power over the supervision and direction of all affairs of the  
595 Organization during the interim of the Biennial Sessions of the Connectional Lay Organization,  
596 except that it shall not infringe upon any of the expressed constitutional provisions herein set  
597 forth and provided. Further, the Connectional Lay Organization, in its Biennial Session, may  
598 nullify, abrogate, or rescind any action of the Executive Board.

599  
600 *Section 7.* The Executive Board shall have such other authority as may be necessary to carry  
601 out the general purposes and intent of this Constitution.

602  
603 *Section 8.* The Executive Board may establish an Advisory Council to act in a purely advisory  
604 capacity. The Advisory Council may consist of past presidents of the Connectional Lay  
605 Organization and such other distinguished lay members as the President may designate. The  
606 Advisory Council shall not exceed five (5) persons.

#### 607 608 ARTICLE X – MEETINGS

609 *Section 1.* The Connectional Lay Organization shall meet biennially in its regular session.

610  
611 *Section 2.* The Biennial Session of the Connectional Lay Organization shall be held during the  
612 period July 7 to August 8<sup>th</sup>, with the Opening Worship Service being held on Sunday, except that  
613 no Opening Worship Service shall be held on a First Sunday. The first business session will  
614 begin on Monday. The site of the next Biennial Sessions shall be determined six (6) years in  
615 advance.

616  
617 *Section 3.* The Connectional President and/or a majority of the voting members of the  
618 Executive Board may call an emergency meeting of the Connectional Lay Organization when  
619 such a meeting is deemed necessary. The time, place, and object of such Special or Emergency  
620 Meeting shall be clearly set forth in the official call or notice. Only those matters expressly set  
621 out in the notice or call shall be deliberated upon, provided however, that no election of  
622 officers shall take place at a special or emergency meeting.

623  
624 *Section 4.* All delegates to the Biennial Session must be elected at a regular or properly  
625 convened meeting. The names and addresses of all delegates must be submitted to the  
626 Connectional Financial Secretary on or before April 1 of the Biennial year. These names shall be  
627 forwarded to the Connectional Director of Lay Activities by the Financial Secretary on or before  
628 May 1 of the Biennial year for the expressed purpose of expediting pre-registration for  
629 Educational sessions.

#### 630 631 ARTICLE XI – VOTING PRIVILEGES

632 *Section 1.* Voting privileges in the Connectional Lay Organization shall be confined and  
633 restricted to persons set out under Article IV of this Constitution.

634  
635 *Section 2.* No person shall be entitled to more than one (1) vote on an issue or matter in the  
636 Connectional Lay Organization, and must be personally present to exercise such privilege. No  
637 proxy or absentee voting shall be permitted.

638  
639 *Section 3.* Unless otherwise indicated, the majority vote shall prevail in determining all matters.

#### 640 641 ARTICLE XII – POWERS AND JURISDICTIONS

642 *Section 1.* The Connectional Lay Organization shall exercise prudent and appropriate authority,  
643 power, and supervision over all Episcopal District Lay Organizations established under the  
644 provisions of this Constitution.

#### 645 646 ARTICLE XIII – RESERVED AND IMPLIED POWERS

647 *Section 1.* Each Episcopal District, Annual Conference, District of the Annual Conference, and  
648 Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall be vested with the full authority to make its own  
649 Constitution and By-laws, Rules and Regulations, as may be deemed necessary for proper and  
650 orderly conduct of its affairs and for the governing of its officers and members. Each Divisions  
651 Constitution shall conform to, and harmonize with the Connectional Constitution and By-laws.  
652 Each of these organizations shall have the authority to establish its own Executive Board, raise  
653 funds, and in general perform all duties incident to its existence as an autonomous body  
654 except, however, said organization shall not make Constitutions and By-laws, or Rules and  
655 Regulations which are in-conflict with, or abridge any part of the Constitution and By-laws of  
656 the Connectional Lay Organization. Or the template for subordinate divisions.

657  
658 *Section 2.* A copy of the Constitution and By-laws of each Episcopal District organization must  
659 be filed with the Constitution and Bylaw Committee of the Connectional Lay Organization for  
660 examination and response.

661  
662 *Section 3.* Each Episcopal District, Conference, District of the Annual Conference, and each  
663 Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall have the following inserted in its Constitution and By-  
664 laws: “This Organization shall be subject to and governed by the Constitution and By-laws of  
665 the Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.”

666  
667 *Section 4.* This organization and each of its Divisions shall at all times be governed by the  
668 Constitution and Bylaws of the Connectional Lay Organization, the *Current Book of Discipline,*  
669 *Laws, Doctrines, and Tenets of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and Robert’s Rules of*  
670 *Order Newly Revised, latest edition.*

671  
672 ARTICLE XIV – COMMITTEES. To insure successful and effective implementation of programs  
673 and projects of the Connectional Lay Organization, other than specified duties of elected  
674 officers per Constitution and Bylaws, all Chairpersons shall be appointed by the President.

675  
676 *Section 1.* Four (4) types of Committees shall exist in the Connectional Lay Organization;  
677 Standing, Special, Convention, and ad hoc

678  
679 *Section 2.* Standing Committees are appointed to implement specific goals, objectives, and  
680 programs that advance of, and are vital to the functioning of the Connectional Lay Organization.  
681 Standing Committees shall be the following: Proposed Legislation, Constitution and By-Law, and  
682 AMEV – Alert. Each standing committee shall have no more than seven (7) members appointed  
683 by the president, and approved by the Executive Board. Appointments shall be globally  
684 inclusive and age sensitive. The President, in appointing Committee members shall follow  
685 these guidelines; at least, one (1) person from Districts 14 - 20; one (1) person between the  
686 ages of 18 - 35, and all persons must have demonstrated diversity of experiences in the work  
687 assigned to the committee. Selection of committee members must respect the guidelines that  
688 govern the committee’s duties and reporting timelines.

689  
690 *Section 3.* Special Committees shall be the following: The Nominating, Elections, and Audit  
691 Committee. Special Committees are appointed to perform a task that does not fall within the  
692 assigned function of a Standing Committee.

693  
694 *Section 4.* Committees of the Biennial Session. The Committees of the Biennial session shall be  
695 Rules, Elections Commission, Registration, Credentials, Health, Budget and Finance, Memoriam,  
696 Time and Place, Review of the Discipline, Evaluation, Resolution, Review of Job Analysis,  
697 CLEDC?, Issues facing the Church and Nation, Social Actions, Proposed Legislation, Young Adult,  
698 Executive Summary, Kit, Global Ministry, Higher Education Support, Constitution and Bylaw,  
699 AME V – Alert, Marshall/Staffers, Nominating and Strategic Planning.

700  
701 *Section 5.* The Credential Committee prepares and presents to the Biennial Convention a  
702 certified list of registered officers and delegates that make up the voting strength of the  
703 convention.

704  
705 *Section 6.* The Rules Committee provides official guidelines of operating procedures specially  
706 prepared for operation of the convening Biennial Session.

707  
708 *Section 7.* Budget and Finance Committee of the Connectional Lay Organization shall submit its  
709 final report to the regular session of the Organization no later than the evening of the second  
710 business day of the Biennial Session.

711

712 *Section 8.* The Budget and Finance Committee composed of the Treasurer and other members  
713 for a total of no more than seven (7) members shall be appointed by the President. It shall be  
714 the duty of this committee to prepare a two (2) year budget to be submitted to the President  
715 and the Executive Board for approval in the Biennial Session for adoption by a majority vote.  
716

717 *Section 9.* The Constitution and By-Law Committee defines the primary character of the  
718 organization, prescribes how the organization functions including all the rules that the  
719 organization considers so important that they cannot be changed without previous notice to  
720 the membership and a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Biennial Convention.  
721

722 *Section 10.* The Organizational and Officers Effective Committee shall report annually to the  
723 Executive Board. The committee will propose and present for the Executive Board the process  
724 and tools for the officers evaluation and implement the process. The President has thirty (30)  
725 days after the close of the Biennial to appoint the committee members who will present their  
726 findings.  
727

728 *Section 11.* Ad Hoc Committee is appointed as the need arises to carry out a specific task. It  
729 automatically ceases to exist on presentation of its final report to the body.  
730

## 731 ARTICLE XV – SUBORDINATE BODIES 732

733 *Section 1.* Episcopal District Lay Organizations – The Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be  
734 composed of:

- 735 a. all elected officers;
- 736 b. all Presidents and Directors of Lay Activities of Conference Organizations;
- 737 c. six (6) elected delegates from each Conference Lay Organization, at least one of  
738 whom shall be a young adult, ages 18-35;
- 739 d. each President or a duly elected representative of each organized District Lay  
740 Organization of the Annual Conference;
- 741 e. each President and six (6) elected delegates, at least one of whom shall be a young  
742 adult, ages 18-35 —of each organized Station or Circuit Lay Organization where there  
743 is a duly organized District Lay Organization of an Annual Conference;
- 744 f. any elected officers of the Connectional Lay Organization who are members of an  
745 organized Station or Circuit Lay Organization in the Episcopal District
- 746 g. each President and six (6) elected delegates, at least one of whom shall be a young  
747 adult, ages 18 - 35, from each Station or Circuit.  
748

749 *Section 2.* Conference Lay Organization – The Conference Lay Organization shall be composed  
750 of:

- 751 a. all elected officers;
- 752 b. each President and Director of Lay Activities of duly organized District Lay  
753 Organization of the Annual Conference;
- 754 c. six (6) elected delegates, at least one of whom shall be a young adult, ages 18-35,  
755 from each duly organized District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference; and

- d. each President and six (6) elected delegates at least one of whom one shall be a young adult, ages 18-35, from each Station or Circuit.
- e. any elected officers of the Connectional Lay Organization or Episcopal District organization who are members of an organized Station or Circuit Lay Organization in the Annual Conference

*Section 3.* District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference – The District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference shall be composed of:

- a. all elected officers; and
- b. the President and six (6) elected delegates, at least one of whom shall be a young adult, ages 18 – 35, from each Station or Circuit where there is a duly organized Lay Organization.
- c. any elected officers of the Connectional, Episcopal District or Annual Conference Lay Organizations who are members of an organized Station or Circuit Lay Organization in the District of the Annual Conference
- a. This organization is amenable to the Conference Lay Organization and must report to the Conference Lay Organization at least annually

*Section 4.* Station/Charge or Circuit Lay Organization – The pastor of each Station or Circuit shall, within thirty (30) days after the close of the Annual Conference, call a meeting of the members of the Station/Charge or Circuit for the purpose of organizing a Lay Organization where none exists. The Station/Charge or Circuit Lay Organization shall be composed of all members of said Station or Circuit who desire to enroll/join. The officers of the organization shall be elected from those enrolled in said organization. The President of the Lay Organization, or a duly elected representative of the local church, becomes a member of the Official Board by virtue of his/her office.

*Section 5.* The officers of a Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall be those specified in Article V, Section 1 of this Constitution. The Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall fix the time for regular meetings, which should not be fewer than eleven (11) times per year.

#### ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS

*Section 1.* Amendment of Bylaws. Amendments to the Constitution and By Laws of the Connectional Lay Organization may be made by filing a copy of the proposed amendment with the Connectional President and Secretary. The Secretary shall send an official copy of the proposed amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee at least six months or (180) days prior to the meeting of the Connectional Lay Organization’s Biennial Session. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall send copies of proposed amendments, by certified mail and/or electronic communication to each of the Episcopal District Presidents. Two-thirds vote of the members present and eligible to vote at the Biennial Session shall be required to effect an amendment. Amendments will take effect at the close of the General Conference ratifying the Amendments.

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**By-Laws of the Connectional Lay Organization**

The following shall constitute the By Laws of this organization.

*Section 1.* The Order of Business shall be:

- a. Devotion
- b. Bible Study
- c. Roll Call of Officers
- d. Report of Credentials Committee
- e. Registration of Delegates
- f. Reading of Minutes of the Executive Board
- g. Reading of Communications
- h. Reading of Committees Report
- i. President's Message
- j. Reports of Officers
- k. Reports of Episcopal District Presidents
- l. Unfinished Business
- m. New Business
- n. Report of Committees
- o. Memorial Service
- p. Installation of Officers
- q. Adjournment

*Section 2.* A majority of delegates present from the Episcopal Districts of the AME Church with voting delegations at the Biennial Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business.

*Section 3.* The members shall conform to all the rules and regulations of this organization; any member (s) guilty of an infraction or violation of the rules, or for conduct or decorum unbecoming a member, may be removed from membership herein.

*Section 4.* The order of business herein before outlined may be changed by a two-third (2/3) majority vote of the delegates present at the Biennial Convention.

*Section 5.* All reports of Presidents and other officers shall be in writing and submitted in triplicate copies, one to be left with the President of the organization, one to be left with the Secretary of the organization, and one to be retained by the officer making the report.

*Section 6.* Any officer failing to perform his or her official duties shall be accountable to the Executive Board.

*Section 7.* No officer, nor standing or special committee, shall incur any obligation, which shall be binding, unless such action was authorized in its inception, or subsequently ratified and approved by the organization.

*Section 8.* The President shall be authorized to appoint and deputize, with sufficient power and authority, as many Marshals as may be deemed necessary to maintain order and decorum in the meeting. It shall be the duty of the Marshals to maintain strict order, see that only members are seated within established bounds of the meeting, and perform such other duties as may be assigned to them by the President in keeping with the duties of their office.

*Section 9.* Any provision or condition not expressly covered in the Constitution and By-Laws of this Organization shall be interpreted and construed in keeping with the long established policy, customs, tenets, and traditions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, and *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised edition*.

## **COLORS**

*The official colors of the Connectional Lay Organization are: Royal Blue and White or Navy Blue and White.*

## **THE LAY HYMN**

Laymen now have thus assembled,  
In Thy blessed name O God.  
Guide us in our true endeavor,  
Light the pathway that we trod; Give us  
strength to ever labor for Thy cause  
Give us strength to ever labor for Thy cause.

We are banded one in union,  
To fulfill Thy just command.  
May we be Thy true disciples,  
Holding to Thy mighty hand;  
Give us blessings from the fountain of Thy love  
Give us blessings from the fountain of Thy love.

As we walk this Christian journey,  
Let us keep our armour bright.  
Let our works be pure and holy  
That we stand within Thy sight; Laymen  
soldiers, strong in unity and love  
Laymen soldiers, strong in unity and love.

May we stand before Thine altar,  
Pledging Lord to work for Thee.

885 In the vineyard, in the pastures  
886 Let us Lord Thy pilgrims be;  
887 Let us lift the cross forever to the skies,  
888 Let us lift the cross forever to the skies.

889  
890 **Tune:** “Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah”  
891 written by Frances A. Walston  
892

893  
894  
895 **THE LAY BENEDICTION**

896 “May God bless us with the true spirit of Christianity. That we may live together, not as man  
897 over man, but as lay persons working with God. Amen”  
898

899  
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901  
902 **CONNECTION LAY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CLEDC)**

903  
904 **Connectional Lay Economic Development Corporation (CLEDC)**  
905

906 The purpose of the CLEDC is to provide financial assistance to the Connectional institutions and  
907 projects; a financial base for lay ministries, outreach missions, and long-term financial programs  
908 for the denomination.  
909

910 The CLEDC is a not-for-profit corporation under the auspices of the Connectional Lay  
911 Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.  
912

913 The CLEDC is a continuation of the legacy of Richard Allen, the founding father, who preached a  
914 message of religious freedom, political empowerment, and economic self-determination.  
915

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921  
922 ***SAMPLE CONSTITUTION FOR CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS FOR***  
923 ***OTHER DIVISIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY DIVISION FOLLOWING THE***  
924 ***CONNECTIONAL CONSTITUTION AS EXAMPLE. If revising/amending***



***Episcopal District Constitution the term District replaces Connectional. If  
Conference Constitution the term Conference replaces Connectional.***

**CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS  
OF THE  
(\_\_\_\_) DISTRICT LAY ORGANIZATION  
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

*Section 1.* The name of this organization shall be the (\_\_\_\_) District Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

**ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

*Section 1. Mission Statement.* The Lay Organization of the (\_\_\_\_) District shall teach, train, and empower its members for leadership (refer to article II, Connectional Constitution, to complete this section on mission statement, purpose and objectives).

*Section 2.* The purpose of this organization shall be to organize and train the laity of the (\_\_\_\_) District so that each lay person may maximally utilize their God given abilities and skills (complete).

*Section 3. Objectives –* To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives are adopted.

- a. To instill in the membership of the church a love for and an appreciation of the history, traditions, principles and development of African Methodism by encouraging, motivating, and educating all lay persons.
- b. To keep forever alive the sacred memory of Richard Allen, our illustrious founder.
- c. To advocate respect and loyalty at all times to constituted authority and leadership.
- d. To encourage the laity to support the total program of the church in the local congregation, in the community, and throughout the District.
- e. To foster a systematic and regular study of *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* and of parliamentary procedure, to the end that greater knowledge and information may be disseminated among the laity, and with the further purpose of encouraging lay members to participate more largely in the general functioning and supervision of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- f. To foster, influence, and support all constructive and progressive legislation for the church that promotes the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- g. To encourage development, recognition, and utilization of the most appropriate operational practices and modern technology in conducting the activities of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

- h. To promote the spread of personal evangelism through activities designed to prepare lay members for appropriately conveying God's Word.
- i. To provide training in Christian stewardship, which causes lay members to recognize that the connotation of stewardship addresses more than giving money.
- j. To increase the circulation of church periodicals.
- k. To provide for the orderly and systematic training of lay persons, especially officers, in order that they might more effectively perform their service assignments.
- l. To promote activities which will result in harmonious fellowship for lay persons throughout the Connection.
- m. To help in the support of the AME educational institutions. bb. To give financial assistance to the Connectional Lay Economic Development Corporation (CLEDC) in support of Connectional programs.

### ARTICLE III – DIVISIONS

*Section 1.* The District Lay Organization shall be composed of the Conference Lay Organizations, District Lay Organizations of the Annual Conference and Organizations of a Station or Circuit.

The District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference is optional, and shall only be organized where the Conference Lay Organization determines it to be necessary for the efficient conduct of its business. If such a determination is made, the Conference Lay President shall, after giving fourteen (14) days written notice, which shall include the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting, to each charge in the district, convene and organize the District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference. The District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference, where organized, shall bear the same relationship to the Conference Lay Organization as the Conference Lay Organization bears to the Episcopal District Lay Organization.

### ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

*Section 1.* Membership in this organization is open to all un-ordained members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in good and regular standing, in their local, and Conference Lay Organizations. **Good and regular standing means every member is governed by the Constitution of the organization and pays required dues as set by his/her local lay organization, attends fifty percent (50%) of the local lay organization meetings, and participates at the District of the Annual Conference, and the Annual Conference Lay Organization levels.**

*Section 2.* The District Lay Organization membership to the Mid-year and (AGM) shall be as follows:

- a. all elected officers of the Episcopal District Lay Organization.

- b. all Presidents, Directors of Lay Activities and Young Adult Representatives from each Conference organization.
- c. six (6) elected delegates from each Conference Lay Organization, of whom at least one (1) shall be a young adult, ages 18-30.
- d. each President, Director of Lay Activities and Young Adult Representative from each duly organized District Lay Organization of an Annual Conference.
- e. Each president or duly elected representative of each organized Station or Circuit Organization. A duly organized Lay Organization of the Districts of the Annual Conference shall be an organization reporting to the Conference Lay Organization's Annual Meeting or which is recognized by the Conference as an organization.

## **ARTICLE V – OFFICERS, DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

*Section 1.* The elected Officers of the Episcopal District Lay Organization and its Divisions shall be:


- a. President
  - b. First Vice President
  - c. Second Vice President\*
  - d. Third Vice President\*
  - e. Recording Secretary
  - f. Assistant Recording Secretary\*
  - g. Corresponding Secretary\*
  - h. Treasurer
  - i. Financial Secretary\*
  - j. Chaplain
  - k. Historiographer\*
  - l. Parliamentarian\*
  - m. Director of Lay Activities
  - n. Director of Public Relations\*
  - o. Young Adult Representative
- (\*Elected at discretion of Divisions)

*Duties and responsibilities of officers shall be listed here beginning with the office of President (refer to Connectional Constitution Article V, section 1 to complete this section).*

*Section 2.* The records of all officers handling finances of the (\_\_\_\_) Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be audited by an internal audit committee, which shall report its findings to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the District Lay Organization.

**ARTICLE VI – NOMINATION and ELECTION PROCEDURES** (*refer to Connectional Constitution beginning with this Article for completion of District Constitution*).

1051     **ARTICLE VII – ELECTION OF OFFICERS**  
1052  
1053     **ARTICLE VIII – QUALIFICATIONS**  
1054  
1055     **ARTICLE IX – EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
1056  
1057     **ARTICLE X –MEETINGS**  
1058  
1059     **ARTICLE XI – VOTING PRIVILEGES**  
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1061     **ARTICLE XII – POWERS AND JURISDICTIONS**  
1062  
1063     **ARTICLE XIII – RESERVED AND IMPLIED POWERS**  
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1065     **ARTICLE XIV – COMMITTEES**  
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1067     **ARTICLE XV – SUBORDINATE BODIES**  
1068  
1069     **ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS**

		
Bill Number		
Title	Duties of the General Secretary/Chief Information Officer	
Submitted by	Evelyn James	
Contact	deswamee@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

pg. 129

Intent

To add to the duties of the General Secretary/CIO and establish their cooperative relationship with the Connectional Public Relations Commissioner in order to effectively disseminate information across the Connectional Church and to the secular, religious press and other public media outlets.

Rationale

The office of the CIO of the AME Church unofficially functions as the social media, electronic media, internet streaming and web master for the Connectional AME church. Officially establishing this role as well as establishing the cooperative relationship with the connectional Public Relation Commissioner, will allow for seamless, world-wide communication, promotion and sharing of the work and ministries of the AME Church.

1 Current Text

2 There is none this is an addition on 129 under the duties and role of the General Secretary/CIO

3 Amended Text

4 u.

5 1) Shall be responsible for overseeing and cooperating with the Connectional Public Relations Commissioner on  
6 the gathering and disseminating information of public interest about the AME Church to the secular press,  
7 religious press, radio, television and other legitimate media of public information.

8 2) Shall be responsible for overseeing all methods of communication ( electronic, print, social media, web based,  
9 audio-visual, etc.) of the Connectional AME Church.

10 3) Shall oversee the dissemination of information to the official organs of the Connectional AME Church.

11 4) Shall oversee the administration of the official webpage(s) of the Connectional AME Church.

1

		
Bill Number		
Title	Codifying General Conference Delegates for Connectional Societies	
Submitted by	Jerry Turner	
Contact	jrtturnerjerry@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VIII, Section 1, p.208

Intent

To specify the persons from the Connectional Societies that can serve as delegates to the General Conference

Rationale

Several Connectional entities are without vote at the General Conference. Delegates allocated to the CLO are not allocated in the Composition of the General Conference.

1 Current Text

2 A. The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops, general officers elected by the General  
3 Conference, the general secretary of the General Conference, the presidents of the universities and colleges, deans  
4 of seminaries which have been operation for one or more years continuously previous to the General Conference,  
5 the president and treasurer of the director of the Young Peoples Division, the Connectional presidents of Women  
6 in Ministry (WIM), Richard Allen Young Adult Council (RAYAC), Young Peoples Department (YPD) and Lay  
7 Organization; Episcopal District Lay Presidents, and the president of the Connectional Council, Executive and  
8 Medical Directors of the Health Commission, active duty military and reterans administration chaplains who have  
9 been ordained for at least four (4) years preceding the General Conference and those who are retired with a  
10 minimum of twenty (20) years of service in the Armed Forces of the United States, former World War II Chaplains  
11 who are in good and regular standing in their Annual Conference, the administrators of all Connectional  
12 institutions (i.e., Douglass Hospital), and the president of the Connectional Presiding Elders Council.


13 Amended Text

14 AMENDED TEXT:

15 A. The composition of the General Conference shall be: 1) the Bishops; 2) General Officers elected by the General  
16 Conference; 3) the Presidents of the Universities and Colleges and Deans of Seminaries which have been operation  
17 for one or more years continuously previous to the General Conference; 4) President and Treasurer of the

18 Womens Missionary Society, Editor of the Missionary Magazine, Director of Promotion and Missionary Education  
19 and the President and Director of the Young Peoples Division (YPD) of the WMS; 5) the President, Director of Lay  
20 Activities, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Young Adult Representative and Legislation Chair of the Connectional Lay  
21 Organization; 6) Presidents or a duly appointed designee of all Connectional organizations reporting to the  
22 General Board of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Episcopal District not otherwise listed above; 7)  
23 Executive and Medical Directors of the Health Commission; 8) Episcopal District Organization Lay Presidents; 9)  
24 Active duty military and United States Department of Veterans Affairs chaplains who have been ordained for at  
25 least four (4) years preceding the General Conference and those who are retired with a minimum of twenty (20)  
26 years of service in the Armed Forces of the United States, former World War II Chaplains who are in good and  
27 regular standing in their Annual Conference; 10) the Administrators of all Connectional institutions (i.e., Douglass  
28 Hospital). Unless otherwise specified in the Book of Discipline, delegates representing organizations and  
29 components of the Church shall furnish their own expense and sustentation to the General Conference through  
30 the Connectional Organization.

31 The General Conference shall also be composed of an equal number of Clergy and Lay Representatives elected by  
32 the Annual Conferences apportioned among the Episcopal Districts according to a formula approved by the  
33 General Board no later than the annual meeting two years prior to the General Conference and elected under the  
34 provisions therein established in this document. The Episcopal District Lay President shall count against the  
35 number of lay delegates elected by an Annual Conference. The total cap for all elected delegates shall not exceed  
36 1500 persons.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Effective Date of Adopted Legislation	
Submitted by	Daryl Ingram	
Contact	dingram@ameced.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Pg 197

Intent

To clarify when adopted legislation becomes effective.

Rationale

Currently, it is unclear when legislation becomes effective whether at the time of enactment or inclusion in the Book of Discipline.

1 Current Text

2 No current text.

3 Amended Text

4 At the end of Part VIII, Section 1, Item F, Number 6, The Revisions Committee, add the following paragraph;

5 All adopted legislation shall become effective immediately at the close of the general conference in which it is

6 passed unless otherwise specified in the legislation. The General Secretary in coordination with the Revisions


7 Committee shall post all adopted legislation on the Official African Methodist Episcopal Church website

8 (www.AME-Church.com) within 24 hours of the close of the general conference.

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1



		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	JACQUELYN DUPONT-WALKER	
Contact	JDUPONTW@AOL.COM	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

2012 DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Composition of the General Conference - page 188

Responsibilities of The Standing Commission - page 148

Intent

This legislation is intended to bring the role of the Director of Social Action into compliance with its counterparts in other Connectional Commissions and Organizations. It also serves to provide "voice" to the office that serves as a spokesperson for the church's social justice issues in the public forums, in church gatherings, and in the ecumenical/interfaith world..

Rationale

The General Conference is the highest administrative and legislative body of the AME Church. Its members introduce, discuss, deliberate and pass legislation which governs the operations and ministries of the church Without the official designation as a delegate, the Director of Social Action is unable to fully engage in the deliberations of this supreme body.


1 Current Text

2 The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops, general officer elected by the General  
3 Conference, the General Secretary/CIO, the presidents of the universities and colleges, deans of seminaries which  
4 have been in operation for one or more years continuously previous to the General Conference, the president  
5 and treasurer of the Women's Missionary Society, Editor of the Women's Missionary Magazine, Director of the  
6 Young Peoples' Division, Connectional Presidents of Women In Ministry, Richard All Young Adult Council, Yooung  
7 People's Dept, and Lay Organization; Episcopal District Lay Presidents and the President of the Connectional  
8 Council, Executive and Medical Directors of the Health Commission, Active Duty Miiitary and Veterans  
9 Administration Chaplains who have been ordained for at least four years preceding the General Conference, and  
10 those who are retired with a minimum of 20 years of service in the armed forces of the United States, former  
11 WWII chaplains who are in goog and regular standing in their annual conference, the administrators of all  
12 Connectional Institutions, (ie Douglas Hospital), and the president of the Connectioaln Presiding Elders Council and  
13 elected clergy and lay delegats for each annual conference.

14 Amended Text

15 The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops, general officers elected by the General  
16 Conference..... president of the Connectional Presiding Elders Council, the Director/Consultant of the Social  
17 Action Commission... and elected clergy and lay delegates from each annual conference.

18 NOTE: This action is to become effective immediately upon receiving a favorable vote. It has NO fiscal impact.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Sexual misconduct reporting clarification	
Submitted by	Douglass Selby	
Contact	dselby@hunton.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 271, Part XI, Section XIV(B).

Intent

Clarify that the duty to respond to and report child sexual abuse and rape or sexual assault to civil authorities and designated church administrators shall apply regardless of whether the person reporting is a member or a non-member; provided, however, that only AME Church members may participate in internal church proceedings specified under Part XI Judicial Administration and provided further that, except for child sexual abuse and rape or sexual assault, all reports of sexual misconduct under Part XI, Section XIV(D) must be reported based on personal knowledge or upon information and belief sworn under penalty of perjury.

Rationale

Sexual misconduct within the Church, or by representatives of the Church, is a betrayal of sacred trust and a sinful abuse of power. Part XI, Section XIV(D) of The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church contains robust reporting procedures and policies to report alleged misconduct. In particular, any claim of child sexual abuse or rape or sexual assault are to be reported to adjudicated by civil authorities. The reporting of any such claim is encouraged by any person whether they be a member or non-member of the AME Church.

However, a false allegation of sexual misconduct that is motivated by something other than the truth can seriously damage the reputation of those within the Church and provide confidential information that impedes the ability of the church to defend itself from claims motivated by something other than the truth. As such, robust reporting procedures must be tempered with practical measures. Further, except for child sexual abuse or rape and sexual assault (which are already immediately reportable to civil authorities), access to internal church documents, participation in meetings and closed church proceedings specified in Part XI Judicial Administration shall be limited to members of the AME Church in good and regular standing.

This legislation clarifies that only AME Church members in good and regular standing may utilize the reporting procedures in Part XI, Section XIV(D) relating to sexual misconduct other than child sexual abuse or rape and sexual assault. A member is not limited to reporting only information he or she knows personally. A member may also report an allegation that he or she believes in good faith to be truthful or concerning based upon information and belief.

1 Current Text

2 SECTION XIV. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

3 B. DEFINITIONS

4 Accuser: The accuser is (are) the person(s) making the allegations against the accused. The accuser is also referred  
5 to herein as the complainant.


6 Amended Text

7 AMENDED TEXT:

8     SECTION XIV. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

9     B. DEFINITIONS

10    Accuser: The accuser is (are) the person(s) making the allegations against the accused. The accuser is also referred  
11    to herein as the complainant. While the accuser may report allegations or concerns that are known only upon  
12    information and belief rather than personal knowledge, the accuser must be a member of the AME Church in good  
13    and regular standing; provided, however that the church has a duty to respond to a report by any person, member  
14    or non-member of a claim of child sexual abuse and rape or sexual assault.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Guiding principles to consider when transferring a minister and creation of uniform assessment procedures	
Submitted by	Douglass Selby	
Contact	dselby@hunton.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Pages 274-75 Part XI, Section XIV(C) and Page 119, Part VI, Section II(D).

Intent

Establish a uniform system for authorizing the transfer of a minister that includes appropriate background checks and assessments so that the receiving bishop has information regarding the transferring ministers background and character.

Rationale

While background checks are already required for transferring ministers, the Discipline currently only provides limited guidance on what actions are required if information obtained from such assessments raise red flags and current background checks are typically limited to criminal information. The AME Church may also wish to consider whether the transferring minister has been charged with or accused of multiple violations of AME Church doctrine, which would not be included in a criminal background report. The full disclosure of alleged violations of AME Church doctrine will ensure that the institutional knowledge is communicated to persons responsible for the divisions of the AME Church against to whom negligence claims may be brought for failure to make note of red flags or consider patterns that present risks and potential enterprise-wide liability to the AME Church. A failure to communicate such information can expose the church to legal liability for negligence or failure to properly supervise employees.

The proposed legislation addresses this issue by requiring the transferring minister to disclose any allegations of misconduct prior to receiving a Certificate of Transfer. It also provides guidance on how to address candidates who present red flags or reveal patterns of behavior that raise risks for the church. Consistent with the principles promulgated by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the proposed legislation does not forbid the transfer or employment of all candidates with an imperfect background, but considers each candidate on a case-by-case basis.

1 Current Text

2 See Below

3 Amended Text

4 SECTION XIV. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

5 C. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES OF THE AME CHURCH IN POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

6 Education and Training

7 All clergy and candidates for ministerial orders, employees, appointed or elected officials, and volunteers of the

8 AME Church shall be required to attend a seminar by experts on the issues of sexual misconduct. The training

content and trainer shall be selected and approved by the bishop of the episcopal district. Each participant will be required to sign a statement certifying that he or she has read, understood and been trained in the policy, or sign a statement of refusal to comply with this requirement.

All candidates for itinerant or local orders shall be furnished with a copy of the AME Church's Sexual Misconduct Policy (Section XIV) (Policy) by the Board of Examiners prior to admission on trial to the Annual Conference. The candidates for admission will be required to sign statement certifying to have read, understood, and agreed to comply with the Policy.

Failure to sign a compliance statement will result in referral to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee, or, in case of non-clergy, to the Steward Board for disciplinary action.

#### Background Checks and Due Diligence

After a conditional offer or appointment has been made, but prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Transfer per Part VI, Section II(D)(17), all candidates applying to the Board of Examiners for itinerant or local orders and pastors receiving a first pastoral assignment or who move to a different pastoral assignment shall (1) undergo a mandatory background check and (2) complete a transfer assessment.

The background check will include a National Criminal History Background Check and a clearance check through the local child protective service agency.

The transfer assessment shall include a questionnaire that the transferring candidate completes. The transfer assessment shall be signed by both the transferring candidate and transferring bishop. An explanation must be provided if any question is answered with a yes answer. The questionnaire shall include the following:

1. Whether the transferring candidate at any point has been charged (regardless of outcome) under Part XI, Section II for disobedience, immorality, illegal handling of funds, habitual neglect of duties, maladministration, exacting or receiving money for appointments or simony, levying unauthorized assessments, conviction of a crime, sowing dissension, or sexual misconduct.

2. Whether the transferring candidate at any point has been subject to a review of the Preliminary Inquiry Committee under Part XI, Section IV (regardless of outcome).

3. Whether the transferring candidate at any point has accused of or charged with sexual misconduct or sexual abuse pursuant to Part XI, Section VIV (regardless of whether it resulted in a formal charge or indictment).

4. Whether there is any additional information that the transferring candidate believes the receiving bishop should know related to the moral character of the transferring candidate.

The Ministerial Efficiency Committee shall review on a case-by-case basis all situations where the transferring candidate has a background check or transfer assessment which yields any potentially negative information. In doing so, the Ministerial Efficiency Committee should consider the following factors:

The nature and gravity of the offense or conduct.

The time that has passed since the offense or conduct.

Whether the transferring candidate has taken any actions to repent, including completing a sentence.

Although all cases shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, generally the following principles apply:

A. If the transferring candidate has been convicted of a felony of any nature or a misdemeanor of moral turpitude in the previous ten (10) years under any state or federal law or has been tried and convicted under Part XI, Section VII for any reason, the transferring candidate shall be appointed only if there is substantial evidence supporting the appointment.

B. If the transferring candidate has been charged with any offense listed in Part XI, Section II (regardless of outcome), then the transferring candidate's appointment shall be withheld pending resolution of the charge or the Ministerial Efficiency Committee's recommendation based on review of his or her character.

C. If the transferring candidate has had two or more complaints from any member filed against him or her (regardless of the outcome), then the Ministerial Efficiency Committee shall decide at its sole discretion whether to withhold the appointment.

In addition, all persons (clergy and non-clergy) assigned, appointed and/or employed to positions within the African Methodist Episcopal AME Church involving the care and supervision of children must undergo a mandatory background check.

#### Liability and Insurance

The AME Church and all of its individual congregations shall ensure that their liability insurance policies cover sexual misconduct liability for its programs and activities. The Quarterly Conference shall be responsible for verifying that each local church has liability insurance covering sexual misconduct.

#### Record Keeping

The AME Church and all of its individual connectional conferences will include in every employee's personnel file, including clergy, the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, the transfer assessment, reference responses, and other documents related to this Policy, including a copy of the documents referenced in Part IV.A herein.

## SECTION II. AUTHORITY OF ACTIVE BISHOPS


### D. Duties of an Active Bishop

15. The receiving bishop shall not accept a transferred preacher whose background check or transfer assessment required pursuant to Part XI, Section XIV(C) contains negative information, against whom there is a charge until the Ministerial Efficiency Committee of the Annual Conference shall have full time to examine his or her character and make recommendation upon the same. Any bishop who shall knowingly violate these prohibitions shall be proceeded against by the Annual Conference as per The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

16. The bishop shall not admit to the Annual Conference, transfer, or appoint to the pastorate, presiding eldership, missionary work, or agency, nor allow to officiate in any pulpit or at the altar of any AME Church, any minister under suspension, expulsion, or with charge of immoral conduct against him or her in our church, or from another church. A bishop shall not transfer a minister until the background check and transfer assessment have been completed pursuant to Part XI, Section XIV(C).

17. Whenever a bishop transfers a member of an annual conference, the Certificate of Transfer shall be given. A Certificate of Transfer shall be given only after the transferring candidate completes the background check and transfer assessment required pursuant to Part XI, Section XIV(C).



		
Bill Number		
Title	Reestablishment of the First Educational District	
Submitted by	Jamye Coleman Williams	
Contact	jmacame@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 1948, Page 280, Item 254 and Page 282, Item 257,#3

Intent

To reestablish the former First Educational District, comprising the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Thirteenth Districts, with the addition of the Second District. Originally the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Thirteenth were Episcopal Districts without an educational institution. The Second District, at the time of the establishing of the First Educational District in 1948, had Kittrell College, which no longer exists. The First Educational District was to divide its financial support between Wilberforce University and Payne Seminary.

Rationale

In 1863 when Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne purchased from the Methodist Episcopal Church--on faith for \$10,000--Wilberforce University. This act on behalf of the African Methodist Episcopal Church made Wilberforce University the oldest private coeducational African American institution of higher learning and Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne the first black college president. Long regarded as the "Crown Jewel" of African Methodism, Wilberforce University counts among its graduates 26 of the 130 elected and consecrated bishops, numerous outstanding ministers and prominent laypersons. Currently, Wilberforce University, as with so many other private Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) is facing declining enrollments, deferred maintenance, financial straits.

1 Current Text


2 See The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 1948, Page 280, Item 254 and Page 282,  
3 Item 257,#3

4 Amended Text

5 Insert at the appropriate place in the 2016 Discipline:

6 The First Educational District, to comprise the First, Second Third, Fourth, Fifth and Thirteenth Episcopal Districts  
7 shall be reestablished and its financial support to higher education shall be equally divided between Wilberforce  
8 University and Payne Theological Seminary.

1

		
Bill Number		
Title	Bylaws of the African Methodist Episcopal Women In Ministry	
Submitted by	Kimberly Detherage, President AME/WIM	
Contact	lavk888@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Section VIII. African Methodist Episcopal Women in Ministry, page 444

Intent

To provide necessary clarification regarding the policies and procedures for the operation of AME/WIM

Rationale

To make it easier for AME/WIM to effectively implement its policies and procedures.

1 Current Text

2 (Bylaws as printed in the Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012)

3 Bylaws shall be entirely replaced with the Amended Bylaws.

4 Amended Text

5 SECTION VIII. AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL WOMEN IN MINISTRY BYLAWS

6 Article I - Name

7 This organization shall be known as the African Methodist Episcopal Women in Ministry (AME/WIM).

8 Article II Mission and Objectives

9 Section 1. Mission. The mission of the AME/WIM is to define, enhance, support and expand the presence of  
10 women in ministry in leadership in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.

11 Section 2. Objectives. The purpose of AME/WIM is to meet and further the following objectives:

12 a. To recognize and support women in ministry as an essential part of the leadership of the AME Church.

13 b. To raise the consciousness of the AME Church on issues important to women.

14 c. To address and eradicate sexism in the AME Church.

15 d. To work to expand leadership opportunities for women in ministry in leadership in the AME Church.

16 e. To support women in the pastoral ministry.

f. To support women in specialized ministries including but not limited to: chaplaincy, writing, teaching, counseling, research, prison, youth, geriatric, singles, street, health care, family/life relations, music, homeless, HIV/AIDS and religious education ministries.

g. To encourage academic training for the ministry.

h. To sponsor a Connectional conference at least once during each Quadrennium.

i. To support and provide assistance and outreach to women in ministry in the Fourteenth through Twentieth Episcopal Districts.

j. To compile a complete and accurate record of all women in ministry in the AME church.

k. To foster and develop relationships with people and entities that will assist in furthering the objectives described herein.

## Article III Members

Section 1. Membership. The categories of membership shall be:

a. Full Membership: for women ordained to the itinerant ministry. They shall be eligible to vote and to hold most offices. [See eligibility chart]

b. Local Membership: for women ordained to the local ministry, licensed evangelists, and licensed exhorters. They shall be eligible to vote and to hold some offices. [See eligibility chart]

c. Advisory Membership: for superannuates who have retired from active service in the itinerant or local ministry. They shall be eligible to vote but not to hold office.

d. Student/Licentiate Membership: for women enrolled in an institution of higher education on a full time basis and/or women licensed to preach and preparing for ordination. Licentiates are not entitled to vote or hold office unless within a Campus Ministry. [See Election Eligibility Chart]. Ordained Clergy are eligible to vote.

e. Associate Membership: for male clergy and laity who are supportive of AME/WIM. They shall not be eligible to vote or to hold office.

f. All persons seeking membership must be in good and regular standing in their local churches and Annual Conferences as defined by The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church. Good and regular standing for women in ministry shall include the payment of dues on the Connectional, District and Annual Conference levels

Section 2. Dues. Connectional dues for Districts One through Thirteen shall be:

44 1. Full Membership = \$25.00

45 2. Local Membership = \$15.00

46 3. Advisory Membership = \$10.00

47 4. Student/Licentiate Membership = \$10.00

48 5. Associate Membership = \$20.00

49 Dues and the names of members shall be sent to the Connectional Financial Secretary and copies of the names  
50 shall be sent to the Connectional President, Third Vice President and General Secretary.

51 AME/WIM in Districts Fourteen through Twenty shall establish a comparable and affordable amount for the five  
52 membership categories. Full records of dues received and membership shall be reported to the Connectional  
53 President, Third Vice President, and Secretary, but the dues shall be made payable to and retained by the  
54 AME/WIM District collecting the same and used for operational expenses of AME/WIM.

55 Dues shall be paid annually to the Connectional Executive Board, the Episcopal District, the Annual Conference  
56 and, if applicable, to the presiding elder district conference branch of the annual conference. Connectional dues  
57 must be received by the Treasurer no later than May 31st. Each Episcopal District shall select an annual date on  
58 which dues are paid on the Connectional and the Episcopal District level. The time for payment of dues to the  
59 Annual Conference and the Presiding Elder Districts shall be determined by the respective conferences. Upon  
60 payment of dues, each member will receive a membership card. Payment of dues will entitle members to the  
61 Connectional newsletter.

62 The amount of annual membership dues at the Episcopal District, Annual Conference, Presiding Elder District, and  
63 Campus Ministry levels shall be determined by the respective Executive Boards and the general membership but in  
64 no case shall the amount exceed the connectional level.

65 Section 3. Official Roll. The records of the Connectional Third Vice President, General Secretary and Financial  
66 Secretary shall constitute the official roll of women in ministry.

67 Section 4. Termination of Membership. Termination of membership shall be: a) at the request of a member; b)  
68 removal from the Annual Conference Roll as per the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal  
69 Church.

Section 5. Eligibility for Office. Any AME/WIM in good standing as defined by the Bylaws of AME/WIM and the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is eligible to hold office except as specifically stated herein.

She is to be familiar with AME discipline and polity and shall abide by the same. The AME/WIM Election Eligibility Chart attached hereto details the eligibility criteria for each office, and is incorporated by reference herein.

No person who shall reach retirement age before the end of the Quadrennium shall be eligible to run for office.

An officer who has been appointed or elected during the interim of a four-year term, who has served for at least two years and one month, shall be deemed to have completed a full term of service. She shall not be eligible to serve more than one additional four-year term in the same office.

Any itinerant minister in good standing who is transferred or moves to a new District and/or Annual Conference is eligible to hold office if duly elected, provided she was in good and regular standing with AME/WIM on the Connectional, Episcopal District and Annual Conference levels for two years prior to the transfer. There shall be no requisite waiting period for holding office.

#### Article IV Organization

Organization will be according to the structure of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, i.e. Connectional, Episcopal District, Annual Conference and (where applicable) Presiding Elder District levels.

#### Article V Elections Committee

Elections for all offices within AME/WIM will be conducted by an elections committee who shall be appointed by the incumbent Executive Board to work with the nominating committee to ensure smooth, free and fair elections.

The elections committee will be responsible for:

A. Presiding over the election process;

B. Overseeing the execution of the election process;

C. Preparing an official election ballot;

D. Maintaining sole responsibility for the safekeeping of the ballot box, ballots and voter registry

E. Certifying and announcing the official election results;

F. Accepting, reviewing, and deciding any contest to the election process or results.

#### Article VI - Connectional Executive Board

Section 1. Powers and Numbers. AME/WIM shall be managed by an Executive Board. Members of the Connectional Executive Board shall consist of: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, General Secretary, Financial Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Herstorygrapher, Worship Director, and a Central/Southern Africa Coordinator. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by AME/WIM.

Section 2. Election and Term of Office for Connectional Officers. At the seat of the General Conference, AME/WIM shall meet to elect the officers of the Connectional Executive Board. No member shall be nominated or elected at the Connectional level unless she has been a full member in good and regular standing for at least two (2) years immediately preceding the General Conference.

The term of office shall be one Quadrennium and no officer shall serve in the same office for more than two (2) consecutive Quadrenniums. Each officer of the Executive Board shall hold office until the expiration of the term for which she is elected or until her death, superannuation, resignation or removal.

Officers elected to the Executive Board shall not hold any other office in AME/WIM. She shall surrender any other offices held in AME/WIM no later than September 15th following her election at the General Conference.

Accepting a position on the Episcopal District, Annual Conference or Presiding Elder District Board shall result in an immediate surrender of their office on the Executive Board. Said surrender of office must take place no later than the seat of the next Bishops Council meeting following said election to office.

Section 3. Membership Committee. A membership committee under the direction of the Third Vice President, General Secretary and Financial Secretary, shall compose a list of members eligible to vote to elect the Executive Board.

To be eligible to vote, members shall have paid dues for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the General Conference and the dues must be received no later than May 31st the year of the General Conference.

Section 4. Voting. Election of officers of the Connectional Executive Board shall be by private ballot and shall be conducted by an elections committee as described in Article V. Each officer shall be elected by a majority vote of the membership present at the election of officers at the seat of the General Conference.

Section 5. Transfer of Records. The transfer of records, minutes etc. shall be completed by the 30th day of September following the General Conference.

Section 6. Installation. Installation of Executive Board members shall take place as part of the annual worship service of AME/WIM at the site of the annual Bishops Council and General Board meeting in June of the year following the General Conference. Installation is a ceremonial act.

Section 7. Newly Created Offices and Vacancies. Newly created offices of the Executive Board and vacancies among the Executive Board for any reason may be filled by vote of a majority of the Executive Board members then in office. The Executive Board members so elected shall serve until the next general meeting of AME/WIM.

Section 8. Resignations. Any Board member may resign from office at any time by delivering a resignation in writing to the president, and the acceptance of such resignation, unless required by the terms thereof, shall not be necessary to make such resignation effective. If the President tenders the resignation, said resignation should be tendered to the First Vice-president and the Executive Board. Oral resignations may only be accepted when they occur at an Executive Board meeting with the majority of members present. The Secretary must record the oral resignation as part of the official business of the meeting.

Section 9. Removal. Any Board member elected by members of AME/WIM may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the entire Board, at any special meeting of the Board called for that purpose; or without cause, by vote of the general membership. Removal for cause may include but is not limited to a breach of a fiduciary duty as an officer, removal from the Annual Conference roll, retirement from active ministry, missing three (3) consecutive meetings without being excused, abuse of power, conviction after trial of violation of any laws of the Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church and felony convictions in any state or province.

Section 10. Meetings. The election meeting of AME/WIM shall be held Quadrennially at the seat of the General Conference. The annual meeting of AME/WIM shall be held during each summer session of the Bishops Council and General Board Meeting.

Section 11. Quorum and Voting. Voting privileges in AME/WIM shall be confined and restricted to persons set forth under Article III.

No person shall be entitled to more than one (1) vote on an issue or matter in AME/WIM, and must be personally present to exercise such privilege. No proxy or absentee voting shall be permitted. The Executive Board shall have two thirds of its members/officers present to constitute a quorum for voting. A quorum for the election of officers

to the Connectional Executive Board at the seat of the General Conference shall consist of a majority of the eligible voters present at the time of elections of the Executive Board.

Section 12. Nominations: The nomination of officers shall be governed by the ad hoc Nominating Committee appointed by the Executive Board. The Nominating Committee shall be appointed no later than the seat of the Bishops Council one year prior to the General Conference.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of three to five persons. At least two persons shall be the Consultants to the Executive Board. The other persons shall be full members of AME/WIM in good and regular standing. Members of the nominating committee shall be ineligible for nomination by the committee for any position to be filled on the Executive Board.

Recommendations and nominations for office to the Executive Board must be submitted no later than February 11th during the year of the General Conference. Recommendations and nominations will not be accepted at the seat of the General Conference. Persons nominated to run for Executive Board office must be present at the time and place of the election meeting in order to be elected.

Section 13. President: Powers and Duties. The President shall preside over the Connectional Executive Board of AME/WIM and shall be an ex officio member of all committees except the nominating or elections committee. She shall work with the Executive Board to coordinate the twenty Episcopal Districts; develop policy; plan for conferences; and provide general oversight of the general operations of AME/WIM. She shall facilitate ecumenical relationships that support the Mission and Objectives of AME/WIM.

The President is accountable to the other elected members of the Executive Board, the general membership of AME/WIM, the Commission on Women in Ministry, the General Board and the General Conference.

Section 14. First Vice President: Powers and Duties. The First Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President and shall assist the President in all of her duties. She shall chair the Programs Committee responsible for all programming for Connectional AME/WIM.

She will serve as a programming resource and guide for the Episcopal District Presidents. She must report quarterly to the President and Executive Board on the status of each Episcopal District and overall programming for AME/WIM.



Section 15. Second Vice President: Powers and Duties. The Second Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President and the First Vice President and shall assist them both in their duties. She shall be responsible for Bylaws, legislation, and parliamentary procedure. She shall chair the Bylaws and Legislation Committee. She will serve as a Bylaws and Legislation resource to the Episcopal District Presidents and report quarterly to the President and Executive Board.

Section 16. Third Vice President: Powers and Duties. The Third Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President, First Vice President and Second Vice President. She shall be responsible for membership recruitment and retention. She will maintain an accurate directory of all members of AME/WIM. She will serve as a Membership resource for the Episcopal District Presidents. She shall chair the Membership Committee and report quarterly to the President and Executive Board.

Section 17. General Secretary: Powers and Duties. The General Secretary shall keep records of all proceedings, meetings, correspondence and matters essential to AME/WIM. She shall keep a record of all members. By the 30th day of September following the General Conference, she shall ensure said records are transferred to the Herstorlographer for AME/WIM. She shall preside over any call meetings and executive meetings in the absence of the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Third Vice President.

Section 18. Communication Secretary: Powers and Duties. She shall be responsible for all correspondence including social media. She shall send out to the membership a notice of each meeting. She shall conduct the general correspondence of the organization including distribution of the newsletter, maintenance of the website and all other electronic distributions. She shall assist the Third Vice President in gathering names and current contact information of women in ministry for inclusion in the Connectional directory.

Section 19. Financial Secretary: Powers and Duties. The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the maintenance of account records. She shall maintain a list of all dues-paying members. She shall record all monies (income and expenditures) for the quadrennial and report the same to the Executive Board. She and the treasurer shall be accurate in the record of all monies received and spent, and shall ensure compliance with our written financial policies. She shall provide a monthly financial report to the President and Executive Board.

Section 20. Treasurer: Powers and Duties. The Treasurer shall be entrusted with the custody of all AME/WIM funds. She shall be bonded for a sum sufficient to protect the society from loss. She shall receive and deposit all

203 dues, donations, sales, proceeds from events, and any other miscellaneous income of AME/WIM. She shall co-sign  
204 all checks with the President and/or General Secretary. She shall work with the President and Financial Secretary  
205 to prepare a budget to be passed by the full Executive Board. She shall ensure compliance with our written  
206 financial policies. The Treasurer shall chair the Budget and Finance Committee.

207 Section 21. Herstoryographer: Powers and Duties. Shall prepare a narrative account of the WIM activities during  
208 her term of office, which, when approved by the general membership, will become a permanent part of the  
209 herstory record of WIM. She shall research, gather, record and make available herstory and other information  
210 on AME/WIM and on women in ministry. The Herstoryographer shall coordinate with the Herstoryographers on the  
211 Episcopal District, Annual Conference and Presiding Elder District levels to provide a comprehensive library on  
212 women in ministry and the status and role of women in ministry in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Before  
213 the 30th day of September following the General Conference she shall be responsible for the transfer of records to  
214 the President and Executive Board, and the Director of Research and Scholarship for the A.M.E. Church.

215 Section 22. Director of Liturgy & Worship: Powers and Duties. The Director of Liturgy & Worship shall be familiar  
216 with the concept of intentional and innovative worship experiences, and spiritual formation, and shall encourage  
217 all women in ministry to use gender-inclusive language. She shall work with the First Vice President in the worship  
218 component of all programming of all gatherings, conferences, and workshops convened on the Connectional level.  
219 She shall chair the Worship Committee and shall share her gifts with the Worship Leaders in the Episcopal Districts.

220 Section 23. Central/South African Coordinator: Powers and Duties. The Central/Southern Africa Coordinator shall  
221 serve as a liaison with and resource for the Episcopal District Presidents in the Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth,  
222 Nineteenth and Twentieth Episcopal Districts and shall serve as a resource to the Global Assistance Committee.

223 The Central/Southern Africa Coordinator shall be a member of one of the Episcopal districts in Central and  
224 Southern Africa.

## 225 Article VII ADVISORS AND CONSULTANTS

226 Section 1. Powers. The President with the consensus of the Executive Board and Commission on Women in  
227 Ministry Chairperson, from time to time shall appoint consultants and/or advisors to AME/WIM. Each such  
228 consultant or advisor shall hold office at the pleasure of the Board, and shall have such authority and obligations as

the Board may from time to time determine. No advisor or consultant shall be given voting power on the Executive Board.

Section 2. No Compensation. No consultant/advisor shall receive any salary, compensation or emolument for any service rendered to AME/WIM, except that the Executive Board may authorize reimbursement of expenditures reasonably incurred on behalf of and for the benefit of AME/WIM.

#### ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committees of the Executive Board. The Board may, by resolution adopted by a majority of the entire Board, establish and appoint other standing committees. The President shall appoint the chairperson of each committee. Each committee so appointed shall consist of three or more members, and shall have all the authority of the Board except as to the following matters:

- a. The filling of vacancies on the Board or on any committee.
- b. The amendment or repeal of the by-laws or the adoption of new by-laws.
- c. The amendment or repeal of any resolution of the Board which by its terms shall not be amended or repealed.
- d. The fixing of compensation of Board members for serving on the Board or any committee.

Special committees may be appointed by the President with the consent of the Board and shall have only the powers specifically delegated to them by the Board.

Section 2. Committees of AME/WIM. The Board or the members may create committees of AME/WIM.

Committees created by the Board shall be appointed by the President with the consent of the Board. Committees created by the members shall be elected by the members, unless the members authorize the President to appoint said committees with the consent of the Board.

Section 3. Standing Committees. The standing committees and their responsibilities shall be as follows:

- a. The Budget and Finance Committee shall study the financial needs of AME/WIM and recommend ways and means of generating income.
- b. The Membership Committee shall suggest strategies for identifying the needs of women in ministry, enhancing services to the membership and increasing participation in AME/WIM, and prior to the quadrennial election meeting shall assist with preparation of a list to establish the credentials of members for voting and nomination for office.

- c. The Program Committee shall work with planning Connectional services, meetings, conferences and other events.
- d. The Bylaws and Legislation Committee shall receive, study, analyze and interpret proposed amendments to the Bylaws and legislation affecting women in ministry.
- e. The Publications Committee shall work with the publication of a quarterly newsletter, preparing of educational and informational publications, and assisting with preparing information to be published in The Christian Recorder and other publications.
- f. The Public Relations Committee shall work to promote and disseminate information on the presence and contribution of AME/WIM and women in ministry in the A.M.E. Church.
- g. The Worship Committee shall work with the planning of services and with developing resources on worship and liturgy to be made available to the Episcopal District organizations.
- h. The Strategic Planning Committee shall work to identify and develop strategies to strengthen AME/WIMs organizational growth and to enhance the presence of women in ministry in the A.M.E. Church.
- i. The Global Assistance Committee shall work to identify and generate funding and other resources to assist women in ministry in the Fourteenth through Twentieth Episcopal Districts.

#### ARTICLE IX ACCOUNTS AND INVESTMENTS

Section 1. Contracts, Checks, Bank Accounts. The Executive Board is authorized to select such depositories as it shall deem proper for the funds of AME/WIM and shall determine who shall be authorized in the organizations behalf to sign bills, notes, receipts, acceptances, endorsements, checks, releases, contracts and documents.

Section 2. Investments. The funds of AME/WIM may be retained in whole or in part in cash or be invested and reinvested from time to time in such property, real, personal or otherwise, including stocks, bonds or other securities for the benefit of AME/WIM, as the Executive Board may deem desirable.

Section 3. Expenditures. No officer of the Executive Board can authorize expenditures over one thousand (\$1,000.00) dollars without the approval of the majority of the Executive Board.

#### ARTICLE X - OFFICE AND BOOKS

Section 1. Office. The office of AME/WIM shall be located at such place as the Executive Board may from time to time determine.

Section 2. Books. There shall be kept at the office of AME/WIM correct books of amount of the activities and transactions of AME/WIM including a minute book, which shall contain a copy of the current bylaws, a copy of any resolutions passed by the Board or general membership, and all minutes of meetings of the Executive Board.

Section 3. Incorporation. Any Episcopal District or other branch of AME/WIM wishing to incorporate must first seek the approval of the Connectional Executive Board of AME/WIM. The 2nd Vice President for AME/WIM will work with the person responsible for preparing the incorporation documents to ensure that they comply with the Bylaws of AME/WIM.

#### ARTICLE XI - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of AME/WIM shall be June 1 to May 31.

#### ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of a majority of the entire Executive Board at any meeting of the Executive Board, or by the members of AME/WIM at a meeting duly called for the purpose of amending the Bylaws. Notice of the proposed amendment must be included in the notice of meeting. No amendment to the Bylaws shall become effective until approved by the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

#### ARTICLE XIII - EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Section 1. Each Episcopal District shall elect a President and Executive Board within six (6) months following each General Conference. The Executive Board in each Episcopal District shall be composed of the following officers: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Worship Leader and Herstorlographer. Annual Conference Coordinators shall serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Board. The term of office shall be four years. No officer shall serve in the same position for more than two consecutive terms. Service for two years and one month during one term shall constitute a complete term for purposes of evaluating eligibility.

To be eligible for office, nominees must be itinerant elders who have been members of AME/WIM in good standing for at least two years prior to nomination. Written notice of the date, time and place of the election must be provided to all women in ministry within the Episcopal District at least 60 days in advance of the election. When

309 possible, the election should be held at the site of an Episcopal District meeting to allow for as much participation  
310 as possible.

311 The Episcopal District Executive Board shall meet quarterly and shall meet with the women in ministry in the  
312 Episcopal District at least twice a year.

313 Section 2. Episcopal District President. The Episcopal District President shall work to achieve the mission and goals  
314 of AME/WIM and to carry out the vision of the Connectional President and Executive Board of AME/WIM. Her  
315 duties include but are not limited to:

316 becoming familiar with AME discipline and polity, parliamentary procedure, and AME/WIM objectives and bylaws;  
317 coordinating the membership in all Annual Conferences to assure organization by supervising the Annual  
318 Conference Coordinators and encouraging all licensed evangelists, exhorters, preachers and clergy to become  
319 members of AME/WIM

320 submitting biannual reports to the Connectional President, Third Vice President and General Secretary;

321 ensuring that Connectional dues and names of members are timely submitted to the Connectional Financial  
322 Secretary;

323 presiding over Episcopal District board meetings.

324 keeping accurate records including but not limited to: a minute book, which shall contain a copy of these Bylaws,  
325 the minutes of all Episcopal District Executive Board meetings and elections, and copies of all meeting notices; and  
326 an accurate record of all dues paying members

327 The Episcopal District President must attend at least one AME/WIM Connectional event each quadrennial.

328 Section 3. First Vice President. The First Vice President of the Episcopal District shall preside in the absence of the  
329 President. She shall work closely with the President to plan programming for the district. She shall help the  
330 President in identifying all women who are ministers within the Episcopal District and assist the President in all her  
331 duties. She shall be familiar with AME discipline and polity, parliamentary procedure, and AME/WIM objectives  
332 and by-laws.

333 Section 4. Second Vice President. The Second Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President and First  
334 Vice President. She shall work with the Annual Conference Coordinators to monitor financial issues and Treasurer's

reports. She shall supervise public relations and dissemination of information concerning applicable dates and events. She shall act as parliamentarian.

Section 5. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the Executive Board and Episcopal District meetings, and send correspondence to Board members. She shall maintain a minute book containing minutes from all meetings of the District Executive Board and General Membership meetings, Bylaws, copies of all meeting notices; and an accurate record of all dues paying members.

Section 6. Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary shall keep a record of all Connectional and Episcopal District membership dues paid in the Episcopal District. She shall receive a list of all dues-paying members from the Annual Conferences and (if applicable) Presiding Elder Districts. She shall forward all Connectional dues to the Financial Secretary of the Connectional Executive Board.

Section 7. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall open an account for the Episcopal District Executive Board. She shall be responsible to work out a budget with Board approval. The budget should reflect the source and amounts of all anticipated income and expenses and shall be approved by the District Executive Board.

Section 8. Worship Leader. The Worship Leader shall be familiar with the concept of intentional and innovative worship experiences. She should be familiar with inclusive language promote the use of the same during all WIM worship services. She shall encourage all others members to be conscious of gender domination in the language of worship. She will be responsible with the First Vice President for all AME/WIM worship services at Episcopal District level conferences and gatherings.

Section 9. Herstoryographer. The Herstoryographer will collect information on AME/WIM in the Episcopal District and compile a data bank and be a resource for the District. The Herstoryographer shall coordinate with Herstoryographers on all Connectional levels and provide a comprehensive library on women in ministry and the status and role of women in ministry in her Episcopal District. The Herstoryographer should make a presentation to the Episcopal District AME/WIM at an Episcopal District Meeting at least once a quadrennial on her findings.

Section 10. Newly Created Offices and Vacancies. Newly created offices of the Board and vacancies among the Board for any reason may be filled by vote of a majority of the Board members then in office, and the Board members so elected shall serve until the next general meeting of AME/WIM.

Section 11. Resignations. Any Board member may resign from office at any time by delivering a resignation in writing to the President, and the acceptance of such resignation, unless required by the terms thereof, shall not be necessary to make such resignation effective.

Section 12. Removal. Any Board member elected by members of the Episcopal District WIM may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the entire Board, at any meeting called for that purpose. A board member may be removed without cause only by vote of the general membership of the Episcopal District WIM. A Board member who misses three consecutive Board meetings may be removed from the Board for cause.

Section 13. Committees of the Executive Board. The Board may, by resolution adopted by a majority of the entire Board, establish and appoint executive and other standing committees. The standing committees shall be the standing committees that are in Article VII, Section 3 of AME/WIM Bylaws. The standing committee chairpersons on the Connectional level shall act as advisors and consultants to the District level standing committees. Special committees may be appointed by the President with the consent of the Board and shall have only the powers specifically delegated to them by the Board.

Section 14. Committees of AME/WIM. The Board or the members may create committees of AME/WIM. Committees created by the Board shall be appointed by the President with the consent of the Board. Committees created by the members shall be elected by the members, unless the members authorize the President to appoint said committees with the consent of the Board.

Section 15. Quorum and Voting. No person(s) shall be entitled to more than one (1) vote on an issue or matter in AME/WIM, and must be personally present to exercise such privilege. No proxy or absentee voting shall be permitted. This applies to voting on all levels.

A quorum for the election of the Executive Board on the Episcopal District level is a majority of the persons present at the time of the properly noticed elections.

Notice Requirement. Notice must be provided to the membership of the District at least 60 days prior to the election. The notice must be in writing and must include the date, time and location for the election. Failure to comply with the notice requirement will automatically nullify the results of any election held in violation thereof.

Nominations: The nomination of officers at a District Meeting shall be governed by an ad hoc nominating committee appointed by the President and Executive Board. The nominating committee shall consist of three to



five persons. The five persons on the nominating committee shall be from each of the Annual Conferences in the Episcopal District. Recommendations and nominations for office to the Executive Board must be submitted no later than 45 days prior to the District Meeting. Recommendations and nominations will not be accepted at the seat of the District Meeting. Persons nominated to run for Executive Board office must be present at the time and place of the election meeting in order to remain on the ballot.

#### ARTICLE XIV - ANNUAL CONFERENCE LEVEL

Section 1. Annual Conference. There shall be an Annual Conference Executive Board consisting of the following officers: Conference Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer and Worship Leader and Herstorlographer. In smaller conferences, there shall be at least three officers: Conference Coordinator, Secretary and Treasurer. Each officer shall become familiar with the Book of Discipline of the AME Church and the current bylaws of AME/WIM.

At a time and place set by the current Annual Conference Executive Board and the District President, the women in ministry in each Annual Conference shall meet annually to elect a Coordinator and Executive Board who shall serve for one year. Nominees must be members of AME/WIM in good standing.

The Annual Conference Executive Board shall meet quarterly and shall meet with the women in ministry in the Annual Conference at least twice a year.

Section 2. Conference Coordinator. The Conference Coordinator shall answer to her Episcopal District President.

She shall be an itinerant elder in good and regular standing within the A.M.E. church. She shall coordinate the membership in all presiding elder districts, (where applicable) and assure organization by serving as the Chair at all Annual Conference Executive Board meetings. She shall work to plan activities on the Annual Conference level. She shall encourage all persons to become active members of AME/WIM. She shall coordinate the membership in all Presiding Elder Districts and supervise the elections, finances (where applicable), and work being done therein. She shall work with the membership of the Conference, the Executive Boards on all levels, and the Bishop to achieve the mission and objectives of AME/WIM

She shall keep correct books of the activities and transactions of AME/WIM on the Annual Conference level including a minute book, which shall contain a copy of these bylaws and all minutes of the meetings of the members and of the Annual Conference Board.

415 Section 3. Assistant Conference Coordinator. The Assistant Conference Coordinator shall preside in the absence of  
416 the Conference Coordinator. She shall work closely with the Conference Coordinator to assist in all her duties  
417 including program planning and implementation within the Conference. She shall serve as Parliamentarian. She  
418 shall monitor financial issues and Treasurers reports. She shall assist with public relations and the dissemination of  
419 information within the membership.

420 Section 4. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the Annual Conference Executive Board/Presiding Elder  
421 District/Campus Ministry meetings, send correspondence to Board members, disseminate minutes and other  
422 relevant information to board members, and send copies of same to the Episcopal District President.

423 Section 5. Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary shall keep a record of all membership dues paid on the  
424 Annual Conference level. She shall also receive a list of all dues-paying members from the Presiding Elder Districts  
425 (where applicable). She will forward all Connectional and Episcopal District membership dues to the Episcopal  
426 District Financial Secretary.

427 Section 6. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall open an account for the Annual Conference Executive Board. She shall be  
428 responsible to work out a budget with Board approval. The budget shall reflect the source and amounts of all  
429 anticipated income and expenses.

430 Section 7. Worship Leader. The Leader must be familiar with the concept of intentional and innovative worship  
431 experiences. She should use inclusive language in all WIM liturgy, and encourage all women in ministry to be  
432 conscious of gender domination in the language of worship. She will be responsible with the Coordinator and  
433 Assistant Coordinator for all AME/WIM worship services at Annual Conference level workshops and gatherings.

434 Section 8. Herstoryographer. The Herstoryographer will collect information on AME/WIM in the Annual Conference  
435 level and compile a data bank of events during her time in office. She shall be a resource for the Annual  
436 Conference. The Herstoryographer shall coordinate with Herstoryographers on all levels and provide a  
437 comprehensive library on women in ministry and the status and role of women in ministry in her Annual  
438 Conference. The Herstoryographer should make a presentation to the Women in Ministry of her Conference at the  
439 Annual Conference at least once a quadrennial on her findings.

Section 9 - Newly Created Offices and vacancies; Section 10 - Resignations; Section 11 Removal; Section 12 - Committees of the Executive Board and Section 13 - Committees of AME/WIM are the same as defined under Episcopal District Level herein.

Nominations: The nomination of officers at an Annual Conference meeting shall be governed by an ad hoc nominating committee. For purposes of Election of the Executive Board, a nominating committee shall be appointed by the Annual Conference Coordinator with the assistance of the Executive Board. The nominating committee shall consist of three to five persons. The members of the nominating committee should be members of each of the Presiding Elder District(s) within the Annual Conference. Members of the nominating committee shall be ineligible for nomination by the committee for any position to be filled. The nominating committee shall be appointed no later than three months prior to the election of the Executive Board. Recommendations and nominations for office to the Executive Board must be submitted no later than 45 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Recommendations and nominations will not be accepted at the seat of the Annual Meeting.

#### ARTICLE XV PRESIDING ELDER DISTRICT LEVEL

Section 1. Presiding Elder District. Organization at the Presiding Elder District level is optional. When there are multiple Presiding Elder Districts within an Annual Conference; large numbers of women in concentrated areas; or great distances between women within the Conference; a Presiding Elder District Executive Board of WIM may be organized to assist the Annual Conference & District Executive Boards in carrying out the mission and objectives of AME/WIM within the Episcopal District.

At a time and place set by the current Annual Conference Executive board, the women in ministry in each presiding elder district shall meet annually to elect a Presiding Elder District Coordinator and Executive Board. The Presiding Elder District Executive Board (PE District) shall consist of the District Coordinator, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. District Coordinator. The District Coordinator shall answer to her Conference Coordinator. She shall coordinate the membership in the PE District and assure organization. She shall serve as Chair of the PE District Executive Board meetings. She shall work with the Annual Conference Coordinator to assess the needs of the PE District WIM and to plan for appropriate programming. She shall report to the Annual Conference Executive Board all meeting minutes, funds collected and disbursed, and programming. She shall encourage all people to become members of AME/WIM. She shall maintain the record of all meetings held in the PE District.

Section 3. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the PE District Board meetings, send correspondence, disseminate minutes and other relevant information, and send copies of the same to the Conference Coordinator.

Section 4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep a record of all membership dues paid on the PE District level and shall forward all membership dues to the Annual Conference Financial Secretary.

#### Article XVI. CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Section 1. A chapter of AME/WIM may be established on school and/or seminary campuses to facilitate the support and participation of women in ministry in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Section 2. The Campus Ministries shall be established with the approval of the District and Annual Conference Executive Boards and the Administration of the respective School or Seminary, and shall operate under the guidance of the Presiding Elder District Coordinator where applicable. If there is no Presiding Elder District Coordinator of AME/WIM, then the Annual Conference Coordinator shall act as Advisor to the Campus Ministry.

Section 3. Campus Ministries. Each Campus Ministry shall have a Campus Coordinator who shall, under the supervision of the Presiding Elder District Coordinator, organize and convene a Campus Ministry Executive Board. At a time and place set by the current Annual Conference Executive Board, the women in ministry in each Campus Ministry shall meet annually to elect a Campus Coordinator. Nominees must be members of AME/WIM in good standing.

Section 4. Campus Executive Board. The Campus Ministry Executive Board shall consist of the Campus Coordinator, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 4(a). Campus Coordinator. The Campus Coordinator shall:

Work with her Coordinator to carry out the mission and objectives of AME/WIM.

Maintain an accurate record of all meeting minutes and financial transactions, and provide an accurate report the same to the Executive Boards.

Become familiar with the objectives and Bylaws of AME/WIM

Assess and report the needs and visions of the campus membership


Work with the Executive Boards to create responsive programming

492 Section 4(b) Secretary. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Campus Ministry Executive Board meetings,  
493 send correspondence, disseminate minutes and other relevant information, and send copies of the same to the  
494 Presiding Elder District Coordinator (where applicable).

495 Section 4(c). Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep a record of all membership dues and forward said dues to the  
496 District Coordinator at the Annual Conference. She shall open an account for the Campus Ministry Board and be  
497 responsible to work out a budget for Board approval. The budget shall reflect the source and amounts of  
498 anticipated incomes and expenses. The treasurer shall keep a detailed record of income and expenses.

499 ARTICLE XVII DEFINITIONS

500 WHERE THE BYLAWS OF AME/WIM ARE SILENT, THE MOST RECENT EDITION OF ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER SHALL  
501 CONTROL WHEN NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE OVERALL INTENT OF THE AME/WIM BYLAWS.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Corrections	
Submitted by	M. Charmaine Ragin	
Contact	Mcragin1@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Pg. 224

Intent

Correction of typo

Rationale

Correction. There is no such place as Dission.

1 Current Text

2 G. Seventh District

3 4. Northeast South Carolina Conference - The Northeast South Carolina Conference comprises the Dission,


4 Florence-Dillion, Marion, and Sumter Districts

5 Amended Text

6 G. Seventh District

7 4. Northeast South Carolina Conference - The Northeast South Carolina Conference comprises the

8 Florence-Dillion, Marion, and Sumter Districts.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Corrections	
Submitted by	M. Charmaine Ragin	
Contact	Mcragin1@hotmail.com	

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Pg. 224

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Correction of typo

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4 Florence-Dillion, Marion, and Sumter Districts

5 Amended Text

6 G. Seventh District

7 4. Northeast South Carolina Conference - The Northeast South Carolina Conference comprises the

8 Florence-Dillion, Marion, and Sumter Districts.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Election of Ministerial Delegates	
Submitted by	Kimberly Detherage, President AME/WIM	
Contact	lavk888@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VIII. Conferences and Conventions. Section I. The General Conference. C. Election of Delegates. 1. Ministerial Delegates d.

Intent

To eliminate the possibility of casting a unanimous ballot or voice vote for the election of delegates to the General Conference.

Rationale

To ensure voter freedom and privacy in casting a secret ballot (or vote).

1 Current Text


2 d. All delegates and alternates to the General Conference shall be elected by individual secret ballots or by voting  
3 machine. Each annual conference shall determine by majority vote of the conference which of these two methods  
4 it will use. In cases where ballots are required and the election is uncontested, a voice vote may be held.  
5 If the delegates are to be elected by secret ballot, each ballot used must be identical; including the names of all  
6 eligible candidates who wish to be elected as a delegate. It shall be unlawful for a bishop or any person conducting  
7 the election to allow the use of ballots that are different in colors, different sizes or shapes, or that contain names  
8 that are not identical. It shall be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting that election, to provide  
9 clear instructions on number of candidates to be elected, and how voters should indicate their choice of  
10 candidates. It shall also be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting the election, to allow for the  
11 highest level of voter privacy possible, considering the setting and environment where the election is held.  
12 In cases where voting machines are used, it shall be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting the  
13 election to provide clear instructions and the highest possible level of voter privacy considering the environment  
14 where the election is held.

15 The latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for all elections.

16 Amended Text



17 d. All delegates and alternates to the General Conference shall be elected by individual secret ballots or by voting  
18 machine. Each annual conference shall determine by majority vote of the conference which of these two methods  
19 it will use. [ DELETE: In cases where ballots are required and the election is uncontested, a voice vote may be held.]  
20 If the delegates are to be elected by secret ballot, each ballot used must be identical; including the names of all  
21 eligible candidates who wish to be elected as a delegate. It shall be unlawful for a bishop or any person conducting  
22 the election to allow the use of ballots that are different in colors, different sizes or shapes, or that contain names  
23 that are not identical. It shall be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting that election, to provide  
24 clear instructions on number of candidates to be elected, and how voters should indicate their choice of  
25 candidates. It shall also be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting the election, to allow for the  
26 highest level of voter privacy possible, considering the setting and environment where the election is held.  
27 In cases where voting machines are used, it shall be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting the  
28 election to provide clear instructions and the highest possible level of voter privacy considering the environment  
29 where the election is held.  
30 The latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for all elections.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Membership	
Submitted by	M. Charmaine Ragin	
Contact	Mcragin1@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

P. 59

Intent

To develop a protocol for preparatory members who come of age and assure that they are taught the same information as new members and then participate in the full membership ritual and be issued a Certificate of Membership.

Rationale

To ensure that our youth are officially transitioned into full membership and celebrated. Also, to assist with retention of this age group, we become more intentional in enabling to remain in the AME Church. 129

1 Current Text

2 E. Preparation for Membership

3 In preparation for being received into full membership in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, all new


4 members shall be given at least the following areas of study:

5 Amended Text

6 E. Preparation for Membership

7 In preparation for being received into full membership in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, all new

8 members "and preparatory members" shall be given at least the following areas of study:

		
Bill Number		
Title	General Conference Committees	
Submitted by	Kimberly Detherage, President AME/WIM	
Contact	lavk888@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VIII. Conferences and Conventions. Section I. The General Conference. F. General Conference Committees. Paragraph 7-z. Women in Ministry, page 198

Intent

To delete the duplicate listings of the Committee on Women in Ministry.

Rationale

The Committee on Women in Ministry is listed in paragraphs 7-u and 7-z.

1 Current Text

2 u. Women in Ministry

3 v. Christian Debutante-Master Dedication

4 w. Memoirs

5 x. Reception of Fraternal Delegates

6 y. State of the Church

7 z. Women in Ministry

8 Amended Text


9 u. Women in Ministry

10 v. Christian Debutante-Master Dedication

11 w. Memoirs

12 x. Reception of Fraternal Delegates

13 y. State of the Church

		
Bill Number		
Title	Election of Ministerial Delegates	
Submitted by	Kimberly Detherage, President AME/WIM	
Contact	lavk888@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VIII. Conferences and Conventions. Section I. The General Conference. B. Qualifications of Delegates. Paragraph 1. Ministerial, page 188 and C. Election of Delegates. Paragraph 1-b. Ministerial Delegates, page 189.

Intent

To clarify that a person must have been ordained as an itinerant elder for four years preceding his or her election as a delegate to the General Conference.

Rationale

Right now it is unclear whether the 4-year itinerancy requirement is prior to election or prior to the General Conference. The proposed legislation clarifies that it is for four years prior to election as a delegate to the General Conference.

1 Current Text

2 B-1

3 Every itinerant minister elected a delegate by any Annual Conference shall have been an elder during the four  
4 years immediately preceding the General Conference to which said minister is elected and must be in good and  
5 regular standing in the Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church at the time of his or her  
6 election. He or she shall be a member of the Conference that elects him or her and shall be in actual service within  
7 the bounds of that Conference.

8 C-1-b

9 Ministerial delegates to the General Conference shall be elected by the itinerant ministers of the Annual  
10 Conference, provided they are in good and regular standing at the time of the election. They shall be itinerant  
11 elders who have been traveling Elders in the AME Church for at least four years next preceding their election. At  
12 least one ministerial delegate shall be a person under age forty (40).

13 Amended Text


14 B-1

15 Every minister elected as a delegate by any Annual Conference shall have been an itinerant elder during the four  
16 years immediately preceding the election as a delegate to the General Conference and must be in good and

17 regular standing in the Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church at the time of his or her  
18 election. He or she shall be a member of the Conference that elects him or her and shall be in actual service within  
19 the bounds of that Conference.

20 C-1-b

21 Ministerial delegates to the General Conference shall be elected by the itinerant ministers of the Annual  
22 Conference, provided they are in good and regular standing at the time of the election. They shall have been  
23 ordained as itinerant elders in the AME Church for at least four years preceding their election. At least one  
24 ministerial delegate shall be a person under age forty (40).

		
Bill Number		
Title	Filling of Vacancies of Connectional Officers	
Submitted by	Kimberly Detherage, President AME/WIM	
Contact	lavk888@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VI. General Governmental Divisions and Authority, Section III. General Officers. B. Filling of Vacancies. Paragraph 4, page 126.

Intent

To clarify that the Connectional President of Women in Ministry is one of the officers whose successor is chosen in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the respective organization and not, as is the case of General Officers, by the Council of Bishops nomination to the General Board for acceptance or rejection.

Rationale


The President of Women in Ministry is a Connectional Officer elected by A.M.E. Women in Ministry (AME/WIM). In the event of vacancy or resignation, the Bylaws of AME/WIM provide for the office to be filled by the vote of a majority of the Executive Board members elected by AME/WIM. Removal for cause shall be by a majority vote of the entire Board; or without cause, by vote of the general membership. [Part XII. Connectional Societies and Organizations. Section VIII. African Methodist Episcopal Women In Ministry. Article VI. Connectional Executive Board. Section 7. Newly Created Offices and Vacancies, Section 8. Resignations, Section 9. Removal, pages 448-449]

1 Current Text

2 This does not apply to the following officers: President of Womens Missionary Society, President of Lay  
3 Organization, and President of Connectional Council. These vacancies shall be filled according to the Constitution  
4 and Bylaws of said organizations.

5 Amended Text

6 This does not apply to the following officers: President of Womens Missionary Society, President of Lay  
7 Organization, President of Connectional Council, and President of Women In Ministry. These vacancies shall be  
8 filled according to the Constitution and Bylaws of said organizations.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Connectional Presiding Elders Council	
Submitted by	Earle Ifill	
Contact	peifill94@bellsouth.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Section VII, Page 442, Article 4 VI-Membership

Intent

To codify what is already being practiced

Rationale

By practice Retired Presiding Elders are members of the Presiding Elders Council.

1 Current Text

2 Add:

3 Amended Text

4 and all Presiding Elders Retired by their Annual Conference shall be eligible for membership in the Presiding Elders  
5 Council.

6 FUNDING; There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

7 Submitted by: Ralph L. Wilson

8 11th Episcopal District

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Annual Conference	
Submitted by	Earle Ifill	
Contact	peifill94@bellsouth.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Section II-The Annual Conference, item C-Attendance pages 207-208

Intent


To codify what is already a common practice.

Rationale

To give dignity to those persons who retire in Office

- 1 Current Text
- 2 none
- 3 Amended Text
- 4 Add :
- 5 1. The order of roll:
- 6 a. Presiding Bishop (any other active Bishops present)
- 7 b. Retired Bishop(s) (whose membership is in the Conference)
- 8 c. General Officer(s) (whose membership is in the Conference)
- 9 d. Retired General Officer(s) (whose membership is in the Conference)
- 10 e. Presiding Elders of the Conference (in order of appointment)
- 11 f. Retired Presiding Elders of the Conference (in order of appointment)
- 12 Re number current text from numbers 1-3 to 2-4
- 13 FUNDING; There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation
- 14 Submitted by: Ralph L. Wilson
- 15 11th Episcopal District



		
Bill Number		
Title	Pastoral Lack of Performance	
Submitted by	Earle Ifill	
Contact	peifill94@bellsouth.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012; Part V, Section VI, Subsection B;

Intent

The performance of the Pastor is to be self centered, based upon and determined by the church's ministries, church culture, members' need and involvement, as well as the local expectations of the Presiding Elder District, the Episcopacy, basic human values and needs, and the African Methodist Episcopal Book of Discipline.

Rationale

A Pastor's performance should impact and guide the development of the Circuit, Mission, and Station in ways that contribute to the growth and development of the Circuit, Mission, and Station. The impact of the Pastor's performance must satisfy the expectations of the ministerial needs spiritually, emotionally, physically, mentally, and administratively. Therefore, the Pastor's performance must produce spiritually, growth, stability, and sound managerial practices within the Circuit, Mission, and Station.

1 Current Text

2 TEXT TO BE ADDED AS Part V; Subsection B, Add #31.

3 Amended Text

4 A lack of such outcomes in the Circuit, Mission, or Station, as well as in the lives of the community, families, and  
5 individuals, will require a Pastoral Performance Review . Included in this review will be consideration given to the  
6 Pastor in the present charge or during his/her tenure as a Pastor. This tenure will be based upon the length of  
7 time a Pastor, i.e., 1-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-20 or more years. This review will also include the classification of the  
8 Pastor as full-time or part-time. The performance review will be done at the request of the Presiding Bishop upon  
9 the recommendation of the Presiding Elder.

10 The Presiding Elder will provide appropriate and sufficient opportunities for the ministerial obligations of the  
11 Pastor to be accomplished by the Pastor. These opportunities may include and may require:

- 12 1) time sensitive meetings and training opportunities for Pastoral participation,
- 13 2) periodical discussions with the Pastor regarding ministerial performance, and
- 14 3) spiritual and professional support for the Pastor in definitive areas of need.

After a sufficient opportunity for the Pastor to satisfy and meet the expectations for his/her ministerial performance, a further review and recommendation will be made by the Presiding Elder to the Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Elder will prepare and provide substantive performance products of all the opportunities participated in by the Pastor. These products will be given to the Pastor and/or his/her representative and the Presiding Bishop. The recommendations and review results may require implementation of the African Methodist Episcopal Book of Discipline rules governing pastoral duties and responsibilities. The continuous lack of Pastoral Performance can result in the removal of the Pastor from his or her charge and the Pastor may be subject to further review, evaluation, and/or disciplinary support. Subsequent to any final pastoral recommendations, the Presiding Elder will implement the procedures outlined in a Pastoral Performance and Evaluation document.

#### I. Meetings

- a. The Presiding Elder will meet with the Pastor to state the specific problem in terms of actual performance and desired performance.
- b. The Presiding Elder will refer to previous casual conversations and the previous verbal warnings.
- c. The Presiding Elder will give the Pastor a chance to respond and explain.
- d. The Presiding Elder will tell the Pastor the specific change/action that is expected in his or her performance and the confidence that the Pastor will change and begin to perform properly.
- e. The Presiding Elder will have the Pastor confirm that he or she knows exactly what you expect.
- f. The Presiding Elder will tell the Pastor that a memo to the file will be written summarizing the conversation.

#### II. The Presiding Elder will give an Annual Evaluation of the Pastors which will include the following:

- a. Interpersonal skills Ability to get along with: supervisors, members, officers, community and others. Level of emotional maturity and professionalism will be included.
- b. General Ministerial Performance Demonstrates professional, administrative, supervisory, and/or specialized knowledge required to perform Ministerially.
- c. Work Ethics Promptness and attendance on the Job
- d. Completion of Job Requirements with thoroughness and accuracy

41 e. Planning and Organization Plans and organizes work, coordinates with others, and establishes appropriate  
42 priorities.

43 f. Dependability Monitors projects and exercises follow-through, adheres to time frames, and is on time for  
44 meetings, worship services, and appointments.

45 g. Delegation and supervision Demonstrates ability to direct others in accomplishing ministry, effectively selects  
46 and motivates staff, encourages ministerial outreach to members and community, and does timely appraisals of  
47 staff.

48 h. Relating to Others Maintains positive work relationship with supervisors, with peers, members, and those who  
49 report to and/or interact with Pastor.

50 i. Communication Expresses ideas clearly both orally and in writing; listens well and responds appropriately.

51 j. Commitment to AME CHURCH GOALS Clearly understands and communicates the Doctrine and Discipline of the  
52 AME CHURCH.

53 k. Judgement, critical thinking, and decision making Effectively analyzes problems, determines appropriate action  
54 for solutions, and exhibits timely and decisive action.

55 l. Professional Development Keeps professional knowledge up to date and seeks to increase ministerial knowledge  
56 through course work, seminars, and reading; demonstrates ability to apply new information to enhance  
57 effectiveness in ministry.


58 m. Initiative Is a self-starter, seeks and assumes greater responsibility, monitors projects independently, and  
59 follows through appropriately.

60 n. Creativity Offers innovative ideas that contribute to increase church growth, positive objectives and church  
61 goals.

62 o. Flexibility Adapts to change, accepts new ideas and approaches to ministry, responds appropriately to criticism  
63 and to suggestions for improvement.

64 p. Overall Rating This is to rate overall performance and is not simply an average of the above ratings.

65 q. Signatures 1) The Presiding Elder will sign the Evaluation. 2) The Pastor will sign the evaluation to indicate that  
66 he/she has received a copy of the evaluation and has discussed it with the Presiding Elder. If the Pastor chooses  
67 he/she may respond to the evaluation in writing within 5 business days after the receipt of the evaluation.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Supervision and Evaluation of Pastors	
Submitted by	Earle Ifill	
Contact	peifill94@bellsouth.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part V, Section IX, Subsection B.3, page 107

Intent

To establish a process for evaluating the performance of pastors.

Rationale

It is evident that there exist itinerant elders discontentment with their pastoral assignments due to the high number of lawsuits that the AME Church are experiencing which is costing millions of dollars.

Performance expectations should be used to make church leadership assignments. Capabilities and work ethic should be considered in serving the needs of a given congregation. Performance expectations should be consistent across the connection. Supervisory intervention plans should be established for those pastors that exemplify a need in a given area of performance.

1 Current Text

2 1 Current Text: Section IX, B3.c.; Page 107

3 2 The presiding elder is to supervise mission and smaller churches and circuits.

4 Amended Text

5 3 Amended Text: Section IX, B.3.c.; Page 107

6 4 The presiding elder shall meet with each pastor on his/her presiding elders district during the

7 5 Annual Conference year; preferably before the fourth Quarterly Conference to discuss

8 6 performance expectations and the status of the local church. This meeting will be documented

9 7 with date, place of meeting, and signatures of both pastor and presiding elder. If there are

10 8 concerns, a supervisory intervention plan will be established to include a target date. A

11 9 follow-up meeting shall convene before the Annual Conference in order to determine progress

12 10 of items that needed improvement as stipulated in the intervention plan.

13 11

14 12

15 13 Funding : There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation.

16      14 Submitted by the Presiding Elders Council.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Support of Presiding Elde	
Submitted by	Earle Ifill	
Contact	peifill94@bellsouth.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part V, Section X, Subsection A, 2, d

Intent

To assign full support to the Annual Conference

Rationale

In order for the compensation of the salaried servants of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to be commensurate with those of other communions and to include strict accountability of those servants and funds, the following salary guidelines and rules are established for each salaried servant and level of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

1 Current Text

2 1 Current Text: Section XI,

3 A. Presiding Elders

4 1. The salary of the presiding elder shall be a minimum of \$28,000 annually where possible

5 and financially feasible or any greater sum to be established by the Annual Conference Committee on Presiding

6 Elders Apportionment only. Geographic and cost of living factors of the presiding elder District shall be taken into

7 consideration in the determination of the above.

8 2. The Total Package shall include the following fringe benefits:

9 a. \$12,000 Housing Allowance, annually

10 b. Pension or Retirement

11 c. Self - Employment Tax

12 d. Insurance (Health-Disability-Malpractice)

13 Amended Text

14 d. Insurance (Health-Disability-Malpractice)

15 To be paid for by the Annual Conference in which the Presiding Elder Serves.


16 e. Key Person Insurance 50% to District and 50% to family.

17 f. Presiding Elder District and Connectional Travel

18 Each pastor shall collect the apportionment of his or her charge before the quarterly conference and have it for  
19 the presiding elder when he or she comes so that the presiding elder may be unencumbered in laboring at the  
20 quarterly conference, preaching, inviting persons to join the church, raising the conference funds, and doing all in  
21 his or her power to build up the church and help the pastor. In case of failure of a pastor to collect the presiding  
22 elders allowance, the presiding elder shall receive the same from any of all moneys collected during the quarterly  
23 meeting.

24 AMENDED TEXT: Section X, A. 2.f

25 All deficiencies of the presiding elders support shall be raised by the extra collections in the district ordered by the  
26 session, at those circuits and stations which have failed to pay their apportionment.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Supervision and Evaluation of Pastors	
Submitted by	Gloria Byrd	
Contact	hiejrl137@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012: Part V. Section IX, Subsection B.3i, Page 107-08; Section VII #5; Pages 100-101:

Intent

To establish a process for evaluating the performance of pastors; to timely identify areas of concern for the local church and implement a system of recourse and documentation used in future assignments.

Rationale

The number of law suits and conciliatory hearings bought within and against the AME Church and its leadership based on itinerant elders' discontent with their pastoral assignments remains alarmingly high. This pervasive litigious tendency has been costing the AME Church millions of dollars.

This burdensome situation could be greatly alleviated, if not avoided, if common human resource policies regarding employee performance evaluation, supervisory counseling and documentation were in place and adhered to. In secular society, employment policies require that a supervisor meets with an employee at least twice during the year to evaluate the employee's progress against previously agreed upon goals- accomplishments, challenges and failures are specifically discussed and documented, along with amended goals and new timelines, if necessary to achieve goals.

Decisions on church leadership assignments should be based on capabilities and work product that serves the needs of the congregation, community and objectives of the AME Church, not undermined by emotional affiliation and political influence. If the status of a pastoral charge is significantly diminished ( attending membership and financial resources) less than a year after a pastor is assigned, then the root cause needs to be determined and addressed. This is done with supervisory intervention, including meeting with the pastor, documenting the discussion, final conclusions, establishing new expectations, Strategies, and consequences of not meeting reasonable expectations. This Bill is to be included in the "Minister's Bill of Rights".

Attached to this Bill is an evaluation template

1 Current Text

2 Section IX, B.3.c.;Page 107

3 The presiding elder is to supervise mission and smaller churches and circuits.

4 Amended Text

5 Section IX, B.3.3.c; Page 107


6 The presiding elder shall meet with each pastor of his or her district privately during the quarterly conference

7 meeting and provide verbal and written evaluations that include the pastor's concerns as well as congregation.

8 Quarterly Conference process allows for congregational input. Goals and objectives must be clear.



9 Prior to Annual Conference, and before the third quarterly Conference, the presiding elder must discuss with said  
10 pastor the status of the local church and his/her performance at that charge, citing preceding Quarterly  
11 Conference evaluations, reports and written communication from members, These meetings shall be documented,  
12 showing date, venue and signature of both pastor and presiding elder of the discussion and final assessment. If  
13 there were concerns during a quarterly visit a follow-up meeting shall be convened prior to the next Quarterly  
14 Conference in order to evaluate accomplishments and progress against agreed and signed to goals in the previous  
15 meeting. Continued follow-up should be made post Annual Conference For remaining unresolved concerns.  
16 Documentation from these meetings shall be entered into a secure personnel storage file and copied to the  
17 presiding bishop. The information should be referenced in making pastoral appointments. The bishop shall be  
18 made aware of adverse or irreconcilable situations between pastor and congregation as the presiding elder  
19 becomes aware, and the case referred to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee.  
20 The presiding elder is to provide sufficient or adequate supervision of mission and smaller churches and circuits  
21 that will lead to a more informed and accurate evaluation.  
22 SEE ATTACHED SUGGESTED EVALUATION FORM FOR USE.( To be standardized for all Districts)  
23 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation.  
24 Submitted by Gloria T. Byrd.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Minsters Bill of Rights	
Submitted by	Earle Ifill	
Contact	Peifill94@bellsouth.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Ministers Bill of Rights

Intent

Pastoral Appointment s

Rationale

The new appointment shall correspond to the pastor 's experience efficiency and having kept the pastoral vows made. When a pastor is being considered for a new appointment based on his/her effectiveness at the present appointment, the pastor shall be referred to the final decision

1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text

4 The consideration of a new pastoral appointment shall be based on the following:L1. Tenure of pastor at present  
5 charge, 1-5, 5-10yrs, 10-25 yrs, 25-40, 40-75 yrs

6 2. Productivity- It shall be made known to the pastor at the time of new appointment the numerical and financial  
7 condition of the church. This information shall state whether it is in a rebuilding or sustaining condition.


8 3. The social and economic condition of the area where the appointment is located

9 4. Comparative Records:

10 1. The present pastoral report shall be used as a comparative tool to help determine the new appointment.

11 2. A written status report of the church from the Board of Stewards shall be considered in the decision.

12 3. The Pastor's commitment to the laws, history and legacy of the AME Church. This shall include but not limited  
13 to support of the conference system, meeting stewardship responsibilities, maintaining positive relationship  
14 between pastor and congregation, presiding elder Bishop and the Annual Conference leadership.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Self-Assessment/Mirroring Process of the Local Church	
Submitted by	Rev Trevor E. Woolridge	
Contact	mpofbda@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 58 of the Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. New legislation that would become Section VI of Part IV Church Membership

Intent

To provide an instrument that gives the local church an honest assessment to determine the options for growth.

Rationale

This is a process that will help the local church utilize resources better those readily available and/or within your grasp. This growth may come in the form of merging struggling congregations or relocating struggling congregations where there is growth in population and economics. The local church is better organized and resourced to make disciples as commanded in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19. Potential for growth is increased as we organize to plant, to water and watch God give the increase. Visitors numbers are likely to increase and the unchurched will be attracted to the bright light that will result when we become our best self. A wise person once wrote, Self-Assessment is one test from which no Christian is excused.

1 Current Text

2 Add a new section in the Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2016

3 Amended Text

4 1. Text: Add a new section in the Book of Discipline of the African

5 2. Methodist Episcopal Church 2016 to follow

6 3. Section V on Church Membership.

7 4. Section VI will be known as The Self-Assessment/Mirroring Process of

8 5. the Local Church.

9 6. This process must occur once every four years and be completed at

10 7. least two years prior to the General Conference to determine the

11 8. following:

12 9. The composition of the Presiding Elder District

13 10. The geographic location of the Presiding Elder District by County


14 11. lines, by areas

15 12. The general population of those Counties and/or areas  
16 13. Growth trend of the County and/or areas  
17 14. Economics of the County and/or areas  
18 15. History of the church  
19 16. Membership of the congregation number of members and  
20 17. families  
21 18. Income of the church  
22 19. Attendance of the congregation (How many visitors come in a  
23 20. month)  
24 21. Pastors compensation  
25 22. Operating budget needs of the congregation  
26 23. Growth patterns of the congregation  
27 24. Historic significance of the church in the community  
28 25. Issue surrounding title and deed or usage of the land  
29 26. Distance of other churches to location of local AME Church  
30 27. Distance of the nearest AME Church to the churches being  
31 28. discussed  
32 29. Are there any special social program being operated out of the  
33 30. church site at present  
34 31. What is the estimated dollar value of the church property  
35 32. Why would it possibly profit two (2) congregations at this time to  
36 33. merge? (Be specific, i.e. Church As building is in very  
37 34. poor shape and will cost dollar amount to repair. Church B has  
38 35. only three (3) members, but has a wonderful  
39 36. building. What does each church presently pay the pastor  
40 37. Upon completion of this process, the final recommendations are  
41 38. to be submitted to the Mission, Circuits and

42 39. Stations Committee of the Annual Conference for resolution.

43 Submitted by Bishop James Levert Davis, Rev. Trevor E. Woolridge Mrs. Bernella Knight Rose and the members of

44 the Ninth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Child Sex Trafficking	
Submitted by	Anita J. Gould	
Contact	revdrajg@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part XI, Section XIV. B. Definitions. Sexual Abuse (Page 272); Section XIV. C. Responsibilities and Roles of the AME Church in Policy Implementation (Page 274); and Section XIV. D. Policy and Procedures for Reporting a Complaint of Sexual Misconduct (Page 275).

Intent

To add Child sex trafficking to the list of abuses in an area of trust for professional clergy responsibility and accountability for reporting for the protection of children who are victims in our congregations and communities.

Rationale

Modifying the AME Church Policy on Sexual Misconduct by expanding the definition of sexual abuse to include child sex trafficking ensures coverage of this subject matter in training required for clergy and licentiates, to raise awareness and educate the leadership so that the AME Church remains in the vanguard position as proactive and responsive in combating this pervasive, yet subtle, social ill which victimizes our children.

1 Current Text

2 1 Indecent exposure

3 2 Promotion of Prostitution

4 3 Sexual acts or sexual contact with another person who is incapable of appraising the

5 4 nature of the conduct or physically incapable of declining participation in, or

6 5 communicating unwillingness to engage in, that sexual act or sexual contact.

7 6 Sexual acts or sexual contact arising from the administration to another person of a drug

8 7 or intoxicant which substantially impairs the ability of that person to be aware of, or

9 8 control the nature of the conduct.

10 9 Child pornography

11 Amended Text


12 1 Indecent exposure

13 2 Promotion of Prostitution

14 3 Sexual acts or sexual contact with another person who is incapable of appraising the

15 4 nature of the conduct or physically incapable of declining participation in, or

- 16 5 communicating unwillingness to engage in, that sexual act or sexual contact.
- 17 6 Sexual acts or sexual contact arising from the administration to another person of a drug
- 18 7 or intoxicant which substantially impairs the ability of that person to be aware of, or
- 19 8 control the nature of the conduct.
- 20 9 Child pornography
- 21 10 Child sex trafficking

		
Bill Number		
Title	Submission Part 2 - MCAM Constitution and ByLaws, 2016-2020	
Submitted by	MYRON HILL	
Contact	mhill@embarqmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

page 430; p.432; p. 433; p.434; p. 435; p 436; p. 439; p. 441

Intent

Editorial revision(s); Consistency for requiring additional year of experience; Accountability; Consistency of titles.

Rationale

Correction for consistency - Add period behind number; Consistency with experience; Consistency

- 1 Current Text
- 2 Section 2 The MCAI
- 3 b. He/She must have been registered in attendance to at least one Annual meeting
- 4 of MCAM and MCAI during the Quadrennium prior to running for office.
- 5 Section 2 - Elections and Terms of Office
- 6 b. Persons running for office need to be present in order to run. Extenuating
- 7 circumstances (death or hospitalization of immediate family member: parent,
- 8 spouse, or child) may be considered on an individual basis by the MCAM Executive
- 9 Board.
- 10 c. Connectional Associate Director of Drama
- 11 d. Connectional Associate Director of Dance
- 12 e. Connectional Associate Director of Multi-Media
- 13 f. Connectional Associate Director of Youth and Young Adults
- 14 g. Connectional Assistant Directors of Choirs/Vocals, Keyboards, Instrumental
- 15 The Associate & Assistant Directors shall promote the continued improvement in
- 16 the quality of music presented for worship and activities at conferences, meetings, or
- 17 special programs through their performance genre.
- 18 f. Financial Secretary/Treasurer



19 The Financial Secretary/Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all monies...

20 There shall be no expenditure of MCAM or MCAI monies without the approval of the Connectional Director and

21 the

22 Financial Secretary/Treasurer. The Financial Secretary/Treasurer shall...

23 The Dean of CICA, an appointed position, shall have at least a master degree in music or higher from an accredited

24 institution, at least three (3) years of music leadership experience and two years of active membership with MCAM

25 d. The Membership Committee shall recruit members, compile a directory/roster of the membership by Episcopal

26 District including name, address, music position or office, and year of first membership in MCAM

27 The committee may return to the writer any materials found to be in conflict with the objectives of the

28 MCAM

29 Section 2. Workshops shall be presented for the strengthening of the Episcopal District Music, Dance, Drama, Multi

30 Media and Youth and Young Adult program.

31 Article 1 - Structure and Membership Section 1. The Annual Conference Music and Christian Arts Ministry shall

32 consist of a

33 d. Anyone who registers as a member of the District Choir/Dance group, musician or choreographer, Voting

34 Amended Text

35 Section 2. The MCAI

36 b. He/She must have been registered in attendance to at least two Annual meetings of MCAM (either the MCE

37 Spring meeting of the MCAM or the Fall Executive Board meeting or MCAM Institute) during the Quadrennium

38 prior to running for office.

39 Section 2. Elections and Terms of Office

40 b. Persons running for office need to be present in order to run. Extenuating circumstances (death or

41 hospitalization of immediate family member: parent, spouse, or child) may be considered on an individual basis by

42 the MCAM Executive Board. Communication of the same should be made to the Connectional MCAM Director and

43 submitted in writing to the Recording Secretary.

44 c. Connectional Director of Drama

45 d. Connectional Director of Dance

46 e. Connectional Director of Multi-Media

47 f. Connectional Director of Children/Youth and Young Adults

48 g. Connectional Director of Choirs/Vocals

49 h. Connectional Director of Instruments (keyboards, strings, woodwinds, brasses, percussion)

50 The Associate Director & Directors of the various art disciplines shall promote the continued improvement in the  
51 quality of music presented for worship and activities at conferences, meetings, or special programs through their  
52 performance genre.

53 f. Treasurer

54 The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all monies...

55 There shall be no expenditure of MCAM or MCAI monies without the approval of the Connectional Director and  
56 the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall...

57 The Dean of CICA, an appointed position, shall have at least a master degree in music or higher from an accredited  
58 institution, at least three (3) years of music leadership experience and two years of active membership with  
59 MCAM.


60 d. The Membership Committee shall recruit members, compile a directory/roster of the membership by Episcopal  
61 District including name, address, music position or office, and year of first membership in MCAM.

62 The committee may return to the writer any materials found to be in conflict with the objectives of the  
63 MCAM.

64 Section 2. Workshops shall be presented for the strengthening of the Episcopal District Music, Dance, Drama, Multi  
65 Media and Children/Youth and Young Adult program.

66 Article I - Structure and Membership Section 1. The Annual Conference Music and Christian Arts Ministry shall  
67 consist of a:

68 d. Anyone who registers as a member of the District Choir/Dance group, musician or choreographer; voting

		
Bill Number		
Title	Bishops	
Submitted by	John Hurst Adams & Adam J. Richardson, Jr.	
Contact	bishoprichardson_2000@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Pages 91-104, Sections VI-VIII

Intent

To establish a starting point for evaluating the variety of leadership roles of pastors, to the end that pastors will be encouraged to perform at their optimal best, serving conscientiously, effectively, being held accountable to the denomination and the congregations being served.

Rationale

The Church is both organism and organization. It is spiritual; it is business. This blend, at the core of our being, requires checks and balances to insure pastoral and congregational effectiveness to be among the highest priorities and ideals to which Christians aspire. The evaluation that calls pastors to account for leading effectively must be related to a biblical standard of excellence, the of the shepherds heart as well as the best-practice expectations of the people who desire to see the congregation in which they worship and work grow and flourish in peace and love in Christ. The Book of Discipline has from the beginning provided a standard of pastoral performance and expectations, but does not provide a mechanism by which the pastor is actually interviewed, challenged for ways to grow and improve in certain areas. Pastors have only been evaluated informally on the basis doing what is required for the Conference (i.e. paying the budget), and a vote of confidence (or not) in the Fourth Quarterly Conference, but rarely a question of competence. Perhaps a pre-conference letter of support to the bishop. This initiative brings balance to the decades old Pastors Bill of Rights. Bishops are evaluated by the Episcopal Committee

- 1 Current Text
- 2 None
- 3 Amended Text
- 4 New Text - Bill No. 1
- 5 Title: Congregational Rights and Pastoral Evaluation
- 6 1 INSERT NEW SECTION IX IN SEQUENCE FOLLOWING SECTION VI - THE
- 7 2 ITINERANT MINISTRY; SECTION VII THE MINISTERS BILL OF RIGHTS;
- 8
- 9 3 SECTION VIII MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.
- 10 4
- 11 5 BEGIN NEW SECTION

12 6 IX. EVALUATION OF PASTORS

13 7 Pastors shall be evaluated twice per year in each local congregation of the African  
14 8 Methodist Episcopal Church.

15 9 Purpose

16 10 Organizational structures require routine evaluations at the executive levels of  
17 11 management: holding everyone accountable, to develop quality leadership, to engage in  
18 12 best practices, risk-taking, and innovation in order to determine the structural health of  
19 13 the organization. It is a necessary process for establishing benchmarks for improvement  
20 14 in the leader and in the organization being led. The evaluation of pastors is a necessary  
21 15 step in taking the ministry of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to greater heights  
22 16 in faithfulness to our calling and our historic ministry.

23 17 Process

24 18 A Committee on Evaluation shall be one of the standing committees of the Board of  
25 19 Stewards. The evaluation should be scheduled prior to the Second and Fourth Quarterly  
26 20 Conferences. The Committee on Evaluation, consisting of three to five Stewards, shall sit  
27 21 with the pastor to consider benchmarks of ministry goals and objectives, as well the  
28 22 effectiveness of the leadership style of the pastor. This is not intended to be an inquisition  
29 23 or an opportunity to undermine the authority of the pastor, but to engage in mature,  
30 24 Christian dialogue to help the pastor improve in competencies that will assist the  
31 25 congregation in creating an environment of love, fruitful ministry, and of reaching its  
32 26 fullest potential at being the beloved community of faith. The evaluation should consist  
33 27 of the following areas of pastoral concern:

34 28 The Pastor as Liturgist: Evaluators are encouraged to share their impressions and their  
35 29 perceptions about worship that is inspiring and serves as a continuing impetus for  
36 30 spiritual formation in discipleship.

37 31 The Pastor as Preacher: Evaluators are encouraged to offer honest reflection about the  
38 32 sermons, evaluating sermons on being thoughtful, persuasive, motivating and helpful in

39 33 expressing the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ.

40 34 The Pastor as Shepherd: Evaluators are to consider the pastors ability to listen, to

41 35 determine if the pastor shows a level of mature understanding, if the pastor is proficient

42 36 in counseling, if the pastor is trustworthy on matters of confidentiality, if the pastor

43 37 demonstrates a loving, caring demeanor, and whether the pastor is diligent with

44 38 appropriate pastoral visitation.

45 39 The Pastor as Teacher: The evaluators should determine if the pastor conducts regular

46 40 Bible study, and whether the pastor is faithful to Methodist/Wesleyan theology,

47 41 Discipline and Community Discipleship?

48 42 The Pastor as Administrator: The evaluators are to ascertain if the pastor has given

49 43 attention to structure, organization, human resources, financial resources, property

50 44 resources and of best practices regarding effective, results-oriented administration.

51 45 The Pastor as Resident Theologian/Ethicist: The evaluators are expected to discern if

52 46 the pastor shows evidence of being interested in studying and pursuing the deep things of

53 47 God on matters related to matters in the community on what he or she perceives God to

54 48 be saying and doing, and what God is expecting of us?

55 49 The Pastor as Representative: The evaluators are expected to determine if pastor is

56 50 committed to matters of justice issues in the community, is present in ecumenical

57 51 settings, has familiarity with those in seats of power, is willing to work with members

58 52 and leaders of other faith traditions for the greater good, and is open to working with and

59 53 for the left-out and marginalized.

60 54 The Pastor as Programmer: The evaluators are to seek honest reflection on whether the

61 55 pastor gives evidence of imagination; whether the pastor provides guidance and

62 56 assistance to volunteers or paid staff members, and whether the pastor shows ability to

63 57 design programs, delegate and designate responsibility for implementation and

64 58 satisfactory outcomes.

65 59 The Pastor as Relationship Builder: The evaluation team is to determine if there is

66 60 evidence of sincere Christian fellowship, a sense of we-ness among the congregants, an  
67 61 atmosphere of trust, communal and respect.

68 62 The Pastor as Prophet/Advocate: The evaluators should determine whether the pastor  
69 63 engenders a commitment to the mission of the church, operates within the scope of  
70 64 biblical ethics, justice , the rule of law, showing evidence of gifts of the Spirit, a regard  
71 65 for the poor and oppressed, a passion for education and economic democracy.

72 66 The Pastor as Steward: The evaluators should determine whether the pastor is model of  
73 67 excellent stewardship, faithful in tithes and offerings, and is first among the contributors.


74 68 The Pastor as Leader: The evaluators should consider the pastors gifts of vision, ability  
75 69 to plan, strategize, articulate the vision, stand as an example, and represent the  
76 70 embodiment of love.

77 71

78 72 Results of the interview will be shared with the Presiding Elder and will form the basis of  
79 73 the Stewards vote of confidence, or lack thereof, at the Fourth Quarterly Conference. It  
80 74 will also serve the purpose of measuring improvements in the performance of duty in a  
81 75 wide range of pastoral leadership competencies; and will become a useful and objective  
82 76 tool for the Presiding Elder in making recommendations to the Bishop regarding pastoral  
83 77 appointments.

84 78

85 79 Submitted by Bishop John Hurst Adams and Bishop A. J. Richardson

		
Bill Number		
Title	Rev. Dr.	
Submitted by	M. Charmaine Ragin	
Contact	Mcragin1@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 216

Intent

To identify and provide statistics for all youth

Rationale


Youth ages 13-17 should be significantly recognized for this is a critical time when they decide whether or not they will remain and become full members. Therefore, they should be acknowledged as preparatory members and emphasis placed upon them. According to the discipline, they are neither full members nor preparatory.

1 Current Text

2 19. Number of preparatory members? (Children under 12 years of age, not to be ounces as full members.)

3 Amended Text

4 19. Number of preparatory members? (Youth through age 17)

		
Bill Number		
Title	Quarterly Conference	
Submitted by	M. Charmaine Ragin	
Contact	Mcragin1@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 217

Intent

The quarterly conference disciplinary questions does not include statistical data for adult baptism.

Rationale

It is significant to document adult baptism as well as hidden.

1 Current Text

2 22. How many baptisms this quarter?

3 a. Infants (a few weeks to 5 years of age)

4 b. Children (6-12)

5 c. Youth (13-18)

6 Amended Text

7 c. Youth (13-17)

8 d. Adults. 18 and over



		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	M. Charmaine Ragin	
Contact	Mcragin1@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

To be inserted on page 424

Intent

To coordinate the work of all youths and young adults, youth groups, auxiliaries, and organizations on the presiding elder district.

Rationale

All levels of the church are represented except the presiding elder district in this much needed area of ministry and is much needed on all levels.

1 Current Text

2 N/A

3 Amended Text

4 Presiding Elder District RAYAC

5 ARTICLE I - PURPOSE

6 Section 1. The RAYAC in the presiding elder district shall serve to coordinate the work of all youths and young

7 adults, youth groups, auxiliaries, and organizations in the local church. It shall serve as the steering organization for

8 all youths work and activities in the presiding elder district.


9 ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

10 The presiding elder district RAYAC shall consist of presiding area district Christian Education coordinators, presiding

11 elder district RAYAC elected officers, and presiding elder directors or supervisors of youth departments or groups

12 in the church.

13 ARTICLES III -VI "shall be the same as the local with the exchange of presiding elder in place of pastor."

		
Bill Number		
Title	Organization of Ministerial Staff	
Submitted by	Gerald A. Cooper, Mila P. Cooper, Eric Billips, Myra Billips, Ayonna Johnson, Rodrecus Johnson, Jr., Byron Moore, Sharon Moore, Anthony Reed, Karen Reed, Ann Champion Shaw, Robert Shaw, Gregory Thomas, Michelle Thomas, John White, Maria Mallory White	
Contact	gacooper40@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, p. 112; Part V, Section XI.

Intent

To authorize and encourage pastors to organize and empower ministers in the local church to maximize the use of their gifts and skills for ministry.

Rationale


Pastors should be granted sufficient latitude to organize their ministerial staffs as they deem appropriate for effective and efficient ministry in their local context. The organization of the ministerial staff should include express authority to both delegate responsibilities and to apply appropriate titles to reflect those responsibilities, including the use of titles such as Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Executive Pastor, Administrative Pastor, Visitation Pastor, Youth Pastor, and the like. There are many ordained clergy persons serving in our local churches without pastoral appointments. The denomination should not discourage, but should rather strongly encourage pastors to prayerfully and thoughtfully organize these clergy persons in ways that will maximize the use of their ministry gifts. Note, the term pastor in charge is a variation of the term minister in charge, which is already used in other parts of the Discipline, and is intended to have the same meaning.

1 Current Text

2 N/A

3 Amended Text

4 Part V, Section XI. G. The pastor in charge shall organize the clergy persons serving in his or her charge so as to use  
5 their ministry gifts to the fullest potential for the benefit of the church. The pastor in charge may delegate  
6 authority and responsibilities as deemed prudent and appropriate in light of the needs of the congregation and the  
7 skills of the ministerial staff. The pastor in charge may also apply appropriate titles to reflect the delegated  
8 responsibilities, including, but not limited to, Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Executive Pastor, Administrative  
9 Pastor, Visitation Pastor, Youth Pastor, etc. The pastor shall specify, in writing, the duties and expectations  
10 associated with any such title or position.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Creation of an Order of Deacons in the African Methodist Episcopal Church	
Submitted by	Michael Joseph Brown	
Contact	mbrown@payne.edu	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

2012 Discipline, Part V The Ministry, Section V, Subsection A (pages 89-90)

Intent

To create a permanent Order of Deacons in the African Methodist Episcopal Church

Rationale

Since its inception, the African Methodist Episcopal Church has been committed to an itinerant ministry. The itinerancy was and is meant to fulfill the missional needs of the AME Church. Nevertheless, all persons seeking to minister in the AME Church do not desire to serve as full-time itinerant pastors. A great number of these, who do not wish to itinerate, desire to perform specialized ministries in the church.

The AME Church should make an opportunity available for these individuals to serve in a recognized status. A permanent diaconate would supply a vital need in the Church to recognize and bestow sacramental authority upon individuals who do not desire to pursue Elders Orders. They would enjoy the same rights and privileges as Itinerant Deacons without the expectation for advancement.

1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text

4 5. The African Methodist Episcopal Church has longed recognized the importance of the itinerancy to its mission.

5 The Church believes that individuals desiring to be in full connection should pursue the office of Itinerant Elder.

6 6. The African Methodist Episcopal Church also recognizes that certain persons may not wish to assume all of the

7 responsibilities incumbent upon an Itinerant Elder. Likewise, excluding chaplaincy, may not need to complete all of


8 the requirements for Elders Orders in order to perform effective ministry. These individuals may request to be

9 ordained into the permanent Order of Deacons.

10 7. Any licentiate desiring to become a permanent deacon must complete a basic course of theological studies and

11 receive a Certificate of Theological Instruction from either Payne Theological Seminary or Turner Theological

12 Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center prior to election and ordination.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Course of Instruction	
Submitted by	Michael Joseph Brown	
Contact	mbrown@payne.edu	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

2012 Discipline, Part V The Ministry, Section III, Subsection C (Pages 87-89)

Intent

To revise of the Course of Instruction to address a deficiency in emphasis and provide an up-to-date assessment instrument for candidates on completion of fourth years studies, or upon examination for Elders Orders.

Rationale

The 2012 Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church provides for the instruction of candidates from admissions to fourth year studies. The topics outlined in this Course of Instruction are generic, lacking in observable content that emphasizes the distinctive ministry of the AME Church.


Although previous Disciplines have contained more in-depth content regarding the education of our candidates for ministry, the change in educational requirements (i.e., a seminary education) provides the AME Church with the opportunity to perform in-depth instruction in the doctrine, discipline, liturgy, and practices peculiar to our form of Methodism.

- 1 Current Text
- 2 The Course of Instruction
- 3 Admissions
- 4 Bible
- 5 Church Tradition
- 6 First Year Studies
- 7 Bible
- 8 Preaching
- 9 Church Administration
- 10 Church Tradition
- 11 Theology
- 12 Second Year Studies
- 13 Bible
- 14 Ministerial Ethics

15	Theology
16	Church Administration
17	Church History
18	Preaching
19	Third Year Studies
20	Bible
21	Church History
22	Theology
23	Church Leadership
24	Christian Education
25	Preaching
26	Worship
27	Fourth Year Studies
28	Bible
29	Ministerial Ethics
30	Theology
31	Church History
32	Preaching
33	Church Administration
34	B. Specific Examination
35	(The entire text of the examination covers pages 87-89)
36	<u>Amended Text</u>
37	The Course of Instruction
38	The Connectional Board of Ministerial Education publishes quadrennially a Unified Curriculum to be used by the
39	annual conference Boards of Ministerial Training Examiners. This curriculum emphasizes the distinctive character
40	of our theology and practice, as well as the peculiar ministerial service provided by clergy in the AME Church.
41	Admissions

- 42 Understanding Your Call (2 hours; 20 contact hours)
- 43 Introduction to Theology and Theological Terms (1 hour; 10 contact hours)
- 44 AME Church: Admissions (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 45 Introduction to Biblical Studies (2 hours; 20 contact hours)
- 46 First Year Studies
- 47 Sermon Preparation in the African American Tradition (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 48 Theology in the Wesleyan-Allen Tradition (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 49 AME Polity and Practice I: The Discipline (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 50 Introduction to Christian Education (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 51 Second Year Studies
- 52 Preparation for Ordained Ministry (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 53 Introduction to Worship Preparation: Liturgy and Music (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 54 Ministerial Ethics in the AME Church (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 55 Pastoral Care in the African American Tradition (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 56 Third Year Studies
- 57 Leadership in Contemporary Society with a concentration on Congregational Growth and Development (3 hours;  
58 30 contact hours)
- 59 Preaching Practicum for Community Liberation (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 60 AME Polity and Practice II: Book of Worship (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 61 Ministry in Context: Budgeting and Finance (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 62 Introduction to Black, Womanist, and Latino/a Theologies (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 63 Fourth Year Studies
- 64 Biblical Interpretation, Preaching, and the African American Context (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 65 Introduction to Fundraising (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 66 The Church and Non-Profit Law (3 hours; 30 contact hours)
- 67 Ministry in Context: Pastoring the Small or Rural Congregation or Pastoring in an Urban Context (4 hours; 40  
68 contact hours)

- 69 Ministry in Context: Mentoring in Clergy Care and Self-Care (4 hours; 40 contact hours)
- 70 Specific Examination
- 71 Each annual conference Board of Ministerial Training Examiners administers an examination to candidates based
- 72 upon the Unified Curriculum and the specific ministerial context in which the candidate shall serve. Likewise, the
- 73 Board may adopt for use an examination suggested by the Connectional Board of Ministerial Education.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Connectional Board of Ministerial Education	
Submitted by	Michael Joseph Brown	
Contact	mbrown@payne.edu	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

2012 Discipline, Part V The Ministry, Section III (Pages 85-89). The designation for Section IV seems to be missing.

Intent

To establish a connectional board of Episcopal District Deans, Chairs, and other AME scholars. Its task would be to oversee the creation and development of a unified curriculum, consistent policies and procedures, and connectional standards of assessment to be employed by the annual conference Boards of Ministerial Training Examiners (BMTE) to train candidates for ordination. This unified curriculum and training would replace the existing Course of Instruction for persons seeking itinerant orders, with a primary emphasis on Methodism, generally, and African Methodism, specifically. To ensure those persons ordained for ministry in the African Methodist Episcopal Church are in-fact Methodist Christians in their natural inclination, theological perspective and professional practice.

Rationale

Since the general church has delegated the academic preparation of AME clergy to institutions largely outside the control of and with no particular commitment to the AME Church, the AME Church can no longer ensure persons ordained for ministry in the AME Church are by reason of training and theological perspective African Methodists. The annual conference BMTE must now become our institutional instrument for preparing ministers to preserve the historic character, identity and witness that is the African Methodist Episcopal Church. This Board helps unify and standardize the efforts on the annual conference level.

- 1 Current Text
- 2 None
- 3 Amended Text
- 4 The Connectional Board of Ministerial Education (CBME) shall be made up of the appointed Episcopal District
- 5 deans or chairs from each District and three (3) members at-large appointed by the Council of Bishops, and the
- 6 Presidents of the AME Churchs theological seminaries.
- 7 The appointed members of the CBME shall at its quadrennial meeting organize and elect from its number a
- 8 Chairperson and Secretary, and at least three (3) Vice Chairpersons who shall chair the standing committees of the
- 9 Board.
- 10 The Standing Committees will be:
- 11 Curriculum and Instruction. This committee shall be responsible for the research, development, and design of the
- 12 Unified Curriculum. It shall also be responsible for the development of strategies and procedures for how the




13 Unified Curriculum is to be presented. It shall ensure that the instructional practices meet the learning needs of  
14 our candidates.

15 Policy and Procedure. This committee shall be responsible for engaging and standardizing the policies and  
16 procedures of the BMTEs in each annual conference. The committee shall, after a thorough review of the entire  
17 CBME, publish a handbook every four years to provide suggestion and guidance to the BMTEs in their work.

18 Standards, Testing and Assessment. This committee shall responsible for the development of instruments (e.g.,  
19 tests) to assess, measure and align the results of instruction and the training of candidates in accordance with  
20 emerging practices in curriculum delivery.

21 The CBME shall meet on the evening before the General Board meeting and report its work to the Commission on  
22 Ministry and Recruitment. The CBME shall produce, publish, maintain and quadrennially update the Unified  
23 Curriculum and Instruction Manual with lecture outlines, notes and highlights. The CBME shall publish  
24 quadrennially a Policy and Procedures Handbook. Each Episcopal District Dean and presiding Bishop shall ensure  
25 that the connectional curriculum, instructional methods and standards are adhered to and integrated in the work  
26 of each annual conference Board of Ministerial Training Examiners.

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Shirley Cason Reed	
Contact	wmsamec@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

24a., Page 217 of the 2012 edition  
Regarding Quarterly Conference Report

Intent

Maintain accurate records of churches with Societies and to start Societies where there are none.

Rationale

To ascertain the number of Women's Missionary Society's in each annual conference and the numerical strength of the same.

1 Current Text

2 None - New text to be inserted after number 24.

3 Amended Text

4 Insert new text as listed below:


5 25. Does this station, circuit or mission have a Women's Missionary Society?

6 a. If so, how many members does the Women's Missionary Society have?

7 The rest of the questions of the Quarterly Conference Report shall follow in sequence.

8 (This proposed legislation is submitted by the Women's Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal

9 Church and it does not carry any financial burden in the General Budget.)

		
Bill Number		
Title	Appointment of Co-pastors	
Submitted by	Gerald A. Cooper, Mila P. Cooper, Eric Billips, Myra Billips, Ayonna Johnson, Rodrecus Johnson, Jr., Byron Moore, Sharon Moore, Anthony Reed, Karen Reed, Ann Champion Shaw, Robert Shaw, Gregory Thomas, Michelle Thomas, John White, Maria Mallory White	
Contact	gacooper40@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, p. 118; Part VI, Section II. D. 1.

Intent

To expressly authorize bishops to appoint co-pastors when they deem it beneficial to do so.

Rationale

Since 1960, when the General Conference, lifted all restrictions pertaining to the ordination of women, we have seen a steady rise in the number of married clergy couples in the A.M.E. Church. Several bishops, recognizing the unique opportunities and benefits of embracing and affirming the team ministries to which God has called many of these clergy couples, have exercised their episcopal authority to appoint co-pastors. While there is no provision in the Discipline preventing a bishop from appointing a co-pastor, the purpose of this legislation is to codify this authority as positive law. This legislation does not require any bishop to appoint the spouse of a pastor as a co-pastor, but rather removes any ambiguity about the bishops authority to do so. Moreover, this legislation affirms that the A.M.E. Church embraces the move of God that the church has witnessed regarding married couples serving in ministry together. Note, the term pastor in charge is a variation of the term minister in charge, which is already used in other parts of the Discipline, and is intended to have the same meaning.


1 Current Text

2 The bishop shall preside in all of the annual conferences within the episcopal district where assigned, and in  
3 conjunction with the presiding elders, determine what shall be the appointments of all of the pastors at the Annual  
4 Conference. When a charge within an annual conference is without a pastor for any reason, the presiding bishop  
5 must appoint a pastor within one hundred twenty (120) days to fill the vacancy.

6 Amended Text

7 The bishop shall preside in all of the annual conferences within the episcopal district where assigned, and in  
8 conjunction with the presiding elders, determine what shall be the appointments of all of the pastors at the Annual  
9 Conference. Upon the request of a pastor, the bishop may, if he or she determines it to be in the best interest of  
10 the church, appoint a co-pastor to serve with the pastor in charge. When a charge within an annual conference is

- 11 without a pastor for any reason, the presiding bishop must appoint a pastor within one hundred twenty (120) days
- 12 to fill the vacancy.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Covenant Keepers and Intercessors	
Submitted by	Rev. Dorisalene Hughes	
Contact	Dorisalene@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

1 Part VII, Section II, Connectional Departments, C., Department of Church Growth and Development, Paragraph 1.  
2 Division of Worship and Evangelism, page 160.

Intent

1 To change the Ad Hoc Committee known as the Jubilee Prayer Team 2016, to be legislated and officially hereafter  
2 known as The Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Covenant Keepers and Intercessors.

Rationale


1 This group of volunteer covenant keepers and intercessors have been waging war and  
2 interceding for over twelve years as a well-trained and disciplined team. The passing of  
3 this legislation would become an extremely viable enhancement to our Book of Discipline,  
4 as well as officially validate this organism of our Zion.

1 Current Text

2 1 C-1-f. The Secret Chamber, the Division of Worship and Evangelisms daily devotional guide, is herein recognized  
3 2 as an aid to worship; it is also an official periodical of the Church and is listed in The Doctrine and Discipline of  
4 the  
5 3 African Methodist Episcopal Church in the annual report of the pastor on periodicals.

6 Amended Text

7 1 C-1-g. The Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Covenant Keepers and Intercessors.  
8 2 The mission of this outreach ministry is to conduct spiritual mapping, domestic and  
9 3 International intercession regarding our various bishops, councils, general and  
10 4 connectional officers, events and issues of our Zion. This would include all local, conference,  
11 5 and district concerns and matters. The covenant keepers and intercessors would be 6 responsible for the  
12 6 Connectional Day of Prayer with the approval of the Bishop Chairperson, 7 and the General Conference Prayer  
13 7 Chapels and early Morning Prayer Labs.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The AME Publishing Board	
Submitted by	Kimberly Gordon Brooks	
Contact	kimberlysaponi@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 156 -Part VII, II, A,

Intent

To establish a free standing board to give oversight to the operation of the Sunday School Union and the AME Publishing House.

Rationale

The AME Publishing House is one of the more diverse and the oldest business enterprises of the church. There is little opportunity and facility for the Commission on Publications to give proper attention to such an entity. The establishment of a board will assist in the further development of a potential funding stream for the General Church.

1 Current Text

2 Part VII, II, A,

3 A. Department of Publications

4 Pursuant to certain enactments of the functions and duties of the Department of Publications by the General

5 Conference of 1952 to include the AME Book Concern and the Sunday School Union, it is hereby required that the

6 charters of the Book Concern and the Sunday School Union be amended to reflect these enactments.

7 And

8 2. The President/Publisher of the Sunday School Union automatically becomes the Executive Director of the

9 Department of Publications with corresponding duties, functions, and responsibilities. As a General Officer, the

10 Publisher is elected quadrennially by the General Conference. He or she is directly responsible to the General

11 Board and the Commission on Publications. As the Executive Director and chief administrator of the AME Church

12 domain, his or her duties are to oversee, administer and supervise. The publisher optimizes publishing production

13 and performance.

14 Amended Text

15 After A. Publication

16 Delete current text cited, insert new text:

There shall be established an administrative board for the AME Publishing House and the Sunday School Union known as The AME Publishing Board. The Board shall be comprised of one bishop (who shall serve as Chair), the President/Publisher of the Sunday School Union/AME Publishing House, a representative elected by each episcopal district and five persons at large.

The election of district representatives to the Publishing Board shall be elected in the same place, at the same time and in the same manner as that of representatives to the General Board. Even numbered districts shall be represented by (1) minister. Odd-numbered districts shall be represented by one (1) lay during the quadrennium of 2016-2020. At least one member at large shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-30. The clergy/laity order of district representation is to rotate quadrennially. No persons from an episcopal district other than delegates may be in the voting assembly. An effort should be made to select persons with skills appropriate for this business.

A person does not have to be a delegate to the General Conference to have his/her name included on the ballot.

Five at-large members shall be nominated by the Council of Bishops and elected by the General Conference. The at-large members shall be both clergy and lay in equal number with the greater number, by one (1) of clergy/lay following the pattern of the odd numbered episcopal districts (i.e., there shall be 2 clergy and 3 lay at large members in 2016-2020).

The Publishing Board shall bring to the General Board in June 2017 a tentative structure for interim implementation until the 51st Quadrennial Session of the General Conference (2020) can adopt detailed legislation. The new Board will immediately assume those responsibilities formally assigned to the Commission on Publications relative to the AME Sunday School Union/AME Publishing House. The Publishing Board shall meet at least once per year not more than one week prior to the opening of the annual General Board regular meeting. The cost of the meeting shall become a part of expenses of the AME Sunday School Union/Publishing House. It shall report to the General Board on its work and the performance of the President/Publisher.


Part VII, II, A, 2

1. Remains unchanged.

2. The President/Publisher of the Sunday School Union automatically becomes the Executive Director of the Department of Publications with corresponding duties, functions, and responsibilities. As a General Officer, the Publisher is elected quadrennially by the General Conference. He or she is directly responsible to the General

44 Board and the AME Publishing Board. As the Executive Director and chief administrator of the AME Church  
45 domain, his or her duties are to oversee, administer and supervise. The publisher optimizes publishing production  
46 and performance.  
47 No changes to the remainder of the section.



		
Bill Number		
Title	Pastoral Evaluations	
Submitted by	Kimberly Gordon Brooks & Ametta L Reaves	
Contact	kimberlysaponi@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part V, IX. Add new section I

Intent

To codify the task of Pastoral Evaluations through the presiding elders.

Rationale


Evaluation is a critical tool for accountability and professional development. This bill makes an annual, written evaluation of each pastor a task assigned to the presiding elder.

1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text

4 The presiding elder shall provide to the bishop a written evaluation of each pastor no later than sixty (60) days  
5 prior to the opening of the annual conference. The presiding elder shall apply the same evaluation instrument to  
6 all pastors and shall seek the input of the stewards, presidents of the local church organizations, and a trustee in  
7 the respective pastoral charges. A copy of the evaluation report shall be given to the pastor, who may attach a  
8 response for the bishops review.

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Paul M. Mugala	
Contact	mugalapm@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 116 SECTION II. AUTHORITY OF BISHOPS A. Active Bishops #4 part b or the second paragraph.

Intent

To accommodate the Clergy who have obtained Theological Graduate or Masters Degree from academic Institutions other the Theological Seminaries to meet the academic requirements to be eligible to be certified candidates for the office of bishop.

Rationale

In the Global Development Council Episcopal Districts 14 through 20; most of the Theological Seminaries if not all, do not offer Graduate or Masters Degrees. This modification will in the future accommodate Clergy with Graduate or Masters Degrees in Theological Studies such as Biblical Studies, Theology, or Divinity.

1 Current Text

2 4. part b: Candidates for the office of bishop must possess an earned seminary degree from an Association of  
3 Theological Schools (ATS) accredited seminary or, if outside of the United States, an accredited seminary as  
4 determined by the country in which he or she is educated.

5 Amended Text

6 4. part b: Candidates for the office of bishop must possess an earned seminary degree from an Association of  
7 Theological Schools (ATS) accredited seminary or, if outside of the United States, an accredited seminary or  
8 colleges/universities as determined by the country in which he or she is educated.

1

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Bill Number		
Title	Chargeable Offenses	
Submitted by	Jeffrey N. Leath	
Contact	jeffreynleath@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Pages 257-258 Part XI Judicial Administration, Section II. Charges, A.

Intent

Restore insubordination to list of chargeable offenses

Add perjury to the list of chargeable offenses

Rationale

As a hierarchical denomination, insubordination is an implied offense which has been lost from our list.

Perjury is referenced in various sections, but it does not appear as an offense.

1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text


4 Page 257-258, Section II. Charges, A.

5 Add as #11 and #12 the following and adjust the numbering of remaining points.

6 11. Insubordination (A person may be charged with insubordination when he or she willfully or intentionally fails

7 to obey a lawful and reasonable request or shows a lack of respect toward those in authority.)

8 12. Perjury

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Paul M. Mugala	
Contact	mugalapm@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 162 SECTION II CONNECTIONAL DEPARTMENTS D "Department of Annuity Investments and Insurance"

Intent

This is an addendum to specifically address the Annuity and Insurance opportunities for Clergy and Employees serving in the GDC Episcopal Districts 14 through 20.

Rationale

Due to the complex composition of the GDC Episcopal Districts 14 through 20, there is need for a Framework under which each Episcopal Districts can pursue its own Annuity Investments and Insurance programs by Country. It is by country due to the distinct jurisdictions of each country belonging to an Episcopal District. There is no cost burden to the Connectional Church.

1 Current Text

2 There is none. Add or Insert #6 on Page 166 this ADDENDUM

3 Amended Text

4 ADDENDUM: Global Development Council Episcopal Districts 14 to 20 ANNUITY INVESTMENTS and INSURANCE

5 PROGRAMS by COUNTRY.

6 Each Episcopal District to pursue its own Annuity Investments and Insurance program by Country due to the

7 distinct Government's Legal Annuity Investments and Insurance requirements and regulations.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Annual Conference Committee on Apportionment	
Submitted by	Kimberly Gordon Brooks & Ametta L Reaves	
Contact	kimberlysaponi@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VIII, Section II, F. Committees

Intent

To codify a process for establishing assessments and apportionment of financial obligations and requests of local congregations.

Rationale

The process for how assessments are levied on congregations is not clear and practices vary across the church. This bill will clarify a process and allow both input and transparency within the annual conference.

1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text

4 Add as #3

5 3. Committee on Assessments

6 The Committee on Assessments shall recommend to the annual conference the assessment for the General


7 Budget, District Budget, District Project and other assessments/ apportionments of the annual conference and the

8 episcopal district. In addition, the Committee on Assessments shall recommend to the annual conference an

9 inclusive structure of assessment for the support of the presiding elder (s).

10 The Committee shall explain the process used to arrive at its recommendations in their report. The annual

11 conference shall approve by majority vote the assessments which are to be levied on the congregations.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Amendment of Charges	
Submitted by	Jeffrey N. Leath	
Contact	jeffreynleath@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Pages 258 Part XI Judicial Administration, Section II. Charges, B.

Intent

To clarify the process for the filing of charges during the preliminary inquiry process.

Rationale

Once submission and response to charges process has begun in the preliminary inquiry phase of judicial administration, the amendment of charges creates a condition inconsistent with the proper administration of the process.

1 Current Text

2 Pages 258 Part XI Judicial Administration, Section II. Charges, B.

3 A bill of charges may be amended at any time prior to the opening of the trial on the charges, provided the

4 amendment does not change the nature of the charges or introduce new charges.

5 Amended Text


6 Pages 258 Part XI Judicial Administration, Section II. Charges, B.

7 A bill of charges may be amended at any time prior to the opening of the trial on the charges, provided the

8 amendment does not change the nature of the charges or introduce new charges except when charges are sent to

9 the Preliminary Inquiry Committee. Such charges may not be amended once submitted to the General Secretary

10 unless or until the charges are referred to the Trial Committee for further action.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Submission of Legislation	
Submitted by	Kimberly Gordon Brooks	
Contact	kimberlysaponi@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 197, 6. The Revisions Committee

Intent

To make proposed legislation visible to the entire church with sufficient time for full consideration and debate.

Rationale

The current submission deadline of ninety (90) days prior to the opening of the General Conference with the related legislation posting deadline of thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the General Conference does not subject legislation to sufficient review. The Church currently organizes legislative convocations and has other groups with an interest in sufficient dialogue prior to the consideration of important legislation. The bill will force earlier exposure of the thinking of the Church and allow time for prayerful reflection and consideration of the impact of legislation.

1 Current Text

2 6. The Revisions Committee (paragraphs #2 and #3)

3 The packet of legislation shall be posted on the Official African Methodist Episcopal Church website (www.AME-

4 Church.com), and sent to the delegations, at least, thirty (30) days before the General Conference convenes.

5 All bills and proposed legislation must be in the hands of the General Secretary of the AME Church at least ninety

6 (90) days prior to the opening of the General Conference.

7 Amended Text

8 The packet of legislation shall be posted on the Official African Methodist Episcopal Church website (www.AME-

9 Church.com), and sent to the delegations, at least, one hundred twenty (120) days before the General Conference

10 convenes.

11 All bills and proposed legislation must be in the hands of the General Secretary of the AME Church no later than

12 the first day of September in the year preceding the opening of the General Conference. Bills may be amended by

13 the original author and/or the Official Legislative Convocation until the first day (1) of February of the year of the

14 General Conference. For the consideration of proposed legislation, The Official Legislative Convocation is to be

15 convened by the Council of Bishops no later than the twentieth (20) day of January of the year of the General  
16 Conference.



		
Bill Number		
Title	Local Church Property Transfer of Property	
Submitted by	Thomas Hughes	
Contact	eldertmh299@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012,  
Section II. General Church Property, Part B. Local Church Property Transfer of  
Property (page 53)

Intent

To provide clarity as to the ownership of church properties.

Rationale

The Annual Conference is the only legal entity in the AME Church. Property is entrusted to the Annual Conference. Some churches are putting properties in the name of the church, which is incorrect, and could cause the AME Church to lose the property in a legal situation.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: B. Local Church Property Transfer of Property

3 2 The Board of Trustees, duly elected by the local church as provided by The Doctrine and

4 3 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, may take such steps to purchase,

5 4 mortgage, sell, transfer and convey real and personal property, PROVIDED that such transfer has

6 5 been duly approved by the resolution in Quarterly Conference of the said church, and also by the

7 6 trustees of the Annual Conference in which the property is located, and of which the presiding

8 7 bishop is president.

9 8 The Board of Trustees and members of the local church hold property of whatever kind IN

10 9 TRUST for the General Church and not in their individual capacities.

11 10 When the local church shall be incorporated, all property-real, personal, or mixed-shall be deeded

12 11 to it in its corporate name, IN TRUST for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Inc. Failure

13 12 of the local church to deed said property to the local church corporation shall not eliminate the

14 13 Connectional , IN TRUST character of the property or change the authority and duty of the local

15 14 trustees and members to administer the property as directed by The Doctrine and Disciplines of

16 15 the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

17 Amended Text

18 16 AMENDED/NEW TEXT: B. Local Church Property Transfer of Property

19 17 The Board of Trustees, duly elected by the local church as provided by The Doctrine and

20 18 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, may take such steps to purchase,

21 19 mortgage, sell, transfer and convey real and personal property, PROVIDED that such transfer has

22 20 been duly approved by the resolution in Quarterly Conference of the said church, and also by the

23 21 trustees of the Annual Conference in which the property is located, and of which the presiding

24 22 bishop is president.

25 23 The Board of Trustees and members of the local church hold property of whatever kind IN

26 24 TRUST for the Annual Conference of the General Church and not in their individual capacities.

27 25 When the local church shall be incorporated under the African Methodist Episcopal Church, all

28 26 property-real, personal, or mixed-shall be deeded to it in its corporate name, IN TRUST for the

29 27 African Methodist Episcopal Church, Inc. Failure of the local church to deed said property to the

30 28 local church corporation shall not eliminate the Connectional, IN TRUST character of the

31 29 property or change the authority and duty of the local trustees and members to administer the

32 30 property as directed by The Doctrine and Disciplines of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Local Church Organization	
Submitted by	Thomas Hughes	
Contact	eldertmh299@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012,  
Section II, B, 3 (page 73) and Section III, B, 4b (page 78)

Intent

To clarify the African Methodist Episcopal Church has one system of operating business.


Rationale

There is one system of operating the business of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The text in the Discipline suggests there are two systems the local church and an optional system of operating. The Central Budget Fund needs to be removed from the Optional Local Church Organization Commissions in the Local Church section because the Central Budget Fund is not a Commission, and would thus erase the idea that it is optional.

- 1 Current Text
- 2 CURRENT TEXT: (Delete b on page 78 and move to page 73 and it becomes 3 e.)
- 3 2 b. Central Budget Fund The work of the local church requires the support of each member.
- 4 3 Participation through services and gifts is a Christian duty and a means of grace. In order that all
- 5 4 members of the AME Church on the local level may share in its manifold ministries at home and
- 6 5 abroad and that work committed to us may prosper, the following financial plan is hereby duly
- 7 6 approved and adopted. (See Rules for Giving, Part II, Section VII)
- 8 7 1) There may be established a central fund in the local church known as the Central Budget
- 9 8 Fund.
- 10 9 2) The various causes and services included in this local fund shall be:
- 11 10 a) Ministers Support
- 12 11 b) Benevolences
- 13 12 c) Christian Education
- 14 13 d) Public Relations

15 14 e) Connectional Budget  
16 15 f) Conference Budget (District, Annual)  
17 16 g) Community Project  
18 17 h) Current Trustee Expense  
19 18 i) Purchase and Repair  
20 19 j) Church Expansion (Local)  
21 20 k) Travel (Minister and Lay)  
22 21 l) Extra Budget Projects  
23 22 m) Insurance  
24 23 n) Contingency  
25 Amended Text  
26 AMENDED/NEW TEXT: Add to page 73, Section 3 e  
27 25 e. Central Budget Fund The work of the local church requires the support of each member.  
28 26 Participation through services and gifts is a Christian duty and a means of grace. In order that all  
29 27 members of the AME Church on the local level may share in its manifold ministries at home and  
30 28 abroad and that work committed to us may prosper, the following financial plan is hereby duly  
31 29 approved and adopted. (See Rules for Giving, Part II, Section VII)  
32 30 1) There shall be established a central fund in the local church known as the Central Budget  
33 31 Fund.  
34 32 2) The various causes and services included in this local fund shall be:  
35 33 a) Ministers Support  
36 34 b) Benevolences  
37 35 c) Christian Education  
38 36 d) Public Relations  
39 37 e) Connectional Budget  
40 38 f) Conference Budget (District, Annual)  
41 39 g) Community Project

- 42 40 h) Current Trustee Expense
- 43 41 i) Purchase and Repair
- 44 42 j) Church Expansion (Local)
- 45 43 k) Travel (Minister and Lay)
- 46 44 l) Extra Budget Projects
- 47 45 m) Insurance
- 48 46 n) Contingency
- 49 47
- 50 48 Funding: There is no funding associated with this Bill.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Commission on Stewardship	
Submitted by	James Miller	
Contact	dritmiller@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012,  
Section III. Connectional Commissions and Headquarters (Page 178)

Intent

To provide a central resource for stewardship insight, information, materials and support for all levels of the church.

Rationale

Stewardship is addressed throughout the Holy Bible, prayer, evangelism, missions and other ministries. No African American Christian denomination has a formal stewardship department. It is crucial for the advancement of both kingdom and community that the church provides leadership and guidance in the area of biblical stewardship (ownership, responsibility, accountability and reward).

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: None

3 Amended Text

4 AMENDED/NEW TEXT: L. Commission on Stewardship

5 3 1. There shall be an African Methodist Episcopal Commission on Stewardship, which shall

6 4 function under the direction of the General Conference and elected quadrennially at the General

7 5 Conference a director/consultant. He or she shall be a member of the General Board.

8 6 2. The Commission of Stewardship shall provide leadership and guidance in the area of biblical

9 7 stewardship (ownership, responsibility, accountability and reward).

10 8 3. The Stewardship director/consultant shall serve as the Officer of Stewardship for the AME

11 9 Church. He or she shall be knowledgeable about all aspects of Stewardship and shall attend such

12 10 conferences in his or her field as may be allowed by his or her budget. He or she shall prepare an

13 11 annual report which shall be presented at the meeting of the Commission.

14 12 4. The commission shall be funded annually with \$15,000 of the funds currently allocated to

15 13 the Department of Investments and Annuities for Stewardship Training for the Director's

16 14 administration and travel.

17 15 5. There shall be established in each annual conference a Committee on Stewardship, which

18 16 shall be appointed by the presiding bishop of the district. From this committee shall come a report

19 17 hereinafter known as the Annual Conference Report on Stewardship, which shall be

20 18 acted upon by the current session of the Annual Conference. The contents of this report shall

21 19 concern matters of stewardship which affect the constituency of the church in

22 20 general. A copy of each annual report shall be forwarded to the office of the Commissioner on

23 21 Stewardship at the close of the Annual Conference.

24 22 There shall be established in each Presiding Elder district a committee hereinafter known as the

25 23 Committee on Stewardship, which shall be appointed by the Presiding Elder. From this

26 24 committee shall come a report hereinafter known as the District Report on Stewardship, which

27 25 shall be acted upon by the current session of the District Conference.

28 26 There shall be established in each local church a committee hereinafter known as the Committee

29 27 on Stewardship, which shall be appointed by the pastor. The pastor shall interpret for this


30 28 Committee the significance of its work and shall direct the course of its activity.

31 29

32 30 Funding: No additional funding associated with this bill. Funded annually with \$15,000 of

33 31 the funds currently allocated to the Department of Investments and Annuities for

34 32 Stewardship Training for the Directors administration and travel.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Authority to Assign a Bishop Two Districts	
Submitted by	Ametta Reaves	
Contact	reaves15@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Electronic AME Discipline = Location # 4394

Intent

To give the Episcopal Committee the authority to assign two smaller contiguous districts to one bishop.

Rationale

Given the demographic realities of our denomination, some district do not have the numerical strength to warrant the same level of episcopal supervision as in past years. There is a potential for savings to both the general church and an Episcopal district in the sharing of episcopal service without losing district identity through merging. There is a minimal ANNUAL savings to the General Church of \$100,000 for each dual episcopal assignment. In cases of vacancies, the church has historically made dual assignments. This would be an option which the Episcopal Committee and the General Conference may or may not exercise.

1 Current Text

2 f. The Episcopal Committee

3 The Episcopal Committee shall make the assignments of bishops subject to the approval of the General

4 Conference. A bishop may be assigned to succeed himself or herself once, but in no case shall a bishop be assigned

5 to any district for more than two consecutive quadrenniums.

6 Amended Text

7 f. The Episcopal Committee shall make the assignments of bishops subject to the approval of the General

8 Conference. A bishop may be assigned to succeed himself or herself once, but in no case shall a bishop be assigned

9 to any district for more than two consecutive quadrenniums. The Episcopal Committee may assign two smaller

10 contiguous districts to one bishop.



		
Bill Number		
Title	The New Kentucky Annual Conference	
Submitted by	Jeffrey Leath	
Contact	jeffreynleath@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 219

Page 227-228

Intent

To adjust the text in the Discipline to be in keeping with the proposed new Kentucky Annual Conference.

Rationale

Demographic changes have led the Kentucky Annual Conference and the West Kentucky Annual Conference to merge as the Kentucky Annual Conference.

1 Current Text

2 219 - Thirteenth DistrictConferences Five (5)

3 Tennessee, East Tennessee, West Tennessee, Kentucky and West Kentucky

4 Page 227 - M. Thirteenth District

5 1. Tennessee Conference -- The Tennessee Conference is bounded on the east by and includes the counties of

6 Marshall, Bedford, Cannon, DeKalb, Smith, Jackson, and Macon; on the north by and includes Robertson, Davidson,

7 Williamson, Lewis, Montgomery, Cheatham, Stewart, Dickson, and Humphrey; on the west by and includes

8 Hickman, Perry, and Wayne Counties, all east of the Tennessee River.

9 2. East Tennessee Conference -- The East Tennessee Conference includes Lincoln, Monroe, Coffee, Giles and

10 Warren Counties and all the territory east of the North Carolina and Virginia lines. Jellico is the Kentucky

11 Conference.

12 3. West Tennessee Conference -- The West Tennessee Conference is bounded on the south by the Mississippi state

13 line, east of the Mississippi River to the Kentucky state line then south by the Tennessee River.

14 4. Kentucky Conference -- The Kentucky Conference comprises all that part of Kentucky east of an imaginary line

15 from Carrollton on the Ohio River to Bagdad on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, then to Waddy on the

16 Louisville Southern Railroad, then to Campbellsville, then to Greensburg, thence due south to Tennessee, including

17 Jellico in Tennessee.

18 5. West Kentucky Conference -- The West Kentucky Conference includes that part of the State not described in the  
19 Kentucky Conference.

20 Amended Text

21 219 - Thirteenth DistrictConferences Five (4)

22 Tennessee, East Tennessee, West Tennessee, and Kentucky

23 Page 227


24 M. Thirteenth District

25 1. Tennessee Conference -- The Tennessee Conference is bounded on the east by and includes the counties of  
26 Marshall, Bedford, Cannon, DeKalb, Smith, Jackson, and Macon; on the north by and includes Robertson, Davidson,  
27 Williamson, Lewis, Montgomery, Cheatham, Stewart, Dickson, and Humphrey; on the west by and includes  
28 Hickman, Perry, and Wayne Counties, all east of the Tennessee River. The Tennessee Conference shall also include  
29 the following counties in Kentucky: McCracken, Graves and Hickman.

30 2. East Tennessee Conference -- The East Tennessee Conference includes Lincoln, Monroe, Coffee, Giles and  
31 Warren Counties and all the territory east of the North Carolina and Virginia lines.

32 3. West Tennessee Conference -- The West Tennessee Conference is bounded on the south by the Mississippi state  
33 line, east of the Mississippi River to the Kentucky state line then south by the Tennessee River.

34 4. Kentucky Conference -- The Kentucky Conference comprises the Commonwealth of Kentucky with the  
35 exception of McCracken, Graves and Hickman counties.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Church Membership for Registered Sex Offenders	
Submitted by	Tenth Episcopal District	
Contact	10thdistrictoffice@10thdistrictame.org	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

None

Intent

To provide established criteria for determining whether registered sex offenders qualify for membership in the A.M.E. Church.

Rationale

Our Christian community relies upon biblical tenets of the faith and the Articles of Religion to demonstrate Christian membership and eligibility of service. We believe in salvation with confession and repentance; forgiveness with remorse and penance; and the sincere desire to convert (turn) from wicked ways and healing and redemption through Jesus Christ. The A.M.E. Church commends those who are rehabilitated through the offices of the civil government, and have turned their lives around as a testimony of Gods grace and mercy. In light of Gods grace and mercy, we are keenly aware of the broken world in which we live and how that brokenness impacts the church. However, given the litigious climate in which we live, the church must be vigilant in securing the health and safety of all of its members; especially children/minors and those who are victims of sexual offenses.

1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text

4 Sec. 1. Denial of Church Membership/Attendance at Church-Sponsored Activities

5 A. If the pastor, steward, or trustee of an A.M.E. church becomes aware that a person designated as a registered

6 sex offender seeks to become a member of the local church and/or attend church activities, either by the

7 registered sex offender, a member of the church or the public, the Steward Board of the local church shall conduct

8 a search of the public record to confirm the persons status. Such confirmation shall be sought by conducting a

9 search on the U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offenders Public Website (NSOPW) or other public

10 databases.

11 B. If the persons registered sex offender status is confirmed, then offenders probation/parole officer shall be

12 contacted to ascertain the conditions that have been imposed on the offender. If the probation/parole officer

reports that the offender is prohibited from being in the presence of children/minors, then the person shall be denied membership in the local church and prohibited from attending church-sponsored activities.

C. The offender shall also be denied membership and/or prohibited from attending church-sponsored activities if;

1. The offenders victims are members of the local church in which the offender seeks membership or permission to attend church-sponsored activities; or

2. The offender violated a previous Conditional Attendance Agreement as described in Section 3 below.

#### Sec. 2. Conditional Membership/Attendance at Church-Sponsored Activities

A. If the Steward Board learns that the offender is not prohibited from being in the presence of children/minors or not otherwise disqualified from membership and/or prohibited from attending church-sponsored activities under Section 1 above, then the offender is eligible to become a member of the local church and/or attend church services and activities under the following conditions:

1. The offender shall not work with children/minors in any capacity and/or transport children/minors;

2. The offender shall not attend church services and activities that are solely and specifically for children/minors;

3. A steward board-designated chaperone shall accompany the offender at all times while the offender is attending church activities; and

4. Any other condition that the steward board deems appropriate under this subsection.

B. The offender seeking membership and/or attendance at church activities shall sign a Conditional Attendance Agreement that describes the afore-mentioned conditions;

C. If the steward board of the local church determines that the church is unable to provide the chaperones needed to fulfil the conditions set out in subsections A and B above, then the offender shall be denied membership and/or prohibited from attending any church activities.


#### Sec. 3. Disqualification from church employment/service as a church leader

A. An offender who has obtained a conditional membership under Section 2 above shall not be:

1. Employed by a local church in any capacity; or

2. Hired as an independent contractor for a local church.

38 B. An offender who has obtained a conditional membership under Section 2 above is disqualified from serving as  
39 an officer in a local church, presiding elder district, annual conference, episcopal district and/or general  
40 conference.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Background Checks Revealing Criminal History	
Submitted by	Tenth Episcopal District	
Contact	10thdistrictoffice@10thdistrictame.org	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part V, Sections II and III (Pages 84-85); Part XI, Section XIV.C (Pages 274-275).

Intent

To establish procedures for background checks revealing criminal offenses that may present a threat, limited threat, or no threat to the general public, or to the church community. Identify criminal offenses that constitute an absolute bar to the A.M.E. ministry.

Rationale

Our Christian community relies upon biblical tenets of the faith and the Articles of Religion to demonstrate Christian membership and eligibility of service. We believe in salvation with confession and repentance; forgiveness with remorse and penance; and the sincere desire to convert (turn) from wicked ways and healing and redemption through Jesus Christ. The A.M.E. Church commends those who are rehabilitated through the offices of the civil government and have turned their lives around as a testimony of Gods grace and mercy.

In light of Gods grace and mercy, we are keenly aware of the broken world in which we live and how that brokenness impacts the church. Therefore, criminal background checks are necessary for every ministerial candidate and clergy person presently serving or who intends to serve in the pulpit.

1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text

4 Sec. 1. Mandatory Criminal Background Check. All candidates for ministerial orders shall submit to a criminal

5 background check, as approved by the Presiding Prelate in which they seek ordination, no more than three months

6 before the Annual Conference in which they are seeking admission. Every ordained minister shall submit to a

7 criminal background check through the agency approved by the Presiding Prelate in the Episcopal District in which

8 the minister is a member not less than (30) thirty days before the start of the Annual Conference in which they are

9 seeking an appointment. Each candidate for ministerial orders and ordained minister shall submit to a criminal

10 background check every two years. The cost for such criminal background check shall be borne by the candidate or

11 ordained minister.

Sec. 2. Mandatory Disqualification from Admission/Pastoral Appointment. No person shall be eligible to be admitted to the Board of Examiners, or to receive a pastoral appointment if the person has been convicted of or is currently on deferred adjudication for any of the following criminal offenses:

- a. murder;
- b. aggravated assault;
- c. human trafficking;
- d. sexual abuse;
- e. sexual assault (rape);
- f. injury to a child;
- g. incest;
- h. indecency with a child;
- i. inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance with a child;
- j. possession or promotion of child pornography;
- k. the sale, distribution of prohibited substances to a minor; or
- l. abandonment or endangerment of a child.

Sec. 3. All other convictions and/or entries of deferred adjudication for criminal offenses not listed in Sec. 2 above shall be reviewed and considered as follows:

a. In the case of a ministerial candidate, the matter shall be referred to the Board of Examiners. In the case of an ordained minister seeking to pastor, the matter shall be referred to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee.

b. The following issues shall be reviewed by the appropriate body to determine the eligibility of the individual to be admitted to the Board of Examiners or for a pastoral appointment:

- (1) age of the individual at the time of the offense;
- (2) the length of time that has expired since the offense was adjudicated;
- (3) whether the offense involved physical, emotional, and/or psychological injury or harm to a person; or financial injury to a person or entity and
- (4) the acceptance of culpability by the individual for the offense.

c. Should the review of the individuals background reveal criminal offenses that no longer pose a threat to the general public, or to the church community due to the passage of time, the youthful age of the individual at the time of the offense, and the individuals acceptance of culpability in this matter, then a finding shall be made that there are no grounds for a denial of admission into the Board of Examiners or grounds for disqualification from receipt of a pastoral appointment.

d. However should a review of a persons criminal background reveal the existence of one or more of the following then a finding shall be made of ineligibility for admission by the Board of Examiners in the case of a ministerial candidate, or disqualification from receipt of a pastoral appointment by the Ministerial Efficiency Committee:

(1) a misdemeanor conviction punishable by confinement, occurring within the last 10 years, where the individual fails to accept culpability and arising out of the following:


- a. physical, emotional and/or psychological injury to another person or entity; or
- b. financial harm to another person or entity.

(2) a felony conviction occurring, within the last 15 years, where the individual fails to accept culpability for the offense and arising out of the following:

- a. physical, emotional and/or psychological injury to another person.
- b. financial harm to another person or entity.

e. Except for an individual determined to be disqualified under Sec. 2 above, any individual determined to be ineligible to be admitted to the Board of Examiners, or to serve as a pastor by the Ministerial Efficiency Committee under this provision, shall be entitled to re-apply after the passage of two full Annual Conferences, and the submission of an additional approved criminal background check which reveals no further criminal convictions during the previous two years. If each of the above conditions is satisfied, a finding shall be made that there are no grounds for denial of admission into the Board of Examiners by a candidate for ordination, or disqualification from pastoral service by the Ministerial Efficiency Committee. Each finding shall be submitted to the Annual Conference for final action on this matter.



		
Bill Number		
Title	Annuity, Insurance and Investment Board	
Submitted by	Jeffrey N. Leath	
Contact	jeffreynleath@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VII, I, B, 2

Part VII, II, D

Intent

To establish a free standing board to give oversight to the operation of the Department of Annuity, Investment and Insurance.

Rationale

The Department of Annuity, Investment, and Insurance currently manages in excess of one hundred (100) million dollars (USD). Important investment and other major management decisions should reside in the hands of more than a few. Moreover, there should be a board which is both accessible and authorized to act on certain vital matters. There is little opportunity and facility for the Commission on Annuities to give proper attention to such an entity. The establishment of a board will assist in the responsible management of the Church's greatest single operation.

1 Current Text

2 Part VII, I, B, 2

3 2. Commission on Annuity Investments and Insurance: shall receive the report of the Executive Director of the

4 Department of Annuity Investments and Insurance. Shall have the power to amend the annuity, retirement, and

5 hospitalization plan provided the amendments are approved by the Council of Bishops and the General Board and

6 do not diminish the vested rights of any beneficiary.

7 Part VII, II, D

8 D. Department of Annuity Investments and Insurance There shall be a Department of Annuity Investments and

9 Insurance administered by the Executive Director of the department, who is an elected General Officer responsible

10 for giving oversight to the programs of the church operated for the retirement security of the salaried personnel of

11 the church. These include Ministerial Annuities and the Ministerial Retirement Program.

12 Amended Text

13 Delete Part VII, I, B, 2

14 Part VII, II, D shall read

D. Department of Annuity Investments and Insurance There shall be a Department of Annuity Investments and Insurance. There shall be established an administrative board for the Department of Annuities, Investments, and Insurance which shall be known as the AME Annuities, Investments and Insurance Board. The Board shall be comprised of one bishop (who shall be chair), the Executive Director of the Department of Annuities, Investments, and Insurance, a representative elected by each episcopal district and five persons at large. The Department shall be administered by the Executive Director, who is an elected General Officer responsible for giving oversight to the programs of the church operated for the retirement security of the salaried personnel of the church. These include Ministerial Annuities and the Ministerial Retirement Program.

The election of district representatives to the Annuity Board shall be elected in the same place, at the same time and in the same manner as that of representatives to the General Board. Even numbered districts shall be represented by one (1) layperson. Odd-numbered districts shall be represented by one (1) clergy during the quadrennium of 2016-2020. At least one member at large shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-30. The clergy/laity order of district representation is to rotate quadrennially. An effort should be made to select persons with skills in finance or investments appropriate for this business. A person does not have to be a delegate to the General Conference to have his/her name included on the ballot. Five at-large members shall be nominated by the Council of Bishops and elected by the General Conference. The at-large members shall be both clergy and lay in equal number with the greater number, by one (1) of clergy/lay following the pattern of the odd numbered episcopal districts, i.e., there shall be three (3) clergy and two (2) lay in 2016-2020.

The Annuity Board shall bring to the General Board in June 2017 a tentative structure for interim implementation until the 51st Quadrennial Session of the General Conference (2020) can adopt detailed legislation. The new Board will immediately assume those responsibilities formally assigned to the Commission on Annuities, Investments and Insurance. The Annuity Board shall meet at least once per year not more than one week prior to the opening of the annual General Board regular meeting. The cost of the meeting shall become a part of the expenses of the Department of Annuities, Investments and Insurance. It shall report to the General Board on its work and the performance of the Executive Director.

The Annuity Board shall receive the report of the Executive Director of the Department of Annuity Investments and Insurance. Shall have the power to amend the annuity, retirement, and hospitalization plan provided the

- 42 amendments are approved by the Council of Bishops and the General Board and do not diminish the vested rights
- 43 of any beneficiary.
- 44 The remainder of the section is unchanged.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Duties of Bishops Pastoral Appointments	
Submitted by	Ametta Reaves & Simon Letsoko	
Contact	reaves15@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 100 Ministers Bill of Rights

Pages 118-119 Duties of an Active Bishop

Intent

To create a new, special section related to the bishop appointment of pastors.

Rationale

We need a definitive understanding of the process of pastoral appointment. In effort to curb some abuse, the church has created legislation which is contrary to the basic premises of a hierarchical denomination. The legislation is contradictory and results in costly, unproductive proceedings. This legislation is intended to clarify the historic appointing authority of a bishop while establishing protections against arbitrary and retributive actions.

1 Current Text

2 1. A pastoral appointment equal to their abilities, training, and experience, when available. The new appointment,  
3 when available, shall be comparable to or better than the previous one, provided the pastor has not been found  
4 guilty under Judicial Administration. The action may result in location or an appointment that reflects the Church's  
5 current standing at the time of his or her departure.

6 5. Basis For and Notice of Pastoral Change At least ninety (90) days in advance of the bishop's intent to move him or  
7 her to another charge without his or her consent, notice of such change must be given to the itinerant elder. Such  
8 intent by a bishop must be in writing and indicate reasons for the same. A pastor may be reassigned to a lesser  
9 charge or no charge, or have his/her one (1) year appointment abrogated only for the following reasons: 1) mutual  
10 agreement between bishop and pastor; 2) judicial cause (Part XI Judicial Administration Section II); 3) location (Part  
11 V, Section XII The Located Ministers); or, 4) for the good of the congregation (as referenced in Part V, Section XII).  
12 Reassignment for the good of the congregation requires the stewards of the congregation to certify in writing to  
13 the presiding bishop, with a copy to the presiding elder and the pastor, their reason(s) for the request including  
14 dishonest or self-interested handling or mishandling of finances.

Under no circumstances shall a Bishop negate the underlying purpose of this bill which is to protect pastors from arbitrary and capricious moves, or moves motivated by or intended to be vindictive or revengeful.

6. Itinerant Deacons Itinerant Deacons may receive an appointment from the presiding bishop to a pastoral charge and pastor that charge as long as the bishop in his/her judgment decides to appoint them. However, the presiding bishop may in his/her judgment, if there is an itinerant elder in good and regular standing, appoint the itinerant elder to that charge without providing the ninety (90) day notice. In such instance the presiding bishop should inform the itinerant deacon before such a move is made.

8. The bishop shall allow an elder to serve on a presiding elder district so long as the elders services are pleasing and profitable to the pastors and people of the district.

9. The bishop shall not permit any presiding elder to remain on a district when unacceptable, or when it is evident the elders continuance is injurious to the prosperity of the district.

10. The bishop shall, in the interim of the annual conference sessions, receive, change, and suspend preachers whenever necessary as provided for by The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

11. The bishop shall permit a pastor to remain on a circuit or station as long as his or her services are pleasing and profitable to the people.

12. The bishop shall not have anything in this section applied which will prevent the bishop from using godly judgment in making changes in the appointments that are deemed necessary for the good of the church.

13. The bishop shall not remove a pastor without his or her consent, beyond the bounds of his or her conference of the episcopal district, unless he or she shall have given him or her at least three months notice in writing, prior to the time appointed for his or her removal. (Also see Ministers Bill of Rights, Part V, Section VII)

14. The bishop shall not move any minister until the charge to which he or she is to be assigned is open or vacant.

#### Amended Text

Delete Current Text and insert the following new section #8 under the Duties of an Active Bishop. The proper enumeration of the remaining respective sections is herein amended.

#### 8. The Appointment of Pastors

a. Pastoral appointments are to be made by an active bishop annually except in cases referenced further in this section.

- b. Following a period of discernment and consultation, a bishop is to use godly judgment and administrative wisdom in the making of pastoral appointments.
- c. Consideration must be given to the mission of the church, the needs of particular congregations and the demonstrated gifts and graces of pastors to be appointed.
- d. Under no circumstances shall a bishop make an appointment which is arbitrary and capricious, or motivated by or intended to be vindictive or revengeful.
- e. Before making an appointment a bishop must consult with the presiding elder and inform the person to be appointed prior to the public announcement, or fixing, of the appointment. The bishop may consult with others during the process of discernment as necessary.
- f. The bishop may allow a presiding elder to serve on a presiding elder district so long as the presiding elders services are fruitful and not injurious to the prosperity of the district.
- g. The bishop may permit a pastor to remain at a charge as long as his or her services are fruitful and not injurious to the prosperity of the church.
- h. A pastor who comes to the annual conference with a pastoral charge has a reasonable expectation that he or she will receive another appointment to a pastoral charge unless the bishop receives a ruling by the Ministerial Efficiency Committee which has been approved by the annual conference affirming that the pastor is unfit to be appointed for reasons which must be stated in writing. In such cases, the bishop may not appoint the pastor until his or her fitness has been affirmed by the Ministerial Efficiency Committee.
- i. The bishop should give consideration to the abilities, training, and experience (including past pastoral performance) of the persons who are to be appointed. The bishop shall try to make the best matches of clergy and appointments according to the wellbeing of the church and pastors within the bishops godly judgment.
- j. The bishop should give consideration to the pastors current salary. Whenever it is feasible, the new appointment should be paying a salary which is equal to or greater than that which the pastor currently receives.
- k. The bishop shall not move any minister until the charge to which he or she is to be assigned is open or vacant.
- l. The bishop must give at least ninety (90) days advance notice of the intent to appoint an itinerant elder to another charge without his or her consent. Notice of such change must be given to the itinerant elder in writing and indicate reasons for the same.

69 m. The bishop may not abrogate the (1) year appointment except for the following reasons:

70 i. mutual agreement between bishop and pastor;

71 ii. judicial cause (Part XI Judicial Administration Section II);

72 iii. location (Part V, Section XII The Located Ministers);

73 iv. for the good of the congregation;

74 v. by request of the stewards or the official board of a congregation certifying in writing to the presiding bishop,

75 with a copy to the presiding elder and the pastor, their reason(s) for the request.

76 vi. A pastor who must be reassigned for any of the above reasons may be appointed to a lesser charge or no charge

77 according to availability and the godly judgment of the bishop.

78 n. The bishop shall, in the interim of the annual conference sessions, receive, change, and suspend preachers

79 whenever necessary as provided for by The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

80 o. The bishop may appoint itinerant deacons to a pastoral charge. However, the presiding bishop may in his/her

81 judgment, if there is an itinerant elder in good and regular standing, appoint the itinerant elder to that charge

82 without providing the ninety (90) day notice. In such instance the presiding bishop should inform the itinerant


83 deacon before such a move is made.

84 p. The bishop may also appoint local elders, local deacons, and licentiates to lead congregations under the close

85 supervision and oversight of the presiding elder.

86 q. The bishop shall not have anything in this section applied which will prevent the bishop from using godly

87 judgment in making changes in the appointments that are deemed necessary for the good of the church.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Composition of the General Board	
Submitted by	Ametta L. Reaves and Kimberly Gordon Brooks	
Contact	reaves15@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Electronic copy = location 3286

Part VII The General Board, Connectional Departments and Commissions

Intent

Reduce the representation on the General Board and open the General Board candidacy beyond the delegates to the General Conference.

Rationale

Originally, the General Board had three representatives from each Episcopal District. Reducing the size of the body can save the General Church up to \$40,000 annually. Also, there are clergy and laypersons who have gifts in administration who have not been elected delegates of the General Conference. Persons should not be excluded from consideration when delegates make their nominations. Moreover, persons rotating allows for greater participation.

1 Current Text


2 A. The composition of the Board shall be the active bishops of the Church, executive directors of the various  
3 general departments, including the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer and General Secretary/CIO of the Church. The  
4 heads of all departments and institutions receiving funds from the general budget shall be ex-officio members of  
5 the General Board. They shall sit with the Board in its meeting. They shall have the right of the floor without the  
6 privilege of making motions or voting. The General Board shall also be composed of five (5) representatives from  
7 each episcopal district. Even numbered districts shall be represented by (2) ministers and three (3) lay. Odd-  
8 numbered districts shall be represented by three (3) ministers, and two (2) lay during the quadrennium of 2012-  
9 2016. At least one member of every episcopal district delegation shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-30.  
10 The clergy/laity order of district representation is to rotate quadrennially. No persons from an episcopal district  
11 other than delegates may be in the voting assembly. Members of the General Board shall be elected by secret  
12 ballot. Each ballot used must be identical; including the names of all eligible candidates who wish to be elected to  
13 the General Board. It shall be unlawful for a bishop or any person conducting the election to allow the use of  
14 ballots that are different in colors, different sizes or shapes, or that contain names that are not identical. It shall be  
15 the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting that election, to provide clear instructions on number of



16 candidates to be elected, and how voters should indicate their choice of candidates. It shall also be the  
17 responsibility of the bishop or person conducting the election, to allow for the highest level of voter privacy  
18 possible, considering the setting and environment where the election is held. In cases where ballots are required  
19 and the election is uncontested, a voice vote may be held

20 Amended Text

21 A. The composition of the Board shall be the active bishops of the Church, executive directors of the various  
22 general departments, including the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer and General Secretary/CIO of the Church. The  
23 heads of all departments and institutions receiving funds from the general budget shall be ex-officio members of  
24 the General Board. They shall sit with the Board in its meeting. They shall have the right of the floor without the  
25 privilege of making motions or voting. The General Board shall also be composed of three (3) representatives from  
26 each episcopal district. Even numbered districts shall be represented by (2) ministers and one (1) lay. Odd-  
27 numbered districts shall be represented by one (1) minister, and two (2) lay during the quadrennium of 2016-2020.  
28 At least one member of every episcopal district delegation shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-30. The  
29 clergy/laity order of district representation is to rotate quadrennially. No persons from an episcopal district other  
30 than delegates may be in the voting assembly. Members of the General Board shall be elected by secret ballot.  
31 Each ballot used must be identical; including the names of all eligible candidates who wish to be elected to the  
32 General Board. A person does not have to be a delegate to the General Conference to have his/her name included  
33 on the ballot. No person may be elected to more than two consecutive terms. It shall be unlawful for a bishop or  
34 any person conducting the election to allow the use of ballots that are different in colors, different sizes or shapes,  
35 or that contain names that are not identical. It shall be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting that  
36 election, to provide clear instructions on number of candidates to be elected, and how voters should indicate their  
37 choice of candidates. It shall also be the responsibility of the bishop or person conducting the election, to allow for  
38 the highest level of voter privacy possible, considering the setting and environment where the election is held. In  
39 cases where ballots are required and the election is uncontested, a voice vote may be held.

		
Bill Number		
Title	MCAM CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS 2016-2020	
Submitted by	MYRON HILL	
Contact	mhill@embarqmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

p. 432 - Article IV - Officers and Section 1. Qualifications. Section 1b.

Intent

To have consistency in titles for roles being filled MCAM members.

Change the Qualifications - Attendance Requirements) for "Persons aspiring for a Connectional office."

Rationale

All age groups of the church are not clearly defined for choir participation. And there was a need to eliminate any confusion with hierarchy or descending levels of responsibility with the duplication of the use of "Associate" in title.

More experience desired for officer positions.


1 Current Text

2 The elected officers of the MCAM shall be the Connectional Director, who shall be recognized as a Connectional  
3 Officer of the AME Church, Connectional Associate Director of Music, Associate Director of Dance, Associate  
4 Director of Drama, Associate Director of Multi-Media, Associate Director of Youth and Young Adults, Assistant  
5 Director of Choirs, Assistant Director of Keyboards, Assistant Director of Instrumental Music and Related Arts,  
6 Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary, Worship Director, Parliamentarian, and  
7 Historiographer.  
8 b. He/She must have been registered in attendance to at least one Annual meeting  
9 of MCAM and MCAI during the Quadrennium prior to running for office.

10 Amended Text

11 The elected officers of the MCAM shall be the Connectional Director, who shall be recognized as a Connectional  
12 Officer of the AME Church, Connectional Associate Director, Director of Dance, Director of Drama, Director of  
13 Multi-Media, Director of Children/Youth and Young Adults, Director of Choirs/Vocals, Director of Instruments  
14 (keyboards, strings, woodwinds, brasses, percussion) Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer,  
15 Worship Director, Parliamentarian, and Historiographer.

- 16     b. He/She must have been registered in attendance to at least two Annual meetings of MCAM (either the MCE  
17     Spring meeting of the MCAM or the Fall Executive Board meeting or MCAM Institute) during the Quadrennium  
18     prior to running for office.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Covenant Keepers and Intercessors	
Submitted by	Rev. Dorisalene Hughes	
Contact	Dorisalene@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

1 Part VII, Section II, Connectional Departments, C., Department of Church Growth and Development, Paragraph 1.  
2 Division of Worship and Evangelism, page 160.

Intent

1 To change the Ad Hoc Committee known as the Jubilee Prayer Team 2016, to be legislated and officially hereafter  
2 known as The Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Covenant Keepers and Intercessors.

Rationale


1 This group of volunteer covenant keepers and intercessors have been waging war and  
2 interceding for over twelve years as a well-trained and disciplined team. The passing of  
3 this legislation would become an extremely viable enhancement to our Book of Discipline,  
4 as well as officially validate this organism of our Zion.

1 Current Text

2 1 C-1-f. The Secret Chamber, the Division of Worship and Evangelisms daily devotional guide, is herein recognized  
3 2 as an aid to worship; it is also an official periodical of the Church and is listed in The Doctrine and Discipline of  
4 the  
5 3 African Methodist Episcopal Church in the annual report of the pastor on periodicals.

6 Amended Text

7 1 C-1-g. The Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Covenant Keepers and Intercessors.  
8 2 The mission of this outreach ministry is to conduct spiritual mapping, domestic and  
9 3 International intercession regarding our various bishops, councils, general and  
10 4 connectional officers, events and issues of our Zion. This would include all local, conference,  
11 5 and district concerns and matters. The covenant keepers and intercessors would be 6 responsible for the  
12 6 Connectional Day of Prayer with the approval of the Bishop Chairperson, 7 and the General Conference Prayer  
13 7 Chapels and early Morning Prayer Labs.

Entry ID	357	
Entry Date	4/5/2016 16:01	
User IP	96.241.188.250	
Bill Number		
Title	CONVO	
Submitted by	Valeria Bell and Selerya Moore	
Contact	mooresel@verizon.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Presently not in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012.

Intent

To provide a more definitive description of the CONVO process and purpose.

Rationale

Due to the increasing cost of the General Conference, approximately \$8,000.00 per hour; verses the cost to convene a CONVO, approximately \$8,000.00 for the entire gathering, the CONVOS should be the process where proposed legislation is presented, discussed and debated. Thus reducing lengthy deliberations on the floor of the General Conference regarding proposed legislation. Following each CONVO General Board and Commission members, as well as other clergy and laity who attended would be able to be intentional during discussions in their respective Episcopal Districts regarding preparation for voting on legislation to be presented during the General Conference.

1 Current Text

2 NONE

3 Amended Text

4 New Text: Part VII. Section III, Sub-Section E. 1. u.

5 Upon the call by the Council of Bishops, the General Secretary/Chief Information Officer (CIO) shall notify the

6 General Board and global Church that the purpose of the two CONVOS prior to the General Conference shall be to

7 introduce and vet (examine, scrutinize, assess, and/or evaluate) proposed legislation. The said CONVOS shall be

8 held at the sites of the third and fourth Bishops Council and General Board meetings; and shall be 1 days prior to

9 or 1 days after the said meetings. CONVO attendees shall engage in intentional robust discussion regarding

10 proposed legislation. Upon the CONVO attendees' return to their Episcopal Districts, attendees are expected to

11 present and discuss said legislation with clergy and laity in their Episcopal Districts.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The General Board	
Submitted by	AME General Board	
Contact	cio@ame-church.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

page 145, Section 1, part A

Intent

To clarify membership on the general Board

Rationale

To codify the current practice of having at-large members

1 Current Text


2 The composition of the Board shall be the active bishops of the Church, executive directors of the various general  
3 departments, including the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer and General Secretary/CIO of the Church. The heads  
4 of all departments and institutions receiving funds from the general budget shall be ex-officio members of the  
5 General Board. They shall sit with the Board in its meeting. They shall have the right of the floor without the  
6 privilege of making motions or voting. The General Board shall also be composed of five (5) representatives from  
7 each episcopal district. Even numbered districts shall be represented by (2) ministers and three (3) lay. Odd-  
8 numbered districts shall be represented by three (3) ministers, and two (2) lay during the quadrennium of 2012 -  
9 2016. At least one member of every episcopal district delegation shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-30.  
10 The clergy /laity order district representation is to rotate quadrennially.

11 Amended Text

12 Replace with:

13 The composition of the General Board shall be the active bishops of the Church, executive directors of the various  
14 general departments, including the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer and General Secretary/CIO of the Church. The  
15 General Board shall also be composed of five (5) representatives from each Episcopal District. Even numbered  
16 districts shall be represented by three (3) ministers and two (2) lay. Odd numbered districts shall be represented  
17 by two (2) ministers and three (3) lay during the quadrennium 2016 - 2020. At least one member of every  
18 Episcopal District shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-30. The clergy/laity order of district representation

19 is to rotate quadrennially. The Council of Bishops shall nominate ten (10) persons to serve as At-Large members of  
20 the Board, one of whom shall be a youth between the ages of 18-30. The heads of departments and institutions  
21 receiving funds from the General Budget shall be ex-officio members of the General Board. They shall sit with the  
22 Board in its meeting, They shall have the right of the floor without the privilege of making motions or voting.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Efficient Management of General Church Finance	
Submitted by	Ella M. Stanton	
Contact	afrviolt1@sn.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 237, Section III

Intent

To insure integrity, continuity and realistic financial and information management at ALL levels of the AME Church in accordance with established Federal/State Non-Profit regulations.

Rationale

Currently, there is no Integrated Accounting and Management Information System in use at ALL levels of the AME Church..

1 Current Text


2 CURRENT TEXT: The General Board at its first meeting after the 1992 General  
3 Conference, directed the Commission on Statistics and Finance to secure the services of a minority accounting firm  
4 to develop, design, engineer and prepare for installation of an integrated accounting and management information  
5 system to be used by the Department of Finance, other departments, and divisions at all levels of the AME Church,  
6 including Episcopal District Budgets. The system shall include procedures for money handling, check writing, bank  
7 reconciliation, audits, comptroller, and all other required internal controls, within thirty (30) days on direction from  
8 the General Board. The Commission on Finance and Statistics of the AME Church shall begin the process with the  
9 accounting firm determined by the General Board.  
10 The General Board, at its first convening, shall delineate sources of funding for their implementation and will  
11 designate funds in accordance with the budget approved by the General Conference.

12 Amended Text

13 AMENDED TEXT: The General Board at its FIRST meeting after THE 2016 GENERAL CONFERENCE SHALL DIRECT the  
14 Commission on Statistics and Finance to direct the CFO to secure the services of a REPUTABLE accounting firm to  
15 develop, design, engineer, and prepare for installation of an integrated accounting and management information  
16 system to be used by the Department of Finance, other departments, and divisions at all levels of the AME Church,  
17 including Episcopal Districts, ANNUAL CONFERENCES, PRESIDING ELDER DISTRICTS AND LOCAL CHURCHES. The



18 system shall include procedures for money handling, RECORDING FINANCIAL DATA, check writing, bank  
19 reconciliation, audits, comptroller, CHURCH MEMBERSHIP DATA, and all other required internal controls, within  
20 sixty (60) days on the direction of the General Board. THE INTEGRATED ACCOUNTING AND MANAGEMENT  
21 INFORMATION SYSTEM SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL LEVELS OF THE AME CHURCH NOT LATER THAN THE YEAR  
22 2018. The Commission on Statistics and Finance of the AME Church shall begin the process with the accounting  
23 FIRM UNDER THE DIRECTION AND OVERSIGHT OF THE TREASUER/CFO.  
24 The General Board, at its first convening, shall delineate sources of funding for their implementation AND SYSTEM  
25 UPDATES. THE GENERAL BOARD SHALL designate funds in accordance with the budget approved by the General  
26 Conference.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Ministers Bill of Rights Amendment	
Submitted by	Council of Bishops Legislative Committee	
Contact	bishopfugh131@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 100, Ministers Bill of Rights, #1

Intent

N/A

Rationale


N/A

1 Current Text

2 A pastoral appointment equal to their abilities, training, and experience, when available. The new appointment,  
3 when available, shall be comparable to or better than the previous one, provided the pastor has not been found  
4 guilty under Judicial Administration. The action may result in location or an appointment that reflects the Church's  
5 current standing at the time of his or her departure.

6 Amended Text

7 A pastoral appointment equal to their abilities, training, and experience, when available. The new appointment,  
8 when available, shall be comparable to or better than the previous one, provided the pastor has not been found  
9 guilty under Judicial Administration. Other mitigating conditions besides the numerical statistics on the Pastor's  
10 Annual Report such as cost of living in different localities, the classification of the church, and annual finances from  
11 outside sources are also to be considered in determining what is comparable. The action may result in location or  
12 an appointment that reflects the Church's current standing at the time of his or her departure.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Addition to the Minister's Bill of Rights	
Submitted by	Council of Bishops Legislative Committee	
Contact	bishopfugh131@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 102, Ministers' Bill of Rights following section #14

Intent

Make this section consistent with other parts of the Discipline

Rationale

Keep appointment process consistent with Methodist tradition


1 Current Text

2 None

3 Amended Text

4 15. The bishop shall not have anything in this section applied which will prevent the bishop from using godly

5 judgment in making changes in the appointments that are deemed necessary for the good of the church.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Membership of the Commission on Public Relations	
Submitted by	Evelyn James	
Contact	deswamee@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Section III. Optional Local Church Organization Commissions in the Local Church, B. Duties of Commissions, 5 Commission on Public Relations.

Intent

To establish the members of the Commission on Public Relations for the local church in order to effectively disseminate information within the congregation, to the AME Church, to the secular, religious press and other public media outlets.

.

Rationale

Establishing the members of the Commission on Public Relations will give more definition, purpose and direction to the committee and give concrete rolls to members of the Commission.

1 Current Text

2 5. Commission on Public Relations

3 The duties of this commission are as follows:

4 1) It shall be responsible for gathering and disseminating information of public interest to the secular press,

5 religious press, radio, television and other legitimate media of public information.

6 2) It shall be responsible for intra-congregational communication.

7 3) It shall disseminate information to the official organs of the AME Church.

8 4) It shall submit an annual budget to the Commission on Stewardship and Finance

9 Amended Text

10 5. Commission on Public Relations

11 a. The duties of this commission are as follows:

12 1) It shall be responsible for gathering and disseminating information of public interest to the secular press,


13 religious press, radio, television and other legitimate media of public information.

14 2) It shall be responsible for intra-congregational communication.

15 3) It shall disseminate information to the official organs of the AME Church.

16 4) It shall submit an annual budget to the Commission on Stewardship and Finance

17 \*\* b. The members of the commission shall include one steward, who shall serve as the commission chair, the  
18 Chief Information Officer (CIO), any members who have professional backgrounds and expertise in public relations,  
19 journalism, photography, graphic design and audio-visual/media hardware and software or experience in digital,  
20 electronic and print communications.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Establishing A Chief Information Officer for each local Church	
Submitted by	Evelyn James	
Contact	deswamee@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part IV. Church Membership Section II. Local Church Organization Part B. The Official Board Number 1. Composition a. - d. pg. 72.

Intent

To establish the position of Chief Information Officer in each Class A-C church and to furthermore establish the office of Chief Information Office in Class D & E churches at the discretion of the charge to work with the Official Board Secretary and the Commission on Public Relation to implement, utilize and monitor communications, print and digital media and other electronic means of disseminating information for the local church both intra-congregational and to the secular and religious press which includes radio, tv and various media outlets.

Rationale

In the 21st Century, effective use of audio-visual media, electronic communication mediums and social media outlets is an integral part of church growth, effective ministry communication and outreach to the saved and unsaved. The office of General Secretary/CIO exists on the connectional level, however only the Secretary component exists on the local church level. Establishing this position as a part of the local church official board will assist in integrating media and communications ministries into the local church to aid in growth and outreach.

1 Current Text

2 B. The Official Board

3 1. Composition

4 a. The official Board shall be composed of all the class leaders, exhorters, deaconesses, stewards, trustees,  
5 stewardesses and presidents of all organizations of a station, circuit, or mission, including the president of the Lay  
6 Organization. The officers, both junior and adult, of the Junior Church shall also be members of the Official Board  
7 and shall contribute to the funds collected for the church, pastor, presiding elder, the poor, and general funds.

8 b. The pastor shall be a member of the Board and its chairperson ex-officio

9 c. Local Preachers shall be regarded as honorary members of the Board and shall be required to visit it at its  
10 regular sessions.

11 d. The board shall elect annually a secretary and treasurer. A steward should be elected secretary, if there is one  
12 competent to hold this office.

13 Amended Text

14 B. The Official Board

15 1. Composition


16 a. The official Board shall be composed of all the class leaders, exhorters, deaconesses, stewards, trustees,  
17 stewardesses and presidents of all organizations of a station, circuit, or mission, including the president of the Lay  
18 Organization. The officers, both junior and adult, of the Junior Church shall also be members of the Official Board  
19 and shall contribute to the funds collected for the church, pastor, presiding elder, the poor, and general funds.

20 b. The pastor shall be a member of the Board and its chairperson ex-officio

21 c. Local Preachers shall be regarded as honorary members of the Board and shall be required to visit it at its  
22 regular sessions.

23 d. The board shall elect annually a secretary and treasurer. A steward should be elected secretary, if there is one  
24 competent to hold this office.

25 \*\*e. The pastor shall appoint a Chief Information Officer (CIO) to implement, utilize and monitor communications,  
26 print and digital media and electronic dissemination of information within the church and to the secular and  
27 religious press. The CIO should hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree, have excellent writing and grammar skills  
28 and be committed to being responsible for the image of the local church in print, digitally or electronically.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Intentional Accommodations for the Differently Challenged in Public Worship	
Submitted by	Rev. Dr. Miriam Burnett	
Contact	chcamec@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 491ff Part XII Public Worship and Ritual

Intent

Provide language to accommodate the needs of those who are differently challenged by inserting the phrase "if able" whenever a change in position is stated in liturgy

Rationale

Encourage full participation of those that are differently challenged in public worship through the acknowledgement in our liturgy.

To be consistent with the intent of the instructions detailed in italics of Section I.

- 1 Current Text
- 2 page 491 - The Processional - The congregation standing and joining the choir in singing of the processional hymn
- 3 page 492 - The Preface Hymn to the Decalogue - Congregation arising
- 4 page 492 - The Decalogue - Congregation standing
- 5 page 497 - The Affirmation of Faith - Then shall be said, the Apostles' Creed, the people standing.
- 6 page 499 - THE LITANY - The Litany may be used on prayer-meeting occasion... and people in devotional services,
- 7 kneeling.
- 8 page 505 - After which the elder shall extend the following invitation: You that do truly and earnestly repent of our
- 9 sins...and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling.
- 10 page 505 - The elder shall uncover the table. Then shall this General Confession be made by the minister...both the
- 11 celebrant and all the people kneeling and saying together:
- 12 page 508 - Then shall the minister first receive the communion...and after that to the people in order, into their
- 13 hands.
- 14 page 515 - Then shall the people stand up, and the minister shall say: Hear the words of the gospel written by St.
- 15 John...
- 16 page 522 - The husband and wife kneeling, the minister shall add this blessing:



17 page 526 - Then shall the husband and wife kneel, the minister shall say: Let Us Pray...

18 page 529 - The Lord's Prayer. Then the minister and the people shall pray (with the husband and wife kneeling):

19 page 523 - Then shall the person(s) to be consecrated kneel. The bishop, taking each candidate by the hand, shall

20 say to her:

21 page 541 - After which shall be said by the bishop (the persons to be ordained elders all kneeling)

22 page 542 - After this prayer, the bishop with seven elders present shall lay their hands..., the receivers humbly

23 kneeling upon their knees, ...The bishop shall deliver to each of them kneeling the Bible into his or her hands,

24 saying:

25 Further instances are found on pages 545, 546, 548, 553, 556, 564, 565, 568, 569, 572,573, 575, 576, 579, 580,

26 582,584, 585 and 586

27 Amended Text

28 page 491 - The Processional - The congregation standing, if able, and joining the choir in singing of the processional

29 hymn

30 page 492 - The Preface Hymn to the Decalogue - Congregation arising, if able

31 page 492 - The Decalogue - Congregation standing, if able

32 page 497 - The Affirmation of Faith - Then shall be said, the Apostles' Creed, the people standing, if able.

33 page 499 - THE LITANY - The Litany may be used on prayer-meeting occasion... and people in devotional services,

34 kneeling, if able.

35 page 505 - After which the elder shall extend the following invitation: You that do truly and earnestly repent of our

36 sins...and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling, if able.

37 page 505 - The elder shall uncover the table. Then shall this General Confession be made by the minister...both the

38 celebrant and all the people kneeling, if able, and saying together:

39 page 508 - Then shall the minister first receive the communion...and after that to the people in order, into their

40 hands, if possible.

41 page 515 - Then shall the people stand up, if able, and the minister shall say: Hear the words of the gospel written

42 by St. John...

43 page 522 - The husband and wife kneeling, if able, the minister shall add this blessing:

44 page 526 - Then shall the husband and wife kneel, if able, the minister shall say: Let Us Pray...

45 page 529 - The Lord's Prayer. Then the minister and the people shall pray (with the husband and wife kneeling, if

46 able):

47 page 523 - Then shall the person(s) to be consecrated kneel, if able. The bishop, taking each candidate by the hand,

48 shall say to her:


49 page 541 - After which shall be said by the bishop (the persons to be ordained elders all kneeling, if able)

50 page 542 - After this prayer, the bishop with seven elders present shall lay their hands..., the receivers humbly

51 kneeling, if able, ...The bishop shall deliver to each of them kneeling, if able, the Bible into his or her hands, saying:

52 The phrase "if able" shall be added to each instance of the words standing or kneeling - found on pages 545, 546,

53 548, 553, 556, 564, 565, 568, 569, 572,573, 575, 576, 579, 580, 582,584, 585 and 586

		
Bill Number		
Title	Change in terminology from Handicap to Differently Challenged in the Preachers Admitted on Trial	
Submitted by	Rev. Dr. Miriam Burnett	
Contact	chcamec@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

page 84 Part V. Section IIA. Preachers

Intent

To be aligned with the new internationally generally accepted terminology

Rationale

To be aligned with the new internationally generally accepted terminology


There is no budgetary impact

1 Current Text

- 2 Candidates for admission to itinerant ministerial orders...Handicapping conditions are not to be construed as
- 3 unfavorable health factors when such a person is capable of meeting the professional standards and is physically
- 4 capable of rendering effective service as an itinerant minister.

5 Amended Text

- 6 A. Candidates for admission to itinerant ministerial orders...Conditions that cause a person to be differently
- 7 challenged are not to be construed as unfavorable health factors when such a person is capable of meeting the
- 8 professional standards and is physically capable of rendering effective service as an itinerant minister.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Revised Commission on Health Departmental Statement	
Submitted by	Rev. Dr. Miriam Burnett	
Contact	chcamec@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 178

Intent

To clarify and expand the departmental statement to consistent with the revised Constitution and ByLaws

Rationale

Consistent language

There is no budgetary impact

1 Current Text

2 Section III. Connectional Commissions and Headquarters

3 A. Commission on Health


4 The Health Commission is to promote the health concerns of members of the AME Church. It shall advocate health  
5 care as a right and not a privilege. It shall also challenge and work to reform the unjust structure that is prevalent  
6 in health delivery systems. It shall encourage each organization in our church to include a health component in its  
7 life and work.

8 Amended Text

9 Section III. Connectional Commissions and Headquarters

10 A. Commission on Health

11 The Health Commission is to serves, among other tasks, to help the denomination understand health as an integral  
12 part of the faith of the Christian Church, to seek to make our denomination a healing faith community, and to  
13 promote the health concerns of members of the AME Church and surrounding communities. It shall advocate  
14 health care as a right and not a privilege. It shall also challenge and work to reform the unjust structure that is  
15 prevalent in health delivery systems. It shall encourage each organization in our church to include a health  
16 component in its life and work.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the International Health Commission	
Submitted by	Rev. Dr. Miriam Burnett	
Contact	chcamec@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Pages 463 472 The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church 2012

Intent

Update the Constitution and ByLaws of the Connectional Health Commission  
There is no budgetary impact

Rationale

To reflect a change in the name to International Health Commission which is more widely understood by external partners. To better define the mission, objectives and goals. To elaborate on the responsibilities of leadership. The expand the scope of the ministries of the Commission.

1 Current Text

2 Section IX. Connectional Health Commission

3 ARTICLE I - NAME OF ORGANIZATION

4 The name of this organization shall be the Connectional Health Commission of the African Methodist Episcopal  
5 Church.

6 ARTICLE II - MISSION STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

7 Section 1. Mission.

8 To promote health as a part of our faith and to care for our congregations by advocating health as a right and not a  
9 privilege by forming celebrative relationships with, International, National, State, County or City health programs  
10 as well as Health Associations and Community Agencies.

11 To empower our congregations to advocate for improved access to affordable health care.

12 To provide Health Education and identify health resources.

13 To assist with first aid for Connectional Meetings as needed.

14 To Collaborate with Ecumenical Health Projects.

15 Section 2. Objectives.

16 a. Establish Health Commission Directors on all levels, episcopal districts, Annual conferences and local church.

- 17 b. Inclusion of one health presentation at each Episcopal District , Annual Conference, Presiding Elder District  
18 meeting and Education Congress.
- 19 c. Observe International and National Health Observances at all levels when possible, using a spectrum of  
20 information distribution.
- 21 d. Institute and establish partnerships with other health agencies or programs at all levels.
- 22 e. Expand and develop relationships with colleges and universities, medical, nursing, dental and schools of public  
23 health.
- 24 f. Expand Health Ministries at all levels to include all components of healthcare to promote total wellness (physical,  
25 spiritual and emotional).
- 26 g. Encourage connectional organizations to develop health programs and given them support as needed.
- 27 h. Build relationships with corporate, government and institutional programs and projects expanding preventive  
28 and curative resources.
- 29 i. Health Conferences every year targeting The World Health Organization Health for All campaign, identifying  
30 focus areas as it relates to Africans, Caribbeans, South Americans and those of the African Diaspora.
- 31 j. Expand connectional and regional training seminars.

### 32 ARTICLE III - ORGANIZATION

33 The Connectional Health Commission shall be composed of Episcopal District, Annual Conference, Presiding Elder  
34 District (where applicable) and Local Church Health Commissions.

### 35 ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

36 Membership shall consist of health professionals (doctors, nurses, nutritionist, dentist, medical, dental, nursing  
37 students, health educators, psychologist, social workers, physical therapists, occupational therapists and those  
38 persons certified in CPR and first aid, pharmacists, certified medical or nursing nursing assistants) - clergy or lay.

### 39 ARTICLE V - COLORS

40 The colors are royal blue with a touch of red.

### 41 ARTICLE VI MOTTO

42 A Ministry that Cares Always, Helps and Assist Those in Need of Health Care and Comforts the Weary

### 43 ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

44 Section 1. The Elected Officers shall be:

45 Executive Director (connectional level only)

46 Medical Director

47 Assistant Medical Director

48 Overseas Coordinators

49 Recording Secretary

50 Assistant Recording Secretary

51 Corresponding Secretary

52 Treasurer

53 Chaplain

54 Historian

55 Parliamentarian

56 Director of Public Relations

57 Overseas Coordinators 2 (connectional level only)

58 Section 2. Elected Officers on other levels.

59 Shall be the same as the connectional level except for Executive Director and Overseas Coordinators. The elected

60 local church officers shall be at their discretion depending on the size of the organization.

61 Section 3. Election of Officers. Connectional Health Commission Officers and Episcopal District Officers and

62 Overseas Coordinators shall be elected every four (4) years. Annual Conference, Parish, and Presiding Elder District

63 Officers shall be elected every two (2) years. Local Church Directors shall be elected every year.

64 Officers on all levels can serve for eight (8) years in the same position.

65 The elected officers shall assume their duties of office at the close of the meeting at which they were elected.

66 There shall be a nominating committee on all levels and election shall be by secret ballot. The Executive Director,

67 Medical Director and Assistant Medical Director must be an experienced Health Professional with administrative

68 skills.

69 The transitional period for all officers shall not exceed sixty (60) days at which time all records are transferred to

70 the incoming officer.

71 ARTICLE VIII - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

72 Section 1. Executive Director.

73 The Executive Director is a voting member of the General Conference and member of the General Conference

74 Commission and shall:

75 Respond to request for information on health programs and health resources.

76 Collaborate with international, national and city health programs and projects.

77 Represent the Commission at National Health Meetings, Seminars and Workshops

78 Participate in Ecumenical Health Programs and Projects

79 Assist with the development of curriculum, programs, ministries, projects, policy and procedures in collaboration

80 with the Medical Director.

81 Revise forms and updates handbook as needed in collaboration with the Medical Director

82 Communicate with the Chairman of the Commission on Health on connectional health activities

83 Assist Medical Director as needed

84 Develop a Quadrennial budget for the Commission with the Medical Director and Treasurer

85 Consult with and assist connectional organizations with the setting up of First Aid Stations

86 Assist the host Episcopal District Health Directors and Conference Health Directors in setting up First Aid Stations

87 for Connectional Meetings

88 Maintain an inventory of First Aid Supplies and equipment

89 Compile reports from the Episcopal District Health Directors and Overseas Coordinators along with the Medical

90 Director and report the same to the Commission on Health at the meeting of the General Board

91 Maintain a directory of Health Directors on all levels

92 Visit Districts and Annual Conference when requested to present workshops and seminars, and assist with

93 organization Health Commissions

94 Communicate with the Senior Bishop, President of the Bishops Council, President of the General Board, and

95 Ecumenical Officer as needed.

96 Section 2. Medical Director

97 The Medical Director is a voting Member of the General Conference and shall:



- 98 Assist with the operational program of the Commission
- 99 Seek funding sources for programs, projects and ministries
- 100 Collaborate with international, national and city health programs and projects.
- 101 Respond to request for information on health programs and health resources.
- 102 Represent the Commission at National Health Meetings, Seminars and Workshops
- 103 Communicate with the Overseas Coordinators, and Episcopal District Directors
- 104 Review the reports of the Overseas Coordinator and Episcopal District Health Directors
- 105 Visit Episcopal Districts when requested
- 106 Present workshops and seminars or assist with organizing health programs in episcopal districts when requested
- 107 Communicates with the Chairman of the Commission on Health on Connectional Health activities
- 108 Assist the Executive Director with compiling the Annual Report of the Overseas Coordinators and Episcopal District
- 109 Health Directors for presentation to the Commission on Health at the meeting of the General Board
- 110 Develop curriculum, programs, procedures, policy, projects and ministries with the Executive Director
- 111 Assist the Executive Director and Treasurer in developing a Quadrennial budget
- 112 Communicate with the coordinators of grant programs
- 113 Communicate with the Ecumenical Officer and participates in Ecumenical Health Projects and Programs.
- 114 Communicate with the Senior Bishop, President of the Bishops Council and President of the General Board
- 115 Oversee the webpage with the Webmaster, Chairperson of the Virtual Communication Committee and Public
- 116 Relations Director.
- 117 Section 3. Overseas Coordinators.
- 118 Must be experienced health professionals with administrative skills. They should participate on the Overseas
- 119 Development Council and are members of the Executive Board of the Connectional Health Commission.
- 120 Shall maintain a Directory of Health Directors on all levels and communicate with them to assist them with
- 121 developing health projects and programs for their locations, keeping in mind limited funds.
- 122 Organize Health Commissions in the episcopal districts on the Continent of Africa, nations of the Caribbean Islands,
- 123 South America and Europe.

124 Organize a Health Consortium composed of Episcopal District and Annual Conference Health Directors to carry out  
125 the work.

126 Develop a Quadrennial budget. Seek international funding for health programs and projects

127 Communicate with the Chairman of the Commission on Health, Executive Director and Medical Director of the  
128 Connectional Health Commission

129 Attend Overseas Development Meeting, General Board, Episcopal District and Annual Conference Meetings when  
130 funds allow.

131 Collect and compile quarterly reports from the Episcopal District Health Directors and forward them to the  
132 Executive Director of the Connectional Health Commission

133 Disseminate information to the episcopal districts about health programs and projects so that they may be shared  
134 with the Annual Conference Health Directors.

135 Section 4. Episcopal District Health Directors.

136 The Episcopal District Health Director is a Member of the Executive Board of the Connectional Health Commission  
137 and shall:

138 Organize a District Health Commission and maintain a directory of Annual Conference and Presiding Elder Health  
139 Directors, forward a copy to the Executive Director of the Connectional Health Commission.

140 Disseminate Connectional Health Programs.

141 Meet at least three times a year (Planning Meeting, Midyear and Education Congress) for training and to receive  
142 reports.

143 Develop a budget. Seek funding sources and grants for health programs

144 Compile quarterly reports of activities and forwards a copy to the Executive Director

145 Have a health seminar or leadership training at least once a year

146 Develop an Episcopal District Constitution and Bylaws reflecting the Connectional Constitution and Bylaws and  
147 forward a copy to the Connection.

148 Section 5. Annual Conference, Presiding Elder District Health Director.

149 Member of the Episcopal District Executive Board

150 Assist with organizing Local Church Commissions

151 Maintain a directory of Local Church Directors all levels and forward a copy to the Episcopal District Health Director  
152 Develop a budget. Seek funding sources and grants for health programs or projects  
153 Meet at least once a year for training and reports  
154 Collect and compile quarterly reports and send a copy to the Episcopal District Health Director.  
155 Develop a Constitution and Bylaws reflecting the Connectional and Episcopal District Constitution and By Laws  
156 Disseminate information to the local churches about Connectional Health Programs.  
157 Section 6. Local Church Director  
158 Member of the Annual Conference Executive Board  
159 Assess health needs of the local congregation and develop programs to meet the need  
160 Carry out connectional health projects and programs  
161 Develop a Budget. Seek funding sources or grants for health programs or projects  
162 Review state and city health programs that can be incorporated into the local church health program  
163 Meet as often as needed  
164 Report activities quarterly to the Conference Health Director  
165 Develop a Constitution and Bylaws reflective of the Connectional Constitution and By Laws.  
166 Section 8. Recording Secretary  
167 Shall keep accurate records of proceedings and under the directions of the Executive Director or Medical Director  
168 perform other duties common to the office.  
169 Make available to the members, minutes of all proceedings.  
170 Section 10. Corresponding Secretary  
171 Shall review all correspondence received, send information to members when directed by the Executive Director  
172 or Medical Director  
173 Shall maintain a directory of officers, health directors, consultants, project directors, ministry coordinators and  
174 program directors on all levels.  
175 Section 11. Treasurer  
176 In cooperation with the Treasurer of the AME church shall keep a record of all funds allocated by the church  
177 Shall keep a record of all funds collected and raised from other funding sources\

178 Shall perform annual audits of books

179 Shall assist the Executive Director and Medical Director in developing the quadrennial budget

180 Shall chair the Budget and Finance Committee

181 ARTICLE IX STANDING COMMITTEES

182 Standing Committees of the Commission shall be:

183 Section 1. Programs and New Initiatives.

184 Shall provide the Commission and Episcopal Districts Commissions with information on programs and initiatives

185 available from international and national health associations and agencies.

186 Section 2. Grants.

187 Shall seek out and provide information about grants available from national health organizations, associations, and

188 agencies.

189 Section 3. Virtual Communications.

190 Work with Webmaster. Develop information for web pages. Assist the Public Relations Director.

191 Section 4. Constitution and Bylaws.

192 Study and review all proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws and the Handbook.

193 Amend Constitution and Bylaws and Handbook as needed.

194 ARTICLE X MINISTRIES

195 The Commission Ministries are:

196 Section 1. HIV/ AIDS.

197 Provide information for people living with HIV/ AIDS. Encourage screening throughout the connection. Provide

198 health education through seminars and workshops. Advocate healthcare for people living with HIV/ AIDS.

199 Section 2. Family Care Givers.

200 Provide information to assist the care givers to access resources available in the community.

201 Develop support groups for care givers.

202 Section 3. Spiritual Health.

203 Provide spiritual support and counseling to members of the congregation as requested.

204 Provide moments for meditation during meetings. Establish a quiet place.

205 Members of the Spiritual Health Committee must be certified counselors, psychologists, social workers, or human  
206 service workers clergy or lay.

207 Section 4. Body and Soul for Churches.

208 A nutrition program developed for the African American Church.

#### 209 ARTICLE XI MEETINGS

210 Business meetings of the Connectional Health Commission will be held every four years. Officers will be elected at  
211 the meeting preceding the General Conference. The site will be at the invitation of the episcopal district or chosen  
212 by the Executive Board. There shall be annual Leadership Training Workshops usually preceding the General Board.  
213 Meetings of the Overseas Consortium shall be at the call of the Overseas Coordinators. Episcopal district, Annual  
214 Conference, and presiding elder district meetings shall be at the call of the directors on those levels. Local church  
215 commissions shall be at the call of the Director.

#### 216 ARTICLE XII THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

217 The Executive Board of the Connectional Health Commission shall consist of elected officers, consultants, ministry  
218 coordinators, project directors, advisors, chairperson of standing committees, and episcopal district health  
219 directors, overseas coordinators, and annual conference health directors.

220 The Executive Board shall meet at the call of the Executive Director of Medical Director, either by conference calls,  
221 webinars, or at a designated location.

222 The Executive Board shall work closely with the Executive Director, Medical Director and the Overseas  
223 Coordinators for the planning, promoting, and implementing programs of the Commission.

224 The Executive Committee of the Overseas Health Consortium on the Continent of Africa, Nations of the Caribbean  
225 Islands, Europe and South America shall be composed of the Health Directors of each episcopal district and Annual  
226 Conferences and consultants necessary to carry out their programs.

227 The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a year to carry on the business of the Health Consortium.

#### 228 ARTICLE XIII GOVERNANCE

229 This organization shall be governed on all levels by: The Constitution and Bylaws of the Connectional Health  
230 Commission, The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Roberts Rules of Order, Newly  
231 Revised Connectional Health Commission Handbook

232 The Overseas Health Consortium. Episcopal districts, Annual Conferences, and local churches may write a  
233 Constitution and Bylaws as long as it is not in conflict with the Connectional Health Commissions Constitution and  
234 Bylaws and The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

#### 235 ARTICLE XIV AMENDMENTS

236 This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds of the members present at a duly constituted  
237 business meeting of the Commission, provided said amendment has been in writing 90 days prior to the meeting.

#### 238 Amended Text

239 Section IX. International Health Commission

#### 240 ARTICLE I - NAME OF ORGANIZATION

241 The name of this organization shall be the International Health Commission of the African Methodist Episcopal  
242 Church.

#### 243 ARTICLE II - MISSION STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

244 Section 1. Mission.

245 The International Health Commission serves, among other tasks, to help the denomination understand health as  
246 an integral part of the faith of the Christian Church, to seek to make our denomination a healing faith community,  
247 and to promote the health concerns of its members. Specifically, the mission is to:

248 To empower our congregations to advocate for improved access to affordable and quality health care

249 To provide Health Education and identify health resources.

250 To assist with first aid for services and meetings at all levels: International, Annual Conference, District and Local

251 To collaborate with Ecumenical and Interfaith Health Projects while promoting health as a part of our faith and to  
252 care for our congregations by advocating health as a right not a privilege, by forming collaborative relationships  
253 with International, National, Regional and Local ecumenical and interfaith health programs or projects as well as  
254 Health Associations and Community Agencies.

255 Section 2. Objectives.

256 a. Establish Health Commissions on all levels, episcopal districts, Annual Conferences and local church

257 b. Inclusion of one health presentation at each Annual Conference, District Conference, and Christian Education

258 Congress

- 259 c. Observe International, National and Local Health Observances at all levels using a broad variety of information  
260 for dissemination
- 261 d. Institute and establish partnerships with other health agencies or programs at all levels.
- 262 e. Expand and develop relationships with colleges and universities, medical, nursing, dental and schools of public  
263 health.
- 264 f. Expand Health Ministries at all levels to include all components of healthcare to promote total wellness (physical,  
265 spiritual and emotional).
- 266 g. Encourage connectional organizations to develop health programs and given them support as needed.
- 267 h. Build relationships with corporate, Government, and institutional agencies allowing for programs and projects to  
268 expand preventive and curative resources
- 269 i. Encourage health conferences every year targeting initiatives of The World Health Organization with focus areas  
270 as it relates to Africa, the Caribbean, India, South America, and those of the African Diaspora located in other parts  
271 of the world
- 272 j. Expand International and regional training seminars.

273 ARTICLE III - ORGANIZATION

274 The International Health Commission shall be composed of Episcopal District, Annual Conference, Presiding Elder  
275 District (where applicable) and Local Church Health Commissions.

276 ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

277 Section 1. Membership shall consist of clergy or lay who are health professionals (physicians; nurses; dentists;  
278 dietitians and nutritionists; medical, nursing and dental students; health educators; psychologists; social workers,  
279 case managers and utilization review personnel; physical therapists and physical therapy assistants; public health  
280 professionals, occupational therapists; pharmacists; certified medical or nursing assistants; and those persons  
281 certified in CPR and first aid).

282 Section 2. Dues.

283 Annual International dues for Districts One through Thirteen shall be:

284 Full membership: \$25

285 Students: \$10

286 The amount of annual membership dues at the Episcopal District, Annual Conference, Presiding Elder District and  
287 Local church shall be determined by the respective Executive Board and the respective general membership.  
288 Global Health Coordinators in Districts Fourteen through Twenty shall establish a comparable and affordable  
289 amount for the two categories. The funds are reported to the International Treasurer and Secretary but shall be  
290 retained by the district collecting the same and be used for operational expenses of the District Health  
291 Commission.

## 292 ARTICLE V - COLORS

293 The colors are royal blue with a red accent.

## 294 ARTICLE VI MOTTO

295 A Ministry that Cares Always, Helps and Assists Those in Need through Prevention, Prayer and Education

## 296 ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

297 Section 1. The Elected Officers shall be:

298 Executive Director

299 Medical Director

300 Recording Secretary

301 Corresponding Secretary

302 Treasurer

303 Global Health Coordinators (2)

304 Section 2. Elected Officers on other levels.

305 Health Director (Health Coordinator at local level)

306 Recording Secretary

307 Treasurer

308 Section 3. Election of Officers. International and Episcopal District Officers and Overseas Coordinators shall be  
309 elected every four (4) years. Annual Conference and Presiding Elder District Officers shall be elected every two (2)  
310 years. Local Church Officers shall be elected annually. There are no term limits.

311 The elected officers shall assume their duties at the close of the meeting at which they were elected. There shall  
312 be a nominating committee on all levels and election shall be Roberts Rules of Order. The Executive Director and



313 Medical Director must be experienced health professionals with administrative skills. The transitional period for all  
314 officers shall not exceed 60 days at which time all records are transferred to the incoming officer.

## 315 ARTICLE VIII - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

### 316 Section 1. Executive Director.

317 The Executive Director is a voting member of the General Conference and a member of the General Conference  
318 Commission and shall:

319 Respond to requests for information on health programs and resources.

320 Collaborate with International, National, Regional and Local ecumenical and interfaith health programs or projects  
321 as well as Health Associations and Community Agencies.

322 Seek funding sources for programs, projects and ministries.

323 Represent the Commission on International and National Health Meetings, Workshops and Seminars.

324 Participate in Ecumenical and Interfaith Health Programs and Projects.

325 Assist with the development and expansion of curriculum, programs, ministries, projects, website content, policies  
326 and procedures in collaboration with the Medical Director.

327 Revise forms and updates handbook as needed in collaboration with the Medical Director.

328 Communicate with the Chairman of the Commission on Health on International health activities.

329 Develop a Quadrennial budget for the Commission in collaboration with the Medical Director and Treasurer.

330 Consult with and assist Connectional organizations with the setting up of First Aid Stations for Connectional  
331 Meetings.

332 Assist the host Episcopal District and Conference Health Directors with setting up First Aid Stations for  
333 Connectional Meetings.

334 Maintain an inventory of First Aid supplies and equipment.

335 Compile reports from Episcopal District Health Directors and Overseas Coordinators along with the Medical  
336 Director and report the same to the Commission on Health at the meeting of the General Board.

337 Maintain a directory of Health Directors and Health Coordinators (as provided by the Health Directors).

338 Visit Districts and Annual Conference when requested to present workshops and seminars, and assist with/provide  
339 consultation for the development and organization of Health Commissions.

340 Communicate with the Senior Bishop, President of the Bishops Council, President of the General Board, and  
341 Ecumenical Officer as needed.

342 Section 2. Medical Director.

343 The Medical Director is a voting member of the General Conference and shall:

344 Assist with the operational program of the Commission.

345 Seek funding sources for programs, projects and ministries.

346 Collaborate with International, National, Regional and Local ecumenical and interfaith health programs or projects  
347 as well as Health Associations and Community Agencies.

348 Respond to requests for information on health programs and resources.

349 Represent the Commission at International and National Health Workshops and Seminars.

350 Participate in Ecumenical and Interfaith Health Programs and Projects.

351 Communicate with the Overseas Coordinators and Episcopal District Health Directors as needed.

352 Review the reports of the Overseas Coordinators and Episcopal District Health Directors. Visit Episcopal Districts  
353 when requested.

354 Present workshops and seminars or assist with organizing health programs in Episcopal Districts when requested,  
355 or your designee.

356 Communicate with the Chairman of the Commission on Health on International Health activities.

357 Assist the Executive Director with compiling the Annual Report of the Overseas Coordinators and Episcopal District  
358 Health Directors for presentation to the Commission on Health at the General Board meeting.

359 Develop curriculum, programs, procedures, policies, projects, website content and ministries with the Executive  
360 Director.

361 Assist the Executive Director and Treasurer in developing a Quadrennial Budget.

362 Communicate with coordinators of grant programs.

363 Communicate with the Ecumenical Officer and participate in Ecumenical and Interfaith Health Projects and  
364 Programs.

365 Communicate with the Senior Bishop, President of the Bishops Council and President of the General Board.

366 Oversee the webpage with the Webmaster

367 Section 3. Global Health Coordinators

368 The Global Health Coordinators shall:

369 Should participate on the Global Development Council and are members of the Executive Board of the

370 International Health Commission.

371 Shall maintain a directory of Health Directors on all levels and communicate with them to assist them with

372 developing health projects and programs for their locations.

373 Organize Health Commissions in the Episcopal Districts on the continent of Africa, nations of the Caribbean Islands,

374 India, South America and Europe.

375 Organize a Health Consortium composed of Episcopal District and Annual Conference Health Directors to conduct

376 the work.

377 Develop a Quadrennial Budget and submit to the Executive Director and Treasurer.

378 Seek international and national funding for health programs and projects.

379 Communicate with the Chairman of the Commission on Health, the Executive Director and the Medical Director of

380 the International Health Commission.

381 Attend Global Development Meeting, General Board, Episcopal District and Annual Conference Meetings when

382 funds allow.

383 Collect and compile quarterly reports from the Episcopal District Health Directors and forward them to the

384 Executive Director of the International Health Commission.

385 Disseminate information to the Episcopal Districts about health programs and projects for further dissemination to

386 the Health Directors and Coordinators.

387 Section 4. Episcopal District Health Directors.

388 The Episcopal District Health Director is a Member of the Executive Board of the International Health Commission

389 and shall:

390 Organize a District Health Commission and maintain a directory of Annual Conference and Presiding Elder Health

391 Directors, forward a copy to the Executive Director of the International Health Commission.

392 Disseminate International Health Programs.

393 Meet at least three times a year (Planning Meeting, Midyear and Education Congress) for training and to receive  
394 reports.

395 Develop a budget. Seek funding sources and grants for health programs

396 Compile quarterly reports of activities and forwards a copy to the Executive Director

397 Have a health seminar or leadership training at least once a year

398 Develop an Episcopal District Constitution and Bylaws reflecting the International Constitution and Bylaws and  
399 forward a copy to the Connection.

400 Section 5. Annual Conference, Presiding Elder District Health Director.

401 The Annual Conference (Presiding Elder District) Health Director is a Member of the Episcopal District  
402 Executive Board (Annual Conference Executive Board) and shall:

403 Assist with organizing Local Church Commissions

404 Maintain a directory of Local Church Directors all levels and forward a copy to the Episcopal District Health Director

405 Develop a budget. Seek funding sources and grants for health programs or projects

406 Meet at least once a year for training and reports

407 Collect and compile quarterly reports and send a copy to the Episcopal District Health Director.

408 Develop a Constitution and Bylaws reflecting the International and Episcopal District Constitution and By Laws

409 Disseminate information to the local churches about International Health Programs.

410 Section 6. Local Church Health Coordinator.

411 The Local Church Health Coordinator is a Member of the Presiding Elder District Executive Board and shall:

412 Assess the health needs of the local congregation and develop programs to meet the need.

413 Carry out Connectional, Episcopal District and Annual Conference health projects and programs.

414 Develop a budget and submit to the Presiding Elder District Health Coordinator.

415 Seek funding sources or grants for health programs and projects.

416 Review regional and local health programs that can be incorporated into the local church health program.

417 Meet as often as needed.

418 Report activities quarterly to the Conference Health Director.

419 Develop a Constitution and Bylaws reflective of the International Constitution and Bylaws.

420 Section 8. Recording Secretary.

421 Shall keep accurate records of proceedings under the directions of either the Executive Director or Medical

422 Director (International), Health Director (Episcopal District or Annual Conference) or Health Coordinator (Presiding

423 Elder or Local)

424 Perform other duties common to the office.

425 Make available to the members, minutes of all proceedings.

426 Section 10. Corresponding Secretary.

427 Shall review all correspondence received, send information to members when directed by the Executive Director

428 or Medical Director (International), Health Director (Episcopal District or Annual Conference) or Health Coordinator

429 (Presiding Elder or Local)

430 Shall maintain a directory of officers, health directors, consultants, project directors, ministry coordinators and

431 program directors for the appropriate levels.

432 Section 11. Treasurer.

433 International level: In cooperation with the Treasurer of the AME Church shall keep a record of all funds allocated

434 by the church. Shall keep a record of all funds collected and raised by other funding sources. Shall keep a record of

435 all funds dispersed. Shall have annual fiscal audits performed. Shall assist the Executive Director and Medical

436 Director in developing the quadrennial budget. Shall provide reports to the Budget and Finance Committee of the

437 Commission on Health. Shall receive fiscal reports from the Episcopal District Health Commission Treasurer.

438 Episcopal District level: In cooperation with the Health Commission International Treasurer shall keep a record of

439 all funds allocated by the district. Shall keep a record of all funds collected and raised by other funding sources.

440 Shall keep a record of all funds dispersed. Shall assist the Health Director in developing the quadrennial budget.

441 Shall provide reports to the International Treasurer. Shall receive fiscal reports from the Annual Conference Health

442 Commission Treasurer.

443 Annual Conference and Presiding Elder level: In cooperation with the Health Commission Episcopal District

444 Treasurer shall keep a record of all funds allocated by the conference or district. Shall keep a record of all funds

445 collected and raised by other funding sources. Shall keep a record of all funds dispersed. Shall assist the Health

446 Director in developing the biennial budget. Shall provide reports to the Episcopal District Treasurer. Shall receive  
447 fiscal reports from the Local Health Commission Treasurers.

448 Local level: In cooperation with the Health Commission Presiding Elder District Treasurer shall keep a record of all  
449 funds allocated by the local church. Shall keep a record of all funds collected and raised by other funding sources.  
450 Shall keep a record of all funds dispersed. Shall assist the Health Coordinator in developing the annual budget.  
451 Shall provide reports to the Health Commission Presiding Elder District Treasurer.

#### 452 Section 12. Qualifications for Executive and Medical Director (International positions)

453 The Executive Director and Medical Director must be experienced health professionals with administrative skills.  
454 The Executive Director and Medical Director should have actively served the Health Commission at the Episcopal  
455 District level for a minimum of two terms (4 years). The Executive Director and Medical Director should have  
456 served the Health Commission by volunteering at least one General Conference and one Episcopal District  
457 meeting. The Executive Director and Medical Director should be in good standing with their appropriate licensing  
458 body (active or retired).

#### 459 Section 13. Qualifications for Global Health Coordinators (International Level) Health Director (Episcopal District 460 and Annual Conference levels) and Health Coordinators (Presiding Elder and Local levels)

461 The Global Health Coordinators and Health Director must be experienced health professionals with administrative  
462 skills. The Health Coordinator must have an interest in the well-being of their fellow congregants and communities.  
463 The Global Health Coordinators and Health Director should be in good standing with their appropriate licensing  
464 body (active or retired).

465 The Health Coordinator must have an interest in the well-being of their fellow congregants and communities. It is  
466 not required that the Health Coordinator have any health professional training, but must be CPR certified.

#### 467 Section 14. Qualifications for Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary

468 The secretaries must be able to utilize word processing software (e.g. Microsoft Word, etc.), social media (e.g.  
469 Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and email merge.

#### 470 Section 15. Qualifications for Treasurer

The Treasurer must be able to utilize accounting type software (Excel, Quickbooks, etc.), manage finances and account for all funds. At the International level, the treasurer should have actively served the Health Commission at the Episcopal District level for a minimum of one term (2 years).

#### ARTICLE IX STANDING COMMITTEES

##### Section 1. Programs and New Initiatives.

Shall provide the Commission and Episcopal Districts Commissions with information on programs and initiatives available from International, National, Regional and Local ecumenical and interfaith health programs or projects as well as Health Associations and Community Agencies.

##### Section 2. Grants.

Shall seek out and provide information about grants available from International, National, Regional and Local health organizations, associations, and agencies.

##### Section 3. Virtual Communications.

Work with Webmaster. Develop information for web pages and a variety of social media.

##### Section 4. Constitution and Bylaws and Handbook.

Study and review all proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws and the Handbook. Propose amendments for the Constitution and Bylaws and Handbook as needed.

Amend Constitution and Bylaws and Handbook as needed.

#### ARTICLE X MINISTRIES

In general the Ministries shall :

provide information and connect churches, Pastors, Presiding Elders and Episcopal Districts with health resources available to the faith based community.

provide support and referral resources on AMEhealth.org website and on the Health Calendar.

The Commission Ministries shall include but not be limited to:

Section 1. HIV/AIDS. Provide information for people living with HIV/AIDS. Encourage screening throughout the connection. Provide health education through seminars and workshops. Advocate healthcare for people living with HIV/AIDS. Recommend and encourage the AME church internationally to support World AIDS Day on Dec 1st and

497 other national days of recognition like National Black HIV/AIDS Day (February 7) and Week of Prayer for the  
498 Healing of AIDS held during the 2nd week of March.

499 Section 2. Caregivers. Provide information to assist the caregivers to access resources available in the community.  
500 Develop support groups for caregivers.

501 Section 3. Spiritual Health. Provide spiritual support and referrals for counseling to members of the congregation  
502 as requested. Provide moments for meditation during meetings. Establish a quiet place. Members of the Spiritual  
503 Health Committee must be certified counselors, psychologists, social workers, or human service workers clergy or  
504 lay.

505 Section 4. Nutrition and Exercise. Provide nutrition and exercise information on AMEHealth.org website and on  
506 the Health Calendar. Recommend and encourage the AME church internationally to participate, support and  
507 promote the Annual July Faith Based Health, Wellness, Nutrition and Fitness month established by the  
508 International Health Commission of the AME Church. Recommend all meals served at all church related events  
509 offer healthy food choices and healthy beverages in order to prevent and fight disease. Recommend churches  
510 offer fitness programs and stretch breaks at programs to promote blood circulation, clear thinking and good  
511 health.

512 Section 5: Mental Health. Provide support and referral resources on AMEHealth.org website and on the Health  
513 Calendar. Provide churches and Episcopal District with free resources available via Mental Health organizations for  
514 church congregations.

515 Section 6: Ministry to those who are differently challenged. Provide information on making our churches and  
516 worship welcoming and accessible for all people including those who are differently challenged. Provide resources  
517 that will support churches in their effort to include persons who are differentially challenged. Provide information  
518 on emergency evacuation and ensuring all persons can safely exit the building.

519 Section 7: Clergy and Family Health. Recommend and encourage all Clergy to participate in the Annual August  
520 Clergy and Clergy Family Wellness month created to promote physical and mental health, reduce stress, encourage  
521 sabbatical and clergy self-care. Provide, support and offer resources that address family wellness which include,  
522 but are not limited to: blended families (i.e. stepchildren and stepparents), marriage, divorce, widows, single life,  
523 domestic violence, sexual abuse, child abuse, sexuality and financial wellness.



524 Section 8: Communicable Diseases and Immunizations. Provide information of immunizations. Provide information  
525 and updates on communicable diseases that arise during certain times of the year, outbreaks or epidemics, travel  
526 health advisories and precautions, recommendations and prevention on AMEHealth.org.

527 Section 9: Chronic Diseases. Recommend and encourage all churches to provide and support a smoking free  
528 environment. Provide a variety of wellness pamphlets and brochures at church and workshops at major meetings,  
529 invite health professionals to speak at district meetings and Episcopal meetings. Promote annual physicals  
530 prevention and treatment options in order to equip and empower the church to make important health decisions.  
531 Encourage all Episcopal Districts and Connection components to use utilize the Health Calendar and resources  
532 available on AMEHealth.org.

533 Section 10: Collaboration with other Connectional Agendas. Partner and support with other Connectional  
534 organizations that of mutual interest and concern in order to expand the outreach or scope of the agenda.

535 Section 11: Death, Dying and Hospice. Provide information and resources on programs. Encourage Clergy and Lay  
536 to become trained support members or teams. Recommend churches provide free resources pamphlet form.

537 Section 12: Disaster Preparedness and Response. Recommend and encourage all Episcopal Districts and Churches  
538 to participate in the Annual September Disaster Preparedness Month fire drills and evacuation drills. Provide  
539 information on preparedness, First Aid and CPR training, Earthquake and other Natural disaster responses. Provide  
540 information on partnerships with the Red Cross, SADA and Medical Corps.

541 Section 13: Substance Abuse, Addictions and Recovery. Provide information and resources on substance abuse,  
542 workshops, Clergy and Lay certification programs.

#### 543 ARTICLE XI MEETINGS

544 Business meetings of the International Health Commission will be held every four years. Officers will be elected at  
545 the meeting preceding or during the General Conference. The site will be at the invitation of the Episcopal District  
546 or chosen by the Executive Board. There shall be quadrennial Leadership Training Workshop usually preceding the  
547 General Board.

548 Meetings of the Global Consortium shall be at the call of the Global Health Coordinators (a minimum of annually).  
549 Episcopal district, Annual Conference, and Presiding Elder District meetings shall be at the call of the Directors on  
550 those levels (a minimum of bi-annually).

551 Local church commissions shall be at the call of the Coordinator (a minimum of quarterly).

552 ARTICLE XII THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

553 The Executive Board of the International Health Commission shall consist of elected officers, Episcopal District  
554 health directors, Global Health Coordinators. Ex-officio members shall include consultants, ministry coordinators,  
555 project directors, advisors, chairman of standing committees, and Annual Conference Health Directors.

556 The Executive Board shall meet at the call of the Executive Director of Medical Director, either by conference calls,  
557 webinars, or at a designated location. The Executive Board shall work closely with the Executive Director, Medical  
558 Director and the Global Coordinators for the planning, promoting, and implementing programs of the Commission.

559 The Executive Committee of the Global Health Consortium on the Continent of Africa, Nations of the Caribbean  
560 Islands, Europe, India and South America shall be composed of the Health Directors of each Episcopal District and  
561 Annual Conferences and consultants necessary to carry out their programs. The Executive Committee shall meet at  
562 least once a year to carry on the business of the Health Consortium.

563 ARTICLE XIII GOVERNANCE

564 This organization shall be governed on all levels by: The Constitution and Bylaws of the International Health  
565 Commission, The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Roberts Rules of Order,  
566 International Health Commission Handbook and The Global Health Consortium.

567 Episcopal Districts, Annual Conferences, and local churches may compile a Constitution and Bylaws as long as it is  
568 not in conflict with the International Health Commissions Constitution and Bylaws and The Doctrine and Discipline  
569 of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

570 ARTICLE XIV AMENDMENTS

571 This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by a meeting of the Executive Board or by the members of  
572 International Health Commission meeting duly called for the purpose of amending the Constitution and Bylaws. A  
573 notice of the proposed amendment must be included in the notice of the meeting. No amendment to the  
574 Constitution and Bylaws shall become effective until approved by the General Conference of the African Methodist  
575 Episcopal Church.

576 ARTICLE XV ACCOUNTS AND INVESTMENTS

577 Section 1. Contracts, Checks, Bank Accounts. The Executive Board is authorized to select such depositories as it  
578 shall deem proper for the funds of the International Health Commission and shall determine who shall be  
579 authorized in the organizations behalf to sign bills, notes, receipts, acceptances, endorsements, checks, releases,  
580 contracts and documents.

581 Section 2. Investments. The funds of the International Health Commission may be retained in whole or in part in  
582 cash or be invested and reinvested from time to time in such property, real, personal or otherwise, including  
583 stocks, bonds or other securities, as the Executive Board may deem desirable.

584 Section 3. Expenditures. No officer of the Executive Board can authorize expenditures over five thousand  
585 (\$5,000.00) dollars without the approval of the majority of the Executive Board.

586 ARTICLE XVI - FISCAL YEAR

587 The fiscal year of the Health Commission shall be June 1 to May 31.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Judicial Committee	
Submitted by	Council of Bishops Legislative Committee	
Contact	bishopfugh131@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part XI, Section IX, C, 9, page 265; Section XIV, A, page 270

Intent

To remove matters related to the composition of the Judicial Committee in cases of sexual misconduct to the Section dealing with that subject.

Rationale

The composition of the Judicial Committee as presented in Item 9, page 265, is in the middle of a discussion regarding the Trial Committee. The present description of the Committee makes no provision for replacement of persons who are unable to serve or unwilling to serve.

1 Current Text

2 Part XI, Section IX, C, 9, page 265

3 9. The Judicial Committee of the Annual Conference shall consists of the following persons: A presiding elder and  
4 five (5) ministers who shall be elected for a two-year period, beginning with the year 1960.

5 Process of Trial: The Trial Committee thus constituted shall have the power to try the accused and, by a vote of  
6 two-thirds of the Committee, suspend the said preacher from the exercise of all official functions until the next  
7 annual conference.

8 The findings of this Trial Committee shall be final, subject to appeal to the Annual Conference as hereinafter  
9 provided. The record of the trial shall be signed and it, together with all testimony, shall be signed by the presiding  
10 elder of the Trial Committee.

11 In the case of a minor offense, the Trial Committee may fix a lesser penalty, which shall be as follows: 1. Said  
12 preacher may be reprimanded. 2. A presiding elder and bishop may be directed to move the preacher from his or  
13 her Church, or presiding elder district, whichever the case may be.

14 Section XIV, A, page 270, 3rd and 4th paragraph

15 The tasking of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee with total control of clergy sexual misconduct proceedings is

16 inconsistent with African Methodist Episcopal Church polity and obviates the fairness and due process that should

undergird all judicial procedures. Under the proffered changes, the Ministerial Efficiency Committee will no longer serve as investigative and appeals bodies, judge, and jury as these functions will resort to the Judicial Committee, Trial Committee, or the Triers of Appeals in the Annual Conference. Diminishing the role of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee in this matter is not intended to minimize the egregiousness of a sexual misconduct offense, but this modification is designed to establish a prudent judicial process through the restoration of power to the appropriate committees. Policy addenda, which include training of all clergy and licentiates, signed compliance agreements, support for congregations and the falsely accused, should strengthen the policy, with the emphasis on preventive measures and supportive restoration.

Under the provisions of this policy, all matters pertaining to clergy sexual misconduct shall fall under the aegis of the Judicial Committee rather than the Ministerial Efficiency Committee. The Judicial Committee shall serve as the investigative body (a grand jury of sorts) to determine whether the alleged conduct meets the strict definitions of sexual misconduct under the provisions of this policy. If the allegations against the accused are sustained, the Judicial Committee must recommend that the accused be tried under the provisions of judicial administration of the Annual Conference. If the allegations are not sustained, the matter shall be dismissed.

Amended Text

DELETE: Part XI, Section IX, C, 9, page 265 - Cause the paragraph titled Process of Trial to become the NEW Item

9. Process of Trial: The Trial Committee thus constituted shall have the power to try the accused and, by a vote of two-thirds of the Committee, suspend the said preacher from the exercise of all official functions until the next annual conference.

The findings of this Trial Committee shall be final, subject to appeal to the Annual Conference as hereinafter provided. The record of the trial shall be signed and it, together with all testimony, shall be signed by the presiding elder of the Trial Committee.

In the case of a minor offense, the Trial Committee may fix a lesser penalty, which shall be as follows: 1. Said preacher may be reprimanded. 2. A presiding elder and bishop may be directed to move the preacher from his or her Church, or presiding elder district, whichever the case may be.

INSERT: In Part XI, Section XIV, A, after the fourth paragraph, just before the last paragraph that begins with Under the provision

The tasking of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee with total control of clergy sexual misconduct proceedings is inconsistent with African Methodist Episcopal Church polity and obviates the fairness and due process that should undergird all judicial procedures. Under the proffered changes, the Ministerial Efficiency Committee will no longer serve as investigative and appeals bodies, judge, and jury as these functions will resort to the Judicial Committee, Trial Committee, or the Triers of Appeals in the Annual Conference. Diminishing the role of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee in this matter is not intended to minimize the egregiousness of a sexual misconduct offense, but this modification is designed to establish a prudent judicial process through the restoration of power to the appropriate committees. Policy addenda, which include training of all clergy and licentiates, signed compliance agreements, support for congregations and the falsely accused, should strengthen the policy, with the emphasis on preventive measures and supportive restoration.

The Judicial Committee of the Annual Conference shall consist of the following persons: a presiding elder appointed by the bishop presiding in the Annual Conference, and five (5) itinerant ministers elected for a two year term, at least two (2) of whom shall be women. All members of this committee must successfully complete the education and training and mandatory background checks required under Part XI, Section XIV, Paragraph C, before participation in any of the activities of the Committee. In the event that vacancies occur on this Committee between Annual Conferences, the presiding bishop shall appoint temporary members, as necessary, to carry out the business of the Committee. Such appointed members shall also be eligible for election at the next Annual Conference.

Under the provisions of this policy, all matters pertaining to clergy sexual misconduct shall fall under the aegis of the Judicial Committee rather than the Ministerial Efficiency Committee. The Judicial Committee shall serve as the investigative body (a grand jury of sorts) to determine whether the alleged conduct meets the strict definitions of sexual misconduct under the provisions of this policy. If the allegations against the accused are sustained, the Judicial Committee must recommend that the accused be tried under the provisions of judicial administration of the Annual Conference. If the allegations are not sustained, the matter shall be dismissed.

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Joelynn T. Stokes	
Contact	jstokes@jstokesandassoc.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Part V, Section VII , pg 100 (2012)

Intent

To prohibit the practice of establishing pastoral salary packages and/or pastoral loans to the church that the church cannot afford to (re)pay during a pastors tenure at the church; then after reassignment or removal, attempt to collect/sue the church for unpaid wages or for repayment of the loan.

Rationale

If a pastor is unable to raise the funds necessary to cover his/her salary or repay loans given during his/her tenure, it is unreasonable to expect the successor pastor to raise enough funds to cover the prior pastors salary and/or loan repayments while endeavoring to raise his/her salary and meet church obligations.

1 Current Text

2 NONE

3 Amended Text

4 Any financial agreements between the local church and the pastor, including but not limited to unpaid salary,

5 salary related expenses, benefits, or repayment of loans made to the church by the pastor, are void, terminated

6 and deemed satisfied in full upon the pastors reassignment, new appointment or removal from the charge.

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Joelynn T. Stokes	
Contact	jstokes@jstokesandassoc.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Part V, Section VII, pg 100 (2012)

Intent

To establish and encourage accurate reporting of church membership and revenues; and to provide an avenue of recourse when the Pastoral Report is relied upon to determine equal or comparable to for purposes of pastoral appointments.

Rationale

Unfortunately, it is a common practice to report revenue and membership numbers that are not reflective of a church's actual membership and revenue. However, it has been decided that Bishops may rely upon the Report given there is no other documentation at present upon which to rely. Some mechanism should be in place to address the inaccuracy.

1 Current Text

2 NONE

3 Amended Text

4 If a Pastors Annual Report is relied upon to determine equal or comparable to for purposes of pastoral  
5 appointments, a pastor assigned to a new charge shall have 90 days to verify and document the (in)accuracy of the  
6 membership and/or revenue reported in the Pastors Annual Report.

7 If it is determined that the Pastors Annual Report relied upon is not accurate, the pastor submitting the inaccurate  
8 report may be removed from the charge to which he/she was assigned and left with no charge or moved to a  
9 lesser charge.

10 The pastor who established the inaccuracy of the Report for the church to which s/he was assigned, absent other  
11 extenuating circumstances, shall be returned to his/her prior charge.

12 For purposes of this provision only, to be deemed inaccurate evidence must be presented that establishes the  
13 membership and/or revenue reported was 35% or more higher than the actual membership or revenue.



		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Joelynn T. Stokes	
Contact	jstokes@jstokesandassoc.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Part V, Section VII, pg 100 (2012)

Intent

To establish a policy regarding a pastors authority to obligate the church without the approval of the local church.

Rationale


Legislation currently exists regarding a pastors authority to mortgage church property; but there is no policy regarding a pastors ability to obligate the church on non-secured debt obligations.

1 Current Text

2 NONE

3 Amended Text

4 The local church conference shall establish a maximum limit for which the pastor may obligate the church. In the  
5 absence of an established policy, the Board of Trustees may authorize an amount up to \$2000. Any pastor that  
6 obligates the church by approving or signing a contract in violation of the maximum limit established by the local  
7 church conference, or in the absence of an established limit, obligates the church for an amount exceeding \$500  
8 shall be held personally liable for the indebtedness. The pastor shall be required to repay to the local church the  
9 indebtedness for which s/he is personally liable before being reassigned or approved for transfer.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Stewardship and Finance Commission	
Submitted by	Sandra Nelson, Jacqueline Sibbles and Vicki Whitsett Jackson	
Contact	jss1703@netzero.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part IV, Section II.A.4 Auxiliaries (Page 72); and Section III Optional Local Church Organization, specifically Subsection B. 4. Commission on Stewardship and Finance (pages 74 and 77,78)

Intent

To move the requirements for the Commission on Stewardship and Finance from Section III (Optional Local Church Organization), and place them under Section II, Subsection A.4. (Auxiliaries), thus qualifying the body as a standing committee and establishing said committee as the official financial administrative unit of the local church. Further, the introductory language to Section III will be subsequently amended

Rationale

For several years, the local church has been encouraged to establish a Central Budget Fund (as is established on the Episcopal District and Connectional levels). Increasingly at Quarterly Conferences, presiding elders regularly inquire if the local church in question has a central fund. The requirement for establishing a Central Budget Fund is written under the duties of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance (Part IV, Section III. B.4.b.1; p. 78). It is specified in paragraph 4 of said section (p, 78) that the fund is administered by the Commission on Stewardship and Finance. However, these requirements are laid out under the above cited section, designated for optional local church organizations.

The existence and function of an administrative body such as this commission is vital to effectual fiscal management in the local church and cannot be optional, but must be mandatory. It needs to be established as a continuously functioning, standing unit, as are similar bodies at other levels of the Connectional Church. The Commission on Stewardship and Finance is currently required to carry out the financial obligations of the church under the direction of the Official Board, including developing a budget and administering the Central Budget Fund. These functions need to be performed by a representative cross-section of the local church components and membership. Members should possess relevant skills and experience that can advance the fiscal health and wellbeing of our Zion.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Part IV, Section II. A.4.A.; Page 72 No Language

3 CURRENT TEXT: Part IV, Section III, p. 74

4 There may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter

5 defined: (1) The Commission on Membership, Evangelism, and Discipleship, (2) The Commission on Christian

6 Education, (3) The Commission on Missions and Welfare, (4) The Commission on Stewardship and Finance,

7 (5) The Commission on Public Relations, (6) Commission on Christian Social Action, and (7) The Commission on

8 Health.

The pastor shall be the chairperson of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance and the ex-officio chairperson on the other commissions. The chairperson of each commission shall be a steward and therefore, a member of the Official Board and Quarterly Conference to which he or she is amenable, with the exception of the Commission on Missions and Welfare, whose chairperson may be either a steward or a trustee. They shall make monthly reports to the Official Board and also quarterly reports to the Quarterly Conference.

The members shall be elected by the Church Conference, except that the superintendent of the Church School, president of the Allen Christian Fellowship, director of the Young Peoples Division of the Womens Missionary Society, directors of Bureau Service Agencies and additional members who shall be nominated by the pastor and elected by the Quarterly Conference. The director of Christian Education shall be an ex-officio member of this commission.

Each Commission shall be composed of no fewer than three nor more than seven members who are in good and regular standing in the AME Church and eighteen years of age or over. This rule may not apply in the case of mission charges, and does not apply to the Commission on Stewardship and Finance, which shall be composed of an equal number of stewards and trustees plus Official Board members-at-large. The total number of persons on this commission shall not be fewer than three (3) nor more than nine (9). Each commission shall cooperate with the Connectional and Annual Conference Commission.

Amended Text

AMENDMENT/NEW TEXT: Renumber the current Part IV, Section II. A.4.B as the new Part IV, Section II, A4.A.; add a new Part IV, Section II. A.4.B. as follows:

B. The Stewardship and Finance Commission

1. Composition

a.) The Stewardship and Finance Commission shall be composed of an equal number of stewards, trustees and Church Conference Members at-at-large. The total number of persons on this commission shall not be fewer than three (3) nor more than nine (9). This rule may not apply to mission charges.

b.) The members of the commission shall be elected by the Church Conference. Where there is a member of the local church who possesses accounting expertise, such person shall be considered for election.

c.) The pastor shall be the ex-officio chairperson of the commission.

2. Duties of the Stewardship and Finance Commission

a.) The Stewardship and Finance Commission shall administer the financial program of the station, circuit, or mission. In keeping with this overall function, the duties of the commission are as follows:

1.) At the beginning of each conference year, the commission shall set up an annual budget for the station, circuit or mission and shall submit the same to the Official Board for its action and determination. The annual budget shall consider and incorporate the pastors suggested budget.

2.) Upon approval of the annual budget by the Official Board, the Commission shall, under the direction of the board, take action to provide the income sufficient to cover same, and shall administer the funds received according to the plan of the Official Board.

3.) Contributions and payments shall be credited to the respective contributor and a proper and accurate account shall be kept of each contributor and each contribution and payment.

4.) All funds shall be deposited promptly in a bank approved by the Official Board and the account shall be in the name of the local church.

5.) Funds received shall be disbursed by the treasurer as the Official Board directs through the approved budgetary process. Any request for expenditure not included in the approved budget must come before the Official Board for pre-approval, with the consent of the pastor.

6.) The income received each month shall have been shared proportionately among the budgeted items after the pastors salary and that of the entire church staff shall be given priority.

7.) A report of all receipts and disbursements and of unpaid obligations against the budget shall be provided by the Stewardship and Finance Commission to the Official Board each month.

8.) It shall be the continuing duty of the Commission to inform the congregation of the financial needs of the church.

9.) There shall be an annual Every Member Canvas for individual pledges. All payments shall be credited to the donors and a proper account shall be kept of each subscriber and contributor.

10.) No lottery, raffle, or other games of chance shall be used in raising money for any purpose.

b.) Central Budget Fund

1.) There shall be established a central fund in the local church known as the Central Budget Fund.

63 2.) This fund shall be administered by the Stewardship and Finance Commission.

64 3.) The various causes and services included in this central fund shall be:

65 a.) Ministers Support

66 b.) Current Trustee expense

67 c.) Insurance (property and pastors annuity)

68 d.) Purchases and Repairs

69 e.) Christian Education

70 f.) Benevolence

71 g.) Conference Budget (District of the Annual Conference)

72 h.) Connectional Budget

73 i.) Public Relations

74 j.) Community Project

75 k.) Travel (Minister and Lay)

76 l.) Local Church Expansion

77 m.) Extra Budget Projects

78 n.) Contingency

79 (NOTE: The order of the aforementioned is also amended.)

80 AMENDED/NEW TEXT: Part IV Section III; p. 74

81 There shall be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are herein

82 defined: (1) The Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship, (2) The Commission on Christian

83 Education, (3) The Commission on Missions and Welfare, (4) The Commission on Public Relations, (5) The

84 Commission on Christian Social Action, and (6) The Commission on Health.

85 The pastor shall be ex-officio chairperson on the commissions. The chairperson of each commission shall be a

86 steward and therefore a member of the Official Board and Quarterly Conference to which he or she is amenable,

87 with the exception of the Commission on Missions and Welfare, whose chairperson may be either a steward or

88 trustee. They shall make monthly reports to the Official Board, and also quarterly reports to the Quarterly


89 Conference.

90 The members shall be elected by the Church Conference, except that the Commission on Christian Education shall  
91 be composed of the pastor, the superintendent of Church School, president of the Allen Christian Fellowship,  
92 director of the Young Peoples Division of the Womens Missionary Society, directors of Bureau Service Agencies  
93 and additional members who may be nominated by the pastor and elected by the Quarterly Conference. The  
94 director of Christian Education shall be ex-officio member of this commission.

95 Each commission shall be composed of no fewer than three nor more than seven members who are in good and  
96 regular standing in the AME Church and eighteen years of age or older. This rule may not apply in the case of  
97 mission charges. Each Commission shall cooperate with the Connectional and Annual Conference Commissions.

98 AMENDED/NEW TEXT: DELETE the Current Part IV, Section III. B.4. pgs. 77,78

99 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Transparency of Assessments Determination at all levels of the AME Church	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part VIII, Section II,A. pg. 205; Part IX, Section 1.D., pg. 233

Intent

To inform the AME Church membership, in a clear and succinct manner, of the methodologies and/or algorithms used to determine the financial assessments of each episcopal district toward the General Budget, and the financial assessments of each annual conference and local church toward the General Budget and episcopal district budget

Rationale

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church specifies budget allocations (financial assessments) to episcopal district budgets, giving only a cursory overview of factors considered in developing the General Budget (of the Connection), such as, projections made to reflect economic conditions in both the nation and church, and the median income of families in each episcopal district. However, there is no clear statement explaining how the percentage allocations are calculated. Absence of a clearly defined, objective methodology makes the assessments seem arbitrary, subjective and subject to negative criticism. In addition, The Doctrine and Discipline also states that allocated amounts also represent assessments to annual conferences and local churches. And similarly, there is no methodology offered to help the local church understand how the size of its assessment is derived from the General or Episcopal District Budgets. The calculus or method(s) used to derive financial assessments to the episcopal district, annual conference and local church need to be shared with all members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT:

3 No language on method or algorithm

4 CURRENT TEXT:

5 Part IX, Section II.3., page 236 and Part VIII, Section II.A.10 (3rd paragraph); Page 207

6 The Episcopal District Budget with special projects, if any, must be submitted to the General Board at its first

7 annual meeting following the General Conference for approval. The Episcopal District Budget submitted for

8 approval must include sources and amount of anticipated income and expected amount of expenditure in each of

9 the listed account categories. A printed, audited report of Income and Expenditure itemized will be presented to

10 each annual conference which contributes to the fund.

11 Amended Text

12 AMENDED TEXT: Add a new paragraph to Section I.D. (Page 233)

13 By the first meeting of the General Board after the 2016 General Conference, the Commission on Statistics and  
14 Finance shall submit to the General Board documentation of the method(s), system(s) and/or algorithm(s) used to  
15 determine episcopal district budget assessments for 2016-2020. The documents shall consist of clearly stated  
16 procedure(s) and/or algorithm(s), and shall include details on annual conference and local church assessments  
17 determination, as applicable. The General Board shall carefully review the submitted material for accuracy and  
18 consistency with the approved General Budget and proposed Episcopal District Budgets. Members of the General  
19 Board shall return a copy of the assessments determination documents to each annual conference within the  
20 respective episcopal district that they represent.

21 Thereafter, the Commission on Statistics and Finance shall provide the current methodology, system and/or  
22 algorithm used to determine episcopal district assessments to the General Budget along with the proposed  
23 General Budget presented at each General Conference.


24 AMENDED TEXT:

25 Part IX, Section II.3., page 236 and Part VIII, Section II.A.10 (3rd paragraph); Page 207

26 The Episcopal District Budget with special projects, if any, must be submitted to the General Board at its first  
27 annual meeting following the General Conference for approval. The Episcopal District Budget submitted for  
28 approval must include sources and amount of anticipated income and expected amount of expenditure in each of  
29 the listed account categories. The Episcopal District Budget must also include a clear statement explaining the  
30 methodology, system and/or algorithm used to determine assessments of annual conferences and local churches  
31 within the episcopal district. A printed audited report of income and expenditures itemized, along with a clear  
32 explanation of the methodology, system and/or algorithm used to determine annual conference and local church  
33 budget assessments shall be presented to the members of each annual conference at the first annual conference  
34 after the General Conference.

35 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation



		
Bill Number		
Title	Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer) of the AME Church	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part VI, Section III, pg 131

Intent

To specify the Qualifications for the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

Rationale

Add a new section (a).

The CFO (treasurer) of the AME Church is responsible for directing the budget, overseeing investments of funds, managing and limiting risks, and supervising cash management. The person serving in this position must be equipped with proper educational qualification and professional expertise.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: None

3 Amended Text

4 AMENDED TEXT: Add new paragraph 2.a. Qualifications. (pg. 131)

5 Any candidate seeking the office of Chief Financial Officer of the AME Church shall have the following credentials:

6 1. Be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with a current license or have a Masters in Business Administration


7 (MBA) degree from an institution accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB);

8 2. Have a proven track record of applicable work experience and professional expertise

9 3. Be a Lay Person in good and regular standing

10 This legislation shall take effect in 2020.

11 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Young Adult Age Redefinition	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part VIII, and glossary; pgs. 213,216, and 680

Intent

To change the young adult age range from 18-30 to 18-35.

Rationale

The original youth delegate positions were codified in the 1972 Discipline to provide voice for a group with limited representation within the AME Church. But the Church, since then, has recognized and acknowledged that a wider demographic group (ages 18-40) has not only been under-represented in church administration, but its membership had steadily declined over subsequent decades. This 18-40 age group constitutes a missing link in our churches.

In recognition of this fact, the Connectional Lay Organization has elected to amend its constitution and bylaws to increase its young adult age definition to ages 18-35. Our organization further proposes that the age limit of young adult at all levels of church administration, including delegates to conferences, be raised to 35 in order to encourage participation and facilitate proportionate representation of the missing link age group.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT:

3 Part VII, Section 1.A.; Page 145

4 ..... The General Board shall also be composed of five (5) representatives from each Episcopal district. Even

5 numbered districts shall be represented by (2) ministers and three (3) lay. Odd-numbered districts shall be

6 represented by three (3) ministers, and two (2) lay during the quadrennium of 2012-2016. At least one member of

7 every Episcopal District delegation shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-30. The clergy/laity order of

8 district representation is to rotate quadrennially.

9 Part VII, Section 1.A.1. Nominating Committee; Page 146

10 ..Four (4) members of the nominating committee shall be clergy and four (4) shall be laypersons. At least one

11 member shall be a young adult between ages 18 to 30.

12 3. Executive Committee

There shall be an Executive Committee of the General Board consisting of the officers of the Board and one representative from each Episcopal district. At the rise of the 2000-2004 quadrennial, even numbered districts shall furnish the ministerial representatives and odd numbered districts shall furnish the lay representatives on the Executive Committee. At least one member of the Executive Committee (Episcopal District or at large) shall be a young adult ages 18-30.

Part VII., Section I. D. Episcopal District Budget; Page 151

. The budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal District Budget Committee, which shall be made up of one minister and two ministers and one layperson alternately from every Annual Conference. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 30.

Part VIII, Section 1. C. 2. Lay Delegates; Page 191

c. Two members, one adult and one young adult between the ages of 18 and 30, in good and regular standing, shall be elected to the Electoral College from each local church. At least one member of each Annual Conference lay delegation shall be a young adult between the ages of 18 and 30. The combined number of young adult and adult lay delegates shall be equal to the number of elected ministerial delegates.

3. Lay Electoral College

a. The Electoral College shall be composed of one adult and one young adult between the ages of 18 and 30, in good and regular standing, from each station, circuit, and mission in the Annual Conference, whose expenses to said College shall be paid by the station, circuit or mission represented.

b. After devotional service, the College shall effect a permanent organization, electing a chairperson, secretary, two tellers and two clerks and then proceed to elect from its members by ballot, delegates, one of whom must be a youth between the ages of 18 and 30, and alternates, as provided by law under caption of Composition of the General Conference

Part VIII, Section 1. F. 1. The Episcopal Committee; Page 194

Composition: The Episcopal Committee shall be composed of two ministerial delegates, two lay delegates, one of whom must be a youth between the ages of 18 and 30, from each Episcopal district.

G. 1. a. Post-General Conference Committees/Commissions; Page 199

The General Conference Commission shall consist of four (4) bishops nominated by the Council of Bishops and elected by the General Conference; two (2) representatives (one lay and one ministerial) from each Episcopal district, to be nominated by ballot by the district delegation and elected by the General Conference; six (6) at-large representatives three (3) lay and (3) ministerial to be nominated by ballot at the General Conference of whom at least one must be a young adult ages 18-30; the General Secretary and the Chief Financial Officer of the Church.

Part VIII, Section II. A; Page 205

1. The Annual Conference shall be composed of .. and at least one elected lay person between the ages of 18-30, when possible, from each charge within its bounds. ..

10. .The Budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal District Budget Committee, which shall be made up of one minister and two ministers and one layperson alternately from every Annual Conference. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 30. ..

Part IX., Section II. Episcopal District Budget: Page 235

1. The Budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal District Budget Committee, which shall be made up of one minister and two ministers and one layperson alternately from every Annual Conference. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 30.

Glossary; Page 710

Young Adult: - Generally when The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church refers to Young Adults i.e., election of delegates to the General Conference the age level is 18 to 30 years. With regards to specific auxiliaries, the Richard Allen Youth Adult Council ranges from 21 to 39 years of age;; the Connectional Young Peoples and Childrens Division of the Connectional Womens Missionary Society Young Adult Division is 18 to 26 years of age; the Young Womens Initiative of the Womens Missionary Society encompasses ages 18 to 40; the Young Adult age for the Connectional Lay Organization is 18 to 30 years of age.

Amended Text

AMENDED TEXT:

Part VII, Section 1.A.; Page 145

..The General Board shall also be composed of five (5) representatives from each Episcopal district. Even numbered districts shall be represented by three (3) ministers and two (2) lay. Odd-numbered districts shall be

represented by two (2) ministers, and three (3) lay during the quadrennium of 2016-2020. At least one member of every Episcopal District delegation shall be a young adult between the ages of 18-35. The clergy/laity order of district representation is to rotate quadrennially.

#### Part VII, Section 1.A.1. Nominating Committee; Page 146

Four (4) members of the nominating committee shall be clergy and four (4) shall be laypersons. At least one member shall be a young adult between ages 18 to 35.

#### 3. Executive Committee

There shall be an Executive Committee of the General Board consisting of the officers of the Board and one representative from each Episcopal district. At the rise of the 2000-2004 quadrennial, even numbered districts shall furnish the ministerial representatives and odd numbered districts shall furnish the lay representatives on the Executive Committee. At least one member of the Executive Committee (Episcopal District or at large) shall be a young adult ages 18-35.

#### Part VII., Section I. D. Episcopal District Budget: Page 151

. The budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal District Budget Committee, which shall be made up of one minister and two ministers and one layperson alternately from every Annual Conference. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 35

#### Part VIII, Section 1. C. 2. Lay Delegates: Page 191

b. Two members, one adult and one between the ages of 18 and 35, in good and regular standing, shall be elected to the Electoral College from each local church. At least one member of each Annual Conference lay delegation shall be a youth between the ages of 18 and 35. The combined number of youth and adult lay delegates shall be equal to the number of elected ministerial delegates.

#### Lay Electoral College

a. The Electoral College shall be composed of one adult and one young adult between the ages of 18 and 35, in good and regular standing, from each station, circuit, and mission in the Annual Conference, whose expenses to said College shall be paid by the station, circuit or mission represented.

b. After devotional service, the College shall effect a permanent organization, electing a chairperson, secretary, two tellers and two clerks and then proceed to elect from its members by ballot, delegates, one of whom must be

a young adult between the ages of 18 and 35, and alternates, as provided by law under caption of Composition of the General Conference

Part VIII, Section 1. F. 1. The Episcopal Committee: Page 194

Composition: The Episcopal Committee shall be composed of two ministerial delegates, two lay delegates, one of whom must be a youth between the ages of 18 and 35, from each Episcopal district.

G. 1. a. Post-General Conference Committees/Commissions; Page 199

The General Conference Commission shall consist of four (4) bishops nominated by the Council of Bishops and elected by the General Conference; two (2) representatives (one lay and one ministerial) from each Episcopal district, to be nominated by ballot by the district delegation and elected by the General Conference; six (6) at-large representatives three (3) lay and (3) ministerial to be nominated by ballot at the General Conference of whom at least one must be a young adult ages 18-35; the General Secretary and the Chief Financial Officer of the Church.

Part VIII, Section II.A.: Page 205

1. The Annual Conference shall be composed of .. and at least one elected lay person between the ages of 18-35, when possible, from each charge within its bounds. ..

10. ..The Budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal District Budget Committee, which shall be made up of one minister and two ministers and one layperson alternately from every Annual Conference. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 35.

Part IX., Section II. Episcopal District Budget; Page 235

1.. The Budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal District Budget Committee, which shall be made up of one minister and two ministers and one layperson alternately from every Annual Conference. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 35.


Glossary; Page 710

Young Adult - Generally when The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church refers to Young Adultse.g., election of delegates to the General Conferencethe age level is 18 to 35 years. With regards to specific auxiliaries, the Richard Allen Youth Adult Council ranges from 21 to 39 years of age; the Connectional Young Peoples and Childrens Division of the Connectional Womens Missionary Society Young Adult Division is 18

119 to 26 years of age; the Young Womens Initiative of the Womens Missionary Society encompasses ages 18 to 40;

120 the Young Adult age for the Connectional Lay Organization is 18 to 35 years of age.

121 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Extension of Episcopal Committee Authority	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwgc@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part VI, Section II., Subsections .F., G., pgs. 120 - 124; Part VIII, Section I. F., pgs. 194-6; Part XI, Section V pg. 261

Intent

To authorize the Episcopal Committee to function in the interim of the General Conference

Rationale

The practice of the Council of Bishops making assignments when there is a vacancy conflicts with the authority delegated to the Episcopal Committee by the General Conference. This bill serves to delineate roles and prevent conflicts of interest, thus helping to strengthen our Zions administration

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT:

3 Part VI, Sect. II.F; Page 121: 7. The Episcopal Committee, or the Council of Bishops, shall not thereafter

4 assign any bishop who has reached the age of retirement to preside over or to supervise the work in any Episcopal  
5 district.

6 Part VI, Sect. II.G; Page 123:

7 10. The Council of Bishops shall hear complaints and petitions against any one of its members, and shall have the  
8 authority, by a two thirds vote of the Council of Bishops, to remove or transfer a bishop from a district, or give such  
9 directions as judgment deems best for the good of the church.

10 Part VI, Sect. II.G; Page 124:

11 23. Should a vacancy occur in the supervision of an Episcopal District by suspension, resignation, death or  
12 otherwise, then the Council of Bishops is authorized to assign one of its number to the said district.

13 No assignment shall be made, however, until the members of the said Episcopal district shall have the opportunity  
14 to make a request to the Council of Bishops, regarding the assignment.

15 25. The Council of Bishops shall not change the Episcopal Committees assignments of bishops, except as herein  
16 provided in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church



Part VIII, Sect. I.F.1.; Page 195:

c. Organization

From the total number of certified ministerial delegates, a chairperson shall be elected by the General Conference, using voting machines whenever there is more than one candidate for the office. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be one of its elected members. The Chairperson shall assemble the Committee and proceed to elect by ballot the following officers: Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and one person from each Episcopal District for the Judiciary Committee. The Judiciary Committee shall elect by individual ballot, a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and other officers as needed.

f. The Episcopal Committee shall make the assignments of bishops subject to the approval of the General Conference. A bishop may be assigned to succeed himself once, but in no case shall a bishop be assigned to any District for more than two consecutive quadrenniums.

Part XI, Sect. V; Page 261:

2. Removal from the said episcopal district and reassignment by the Council of Bishops.

Amended Text

AMENDED TEXT:

Part VI, Sect. II.F; Page 121:

7. The Episcopal Committee shall not thereafter assign any bishop who has reached the age of retirement to preside over or to supervise the work in any Episcopal district. For the purposes of assignment, the Office of Ecumenical and Urban Affairs is considered an episcopal district.

Part VI, Sect. II.G; Page 123:

10. The Council of Bishops shall hear complaints and petitions against any one of its members. By a two-thirds majority vote, the Council of Bishops shall recommend to the Episcopal Committee removal or transfer of a bishop from an episcopal district. The Episcopal Committee is authorized to assign a bishop to said episcopal district within thirty (30) calendar days of notification from the Council of Bishops.

Part VI, Sect. II.G; Page 124

23. Should a vacancy occur in the supervision of an Episcopal District by suspension, resignation, death or otherwise, then the Episcopal Committee is authorized to reconvene to assign a bishop to the episcopal district affected and make necessary reassignments of bishops for the good of the AME Church within ninety (90) calendar days of notification of said vacancy by the Council of Bishops.

24. No assignment shall be made, however, until the members of the affected episcopal district shall have the opportunity to make a request to the Episcopal Committee regarding the assignment.

In no case shall an existing episcopal district be divided geographically, or in its episcopal supervision.

25. The Council of Bishops shall not change the Episcopal Committees assignments of bishops.

Part VIII, Sect. I.F.1.; Page 195

#### c. Organization

From the total number of certified ministerial delegates, a chairperson shall be elected by the General Conference, using voting machines whenever there is more than one candidate for the office. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be one of its elected members. The Chairperson shall assemble the Committee and proceed to elect by ballot the following officers: Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and one person from each Episcopal District for the Judiciary Committee. The Judiciary Committee shall elect by individual ballot, a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and other officers as needed. The Episcopal Committee is empowered to create a manual of procedure to be filed with the General Secretary/CIO of the AME Church. All minutes of the Episcopal Committee shall be turned over to the General Secretary/CIO of the AME Church within thirty (30) calendar days of meeting.

f. The Episcopal Committee shall make the assignments of bishops subject to the approval of the General Conference. A bishop may be assigned to succeed her/himself once, but in no case shall a bishop be assigned to any episcopal district for more than two consecutive quadrenniums. A bishop assigned to complete the unexpired assignment of another bishop may only succeed her/himself once in the same episcopal district.


In the interim of the General Conferences, the members of the Episcopal Committee shall constitute a continuing committee charged with the responsibilities of making episcopal assignments should an active bishop(s) become incapacitated or expire, and/or, should an active bishop, previously released from duty due to impaired health become adequately recovered and desire to resume full duties. The Episcopal Committee shall not meet within

70 twelve months of the next General Conference. Meetings of the Episcopal Committee in the interim of the General  
71 Conference shall be conducted by teleconference or by other suitable technological media, provided that all  
72 members have equal access to said media. Logistical expenses, if any, shall be apportioned from the General  
73 Budget Fund by the Chief Financial Officer.

74 Part XI, Sect. V; Page 261:

75 Removal from the said affected episcopal district and reassignment by the Episcopal Committee.

76 FUNDING: Potential financial impact occurs if there are logistical expenses.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Reduction of Travel Expenses for Retired Bishops and Retired General Officers	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwgc@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part VI Section II F. 11( pg. 122) and Section III C. 3 (pg. 127), pgs. 692 and 695

Intent

To capture budgetary savings by phasing out travel expense reimbursements for retired bishops and retired general officers. The savings should be captured progressively following the close of the 2016 General Conference

Rationale

Retired bishops and retired general officers are not full-time employees of the General Church. While their continued work for the development of the AME Church is commendable, current travel expense allocations in the Connectional Budget impose an unnecessary budgetary hardship. Further, current economic conditions in the African American community warrant that the African Methodist Episcopal Church makes comparable fiscal adjustments. A phase out of the budgeted amount for travel expenses for non-active bishops and general officers is clearly warranted.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Part VI Section II F. 11, Page. 122

3 A retired bishop shall also receive from the Chief Financial Officer of the AME Church reimbursement for actual  
4 travel and lodging expenses only when and if he or she attends a session of the Council of Bishops and General  
5 Conference. Housing expenses of a retired bishop, if there be any, shall not be the expense of the Connectional  
6 budget. This legislation is to become effective at the close of the 1996 General Conference and include bishops  
7 retiring at that session.

8 CURRENT TEXT: Connectional Budget 2013 2016; Pages 692 and 695

9 Retired Bishops (Annual) Expenses \$101,952.00

10 Retired General Officers (Annual) Travel \$76,383.00

11 Amended Text

12 AMENDED TEXT: Part VI Section II F. 11; Page. 122

13 A retired bishop shall receive from the Chief Financial Officer of the AME Church reimbursements of the actual  
14 travel and lodging expenses according to a tiered reduction expense budget over the 2017 2020 quadrennium,

only when and if he or she attends a session of the Council of Bishops and the General Conference. Each fiscal year of the quadrennium, the travel expense budget for retired bishops and retired general officers shall be reduced by an additional twentyfive percent (25%) of the annual travel expense budget of the 2013-2016 quadrennium. This process will effectively phase out the travel expense budget by the end of 2020. This legislation is to become effective at the close of the 2016 General Conference.


AMENDED TEXT: Connectional Budget 2017 2020

	Yr 2017	Yr 2018	YR 2019	Yr 2020
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Retired Bishops Expenses	\$81,561.60	\$61,171.20	\$40,780 .80	\$20,390.40
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Ret. General Officers Travel	\$61,106.40	\$45,829.80	\$30,553.20	\$15,276.6
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Net Budget Savings	\$356,670.00			
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Bill Number		
Title	Mandatory Reconfiguration of Districts 14-20 by 2020	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwgc@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part X, Section I, C.; pg 247.

Intent

To establish a process for the reconfiguration of the AME Church work in Districts 14-20

Rationale

The current Episcopal District configurations include areas that were established to circumvent the apartheid regime of South Africa as well as to temporarily accommodate rapid growth in the Great Lakes region. This configuration needs to be updated to reflect current socio and geopolitical realities, and more equitably reallocate resources and personnel for effectual work in our Zion

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: No Language

3 Amended Text

4 ADD NEW TEXT: Part X, Section I.C.; Page 247

5 The Global Development Council, for the 2016-2020 quadrennium, shall set as its top priority, a business item

6 concerning the reconfigurations of the geographic boundaries of Episcopal Districts 14-20 and their constituting


7 annual conferences. Annual progress reports shall be submitted to the General Board through its Commission on

8 Global Development. Final recommendations to the General Conference will be determined at the 2019 GDC

9 Biennial Session. This process shall take into account the current geopolitical situations of these areas with the

10 provision that the total number of episcopal districts shall not increase.

11 . FUNDING There is no cost associated with this legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Public Relations Professional	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part VI Section III. E.1., pg. 128 and Part VII Section II. A. 11, pg. 158

Intent

To reassign the Public Relations Representative position to the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and broaden the positions scope.

Rationale

The African Methodist Episcopal Church's story is a captivating epic of great historic and societal significance. If told correctly, our story would draw more people to our Zion. Other religious organizations strategically use public relations to promote a positive image. They have developed a brand that attracts new members. The AME Church must develop and promote a powerful and positive image that effectively tells our story, thus creating a strong brand for carrying out the Great Commission. A Public Relations Professional empowered to conduct a strategic public relations program across the connection will be pivotal to the development and promotion of the AME brand.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Part VI Section III. E. 1,( pages 128-131)

3 No Language

4 CURRENT TEXT: Part VII Section II. A. 11,( page 158)

5 Amended Text

6 AMENDED TEXT: Add New Section III.E. 1.u. (page 131)

7 The Chief Information Officer (CIO) shall hire a specialist in public relations to manage a comprehensive public

8 relations program for the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. This position, Public Relations Professional,

9 shall be responsible for publicity, public relations and corporate relations for the AME Church The scope of the

10 program shall be as follows:-

11 1) Generate positive publicity for the African Methodist Episcopal Church and enhance its brand, expressed in clear  
12 and concise narrative, that defines the values and principles of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

13 2) Direct all outside media communication for the Connectional AME Church, with a direct impact on developing a  
14 means to promote the AME Church brand to the public for Connectional Church events and activities.

3) Cultivate and maintain close and productive relationships with journalists, bloggers and opinion leaders, to include creating and printing web-based communication materials, such as story pitches, press releases, Q and A interviews, presentations, video scripts and speeches that are consistent with the image and message (brand) of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

4) Assist episcopal districts with web site design, graphics and imagery that indicate the inter-relative character of the AME Church, while maintaining regional uniqueness.

5) Provide semi-annual online public relations (PR) workshops (two times per year) for episcopal district public relations representatives that will be conducted via the Internet, and will provide access to specialist in the fields of media, marketing, information technology and public relations. An additional in-person PR workshop may be presented annually.

6) Act as an advisor in the preparation of representatives of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for press conferences, media interviews and speeches.


**Education and Experience requirements** The Public Relations Professional shall possess a bachelors degree, a training background and over five years of experience working in public relations. This position requires excellent writing skills, critical thinking ability and creative capabilities. Special considerations shall be given to persons with the requisite experience and a successful track record working in a similar capacity at other levels of the AME Church.

The Public Relations Professional shall receive general supervision from the CIO and report to the chair of the General Board.

**AMENDMENT:** Delete Part VII Section 11, A.11, (page 158)

**FUNDING:** The cost associated with this proposed legislation includes the salary of the Public Relations Professional.



		
Bill Number		
Title	Development of Human Resources Policy for the AME Church	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012; Part VIII, Section I, G.4; pg. 203

Intent

To authorize an ad hoc committee to establish consistent standards of operation that are adequately defensible in any civil court

Rationale

Over the years, the AME Church has had to defend against copious lawsuits. In recent years, for example, charges of sexual harassment have increased at an alarming rate, and the AME Church is increasingly being sued regarding pastoral assignments. As a denomination, we are constantly spending funds on legal representation. Many times, these legal problems occur because the laws and rules in the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (The Doctrine and Discipline) are not adhered to, leaving the church vulnerable to lawsuits. The courts rely on what is printed in The Doctrine and Discipline. But there are too many sections in The Doctrine and Discipline that are contradictory and/or do not support practiced procedures.

The entire Doctrine and Discipline needs to be reframed to meet the needs of the AME Church of today, using a 21st Century corporate approach to operations. The development of a set of Human Resources Policies would provide much needed standardized rules and guidelines.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Part VIII, Section I.G.4. Page 203

3 No Language

4 Amended Text

5 ADDED TEXT: Part VIII, Section I.G.4. Page 203

6 Ad Hoc Human Resources Development Committee

7 An Ad Hoc Committee of six (6) clergy and five (5) lay persons shall be selected by the General Board to work on

8 the development of a set of human resources policies for the AME Church, applying corporate principles. At least

9 one member of the committee shall be a young adult, age 18-35. Each member of the committee shall possess at


10 least one of the following: 1. ) a legal background; or 2.)a human resources background; or 3.) management

11 experience. A first draft of the set of human resources policies shall be presented to the General Board by 2018,

12 and a final draft presented at the 2019 CONVO, preceding the 2020 General Conference.

13 The set of human resources policies shall cover the administrative functioning of all components and all levels of  
14 the AME Church, fundamentally revamping the structure and content of the Doctrine and Discipline of the African  
15 Methodist Episcopal Church.

16 FUNDING: The cost associated with this proposed legislation constitute, at most, once per year travel for members  
17 to attend meetings in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and research time. Electronic communication (conference calls and  
18 Skype) shall be the primary means of convening which shall greatly supplement costs.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Connectional Record Keeping of Certification Documents on Sexual Misconduct Policy Education and Training	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012; Part XI, Section XIV, Subsection C, pg. 275.

Intent

To provide a central connectional repository for certification documents of sexual misconduct policy education and training of all clergy, laity and volunteers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for provision to liability insurance companies when needed.

Rationale

Proof of education and training of all clergy, laity and volunteers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church on the church's policy on sexual misconduct is a mandatory requirement as outlined in Part XI, Section XIVC, of the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 2012. Each person trained is required to sign a statement certifying completion of training.

It is believed that episcopal districts maintain records of the training classes in the respective episcopal district office, but in addition, these records need to also be retained on the connectional level, since they are vital in cases of sexual misconduct being handled at that level. The growing number of cases involving sexual misconduct charges call for ready access to all relevant documents to facilitate effective and efficient trial process. We must have ready means of verifying that every episcopal district is offering consistent training on avoidance of sexual misconduct by clergy and laity.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Section XIV, C; Page. 275

3 Record Keeping

4 The AME Church and all of its individual connectional conferences will include in every employee's personnel file,

5 including clergy, the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, reference responses, and other

6 documents related to this Policy, including a copy of the documents referenced in Part IV, A, herein.

7 Amended Text

8 AMENDED TEXT: Section XIV, C; Page. 275

9 Record Keeping

10 Registration and attendance documentation for every training class on this Policy must be retained by the annual


11 conference in which the class is held, and copies of these documents forwarded to the office of the episcopal

district in which said annual conference is located. The local church to which each training class attendee is affiliated shall obtain a copy of the certified statement of training for respective attendees.

Each episcopal district shall forward a copy of its roll sheet for each training class on the AME policy on sexual misconduct, along with copies of the signed statement of training of each attendee, to the office of the chief information officer (CIO) within thirty days (30) after completion of the class. The CIOs office will be the central repository for documentation on education and training on this Policy, and the CIO will be responsible for verifying the training for all clergy, members, employees and volunteers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church when needed.

The AME Church and all of its individual connectional conferences will include in every employees personnel file, including clergy, the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, reference responses, and other documents related to this Policy, including a copy of the documents referenced in this Part.

**FUNDING:** The cost associated with this proposed legislation is nominal, consisting mainly of labor to set up an electronic filing system and periodically updating it.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Ministerial Training Board Composition and The Course of Instruction	
Submitted by	the Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012,, Part V, Section III, Subsection B - Ministerial Training Board (Committee on Instruction); pgs. 86 and 87.

Intent

To amend the composition of the Ministerial Training Board to include lay instructors, and to augment the Course of Instruction by including study of the Doctrine and Discipline of the A. M. E. Church, and training in Fiscal and Personnel Management

Rationale

Under the current composition listed in the Doctrine and Discipline, there is no requirement that the members of the Training Board be only ordained persons as is the case with the Board of Examiners. The Course of Instruction includes classes that credentialed members of laity are highly qualified to teach. The AME church should take full advantage of its resources in an effort to get the best results in all its endeavors, for the benefit of our Zion. Therefore, lay persons who are certified and qualified to teach classes in the Course of Instruction should be retained for the purpose, thus promoting clergy and laity collaborating in the training of our ordained servants. Further, The Course of Instruction should provide comprehensive training, addressing all areas for effective ministerial service that will enhance the local churches. Study of the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and training in fiscal and personnel management are essential areas of ministerial preparation for effectual leadership at every level of our Zion. These classes need to be specifically listed.

- 1 Current Text
- 2 CURRENT TEXT: Part V, Sec. III. B.; Page 86 (1st para.)
- 3 The presiding bishop shall appoint the Dean of Ministerial Training of the conference. The dean, in turn, shall
- 4 nominate the staff (committees) which shall confirmed by the Annual Conference. The Ministerial Training Board
- 5 CURRENT TEXT: Part V, Sec. III. C.; Page 87
- 6 The Course of Instruction
- 7 A. Admissions
- 8 Bible Church Tradition
- 9 B. First Year Studies
- 10 Bible Church Tradition
- 11 Preaching, Theology

12 Church Administration

13 C. Third Year Studies

14 Bible Church History

15 Ministerial Ethics Preaching

16 Theology

17 Church Administration

18 Amended Text

19 AMENDED TEXT: Part V, Sec. III. B.; Page 86 (1st para.)

20 The presiding bishop shall appoint the Dean of Ministerial Training of the conference. The dean, in turn, shall  
21 nominate the staff (committees) which will consist of highly qualified and/or certified clergy and laity which shall  
22 be confirmed by the Annual Conference. The Ministerial Training Board .

23 AMENDED TEXT: Part V, Sec. III. C.; Page 87

24 The Course of Instruction

25 A. Admissions

26 Bible Church Tradition

27 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (current ed.)

28 B. First Year Studies

29 Bible Church Tradition

30 Preaching, Theology

31 Church Administration

32 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (current ed.)

33

34 C. Third Year Studies


35 Bible Church History

36 Ministerial Ethics Preaching

37 Theology Church Administration.

38 Management Financial and Personnel

39 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Itinerant Ministers Reporting at the Annual Conference	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012; Part VII, Section II, Subsection .A; pg. 206

Intent

To provide an avenue for itinerant ministers who do not pastor to give an account of their stewardship during the conference year.

Rationale

The structure of the Annual Conference does not provide an opportunity for non-pastoral clergy who are not chaplains to give account of their stewardship beyond the roll call. At the very least, all itinerant ministers should be afforded a forum for sharing their yearly accomplishments with the Annual Conference and be recognized for their service to the church and community. This will give the annual conference a means to evaluate their capabilities and validate their ministries

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Section II.A.; Page 206

3 No language

4 Amended Text

5 AMENDMENT: Reassign Current, Section II.A.10; Page 206 as new Section II.A.11

6 Add new Section II.A.10; Page 206

7 10. All itinerant elders and itinerant deacons on the roll of the Annual Conference, but not assigned as pastors for

8 the closing conference year, must each render a written report to the Annual Conference detailing her/his

9 ministerial service and labors for said conference year. The report shall include but not be limited to: 1) Number of

10 Sermons preached, 2) Number of Baptisms performed, 3) Number of Weddings performed, 4) Number of Funerals

11 officiated, 5) Local Church membership, 6) Other professional responsibilities (example Administrator of finance

12 department , Grief Counselor, etc.). These reports shall be submitted to the presiding prelate of the Annual


13 Conference through the presiding elders prior to the start of the Annual Conference. Any additional opportunities

14 to address or recognize the reports during the Annual Conference are at the discretion of the presiding prelate of

15 the Annual Conference.



16 FUNDING There is no cost associated with this legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Adjustment of Degree Requirements for Ordination Candidates and Candidates for Bishop	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part V, Section II page 84; Part VI, Section II; pg. 116

Intent

To harmonize accreditation standards for itinerant elders and bishops.

Rationale

The academic qualifications for becoming an ordained itinerant elder and a candidate for bishop differ with regards to accepted degrees. With the proliferation of diploma mills, it is important to clearly state what academic credentials qualify as acceptable for itinerant and episcopal candidacy.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT:

3 Part V, Section II; Page 85.

4 F. A Candidate for ordination as itinerant elder must be a graduate of a Seminary accredited by Association of

5 Theological Schools (ATS) or similar accrediting agency. Exception to these requirements is at the discretion of

6 annual conference Board of Examiners with the approval of the presiding bishop.

7 Part VI, Section II.A.; Page 116.

8 4. They must register their credentials with the General Secretary/CIO of the church at least 180 days prior to the

9 opening day of the General Conference. Candidates for the office of bishop must possess an earned seminary

10 degree from an Association of Theological Schools (ATS) accredited seminary or, if outside of the United States, an

11 accredited seminary as determined by the country in which he or she is educated.

12 Amended Text

13 AMENDED TEXT:

14 Part V, Section II; Page 85.

15 F. A Candidate for ordination as itinerant elder must be a graduate of a seminary accredited at the time of


16 graduation by either 1) the Association of Theological Schools (ATS); 2) an accrediting authority recognized by the

United States Department of Education; or 3) an agency equivalent to the above options if obtained from outside of the United States. Degrees from schools not meeting the accreditation criteria, however, cannot be accepted.

Part VI, Section II.A.; Page 116.

4. They must register their credentials with the General Secretary/CIO of the Church at least 180 days prior to the opening day of the General Conference. Candidates for the office of bishop must possess an earned seminary degree from an institution accredited at the time of graduation by either: 1) the Association of Theological Schools; 2) an accrediting authority recognized by the United States Department of Education; or 3) an agency equivalent to the above options if obtained from outside of the United States.

FUNDING There is no cost associated with this legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Member in Good and Regular Standing	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwgc@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012; Part IV Section I ( pgs. 58 and 59)

Intent

To address the expectations of a member in a local church, circuit or station, or any component or organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

Rationale

Membership in the African Methodist Episcopal Church begins in the local church, circuit, or station. The health and wellness of the local church is directly attributable to the contributions and participation of its membership. The degree to which these actions are performed helps to define a members status. The terminology full, good and regular standing is used specifically as well as generally as a qualification or eligibility for holding an office in the AME Church. A definition of this terminology is in the glossary of the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, however, qualification of this status should be included in the Membership section. This new text provides a relationship as well as a rule of governance for identifying a members status in any and all affiliate components of the AME Church from the local to the connectional levels including what it means and the parameters of what it implies.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: No Language

3 Amended Text

4 AMENDMENT: Add a new Part IV, Section 1, G; Page 59

5 (Current subsection G, Affiliated Membership, will be changed to Section H, and all subsequent sections will be  
6 renumbered sequentially).

7 The Expectations of Membership:

8 A member of a local church is expected to be governed by the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist


9 Episcopal Church, actively participate in the programs of the local church and regularly contribute to these

10 programs and other needs, to the best of the members abilities. Members who meet these criteria are deemed in  
11 good and regular standing. The local church Official Board shall determine each members status.

12 This status means that the member must regularly attend worship, and the other means of grace; regularly attend  
13 component, organization, or ministry meetings; regularly contribute to the support of the gospel, the church, its

14 benevolent enterprises and the poor; and lends his/her time and talents to the various ministries of the local  
15 church, circuit or station, or its affiliate bodies throughout the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Assessment of  
16 a member in good and regular standing shall be applicable throughout the conference year.

17 In the case of a member who is enrolled as an affiliated member as specified in Section 1.H. of this Part, the home  
18 church shall consider participation and contributions of said member at the affiliated local church in determining  
19 the members status. In the case of members who are no longer able to meet the above stated criteria due to  
20 adverse deterioration in physical and/or mental capabilities, but who had met these criteria up to the time of their  
21 incapacities, said members shall be considered to be continually in good and regular standing up to their recovery,  
22 or to the end of their natural lives, whichever comes first.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Terms of Service for Members of the Board of Trustees	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part IV, Section II.A.1. paragraph A1b(2) and A1b(3b); pg. 64.

Intent

To establish consecutive terms of service for members of the Board of Trustees that will best benefit the local church.

Rationale

In order for the local church to operate effectively it needs to engage the contributions and cooperation of all members in all areas of service and ministries. It is important that positions of leadership such as members of the Board of Trustees have an appropriate turnover that would ensure that resources are updated for effective church administration so that leadership will remain relevant to the changing times. Church members who meet the qualifications of this position will have a better opportunity to serve in this capacity if the consecutive term of service is in place. The years of service prior to the effective date will not be factored in (i.e. everyone will start from zero years). There is also opportunity for a member to be nominated again one year after serving the necessary consecutive years (i.e. there shall be a one year lapse after serving eight consecutive years before a member can be nominated again).

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Section II.A1.b. 2); Page 63

3 Qualifications

4 Each person to be elected a trustee shall be eighteen (18) years of age or over and shall be

5 instructed in the duties and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees of the local church. The

6 training shall be completed within sixty (60) days after the election, or prior to the appropriate

7 Quarterly Conference, whichever comes first. All trustees must attend at least three training

8 sessions. A Certificate of Confirmation shall be given to each successful student, to be presented

9 at the appropriate Quarterly Conference, signed by the instructor appointed by the pastor. The

10 nominee shall have been a member of the local church at least six (6) months and a member of

11 the African Methodist Episcopal Church for not less than two (2) years, except in case of mission

12 or new work. No person who is not a member in good and regular standing in our church shall be

13 eligible to be elected a trustee.

14 CURRENT TEXT: Section II.A1.b. 3)b); Page 64

15 When the civil law does not intervene, the trustees shall be elected annually by the  
16 members of the church.


17 Amended Text

18 AMENDED TEXT: Section II. A.1.b. 2); Page 64; Add the following to the current text.

19 There shall be not less than a one year lapse after serving eight consecutive years before a  
20 member is eligible to be nominated again.

21 AMENDED TEXT: Section II.A1.b. 3)b); Page 64

22 When the civil law does not intervene, the trustees shall be elected annually by the  
23 members of the church for each one year of service and they shall not serve for more than  
24 eight (8) years consecutively. Exception may be made with approval by the Church Conference  
25 of a local church, station or circuit consisting of less than fifty (50) adult members. The years  
26 of service prior to the effective date of this legislation will not be factored into its execution.  
27 This legislation will take effect at the close of the 2016 General Conference.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Terms of Service for Members of the Board of Stewards	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part IV, Section II.A.1. a. 1) paragraphs c) and d); pg. 61.

Intent

To establish consecutive terms of service for members of the Board of Stewards that will best benefit the local church.

Rationale

In order for the local church to operate effectively it needs to engage the contributions and cooperation of all members in all areas of service and ministries. It is important that positions of leadership such as members of the Board of Stewards have an appropriate turnover that would ensure that resources are updated for effective church administration so that leadership will remain relevant to the changing times. Church members who meet the qualifications of this position will have a better opportunity to serve in this capacity if the consecutive term of service is in place. The years of service prior to the effective date will not be factored in (i.e. everyone will start from zero years). There is also opportunity for a member to be nominated again one year after serving the necessary consecutive years (i.e. there shall be a one year lapse after serving eight consecutive years before a member can be nominated again).

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Section II.A.1. a.1(c); Page 61

3 The pastor in charge shall nominate the number of stewards needed for the mission,  
4 circuit, or station and shall submit them to the Quarterly Conference, which shall confirm  
5 them or, if it sees fit, reject them

6 CURRENT TEXT Section II.A.1. a.1 (d); Page 61

7 The stewards so nominated and confirmed shall serve for a term of one year. The same  
8 person(s) may be nominated annually.

9 Amended Text

10 AMENDED TEXT: Section II.A.1. a.1(c); Page 61:

11 The pastor in charge shall nominate annually the number of stewards needed for the  
12 mission, circuit, or station and shall submit them to the first Quarterly Conference, which  
13 shall confirm them or, if it sees fit, reject them. There shall be not less than a one year



14 lapse after serving eight consecutive years before a member can be nominated again.

15 AMENDED TEXT: Section II.A.1. a.1 (d); Page. 61

16 The stewards so nominated and confirmed shall serve a term of one year. The same

17 person (s) may be nominated annually but shall not serve for more than eight (8) years


18 consecutively. Exception may be made with approval at the first Quarterly

19 Conference of a local church, station or circuit consisting of less than fifty (50) adult

20 members. The years of service prior to the effective date of this legislation will not be

21 factored into its execution. This legislation will take effect at the close of the 2016

22 General Conference.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Steward Board _Clarified	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part IV, Section II. Subsection A.,1., a.; pgs. 61 - 63

Intent

To delineate and clearly state the unique responsibilities of the stewards by amending paragraphs a), b), c) d) of Subsection A.1.a.2) and reordering entire Subsection A.1.a for better readability.

Rationale

The stewards have traditionally been recognized as the body that assists the pastor with the spiritual and administrative needs of the local church, as in the capacity of a cabinet. Essentially they are expected to have a full understanding of the operations of the church and be able to conduct certain affairs on the pastors behalf in her/his absence. This role needs to be expressly stated and fluently laid out in the Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Section II A.1. a.1.); Page 61

3 a.) The pastor appointed by the presiding bishop shall (a thru g inclusive, of current text)

4 CURRENT TEXT: Section II A.1. a.2.), Page 62

5 a) They shall make an exact account of all money or other provisions collected for the support of the pastor of the  
6 mission, circuit, or station.

7 b) The salary of a full time minister shall be negotiated by the pastor and the steward board. The negotiated salary  
8 and benefit package shall be commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of  
9 the local congregation. The following benefits apply to those ministers who are full-time servants of the church.

10 They shall be adhered to per the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and open to  
11 negotiation in all cases. The benefits include, but are not limited to: pension or retirement insurance(s); health,  
12 disability, professional liability, key person life insurance\*; self employment tax; parsonage or housing allowance;  
13 continuing education; travel: connectional, episcopal district, conference, inner parish and all other related to  
14 official duties. If a housing allowance is given, it is the stewards duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance  
15 with the pastor.

- 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.

Amended Text

AMENDED TEXT

Section II A. 1. a. 1) Purpose

The stewards shall assist as the pastors cabinet in encouraging, fostering, and improving the general interest of the church. They shall give an account, when requested, in matters of the fitness of the membership, give advice in reference to overall program planning, and give counsel in matters of arbitration as outlined under Section XI of Judicial Administration.

Section II A. 1.a.2.) Composition [Same as current Section II A.1.a.1.)]

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 (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, and 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 Steward 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.

Section II A. 1.a.3.) The Duties and Responsibilities of the Stewards

a) They shall seek the needy, infirmed and distressed in order to relieve and comfort them. They shall see or devise a ministry(s)/system(s) to actively address these concerns on behalf of the local church.

b) They shall provide the implements and elements for the Holy Communion.

c) After consulting with the Stewardship and Finance Commission, the stewards and the pastor, on behalf of the local church, shall negotiate said pastors salary and benefit package. The stewards shall submit the proposed negotiated salary and benefit package to the Stewardship and Finance Commission for inclusion in the proposed local church annual budget. The proposed budget shall then be presented to the Official Board for its action and approval.

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 to negotiation in all 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 to official duties. If a housing allowance is given, it is the stewards duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with the pastor.

d) They shall register all baptisms, marriages and deaths within the congregation

e) The Steward Board shall have an appropriately labeled church record book which shall contain the registration of all baptisms, marriages, births, deaths, new members and full time members.

f.) The stewards shall write circular letters to societies of a circuit when occasion requires, to let them know the state of the temporal concern at the last quarterly meeting and to urge them to be more liberal in their contributions.

g) 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

70 financially, attended the regular means of grace, and supported the various benevolent enterprises of the church.

71 The survey shall contain date, name and address, dates of birth, active, inactive, new member, student, left with  
72 certificate, left without certificate, deceases and class number.

73 h) The Steward Board shall investigate all members of the church roll and submit its findings to the Official Board  
74 for approval. The Certified Membership Roll shall be forwarded to the fourth quarterly conference for submittal to  
75 the annual conference. Each Annual Conference shall forward all Certified Membership Rolls to the General  
76 Church Secretary.

77 i) They shall see to the proper maintenance of all records/documentations of church activities and transactions and  
78 shall oversee an archive of this information.

79 j) The minister in charge of the circuit or station shall see that all these provisions are enforced.


80 k) The Steward Board shall be subject to the bishops, elders, deacons, and traveling ministers of their circuit or  
81 station.

82 Section 11,A 1.a.4 Amenability of the Stewards

83 a) The stewards shall be accountable to the Quarterly Conference of their circuit or station, which shall have the  
84 power to remove them when they fail or refuse to do their duties.

85 b) In the interim of the Quarterly Conference, the minister in charge shall have power to suspend a steward to  
86 refuses, neglects or fails to discharge his or her duty, and to fill the vacancy until the next meeting of the Quarterly  
87 Conference, which shall dispose of the case.

88 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Official Board Purpose and Duties Clarified	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, pg. 73, Part IV, Section II. LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION, Subsection B.

Intent

To include a summary of the purpose and role of the Official Board as B.1, and renumber subsequent subsections consecutively. To also include a clarification of duties under newly numbered B.4. Business.

Rationale

The Official Board, by virtue of its composition, is the premier leadership and decision-making body of the local church. Its critical purpose and role should be expressly laid out in the Discipline, citing, without ambiguity, its responsibilities and authority.

1 Current Text

2 CURRENT TEXT: Part IV, Section II, Subsection B; Page. 72

3 1. Composition

4 a. The Official Board shall be composed of the class leaders, exhorters, deaconesses, stewards, trustees,  
5 stewardesses and presidents of all organizations of a station, circuit, or mission, including the president of the Lay  
6 Organization. The officers, both junior and adult, of the Junior Church shall also be members of the Official Board  
7 and shall contribute to the funds collected for the church, pastor, presiding elder, the poor, and general funds.

8 b. The pastor shall be a member of the Board and its chairperson ex-officio.

9 c. Local preachers shall be regarded as honorary members of the Board and shall be required to visit it at its  
10 regular sessions.

11 d. The Board shall elect annually a secretary and a treasurer. A steward should be elected secretary, if there is one  
12 competent to hold this office.

13 2. Sessions

14 a. The Official Board of every mission, circuit or station shall meet at least once every month.

15 b. Additional meetings of the board shall be called by the pastor whenever necessary, and the members shall be  
16 required to attend these meetings also.

17 c. All meetings of the board shall be opened with devotions.

18 3. Business

19 a. The secretary shall keep a strict record of the proceedings.

20 b. The treasurer shall be responsible for all the monies received under the auspices of the stewards and disburse  
21 the same on order of the board.

22 c. The board, at its sessions, shall require the class leaders to give to the stewards the money they have collected  
23 for the church, pastor, presiding elder, and programs for the church.

24 d. It shall see, at its sessions, that the pastor receives his or her support, and it shall devise ways and means to pay  
25 him or her and the presiding elder all that is due them. It shall receive all the class leaders reports on the following  
26 subjects:

27 1) Those who walk disorderly and will not be reproved.

28 2) Those who are sick and need the attention of the pastor.

29 3) Those who are deceased.

30 4) Those who willfully and persistently neglect their class and other religious duties.

31 5) Those who have left the church with certificate.

32 6) Those who have left the church without certificate.

33 The board shall have the power to send out committees for the purpose of making investigations concerning  
34 rumors affecting the spiritual or moral standing of any member and shall, moreover, have members to appear  
35 before it so that they may explain such rumors.

36 Amended Text

37 ADDED and AMENDED TEXT Part IV, Section II, Subsection B; Page 72

38 1. The Official Board is the administrative body of the local church. It plans and directs the total program of the  
39 local church, under the leadership of the pastor, thus directing the church's day-to-day work in every detail.

40 2. Composition

41 a. The Official Board shall be composed of all the class leaders, exhorters, deaconesses, stewards, trustees,  
42 stewardesses and presidents of all organizations of a station, circuit, or mission, including the president of the Lay

Organization. The officers, both junior and adult, of the Junior Church shall also be members of the Official Board and shall contribute to the funds collected for the church, pastor, presiding elder, the poor, and general funds.

b. The pastor shall be a member of the Board and its chairperson ex-officio.

c. Local preachers shall be regarded as honorary members of the Board and shall be required to visit it at its regular sessions.

d. The Board shall elect annually a secretary and a treasurer. A steward should be elected secretary, if there is one competent to hold this office.

### 3. Sessions

a. The Official Board of every mission, circuit or station shall meet at least once every month.

b. Additional meetings of the board shall be called by the pastor whenever necessary, and the members shall be required to attend these meetings also.

c. All meetings of the board shall be opened with devotions.

### 4. Business

a. The Official Board, prior to the end of the first quarter, shall see that it receives the proposed annual budget of the local church for its determination and action. The proposed annual budget of the local church shall be inclusive of the approved total program of the church to include the ministries and programs of the organizations of the local church, the proposed pastors salary and support as recommended by the Steward Board, the churchs operational expenses, the AME Church budgets, and the benevolent missions of the congregation. The proposed annual budget, upon its approval, shall be presented to the church conference.

b. The secretary shall keep a strict record of the proceedings.

c. The treasurer shall be ex-officio member of the Stewardship and Finance Commission and shall work with that commission in the accounting of all income and disbursements related to the support of the station, mission, or circuit on order of the Official Board. The Official Board shall receive the finance commissions monthly financial report of all receipts and disbursements and unpaid obligations against the budget.

d. It shall see, at its sessions, that the pastor receives his or her support, and it shall devise ways and means to pay him or her and the presiding elder all that is due them.



69 e. It shall direct all class leaders to turn over to the Stewardship and Finance Commission all money they have  
70 collected for the church, pastor, presiding elder and programs of the church and shall receive all class leaders  
71 reports on the following subjects:

72 1) Those who walk disorderly and will not be reprov'd.

73 2) Those who are sick and need the attention of the pastor.

74 3) Those who are deceased.

75 4) Those who willfully and persistently neglect their class and other religious duties.

76 5) Those who have left the church with certificate.

77 6) Those who have left the church without certificate.

78 The board shall have the power to send out committees for the purpose of making investigations concerning  
79 rumors affecting the spiritual or moral standing of any member and shall, moreover, have members to appear  
80 before it so that they may explain such rumors.


81 5. Restrictions

82 a. The Official Board shall not have power to try and expel members of the church.

83 b. Such a course would make the chairperson liable to the charge of maladministration.

84 c. The Official Board cannot overrule the pastor or reverse his or her decision, or change his or her plans for the  
85 government of the charge except by a two-thirds vote of its members.

86 FUNDING: There is no cost associated with this proposed legislation

		
Bill Number		
Title	Quarterly Conference Consistency	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012; Part VII, Section IV, pg. 215; The Quarterly Conference

Intent

To state the purpose of the Quarterly Conference, and to make clear the intent of the currently stated schedule and format for Quarterly Conferences as stipulated in the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and to emphasize the importance of said schedule and format.

Rationale

The presiding elder is required to hold a Quarterly Conference in every station and circuit every three months. However, some presiding elders have implemented a variety of meeting formats and schedules which have been increasingly causing undue hardship for the members and officers of the local churches, resulting in significant reduction in attendance. In order to fulfill the duty of determining the efficiency of the pastor and the effectiveness of the ministry of the church (Section IX, Subsection A1.a) it is imperative that the presiding elder meet and interact with a substantive representation of the local church, and in such a place and manner as to ensure the local church's privacy.

1 Current Text

2 Part VII, Section IVB. Sessions; pg. 215 (first paragraph)

3 The sessions of the Quarterly Conference shall be held every three (3) months, or four times a year, in every circuit  
4 and in every station. The time and place of meetings shall be selected by the presiding elder after consultation  
5 with the pastor. If there is no presiding elder, the time and place shall be selected by the pastor. Where there is no  
6 pastor, the presiding elder shall select the time and place of the meeting.


7 Amended Text

8 AMENDMENT: Part VII, Section IV; ADD Opening Paragraph (before subsection A)

9 The presiding elder holds Quarterly Conferences to determine the effectiveness of the ministry of each church in  
10 his/her respective district, to evaluate the efficiency of each pastor and give proper direction to all the affairs of  
11 the churches in said district.

12 AMENDED TEXT: Section IVB. Sessions; pg. 215 (first paragraph)

13 A Quarterly Conference shall be held every three (3) months, a total of four times for the fiscal year, in each  
14 station, circuit or mission. The time of the conference shall be set by the presiding elder after consultation with the  
15 pastor. Where there is no pastor, the presiding elder shall select the time of the conference. The place of the  
16 conference shall be the location of the station or mission, or in the case of a circuit, one of the stations or missions  
17 of said circuit, using a rotating schedule.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Reporting Liabilities/Accounts Payable and Indebtedness at the Quarterly Conference	
Submitted by	The Connectional Lay Organization	
Contact	drwcg@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part VIII, Section IV, C. Procedure question 30; pg. 217

Intent

Restate and expand on information requested in question #30 on indebtedness.

Rationale

Merely stating a mortgage balance or an auto loan balance as indebtedness does not give a comprehensive report of a church's total indebtedness. More details are warranted in order to evaluate and fiscally analyze a local church's present financial position. A local church can benefit greatly when all stakeholders (clergy and laity) are regularly informed of the church's full financial status.

1 Current Text

2 Section IV C., Question 30; Page 217

3 30. What is the present indebtedness? a. Steward b. Trustees c. Stewardship Commission

4 Amended Text

5 Section IV C., Question 30; Page 217

6 30. Liabilities/Accounts Payable

7 a. What is the present indebtedness? (Debt secured by church physical assets.)

8 Itemize the amount of debt/liens currently held by the church, such as mortgages, that are secured by properties

9 and assets owned by the church.)

10 (b. Other debt (State the total of all debt/liens currently held by the church that is not secured by church property


11 assets, such as credit cards, lines of credits, and lease-to-purchase agreements).

12 c. Total Debt (The sum of lines a. and b. should equal the total debt currently held by the church.)

13 d. Are there any accounts payable/liabilities/ or any other debts for goods or services that are past due 60 days?,

14 90 days?, 120 days? or more?

15 f. Are there any unpaid obligations against the approved local church annual budget.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Title Conn-M-SWAWO Plus PKs C&B Revision - Structure	
Submitted by	Lula Shaw Cleckley, Connectional President	
Contact	connmswawopk4@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, page 477, Article IV, Section 1, and page 478, Article V, Section 4

Intent

To change the structure levels to enhance functionality of the Connectional Ministers Spouses, Widows, and Widowers Organization Plus PKs (Conn-M-SWAWO Plus PKs).

Rationale

Conn-M-SWAWO Plus PKs only need to have Elected Officers on three (3) levels: Connectional, Episcopal District and Annual Conference. The Conference President will be given the option to appoint a Liaison in each Presiding Elder District who would be responsible for distributing pertinent information from the 3 levels above.

1 Current Text


2 Article IV. Section 1. The organization shall be according to the structure of the African Methodist Episcopal  
3 Church, i.e., connectional, episcopal district, Annual Conference and District Conference levels (Article IV, Section  
4 1, page 477).

5 Article V. Section 4. Any member may hold office on more than one level: presiding elders district, Annual  
6 Conference, episcopal district or connectional (Article V, Section 4, page 478).

7 Amended Text

8 Article IV. Section 1. The organization shall be according to the structure of the African Methodist Episcopal  
9 Church, i.e., Connectional, Episcopal District, and Annual Conference levels. The Conference President (where  
10 applicable) shall appoint a Liaison in each Presiding Elder District who will be responsible for the distribution of  
11 communications received from all above levels. (Article IV, Section 1, page 477).

12 Article V. Section 4. Any member may hold office on more than one level: Annual Conference, Episcopal District or  
13 Connectional. (Article V, Section 4, page 478).

		
Bill Number		
Title	Conn-M-SWAWO Plus PKs C&B Revision - Structure	
Submitted by	Lula Shaw Cleckley, Connectional President	
Contact	connmswawopk4@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Article IV, Section 1, page 477.

Intent

To change the structure levels to the enhance functionality of Connectional Ministers Spouses, Widows, and Widowers Organization Plus PKs (Conn-M-SWAWO Plus PKs).

Rationale

Conn-M-SWAWO Plus PKs only need to have Elected Officers on three (3) levels: Connectional, Episcopal District and Annual Conference. The Conference President will be given the option to appoint a Liaison in each Presiding Elder District who would be responsible for distributing pertinent information from the 3 levels above.

1 Current Text

2 Section 1. The organization shall be according to the structure of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, i.e.,  
3 connectional, episcopal district, Annual Conference and District Conference levels

4 Amended Text

5 Section 1. The organization shall be according to the structure of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, i.e.,  
6 Connectional, Episcopal District, and Annual Conference levels. The Conference President (where applicable) shall  
7 appoint a Liaison in each Presiding Elder District who will be responsible for the distribution of communications  
8 received from all above levels.

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Thomas L. Bess., Sr.	
Contact	tbess10399@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

2012 Discipline: Section III. "General Officers;" Subsection E. "Duties of General Officers;" Paragraph h, page 130.

Intent

To provide for greater flexibility and efficiency in the office of the CIO by increasing the options for permanent office locations from four cities to five cities by including the city of Atlanta, Georgia.

Rationale

Atlanta serves as a major hub for efficient and less expensive travel options. Additionally, with current technological advances, the CIO can establish a satellite virtual office with ease.

1 Current Text

- 2 Establish a permanent office in one of the four cities: Washington, DC; St. Louis, Missouri, Nashville, Tennessee; or
- 3 Memphis, Tennessee.

4 Amended Text

- 5 Establish a permanent office in one of the five cities: Washington, DC; St. Louis, Missouri, Nashville, Tennessee;
- 6 Memphis, Tennessee; or Atlanta, Georgia.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Conciliation Procedure	
Submitted by	Council of Bishop Legislative Committee	
Contact	bishopfugh131@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, Part XI, Section I, first paragraph, page 256; Item D, page 257; Item E, page 257

Intent

To give uniformity to the procedures used to conduct Conciliation Committee proceedings.

Rationale

The procedure for conducting conciliation varies from case to case, depending on who presides. However, recent declaratory decisions by the Judicial Council have taken the guess work out of the process. The proposed revisions incorporate those holdings in order to create consistency of practice.

1 Current Text

2 Part XI, Section I, page 256

3 Section I. Conciliation Committee

4 It is the clear intent and purpose of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to encourage, create, and stimulate  
5 peace and goodwill among all of its members, societies, local churches, auxiliaries, departments, and commissions.

6 Accordingly, before any charge may be filed, introduced, or conveyed for consideration, all parties to any  
7 difference, dispute, claim or controversy shall submit the matters of contention to the Conciliation Committee. If,  
8 however, the charge is that of sexual misconduct, the charge shall be received, processed and resolved in  
9 accordance with Section XIV, "Sexual Misconduct."

10 Item D., first paragraph, page 257

11 The presiding bishop shall fix a time for the first meeting of the committee within twenty (20) days after the  
12 request is filed, and cause of notice to be given to all parties by certified mail.

13 Item E, page 257

14 Within thirty (30) days after the first meeting of the committee, the presiding bishop shall meet informally,  
15 separately, with each part involved, with a view to work out a firm resolution of differences. If it shall appear that  
16 further conference (s) may prove fruitful, the Conciliation Committee shall keep the lines of communication open



and do all things possible to effectuate a settlement of the matter. If the matter is not settled within one hundred twenty (120) days after the first meeting of the committee, conciliation shall cease, and the committee discharged.

Amended Text

Part XI, Section I, page 256

It is the clear intent and purpose of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to encourage, create, and stimulate peace and goodwill among all of its members, societies, local churches, auxiliaries, departments, and commissions. Accordingly, before any charge may be filed, introduced, or conveyed for consideration, all parties to any difference, dispute, claim or controversy shall submit the matters of contention to the Conciliation Committee. If, however, the charge is that of sexual misconduct, the charge shall be received, processed and resolved in accordance with Section XIV, "Sexual Misconduct."

In addition, the following matters are deemed unsuitable for Conciliation:

Matters pending before other AME Church tribunals, including, but not limited to: the Judicial Council, a Trial Committee, Preliminary Inquiry Committee, or the General Conference; Matters pending before state, federal or international courts and administrative agencies; Matters under investigation by law enforcement authorities; and Matters previously addressed in conciliation, unless consented to by all parties involved in the matter of contention.

Item D., first paragraph, page 257

The presiding bishop shall fix a time and hold the first meeting of the committee within twenty (20) days after the request is filed, and cause notice to be given to all parties by certified mail.

Item E, page 257

Within thirty (30) days after the first meeting of the committee, the presiding bishop shall meet informally, separately, with each party involved, with a view to work out a firm resolution of differences. Conciliation may continue up to one hundred twenty (120) days after the first meeting of the committee, as long as the parties feel that further conferences may prove fruitful. The process may be terminated by either party of the dispute when that member no longer sees the meetings as beneficial.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Ministers Bill of Rights	
Submitted by	Reginald Jackson	
Contact	reginald.jackson132@verizon.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church  
2012, Pg. 101, Section VII 5

Intent

To clarify good of the congregation

Rationale

Good of the congregation should be determined by the Quarterly  
Conference

1 Current Text

2 : Reassignment for the good of the congregation requires the stewards

3 2 of the congregation to certify in writing to the presiding bishop, with a copy to the

4 3 presiding elder and the pastor, their reason(s) for the request including dishonest or

5 4 self- interested handling or mishandling of finances.

6 Amended Text

7 Reassignment for the good of the congregation requires the

8 6 Quarterly Conference, presided over by the presiding elder, with the pastor invited to

9 7 be present, to vote and certify in writing to the presiding bishop, with copies to be

10 8 provided by the secretary of the Quarterly Conference to the presiding elder, pastor,

11 9 and the records of the Quarterly Conference, stating why the Quarterly Conference

12 10 has determined that for the good of the congregation it is necessary for the pastor to

13 11 be moved immediately, negating the necessity for the bishop to provide the pastor

14 12 a ninety day (90) notice. In such instance the presiding bishop will inform the

15 13 pastor of impending move and timeline to effectuate the same. If the pastor refuses

16 14 to attend the Quarterly Conference after proper notice and attempts to find an

17 15 agreeable date, the presiding elder shall notify the pastor, president pro tem of the

- 18     16   Board of Stewards and presiding bishop by certified mail of the date of the Quarterly
- 19     17   Conference, and it shall be authorized to meet without the pastor being present.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Ministers Bill of Rights	
Submitted by	Reginald Jackson	
Contact	reginald.jackson132@verizon.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church  
2012, Pg. 100, Section VII 1

Intent

To define standard for pastors being reassigned

Rationale


To provide an explanation for reassignment of pastors

1 Current Text

2 A pastoral appointment equal to their abilities, training, and  
3 2 experience when available. The new appointment, when available, shall be  
4 3 comparable to or better than the previous one, provided the pastor has not  
5 4 been found guilty under judicial administration. The action may result in location  
6 5 or an appointment that reflects the church's current standing at the time of his or  
7 6 departure.

8 Amended Text

9 A pastoral appointment equal to their abilities, training and  
10 8 experience when available. The new appointment, provided the pastor has not  
11 9 been found guilty under judicial administration, when available, shall be reflective  
12 10 of the status of the appointment at the time the pastor is moved. If questioned,  
13 11 the status of the appointment shall be attested by the Board of Stewards and the  
14 12 presiding elder in writing to the bishop of the Episcopal District.

		
Bill Number		
Title	HALT-2: Leader Training on HIV/AIDS	
Submitted by	Michael Brown (for PTS-CM243 class)**	
Contact	mbrown@payne.edu	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

N/A (New item)

Intent

This new legislation intends (1) to assure that AME Church leadership is equipped, knowledgeable and confident to engage accurately about HIV/AIDS and, (2) to institutionalize policy so that leaders and the people we serve can be highly effective in avoiding HIV/AIDS impacts and helping to eliminate HIV/AIDS.

Rationale

Although needed, many people would not make the time or consider it a priority to receive understanding of current impacts and effective ways to reduce HIV/AIDS. At Payne Theological Seminary (PTS), we find that once adequately informed, leaders embrace the urgency to develop and sustain effective ministry action to reduce HIV/AIDS. Mandatory training of clergy and officer leaders to understand HIV/AIDS will be similar to mandatory sexual harassment training organized by leadership in each Episcopal District or Annual Conference to occur at any Episcopal, Annual Conference or Presiding Elder meeting event. It will extend throughout the entire AME Church network.

There are no increased finances required. Content material and expert facilitators shall be obtained at no charge from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and by using resources or expertise of local Health Departments and not-for profit agencies. If desired, specific facilitators of choice to conduct the required training may be secured by Episcopal Districts using honorariums built into Episcopal budget for presenters.


1 Current Text

2 N/A As new legislation, the required training can be related to, but does not have to be part of, activities in a  
3 charge/church of the Social Action Committee as referenced on page 179-paragraph-5 in The Doctrine and  
4 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, (2012).

5 Amended Text

6 We propose that: "Clergy, at all levels, and appointed or elected officers shall be required to obtain a basic  
7 scientific foundation to understand HIV/AIDS. This can be summarized as 'What effective religious leaders should  
8 know about HIV/AIDS' (see content below). Mandatory training shall be provided annually throughout each  
9 Episcopal District, at ongoing or special planned sessions as directed by the Presiding Bishop and Presiding Elders.  
10 Each clergy person or officer is required to be certified and/or updated at least once every four years through this  
11 offering.

12 The annual training should provide at least three or more contact hours about HIV/AIDS. Content should provide  
13 understanding of: (1) current prevalence and impacts of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in local communities and globally,  
14 (2) the biology of the virus and its disease, (3) community resources available, and (4) practical ways religious  
15 leaders can help to eliminate HIV infection, AIDS and death from AIDS-related causes."  
16 \*\*Respectfully submitted for,  
17 Members of Payne Theological Seminary CM-243 class, March 2016.

		
Bill Number		
Title	HALT-1 (HIV/AIDS Legislative Team): Annual Report	
Submitted by	A. Oveta Fuller	
Contact	fullerao@umich.edu	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

N/A. This new item will extend requests of the Commission on Health and fit with a required Annual Report from each charge as referenced on pages 178 and 721, respectively in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, (2012).

Intent

To institutionalize across the global AME Church expectation that every charge/church shall engage purposefully in halting the advance of HIV/AIDS that is disproportionately affecting African, African Americans, and others served by the global AME Church.

Rationale

Presence of the new question in the Annual Report uniformly encourages action and emphasizes priority of sustained efforts to address HIV/AIDS by each church. As a global network we have access, unique resources and a responsibility to assist in ending the HIV/AIDS pandemic and reducing its impacts. There are substantial benefits that align with the AME mission of documenting such effort on the Annual Report. The question will be included in a revised electronic Pastors report form. There are no additional financial costs of the legislation.

- 1 Current Text
- 2 N/A
- 3 Amended Text
- 4 We propose adding the following question to be answered on the required Annual Report form submitted by the
- 5 pastor and steward board of each charge/church to their Annual Conference:
- 6 Q. Health Ministry
- 7 a. Does your charge/church have an active Health Ministry? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ In progress\_\_\_
- 8 b. Did your charge/church engage in ministry or awareness events towards eliminating or addressing congregation
- 9 or community needs associated with the HIV/AIDS pandemic?
- 10 Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_
- 11 Optional to provide info on event(s):

		
Bill Number		
Title	Triers of Appeals	
Submitted by	Council of Bishops Legislative Committee	
Contact	bishopfugh131@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, Part XI, Section XIII, The Triers of Appeals, pages 268-269; V. Appeals, page 283.

Intent

To remove obsolete and inconsistent provisions of judicial administration, including the jurisdiction and authority now reposed in the Judicial Council.

Rationale

The Court of Triers of Appeals dates back to the very first published Book of Discipline of the AME Church. the privilege of our members to trial before the society or by a Committee, and an appeal. (1817) However, since its inception, the Church has instituted various opportunities to appeal rulings of trial committees. In 1948 the Council of Bishops constituted a judicial court to decide all questions of law in the interim of the General Conference. The Judicial Council was enacted in 1952 as the highest judicatory body of the AME Church elected by the General Conference to which it is amenable

1 Current Text

2 Section XIII. The Triers of Appeals (pages 268-269)

3 East Annual Conference shall elect five (5) experienced and judicious elders to be known as the Triers of Appeals.

4 A. Formation of the Court of Triers of Appeals

5 Whenever a member of an annual conference takes exception to trial and expulsion from the Conference by the

6 decision of a bishop, that member shall make it known to the bishop that he or she appeals and desires the bishop

7 to alert the Court of Triers of Appeals.

8 When such notice is given to the bishop, the bishop shall designate three (3) of the nearest conferences from which

9 the bishop shall call triers to meet at a given place within three (3) months after notification. They shall have a

10 reasonable time for their session.

11 B. Rights of Applicants

12 The appellant shall have the right to object to any member of the court, provided a challenge does not reduce the

13 number of members to fewer than ten (10), as ten (10) is the required number for a quorum. In all cases where an

14 appeal is made, the appellant, or his or her representative, shall state the grounds for the appeal. The right to an



appeal cannot be abridged in any manner other than as set forth in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

#### C. Method of Procedure

When the appeal is made from a bishop's decision, the triers may be called from two neighboring conferences, as the appellant's conference may be the third.

The court shall have one of its members act as president and one as secretary. The secretary shall keep a faithful record of the court's proceedings, which shall be subject to the order of the next sitting of the General Conference for its review. (For Methods of Procedure, see Duties of Judicial Council.)

In all cases which are brought up as appeals, the following methods shall be observed:

1. The appellant shall give a statement setting forth the appeal and the grounds for it.
2. The charges, specifications, and the judgment of the lower court are heard.
3. Inquiries are made to determine if conditions of the appeal are met.
4. The records of the trial are read.
5. The appellant or his or her counsel is heard.
6. The lower court shall reply through its representative.
7. The appellant or his or her counsel may make a closing statement.
8. The appellant and other representatives retire, and the conference decides the case.

Below current text for Part XI, Section XIV, C, Item V. Appeals, page 283

#### V. Appeals

A person against whom a complaint of Sexual Misconduct has been sustained shall have the right to appeal. A formal notice of appeal must be filed within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written notice of decision from the Trial Committee. The notice shall be provided according to Section XII, Appeals, of The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The bishop shall have discretion when ruling on matters pertaining to a stay of enforcing the penalty of relinquishing credentials and pastoral assignments during the appeals process. The matter shall be referred to the Triers of Appeals in accordance with the duties as outlined in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Section XIII, page 294. Each party retains all rights and privileges granted by local, state, federal and international law. Triers of Appeals may only consider matters where

due process is deemed to have been violated, and may only consider "new evidence" if said evidence will have a bearing on the outcome of the sustained verdict.

Amended Text

Delete Part XI, Section XIII, The Triers of Appeals, pages 268-269

Amended Text for Part XI, Section XIV, C, Item V. Appeals, page 283

V. Appeals

A person against whom a complaint of Sexual Misconduct has been sustained shall have the right to appeal. A formal notice of appeal must be filed within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written notice of decision from the Trial Committee. The notice shall be provided according to Section XII, Appeals, of The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The bishop shall have discretion when ruling on matters pertaining to a stay of enforcing the penalty of relinquishing credentials and pastoral assignments during the appeals process. The matter shall be referred to the Triers of Appeals in accordance with the duties as outlined in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Section XIII, page 294. Each party retains all rights and privileges granted by local, state, federal and international law.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Preliminary Inquiry	
Submitted by	Council of Bishop Legislative Committee	
Contact	bishopfugh131@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part XI, Section II. Charges, B, page 258; Section IV. Preliminary Inquiry Committee, B. Procedure, page 259

Intent

To provide an exemption for matters of Preliminary Inquiry from the provision found in Section II. Charges, Item B that allows a "bill of charges" to be amended at any time prior to the opening of the trial on the charges.

Rationale

As the rule stands, once the accused bishop or general officer responds to the bill of charges the accuser can amend the charges in light of the responses. If the responses are amended as well, the cycle can continue indefinitely.

1 Current Text

2 B. Procedure


3 All charges shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Church and the Secretary of the Council of Bishops. In the  
4 event that the accused is the General Secretary, the Secretary of the Council of Bishops shall receive the charges  
5 and serve as convener. The convener, shall schedule a meeting and notify the accuser and the accused of the time  
6 and place thereof, for the purpose of drawing or selecting a panel of thirteen (13) members from the names of the  
7 Preliminary Inquiry Committee. The accused person may submit an answer or reply with accompanying affidavits  
8 and exhibits. This must be forwarded to the convener and the accuser(s) within twenty (20) days after receipt of  
9 the charges. The convener shall immediately give notice to each panel member upon his or her selection and shall  
10 forward to each, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, copies of the charges, a summary of the  
11 expected testimony, and all other submitted documents.

12 Amended Text

13 B. Procedure

14 All charges shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Church and the Secretary of the Council of Bishops. In the  
15 event that the accused is the General Secretary, the Secretary of the Council of Bishops shall receive the charges  
16 and serve as convener. Charges may not be amended once they have been submitted to the General Secretary.

The convener, shall schedule a meeting and notify the accuser and the accused of the time and place thereof, for the purpose of drawing or selecting a panel of thirteen (13) members from the names of the Preliminary Inquiry Committee. The accused person may submit an answer or reply with accompanying affidavits and exhibits. This must be forwarded to the convener and the accuser(s) within twenty (20) days after receipt of the charges. The convener shall immediately give notice to each panel member upon his or her selection and shall forward to each, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, copies of the charges, a summary of the expected testimony, and all other submitted documents.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Voluntary Merging of Small Congregations for Greater Spiritual Work	
Submitted by	Melvin L. Jenkins, Esq. on behalf of the Midwest Annual Conference	
Contact	melvin.jenkins@att.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline Page 79-80

Intent

To allow those congregations that see the need to merge to offer the memberships greater service for the spiritual work and growth of the work of Kingdom Building.

Rationale

All too often we in the AME Church close because of a lack of members or the membership has been reduced to make it all but impossible to make its annual assessment. As the present legislation reads, it only allows for churches with congregations to close with membership from 1-50. In some instances, churches over 50 in the congregation may want to merge. The legislation as presently stands is too restrictive.

1 Current Text

2 Voluntary Merging of Small Congregations for Greater Spiritual Work

3 Episcopal leadership should identify congregations that are in close proximity to each other with membership  
4 ranging from 1-50. Then, a meeting should be called with the designated presiding elder(s), the pastors, the  
5 stewards and trustees of both congregations. The following steps should be followed to merge congregations.

6 Step 1. If all are in agreement, each pastor shall call a church, conference to present the idea to the members  
7 (Timeline 3 months).

8 Step 2. Committees should be established to include members from both congregations to do research on  
9 property issues, inclusive of identifying a contractor to determine which structure has the best potential for  
10 growth and expansion, which properly has greater historic value, including special consideration for cemetery  
11 properties (Timeline 6 months). Congregations must determine how cemeteries will be managed and maintained.

12 Step 3. Both congregations should meet for services together exchanging facilities at least twice per month for the  
13 duration of the next conference year (Timeline 12 months). The goal is for them to see the benefits and how well  
14 they can worship together. The Episcopal leadership along with the Presiding Elder would need to ensure that the  
15 Pastors involved would also have a future assignment with the upcoming conference year.

Step 4. Boards of each church would be able to merge also inclusive of trustees, stewards, and stewardesses, etc., based on numbers stipulated in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. No one should lose her or his position during this transition. Of course, as the church grows, the new pastor should follow The Discipline in making any changes after one year as a combined congregation (Timeline 12 months). The combined congregation at the end of one year of exchanging services will decide, based on committee reports, which structure will become their actual location; or would the sale of both properties serve them better in searching for a new neutral location. Because of generational issues, the churches names could be combined to maintain continuity. For example, a St. Phillip and a St. Paul could become The Church of Phillip and Paul AME or The African Methodist Episcopal Church of Phillip & Paul. Another example, Smith Chapel-Bearden Temple AME Church. Of course, congregations will have the ability to select a new name, if desired, thus creating a neutral name and a new start for both congregations. Before the final merger closes, classes to train the officers in how to operate as a station church be conducted. The Annual Conference will redistribute the fiscal encumbrances of said churches.

Step 5. Before the final merger the congregations may have a ritual for the closing or merging.

#### Amended Text

#### Voluntary Merging of Congregations for Greater Spiritual Work

Episcopal leadership should allow churches to merge for the greater good of the congregations. Then, a meeting should be called with the designated presiding elder(s), the pastors, the stewards and trustees of both congregations. The following steps should be followed to merge congregations.

Step 1. If all are in agreement, each pastor shall call a church, conference to present the idea to the members (Timeline 3 months).


Step 2. Committees should be established to include members from both congregations to do research on property issues, inclusive of identifying a contractor to determine which structure has the best potential for growth and expansion, which properly has greater historic value, including special consideration for cemetery properties (Timeline 6 months). Congregations must determine how cemeteries will be managed and maintained.

Step 3. Both congregations should meet for services together exchanging facilities at least twice per month for the duration of the next conference year (Timeline 12 months). The goal is for them to see the benefits and how well

they can worship together. The Episcopal leadership along with the Presiding Elder would need to ensure that the Pastors involved would also have a future assignment with the upcoming conference year.

Step 4. Boards of each church would be able to merge also inclusive of trustees, stewards, and stewardesses, etc., based on numbers stipulated in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. No one should lose her or his position during this transition. Of course, as the church grows, the new pastor should follow The Discipline in making any changes after one year as a combined congregation (Timeline 12 months). The combined congregation at the end of one year of exchanging services will decide, based on committee reports, which structure will become their actual location; or would the sale of both properties serve them better in searching for a new neutral location. Because of generational issues, the churches names could be combined to maintain continuity. For example, a St. Phillip and a St. Paul could become The Church of Phillip and Paul AME or The African Methodist Episcopal Church of Phillip & Paul. Another example, Smith Chapel-Bearden Temple AME Church. Of course, congregations will have the ability to select a new name, if desired, thus creating a neutral name and a new start for both congregations. Before the final merger closes, classes to train the officers in how to operate as a station church be conducted. The Annual Conference will redistribute the fiscal encumbrances of said churches.

Step 5. Before the final merger the congregations may have a ritual for the closing or merging.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Episcopal Budget	
Submitted by	Melvin L. Jenkins, Esq., on behalf on the Midwest Annual Conference	
Contact	melvin.jenkins@att.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline - Page 151-152

Intent

To reduce the amount of revenue flowing from the local church that could be used to increase the number of local church efforts for sustainability to improve life for its local members and the local community in general. This may allow the local church to better maintain its properties and/or consider merging with another local church to strengthen its growth and ministries.

Rationale

There has been a substantial decrease in membership in our local churches. The church cannot meet the established budget, as the pews are empty. For example, the demographics have changed in the Midwest Annual Conference, and in the last 15 years 21 churches have closed with an additional closing of 5 projected in 2017. Further, the existing church have to assume the budget of a closed churches. This places an addition financial burden on these churches. In 2015 alone, five of our churches are now worshipping in homes or schools due to walls collapsing. Our churches cannot maintain their buildings, and the ability to purchase insurance is waning. The current budget adds additional strain on the local church with many of them having the inability to pay their denominational assessment.

Even by reducing the budget by 15 percent will allow local churches to focus more programming to local concerns. It is felt that with funds that flow to the Episcopal District from the General Budget, that this is adequate to support the programs and activities of the District. Some Episcopal Districts do not access the full 35 per cent that is allowed under the current legislation.

1 Current Text

2 The Episcopal District Budget

3 There shall be established in each episcopal district of the African Methodist Episcopal Church a central fund which  
4 shall be known as the Episcopal District Budget Fund. The Episcopal District Budget shall be approved by the  
5 episcopal district through its annual conferences. The budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal  
6 District Budget Committee which shall be made up of one clergy, one layperson, and one young adult layperson  
7 ages 18-30, and two ministers and one lay person, alternately, from each annual conference within the episcopal  
8 district. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 30. Where there is a person in the episcopal  
9 district who possesses accounting or legal expertise, such person shall be considered for election by the respective  
10 annual conference.



The Episcopal District Budget shall not exceed 35% of the episcopal district allocation of the connectional budget, except in episcopal districts where the episcopal district budget allocation does not exceed \$500,000. The Episcopal District Budget shall not exceed the 1996-2000 level. It shall include all administrative and programmatic expenses and shall be inclusive of all income from all sources and components, such as the WMS, YPD, Lay Organization, public offerings, etc., with the exception of General Conference sustentation. In those episcopal districts where 35% would impose a hardship, a smaller percentage will be determined in consultation with the Budget Committee. The Episcopal District Budget shall not make allowances for expenses covered in the Connectional Budget. Episcopal districts with schools and other projects may appeal to the General Board for special fund raising consideration. No other funds are to be collected by the episcopal district except for emergencies declared by the Council of Bishops and concurred by the General Board.

The Episcopal District Budget with special projects, if any, must be submitted for approval to the General Board at its first annual meeting following the General Conference. The Episcopal District Budget submitted for approval must include sources and amount of anticipated income and expected amount of expenditures in each of the listed account categories. A printed, audited report of income and expenditures itemized will be presented to each annual conference which contributed to the fund. The General Board shall develop means for studying, approving, and presenting information relative to Episcopal District Budgets to the Connectional Church.

These provisions shall in no way repeal Part IX, Church Finance, as set forth in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Actions in contravention of the proceeding shall be considered malfeasance of administration and subject to review through the legal process of the AME Church.

The budgetary provisions apply only to the continental United States. The Episcopal District Budget of Districts 14-20 shall be determined by the particular needs of those districts. However, the same procedures for the adoption of said budget are used.

### Amended Text

The Episcopal District Budget

There shall be established in each episcopal district of the African Methodist Episcopal Church a central fund which shall be known as the Episcopal District Budget Fund. The Episcopal District Budget shall be approved by the episcopal district through its annual conferences. The budget will be structured and developed by the Episcopal


District Budget Committee which shall be made up of one clergy, one layperson, and one young adult layperson ages 18-30, and two ministers and one lay person, alternately, from each annual conference within the episcopal district. At least one member must be a young adult ages 18 to 30. Where there is a person in the episcopal district who possesses accounting or legal expertise, such person shall be considered for election by the respective annual conference.

The Episcopal District Budget shall not exceed 20% of the episcopal district allocation of the connectional budget, except in episcopal districts where the episcopal district budget allocation does not exceed \$500,000. The Episcopal District Budget shall not exceed the 1996-2000 level. It shall include all administrative and programmatic expenses and shall be inclusive of all income from all sources and components, such as the WMS, YPD, Lay Organization, public offerings, etc., with the exception of General Conference sustentation. In those episcopal districts where 35% would impose a hardship, a smaller percentage will be determined in consultation with the Budget Committee. The Episcopal District Budget shall not make allowances for expenses covered in the Connectional Budget. Episcopal districts with schools and other projects may appeal to the General Board for special fund raising consideration. No other funds are to be collected by the episcopal district except for emergencies declared by the Council of Bishops and concurred by the General Board.

The Episcopal District Budget with special projects, if any, must be submitted for approval to the General Board at its first annual meeting following the General Conference. The Episcopal District Budget submitted for approval must include sources and amount of anticipated income and expected amount of expenditures in each of the listed account categories. A printed, audited report of income and expenditures itemized will be presented to each annual conference which contributed to the fund. The General Board shall develop means for studying, approving, and presenting information relative to Episcopal District Budgets to the Connectional Church.

These provisions shall in no way repeal Part IX, Church Finance, as set forth in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Actions in contravention of the proceeding shall be considered malfeasance of administration and subject to review through the legal process of the AME Church. This section shall also amend Part VIII, Section II, paragraph 10, (page 206 of The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012), to reflect the appropriate percentage of 20 percent.

64 The budgetary provisions apply only to the continental United States. The Episcopal District Budget of Districts 14-  
65 20 shall be determined by the particular needs of those districts. However, the same procedures for the adoption  
66 of said budget are used.

		
Bill Number		
Title	YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH	
Submitted by	Char'nette Pinckney	
Contact	pcharnette@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Young Adult Ministry doesn't have a page in the Discipline.

Intent

Our intention with organizing and connecting Young Adult Ministry across the AME connection. That our young Adults between the ages of 18-45 will not leave the AME church to join other denominations in order to receive Economic Development and Entrepreneurial training.

Rationale

Rationale

Originally, in 2008, the Young Adult Ministry was established to teach young Adults in Economic Development and Entrepreneurial training, mentor and recruit young women and Men ages 18 to 45 into Young Adult Ministry of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The programs and activities for this age group were created to build a relationship between like minded young Adults.

Currently, The Young Adult Ministry is quickly evolving across the Connectional church. Young adults are in need of Economic Development and Entrepreneurial training though this Ministry (YAM) by introducing young Entrepreneurs and motivational speakers three times a year Post Conference, Mid-Year and Leadership we are striving to enhance the Young Adult Ministry through leadership development, diverse and programs.

So it is imperative that we keep acronym YAM for Young Adult Ministry. The Womens Missionary Society also wants to change to the same acronym from YWI Young Womens Initiative to Young Adult Missionary (YAM). Which will make it difficult to distinguish between the two organizations. So we are asking that they come up with another name such as Young Women Missionary (YW M) just a suggestion

Respectfully Submitted By:

Charnette Unique Pinckney

The Super Seventh Episcopal District


Young Adult Ministry, 7th Episcopal District

1 Current Text

2 There isn't a current text in the 2012 Discipline.

3 Amended Text

4 There isn't a current text in the 2012 Discipline.

		
Bill Number		
Title	YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH	
Submitted by	Char'nette Pinckney	
Contact	pcharnette@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Currently not in the Discipline yet.

Intent

Our intention with organizing and connecting Young Adult Ministry across the AME connection. That our young Adults between the ages of 18-45 will not leave the AME church to join other denominations in order to receive Economic Development and Entrepreneurial training.

Rationale


Rationale: The Young Adult Ministry is quickly evolving across the Connectional church. Young adults are in need of Economic Development and Entrepreneurial training through this Ministry (YAM) by introducing young Entrepreneurs and motivational speakers three times a year Post Conference, Mid-Year and Leadership. So it is imperative that we keep acronym YAM for Young Adult Ministry. The Womens Missionary Society also wants to change to the same acronym from YWI Young Womens Initiative to Young Adult Missionary. Which will make it difficult to distinguish between the two organizations. So we are asking that they come up with another name such as Young Missionary Women (YMW) just a suggestion

1 Current Text

2 There isn't one, the closest is Richard Allen Young Adult Council on page 412

3 Amended Text

4 There isn't one

		
Bill Number		
Title	Update of General Secretary/CIO Communication responsibilities	
Submitted by	Starr Battle	
Contact	starrbattlejd@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VI, Section III. E.1.t.p 129

Intent

To update the functions of the General Secretary/CIO relative to the official AME Church internet/online presence

Rationale

There are various AME departments with Internet presences and email lists. This legislation will help coordinate the dissemination of electronic communication and enable the General Secretary/CIO to serve as the official information/communication source for the denomination.

1 Current Text

2 CIO Email Bill

3 Part VI, Section III. E.1.t.p 129


4 The General Secretary and CIO shall oversee the Information Management System of the Church. The Information  
5 Management System is defined as a compilation of information in reference to church statistics (example: daycare  
6 centers, non-profit groups, talent banks, membership, number of churches, property values or other services that  
7 might be valuable to the organized church). The data will be used to evaluate programs, projects and districts, and  
8 to enable the governing bodies to make effective decisions concerning church operation.

9 Amended Text

10 t. The General Secretary/CIO shall oversee the Information Management System of the Church. The Information  
11 Management System is defined as a compilation of information in reference to church statistics (example: daycare  
12 centers, non-profit groups, talent banks, membership, number of churches, property values or other services that  
13 might be valuable to the organized church, as well as church and clergy email addresses and social media  
14 contacts). The data will be used to evaluate programs, projects and districts, and to enable the governing bodies to  
15 make effective decisions concerning church operation.

16 u. The General Secretary/CIO shall administer the official AME App, AME Meeting App, website, Facebook and  
17 other social media platforms of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The General Secretary/CIO shall

18 coordinate the online presence (website, Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media) of Connectional  
19 Departments, Episcopal Districts and Connectional entities to ensure that a cohesive African Methodist Episcopal  
20 Church brand is maintained.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Establishing the Commission on Faith and Order	
Submitted by	Teresa Fry Brown	
Contact	AMECHistoryintheMaking@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VI, Section III, 9.a.p. 142; Part VII, Section VI.p. 187

Intent

To establish a Commission on Faith and Order

Rationale

This legislation is based on suggestions made at CONVO XVII. While position papers and resolutions have been adopted at several General Conferences, a systemic articulation of AME faith and doctrine does not exist. A clear structure is needed to provide the Connectional Church with resources to outline our perspective and position on various matters to assist our members in developing and expressing their faith.

1 Current Text

2 New Legislation

3 Amended Text

4 Part VI, Section III, 9.a.p. 142

5 a. Research Program: Duties of Historiographer

6 8) Serve as staff and resource person for the Commission on Faith and Order

7 Part VII, Section VI.p. 187

8 L. Commission on Faith and Order

9 1: The Commission on Faith and Order shall:

10 a. Craft a cohesive statement of AME doctrine and biblical interpretation for consideration and adoption by the

11 General Conference. Once adopted, this statement can be amended following the procedures herein outlined for

12 revision of the Doctrine and Discipline.

13 b. Coordinate with academics and theologians in the AME Church tradition to produce position papers to amplify


14 and articulate AME theological interpretations.

15 c. Establish links and exchanges with like bodies in the broader Christian family with a special emphasis on

16 denominations in the Methodist tradition.



- 17 d. Assist the Council of Bishops and other connectional departments in matters of theological and doctrinal  
18 interpretation.
- 19 2. Membership
- 20 a. The Commission shall be composed of 12 persons nominated by the Council of Bishops and approved by the  
21 General Conference.
- 22 b. The Council of Bishops shall nominate two of its number to serve as Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission.  
23 The Ecumenical Officer shall be an ex-officio member.
- 24 c. Membership in the Commission shall include clergy and lay members and reflect a balance of academic  
25 preparation, gender, and church service with the following stipulations:
- 26 i. At least one member shall be a layperson under age 30.  
27 ii. At least one member shall be a clergyperson under age 40  
28 iii. At least one member shall be from Districts 14-20.
- 29 d. The Executive Director of Research and Scholarship/Historiographer shall serve as Consultant to the  
30 Commission and shall be responsible for its administrative tasks.
- 31 e. At the CONVO preceding the General Conference, space and time shall be made available for the Commission  
32 to present its work during the quadrennium and issues that it will bring for action to the General Conference.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Establishing the Commission on Research and Scholarship	
Submitted by	Teresa Fry Brown	
Contact	AMECHistoryintheMaking@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VII, Section I., A and B, pp. 146 and 148

Intent

Establishing the Commission on Research and Scholarship

Rationale

The Department of Research and Scholarship was created in 2000 through the merger of the Historiographer with the Editor of the AME Review. The Executive Director of the department currently reports to the Publications Commission of the General Board as Editor of the AME Review. This structure does not allow sufficient time for review all activities of the Department. All other departments that produce publications have separate Commissions. A separate Commission will allow better oversight.

1 Current Text

2 Part VII, Section I., A. p. 146

3 The officers of the General Board shall be a president and fourteen (14) vice presidents who shall serve as

4 chairpersons of the standing commissions. The General Secretary shall serve as the secretary and the Chief

5 Financial Officer of the AME Church shall serve as the treasurer.

6 The commissions of the General Board shall be (1) Statistics and Finance, (2) Annuity Investments and Insurance,

7 (3) Publications, (4) Social Action, (5) Church Growth and Development (6) Global Witness and Ministry, (7) Lay

8 Organization, (8) Seminaries, Universities, Colleges and Schools, (9) Christian Education, (10) Women in Ministry,

9 (11) Health, (12) Ministry and Recruitment, (13) Global Development, (14) Economic Development.

10 Amended Text

11 Part VII, Section I., A.

12 The officers of the General Board shall be a president and fifteen (15) vice presidents who shall serve as

13 chairpersons of the standing commissions. The General Secretary shall serve as the secretary and the Chief

14 Financial Officer of the AME Church shall serve as the treasurer.


15 The commissions of the General Board shall be (1) Statistics and Finance, (2) Annuity Investments and Insurance,

16 (3) Publications, (4) Social Action, (5) Church Growth and Development (6) Global Witness and Ministry, (7) Lay

17 Organization, (8) Seminaries, Universities, Colleges and Schools, (9) Christian Education, (10) Women in Ministry,  
18 (11) Health, (12) Ministry and Recruitment, (13) Global Development, (14) Economic Development, (15) Research  
19 and Scholarship.

20 Part VII, Section I., B.

21 15. Commission on Research and Scholarship: Shall receive the report of the Executive Director of Research and  
22 Scholarship/Historiographer.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Adjusting denominational per diem/mileage allocations	
Submitted by	Kimberly Brooks	
Contact	kimberlysaponi@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part V Section VIII, A, pp.103; Part IX, Section I. D., pp 235; Part XI Section XX., E., 291

Intent

To provide fair compensation for travel in connection with official denominational duties

Rationale

The current 35 cents per mile reimbursement rate in the Discipline was taken originally from the US federal government and is decades out of date. The current rate is 56 cents per mile and is periodically adjusted.

1 Current Text

2 Part V Section VIII, A, pp.103

3 ...In the case of circuits and presiding elders districts, the travel expenses of the minister, unless otherwise

4 provided for, shall be computed on the basis of thirty-five (35) cents per mile one way, and these expenses shall be

5 an allowable deduction from the ministers income from the pastoral charge.

6 Part IX, Section I. D., pp 235

7 Travel: Travel to all General Board and other connectional meetings shall be \$. 35 per mile one way when traveling

8 by land. All airline tickets must be obtained at least 30 days prior to meeting or at least 3 days after meeting

9 notice. Airline travel to all connectional meetings where travel is paid for by the general church must be arranged

10 through Allen Travel Service/ SailAir.

11 Sustentation: Sustentation shall be the negotiated rate at the host hotel for the specified meeting. Under no

12 conditions shall the sustentation exceed \$75.00

13 Part XI Section XX., E., 291

14 The treasurer of the AME Church is hereby authorized to pay each member of the Judicial Council a per-diem

15 sustentation of sixty dollars (\$ 60.00) and travel expense at the rate of thirty-five cents (\$. 35) per mile one way in

16 the continental United States.

17 Amended Text

18 Part V Section VIII, A

19 In the case of circuits and presiding elders districts, the travel expenses of the minister, unless otherwise provided  
20 for, shall be computed on the basis of the current United States Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate  
21 used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving  
22 purposes. These expenses shall be an allowable deduction from the ministers income from the pastoral charge.


23 Part IX, Section I. D.

24 Travel: Travel to all General Board and other Connectional meetings by land shall be computed using the current  
25 United States Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate used to calculate the deductible costs of operating  
26 an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. All airline tickets must be obtained at least 30  
27 days prior to meeting or at least 3 days after meeting notice to be eligible to receive reimbursement from the  
28 Treasurer/CFO.

29 Sustentation: Sustentation shall be the negotiated rate at the host hotel for the specified meeting.

30 Part XI Section XX., E.

31 The Treasurer of the AME Church is hereby authorized to pay each member of the Judicial Council a per-diem  
32 sustentation of sixty dollars (\$ 60.00) and travel expense at the current United States Internal Revenue Service  
33 standard mileage rate used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable,  
34 medical or moving purposes.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Flexibility in Publication of The Christian Recorder	
Submitted by	Kimberly Brooks	
Contact	kimberlysaponi@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Part VII, Section II, A., 9., a. p157

Intent

To allow for adjustment in the the frequency of physical printing of The Christian Recorder

Rationale

The current news environment allows for rapid transmittal of information via electronic means. This bill gives the AMEC Publishing House and the Commission on Publications flexibility in determining the frequency of publication.

1 Current Text


2 9. The Christian Recorder

3 a. The Christian Recorder shall be published biweekly under the direction of the Commission on Publications of the  
4 General Board of the AME Church at the AME Sunday School Union in Nashville, Tennessee. The Department of  
5 Publications shall be the publishing agent for The Christian Recorder and shall have full responsibility for its  
6 printing and publication.

7 Amended Text

8 9. The Christian Recorder

9 a. The Christian Recorder shall be published at least monthly under the direction of the Commission on  
10 Publications of the General Board of the AME Church at the AME Sunday School Union in Nashville, Tennessee.  
11 Special/Commemorative editions may be printed at the discretion of the Editor and the Publisher. Periodic news  
12 updates shall be distributed online. The Department of Publications shall be the publishing agent for The Christian  
13 Recorder and shall have full responsibility for its printing and publication.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Proposal to Remember The Emanuel Nine	
Submitted by	Joseph Cohen	
Contact	jcohen1900@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

This is a new item. There is no page reference.

Intent

Create a means by which the tragic event of June 17, 2015 at Emanuel A.M.E., Charleston, S.C., will become part of the knowledge of future generations of A.M.E. Church members.

Rationale

1. Annually remember and honor those brutally murdered during Bible study at Emanuel A.M.E. Church, Charleston S.C., June 17, 2015.
2. Future members of the A.M.E. Church should know the details of this tragedy as well as they will know of the events that fostered the founding of the A.M.E. Church.
3. Remind future generations of the need for eternal vigilance against violence and hatred at all times, even during worship within the sanctuary.

1 Current Text

2 Proposal to Remember the Emanuel Nine

3 Every congregation of the A.M.E. Church will conduct yearly a brief ceremony to remember the nine members of

4 Emanuel A.M.E. Church, Charleston, S.C., brutally murdered on June 17, 2015 during Bible study. This ceremony

5 will be conducted during Sunday worship service, until perpetuity. Each congregation will conduct the ceremony


6 under independent guidelines.

7 The ceremony will be conducted on the immediate Sunday following June 17, except those years when June 17 is

8 on Sunday, in which case the ceremony will be held on June 17.

9 Amended Text

10 This is the original proposal.

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	INNOCENT C MWEWA	
Contact	mwewa1965@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

none

Intent

Creation of position of Annual Conference Suprintendent

Rationale

To fill the void that is there in the administration of the Annual Conference, while other Axilliaris (YPDERS, WMS. YWI LAITY) all have structures at this level, the Clergy do not have therefore leaving these Axilliaris inviting presiding elders to officiate at the above mentioned departments functions, just as is the case with the Bishop who comes down from episcopal for the sole purpose of chairing the Annual Conference, from this point we can clearly see that there's need of either creating the Episcopal Conference.

It is therefore important to create the position of Annual Conference Suprintendent in order for the Officer to make programs with the axilliaris and move in tandem.

**ASCENDANCY TO OFFICE OF SUPRINTENDENT**

The position must be electible

- a) The officer to serve for a maximum of two quadreniums thereafter be subjected to an election
- b) The Bishop shall appoint one Extra clergy to position of Presiding Elder
- c) The Presiding Elders so appointed by the Bishop shall be subjected to election of Conference Suprintendent before assignment to their Presidng Elder"s district
- d) The Annual Conference delegates shall form the electoral college to elect the Suprintendent
- e) The Bishop may transfer the Suprintendent in between the quadreniums
- f) The Suprintendent shall be the Chief executive officer of the Conference
- g) He/She shall chair the mid year Conference and receive reports from Presiding elders
- h) He/She shall preside at all Conference functions except the Annual Conference unless appointed so by the Bishop
- i) He/She shall plan for the developmetal projects of the Annual Conference
- j) He/She shall be assisted by a secretary assitant secretary, treasurer, accountant, and executive members whose number shall be determined by respective Annual Conference, all these officers shall be voted into office at the same time and place as the Suprintendent, and their shall serve for a quadrenium


1 Current Text

2 none

3 Amended Text

4 none)



		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	INNOCENT C MWEWA	
Contact	mwewa1965@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

PAGE 61 SECTION II.LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Intent

To give board members a feeling of ownership to the programs they labour to plan and agree on

Rationale


To eliminate the dictatorial tendencies that may and are already being exhibited by some pastors in vetoing programs that are meant for the betterment of their charges,the current law makes board members less committed because they know after spending long hours in board meetings,whatever you agree upon may be just washed down by one person if he/she decided to so and we don't expect members in such scenario to give in their best when called to attend meetings,they would rather attend to business that is making a difference in their lives this impact negatively on the church

1 Current Text

- 2 The Pastor may appoint a chairperson pro tem to act in his or her absence,All business conducted in his or her  
3 absence shall be subject to veto by the pastor

4 Amended Text

- 5 The pastor shall have no power to veto any business conducted in his or her absence

		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	INNOCENT C MWEWA	
Contact	mwewa1965@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

PAGE 61 SECTION II LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION SUB SEC A

Intent

There shall a senior Steward elected amongst the stewards appointed or elected

Rationale

The rationale is to create separation of powers and build checks and balances, as the Minister can not be chair of the stewards board, chairs its meetings, chairs the Official Board and receives the same deliberations and or report from the organ he/she chaired, to receive his/her own report, the current setup has made stewards less active, the current setup while working for the pastors to have more power and control, it is not working for the good of the church therefore affecting the growth of the great Zion as stewards can't sit and plan on their own unless at the call of the minister in charge, there's need to have a leader in charge, you can't have a body with no leader, it must be appreciated that ministers come and go and in the situation a new minister is appointed to a charge mid year, who receives and walk through the minister? surely there must be someone, practical example of conflict of operation of interest is on the salary of the minister PAGE 62 b) The salary of the full time Minister shall be negotiated by the pastor and the stewards board, how can a person chair a meeting discussing his/her salary? surely the stewards board meetings ought to be chaired by its own members

1 Current Text

2 The pastor appointed by the presiding Bishop to the Local Church shall be the chairperson of the Board of

3 Stewards, the pastor may appoint a chairperson pro tem to act in his or her absence

4 Amended Text

5 The Senior Steward so elected shall be the Chairperson of the board of stewards

1

		
Bill Number		
Title	Judicial Council Meetings	
Submitted by	Judicial Council	
Contact	vbyrd2@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

292

Intent

To improve the efficiency of the work of the Judicial Council by eliminating barriers to face to face meetings.

Rationale


Preventing the Judicial Council from meeting at connectional meetings and limiting face to face meetings to two times per year including the General Conference, is too restrictive, arbitrary, weakens the work of the Judicial Council and creates inefficiencies. At the heart of the work of the Judicial Council is the deliberative process. This process involves members of the Council discussing, debating and trying to correctly apply law of various levels of complexity to matters of importance to the church. While the vast majority of these sessions can and will occur via telephone, there is no substitute for face-to-face discussions. Hence, members should not be restricted from deliberating when they are attending a connectional meeting of the A.M.E. Church.

1 Current Text

2 ..It shall also meet at such times and places as it may deem necessary, but not more than twice a year in addition  
3 to the meeting at the General Conference...The Judicial Council shall not meet at a time and place designated for a  
4 meeting of the Council of Bishops or of any other connectional meeting of the A.M.E. Church, except the General  
5 Conference.

6 Amended Text

7 Delete: "but not more than twice a year in addition to the General Conference"  
8 Delete: "The Judicial Council shall not meet at a time and place designated for a meeting of the Council of Bishops  
9 or of any other connectional meeting of the AME Church, except the General Conference"

		
Bill Number		
Title	Composition of the Judicial Council	
Submitted by	Judicial Council	
Contact	vbyrd2@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

290

Intent

Increase the pool of talent of people eligible to seek office on the Judicial Council by eliminating unnecessary requirements for eligibility.

Rationale


It is important to have a wide pool of legal talent from which the church may elect persons to serve on the Judicial Council. There are legally trained persons, such as law professors or persons in government service, who are in good standing with their bar associations or other licensing bodies, but who may not be "practicing attorneys."

1 Current Text

2 ..provided said lawyers are practicing attorneys in good standing in the state or territory where they hold a valid  
3 license, and said judges are those who regularly hold court above that of committing magistrate.

4 Amended Text

5 ..provided said lawyers have a valid license to practice law and are in good standing in the state or territory where  
6 they hold a valid license and said judges are in good and regular standing with their state/territory bar or licensing  
7 organization

		
Bill Number		
Title	Limited Voting Rights	
Submitted by	Judicial Council	
Contact	vbyrd2@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

not applicable

Intent

To grant limited voting rights to members of the Judicial Council.

Rationale

Persons who serve the church in the highest judicial capacity should have a right to vote in the General Conference as do members of the executive and legislative branches of the church.


1 Current Text

2 Not applicable

3 Amended Text

4 Members of the Judicial Council shall have the right to vote on all matters before the General Conference except

5 proposed legislation.

		
Bill Number		
Title	General Conference Composition	
Submitted by	Judicial Council	
Contact	vbyrd2@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

188

Intent

To insure that members of the Judicial Council are part of the composition of the General Conference

Rationale


The Judicial Council constitutes the highest judicial body of the AME Church. Like bishops and general officers, its members are elected by the General Conference, are accountable to the General Conference, and must provide a report to the General Conference on its work for the preceding four years. The Judicial Council also hears cases during the General Conference. As such, the language regarding General Conference composition should include this important branch of the church's structure.

1 Current Text

- 2 The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops, general officers elected by the General  
3 Conference...

4 Amended Text

- 5 The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops, general officers and members of the Judicial  
6 Council elected by the General Conference...

		
Bill Number		
Title	Nepotism Policy	
Submitted by	Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Eric L. Brown	
Contact	drericlbrown@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

There is no such policy at this time.

Intent

Nepotism is securing of employment or position based on the influence of a relative. It makes partiality virtually impossible.

INTENT: To establish a mandatory Nepotism policy in the African Methodist Episcopal Church to create an atmosphere where everyones gifts and Graces can be used for the up building of Gods kingdom and not just a select few families.

Rationale

The African Methodist Episcopal Church has no such policy in place. This legislation would offer the opportunity for shared leadership throughout the Connectional church.

1 Current Text


2 There is no such policy at this time.

3 Amended Text

4 1. No persons related either by blood or marriage to any bishop, general officer or Connectional officer to the third  
5 degree shall be eligible to serve in any Connectional office, on the general board, or any Connectional committee  
6 or commission, while the bishop is actively serving in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

7 2. Nor shall any pastor nominate a person related either by blood or marriage to serve on the Steward Board or  
8 the Trustee Board in the local church.

9 There are no financial implications associated with this legislation and it is therefore, not necessary for it to be  
10 referred to the Commission on Statistics and Finance.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Full Time Service of General Officers	
Submitted by	Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Eric L. Brown	
Contact	drericlbrown@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 125 A. Responsibilities number 4

Intent

Since the General Officers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church receive a full time salary, housing allowance, travel allowance and pension contributions. Therefore, they shall not be otherwise secularly employed.

Rationale

Since the General Officers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church receive a full time salary, housing allowance, travel allowance and pension contributions. Therefore, they shall not be otherwise secularly employed.


1 Current Text

- 2 All General Officers are subject to all the rules of the Quarterly Conference except when carrying them out  
3 conflicts and/or interferes with their official duties.

4 Amended Text

- 5 That effective at the close of the 50th Quadrennial session of the General Conference that no elected or in the case  
6 of vacancy appointed General Officer of the African Methodist Episcopal Church be permitted to hold secular  
7 employment outside of the church.  
8 There are no financial implications associated with this legislation and it is therefore, not necessary for it to be  
9 referred to the Commission on Statistics and Finance.



		
Bill Number		
Title	ADDITION OF THE MINISTERIAL COURSE OF STUDY FOR MINISTERIAL TRAINING	
Submitted by	Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Eric L. Brown	
Contact	drericlbrown@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 86 - C. Course of Instruction for Itinerant Preachers

Page 87 - The Course of Instruction A. Admissions

Intent

As we celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the incorporation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, we rejoice in the fact that we finally have a resource in one volume that gives definitions of the intricate vernacular of our denomination A Dictionary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Volume 1. Authored by Rev. Dr. Eric L. Brown, a presiding elder in the Third Episcopal District, Pittsburgh Annual Conference.

Rationale

As we celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the incorporation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, we rejoice in the fact that we finally have a resource in one volume that gives definitions of the intricate vernacular of our denomination A Dictionary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Volume 1. Authored by Rev. Dr. Eric L. Brown, a presiding elder in the Third Episcopal District, Pittsburgh Annual Conference.

1 Current Text

2 Page 86

3 C. Course of Instruction for Itinerant Preachers

4 The following course of study constitutes the minimum requirement for each of the four years of study after the

5 candidate has been admitted to the annual conference. A candidate who is regularly enrolled in an approved

6 theological seminary may be exempted from the general course of study,

7 Page 87

8 but must be required to study and pass an examination in the history, polity, doctrine and current program of the

9 AME Church, The Board of Examiners should determine whether a candidate is fully registered and presently

10 attending an accredited seminary.

11 The Course of Instruction

12 A. Admissions

13 \*Bible \*Church Tradition

14 Amended Text

15     Legislation:

16     That A Dictionary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Volume 1. Create Space Publishing. North

17     Charleston, SC. 2014.


18     Be included in the course of study for those persons seeking ministerial orders in the African Methodist Episcopal

19     Church and be added to the course of study in the 2016 Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal

20     Church.

21     There are no financial implications with this bill and therefore, it is not necessary for it to be referred to the

22     Commission on Statistics and Finance.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Care of Widows and Widowers' Of Pastors and Presiding Elders	
Submitted by	Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Eric L. Brown	
Contact	drericlbrown@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 480, Article V. Section 16 - Deceased Members and Spouse Committee

Intent

Currently the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church does not provide any financial assistance for the servants of the church, until the time that the life insurance and or the annuity is paid out by the Department of Annuities, Investments and Insurance. This sometimes can take a minimum of 90 days and a maximum of 120 days in most cases. Thus leaving the widow, widower and minor children at the mercy of the kindness of the local church. As servants of the church our families should be taken care of at our demise in a respectful and caring manner.

Rationale

Currently the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church does not provide any financial assistance for the servants of the church, until the time that the life insurance and or the annuity is paid out by the Department of Annuities, Investments and Insurance. This sometimes can take a minimum of 90 days and a maximum of 120 days in most cases. Thus leaving the widow, widower and minor children at the mercy of the kindness of the local church. As servants of the church our families should be taken care of at our demise in a respectful and caring manner.


1 Current Text

2 The Deceased Members and Spouse Committee shall develop a roll and make a necrology report at the annual  
3 meetings. Each episcopal district shall provide the deceased names to CONN-M-SWAWO.

4 Amended Text

5 That effective at the close of the 50th Quadrennial session of the General Conference that when a pastor goes to  
6 claim their eternal reward that the local church and or the churches on the presiding elder district provide the  
7 regular salary and benefits to the widow or widower or minor children, if there is no spouse for a minimum of 45  
8 days from the date of the death of the pastor or presiding elder. This would make a difficult time for the grieving  
9 family a little easier.

10 There are no financial implications with this bill and therefore, it does not need to be referred to the Commission  
11 on Statistics and Finance.

		
Bill Number		
Title	MINISTERIAL ORDERS	
Submitted by	Rev Allen McClendon, Pastor, St Paul, Indianapolis, IN and Rev Deborah Lightfoot Oates, Pastor, Providence, Indianapolis, IN	
Contact	dlight10@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 90, Section V. B 1

Intent

To expand eligibility for itinerant ordination to traveling deacons in the pastorate for ten (10) years.

Rationale

Traveling deacons who have served in the pastorate for 10 years should be able to fully serve the congregations to which they have been appointed.

1 Current Text

2 B. Elders

3 Traveling deacons of two full years in good and regular standing are eligible for election to the Order of Elder

4 provided they give evidence of satisfactory performance in the course of studies prescribed in The Doctrine and

5 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.


6 Amended Text

7 B. Elders

8 Traveling deacons of two full years in good and regular standing are eligible for election to the Order of Elder

9 provided they give evidence of satisfactory performance in the course of studies prescribed in The Doctrine and

10 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and have pastored for ten or more years.

		
Bill Number		
Title	PREACHERS ADMITTED ON TRIAL	
Submitted by	Rev Deborah Lightfoot Oates, Pastor, Providence, Indianapolis, IN and Rev Allen McClendon, Pastor, St Paul, Indianapolis, IN	
Contact	dlight10@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 85, Section II. F, 1-3

Intent

To grant exception to requirements for ordination as an Itinerant Elder to Itinerant Deacons in the Pastorate for ten years. To give full orders enabling them to serve congregants in their charge.

Rationale


Itinerant Deacons who have answered the call to Pastor and for 10 years have, preached, taught, led congregations, visited the sick, buried the dead and served Holy Communion should also be able to consecrate the elements. The exception to ordain these individuals as itinerant elders would allow Itinerant Deacons in the Pastorate the ability to fully perform their pastoral ministrations with the congregations under their charge.

1 Current Text

- 2 3. When the exception rule is applied for the election to the office of itinerant elder, the candidate shall be  
3 required to complete a minimum of sixty-four hours of instruction.

4 Amended Text

- 5 3. When the exception rule is applied for the election to the office of itinerant elder, the candidate shall be  
6 required to have successfully completed the course of studies for the conference Board of Examiners.  
7 4. When the exception rule is applied for itinerant deacons in the pastorate, the candidate must have completed  
8 the course of studies for the conference Board of Examiners and must have pastored for a minimum of ten (10)  
9 years.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Preachers Admitted on Trial	
Submitted by	Rev Allen McClendon, Pastor, St Paul, Indianapolis, IN and Rev Deborah Lightfoot Oates, Pastor, Providence, Indianapolis, IN	
Contact	dlight10@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 2012, Page 85, Section II. F

Intent

To extend supervisory function of Presiding Elders to candidates for ordination exceptions.

Rationale


Presiding Elders license individuals to preach and have firsthand knowledge of candidates prior to the conference Board of Examiners. As such, presiding elders should have input on exceptions sought and/or granted in the ordination process.

1 Current Text

- 2 A candidate for ordination as itinerant elder must be a graduate of a seminary accredited by the Association of  
3 Theological Schools (ATS) or similar accrediting agency. Exception to these requirements is at the discretion of the  
4 annual conference Board of Examiners with the approval of the presiding bishop.

5 Amended Text

- 6 A candidate for ordination as itinerant elder must be a graduate of a seminary accredited by the Association of  
7 Theological Schools (ATS) or similar accrediting agency. Exception to these requirements is at the discretion of the  
8 Presiding Elder in consultation with the annual conference Board of Examiners and the approval of the presiding  
9 bishop.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Preachers Admitted on Trail - Retroactive Status Adjustment	
Submitted by	Rev Deborah Lightfoot Oates, Pastor, Providence, Indianapolis, IN and Rev Allen McClendon, Pastor, St Paul, Indianapolis, IN	
Contact	dlight10@sbcglobal.net	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Page 84, Section B

Intent

To make retroactive the status of Itinerant Deacons who were already in the process or had completed the requirements for Itinerant Elder orders prior to the adoption of the legislation in 2000.

Rationale


There are Itinerant Deacons in the pastorate, who would otherwise have been received and ordained Itinerant Elders if the law had not changed. These individuals have natural graces and acquired gifts from ministerial training and work experiences and are demonstrating commitment and dedication to serving his or her congregation. Retroactive status would recognize the passage of the Itinerant Deacons to the orders of Itinerant Elder.

1 Current Text

2 Ministers, who were previously received into ministry as Locals because the age restrictions may apply for Itinerant  
3 status, provided all other standards have been met. Upon the recommendation of the Board of Examiner, the  
4 annual conference may change the status of the Local minister and will recognize the crossover from Local to  
5 Itinerant with appropriate ceremony and liturgy written for the occasion.

6 Amended Text

7 Ministers who were previously received into ministry as Locals because of the age restrictions and Itinerant  
8 Deacons who were previously received into ministry before July, 2000 may apply for Itinerant Elder status. Upon  
9 the recommendation of the Presiding Elder in consultation with the Annual Conference Board of Examiner and the  
10 approval of the Presiding Bishop may change the status of the itinerant deacon in the pastorate to itinerant elder.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Presiding Elder	
Submitted by	Eric L Brown	
Contact	drericlbrown@gmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 100 Section VIII

Intent

To provide some sense of financial security for the clergy family following the death of an ordained clergy person who is serving a congregation at the time of their death.

Rationale

This would make a difficult time a little easier. Since it take some time to complete the paper work with the AME Department of Annuities, Investments and Insurance

1 Current Text

2 Does not exist

3 Amended Text


4 That effective at the close of the 50th Quadrennial session of the General Conference that when a pastor goes to

5 claim their eternal reward that the local church or in the case of a presiding elder, that the presiding elder district

6 provide the regular salary and benefits to the widow, widower or minor children if there is no spouse for a

7 minimum of 45 days following the death of the pastor or presiding elder.



		
Bill Number		
Title		
Submitted by	Virgil Glenn	
Contact	rev_glenn@yahoo.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

p. 89, "Section V. Ministerial Orders"

Intent

To make perfectly clear that persons who are engaged in a same sex relationship are living contrary to the will and Word of God and, as such, are ineligible for ordained ministry within our Zion.

Rationale

The 2012 Doctrine and Discipline of the A.M.E. Church, although it makes clear on p. 288 "Section XVIII. Matrimonial Relations. B. Same Sex Marriage," that "...the AME Church believes that unions of any kind between persons of the same sex or gender are contrary to the will of God... the AME Church strictly prohibits and forbids any AME clergyperson...from performing or participating in or giving any blessing to any ceremony designed to result in any persons of the same sex gender, including, but not limited to, marriage or civil unions...", does not speak specifically as it relates to those seeking ordination who are engaged in a same sex relationship. It should. Further, in "Part V. The Ministry Section I. The Call to Preach" candidates are to be asked "3. As to fruits: Are they truly convinced of sin and converted to God by their preaching?" Unless a candidate lies, how can they rationalize their same sex relationship when the word of God condemns it?

1 Current Text

2 no current text

3 Amended Text

4 before "Section V. Ministerial Orders A. Deacons", this paragraph should be added:

5 The AME Church, because we believe the Holy Scriptures are sufficient for salvation (see Articles of Religion #5)

6 and we believe that homosexuality is a sin that is expressly spoken against in the Bible (see Leviticus 18:22,

7 Romans 1:26-27 and I Timothy 1:8-10). Therefore, those persons who are actively engaged in same sex

8 relationships are ineligible for the ordained ministry as that lifestyle runs contrary to the Word of God.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Course of Instruction for Evangelists	
Submitted by	The Rev. Geoffrey Whitcomb	
Contact	thewhitcombs22@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 87; Page 110.

Intent

To establish a Course of Instruction for candidates for Evangelist in The African Methodist Episcopal Church, and to require all such candidates to successfully complete it.

Rationale

The role of Evangelist is of vital importance in the Church, as witnessing, soul winning, and teaching must happen both inside and outside of the local church house in order for the local congregation to grow. Evangelists are, under the direction of their Pastors, responsible for engaging in this work, and, as such, need to be aware of various evangelism principles and methods, both contemporary and historical, by which the gospel is effectively shared with others. The following Course of Instruction teaches these things, and is currently being used, through the respective Boards Of Examiners, to train all candidates for Evangelist in The 10th Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

1 Current Text

2 There is no current section pertaining to a Course of Instruction for candidates for Evangelist. Similarly, there is no  
3 current language requiring candidates for Evangelist to successfully complete training.

4 Amended Text

5 Part V, Section III, D. Course of Instruction for Evangelists

6 The following course of study constitutes the minimum requirements (one year of study suggested) for the training  
7 and licensure of all Evangelists in the local church. A candidate who is regularly enrolled in an approved  
8 theological seminary may be exempted by special examination from this course, provided that the candidate  
9 achieves a score of at least eighty out of one hundred percent, and presents a written report on an evangelism  
10 plan for his or her current or anticipated church context.

11 The Purposes

12 (1) To learn principles and practices of successful, Biblically-based evangelism.

13 (2) To learn historical and contemporary models of evangelism from the past 250 years.

14 (3) To practice and apply methods of evangelism in interpersonal and church contexts.

15 The Texts (In Chronological Order)

16 God, The Holy Bible.

17 Matthew 28:16-20, The Great Commission.

18 John 3:16, Gods Gift for Man to Believe and Receive.

19 Romans 10:9-10, 11-13, The Roman Road to Salvation.

20 John 16:7-11, The Work of the Holy Spirit.

21 Acts 1:8, Believers Empowered to Be Witnesses Unto Christ.

22 Ephesians 4:11-13, 14-16, Ministries Are for Equipping the Saints.

23 Whitcomb, Geoffrey, Rev., Actions For Evangelism.

24 Allen, Richard, Right Rev., The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen.

25 <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/allen/menu.html>, pp. 3-21, particularly pp. 7-13.

26 Lee, Jarena, Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee. <http://www.umilta.net/jarena.html>

27 Finney, Charles, Rev., Lectures on Revival of Religion, No. 9 (Means to be Used With Sinners) and No. 10 (To

28 Win Souls Requires Wisdom).

29 [http://www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Text.Only/pdfs/Revival\\_Lectures\\_Text.pdf](http://www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Text.Only/pdfs/Revival_Lectures_Text.pdf)

30 Foote, Julia, A Brand Plucked from the Fire,

31 <https://archive.org/stream/brandpluckedfrom00foot#page/n5/mode/2up>, pp. 81-111.

32 Finney, Charles, Rev., Lectures on Revival of Religion, No. 11 (A Wise Minister Will Be Successful), and No. 18

33 (Directions to Sinners). [http://www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Text.Only/pdfs/Revival\\_Lectures\\_Text.pdf](http://www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Text.Only/pdfs/Revival_Lectures_Text.pdf)

34 Jones, Howard, Gospel Trailblazer: An African-American Preachers Historic Journey Across Racial Lines.

35 <http://www.ccel.us/gospeltrail.toc.html>

36 Author Unknown, The Four Spiritual Laws booklet. <http://www.campuscrusade.com/fourlawseng.htm>.

37 The Process

38 (1) After the first meeting where the Biblical texts are read and discussed, each candidate must, for every meeting,

39 read, write a brief report on, and discuss in class one chapter from Actions For Evangelism and one or two reading

40 selections. Items to include in each report are as follows:

41 The gist or main point(s) of the work, particularly as related to evangelism principles.

- 42 Evangelism techniques and/or methods used to reach others.
- 43 The location and cultural context of the evangelists ministry.
- 44 The candidates assessment of whether the evangelist was successful.
- 45 (2) Items to discuss in class include at least the following, in fairly chronological order:
- 46 What is Evangelism? (Euangelion, the good news; Euangelizo, to preach the good news; Euangelistes, a
- 47 preacher of the good news).
- 48 How to Share the Faith, Part I Being a Witness Acts 1:8.
- 49 Incarnational-ism.
- 50 Koinonia Fellowship / Blending of word and deed ministries.
- 51 How to Share the Faith, Part II Leading Someone to Christ Romans 10:9-13.
- 52 Going Where the People Are.
- 53 Revivals: How to Hold Them, Pray for Them, and Minister in Them, Part I.
- 54 Consecration to God.
- 55 Contextual Communication of the Gospel (Exegeting Culture).
- 56 Revivals: How to Hold Them, Pray For Them, and Minister in Them, Part II.
- 57 Cross-Cultural Contextual Communication (Presentation vs. Message).
- 58 How to Share the Faith, Part III (Different Kinds of Evangelism).
- 59 Cross-Cultural Contextual Communication (Redemptive Analogies).
- 60 Apologetics: How to Answer Questions about the Jesus, Christianity, and/or the Church.
- 61 (3) For the last meeting, each candidate must present a written evangelism plan for his or her current or
- 62 anticipated church context, with both short-, medium-, and long-term goals, actions, and assessment steps.
- 63 Part V, Section XI, D., 5. All candidates for Evangelist are required to successfully complete the Course of
- 64 Instruction for Evangelists.

		
Bill Number		
Title	Starting New Congregations	
Submitted by	The Reverend Geoffrey S. Whitcomb	
Contact	thewhitcombs22@hotmail.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

Page 81.

Intent

To include a Preamble to this section, and to amend the current language of The Doctrine and Discipline regarding (1) the structure of new church congregations, and (2) the process of holding the first official organizational meeting of the new congregation.

Rationale

(Preamble)

Introducing this section with a paragraph detailing the importance of starting new congregations, including examining several models and methods, and encouraging all AME followers of Christ to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, places emphasis on the necessity and importance of beginning new congregations, under the unction and direction of God.

(1) The current language of The Doctrine and Discipline, in regards to the structuring of new congregations, seems to automatically follow the traditional bricks-and-mortar model of AME local churches, requiring new congregations to have a Board of Trustees, for the management of physical church property; a Steward Board, for assistance in working with spiritual concerns of the church, including the preparation of a physical space (i.e. chancel rail, altar, pulpit) for a particularly-styled (physical) communion service; and other standard Officer Boards and/or organizations. If a new congregation does not intend to own, lease, or rent a physical property, however, but instead plans to meet in public facilities (such as restaurants, libraries, parks, or community centers), private ones (such as homes), or online (an Internet-based fellowship), then requiring it to have a Trustee Board and, in some ways, a Steward Board, which would exist and function in the ways that they are currently proscribed, could become unnecessary.

In summary, the current structure used for starting new African Methodist Episcopal Church congregations does not allow for some contemporary, emerging, and yet-to-come church plant models to be fully recognized and utilized. Amending the language of The Doctrine and Discipline, and, thereby, allowing the structure of new church plants to be contextually flexible, opens up our African Methodist Episcopal Church to new ways of effectively reaching today's and tomorrow's lost generations for Jesus Christ.

(2) The language currently in use, in Part IV, Section V.B.1.d. and Section V.B.1.e., suggests that the presiding Bishop of the particular Episcopal District where the new congregation is being started must be present when the first official organizational meeting of the new congregation is held. Amending the language will remove this impression and more accurately reflect the reality of the process.

1 Current Text

2 (Preamble)

3 There is no preamble.

4 (1)

5 Part IV, Section V.B.1.i. Appoint as stewards those who are qualified.

Part IV, Section V. B. 1.j. Nominate, as The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church provides, those who are available for service as trustees.

Part IV, Section V.B.1.k. Appoint such other essential officers of the church as shall be necessary to perform the services required in the new church until the first quarterly conference is held.

(2)

Part IV, Section V.B.1.d. Read a copy of the request to the presiding bishop and verify it.

Part IV, Section V.B.1.e. Read the approval to the presiding bishop and enter both the request and the approval in the minutes.

#### Amended Text

(Preamble)

It is recognized by the African Methodist Episcopal Church that starting new congregations is vitally important to the development of Gods Kingdom and the ensuing health of our denomination. As such, the procedure needs to be undertaken with careful consideration, prayer and discernment, ongoing research, joyful presence, perseverance, and Christian love. Those who would start these new outposts of Christs Ecclesia would also be wise to examine their own motives and motivations; investigate various models and methods which vary from time to time, place to place, and culture to culture; and ultimately rely on the leading of the Holy Spirit for the congregations to best begin and continue, grow, and thrive.

These starters are also encouraged to utilize AMEC denominational resources and personnel, such as those found through the Departments of Church Growth and Development and Global Witness and Ministry; the various Episcopal District Committees or Coordinators of Evangelism; and Pastors and local church members, including Evangelists, who are already working in particular communities.


(1)

Part IV, Section V.B.1.i. Appoint such essential officers of the church as shall be necessary to perform the services required in the new church until the first quarterly conference is held.

[Reorder the succeeding letters so that Part IV, Section V.B.1.j and Part IV, Section V.B.1.k of the current Discipline are removed.]

(2)

- 33 Part IV, Section V.B.1.d. Read a copy of the request given or sent to the presiding bishop and verify it.
- 34 Part IV, Section V.B.1.e. Read the approval from the presiding bishop and enter both the request and the approval
- 35 in the minutes.

		
Bill Number		
Title	The Accountability of Stewards	
Submitted by	Loretta Nisbett	
Contact	Lnisbett@aol.com	

Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012, Part IV, Page 63, Section 3

Intent

To evaluate the spiritual and business acumens of each nominee to the Board of Stewards.

Rationale

Stewards are often confirmed as a collective body. The quarterly conference should have the knowledge of each nominee's ability to handle the temporal business of the church at least 30 days prior to any confirmation at the quarterly conference in order to vote responsibly by ballot.

1 Current Text

2 There is no current text regarding stewardship of nominees of the Board of Stewards.


3 Amended Text

4 The minister on charge shall publish a copy of the nominees for the Board of Stewards containing their  
5 qualification and justification to be submitted thirty days prior to their confirmation for review by the members of  
6 the quarterly conference. After said review, nominee's name shall be placed on a ballot. Those receiving 50% or  
7 more of the vote shall be confirmed.

8 There is no cost associated with this legislation.

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Bill Number		
Title		
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Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

164 section g iii

Intent

The intent is to provide additional options for submission of ministerial annuity payments electronically for churches and institutions who operate with payroll services.

Rationale

Currently payments are submitted at the annual conference and the mid-year conference. This bill is not to change the current language but to offer an electronic option. After research with our payroll service (ADP) they have the ability to send a pre-taxed allocation to the Department of Annuity and Investment. However the department currently accepts paper checks for additional contributions into the annuity program. Since the contribution minimum is 12% or \$312 based on a salary of \$5200. There could be a minimum contribution of 3%-5% collected at the Annual Conference and the Mid-Year Conference. The local church's payroll system could allocate electronically a weekly, bi-weekly, bi-monthly or monthly amount to department of annuity and investments. This would satisfy the collection of the annuity by Episcopal District and give optional allocation opportunities for churches using payroll services. The Department of Annuity and Investments would have to set up capability to receive electronic contributions. Since the AME Church will be celebrating 200 years of incorporation it makes sense to have an electronic option.

1 Current Text

2 The contributions payable by the ministers shall be paid and reported to their presiding elder prior to their mid-  
3 year and annual conferences, and shall be part of each minister's and presiding elder's report.

4 Amended Text

5 The contributions payable by the ministers shall be paid and reported to their presiding elder prior to their mid-  
6 year and annual conferences, and shall be part of each minister's and presiding elder's report. In addition,  
7 churches who operate with a payroll system may electronically send additional amounts to the department of  
8 investments and annuities

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