



On 2nd THOUGHT

SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER 2018

DISASTER RELIEF

*Prayers, Donations
and Human Energies*



The Second Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church
James Levert Davis and Arelis Beevers Davis, Servant Leaders
www.ame2.com

Mid-Winter Gathering 2019

Founded in 1752 Portsmouth Virginia serves as home to two of the Navy's oldest sites. Yet, that distinction pales compared to the upcoming Second Episcopal District 2019 Mid-Winter Gathering. From Thursday February 21 to February 23, 2019 the Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk Waterfront Hotel 425 Water Street is the host site for our celebratory and educational event. We will be honoring our past – Bishop Richard Allen and his legacy. We will be inspiring our future. We will prepare for phenomenal church growth and ministry expansion. We will share our mirroring reports. We will share best practices for evangelism – accessions – stewardship - spiritual growth - facility maintenance. We will share recommendations to advance God's kingdom. We will see you – clergy – laity – children – youth - young adults – in Portsmouth.



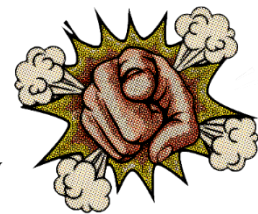
Mid-term Elections

When we choose teams, we choose people who will help us win. It does not matter the activity; we choose teammates to help us win. Team members are expected to work for and not against the team. The same is true of teams you vote to put in office. Your vote decides who will run your government and how your government will run. State legislatures decide how much money to allocate to your city/county Mayors and county executives decide which neighborhoods receive services. County/city councils decide zoning, contract, and jurisdictional budget approvals. States Attorneys decide who will be prosecuted. Sheriffs decide how to enforce laws. Judges decide how court cases will be determined. School boards decide who will oversee educational services. You decide who will make these decisions. **Go to the polls! VOTE EARLY**, VOTE ON ELECTION DAY, **VOTE ABSENTEE BALLOT**. Let our ELECTED OFFICIALS KNOW YOU ARE THE ULTIMATE DECISION MAKER.

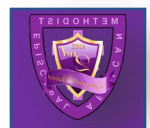


I Dare You to Trust God –Let's Do It Again

Thanksgiving more than a ritual, it's a time to reflect on how much we trust God. Last year we put on wrist bands that challenged us: *I Dare You To Trust God*. We trusted God for tangible and intangible blessings. Or did we? Beginning **November 1, 2018**, we the Second District have an opportunity to amp up our resolve to trust God. Once again, we will focus on five areas:



1. **Resources:** Commit to generosity—Give the 10% of your finances, time and talents that we owe and your offerings
2. **Witness:** Share the Good News—Everybody can tell somebody about the death burial and resurrection of Jesus



3. **Body:** Holistic health—annual physicals, establish healthy eating habits, regular exercise, mental health assessment
4. **Intellect:** Engage in continuous study—attend Bible study, conferences, seminars, read, journal, try a new hobby or re-engage with an old one
5. **Relationships:** Intentionally become a peace maker, make loving God, others, and self a priority

A new supply of wristbands is ready for distribution. Are you ready to: Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart? (Proverbs 3:5a The Message Bible). I Double dog dare you to Trust God—and if you do Trust God get ready to be amazed.

Mirroring

Mirroring gave churches a golden opportunity to visualize a better future. Congregations looked back, analyzed the present, and began envisioning a greater future. Through members insight and input congregations focused on their effectiveness in:



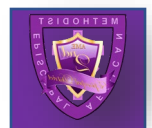
1. The Great Commission (Evangelism): *Matthew 28:19*
2. Church Expansion: (Accessions): *Acts 5:14*
3. Stewardship time, talent, and resource: *Ephesians 5:15-16; 1 Peter 4:10; Matthew 25:14-30*
4. Spiritual Growth: *Hebrew 6:1; Colossians 1:9-10*
5. Willingness to change: *Ecclesiastes 3:1*
6. Building Integrity: *John 2:17*

Now that we completed the first phase of the mirroring report you may wonder what comes next. Each completed report gives invaluable information to your congregation and our District. Thanks, to our Conference Lay

Presidents who collected reports and tabulated data. We also commend local church coordinators compiling the mirroring reports. Now, we will advance to phase 2. We will identify existing strengths – weaknesses - opportunities –issues - best practices – future directions.

This next phase gives numerous benefits to your local church. Your local church will receive an in-depth report that will include: 1. tabulated data, 2. SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), 3. recommendations, 4. resource material, 5. proven strategies.

Our initial mirroring report findings will be shared at our mid-winter gathering. An interactive panel of experienced theorist, practitioners, and scholars will offer guidance and options. They will focus on rural, suburban, and urban churches. These discussions coupled with your mirroring report will set the stage for future efforts. Your church will be better equipped to design a plan that will propel the local church into its best future. This golden opportunity (to use your report and expertise gained at the mid-winter meeting) will turn to platinum as your congregation formulates its plan to advance God's kingdom.



We Are A.M.E. – What Do You Think?

► POINT OF VIEW



The Reverend Paul J. Thomas, a Philadelphia native who has led the AME Union flock for nearly seven years, says he is getting much satisfaction and pride in engaging young adults and teenagers who have become “estranged to church.”

His secret to growing and maintaining the church’s youth population, he said, has been tailoring his Sunday and other services to appeal and relate to millennials, generally considered those born in 1980 to 2000. So, instead of dressing up in a suit and tie every Sunday, he opts to wear a “regular shirt and jeans.”

Thomas, whose youthful energy complements his youthful approach, also modifies the traditional AME worship service, with its extensive liturgies, as he sees fit. “I’ve made traditional aspects of the liturgy flexible where it’s removable and it’s something that makes sense. I will go from music into reading Scripture, then prayer and sermon or there are times we’ll do a hymn because hymns teach a different aspect,” he said.

“They label me radical in that way, what my colleagues would say is, ‘You wouldn’t know you were in an AME church.’” said Thomas, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and Lincoln University graduate who became heavily involved in the ministry around 2003. Harriet Harris, a member for 80 years, acknowledges that the church is “completely different” from her earlier years but “you learn to adjust to new ways. [And] there’s only one God.”

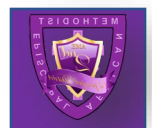
Retrieved October 26, 2018 http://www.phillytrib.com/religion/ame-union-church-drawing-in-millennial-flock-with-well-tailored/article_fc0e589f-4b14-57fd-815a-48de65e0d230.html

► POINT OF VIEW



The general rule in many churches; and it’s a very simple formula – “We stand to praise God, we sit to learn, and we kneel to pray.” Spoken or unspoken, the same rule has been followed in many AME Churches.

We stand to affirm our faith, the Apostles Creed or the Nicene Creed. We stand for the Doxology, the Call to Worship, the preface to The Decalogue, The Decalogue, the Gloria Patri, the offertory hymn and



the benediction. We stand to sing hymns, but in some areas, AMEs tend to sit and reflect during the sermonic hymn/hymn of preparation.

It has been our custom and is appropriate that we sit during readings from the Old Testament, the New Testament Epistles, the sermon, and the choir selections. It is appropriate to sit during the reading of the Psalms, but often if the Psalms are read responsively, worship leaders ask the people stand.

Following the rule, “We stand to praise God, sit to learn, and kneel to pray,” it is appropriate to sit during the scripture reading(s) because we are being taught by the Word of God. When God’s Word is being read, it’s a learning moment, not praise moment. Scripture lessons are “moments to learn and to be inspired” by God’s Word. We sit to learn and when we listen; we learn from God’s Word. (the Reverend Doctor Calvin H. Sydnor, III, 2011)

► POINT OF VIEW

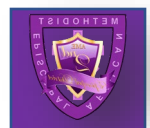


There is an ongoing debate within and beyond the AME Church – how to worship and praise the Lord in the present age. Advocates of postmodern church marketing play down the role of traditional worship, say that denominational loyalty is no longer a crucial factor for those seeking a church home and that contemporary worship brings more new members into the fold. And those in favor of traditional worship say that the strength of the church is in doing things as they’ve always been done

and letting potential members either accept what they find or look elsewhere. The best practice probably falls between those two extremes.

I also believe, however, that some of our Connectional worship services should follow our traditional Order for Worship, integrate new things, and model on a large scale how AME worship should look.

At Morris Brown, we follow the traditional AME Order for worship, complete with anthems, traditional worship music and spirituals. We also, however, include non-traditional elements like the presence of acolytes, an altar call, a praise dance ministry, a mime ministry, a Young Adult Choir that specializes in contemporary praise music, and congregational hymns from the African-American Heritage Hymnal as well as the African Methodist Episcopal Church Hymnal. The result is a worship experience that appeals to those who didn’t grow up AME but is also appreciated by longtime members who find as much meaning in *Lift Up your Heads O Ye Gates* or *For a Thousand Tongues to Sing* as they do in *Shake the Foundation with Praise*. The pleasant irony is that when our mobile and postmodern young adult members move elsewhere to pursue



new career opportunities, they often come back to Morris Brown and say, I found an AME Church, but it doesn't feel like an AME Church! *Rev. Joseph Darby*

Retrieved October 22, 2018 from <https://morrisbrownamechurch.org/we-stand-to-praise-god/>

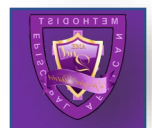
Disaster Relief



Television, newspaper, internet depictions cannot begin to convey the destructive impact of Hurricane Florence. For a few days, media accounts kept Hurricane Florence's aftermath before us. But, the next storms came. Hurricane Florence shrank to the background no longer dominating broadcasters' interest. Fortunately, Bishop Davis working with members of the North Carolina conference established a disaster relief plan that extends beyond a few weeks.

This long-term multi-faceted consistent response continues to support our churches and church members. Our collaborative efforts have made this long-term plan possible. Bishop and Mother Davis thank each of you for all you have done to help and support our Second District family during this time of need. We appreciate and thank the churches serving as collection centers in the Baltimore, Washington, Virginia, and Western North Carolina conferences. We especially commend our HOPE CENTERS, that is the churches in the North Carolina Conference that despite being affected by Hurricane Florence have opened their hearts and doors to provide much needed assistance.

Through our combined efforts we have dispatched two loads of water (120 cases/delivery) via 18-wheel trucks. Four designated sites (Empowerment Temple, Pilgrim Washington D.C., New Mount Olive, Chesapeake, St. Paul Raleigh) receive water, cleaning supplies, rubber gloves, masks, trash bags, paper towels, brooms, and mops, toiletries, diapers/disposable, blankets, wipes, money cards. These supplies will be shipped to our Second District HOPE CENTERS (St. James Kinston, New Pike Creek Burgaw, St. Luke Fayetteville, St. Stephens Wilmington). The Women's Missionary Society will help distribute food and gift cards.



Our upcoming relief efforts include: ministry to those whose loved ones died, financial assistance to churches and people whose homes are damaged, unsafe, or inaccessible and donation of 10,000 pounds of emergency food to our members and the wider community. From November 12 -13, 2018 our HOPE CENTERS will serve as food distribution sites. In addition, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff and computers are available at St. Paul to help members complete government assistance and insurance forms. Because recovery is long term, every conference will be asked to send cleanup crews (Sons of Allen, youth ministries).



The District intends to pay the deductible for churches impacted by Florence. Affected churches will complete an application - submit a copy of their insurance policy - provide a picture of the destruction. In addition to these efforts, our District is working with the North Carolina legislature to ensure that our churches can receive assistance from FEMA.

We are a connectional church; our North Carolinian members need our help. Let us remember them not only in

our prayers, but with donations and human energies that will help them through this crisis. In all that we do, our priority is to African Methodist. Bishop Richard Allen reminds us that, “The Lord was pleased to strengthen us, and remove all fear from us, and disposed our hearts to be as useful as possible.” Hurricane Florence impact calls us to this usefulness. Let us pray continually for our Brothers and Sisters in the North Carolina Conference who have been devastated by Hurricane Florence. We pray that God’s grace – hope – joy – love – peace overflow. And we pray that every need be met as lives are built and hearts are healed.

