St. Andrew A.M.E. Church
867 S. Parkway East
Memphis, TN  38106

141st West Tennessee Annual Conference

Conference Minutes

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, Presiding Prelate, Thirteenth Episcopal District
Dr. Susan J. Leath, Episcopal Supervisor, Missions

The Reverend Linda F. Thomas-Martin, Host Presiding Elder
The Reverend C. Robert Finch, Co-Host Presiding Elder

The Reverend Dr. Kenneth S. Robinson, M.D., Host Pastor
Reverend Marilynn S. Robinson, Host Pastor

The Reverend Barbara S. Green, Recording Secretary
The Reverend Quinten L. Smith, Engrossing Secretary
THURSDAY, October 8, 2015

Opening Worship Service

The Opening Worship Service for the 141st Session of the West TN Annual Conference opened at 7:35 pm with Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch as Worship Leader. The preacher was Reverend Barbara S. Green, Pastor of Bethel AME Church, Memphis. The text was 1 John 3:1-3 for the sermon entitled, “I Have My Daddy’s DNA.”

Bishop Jefffrey N. Leath welcomed the following visitors:

Presiding Elders: Harold M. Love, Jr., (South Nashville), and Troy Merritt, Jr., (Nashville); William Easley, Jr, (West KY); James E. Smith, (Lexington, KY); and Reverend(s) Roderick Belin (TN), Brock, (TN), Anthony Sinkfield and Alexander Gatson (TN). Sister(s) Gladys Brock (TN).

Reverend(s) Kenneth J. Golphin (KY), and Sister(s) _______ Smith, and Diane Golphin.

Bishop Leath made the following announcements: Bishop acknowledged General Officer Reverend Dr. James C. Wade (Executive Director, Department of Church Growth and Development) and Dr. Julia Wade the District Officers Theresa Baker, (WKY - WMS), Latanua Germany, (13th District YPD Director), Component Presidents, clergy spouses, Jim and Mary Sargent (7th District, Palmetto Conference) parents of the preacher along with choir members of Bethel, AME Memphis, TN. Additionally, Bishop Leath acknowledged Supervisor Susan J. Leath.

Additionally, Bishop allowed the out of district guests to give their names, where they serve and their aspirations. Reverend Dr. Roy Jones (Little Rock, Arkansas) candidate for Christian Education. Reverend(s) Allen Lewis, California, and _______Calloway for Episcopal Service.
Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath thanked Reverend Barbara S. Green, for delivering the Word.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath also thanked the West TN Conference along with Presiding Elders C. Robert Finch and Linda F. Thomas-Martin and the St. Andrew AME Church Family for hosting in such a marvelous way.

Bishop Leath announced that devotion will begin on tomorrow morning at 8:30 am with the Board of Examiner’s student leading in devotion and roll call will begin at 9:00 am.

The Opening Worship Service concluded at 9:40 pm.

Friday, October 9, 2015

Morning Business Session

Devotions were led by students of the Board of Examiners at 8:45 am: Reverend Marva C. Bell, Donna J. Lorhorn, and Emma Jean Ward. Sister(s) Annie B. Garvin, and Cassandra Palmer.

The Morning Business Session opened when Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath assumed the chair at 8:50 am. Bishop asked if anyone other than Reverend Darrell K. Scott was celebrating a birthday, since no other person; therefore, the congregation sang happy birthday to Reverend Scott. Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath called for the Recording Secretary, Reverend Barbara S. Green, to call the Roll (see attached).

The following Itinerant Elder(s) were excused: Michael Broadnax, Leonard Curry, Charles Jackson, Deborah Marshall, Stanley Richardson, and Harlan White. The following were absent: Itinerant Elder(s): Alicia Fai Crooks, and Niambi Webster. Local Deacons who were
absent: Reverend Chauncy Tall. Local Elder(s) excused were: Iola Bridges, Charles Hornton. Superannuate members who were excused: Reverend(s) Harold Horton, James Weeden, Willie V. Woods, Deborah T. Dennie.

The name of Reverend Alicia Fae Crooks was referred to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee to determine her status with the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Presiding Elder Linda Faye Thomas-Martin presented the organization of the Conference (see attached), which included President of the Annual Conference Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, Recording Secretary Reverend Barbara S. Green, Engrossing Secretary Reverend Quinten L. Smith, and Statistician Reverend Darrell K. Scott. Their election was moved by Presiding Elder Linda Faye Thomas-Martin, and seconded by Reverend Clay A. Holliday, Sr. The motion carried.

- The nominees for Triers of Appeal members for 2015-2016 are Reverend(s) Willie M. Williams, Barbara S. Green, Darrell K. Scott, Anthony T. Branch, and Verlie Horton, D.Min. Reverend Clay A. Holliday, Sr., made the motion to elect. It was seconded by Reverend Anthony Branch. The motion carried.

The Conference Boundaries were established as the first 10 rows across the Sanctuary. Reverend Marilynn S. Robinson made the motion. It was seconded by Reverend Colleen P. Gibson. The motion carried. Presiding Elder Linda Faye Thomas-Martin nominated the Finance Committee to include: Reverend(s) Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., Willie M. Williams, Anthony T. Branch, Colleen P. Gibson, Eric J. Knowles, Sister(s) Mary T. Jones, and Lovie Jacocks. Reverend
Hilda D. Taylor made the motion. It was seconded by Reverend Darrell K. Scott. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin offered the following Marshals to serve – Reverend(s) Perry Lorenzo Herman, Marcus Rogers, and Terri Strong. Brother(s) Julius Jennings and Bill Palin. The motion was made by Reverend Clay A. Holliday, Sr.. It was seconded by Reverend Terri L. Strong. The motion carried.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath called for the Board of Examiners report (see attached). The following report was offered:

- Conference Evangelist – Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., moved that Sister Gale A. Hunter’s certificate as a licensed evangelist at the 139th session of the West Tennessee Annual Conference be renewed. It was seconded by Reverend Walter Henry. The motion carried.
- Admissions. We have no students in the First Year Class. So ends our report on Admissions.
- First Year Class Reverend Darrell K. Scott moved that Cassandra F. Palmer be advanced to the Second Year Class in Local Relations. It was seconded by Reverend Walter Henry. The motion carried.
- Second Year Class Reverend Ivy Hudson Courtez, moved that Annie B. Garvin be elected and ordained an Itinerant Deacon in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and that she be advanced to the Third Year Class. It was seconded by Reverend Terri L. Strong. The motion carried.
• Third Year Studies – Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., moved that Reverend Donna J. Lorhorn be advanced to the Fourth Year Class In Itinerant Relations. It was seconded by Reverend Colleen P. Gibson. The motion carried.

• Fourth Year Class – Reverend Young did not participate in the classes of the Board this year. Reverend Hilda D. Taylor moved that Reverend Young In Local Relations for St. James, Memphis remain the in Fourth Year Class. It was seconded by Reverend Colleen P. Gibson. The motion carried.

• Fourth Year Class – Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., moved that Reverend Marva Patrice Curry Bell be highly commended for completing their labor in the Lord in the classes of the Board Of Examiners, and that they be warmly encouraged as they pursue completion of the academic requirements for ordination as Itinerant Elder. It was seconded by Reverend Benita Granberry Livingston, D.Min. The motion carried.

• Fourth Year Class - Reverend Kirk W. Ridley, Sr. moved that Reverend Queen Ann Yancy Branch be highly commended for her years of study and labor in the Lord and that he be elected and ordained an Itinerant Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church! It was seconded by Reverend Terry L. Strong. The motion carried.

• Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., moved that Reverend(s) Erica Mack, Aundrae Deshone Mack, Cynthia Pearson and Clay A. Holliday, Jr., having completed Second Year Class remain on hold in Itinerant Relations seek to begin or continue in seminary, whenever possible and that they - while not actively attending the classes of the board - would maintain an active license to preach, be answerable to the Quarterly Conference
of his or her local church, render active service in that church, and remain accountable to the Board. It was seconded by Reverend Walter Henry.

- Fourth Year Studies – Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., moved that Mattie L. Partee in Local Relations for St. John, Memphis, and Sharon Felecia Webster-Walker, - In Local Relations for St. Andrew, Memphis moved that the above students return to complete their work in the Fourth Year Class is so desired. It was seconded by Reverend Colleen P. Gibson. The motion carried.

THE FOLLOWING ITINERANT DEACONS REMAIN ON HOLD, HAVING COMPLETED FOURTH YEAR CLASS

2014
WILKERSON, JOY LYNN
WILLIAMS, FRANCIS LOYD

2013
JACKSON, ASHLEIGH NICHOLE
REEVES III, EMANUEL WENDELL

2012
BROWNLOW, AUBREY GAMEL
GREEN, ANGELA DENENE
TRAYNHAM-OWENS, ALFREDA
MILLER, MARVETTE

2011
HENDRICKS, DORIS BRIETTA
At the conclusion of the report, Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., moved the report be adopted as a whole. It was seconded by Reverend Walter Henry. The motion carried.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath called for the Presiding Elder’s Summary Report(s). Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin presented the summary financial report for the South Memphis District as follows: 60 conversions, 182 accessions, 3,361 members, $5,424,227 funds raised and $6,258,673 indebtedness and brought to the conference $125,566.

Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch presented the summary financial report for the North Memphis District 26 conversions, 88 accessions, 1,555 members, $1,511,690 funds raised and $935,229 indebtedness and brought to the conference $93,940.
FRIDAY, October 9, 2015

Memorial Service

The Memorial Service began at 11:30 am with Reverend Perry Lorenzo Herman as the Worship Leader. The service celebrated and remembered those members of the Annual Conference and Connectional leaders who died since we last convened. The names of Reverend Justine Ross and Dr. Linda Cox, Director of Christian Education were mentioned. Additionally, the names who were deceased were listed in the report.

The Memorial Service concluded at 11:54 am.

Hour of Power

The Hour of Power began at 11:55 am with Reverend Terri L. Strong as the Worship Leader. The worship services was a prayer service with prayers offered by Brother Dan Lewis and Reverend William L. Smith and congregational selections. Reverend Terri L. Strong read the scripture which was taken from Acts 5:17-29.

The Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD, Host Pastor made announcements. Bishop also made announcements and ask that we reconvene at 2:00 pm.

The morning business session concluded at 12:30 am.
FRIDAY, October 9, 2015
Afternoon Business Session

Devotion was led by the students of the Board of Examiners Reverend Marva C. Bell at 1:49 pm. Bishop Leath asked Reverend Alonzo Holman, (ETN) to thank the Pastors and Churches who sponsored the luncheon for the Bishop and his guests.

Bishop Leath recognized the following individuals with aspirations for Episcopal service: Reverend Dr. Cecila Greenbarr (4th Episcopal District) and Rev. Dr. Fredrick Wright, (2nd Episcopal District). Additionally, Bishop Leath recognized Presiding Elder Walter W. Reid, (North Nashville); Reverend(s) Otto Duncan (8th Episcopal District); and Victor Goodman, (TN).

Bishop Leath stated that Pastors allotted 2 minutes for each Pastor to present their reports and asked Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch of the North Memphis District to call for the Pastoral Reports for the North Memphis District. The following churches reported:

- Reverend Dr. Verlie Horton – Christ Tabernacle, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Verdella Coleman.
- Reverend Clonia Young – Allen Chapel, Paris reported. Delegate Brother Jasper Bruce.
- Reverend George Turks, Jr., – Salters Chapel, Dyersburg reported. Delegate Sister Ann Harris.
- Brother Clay A. Holliday, Jr. - McKenzie Temple, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Reshun Green
• Reverend Anthony Hodges – St. Paul, South Fulton reported. Delegate was absent.

• Reverend Marcus Rogers – Williams Chapel reported. Delegate Brother Lewis Hurd.

• Reverend Irene W. Booker – Mt. Olive, Millington reported. Delegate Brother Bobby Watson.

• Reverend Walter Henry – Mt. Herman, Millington reported. Delegate Sister Mary T. Jones.

• Reverend Ivy Hudson Courtez – St. John, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Brenda Hollowell.

• Reverend Dave Louis Adams, Sr., – St. Mark, Munford reported. Delegate Sister Wilma McCoy.

• Reverend Colleen P. Gibson – Greer Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Michael Pegues.

• Reverend Clay A. Holliday, Sr., - Brown Chapel, Union City reported. Delegate Brother Ardell Maddox.

• Reverend Hilda D. Taylor – Avery Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Michael Floyd.

• Reverend Anthony T. Branch – Greenwood, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Larry Strong.

• Reverend John Dandridge – Quinn Chapel, Paris reported. Delegate Brother George Combs, Jr.

• Reverend William L. Smith – St. Sinai, Arlington reported. Delegate Sister Helen Turner.
Bishop Leath acknowledged the request of the Reverend William L. Smith for superannuation status, and referred him to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee.

- Reverend Willie M. Williams – Providence, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Beverly Cooperwood.
- Reverend Quinten L. Smith – Greater Payne Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Bill Palin.
- Reverend Michael D. Broadnax - St. James, Memphis reported. Reverend Robin E. Henderson made the report for the Pastor who is ill. Delegate Brother Julius Jennings. Bishop thanked Reverend Robin E. Henderson, PhD., for the exceptional way in which her gifts and grace allowed her to assist with St. James during the illness of Pastor Broadnax. Additionally, noted that if Reverend Henderson needed a recommendation for the services she provided he is to offer an outstanding recommendation on her behalf. Bishop Leath also thanked the membership of St. James for being prayerful and patience during Pastor Broadnax’s illness and noted the compensation listed went to Pastor Broadnax and not the Reverend Henderson.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath asked for a Song – Victory Is Mine after all of the Pastor’s Reports had been given.

Bishop Leath stated that the Pastors will have 2 minutes to present their reports and asked Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin to call for the Pastoral Reports for the South Memphis District.
The following churches reported:

- Reverend Jerry Epperson – St. Mark, reported. Delegate Brother Danny Gray.
- Reverend David Yancy, II – Spring Chapel, Grand Junction reported. The Delegate Brother Samuel Herring.
- Reverend John Moore – Fredman Chapel, Decaturville reported. The Delegate Sister Robbie White.
- Reverend Errol Thomas, Wrights Chapel reported. The Delegate Brother Leon Lynn.
- Reverend Perry Lorenzo Herman – Galilee, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Esther Thornton.
- Reverend Kirk W. Ridley, Sr., – White’s Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Everett McIntyre.
- Reverend Lula Marie Martin-Sanderson – Wilson Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Audrey Leakes.
- Reverend Barbara S. Green – Bethel – Memphis, reported. Delegate Sister Alma Luper.
- Reverend Elizabeth Thurman Shell – Noah Chapel, Millington reported. Delegate Sister Rita Nelson.

Reverend Sabrina Transou – New Greater Bethel, Jackson reported. Delegate Dr. Pamela Murray.

Reverend Agnes Henderson – New Allen Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Roxie P. Ball stood in the pew because she fell earlier. Sister Ann Williams stood with the Pastor.


Bishop Leath recognized Reverned Dr. Ceasar Richburg (7th Episcopal District) a candidate for Episcopal Service. Bishop also recognized Reverend Sydney Bryant (Nashville); and Sister Andriette Bryant (Nashville). Three videos were played which featured three individuals aspiring for the Episcopal Office: General Officer, Daryl Ingram, (Executive Director, Department of Christian Education); Reverend Williams, and Chaplain _________________.

Bishop Leath addressed the topic of the mode of election for the General Conference Delegate elections. The Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., moved that the mode of election
be by Electronic Voting. The Reverend Kirk W. Ridley seconded the motion. Following any unreadiness, the motion carried.

Bishop Leath acknowledged those clergy who have submitted their names as candidates for General Conference Delegates and Alternate Delegates. Bishop then asked if there were any others who wished to submit their names or if any wanted to change from delegate to an alternate.


The following clergy submitted their name as alternate candidates for General Conference Reverends: Perry Herman, Kirk W. Ridley, Sr., George Turks, and Verlie Horton, D.Min.

The following lay submitted their name as candidates for General Conference Delegates: Roxie P. Ball, Gwen F. Dillihunt, Pauline Guyton, Lovie Jacocks, Mary T. Jones, Joseph Martin, John McClinton, Rita K. Nelson, Verda Phipps, Michael D. Steward, Shelia Tolbert, Sedella Gregory and Epperson

The following person submitted her name for General Conference Alternate: Sister Thylia Wilson.
Bishop Leath asked that the 141st Annual Conference Guide and Workbook be used as the agenda for the Conference. The motion was made by Reverend Perry L. Herman and seconded by Sister Mary T. Jones. The motion carried.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath called for the following Committee Reports:

- The Conference Trustees - reported. (See attached).

Bishop noted that the building which was formerly known as Palestine A.M.E. is Abandon Property and has not been given to McKenzie Temple/Chainbreakers. All properties noted as abandoned are under the control of the Trustees. For the record, it was noted that McKenzie Temple is not paying rent at this time.

**Salter’s Chapel** AME located at 480 Miffin Road, Henderson, Tennessee needs to be sold. Permission is required of Trustees, pending recommendation by Trustees to sell Salter’s Chapel. The motion was made by Presiding Elder Linda Faye Thomas-Martin and seconded by Reverend Jerry Epperson. The motion carried.

**Mt. Pisgah**

Mt. Pisgah property is being rented by One Faith Christian Church. Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch noted that in lieu of paying rent, the Church has been paying the water repair bill. The motion was made by Reverend John Dandridge and seconded by Reverend Irene Booker to sell Mt. Pisgah. An unreadiness was made by Reverend Jerry Epperson. Reverend Epperson stated that Mt. Pisgah is heirs property and when it was given to the African Methodist Episcopal to be used; however, if it ceased to be operated by the African Methodist Episcopal Church it would revert to the original owners. Reverend Dandridge amended his motion to give the Annual
Conference the permission to approved clearing of title to Mt. Pisgah either through reversion or sale of the property. It was seconded by Reverend Beverly Darden. The motion carried.

**CLAYBORN BALL TEMPLE**

Pending the action of the Trustees, the Annual Conference agrees to the sale of the property presently leased to St. Patrick. The motion was made by Reverend Dr. Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., to sell the property to Hope Foundation for $50,000 and 0.2 acre plot of land for $15,000. It was seconded by Brother George Combs, Jr. The motion carried. Brother Combs commended Bishop Leath for finalizing the selling of the project. Bishop indicated that it was all the work of God.

Bishop is proposing that the funds from the sale of the property [$65,000] be divided after expenses with ½ of the monies going to the West Tennessee and the remaining monies be used to take care of needed repair work on the Episcopal Residence. The motion was made by Reverend Kirk W. Ridley. It was seconded by Sister Dorothy Ealy. The motion carried.

Long Chapel two options:

Bishop Leath asked what is the prospect of the present renter purchasing the property. Reverend Jerry Epperson said that the McCombs family spoke with him about purchasing 5 of the 7 acres. Bishop stated that the family should acquire the services of an attorney and form a cemetery association and the African Methodist Episcopal Church will sell the cemetery for $1.00.

Second Option. The county has a landfill.
Bishop Leath stated that pending the action of the Annual Conference Trustees, the Church will sell the property. The motion was made by Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch. It was seconded by Reverend Jerry Epperson. The motion carried.

Announcements were made by Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD.,

Bishop Leath asked Pastors and Delegates to sign the documents verifying that the Annual Reports are correct. Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, noted that we would convene at 7:00 pm for the Retirement Service.

**The afternoon business session recessed at 5:25 pm.**

**The Retirement Service**

The Retirement Worship Service began at 7:05 pm. Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch offered The Statement of Achievement of Reverend William L. Smith for his 36 years of service in the 13th Episcopal District.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath offered The Tribute to Reverend William L. Smith and recognized his daughter, and church members. Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath noted that Reverend William L. Smith has only retired from the Pastoral ministry; however, his gifts and graces can still be utilized within the body of Christ. Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath encouraged Reverend Smith to assume his place with honored joy and noted that a monetary token of love would be given and encourages those present to individually give a token of love to prior to closing of conference.

Reverend Smith made comments and thanked everyone and noted the importance each charge had on his family’s life.
Bishop Leath recognized the following guests: Bishop Clement W. Fugh (14th Episcopal District); Supervisor, Alexis Fugh. General Officers: Reverend Dr. James C. Wade (Executive Director, Department of Church Growth and Development) and Dr. Richard Allen Lewis, (Treasurer/CFO, AME Finance Department).

Bishop Leath asked Bishop Clement W. Fugh to offer the prayer and blessings.

The Retirement Service concluded at 7:20 pm.

The Renewal of Ordination Vows

The Renewal of Ordination Vows began at 7:25 pm. With Itinerate and Local Elders renewing their vows before the Lord.

The Renewal of Ordination Vows concluded at 7:35 pm.

Unity Worship

The Unity Worship began at 7:40 pm. The Worship Leader was the West Tennessee Lay President, Sister Lovie Jacocks. The speaker, Dr. Shirley Cason-Reed. The text was taken from Philippians 2:1-11. The message was entitled, “Power In Unity.”

Bishop Leath thanked St. Andrew’s choir and liturgical dance ministry for ministering in such a marvelous way. He announced Church School will be from 8:30-8:55 am and that a health presentation will begin at 9:00 am on tomorrow. Additionally, Dr. Shirley Cason Reed for a challenging message.
Bishop Leath asked Reverend Dr. James C. Wade (Executive Director, Department of Church Growth and Development) to offer the benediction.

The worship service concluded at 8:45 pm.

THIS CONCLUDES THE FIRST BUSINESS DAY.