

**THE MINUTES OF THE 120TH SESSION OF THE EAST TENNESSEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
BETHEL, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
SEPTEMBER 9-13, 2020**

WEDNESDAY – September 9, 2020

Literary Reports

At 7:00 p.m., Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, Presiding Prelate of the 13th Episcopal District, opened the 120th Session of the East Tennessee Annual Conference via virtual technology with devotion. Opening song was led by the Reverend Dr. Roderick D. Belin, My Hope Is Built. Brother Terence L. Mayes, Jr. led evening prayer followed by Sister Donna S. Love reading the Scripture text, Joshua 4:1-3, 19-24.

Bishop Leath called for the following literary reports:

- State of the Church presented by the Reverend Archie C. Griffin, Jr.
- Social Action presented by the Reverend Vickie Coleman.
- Stewardship and Tithing presented by the Reverend Coleman March.
- Health Commission Report: Health and Wellness presented by Dr. Tanja Holsey, MD.

Following each report Bishop Leath opened the floor for discussion of the conference. Subjects of discussion included identification of the need for church involvement in social action and importance of locating and identifying pertinent information pertaining to the church community related to COVID-19. Session was concluded with prayer by Bishop Leath at 8:14 PM.

THURSDAY – September 10, 2020

Ministry Reports

At 7:00 pm, Bishop Leath reconvened the East Tennessee Annual Conference with announcements. Following announcements Bishop Leath called for devotion led in song by the Reverend Dr. Roderick D. Belin, “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.” The Reverend Dickie Sebastian led evening prayer followed by Attorney Gia Haselrig reading Scripture, Joshua 4:1-3, 15-24.

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Bishop Leath called for the report of the Fayetteville-Pulaski District. The Reverend Dr. Terence L. Mayes, Presiding Elder of the Fayetteville-Pulaski District reported. Additionally, the following individual churches reported from the Fayetteville-Pulaski District:

- The Reverend Alma Herbert – Mt. View
- The Reverend Vanessa Holmon – St. John and Suggs Chapel
- The Reverend Dr. Charles Holsey – St. Paul, Fayetteville
- The Reverend Ernest Latham – Campbell Chapel & Powell Chapel
- The Reverend Coleman C. March, Jr. – Shorter Chapel
- The Reverend Dr. Terence L. Mayes, Sr. – St. Paul, Agnew
- The Reverend Dickey Sebastian – Berry Chapel
- The Reverend Lance Shelton – Brown's Temple
- The Reverend Paul Sherrill – St. Paul, Aspen Hill & Trotter Chapel
- The Reverend William Howard Smith – Friendship & Round Hill

In addition, the Reverend William Howard Smith made a request to the East Tennessee Annual Conference to be superannuated after 46 years of pastoring due to health, family, and business concerns.

Bishop Leath applauded the report of the Fayetteville-Pulaski District churches on behalf of the entire conference. Bishop Leath called for the report of the Chattanooga-Knoxville District. The Reverend Dr. Eva M. Settles, Presiding Elder of the Chattanooga-Knoxville District reported. Additionally, the following individual churches reported from the Chattanooga-Knoxville District:

Following churches reported from the Chattanooga-Knoxville District:

- The Reverend Dr. Pedro Basden – Warren Chapel
- The Reverend Lee Russell Brown – Bethel, Knoxville & Clayborn Temple
- The Reverend Archie Griffin, Jr. – St. Paul, Alcoa
- The Reverend Fred Harris – Allen Temple & Joseph Chapel
- The Reverend Dr. Sheila Harris - St. James

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- The Reverend A. J. Holman – Bethel, Chattanooga
- The Reverend Kenneth D. Love – St. Paul, Chattanooga

Bishop Leath applauded the report of the Chattanooga-Knoxville District churches on behalf of the entire conference as well as making an observation and commendations in reference to Bethel, Knoxville's report. Bishop Leath acknowledged the virtual presence of two connectional officers, sister Ora Easley and the Reverend Dr. Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, WIM historiographer.

Bishop Leath led the conference in general confession, the declaration of pardon, and spiritual encouragement. Bishop Leath recessed the conference with blessings in prayer. Session concluded at 8:16 PM.

FRIDAY – September 11, 2020

Opening Worship Service

The Opening Worship Service of the 120th Session of the East Tennessee Annual Conference began at 7:02 PM with Presiding Elder Eva M. Settles (Chattanooga-Knoxville District) as the Worship Leader. The preacher was the Reverend Dr. Sheila Harris (Pastor of St. James, Chattanooga). The text was Hebrews 6:19 for the sermon entitled, "The Anchor of Hope."

Bishop Leath welcomed special guest attending virtual conference through zoom, Facebook Live, and YouTube. In addition, Bishop Leath acknowledged the presence of Brother Christopher Greer who is a Connectional Officer within the YPD, the 13th District Lay President, Sister Dorothy Ealy, 13th District WIM President, the Reverend Stephanie Raglin, 13th District RAYAC President, Sister Angel Wilson, 13th District WMS President, Sister Faye Walker, Presiding Elders William Hale, Colleen Gibson, Kenneth Golphin, Troy Merritt, Sidney Bryant, and the Reverend Dr. Antonio Sinkfield (Tennessee Conference). Bishop Leath presented final announcements.

Opening Worship Service concluded at 7:53 PM.

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SATURDAY – September 12, 2020

Business Session I

At 8:30 AM, Bishop Leath reconvened the East Tennessee Annual Conference beginning with devotion. Devotion began in song led by the Reverend Dr. Roderick D. Belin, “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.” The Reverend Lance Shelton led morning prayer followed by Sister Eula Massengale reading Scripture, Psalm 23.

Bishop Leath initiated virtual roll call by requesting all lay and young adult delegates, conference leaders and clergy members of the East Tennessee Conference acknowledge their presence by typing present. Roll call will be confirmed later in session. Bishop Leath confirmed and thanked God for the report of the presiding elders of no clergy deaths during the 2019-2020 conference year. Bishop Leath excused the Reverends Ruby Mason-Crum, Etta Garth, Robert Bailey, and Willie Leslie. Additionally, Bishop Leath lifted in prayer Sister Barbara Howard as her mother has passed. Bishop Leath excused the Reverend Barbara Sanderfur due to illness.

Bishop Leath called for the organization of the conference by Presiding Elders Mayes, Sr. and Settles. Presiding Elder moved the election of the following: the Presiding Bishop of the 13th Episcopal District, the Right Reverend Jeffrey N. Leath as President Ex-Officio of the Annual Conference, the Reverend Kenneth D. Love as recording secretary, Dr. Sandra Griffin as engrossing secretary and the Reverend Dr. Charles Holsey, as statistician, conference Marshalls: the Reverends Dickey Sebastian, Irvin Hines, and Sister Angela Bourne. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder Settles moved that the following serve as the finance committee: the Reverends Dr. Charles Holsey, Lee Russell Brown, Vanessa Holmon, Kenneth D. Love, Sr., Sister Gloria Beverly, Brother Charles Moore, and Sister Donna Simmons. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder Settles moved that the following serve as Triers of Appeal: the Reverends Beryl Basden, Fred Harris, Barbara Jackson, Coleman March, Jr., and Lance Shelton. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder Mayes moved that the following serve on the Judicial Committee 2020-2022: the Reverends Dr. Eva M. Settles, Dr. Pedro Basden, Archie C. Griffin, Jr., Marty Koontz, and Judge John McClarty. The motion carried.

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Presiding Elder Mayes moved that the bounds of the conference shall be the main floor of Bethel, Knoxville sanctuary and the official established meeting of annual conference members connected via the zoom format. The motion carried. Bishop Leath clarified that all delegates, clergy, and conference leaders must be in attendance via zoom. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder Settles moved that the conference approve the agenda as outlined in the published conference guide with reasonable and appropriate adjustments, The 120th Session of the East Tennessee Annual Conference Guide. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder Settles moved that the record of the literary report session convened on Wednesday, September 9, 2020, and the Pastoral Report presentation on September 10, 2020 be acknowledged and engrossed in the record of the 120th Annual Session of the East Tennessee Conference. The motion carried.

Bishop Leath called for the Board of Examiners report (see report). The Reverend A. J. Holman presented.

- 2nd Year Studies – The Reverend Dr. Terence L. Mayes, Sr. moved that Brother Terence L. Mayes, Jr. (itinerant ministry) be elected and ordained itinerant deacon effective on the completion of the requisite hours and that he be passed to the third-year studies effective from the day of his ordination. Bishop Leath addressed unreadiness. The motion carried.

Bishop Leath addressed and encouraged Brother Mayes, Jr. Brother Mayes, Jr. answered questions of the bishop. The Reverend A. J. Holman moved that the Board of Examiner report be adopted as a whole. The motion was accepted by common consent.

Business Session II

Bishop Leath called for the Ministerial Efficiency Committee report. The Reverend Kenneth D. Love, Sr. reported. Bishop Leath confirmed that no matters came before the committee during conference year 2019-2020. Bishop Leath referred the Reverend William Howard Smith to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee per request for superannuated status. Additionally, the Reverend Ruby Mason-Crum was referred to Ministerial Efficiency Committee per request for superannuation.

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Bishop Leath discussed the District Budget noting that there has been no change. The conference affirmed the District Budget by common consent. Bishop Leath requested that the affirmation of the District Audit be held until the planning meeting due to delay in preparation related to disruption of the pandemic. Request was accepted by common consent.

Bishop Leath called for the Treasurer's report. The Reverend Dr. Pedro K. Basden requested delay in presentation to planning meeting. Bishop Leath approved delay of Treasurer's report to planning meeting.

Bishop Leath called for the following reports:

- Mission, Circuits, and Stations reported by the Reverend Alma Herbert reported. See report. The Reverend Alma Herbert moved for the adoption of the report. Bishop Leath addressed unreadiness. The motion carried.
- Pastor & Charge Classification reported by the Reverend Dr. Sheila Harris. See report. Report received by common consent.
- Presiding Elder Support Committee reported by the Reverend Dr. Pedro K. Basden. See report. The Reverend Pedro K. Basden moved for approval of report. Bishop Leath addressed unreadiness. The Reverend Pedro K. Basden withdrew motion to allow committee to revisit allocations.

Bishop Leath recessed the conference for 8 minutes.

Business Session III

Bishop reconvened the conference and called for the following reports:

- Christian Debutante-Master Commission presented by Mrs. Ramona Pratt. Report received by common consent.
- Christian Education reported by Dr. Sandra Griffin and Sister Fordie Franklin. Report received by common consent.
- Minister's Spouses/SWAWO+PKs reported by Mrs. Donna Love.
- Lay Organization reported by Brother Charles Moore.

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- MCAM reported by the Reverend Kenneth Love, Sr. Bishop Leath acknowledged the presence of the Reverend Dr. Roderick Belin as well as acknowledging him as the official psalmist of the conference series.
- Sons of Allen reported by Brother Gene Settles. Report received by common consent.
- WIM reported by the Reverend Dr. Sheila Harris.
- WMS reported by Sister Gloria Beverly. Bishop Leath commended the WMS on their program Friday, September 11, 2020. Additionally, the Reverend Dr. Pedro Basden offered thanks for the WMS assistance in sending clothing and other items to the Bahamas.
- ETN Young Peoples Department. (no report).

Bishop Leath offered thanks to the component leaders with words of wisdom. Bishop Leath confirmed the roll addressing clergy and lay discrepancies. Additionally, Bishop Leath addressed the transfers of the Reverends Tylan Orr (Tennessee Conference) and Paul C. Adkins (Virginia Conference). Bishop acknowledged the presence of General Officer John Thomas on Facebook Live and the Reverends Drs. Sinkfield and Walter Reid (Tennessee Conference).

Bishop Leath requested that the Reverend A. J. Holman offer prayers for Brother Terence L. Mayes, Jr. and blessings for lunch. Bishop Leath recessed the conference at 11:20 AM.

Business Session IV

Bishop Leath reconvened the business session at 2:30 PM. Bishop Leath called for the following reports:

- Presiding Elder Support reported by the Reverend Dr. Pedro K. Basden. The Reverend Kenneth Love moved for the adoption of the report. The motion carried.
- Bishop called for the Conference Trustee report. The Reverend Dr. Pedro K. Basden read the report.

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Bishop Leath gave the following announcements:

- 13th District Planning Meeting, Thursday and Friday, October 29 & 30, 2020
- Mid-Year will be mostly zoom, either in Nashville, TN or Bowling Green, KY on Thursday and Friday, March 18 & 19, 2020. Footnote: Presiding Elders will need to report Mid-Year budget monies to the bishop by March 10, 2020.
- Lay Organization will have their annual meeting June 10, 11, and 12th, 2021.
- General Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, July 6, 2021 and ends on Saturday, July 10, 2021. The biannual begins on Sunday, July 11, 2021 and concluded on Tuesday, July 13, 2021.

Bishop Leath discussed planning for the General Conference to include considerations.

Bishop Leath called for the election of the Conference Treasure. Presiding Elder Mayes moved that the Reverend Dr. Pedro K. Basden be elected to serve as treasurer of the East Tennessee Conference for the conference year 2020-2021. The motion carried.

Bishop Leath acknowledge Sister Robin Dehart as it pertains to information for Believe Board grants. The Reverend Beryl Basden volunteered to serve as clergy on the Believe Board. The Reverend Beryl Basden was added to the board by common consent.

Bishop Leath appointed the following individuals to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee: Reverends Kenneth D. Love, Sr., Beryl Basden, Lee Russell Brown, Dr. Sheila Harris, and Dickie Sebastian.

Bishop Leath called for the statistician summary report. The Reverend Dr. Charles Holsey reported. Bishop Leath addressed concerns of inconsistency in numbers between component reports and pastoral reports.

Bishop Leath reported a check for the Lay Organization, WMS, and YPD from Powell Chapel.

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Bishop Leath acknowledged the presence of the Reverend Paul C. Adkins.

Bishop Leath called for the Trustee report. See report. The Reverend Dr. Pedro K. Basden read. The Reverend Dr. Pedro K. Basden moved for the approval of the first recommendation. The motion carried by common consent. The Reverend A. C. Griffin, Jr. moved for the approval of the second recommendation. The motion carried. The motion carried. The Reverend A. C. Griffin, Jr. moved for the approval of the third recommendation. The motion carried. Presiding Elder Settles moved for the approval of the fourth recommendation. Bishop Leath addressed unreadiness. The motion carried with agreed modifications. The Reverend A. C. Griffin, Jr. moved for the approval of the fifth recommendation. The motion carried.

Bishop Leath called for the Disciplinary Questions (see report). At Question #20, the pastor and delegate, Sister Terra Simmons, of Shorter Chapel invited the 121st Session of the East Tennessee Annual Conference to be hosted by Shorter Chapel, Tullahoma.

Bishop Leath appointed the following individuals to the Board of Examiners: the Reverends A. J. Holman (chair), Lee Russell Brown (dean), Dr. Pedro Basden, Dr. Charles Holsey, and Marty Koontz. The Reverend Lee Russell Brown nominated the following individuals to serve on the Committee on Instruction: Reverends Lee Russell Brown, Kenneth Love, Dr. Pedro Basden, Dr. Sheila Harris, and Beryl Basden. Motion accepted by common consent.

The Memorial Service

The Memorial Service began at 3:30 PM, with the Reverend Donna Perkins as worship leader. The following were memorialized:

- Bishop Zedekiah Lazett Grady
- Supervisor Patricia Ann Morris (PAM) DeVeaux
- Mrs. Valerie Gary Bell, Connectional Lay President
- Dr. Frederick C. Harrison Former Secretary of Missions
- Mrs. Johanna Green, Former Connectional YPD Director
- The Rev. Jeane B. Williams, Former Connectional President of WIM
- Mrs. Micha Mack, Widow of Former Director of Christian Education

The Retirement Service

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The Retirement Service convened following the benediction of the Memorial Service. The service was conducted by the presiding bishop of the East Tennessee Conference, the Right Reverend Jeffrey N. Leath. The following preachers were presented for faithfulness in ministerial service:

- The Reverend Ruby Mason-Crum
- The Reverend William Howard Smith

Bishop Leath acknowledged the presence of the Reverend Dr. Kenneth and Dr. Roberta Hill. Bishop Leath called for the Reverend Vicky Coleman to give the benediction. The retirement service concluded at 4:05 PM.