

**THE 143RD SESSION OF THE WEST TENNESSEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
3300 Summers Avenue
Millington, Tennessee 38122**

143rd West Tennessee Annual Conference

Conference Minutes

**Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, Presiding Prelate, Thirteenth Episcopal District
Dr. Susan J. Leath, Episcopal Supervisor, Women's Missionary Missions**

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

The Darrell K. Scott Host Pastor

**The Reverend Barbara S. Green, Recording Secretary
The Reverend Quinten L. Smith, Engrossing Secretary**

THE MINUTES OF THE 143RD SESSION OF THE WEST TENNESSEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
New Tyler AME Church - Memphis, Tennessee
October 5-8, 2017

Friday, October 6, 2017

Opening Business Session

At 8:35 am, Bishop Leath led devotion with song “Woke Up This Morning With My Mind Stayed On Jesus” at 8:58 am. The following persons participated in the early morning devotion: Reverends: Elizabeth Thuurman Shell, Amanda Speed, Barbara S. Green, Denise Springfield Richardson, and Terri Lynn Strong; **Sister:** Shirley Johnson, **Brothers:** Daniel Lewis and Michael Steward.

The Rt. Reverend Jeffrey N. Leath called the 143rd Session of the West Tennessee Annual Conference to order. Bishop Leath called the attention of the Conference to the 13th District Website (www.ame13.org) to download and view all of the Conference Reports, including the Day 1 Minutes.

Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch and Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin presented the organization of the Conference. The following were elected: Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, as President of the Annual Conference; the Reverend Barbara S. Green as Recording Secretary, the Reverend Quentin L. Smith as Engrossing Secretary, the Reverend Darrell K. Scott as Statistician.

Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin nominated the following persons to serve as Marshals: the Reverends Errol Thomas, MD, David Yancy, II, and Brother Aundrae Deshone Mack and Sister Shelia Tolbert and that Reverend Anthony T. Branch be elected treasurer. The Reverend Byron Moore., D.Min., seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch moved the following be elected to serve as the Finance Committee: the Reverends Byron Moore, D.Min., Walter Henry, Colleen P. Gibson, Eric J.

Knowles, Anthony T. Branch and Sisters Mary T. Jones and Lovie Jacocks. Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch made the motion that the entire bottom level of the sanctuary as the Conference Boundaries. Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin seconded. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin made the motion that the Conference Booklet constitute the agenda for the 143rd Session of the West Tennessee Annual Conference. Motion carried.

Ministerial Efficiency Committee asked to examine the Reverend Yolande Ajamu who is seeking to be re-admitted to the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin nominated the following persons to serve as Triers of Appeal for 2018-2020 are: The Reverend: Linda Evans, Reverend Drs., Benita Grandbury Livingston, Dave Louis Adams, Sr., Verlie Horton, D.Min., and Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD. Brother William McIntyre seconded it. The motion carried.

Bishop Leath called for the report of the Board of Examiners.

CLASS ON ADMISSIONS

We have no students in the Class on Admissions. So ends our report on the Class on Admissions.



FIRST YEAR CLASS

CLAXTON, ROBYN LATRICE CLEVELAND - 31, Greater Payne Chapel. Separated; 1 child. B.A. 2008, Rust College; M.Ed. 2012, Union University; School Counseling Licensure 2014, Freed-Hardeman University; 55 hours toward Ed.D., Freed-Hardeman University. Not currently enrolled in seminary. Teacher, Alternative Learning Center, Haywood County Schools. *In Itinerant Relations*.

The above student met the attendance and coursework requirements of the Board, and passed her aggregate exams.

**RECOMMENDATION:
THAT ROBYN LATRICE CLEVELAND CLAXTON BE ADVANCED TO THE
SECOND YEAR CLASS.**

The motion was made by Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., It was seconded by Reverend Quinten Smith. The motion carried.



SECOND YEAR CLASS

HOLLIDAY, CLAY A. JR. - 33, Noah Chapel. Married, 4 dependent children. Jackson State University, Southwest Tennessee Community College, Crichton College, Victory University. Reportedly completed his B.S in Bus. Administration, 2013. Transcript pending. Not currently enrolled in seminary. Completed Second Year Class, 2008. Quality Inspector, KM Logistics. During Conference Year 2008, Bro. Holliday served as Supply Pastor at Saulter's Chapel. In Conference Year 2009, at the call of the Bishop, he was given an opportunity to begin a new work - McKenzie Temple, now Chainbreakers AME Church - where he has served as Supply Pastor faithfully and productively for eight (8) years. *In Itinerant Relations*

In consultation with Bro. Holliday, and in consideration of his service to the West Tennessee Annual Conference as Supply Pastor for nine (9) years, and with his full understanding and consent to the following recommendations:

**BISHOP LEATH AND MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE,
WE RECOMMEND THAT, AT THE REQUEST OF CHAINBREAKERS A.M.E. CHURCH, BRO. CLAY A.
HOLLIDAY, JR. SERVE CHAINBREAKERS *IN LOCAL RELATIONS*, AND
THAT HE BE ELECTED AND ORDAINED A *LOCAL DEACON*
IN THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AND THAT HE BE ADVANCED TO THE THIRD YEAR
CLASS.**

The motion was made by Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., It was seconded by Reverend Hilda D. Taylor. The motion carried.



THIRD YEAR CLASS

We have no students in the Third Year Class. So ends our report on the Third Year Class.



FOURTH YEAR CLASS

To be eligible for Ordination as Itinerant or Local Elders, students must have satisfactorily met all Board of Examiners requirements for the Fourth Year Class, and the time stipulations as per *Discipline*.* To be eligible for Ordination as Itinerant Elders, students must also be graduates of a Seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools or similar accrediting agencies, earning a Master of Divinity (M.Div.)**

**Ordination subject to the request of the congregation and at the discretion of the Presiding Bishop*

***Exceptions are at the discretion of the Presiding Bishop*

BISHOP LEATH AND MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE, WE ARE NOW GRATEFUL TO GOD TO PRESENT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

GARVIN, ANNIE B. - 59. St. John. Single, 2 adult children. B.B.A., 1995, University of Memphis; M.B.A., 2007 Strayer University; **M.Div., Liberty University, 2016. *In Itinerant Relations***

Reverend Garvin met the attendance and coursework requirements of the Board, and passed her aggregate exams.

WILKERSON, JOY LYNN – 48. St. Andrew. Single, no children. B.S., North Carolina A&T State University, 1991; M.B.A., University of Michigan, 1996; Master of Arts in Religion, Memphis Theological Seminary, 2009. **M.Div., with Honors, Memphis Theological Seminary, 2017.** Program Design Analyst, Sedgwick CMS. ***In Itinerant Relations***

Reverend Wilkerson had previously completed the Fourth Year Class of the Board of Examiners in 2014, and has now provided the Board with the requisite documentation of her completion of the Master of Divinity degree, and has satisfied the requirements of *The Book of Discipline*.

**WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT REVEREND ANNIE B. GARVIN AND
REVEREND JOY LYNN WILKERSON
BE HIGHLY COMMENDED FOR THEIR YEARS OF STUDY AND LABOR IN THE LORD
AND
THAT THEY BE ELECTED AND ORDAINED ITINERANT ELDERS IN
THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH!**



The motion was made by Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, MD., It was unanimously seconded by Board of Examiners and the Committee on Instructions. The motion carried.

Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson, M.D made the motion that the entire report of the Board of Examiners be approved. It was seconded by Reverend Walter Henry. The motion carried.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath called for the Presiding Elder's Summary Report(s)

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath called for the Presiding Elder's Summary Report(s). Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch presented the summary financial report for the North Memphis District 17 conversions, 39 accessions, 1,244 members, \$1,299,732 funds raised and \$747,441 indebtedness and brought to the conference \$94,783. (See Presiding Elder's Report)

Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin presented the summary financial report for the South Memphis District as follows: 86 conversions, 38 accessions, 2,879 members, \$3,892,006

funds raised and \$5,314,294 indebtedness and brought to the conference \$129,184. (See Presiding Elder's Report)

Bishop Leath 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. Bishop Leath indicated that he will alternate the reading between the North and South Memphis District churches reported:

- Reverend Dr. Verlie Horton – Christ Tabernacle, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Beverly Sterling had to leave (North. District)
- Reverend Linda A. Evans – St. Paul, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Edward Williamson. (North District)
- Reverend Jerry Epperson – Supply – Saint Mark, reported. Delegate Sister Gloria Epperson.
- Reverend John Moore – Fredman Chapel, Decaturville. The Delegate Sister Robbie White. (South District)
- Reverend Amanda Speed – Spring Chapel, Grand Junction reported. The Delegate Brother Samuel Herring. (South District)
- Reverend Clonia Givan Young – Allen Chapel, Paris reported. The Delegate Brother Jasper Bruce was absent. (North District)
- Reverend John Moore – Freedman Chapel, Decaturville. The Delegate Sister Robbie White was absent. (South District)
- Brother Clay A. Holliday, Jr. – Chainbreaker. Delegate Brother Reshun Green (North District)

Bishop Leath recognized Presiding Elder Eva Settles from the Chattanooga, Knoxville District.

- Reverend Marlon Obe Barrentine, Sr., – Supply Pastor - St. Paul/ St. Mary Satillio Circuit reported. Delegate Sister Peggy Lowery. (South District)
- Reverend George Turks, Jr., - Salters Chapel – Dyersburg reported. The Delegate Brother Courtney Mason. (North District)
- Reverend Errol Thomas, MD., Wrights Chapel reported. The Delegate Brother Leon Lynn. (South District)
- Reverend Anthony Hodges – St. Paul, South Fulton reported. Delegate Joyce Weeks. (North District)
- Reverend John Hall – Supply – Williams Chapel reported. Delegate Brother Lewis Hurd. (North District)
- Reverend Bobby Carter – New Lewis Chapel, Lexington reported. Delegate Sister Linda Pettigrew. (South District)
- Reverend Perry Lorenzo Herman – Galilee, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Esther Thornton. (South District)
- Reverend Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, D.Min. – Mt. Herman, Millington reported. Delegate Sister Mary R. Jones. (North District)

Bishop recognized the delegate, Brother Addison McFarland, of Mt. Olive although the Pastor Reverend Gregory L. McCollins, Sr., is ill. Bishop said that he heard the good report of Mt. Olive prior to Reverend Gregory McCollins becoming ill. Additionally, Bishop encouraged the church to continue the work in the Lord.

- Reverend Garry Fair – Wilson Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Johnny Dotson. (South District)
- Reverend Ivy C. Hudson Courtez – St. John, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Carrie Wellington. (North District)

Reverend Ivory Hudson Courtez requested supernumerary status.

- Reverend Hilda D. Taylor – White’s Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother William McIntyre. (South District)
- Reverend Dave Louis Adams, Sr., – St. Mark, Munford reported. Delegate Wilma McCoy. (North District)
- Reverend Kelvin Robinson – Noah Chapel, Millington reported. Delegate Sister Rita K. Nelson. (South District)
- Reverend Stanley T. Richardson – Mt. Zion reported. Delegate Sister Pauline Guyton. (South District)
- Reverend Colleen P. Gibson – Greer Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Michael Pegues. (North District)
- Reverend Barbara S. Green – Bethel – Memphis, reported. Delegate Sister Alma Luper. (South District)
- Reverend Lula Martin Sanderson – Avery Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Attorney Thylia Wilson. (North District)
- Reverend Sabrina Transou – New Greater Bethel, Jackson reported. Delegate Dr. Pamela D. Murry, MD. (South District)
- Reverend Agnes Henderson – New Allen Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Roxie P. Ball. (South District)
- Reverend Anthony T. Branch - Greenwood, reported. Delegate Sister Gwen Smith. (North District)

Reverend Anthony T. Branch has asked to allow the Conference to allow him to supernumerate. He wants to spend more time with his family.

- Reverend John Dandridge – Quinn Chapel, Paris reported. Delegate Brother Freddie Williams. (North District)
- Reverend David Yancy, II – St. Sinai, Arlington reported. Delegate Sister Shirley Broome. (North District)
- Reverend Kirk W. Ridley, Sr., – Providence reported. Delegate Sister Remell Rogers.

Bishop recognized the following persons: Dr. Lynette Patrice Williams is a candidate for U.S. Senate seat, the seat, which is currently being held by Senator Bob Corker. Brother Jamal Whitlow is seeking the office for Shelby County Clerk.

Bishop Leath asked Reverend Byron Moore, D.Min., chair of the Social Action Committee to recruit some individuals to assist him to send “Thank You” posters to congress persons for supporting certain laws. Reverend Moore would need to get the following information from the recruits: name, address, zip code and church affiliation.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath recognized Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield and asked her to join him on the rostrum.

Announcements were made by the host pastor, Reverend Darrell K. Scott.

- Reverend Quentin L. Smith – Greater Payne, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Shelia Tolbert. (North District)
- Reverend Eric J. Knowles – Ward Chapel, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Margaret McLaurin. (South District)
- The host church Reverend Darrell K. Scott – New Tyler, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Mondella Woods. (South District)
- Reverend Walter Henry – St. James, Memphis reported. Delegate Brother Tyria Jeff. (North District)

Reverend Walter Henry, commended Reverends: Ivy Hudson Courtez and Anthony T. Branch for the work they have done in ministry. Additionally, Reverend Henry asked for the return of Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch.

- Reverend Byron Moore, D.Min., – St. Andrew, Memphis reported. Delegate Sister Shirley Johnson. (South District)

The Morning Business Service concluded at 12:28 pm

FRIDAY, October 6, 2017

Mid-day Devotion

The mid-day devotion began at **12:20** pm with the song “Hold To God’s Unchanging Hand.” Sister Robin Cleveland Claxton read Scripture Psalm 27:1-5. Brother Aundrea Deshone Mack and Sister Erica Bolden Mack offered the prayers of intercession.

Bishop Leath recognized the following visitors: Presiding Elders: Daryl Ingram, (North Nashville), and Eva Settles (Chattanooga/Knoxville).

The mid-day worship concluded at 12:28 pm

The afternoon session will convene at 2:00 pm

Friday, October 6, 2017

Afternoon Business

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath resumed the chair at 2:00 pm.

Memorial Service

The Memorial Service began at 2:03 pm with the Reading of the Committee Report presented by the Reverend Sabrina Transou, chair and worship leader. The following persons were memorialized:

- The Reverend William L. Smith – deceased February 9, 2017
- The Reverend James Weeden – deceased April 14, 2017
- The Reverend James Jones – deceased June 6, 2017

The Memorial Service concluded at 2:12 pm.

Bishop called for the reports of Chaplains:

- Reverend Benita Granberry Livingston reported.
- Reverend Diane N. Watkins-Dickerson, reported.
- 13th District Budget – Presenter: The Reverend Quinten L. Smith. Bishop Leath asked for the approval of the 13th District Budget. The motion was made by Reverend Perry Lorenzo Herman. The motion was seconded by Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch. The motion carried.
- Conference Trustees. The Trustees noted that there is one piece of abandon property is on file in the Records of the West Tennessee Annual Conference as reported during the One Hundred Forty First Session: Saulter’s Chapel A.M.E. Church, 480 Miffin Road, Henderson, Tennessee 38340. The motion to elect was made by Reverend John Dandridge. It was seconded by Reverend Stanley Richardson. The motion carried. The motion was made by Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin for the sale of Salter’s Chapel. It was seconded by Reverend Linda A. Evans. The motion carried.

Bishop Leath called for the Treasurer’s Report

- Treasurer’s Report – presenter - Reverend Anthony T. Branch. (See report) The motion to receive the report was made by the Reverend Darrell K. Scott and seconded Reverend Byron Moore. The motion carried.

- Missions, Circuit and Stations – presenter – Reverend Quinten L. Smith reported there was no change from last year. The motion was made by Reverend Quinten L. Smith. It was seconded by Reverend Byron Moore, D.Min. The motion carried.

Bishop Leath asked the Pastors and Delegates from the following churches to stand:

Brown’s Chapel, New Greater Bethel, New Lewis Chapel, St. Paul/St. Mary’s (Saltillo Circuit), St. Paul Fulton, Freedman’s Chapel, Salter’s Chapel, Spring Chapel, Allen Chapel and St. Mark, Parsons to consider forming a Presiding Elder’s District.

- Classification of Pastor And Charges – reported (See report). The motion to approve the report was made by the Reverend John Dandridge. It was seconded by the Reverend Byron Moore, D.Min. The motion carried.
- Committee on Stewardship and Tithing – reported. (See report). The Reverend Kirk W. Ridley, Sr., made the motion to receive the report along with the recommendations. It was seconded by the Reverend Stanley T. Richardson. The motion carried.
- CDMC – Sister Sonya Boyce - presenter. The report was received by common consent.
- Church School – reported. Reverend Patsy T. Brown presented. (See report). The report was received by common consent.
- Evangelism – presenter - Reverend John Dandridge (See report). The motion to receive the report was made by the Reverend David Yancy, II. It was seconded by Reverend Stanley T. Richardson. The motion carried.
- Lay - The report was read by Sister Lovie Jacocks. The motion was made by the Reverend Byron Moore, D.Min., to receive the report. It was seconded by Sister Dorothy Ealy. The motion carried.

- MCAM (Music) - The report was received by common consent. Bishop Leath noted that the report is a good report and can be accessed via the 13th District website.
- Sons of Allen - The report was read by Reverend David Yancy II (See report). The motion was made by Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin to receive the report. It was seconded by the Reverend Darrell K. Scott. The motion carried.
- Women In Ministry — The report was read by Reverend Terri Lynn Strong (See report). The motion was made by the Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas-Martin. to receive the report. It was seconded by the Reverend Sabrina Transou. The motion carried.
- WMS — The report was read by Sister Mary T. Jones and the Reverend Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, D.Min., made the motion for the report is accepted. It was seconded by Reverend Terri Lynn Strong, and Sister Mondella Woods. The motion carried.
- Christian Education – reported. The Reverend Hilda D. Taylor (See report). Reverend Patsy T. Brown made the motion to accept the report. It was seconded by Reverend Stanley T. Richardson. The motion carried.
- State of the Country – presenter - Reverend Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, D.Min., (See report). The motion to adopt the report along with the recommendation was made by Reverend Kenneth S. Robinson. It was seconded by the Reverend Perry Lorenzo Herman. The motion carried.
- State of the Church – presenter Reverend Dave Louis Adams, Sr. (See report). The motion to adopt the report along with the recommendation was made by Reverend John Dandridge. It was seconded by the Reverend Patsy T. Brown. The motion carried.

The host pastor, Reverend Darrell K. Scott made announcements.

Bishop Leath announced that we will convene the Retirement Service at **7:15 pm**

Additionally, devotion will begin at **8:05 am** tomorrow morning.

The afternoon business session concluded at 5:00 pm

Dr. Daryl Ingram gave the benediction

We will reconvene at 7:15 pm for the Retirement Service

The Retirement Service

The Retirement Worship Service began at **7:15 pm**. Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch offered The Statement of Achievement of Reverend Joe Louis Travis for his years of service in the 13th Episcopal District.

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath also recognized Mrs. Travis.

The Retirement Service concluded at 7:25 pm

Spiritual Renewal Revival

The Spiritual Renewal Revival Service began at **7:30 pm**. Worship Leader was the Reverend Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, D.Min. The scripture Matthew 6:7-13, was read by Reverend Lula Marie Martin Sanderson. The preacher was the Linda A. Evans St. Paul Memphis, Tennessee. Reverend Evans delivered a Rhema Word Matthew 6:11, entitled "Give Us Today Our Daily Bread."

Announcements were made by the host pastor, Reverend Darrell K. Scott.

Bishop Leath announced that we will convene on tomorrow at **8:05 am** for devotion following by Church School at **8:30 am**. Additionally, Bishop Leath recognized Reverend Dr., James Carter Wade, Executive Director, Church Growth and Development. Bishop Leath also recognized Reverend Clay A. Holliday, Sr.

The Spiritual Renewal Service concluded at 8:40 pm.

This concludes the second business day