



**The AME Church**  
*A Social Justice & Liberating Faith*

13TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT  
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
TENNESSEE AND KENTUCKY

# Opening Worship

October 5, 2017

7:30 pm

## 143rd Session of the West Tennessee Annual Conference

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God's People Pursuing  
**CRIMINAL JUSTICE**  
A CHRISTIAN SEXUAL ETHIC - ISSUES IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

## OPENING WORSHIP

Presiding Elder Linda F. Thomas Martin  
Worship Leader

### The Prelude

#### The Procession

*Come, We That Love the Lord*

Hymn No. 520

*Come, we that love the Lord, And let our joys be known, Join in a song with sweet accord,  
Join in a song with sweet accord, And thus surround the throne, And thus surround the  
throne.*

#### REFRAIN:

*We are marching to Zion, Beautiful, beautiful, Zion; We're marching upward to Zion, The  
beautiful city of God.*

*Let those refuse to sing Who never knew our God; But children of the heavenly King, But  
children of the heavenly King, May speak their joys abroad, May speak their joys abroad.*

*The hill of Zion yields A thousand sacred sweets Before we reach the heavenly fields,  
Before we reach the heavenly fields, Or walk the golden streets, Or walk the golden  
streets.*

*Then let our songs abound, And every tear be dry; We're marching through Immanuel's  
ground, We're marching through Immanuel's ground, To fairer worlds on high, To fairer  
worlds on high.*

### The Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him  
above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

### The Call to Worship

The Reverend Darrell K. Scott

Leader: I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord, our feet shall stand within Thy gates, O Jerusalem.

People: **For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.**

Leader: We come to give an account of our discipleship. We praise God for a testimony of faithful service.

People: **We visited the sick. We were present with those who mourned. We celebrated with those who rejoiced.**

Leader: We heard the cry of the poor and the oppressed. We ministered with benevolence as we called for justice.

People: **We praise God as we come to another Annual Conference. We seek justice at our door and around the world. We thank God for our service and our deliverance.**

**ALL:** Let's sing, shout and dance before God who has kept us. We will pray, listen and be inspired as we receive the Holy Word and heavenly healing. God bless us to live our faith as we bring to reality a more just political order. Let race, class and gender cease to be markers for oppression. We will worship God who calls us to live justly, love kindness and walk in humility. Praise the Lord!

**The Hymn of Praise**

The Reverend Ivy Hudson Courtez  
*And Are We Yet Alive* Hymn No. 304

*And are we yet alive, And see each other's face? Glory and praise to Jesus give For His redeeming grace.*

*Preserved by power divine To full salvation here, Again in Jesus' praise we join, And in His sight appear.*

*What troubles have we seen, What conflicts have we passed, Fightings without, and fears within, Since we assembled last.*

*But out of all the Lord Hath brought us by His love; And still He doth His help afford, And hides our life above.*

*Then let us make our boast Of His redeeming power, Which saves us to the uttermost. Till we can sin no more.*

*Let us take up the cross Till we the crown obtain; And gladly reckon all things loss, So we may Jesus gain.*

**The Invocation**

The Reverend Amanda Speed

Almighty and Eternal God, Our Creator! We invite your presence into this Annual Conference. Remind us of our purpose in you. Help us to be faithful disciples of Jesus. Draw us close to you through our personal devotion. Expand our fellowship as we tell the love of Jesus. Give us wisdom and courage to stand for justice and truth.

Anoint us with Your Holy Spirit! Illumine the path of holiness. Make us mindful of those who are suffering loss. Give us hope as we receive your grace and mercy. All honor and glory belong to you. Amen.

**The Choral Response**

*I Need Thee Every Hour (chorus)*

*I need Thee, O I need Thee, Every hour I need Thee; O bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee! (repeat once) Amen.*

**The Old Testament Reading**

The Reverend David Yancy II

**The New Testament Reading**

The Reverend Dr. John Dandridge

**The Introit**

*Bless the Lord, O My Soul*

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. (repeat) He has done great things, He has done great things, He has done great things, bless His holy name.*

## **The Decalogue**

The Reverend Garry Fair

(An Affirmation of God's Law)

Leader: Let us express our commitment to keep God's law.

**People: God of our salvation, only You are God. We will make no idols.**

**We will not invoke with malice your name, O God.**

**We will remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy.**

**We will honor our father and our mother. We will not commit murder.**

**We will not commit adultery. We will not steal. We will not be a false witness.**

**We will not covet anything that belongs to our neighbor.**

Leader: Jesus said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment."

People: Jesus also challenged us with a second commandment which is like the first: We shall love our neighbor as ourselves! On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

## **The Gloria Patri**

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.*

## **The Selection**

Conference Choir

## **The Prayer**

The Reverend Dr. Errol Thomas

## **The Presentation of the Bishop**

Presiding Elder C. Robert Finch

## **The Presentation of the Preacher**

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath

## **The Sermonic Selection**

Conference Choir

## **The Annual Sermon**

**The Reverend Hilda D. Taylor**

## **The Invitation to Accept Christ**

The Reverend Kirk Ridley

## **The Announcements**

## **The Benediction**

The Reverend Dr. Verlie Horton

## **The Recession**

**THE OPENING OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE BUSINESS – ROLL CALL**