

The African Methodist Episcopal Church
Convo XI
Hilton Columbus Hotel
3900 Chagrin Drive
Columbus, Ohio 43219
December 13, 2023

Opening Plenary

Bishop Michael L. Mitchell, Presiding

OPENING DEVOTION & MEDITATION

Bishop Michael Mitchell called the session to order at 10:05 am and invited the Third Episcopal District forward to begin devotion.

Presiding Elder LuCretia Clark (3) led devotion. The Praise Team consisted of the Reverends Maurice Wright (9), Myron Hill (13) and Sis. Philippa Houston (3) singing “We Have Come into This House”. The Reverend Spencer Barrett (3) offered prayer. The Reverend Dr. Timothy Storm (3) read the scripture Philippians 2:5-11. Presiding Elder Clark presented the Reverend Roderic K. Reid (3), pastor of Lee Memorial in Cleveland, Ohio, to offer the meditation. His subject was “Put Some Respect on That Name”.

OPENING PLENARY

Bishop Mitchell presented Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield to preside over the opening plenary.

Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield, Presiding

WORDS OF WELCOME AND FELECITATIONS

Bishop Byfield offered words of welcome and established protocol. Bishop Mitchell set the protocol and offered greetings. He gave ground rules for discussions of Convo XI. He then presented the Host Bishop, Bishop E. Earl McCloud to bring greetings to the body.

PRESENTATION OF THEME AND KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Bishop Byfield presented Bishop Adam Jefferson Richardson, Senior Bishop, to make felicitations and offer the Keynote Message.

KEYNOTE

Bishop Adam Jefferson Richardson offered a moving keynote based on 2 Kings 7:3-4, "From Despair to Hope".

In response to the keynote message, Bishop Byfield led in singing "My Hope is Built". She presented Judge Derek Anderson, Judicial Council, who in turn presented the Mayor of Columbus, Ohio the Honorable Andrew J. Ginther to greet the body.

Bishop Byfield announced the format for the afternoon breakout sessions (see the agenda).

The Reverend Roderic Reid (3) offered the closing prayer. The session adjourned at 11:50am.

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Evening Plenary

Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, Presiding

OPENING DEVOTION & MEDITATION

Bishop Jeffrey Leath called the plenary to order at 7:03 pm. He then offered devotion.

EVENING PLENARY

Bishop Leath then explained the format for tonight's plenary. He further asked that each group type of their summary and submit to the secretary prior to their departure on tomorrow.

DISCUSSION

Bishop Leath then called for the individual proposed legislation to be discussed.

CLO 8—Revisions to the Commission on Financial Management Program
No Comments

CLO 9—Transparency of Connectional Budget

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson clarified that there may not be any need for legislation. The General Board could vote to have it put back in the Discipline since it was present in the 2016 Discipline. Attorney Selby concurred in the breakout session earlier.

Bishop Ronnie Brailsford stated that it was taken out for a legal reason. Bishop Clement Fugh said the way to get it back within the Discipline is the same way it was taken out. If it was taken out by legislation, it must be placed back in by the same method.

Bishop E. Earl McCloud stated that we have more delegates running the AME Church than many countries combined.

CLO 6—Reduction of the Travel Budget of Retired Bishops and General Officers by 50% to achieve fiscal savings in the 2024-2028 General Church Budget

Bishop Jackson wondered if this should not be legislation but a part of the budget discussion. Mark Johnson (9), Legislative Committee Chair of the Lay Organization, agreed and stated that it should be looked at. Bishop Leath suggested his committee should look at an appropriate budget rather than a simple percentage cut.

CLO 7—Revisions Committee—Time at General Conference

This is handled within the program committee of the General Conference as well the Rules Committee's work. Mark Johnson (9) clarified that it is about giving more time for legislation.

Bishop Fugh stated that if items appear in the Discipline as positive law it cannot be adjusted with resolution. He gave further advice about effectively writing bills.

k. Commission on Internal Audit

If you give too much money to one auditor, it does not make it independent.

II. Organizational Structure

a. Adjusting CONVO to assist in streamlining legislation process for the General Conference

Mark Johnson stated that the CONVO should be more effectively handled for legislation purposes. Bishop Leath noted that the Council of Bishops should reconsider the structure of the CONVOS.

b. Redistricting Episcopal Districts in 2028

Bishop Leath stated that a plan should be created instead of implementing at the General Conference.

Bishop David R. Daniels informed the body that the GDC has legislation that concerning redistricting for the good of the Church.

CLO 3—Consistent use the African Methodist Episcopal Church Emblem—The Anvil and the Cross

Bishop Leath asked that a note be given to the Publications Department to issue a brand guideline for the use of the cross and the anvil.

h. Lay Delegate Electoral College Qualifications

Bishop Leath stated that you want to be careful not to disqualify people from Electoral College when there is a shortage currently.

Penny Oliver (2) stated that there were so many people who had not attended Annual Conference, District Conference and other.

i. Restructure of General Board-1

Bishop Leath stated that this is part one of several parts of the bill. Bill Dickens (5) spoke of an independent agent to find qualified individuals. Bishop Leath stated he merged this bill with another bill the CLO presented. The design of this bill takes the eligibility of the person from the delegates to others within qualification who can be elected from their Episcopal District.

Dr. Erica Crawford (1) spoke to the Districts not sending clergy women. Almeta Reeves spoke to Editor John Thomas' history of the composition of the General Board made earlier in the workshop. Note to Dr Thomas to have an editorial synopsis of the same.

Jerry Turner (4) asked how this affects the number of commissions. Bishop Leath responded the number would be cut to three with the work of the others being done by referral. Dr. Jennifer Leath suggested that the member non-youth delegates alternate between male and female.

CLO 5 - Providing IRS Required Documentation for the Pastor's Housing Allowance Benefit

An individual from the Lay Organization stated that the intention of the bill is to protect pastors where housing allowances are not in balance with rental/housing costs. Bishop Leath stated the question Bishops should ask is whether your church can afford a pastor. Lay person responded the lay is trying to protect the pastor from tax liability.

I. Satisfaction/termination of unpaid pastoral wages and loans

Bishop Leath says that for a pastor to negotiate debt owed to themselves is a conflict. The bishop and Presiding Elder should have knowledge and consent. The Reverend Matthew Watley (2) said a debt is a debt, if a debt is incurred that debt is assumed by the next pastor.

n. Removing Prohibition and Penalty for Licensed or Ordained AME clergypersons from performing Same-Sex Marriages in the United States

Rochelle M. (3) asked if repealing what is in the Discipline would allow ceremonies to be conducted off property. Bishop Leath stated the book does not prohibit same sex marriage, just clergy performing. Bishop Fred Wright noted that in the 20th Episcopal District the governments of various countries have banned same-sex marriages and we may lose AMEs. He stated that when we craft legislation like this it must speak globally. We cannot keep a singular eye to the United States.

Bishop Seawright stated we live in a broken world, but to approve this kind of legislation would throw us right in the jaws of what the United Methodist Church is going through. Bishop Fugh stated that either the whole section should be deleted or kept, or else we would be hypocritical. Chaplain Sebo stated nothing is broken and we should leave the Discipline as is. Almeta Reeves spoke to discrimination. Bishop Mitchell stated the issue should be referred to established committee chaired by Dr. Teresa Fry Brown. Presiding Elder Toni Belin-Ingram (6) agreed with the referral and stated the current law gives license to hate. Dr. John Thomas stated agreement with referral and that we cannot ignore the issue.

Adjourned at 8:58 pm with prayer.

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Convo XI
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3900 Chagrin Drive
Columbus, Ohio 43219
December 14, 2023

Closing Plenary

Bishop Michael L. Mitchell, Chair

CLOSING DEVOTION & MEDITATION

Bishop Michael Leon Mitchell called the session to order at 9:00 am by presenting Presiding Elder James Harris (3) to lead devotion. Elder Harris led in singing “Walk in the Light”. Prayer was offered by the Reverend Shane K. Floyd (3). The scripture, Philippians 3:8, was read by the Reverend Dr. Dale Snyder (3). The sermon was delivered by the Reverend Brandon A. A. J. Davis (3). His text was Philippians 3:8 ESV. His subject was “What’s in a Choice?”

Bishop Frederick Wright, Presiding

CLOSING PLENARY

After thanking the preacher, and Bishops Michael Mitchell and E. Anne Henning Byfield for putting the meeting together, Bishop Wright called for the Breakout Groups Summation Reports. He offered directions for each group as they prepare for summation.

Group One: Oversight and Accountability

Bishop Ronnie Brailsford presented the Reverend Cynthia Parnell McDonald (6) to read the report (see the report).

Bishop E. Earl McCloud gave travel instructions to the airport.

Group Two: Organizational Structure

The reporter, Faye Brown (5) read the report (see the report).

Group Three: Church Development, Expansion/Social Action

Bishop Marvin Zanders presented Christopher Wilson, 13th District Lay President, to read the report (see the report).

Group Five: Worship and Sacraments

Bishop Harry L. Seawright presented Dianne Battle (9), Director of Public Relations of the Connectional Lay Organization (see the report). Bishop McCloud asked concerning the Stewards touching the communion. The question was deferred to after all reports were made.

Group Four: Ministry and Order

Bishop Mitchell presented the Reverend Barrington Ross (2) to read the report (see the report).

Evening Plenary

Bishop Jeffrey Nathaniel Leath presented the Reverend Madonna Gray to read the report (see the report).

Bishop Wright then thanked everyone for their summation reports. He then advised that all moderators respond to any questions that may exist as this session is not designed to be a question-and-answer period. He then acknowledged all Bishops and General Officers present. He also thanked the CIO and staff for their work. He acknowledged the Connectional Presidents and the host Bishop and district. He recognized all candidates.

Bishop Mitchell presented Bishop Brailsford to announce the GDC in South Africa February 2024. He also presented Dr. Garland Pierce to share there is a survey to address mental and social health located on the web at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/resourcingameclergy>.

The connectional places and dates were announced.

Bishop Mitchell thanked Bishop Wright for leading the session. He thanked the CFO and Meeting Planner as well as the CIO and his team. He also thanked Bishop McCloud and the Third District for hosting. He announced that the mothers of Supervisor Irene Daniels and Judge Tania Wright have passed and asked prayers for the families.

CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

Bishop Wilfred J. Messiah offered the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 am.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

CONVO XI Group 2 Breakout Session Organization and Structure

Moderators: Bishop Clement W. Fugh, 5th Episcopal District

Bishop David R. Daniels, 17th Episcopal District

Respondents:

Rev. Dr. Johnathan C. Augustine, Pastor, St. Joseph AME Church, Durham, North Carolina

Rev. Sheriolyn Curry Hodge, Presiding Elder, Desert Mountain Conference, Rocky Mountain District, 5th District

Dr. John Thomas, Editor, The Christian Recorder, AME Church

Meeting convened with prayer by Eric Brule, 3rd District. Bishop Fugh introduced section the breakout group will be discussing and explained the process in which the bills would be reviewed. He advised the group to refer to the Discipline to see the current language and how the proposed language would change it.

Bishop Fugh introduced the respondents and asked them to share how they felt the legislation should make the church leaner, efficient and focused on the greater good.

The Reverend Dr. Jay Augustine shared introductory comments that are summarized as follows:

Dr. Augustine shared that his review of the 9 bills assigned to the Organization and Structure section comes through two frames: (1) his service as a minister, currently serving as the senior pastor of St. Joseph AME Church, in Durham, NC; and (2) his service as a judge on the Judicial Council of the AME Church.

Dr. Augustine likened his service as the senior pastor of St. Joseph to that of the Sankofa bird, because of the congregation's demographics. For the last five years, the congregation has looked backward, to preserve its heritage, while also looking forward, to ensure vitality for its future. He shared that in reviewing each of the 9-bills, he found several of them are Sankofa-like, too. They are futuristic, in terms of looking forward, but also preservationist, in terms of holding on to the rich traditions and history associated with the past. Because of his service as a judge in the church, however, he did not want to address the merits or political ramifications of any of the bills. Instead, he wanted to do his best to facilitate discussion around objective measures of the legislation that would be discussed.

Rev. Sheriolyn Curry Hodge presented her ministerial background, her corporate background and her philosophy. When she looks at the bills, she would like to see if they provide organization and structure, equitable access for all, physical responsibility, asset management, utilization to support ministry operation, human resource management, risk management, and forward-thinking leadership and development. She was passionate that she wanted change so that her daughter and granddaughter remain in the AME church.

Dr. John Thomas stated that branding and consistency are important for any organization. The logos of the different Episcopal Districts are an example of the diversity we have. While they share common elements, we need to have more consistency in our presentation. Also, the Connectional logo that has a trademark needs to be used instead of other unofficial items. This was his opening statement and then he gave history and input on how the General Board was initially established when the bill on General Board Composition was discussed.

Bishop Daniels gave comments and talked about finding ways to include the overseas districts in these meetings – perhaps virtually.

Restructure of the General Board – Bishop Leath spoke to the bill that he had written. As he explained the concept of the bill, he advised the group that there were parts of his legislation that he would be sending to the CIO. He gave a detailed explanation of how the bill would restructure the general board from election to duties. Much discussion was generated on the points of the bill.

Adjusting the CONVO to assist in streamlining legislature – It was discussed that the legislative convo is already an option and we would have to put it in practice. But in order to change the current language of legislation being submitted 90 days before general conference, a legislative change would be required to change the proposed legislation submission to 9 months.

Redistricting Episcopal Districts – It was decided that this legislation only spoke to Districts 1-13 and should be looked at again. Bishop Daniels announced that the GBD will be bringing legislation on redistricting to the general conference.

Transfer of Property – After discussion, it was noted that the procedures are currently in place in the Discipline and does not need to be legislated, but instead put in practice.

Board of Trustees – There was discussion on the need to look at some of the bills from the lens of the global church to see if legislation is the most effective way to change practice. No other comments on bill.

Cross and Anvil Emblem – This bill was discussed by Dr. John Thomas's opening remarks.

General Conference Composition – Body in agreement – no discussion

Lay Delegate Electoral College Qualifications – Discussion was centered on the problems of putting the requirements in effect.

Closing prayer was offered by Presiding Elder Harold Mayberry, 5th District

Faye Brown,
Recorder

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT, EXPANSION, SOCIAL ACTION:

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
CONVO XI

Hilton Columbus Hotel
3900 Chagrin Drive | Columbus, Ohio 43219

Theme: “Let’s Talk and Act”
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2023

BREAKOUT GROUP THREE:
1:30 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.
“Church Development. Expansion, Social Action”
Charles Massey Room

Moderators:

Bishop E Anne Henning Byfield, Presiding Bishop, 13th District.
Bishop Marvin Zanders, Presiding Bishop, 16th Episcopal District

Respondents:

Rev. Dr. Matthew Watley, Pastor, Kingdom Fellowship, AME Church
Dr. Jacqueline Dupont Walker, Executive Director, Commission on
Social Action
Rev. Anica Howard, Presiding Elder, Nashville District, Tennessee
Annual Conference, Administrator, 13th Episcopal Church

Recorder:

Mr. Christopher M. Wilson, 13th Episcopal District Lay President, Local
Christian Education Director and Member of Embry Chapel AME
Church, Elizabethtown, Kentucky

Rev. Dr. Matthew Watley
Pastor, Kingdom Fellowship, AME Church

Dr. Watley spoke from a Mega Church perspective on practical ways to reach the people.

1. Have a Culture of Family
2. Biblical preaching with varying styles
3. Minister to the Community with the understanding that it may not grow your congregation, but it will grow your accountability of credibility
4. Foster a healthy culture, it's 0% to be nice
5. Understand that your new front door is digital
6. Other examples, the Greeters Ministry grew out of the Usher Ministry
7. Using techniques, like a complete run through of your weekly service can enhance the quality of your weekly worship service

Rev. Anica Howard
Presiding Elder, Nashville District, Tennessee Annual Conference,
Administrator, 13th Episcopal Church

P.E. Howard spoke from a smaller P.E. District perspective on increasing your numbers, i.e. Accessions, Conversions, and Baptisms.

1. Over the course of a year, the Eder devised a plan with a goal to first double the numbers
2. With the largest church having 300 members, and the rest having less than 50 members and two being rural
3. In 2022: 22 Accessions and 4 Conversions; and a New Goal of 44 Accessions and 8 Conversions
4. Monthly huddles that gave a regular account of successes, share wisdom and best practices
5. Monthly training, as well
6. The results were: 107 Accessions, 22 Conversions, and 15 Baptisms
7. New Goals: Become Technology ready; Physically ready; Church Culture ready; Hospitality ready; and Attractive to all ages

**Dr. Jacqueline Dupont Walker, Executive Director, Commission on
Social Action**

Sister Dupont – Walker added the Social Action piece.

1. The AME Church was grown through our involvement in Social Action
2. It is the a calling of the AME Church and the Local Church specifically
3. Our Clergy and Laity must not only be among the decision-makers, but strive to be a Decision-maker
4. The Social Action Ministry is the resource for Local Churches to become a trusted voice for people that demonstrates our priority is people
5. The early Civil Rights leaders came to the AME Church because they knew of our action and commitment to social action
6. As time has passed, our original goal of equality has to be replaced with a our goal of equity
7. Our plan is biblically based and structured from the Connectional Church to the Local Church
8. On our watch we have and must continue to focus on social injustice and criminal injustice that encompasses mass incarceration, Healthcare Equity and Environmental Justice
9. This also includes Economic Justice, specifically Economic Redlining that threatens to shut down the Black Farmer
10. The recently formed Economic Commission is emerging, having had two forums to establish its place as a watchdog for such issues like threats to property that can endanger generational wealth possibilities

We cannot rest until all ‘-isms’ and ‘-ills’ are eradicated!

Respectively Submitted,

**Mr. Christopher M. Wilson
13th District Lay President**

WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS:

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH CONVO XI

DECEMBER 13-14, 2023

LET'S TALK

“COME LET US REASON TOGETHER SAYS THE LORD” ISAIAH 1:18

**To: Bishop Michael L. Mitchell, Convo Chair
Bishop E. Earl McCloud, Host Bishop
Bishop Stafford J. N. Wicker, Council of Bishops President
Bishop Paul Kawimbe, President General Board
Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr., Senior Bishop
Members of the Convo Committee**

**This Report is submitted on behalf of Group Four:
Worship and Sacrament- Rm: Roman Johnson**

**Moderators: Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr. Presiding Bishop, 7th Episcopal District
Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Presiding Bishop, 9th Episcopal District**

**Respondents: Reverend Troy Thomas, Pastor, St. Andre AME Church, and
Reverend Dr. Maxine Thomas, Assistant Pastor.
Reverend Garland Pierce, Executive Director, Department of Christian Education
AME Church
Reverend Dr. Roderick Belin, President Publisher, House, AME Church**

SUMMATION REPORT:

The meeting was called to order by Bishop Samuel L. Green, and directions were given by Bishop Harry L. Seawright.

Respondents: Reverend Troy Thomas, Pastor, St. Andre AME Church, and Reverend Dr. Maxine Thomas, Assistant Pastor. Reverend Garland Pierce, Executive Director, Department of Christian Education AME Church Reverend Dr. Roderick Belin, President Publisher, House, AME Church

We greet you in the joy of Jesus during this Advent Season and how excellent it is when are in a fellowship of Worship and Sacrament. Let us look at Worship as it was so eloquently discussed in our group session number four. Worship is an extreme act of Love and adoration for God. We know the two Sacraments in the AME Church are The Holy Baptism and The Lord's Supper, whereas both are acts instituted by Jesus Christ as a means of grace.

Respondents: Reverend Troy Thomas, Pastor, St. Andre AME Church, and
Reverend Dr. Maxine Thomas, Assistant Pastor.
Reverend Garland Pierce, Executive Director, Department of Christian Education AME Church
Reverend Dr. Roderick Belin, President Publisher, House, AME Church

Reverend Dr. Garland Pierce, shared with the group that these two, Worship and Sacraments are an awesome responsibility, and believed that when the faithful first gathered for worship there was a series of discussions about what worship was and how it was supposed to be done. However, some think that Hallelujah is the highest praise of worship because it means to be thankful and to praise God in every possible way.

“Hosanna on the Way” was used as a way of worship. Hosanna denotes a plea to save us. In this subject Worship can be defined as “the reverence or adoration that one shows toward something or someone; holding a person or object in high esteem or giving a person or an object a place of importance or honor.” There are hundreds of scriptures in the Bible that speak about worship and provide guidance as to both who and how to worship.

It is a Biblical mandate that we worship God and Him alone. It is an act that is designed not only to bring honor to Him who deserves honor but also to bring a spirit of obedience and submission to the worshippers. There were many ways to worship discussed during our breakout session.

Questions arose, but why do we worship, what exactly is worship and how do we worship? Because this topic is important to us God and is the reason that we were created. This is why we worship.

Reverend Dr. Roderick Belin, touched on the Sacrament (Holy Communion) and explained that it is not a ritual it is a Sacraments, and only two or three can touch the Holy Communion. The pastor, Stewardess, and Stewards. During the Pandemic, Holy Communion became a concern as to how it was to be distributed to members. Holy Communion is a sacrament with much tradition and theology that was challenging to preserve in the face of COVID-19. Nevertheless, we managed with various ways of distribution. Long before COVID, churches without licensed or ordained clergy have had elements blessed by an elder before leading worship in their ministry locations. The same still exists in our churches today.

During the pandemic, countless creative means of offering Holy Communion were put in place. As for many Pastors, this was an opportunity to spark his or her creativity: During Facebook Live worship on Sunday morning, Pastor led the communion liturgy while standing behind the altar. The pre-packaged, recently consecrated elements had already been available for pick up at the church parking lot or whatever the destination was. Then everyone who had received elements opened them to partake in the sacrament wherever they were at that time.

The role of the class Leader system was discussed as well. **THE CLASS LEADER SYSTEM
“CARING FOR OUR CONGREGATION”**

The Class System is a basic organizational unit of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church that connects each member of the local church. Since the beginning of the A.M.E. Church, the Class System has played a vital role. Richard Allen, the founder and first bishop of the church, at the first A.M.E. General Conference, adopted the Methodist doctrine, including the “Class System. “John Wesley, at the very birth of Methodism had instituted class leadership.

“Each society (congregation) was divided into small companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode, and one person was appointed the leader.” Bishop Henry McNeal Turner is given credit for promoting the sensitivity and importance of the system. He described the class leaders “as proxy-pastors who assist the pastor to minister to each member of the congregation.” In his Methodist Polity, Bishop Turner referred to the “class system” in the church as: “Next to the Word of God.” All persons joining Metropolitan are assigned a temporary Class Leader, called an “anchor,” until that person completes the required new members’ orientation. Upon completing the orientation, each new member is assigned to a class. Each member of the congregation is to be assigned to a class. The Class Leader system is a two-way street; members are strongly encouraged to maintain communication with their class leader. The Class Leader’s main responsibility is to serve as a representative of the pastor and to monitor the general welfare of class members.

Several audience participants asked questions about how we engage Young Adults and some reasons why they were not interested in attending worship service. Some Answers were: too many meetings, too long worship.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr. Presiding Bishop, 7th Episcopal District
Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Presiding Bishop, 9th Episcopal District
Recording Secretary, Dianne H. Battle, 9th Episcopal District

MINISTRY AND ORDER:

African Methodist Episcopal Church

CONVO XI-

Columbus, Ohio

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Hilton Hotel- Pheoris West

Minutes

The Ministry and Order - Breakout Room Pheoris West

87 People in attendance

Bishop Adam Richardson, 10th Episcopal District Presiding Prelate opened the breakout session at 3:35 PM with opening remarks and asked for a recorder. Rev. Barrington Ross, 2nd District Pastor and Candidate for Bishop volunteered. Bishop Richardson described the challenges of Ministry and Order with many examples of churches with no pastor and itinerants unwilling to travel. He also described scenarios of evangelists sent to pastor and congregations that say, "What does a piece of paper mean to us?" with little regard for the itinerancy.

Bishop Richardson introduced Bishop Julius McAllister, 1st District Presiding Prelate. Bishop McAllister gave commendations to the chair and cited the critical time of the church:

Resolving the Annuity, addressing COVID-19 in person worship, rising assessments and other concerns of Ministry and Order, namely:

1. Rate of Retirement of Pastors and Presiding Elders is greater than those being called into ministry. Pulpits are being supplied by
 - a. Lay Speakers
 - b. Lay Preachers
 - c. And P.E.s Supplying as Pastors
2. Acknowledging Annuity plan for Locals who serve years as pastors
3. LGBTQ concerns
4. Seminary requirements by the church for ordination and high cost for students. Also, seminaries are closing and merging causing problems for AME licentiates for ordination.

Bishop Richardson weighed in remarks expected explaining how individuals become pastors and accept the call via Biblically, theological, relationship- process of 1st an exhorter, and then licentiate, experience- your formations, Board of Examiners, Systemic, and Vocation.

The age of ordination has increased from 39 to 50 and now 60 for entering the the process for ordination. Other challenges he noted was other areas of lay ministry

1. The Missionary Rule
2. Lay Ministry speakers and readers
3. Evangelists
4. Exhorters- who can be stewards or trustees
5. Licensed missionaries
6. Local ministers

Also the apparel of unordained clergy was discussed, because individuals were creatively making it up.

Bishop Richardson then introduced Rev. Dr. Toni Belin, 6th District Presiding Elder, North Augusta. Elder Belin gave a brief introduction of her background and how she answered the call to ordained ministry. She further explained that, "We're here because of our relationship with God" but we, "We don't have real relationship with one another" She began to list a number of concerns for the church:

1. Revamping Board of Examiners (BOE)
 - a. Needs Standardized
 - b. Create conversation partners about sermon content.
 - c. Create prayer partners
 - d. Teach about budgets
 - e. Have group therapy
2. Support PEs Development
 - a. Invest in PEs as middle managers
 - b. Provide Coaching
 - c. Encourage professional development
 - d. Should not normalize bivocational ministry
 - e. Shouldn't normalize pastor's giving, with the total job that it takes to be a pastor.
3. Eliminate Ministerial Efficiency
 - a. Instead give Pastor a professional improvement plan (PIP)
 - b. ORequire Quarterly therapy without PE or Bishop oversight.
 - c. Institute Behavioral Health Plan for therapy.

4. Same sex Marriage- God Loves All. The church should embrace individuals who are in monogamous relationships with someone they love.

The Rev. Dr. Keith Mayes, Senior Pastor of Vernon Chapel Greenwood, Tulsa, Oklahoma was introduced

by Bishop Michael Mitchell. Dr. Mayes stated to the session that we've abandoned the class leader systems while other denominations have benefited from and repackaged spiritual formation groups. He also stated that the church needed to address ministry training boards and pastors housing allowances. Local ministry should be allowed to participate in ministry training boards and the annuity plans. He also encouraged the body deal with the same-sex marriage issue and make a decision about whether we should support it or not.

Bishop Jeffery Leath, Ecumenical Bishop for AME Church interjected "we needed to know our endorser and the people we're committed to in the church" on the subject of getting rid of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee (MEC). He further stated in support of keeping the MEC, "Some people don't belong in the pulpit." and the MEC helps Bishops and the church. Pastors should be able to stay in the Annual Conference as long as they want. The MEC addresses the privileges that are extended to those in ministry. The MEC recognizes our responsibility to all clergy, ministry, and family. Elder Toni Belin rebutted that Bishops could use Godly wisdom and vision to stop some of the MEC incidents. Bishop Leath recanted, "Just because one reprimanded, doesn't make them a bad person" Rev. K. Mayes affirmed to trust the process of the MEC and gave a personal example. Bishop Richardson also affirmed to the process. Bishop McAllister suggested the need to revamp the MDiv requirements and the MEC helps Bishops and Clergy. Bishop Richardson added that the MEC is not by design to be punitive.

Two pieces of legislation were discussed, 1702 - Ministerial Training Board presented by Attorney Mark Johnson and 2172-Transfer to another conference in a timely manner presented by Rev. Joelynn Stokes. Both gave excellent presentations. Bishop McAllister stated that we need to implement what we have written in regards to the Ministerial training board and that transfer procedure was already in the discipline. Bishop Reginald Jackson, 6th Episcopal District Presiding Prelate suggested that the laity representation should be included the discussion of the Ministerial Training Board.

Bishop Michell questioned the 90 day time limit being too long for a transfer certificate. Bishop Richardson explained the 90 day rule. Bishop McAllister cited that the time limit was already in the discipline. Bishop Leath added the transfer legislation should include "good and regular standing" standard for transferring from a different district.

Also, 1919 Local Ministry Annuity Provision was discussed, Everyone was in agreement Rev. Matthew Watley, Pastor suggested that the Local Annuity be optional for local clergy. Bishop Richardson stated locals can't transfer. Bishop McAllister was in agreement with this legislation.

Bishop Richardson adjourned the meeting for dinner at 5:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Barrington Ross

EVENING PLENARY:

To: Moderators Bishop Jeffrey Leath, Bishop Reginald Jackson, Bishop Clement Fugh

From: The Reverend Madonna Gray, Recorder

Subject: Convo XI Evening Session

Bishop Jeffrey Leath opened the session with an Ecumenical version of the Lord's Prayer.

Bishop Fugh, Bishop Jackson and Bishop Leath declined making opening statements in the interest of time.

During the evening session all of the submitted Proposed Legislation was presented for further comments. The following is a synopsis of actions.

CLO-9 Transparency of Connectional Budget

Recommended that this matter be reduced to a resolution, and the Budget should be restored in the same way it was taken out of the *Discipline*.

CLO-7 – Time at General Conference

Mark Johnson, Chair of the Lay Organization Legislation Committee noted the concern for more time spent on legislation at the General Conference. It was recommended that the issue be sent to the General Conference Commission Program Committee and the Rules Committee.

CLO-2 – Commission on Internal Audit

It was noted there should more than one auditing firm contracted to do departmental audits. This makes the results more reasonably independent.

Adjusting Convo to Assist in Streamlining Legislation Process for the General Conference

It was recommended that the Council of Bishops look at the reconsider the structure of future CONVOS.

Consistent Use of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Emblem – The Anvil and the Cross

The name should read "The Cross and the Anvil"

It was also recommended that the Publication Department re-issue guidance through the AME website and The Christian Recorder on how the Certified Emblem should be used.

Lay Delegate Electoral College Qualifications

It was noted that while we need informed lay members going to the electoral college, we also want to be careful not to disenfranchise congregations which are unable to send representatives who possess a higher level of qualification.

Restructure of the General Board

Those persons who are elected to represent the district at the General Board should have qualifications for the work. It was also noted that there should be an effort to promote gender inclusion.

New Revised Standard Version of the Bible

The first amendment to this legislation is the title. The title of the legislation should read, "New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Updated Edition." The title of the Bill will be amended.

Ministry and Orders (Ministry – Local Church)

Recommended that the sponsors dig a bit deeper into related issues such as the disposition of rent received from parsonages not used by the pastor.

CLO-5 – Providing IRS Required Documentation for the Pastor's Housing Allowance Benefit

Reminded that this bill reflects a commitment to pastors maximizing tax benefits. It was emphasized that the salary and housing benefits are subject to annual review and negotiation.

Satisfaction/Termination of Unpaid Pastoral Wages and Loans

The discussion emphasized the distinction between reported and unreported debt.

Removing Prohibition and Penalty for Licensed or Ordained AME clergypersons from performing Same-Sex Marriage.

Recommended that the bill be referred to the special committee chaired by the Rev. Dr. Teresa Fry Brown for further consideration.

Breakout Group One: Summation Report Oversight and Accountability

The session was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Bishop Reginald T. Jackson in the Pheoris West room of the Hilton Downtown Hotel, Columbus, Ohio on December 13, 2023. Moderators for this meeting were Bishop Reginald T. Jackson and Bishop Ronnie Brailsford. Respondents were: Sis. Cynthia Gordon-Floyd, Rev. Dr. Alphonse Allen, and Dr. Marcus Henderson.

Bishop Jackson began the meeting with an introduction on the importance of oversight and accountability in our church, emphasizing the need for these two components to be fluent from the local level to the connectional level, especially as it relates to Retirement and Annuity. Brailsford then made comment concerning our church being driven on personality rather than proficiency. He also commented on the need for accountability and proper money management to younger generations and the future of the church.

The meeting on oversight and accountability within the A,M.E church was highly comprehensive and touched upon various critical areas of concern. Overall, the discussions highlighted the necessity for a significant overhaul in financial management, transparency, and integrity across all levels of the church.

There were several key points made during the meeting:

1. **Financial Oversight:** Concerns were raised about financial mismanagement and the need for better oversight, including implementing internal auditors, compliance officers, and inspectors general. It was emphasized that financial responsibility is crucial as it impacts the church's credibility and future sustainability.
2. **Cultural Shift:** There was a call for a cultural shift within the church, emphasizing the importance of asking hard questions without vilifying those who raise concerns. Transparency and full disclosure were highlighted as essential elements to regain trust.
3. **Legislation and Compliance:** Suggestions were made to create legislation enforcing adherence to policies, conducting regular audits, and evaluating what's working and what's not within the church's operations. There was also discussion about the need for compliance officers and a reevaluation of the church's budgeting approach.
4. **Hiring and Resources:** Concerns were raised about the costs of hiring qualified personnel for oversight and accountability roles. There was a suggestion to consider reallocating financial resources within the church to prioritize these roles.
5. **Challenges and Solutions:** The meeting acknowledged challenges, such as the resistance to change and the difficulty in implementing new structures due to existing power dynamics. Suggestions were made to revisit the budgeting process and consider a zero-based budgeting approach.

6. **Local Church Oversight:** The importance of initiating oversight at the local level to foster trust and promote church growth was emphasized. Trust-building was seen as a crucial factor in implementing effective oversight measures.
7. **Leadership and Hiring Practices:** Discussions highlighted the need to hire experienced and qualified individuals from outside the church to manage key roles, especially in financial and administrative positions.

The meeting encompassed a shared recognition of the gravity of the situation and the need for substantial changes in processes, culture, and leadership within the church to ensure accountability and long-term sustainability. It is the hope of the participants in this session that suggestions made during the meeting will inform future strategies and decisions within the church.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm by Bishop Reginald T. Jackson and Bishop Ronnie Brailsford.

Humby submitted this 14th day of December 2023

Rt. Rev. Reginald T. Jackson, Presiding Prelate, 6th Episcopal District

Rt. Rev. Ronne Brailsford, Presiding Prelate, 19th Episcopal District

Rev. Cynthia Parnell McDonald, Ph.D.

Addendum

Oversight and Accountability Detailed Draft of Session Notes

Breakout Group One: Oversight and Accountability: called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Bishop Reginald T. Jackson in the Pehoris West room of the Hilton Downtown Hotel, Columbus, GA. Moderators for this meeting were Bishop Reginald T. Jackson and Bishop Ronnie Brailsford. Respondents were: Sis. Cynthia Gordon-Floyd, Rev. Dr. Alphonse Allen, and Dr. Marcus Henderson.

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The following are comments and advice given by the moderators:

Gordon-Floyd

- Mends what seems to be 20 sole proprietorships rather than a connectional body.
- Develop a “financial umbrella” to oversee what is needed to revive the trust that has been broken due to be financial irresponsibility of our churches.

Allen

- Enforce what is in the discipline
- Ensure consequences for those who are not adhering to the policies in the discipline
- Create a culture shift where the people who are asking the hard questions should not become villains
- Not give the illusion of transparency but ensure full disclosure
- Need for an internal auditor, inspector general and a compliance officer (current with rules and regulations).
- Train, promote and hire proper staff with attention ethics and moral responsibility.

Henderson

- Primary question: Do we want the change? Change means continuing down your current state of consciousness until the change is easier to do
- Conduct 3 audits including a certified audit from each district. Discipline instructs Marcus to collect them, not review them. They must be reviewed.

- Evaluation- We must evaluate 3 things, what working, what's not working, and what could work if given special attention.
- Implement what we have in the discipline
- There will be support from his department to put in the necessary financial constraints to balance issues around fiscal mismanagement.

Additional Comments from Bishop Jackson

At the next general board meeting,

1. Motion should be made to replace that legislation.
2. This group must deal with legislation about specific responsibilities for the commissions
3. Ask the church commission to engage legislation on
- 4) Much of what we are talking about today was talked about in 1984.
- 5) We are still too personlaity driven rather than priority driven.
- 6) Bishop Jackson will make sure that items are sent out appropriately from 1984, such as a bishop to oversee anything voted in is implemented and followed through on.
- 7) Reports are being approved but not implemented. We are where we are because there is no follow through and there are no consequences.
- 8) Administrative officer that makes sure that things are followed through on.
 1. we need to be honest with our selves. The system that we have today does not work. We have not changed it in over 60 years, and it no longer applies to today's times. Something's that we bury does not need to be resurrected, learned that from the pandemic.
 2. Give consideration to a compliance officer. A CFO should have no idea what is happening in retirement service.

Audience Comments and Discussion

- Accountability is something that is paid for. You hire someone. We need to start looking at hire people who are qualified for administration, oversight and accountability.
- Rolling up financials so that every district be on the same fiscal year to help us know our economic power
- 20 sole proprietorships. This must be rectified
- We should stop meeting in person and do virtual meetings to give a break. We approved it and it was not implemented.

- Bishop Leath proposed a bill (page 33.) No entity should be allowed to move the funds from west path without the permission from the participants in the program and a majority vote. To build trust, we should pass this bill as a point of accountability.
- Hiring requires money. 1) We pay bishop an average of \$63,000 base. Compliance officers are paid about \$100,000 which will increase the Connectional budget. We love to hear this but don't want to pay for it.

2) Do we move to a model if local churches paying here money directly to the Connectional church and they send the money back to give districts?

- Bishop response- the church has not increased the budget on 20 years. One thing we need to face is lack of growth. The church is not growing. We need to be honest with ourselves about budgetary needs/requirements and do what is best for the church. Twenty percent of our people are tithers. Our failure to act in 1984 is kicking us today.
- Bishop Davis- 1) We say we want to face the elephant in the room but there is no hiring or replacement for integrity. We had audits. There is no replacement for integrity. We have a spiritual problem in our church and we have an integrity issue from top to bottom. 2) The oldest denomination of color and organized is still living on what we can beg from the pew. Other denominations are investing their resources and we are punishing churches because they are succeeding. We could have saved the money in this meeting. We have no business spending every dime we get and give to white folks. We need to cut out some of these meetings. It's a shame that we don't have our own reality.

- **Other comments from the audience:**

- Infrastructure- Structural integrity needs to be in conversation with infrastructure and accountability. Organizational changes should be made to ensure this. Taking on other projects to supplement budget. What are some structures we can set in place to promote integrity?
- Bishop McCloud- You cannot legislate morality (mlk). We cannot follow the laws we have yet, we want some more. We don't want to change. Most things fail with the Council if Bishop's because we don't want to break down these kingdoms. Bishop McKenzie suggested a charge executive officer and they said the same thing in the 60's. Our problem is us. Change is hard. There are too many people at the top benefiting from this craziness.
- develop requirements for commissions as well as qualifications, preferred and required.
- Look at places where we spend money and cut out some things.
- Reset the budget by using a zero based budget approach.
- Retirement services- happened over a long period of time. We need to take a look at all of the areas.

- Oversight starts at the local church. For church growth and development, churches are growing but not AME churches. Once we do oversight locally, our church will start growing. We are here and people are hurt. It takes trust. We need to do the oversight locally and work its way up for trust building and growth.
 - Compliance and chief administrative officer should be hired outside of the church outside of the church to hire someone.
 - Jackson- Your job description determines what/how we hire. Presiding officer should be a bishop. That bishop should have the people around them to work on these aspects.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm by Bishop Reginald T. Jackson and Bishop Ronnie Brailsford.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION



AME CONVO XI PROPOSED LEGISLATION

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- 51 k. CLO 5 - Providing IRS Required Documentation for the Pastor’s Housing Allowance Benefit (2)
- 52 l. SATISFACTION/TERMINATION OF UNPAID PASTORAL WAGES AND LOANS
- 53 m. Transfer to Another Annual Conference
- 54 n. Removing Prohibition and Penalty for Licensed or Ordained AME clergypersons from performing Same-
- 55 Sex Marriages in the United States
- 56 o. Evangelical Missionary

57 Please note: **Entry ID # with an asterisk (*) means the bills could be grouped in more than one category.**

58 I. Oversight and Accountability

Bill Number
Title CLO 8 - Revisions to the Commission on Financial Management Program
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

59 Page Reference in Current AME Discipline

60 REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021. Part XIII, Section II, A. 7.
61 Page 254 - Commission on Financial Management Program

62 Intent

63 INTENT This proposed legislation is to replace the well-intentioned financial management program, the Commission on
64 Financial Management Program, passed in 1978 but never implemented. The current version in our Doctrine and Discipline,
65 endeavors to provide oversight of each Episcopal District, leading churches in each District, and for all General
66 Departments, Agencies and Institutions of the AME Church. It is clear the purpose of this original Commission was to
67 provide independent financial oversight, integrity, and accountability to the financial management of all areas of the
68 Connectional and Episcopal District levels of the AME Church. This newly revised Commission removes the Episcopal
69 Districts and local churches from the oversight of the Commission to allow the Commission to focus solely on those
70 ministries at the Connectional level that are not monitored closely and are not held accountable for transparent financial
71 reporting yet receive a substantial amount of their funding from the General Budget dollars that are provided by each
72 member of the AME Church. This Commission and platform shall be implemented, staffed and function as an independent
73 body of professionals responsible to the General Conference body to provide strict, sound, objective and transparent
74 oversight. This commission is to be supported by the general funds of the AME Church in the spirit of the Commission on
75 Financial Management Program which has been in our Discipline for more than 40 years.

76 This bill establishes three (3) specific areas of the financial management program under an independent commission of
77 professionals elected to oversee independent, specific oversight and accountability procedures and reporting for all
78 Departments, Agencies and Institutions of the AME Church. The Commission will oversee the work of the 3 program areas
79 which will be implemented in phases to ensure a baseline of consistent, reliable information is established on which
80 recommendations can be based on. The 3 program areas are: Phase I: Financial Management (Financial Oversight); Phase
81 II: Planning & Evaluation (Effectiveness and Efficiency) and Phase III: Research (Goal-Oriented Improvements). It is
82 recommended that each of these program areas are implemented separately or in phases as outlined below.

83 Phase I, Financial Management (Financial Oversight) is the first and most pertinent current need. Therefore, it is
84 recommended that this arm of the program is implemented immediately. The Director of Financial Oversight will focus on
85 ensuring the consistent, independent, thorough, and accurate financial reporting and audit compliance of all Departments,
86 Agencies and Institutions of the AME Church who received General Budget support. This group will coordinate and gather
87 information by overseeing independent audit committees trained and prepared to provide guidance and ensure independence
88 of all audit reporting to the General Conference body.

89 Phase II, Planning & Evaluation (Effectiveness and Efficiency) arm of the program be headed by the Director of Planning &
90 Evaluation. The Director will draw from the audit reports and audit recommendations to evaluate the effectiveness and
91 financial viability of the existing Connectional Departments, Agencies and Institutions and coordinate with the various
92 commissions and boards to assist with outlining needed improvements and changes. Phase II should begin after the first

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94 2-3 years of successful operation of Phase I.

95 Phase III, Research (Goal-Oriented improvements) will be headed by the Director of Research. This Director will conduct
96 independent research to recommend improvements, changes or discontinuance of programs that are not serving the church
97 as intended or as needed. This group would gather information from all areas of the AME Church and from many outside
98 resources to recommend and assist with implementation of significant process and program changes that can make our Zion
99 stronger, more viable and more prepared for the challenges we will face as we endeavor to spread the Good News to all

100 areas of the world. This Phase should be implemented no more than 2 years after the beginning of Phase II.

101 **Rationale**

102 This legislation focuses on implementing sound internal controls and oversight processes to ensure accurate and consistent
103 financial reporting to prevent, detect and address financial irregularities, misappropriations and crimes that have occurred in
104 numerous organizations including the AME Church. This oversight program must be independent of the current Episcopal
105 control structure to ensure no one person, regardless of title or office, will be in a position to influence, conceal or
106 manipulate the financial policies and reporting that will be routinely presented to the church body. Our Zion has suffered
107 greatly in the past and currently from the consistent lack of oversight, reliable independent auditing, undocumented
108 financial reporting and the inability to detect gross errors and omissions in financial reporting. We must bring this to an end.

109 **Current Text**

110 * This bill replaces the prior bill

111 **Amended Text**

112 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021. Part XIII, Section II, A. 7. Page 254 -
113 Commission on Financial Management Program Commission on Financial Management Program (CFM) Introduction and
114 explanation of the Commission on Financial Management Program

115 The Commission on Financial Management Program purpose is to provide independent financial oversight, integrity, and
116 accountability to the financial management of all Departments, Agencies and Institutions at the Connectional level that
117 receive substantial funding from the General Budget of the AMEC. The program will bring consistent monitoring as well as
118 transparent standardized financial audit reporting to the AME Church. This Commission and platform shall be implemented,
119 staffed and function as an independent body of professionals ensuring strict, sound, objective, and transparent oversight and
120 will be responsible to the General Conference body. This program must be independent of the current Episcopal control
121 structure to ensure no one person, regardless of title or office, will be in a position to influence, conceal or manipulate the
122 financial policies and reporting that will be routinely presented to the church body. This commission is to be supported by
123 the general funds of the AME Church.

124 The Commission will oversee the work of the 3 program areas which will be implemented in phases to ensure a baseline of
125 consistent, reliable information is established on which recommendations can be based on. The 3 program areas are: Phase
126 I: Financial Oversight; Phase II: Planning & Evaluation and Phase III: Research. It is recommended that each of these
127 program areas are implemented separately or in phases as outlined below.

128 The Commission on Financial Management Program will cover three specific areas: Financial Oversight, Planning &
129 Evaluation and Research. These areas will be implemented in three phases. The Financial Oversight arm of the Financial
130 Management Program will be implemented first, followed by Planning & Evaluation, then Research. a. Composition -
131 Candidates for the Commission will offer themselves to be elected by ballot at each General Conference and elected by the
132 General Conference body to constitute the Commission on Financial Management Program. The Commission shall consist
133 of nine (9) persons – 5 lay and 4 clergy persons. Ideally, three (3) of the persons on this Commission will be from outside of
134 the AME Church. The chair of the General Board of the AME Church shall be ex-officio (this will mean that they are not
135 part of the regular process of getting on the commission because of their title but it doesn't mean they can't vote) member of
136 this Commission. b. Qualifications - These elected commissioners must possess the formal education, professional
137 certifications, experience, and independence from the General Board to provide the objective expertise required to perform
138 the duties

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140 of this commission. The Commission should be made up of certified public accountants, human resource professionals,
141 internal audit and control experts, fraud examiners, organizational leadership professionals, attorneys, and others with
142 similar financial, management and legal expertise whose skills and experience will be useful to the commission. c. Duties of
143 the Commission

144 1) advise the General Board and the General Conference of the AME Church of the General Budget funds to accomplish the
145 basic program purpose and objective as outlined in the doctrine and discipline by which all AME Connectional
146 Departments, Agencies and Institutions are governed. 2) ensures the implementation of independent audit committees for
147 each connectional department, agency and Institution to oversee the respective audit processes.

148 3) provides direct oversight, training and tools to each audit committee to provide the foundation for consistent ongoing
149 oversight, monitoring & reporting. 4) annually review the financial health of each component as provided by the audit
150 reports, verifying basic supporting documentation from each component and report to the General Board on the compliance
151 of each component.

152 5) elect 3 Program Directors from the commission members prior to the implementation of each Phase of the program. 6)
153 make periodic studies and evaluate the use of material and manpower resources of Connectional Departments, Agency and
154 Institutions in consultation with the components leadership. 7) analyze the operations of each General Department, Agency
155 and Institution of the Church with the purpose of determining the productive benefits occurring from their operation and the
156 degree of efficiency by which these operations are administered. 8) recommend to the General Board and to the General
157 Conference of the AME Church specific financial goals outlined in audit management letters and by review of Commission
158 members to be achieved by each department, agency or institution supported by the general funds of the church and
159 establish time schedules of progress by which each department, agency or institution shall be required to conform in order
160 to produce the greatest benefits for the Church. 9) supervise and structure policy for the productive operation of an Office of
161 Research, Planning and Evaluation. 10) The Commission shall recommend to the General Board of the AME Church the
162 paid staff, qualified academic training and professional experience, to serve as (a) Director of Financial Oversight, (b)
163 Director of Planning and Evaluation and (c) Director of Research. The three Directors will employ one supporting staff
164 member to implement their functional assignments. Phase I – Financial Oversight Arm of the Financial Management
165 Program Overview/Duties The Financial Oversight Arm would be responsible for ensuring independent audit committees
166 are assigned, functioning, trained, and provided tools to oversee the audit process for each Connectional Department,
167 Agency and Institution. Each audit committee will coordinate their work through the Financial Management Program
168 Committee. The final audit reports for each Department, Agency and Institution will be provided directly to the Program
169 Committee. The Director of Financial Oversight and Committee would be responsible for preparing and providing summary
170 reports of each Department, Agency and Institution annually at the General Board meetings of the church and quadrennially
171 provide a summary report regarding each Department, Agency and Institution to the General Conference body. These
172 summaries will include audit results, management letter recommendations, Committee recommendations for financial
173 procedure and process improvements and other pertinent information. The summaries would be submitted to the
174 Commission on Statistics and Finance 30 days prior to presentation to the annual General Board. The complete report
175 quadrennial report will be available for dissemination to all General Conference delegates 3 months prior to each General
176 Conference for review, discussion information, sharing/dissemination...) Composition Oversight Program Chairperson - The
177 Commission on Financial Management Program would elect among the commission members, an Director of Financial
178 Oversight, that would be employed by the General Conference (AMEC) on a part-time basis (potentially \$50-\$75,000
179 annually). This program chair would provide oversight, training, tools and coordination to the group of audit committees.
180 The director would provide annual reporting to the Commission on Statistics & Finance, General Board and General
181 Conference on all matters pertaining to the Financial Oversight work completed by the Financial Management Program
182 Committee. Audit Committees Independently selected Audit Committee members shall be drawn from qualified volunteer
183 members from the general populus of the AME Church or in the case of the Institutions with existing audit committees,
184 from the governing boards of those institutions. Upon organization, the Financial Management Program Committee shall
185 solicit interested volunteer

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187 members willing to be trained to serve on audit committees. All Connectional Departments, Agencies or Institutions that
188 have existing audit committees shall agree to be governed by the guidelines, policies and procedures established by the
189 Commission on Financial Management Program which will be required of all audit committees. They shall submit to the
190 Commission their selected/appointed audit committee persons, or the Commission on Financial Management Program will
191 assign qualified volunteers from the pool of those who volunteer from all districts as needed.

192 Each independent audit committee would consist of 3-5 volunteer persons (no person in a paid AME Church position can
193 serve on an audit committee) based on the size of the Connectional Department, Agency or Institution. The audit
194 committees would also elect/select a Chair and Vice Chair of the committee from their members. The Chairperson would be
195 responsible for reporting to the Director of Financial Oversight.

196 Staffing The staff under the Director of Financial Oversight would be limited to two administrative persons, employed part-
197 time at a cost of no more than \$20,000 annually each. One administrative person will be assigned coordination of the audit
198 committees, and the second person will be responsible for assisting with coordinating the audit reporting. The Independent
199 Audit Committees will perform the following duties: (1) Selection of external auditor (2) Coordination and review of the
200 engagement letter and any specific audit requests. (3) Direct coordination with the auditor during the audit process to review
201 progress, ensure cooperation and provide oversight and instruction if any material error or irregularities are discovered. (4)
202 Meet with the auditor after the completion of the audit to review the audit report and management letter concerns. (5)
203 Summarize the report and recommendations and report to the Financial Oversight Chairperson and Program Committee.
204 Phase II - Planning & Evaluation Phase II would begin 2 years after Phase I is fully operational. The Director of Planning
205 and Evaluation would be implemented under the same financial support of part-time compensation and one support person.
206 This program director would draw from the audit reports and recommendations to evaluate the effectiveness and financial
207 viability of the existing Connectional Departments, Agencies and Institutions and coordinate with the Commission on

208 Financial Management Program and various commissions and boards to assist with outlining needed improvements and
209 changes and timelines for completion of agreed-upon changes. The Director of Planning and Evaluation and Committee
210 would be responsible for preparing and providing summary reports of recommendations on each Department, Agency and
211 Institution annually at the General Board meetings of the church and quadrennially provide a summary report regarding
212 each Department, Agency and Institution to the General Conference body. Phase III - Research Phase II would begin 1 year
213 after Phase II is fully implemented and operational. The Director of Research would be implemented under the same
214 financial support guidelines as the other Director positions with a part-time compensation chairperson and one part-time
215 paid support position. The Director of Research will gather information from all areas of the AME Church and from many
216 outside resources to recommend and implement significant process and program changes that can make our Zion stronger,
217 more viable, more responsive, and more prepared for the challenges we will face as we endeavor to spread the Good News
218 to all areas of the world. The Director of Research and Committee would be responsible for preparing and providing
219 summary reports of recommendations on each Department, Agency, and Institution annually at the General Board meetings
220 of the church and quadrennially provide a summary report regarding each Department, Agency and Institution to the
221 General Conference body.

222 Financial Implications: Year 1 & 2 P/T Director of Financial Oversight \$50,000-\$75,000 P/T Assistant 1 \$20,000 P/T
223 Assistant 2 \$20,000 Total Year 1 & 2 \$90,000-\$115,000

224 Year 3 All Year One Costs Plus P/T Director of Planning & Evaluation \$50,000-\$75,000 P/T Assistant 3 \$20,000

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226 Total Years 3 \$160,000-\$185,000

227 Year 4 and forward All Year 1 and 3 Costs Plus P/T Director of Research \$50,000-\$75,000 P/T Assistant 4 \$20,000 Total
228 Year 4 \$230,000-\$255,000

Bill Number
Title CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

229 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

230 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General
231 Summary of the Budget

232 **Intent**

233 To restore the Church Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD).

234 **Rationale**

235 The 2020 Discipline does not include a Church Finance Section as done in prior editions. The decision to delete the Church
236 Finance Section from the 2020 Discipline out of concerns about legal risk promotes a burden of non-access to basic
237 Connectional financial data. Furthermore, charging members \$5.00 to purchase the financial booklet is inefficient and
238 insulting. Why should a member have to pay to gain access to the financial status and budget projections for the church? To
239 promote member trust in our church financial transactions the Connectional Budget must be included in the BODD, be fully
240 transparent and free to all members in good and regular standing.

241 **Current Text**

242 There is no current text or existing legislation for the proposed bill.

243 **Amended Text**

244 There is no new wording or amended text other than restoring Section IX Church Financial Section back to the 2024
245 Discipline.

246 **Financial Cost** This proposed legislation has no financial impact on the General Church Budget.

Bill Number
Title CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget (2)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

247 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

248 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
249 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church
250 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
251 a Church Finance Section as done in prior editions. The decision to delete the Church Finance Section from the 2020
252 Discipline out of concerns about legal risk promotes a burden of non-access to basic Connectional financial data.
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257 proposed bill. Proposed NEW wording There is no new wording or amended text other than restoring Section IX Church
258 Financial Section back to the 2024 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no financial impact on the
259 General Church Budget.

260 **Intent**

261 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
262 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church
263 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
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269 members in good and regular standing. Existing Legislation now reads There is no current text or existing legislation for the
270 proposed bill. Proposed NEW wording

271 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:59:48

272 There is no new wording or amended text other than restoring Section IX Church Financial Section back to the 2024
273 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no financial impact on the General Church Budget.

274 **Rationale**

275 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
276 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church
277 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
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284 proposed bill. Proposed NEW wording There is no new wording or amended text other than restoring Section IX Church
285 Financial Section back to the 2024 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no financial impact on the
286 General Church Budget.

287 **Current Text**

288 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist

289 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church
290 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
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298 Financial Section back to the 2024 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no financial impact on the
299 General Church Budget.

300 **Amended Text**

301 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
302 Episcopal Church 2021,

303 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:59:48

304 Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget

305 INTENT To restore the Church Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The
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312 existing legislation for the proposed bill. Proposed NEW wording There is no new wording or amended text other than
313 restoring Section IX Church Financial Section back to the 2024 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no
314 financial impact on the General Church Budget.

Bill Number
Title CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget (3)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

315 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

316 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
317 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church
318 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
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325 proposed bill. Proposed NEW wording There is no new wording or amended text other than restoring Section IX Church
326 Financial Section back to the 2024 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no financial impact on the
327 General Church Budget.

328 **Intent**

329 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
330 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church

331 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
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338 proposed bill. Proposed NEW wording

339 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:59:48

340 There is no new wording or amended text other than restoring Section IX Church Financial Section back to the 2024
341 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no financial impact on the General Church Budget.

342 **Rationale**

343 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
344 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church
345 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
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355 **Current Text**

356 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
357 Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget INTENT To restore the Church
358 Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The 2020 Discipline does not include
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368 **Amended Text**

369 CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget REFERENCE The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
370 Episcopal Church 2021,

371 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:59:48

372 Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General Summary of the Budget

373 INTENT To restore the Church Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD). RATIONALE The
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379 transparent and free to all members in good and regular standing. Existing Legislation now reads There is no current text or
380 existing legislation for the proposed bill. Proposed NEW wording There is no new wording or amended text other than
381 restoring Section IX Church Financial Section back to the 2024 Discipline. Financial Cost This proposed legislation has no
382 financial impact on the General Church Budget.

Bill Number
Title CLO 2 - Commission on Internal Audit
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

383 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

384 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021. Page 113, Section II. Local Church
385 Organization - Optional Commissions

386 **Intent**

387 Many Stewards, Trustees and Official Board Members feel powerless to verify the accuracy of the financial reports that are
388 provided to leadership during Official Board meetings and Quarterly and Annual Conferences. It is vital that church
389 leadership has the information and tools to verify the financial reports as well as the accompanying documentation to ensure
390 that the financial status of the church is being reported correctly and accurately. Frequently, the leadership is reliant on the
391 Pastor and a few individuals for the financial integrity of reporting and to maintain internal controls. The Commission on
392 Internal Audit is designed to provide an independent review of the critical areas of financial management and will be able to
393 draw from the Discipline the necessary tools to properly conduct this internal audit review.

394 **Rationale**

395 Many Stewards, Trustees and Official Board Members feel powerless to verify the accuracy of the financial reports that are
396 provided to leadership during Official Board meetings and Quarterly and Annual Conferences. It is vital that church
397 leadership has the information and tools to verify the financial reports as well as the accompanying documentation to ensure
398 that the financial status of the church is being reported correctly and accurately. Frequently, the leadership is reliant on the
399 Pastor and a few individuals for the financial integrity of reporting and to maintain internal controls. The Commission on
400 Internal Audit is designed to provide an independent review of the critical areas of financial management and will be able to
401 draw from the Discipline the necessary tools to properly conduct this internal audit review.

402 **Current Text**

403 Section II. Local Church Organization - Optional Commissions A. Guidelines for Establishing Commissions 1. Types There
404 may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter defined: a) The
405 Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship b) The Commission on Christian Education, c) The Commission
406 on Missions and Welfare, d) The Commission on Stewardship & Finance, e) The Commission on Public Relations. f) The
407 Commission on Christian Social Action, and g) The Commission on Health.

408 **Amended Text**

409 Section II. Local Church Organization - Optional Commissions A. Guidelines for Establishing Commissions 1. Types There
410 may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter defined: a) The
411 Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship b) The Commission on Christian Education, c) The Commission
412 on Missions and Welfare, d) The Commission on Stewardship & Finance, e) The Commission on Public Relations. f) The
413 Commission on Christian Social Action, g) The Commission on Health and, h) The Commission on Internal Audit. D.
414 Duties of Each Commission

415 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:53:23

416 **8. Commission on Internal Audit**

417 a. Qualifications (1) Must be a member in good standing in the local church, participating financially. (2) Must be approved
418 to serve on the internal audit committee by the Official Board or Church Conference. (3) Must commit to 30-45 days of
419 each year to work consistently on the internal audit for the local church. (4) Must participate in all internal audit committee
420 meetings held in preparation for an upcoming internal audit (5) Must participate in all internal audit committee training
421 sessions (6) Must be willing to sign the final internal audit report as a member of the committee and stand in agreement with
422 the committee. b. Duties The duties of this commission are as follows: (1) Collate, check, and analyze spreadsheet data (2)
423 Examine the church accounts and financial control systems (3) Gauge levels of financial risk within the church (4) Check

424 that financial reports and records are accurate and reliable to ensure assets are protected (5) Identify if and where processes
425 are not working as they should and advise on changes to be made (6) Prepare reports, commentaries and financial
426 statements (7) Serve as a liaison with Official Board and Pastor to present findings and recommendations (8) Ensure
427 procedures, policies, legislation and regulations are correctly followed and complied with

428 Financial Implications No financial resources needed; training will occur virtually across the Connection.

429 INTERNAL AUDIT CHECKLIST Audit for the period of January 1, to December 31,

430 Church Name City & State Federal Tax ID Number Senior Pastor Steward Trustee Financial Secretary /Treasurer

431 Date/s Audit Conducted Audit Committee Members & Titles Date Received by Senior Pastor Date Received by Official
432 Board Date Received by Church Conference

433 AUDIT COMMITTEE CERTIFICATE To the Senior Pastor, Official Board and Church Conference: The internal audit
434 committee has inspected the financial position of the church in accordance with audit guidelines adopted by the Church
435 Conference. We have taken steps to see that the financial statements and report of the Financial

436 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:53:23

437 Secretary/Treasurer's funds present fairly the assets and liabilities of the church; and that the receipts and expenditures and
438 changes in all fund balances for the audit year are in accordance with the principles authorized by the Church Conference.
439 Our inspection and certificate are NOT to be construed as an audit and opinion rendered by a Certified Public Accountant.

440 Date Audit Committee Chair _____

441 SECTION I-UNDERSTANDING THE BOOKKEEPING SYSTEM YES NO 1. Does the church have a policies and
442 procedures manual? 2. Has the audit committee agreed the audit shall cover ALL funds of the church?

443 3. Are the books and records that support the work retained in a secure location? 4. Is there a secure backup of the books
444 and records? Does this include original cash receipts and disbursement records?

445 Does it include a file of published and accepted Financial Reports? Does it contain payroll and general ledger information?
446 5. Do checks exceeding a certain level require two (2) signatures? If yes, \$

447 6. Is a chart of accounts in use that includes all church funds? 7. Is the primary bookkeeper a paid employee of the church?
448 8. Does the church's insurance policy include a Fidelity Bond for this position? If yes? How much \$

449 SECTION II-UNDERSTANDING AND VERIFYING THE FINANCIAL REPORTS YES NO 1. Working from a full-set
450 of the FS/Treasurer's final year-end reports:

451 2. Do they include a year-end balance sheet in separate fund form? 3. Do they include a Revenue and Expense statement for
452 all funds of the church?

453 4. Is the Revenue and Expense statement in comparable form? Meaning, does it reflect prior year/budgeted
454 amounts/variance to budget, etc.? 5. Are discrepancies over 10% in the comparative statement explained when the reports
455 were presented/communicated/reviewed?

456 6. Are any bank accounts in excess of FDIC insurance limit of \$250,000? If so, has the church considered an additional
457 bank account for the overage? 7. Have you verified the authorized signatory names and Federal Tax ID number (on page 1)
458 on all bank accounts of the church?

459 The names should be current, and the Federal Tax ID number should be that of the church for ALL accounts. SECTION III-
460 AUDIT DOCUMENTS REVIEWED/CONFIRMED BY AUDIT COMMITTEE YES NO N/A

461 1. Official Board/Joint Board minutes confirming approval of annual budget and monthly financial reports

462 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:53:23

463 2. Does Annual Report to the Denomination report financial

464 information consistent with the Treasurer's approved year-end financial report? 3. List of persons authorized for check
465 signing (confirm with bank), fund withdrawal or transfer, and disbursing approval 4. List of securities, trust and
466 endowments held 5. Review of last year's internal audit letter. Were recommendations approved and complied with? 6.

467 Bank statements for the audited year, plus last statement for previous year and first statement for current year. Used to
468 complete attached proof of cash report for all accounts. 7. Paid checks (if checks or copies are returned) and deposit slips
469 (Sample at least 5% of checks). Are there any unusually large deposits or disbursements/electronic withdrawals? 8. Payroll
470 records with Form I-9, W-2, W-4 and State and Federal withholding records. Only guest or temporary clergy and lay

471 persons should receive a 1099 Form for their compensation! 9. Savings Account or Fund Account statements 10. Other
472 Investment Records. Are there any unusually large deposits or disbursements/electronic withdrawals?

473 SECTION III A-BANK ACCOUNTS (from bank statements only)

474 Institution & Branch Type of Account 1/1 Beginning Balance 12/31 Ending Balance

475 SECTION III-AUDIT DOCUMENTS REVIEWED/CONFIRMED BY AUDIT COMMITTEE (cont'd) YES NO N/A 1.
476 Is/Are the checking accounts reconciled monthly? Verify reconciliation reports?

477 2. In a sample of at least 5% of paid check: Do paid check have authorized signatures? Do paid check have endorsements?
478 Do payees & amounts match the disbursements register? 3. Have all voided check been accounted for?

479 4. Are disbursements supported by vouchers approved by authorized party other than check signer? 5. Are those persons
480 counting receipts required to be unrelated? Those counting funds should never be those able to authorize disbursements. 6.
481 Are receipts records compared with bank deposits for the year? 7. Are all transfers between accounts able to be traced? 8.
482 Do any bank accounts regularly exceed the FDIC insured limit of \$250,000 per account? 9. Does a clergy-controlled
483 discretionary fund exist outside of the primary church accounts? It must be audited

484 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:53:23

485 during this process.

486 10. Does documentation support any checks written to "Cash"?

487 SECTION IV-REVENUE & CASH RECEIPTS YES NO N/A 1. Do the record of total receipts agree with the amounts
488 recorded in the cash receipts journal? 2. Are total contribution budgets compared to actual, and are significant differences
489 investigated? 3. Do acknowledgements of contribution in excess of \$250 include a statement that any goods or services
490 provided consist solely of intangible religious benefits? 4. Are files kept on life income, endowment, annuity gifts including
491 information on use of proceeds and restrictions maintained and adhered to?

492 SECTION V-PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT YES NO N/A 1. If your church is not incorporated, are your Trustees up-
493 to-date with the local court? Please complete the list on the following page of your Trustees. 2. Is there a list of fixed assets,
494 showing date of purchase and cost? 3. Has an extensive physical examination of property and assets been made to the best
495 extent possible? If so, year? 4. Are the land and buildings carried on the financial statements? 5. Are any liens outstanding
496 against any property and equipment?

497 SECTION VI-LIABILITIES & PAYROLL TAXES YES NO N/A 1. Have total wages been reconciled with quarterly
498 Federal Form 941, Form W-2, and Form W-3 2. Have total withholding taxes been reconciled with Form 941? 3. Has it
499 been determined that all Federal & State withholding taxes were remitted on a timely basis, to avoid penalties? 4. Are
500 pension/retirement payments up-to-date for all eligible employees? 5. Is a current, signed Form W-4 on hand for all
501 employees? 6. Has all required indebtedness been properly authorized by appropriate church officials? (Pastor, Trustees,
502 Official/Joint Board, Church Conference, etc.) 7. Do unpaid balances per church records match balances as reported by
503 any/all creditors? 8. Is a detailed schedule of all loans prepared, including name of creditor, date of origin, original amount
504 of debt, interest rate payment schedule, monthly payment, unpaid balance, loan purpose, and authorizing body?

505 SECTION VII-OTHER: YES NO N/A 1. Was a proper housing allowance resolution adopted for all employed clergy and
506 was this resolution recorded in the minutes by the Steward/Deacon/Trustee Board? 2. Has insurance coverage been
507 reviewed? Make sure that any new construction or additional programs – daycare,

508 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:53:23

509 schools, etc have not left the church underinsured.

510 3. Has there been an inquiry as to whether there are any contingencies or commitments facing the church (e.g, legal action)
511 with prospects of potential loss? 4. Is there an insurance risk control/risk management plan in effect to help minimize
512 potential loss?

513 5. Is there a current space use agreement and/or insurance certificate on file for all organizations regularly using the church
514 property/facility? 6. If computers are used for financial or congregant data are files backed up at least weekly? Back-up
515 should be in a secure site.

516 SECTION VII A-LIST OF APPROVED TRUSTEES The following were formally appointed through the Circuit Court of
517 Name of Trustee Address Year Appointed

518 Required Attachments: 1. Year-end Treasurer's report. Show total receipts and total disbursements for the year. Please
519 comment on any variances of 10% or more in any report item. 2. Proof of Cash form for all bank accounts of the church.

520 Should reflect reconciliation of cash balances at year-end. Committee should follow-up on unexplained variances. 3. Copy
521 of insurance declarations page (front page of policy, typically). The entire policy is not required to be submitted. 4. Copy of
522 Audit Committee Findings and Recommendations on Policies and Procedures.
523 *** Unable to attach worksheet. Please notify to discuss.

Bill Number
Title CLO 6 - Reduction of the Travel Budget of Retired Bishops and General Officers by 50% to achieve fiscal savings in the 2024-2028 General Church Budget
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

524 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

525 The Connectional Budget of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2020-2024), Page 17, Retired Bishops Expenses, page
526 2, Retired General Officers Travel.

527 **Intent**

528 Reduce the Travel Budget of Retired Bishops and General Officers by 50%.

529 **Rationale**

530 The next Connectional Budget and its looming anticipated higher costs/demands will warrant sensitive crafting reflecting
531 the fiscal realities of local churches who are already struggling to meet their assessment targets. One of the major budget
532 concerns is six additional Bishops and two additional General Officers will retire in 2024. Considering the unprecedented
533 number of retired Bishops and GOs (29) the Church will have and its projected impact on the Connectional Budget (ref the
534 % of increase & the % impact on overall C. Budget), reducing the travel expenses for retired Bishops and General Officers
535 is a responsible course of fiscal action.

536 It is noted in their retirement, they contribute their expertise and offer wise counsel, they vote in their Council Meetings,
537 except on financial matters and reassignments of Bishops, and meet as a Council at major Connectional meetings. however,
538 regarding current priorities, the General Church should consider reducing these generous travel subsidies during these
539 current economically stressful times.

540 A 50% reduction in travel for both groups is fair, equitable and communicates true leadership. This will result in a savings
541 of \$861,922 for the 2024-2028 Connectional Budget.

542 **Current Text**

543 There is no existing legislation for this proposed bill.

544 **Amended Text**

545 There is no new wording for this proposed bill. The financial impact of this bill is a quadrennial savings is an estimated
546 \$861,922.

547 Retired Bishops (8) Travel Expenses for 2021-2024 Quadrennial per year per person Travel Expenses(p 17,row 7, column
548 7, Connectional Budget 2021-2024 Booklet) \$333,824 \$83,456 \$10,511

549 Retired General Officers (5) Travel Expenses for 2021-2024 Quadrennial Travel Expenses (p 21, row 4, column 7,
550 Connectional Budget 2021-2024 Booklet) \$166,950 \$41,738 4@\$9450 & 1@\$6300

551 Total Budgeted Travel Expenses for 2021-2024 Quadrennial \$500,774 \$125,194 \$9,630

552 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 03:37:11

553 Budget Savings from a %50 travel expenses reduction \$250,387 \$62,597 \$4,815

554 Retired Bishops (6) at 2024 GC Travel Expenses \$168,176 \$42,044 \$10,511 Retired General Officers (2 - Brown &
555 Cooper) at 2024 GC Travel Expenses \$151,200 \$37,800 \$9,450 (at the same 2021-2024 rate)

556 Total Travel Expenses Adjusted for 12 Bishops & 7 GOs Retired in 2024 \$820,150 \$205,038 \$10,791 (at the same 2021-
557 2024 rate)(6 + 6 Bishops 5 + 2 GO) (Lines 7,13, & 14)

558 Budget Savings from a %50 travel expenses reduction \$410,075.0 \$102,518.75 \$5,395.72

559 Retired Bishops (8) Travel Expenses for 2021-2024 Quadrennial per year per person Travel Expenses(p 17,row 7, column
560 7, Connectional Budget 2021-2024 Booklet) \$333,824 \$83,456 \$10,511

561 Retired General Officers (5) Travel Expenses for 2021-2024 Quadrennial Travel Expenses (p 21, row 4, column 7,
562 Connectional Budget 2021-2024 Booklet) \$166,950 \$41,738 4@\$9450 & 1@\$6300

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567 Total Travel Expenses Adjusted for 12 Bishops & 7 GOs Retired in 2024 \$820,150 \$205,038 \$10,791 (at the same 2021-
568 2024 rate)(6 + 6 Bishops 5 + 2 GO) (Lines 7,13, & 14)

569 Budget Savings from a %50 travel expenses reduction \$410,075.0 \$102,518.75 \$5,395.72

Bill Number
Title CLO 8 - Revisions to the Commission on Financial Management Program (2)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

570 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

571 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021. Part XIII, Section II, A. 7. Page 254 -
572 Commission on Financial Management Program

573 **Intent**

574 This proposed legislation is to replace the well-intentioned financial management program, the Commission on Financial
575 Management Program, passed in 1978 but never implemented. The current version in our Doctrine and Discipline,
576 endeavors to provide oversight of each Episcopal District, leading churches in each District, and for all General
577 Departments, Agencies and Institutions of the AME Church. It is clear the purpose of this original Commission was to
578 provide independent financial oversight, integrity, and accountability to the financial management of all areas of the
579 Connectional and Episcopal District levels of the AME Church. This newly revised Commission removes the Episcopal
580 Districts and local churches from the oversight of the Commission to allow the Commission to focus solely on those
581 ministries at the Connectional level that are not monitored closely and are not held accountable for transparent financial
582 reporting yet receive a substantial amount of their funding from the General Budget dollars that are provided by each
583 member of the AME Church. This Commission and platform shall be implemented, staffed and function as an independent
584 body of professionals responsible to the General Conference body to provide strict, sound, objective and transparent
585 oversight. This commission is to be supported by the general funds of the AME Church in the spirit of the Commission on
586 Financial Management Program which has been in our Discipline for more than 40 years.

587 This bill establishes three (3) specific areas of the financial management program under an independent commission of
588 professionals elected to oversee independent, specific oversight and accountability procedures and reporting for all
589 Departments, Agencies and Institutions of the AME Church. The Commission will oversee the work of the 3 program areas
590 which will be implemented in phases to ensure a baseline of consistent, reliable information is established on which
591 recommendations can be based on. The 3 program areas are: Phase I: Financial Management (Financial Oversight); Phase
592 II: Planning & Evaluation (Effectiveness and Efficiency) and Phase III: Research (Goal-Oriented Improvements). It is
593 recommended that each of these program areas are implemented separately or in phases as outlined below.

594 Phase I, Financial Management (Financial Oversight) is the first and most pertinent current need. Therefore, it is
595 recommended that this arm of the program is implemented immediately. The Director of Financial Oversight will focus on

596 ensuring the consistent, independent, thorough, and accurate financial reporting and audit compliance of all Departments,
597 Agencies and Institutions of the AME Church who received General Budget support. This group will coordinate and gather
598 information by overseeing independent audit committees trained and prepared to provide guidance and ensure independence
599 of all audit reporting to the General Conference body. Phase II, Planning & Evaluation (Effectiveness and Efficiency) arm
600 of the program be headed by the Director of Planning & Evaluation. The Director will draw from the audit reports and audit
601 recommendations to evaluate the effectiveness and financial viability of the existing Connectional Departments, Agencies
602 and Institutions and coordinate with the various commissions and boards to assist with outlining needed improvements and
603 changes. Phase II should begin after the first 2-3 years of successful operation of Phase I. Phase III, Research (Goal-
604 Oriented improvements) will be headed by the Director of Research. This Director will conduct independent research to
605 recommend improvements, changes or discontinuance of programs that are not serving the church as intended or as needed.
606 This group would gather information from all areas of the AME Church and from many outside resources to recommend
607 and assist with implementation of significant process

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609 and program changes that can make our Zion stronger, more viable and more prepared for the challenges we will face as we
610 endeavor to spread the Good News to all areas of the world. This Phase should be implemented no more than 2 years after
611 the beginning of Phase II.

612 **Rationale**

613 This legislation focuses on implementing sound internal controls and oversight processes to ensure accurate and consistent
614 financial reporting to prevent, detect and address financial irregularities, misappropriations and crimes that have occurred in
615 numerous organizations including the AME Church. This oversight program must be independent of the current Episcopal
616 control structure to ensure no one person, regardless of title or office, will be in a position to influence, conceal or
617 manipulate the financial policies and reporting that will be routinely presented to the church body. Our Zion has suffered
618 greatly in the past and currently from the consistent lack of oversight, reliable independent auditing, undocumented
619 financial reporting and the inability to detect gross errors and omissions in financial reporting. We must bring this to an end.

620 **Current Text**

621 Part XIII, Section II, A. 7. Page 254 - Commission on Financial Management Program Commission on Financial
622 Management Program

623 a. Composition: The General Board of the AME Church shall appoint nine (9) persons to constitute a Commission on
624 Program Financial Management: Research, Planning and Evaluation. The chair of the General Board of the AME Church
625 shall be an ex officio member of this Commission.

626 Qualifications: These appointees must possess the formal education and professional experience to provide the expertise
627 required to perform the duties of this commission.

628 Duties: It shall be the duty of this Commission to perform the following functions:

629 1) recommend to the General Board and to the General Conference of the AME Church a basic program profile and
630 alternative program profile by which all AME Churches will be governed.

631 2) receive and review periodically, on a random-sampling basis, the programs of a specified number of churches within
632 each episcopal district;

633 3) Give reports periodically to the General Board and to the General Conference of the AME Church on the financial
634 management of a specified number of churches within each episcopal district.

635 4) Make periodic studies and evaluate the use of material and manpower resources within a specified number of churches in
636 each episcopal district.

637 5) Analyze the operations of each General Department, Agency and Institution of the Church with the purpose of
638 determining the productive benefits occurring from their operation and the degree of efficiency by which these operations
639 are administered.

640 6) Recommend to the General Board and to the General Conference of the AME Church specific goals to be achieved by
641 each department, agency or institution supported by the general funds of the church and establish time schedules of progress
642 by which each department, agency or institution shall be required to conform in order to produce the greatest benefits for the
643 Church.

644 7) Supervise and structure policy for the productive operation of an Office of Research, Planning and Evaluation. 8) The
645 Commission shall recommend to the General Board of the AME Church

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647 the paid staff, qualified academic training and professional experience, to serve as (a) Director of Program, (b) Director of
648 Financial Department and (c) Director of Research, Planning and Evaluation. The 3 Directors will employ supporting staff
649 to implement their functional assignments.

650 **Amended Text**

651 Part XIII, Section II, A. 7. Page 254 - Commission on Financial Management Program Commission on Financial
652 Management Program (CFM) Introduction and explanation of the Commission on Financial Management Program

653 The Commission on Financial Management Program purpose is to provide independent financial oversight, integrity, and
654 accountability to the financial management of all Departments, Agencies and Institutions at the Connectional level that
655 receive substantial funding from the General Budget of the AMEC. The program will bring consistent monitoring as well as
656 transparent standardized financial audit reporting to the AME Church. This Commission and platform shall be implemented,
657 staffed and function as an independent body of professionals ensuring strict, sound, objective, and transparent oversight and
658 will be responsible to the General Conference body. This program must be independent of the current Episcopal control
659 structure to ensure no one person, regardless of title or office, will be in a position to influence, conceal or manipulate the
660 financial policies and reporting that will be routinely presented to the church body. This commission is to be supported by
661 the general funds of the AME Church.

662 The Commission will oversee the work of the 3 program areas which will be implemented in phases to ensure a baseline of
663 consistent, reliable information is established on which recommendations can be based on. The 3 program areas are: Phase
664 I: Financial Oversight; Phase II: Planning & Evaluation and Phase III: Research. It is recommended that each of these
665 program areas are implemented separately or in phases as outlined below.

666 The Commission on Financial Management Program will cover three specific areas: Financial Oversight, Planning &
667 Evaluation and Research. These areas will be implemented in three phases. The Financial Oversight arm of the Financial
668 Management Program will be implemented first, followed by Planning & Evaluation, then Research. a. Composition -
669 Candidates for the Commission will offer themselves to be elected by ballot at each General Conference and elected by the
670 General Conference body to constitute the Commission on Financial Management Program.

671 The Commission shall consist of nine (9) persons – 5 lay and 4 clergy persons. Ideally, three (3) of the persons on this
672 Commission will be from outside of the AME Church. The chair of the General Board of the AME Church shall be ex-
673 officio (this will mean that they are not part of the regular process of getting on the commission because of their title but it
674 doesn't mean they can't vote) member of this Commission.

675 b. Qualifications - These elected commissioners must possess the formal education, professional certifications, experience,
676 and independence from the General Board to provide the objective expertise required to perform the duties of this
677 commission. The Commission should be made up of certified public accountants, human resource professionals, internal
678 audit and control experts, fraud examiners, organizational leadership professionals, attorneys, and others with similar
679 financial, management and legal expertise whose skills and experience will be useful to the commission.

680 c. Duties of the Commission 1) advise the General Board and the General Conference of the AME Church of the General
681 Budget funds to accomplish the basic program purpose and objective as outlined in the doctrine and discipline by which all
682 AME Connectional Departments, Agencies and Institutions are governed. 2) ensures the implementation of independent
683 audit committees for each connectional department, agency and Institution to oversee the respective audit processes. 3)
684 provides direct oversight, training and tools to each audit committee to provide the foundation for consistent ongoing
685 oversight, monitoring & reporting. 4) annually review the financial health of each component as provided by the audit
686 reports, verifying basic supporting documentation from each component and report to the General Board on the compliance
687 of each component. 5) elect 3 Program Directors from the commission members prior to the implementation of each Phase
688 of the program.

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690 6) make periodic studies and evaluate the use of material and manpower resources of Connectional Departments, Agency
691 and Institutions in consultation with the components leadership. 7) analyze the operations of each General Department,
692 Agency and Institution of the Church with the purpose of determining the productive benefits occurring from their operation
693 and the degree of efficiency by which these operations are administered. 8) recommend to the General Board and to the
694 General Conference of the AME Church specific financial goals outlined in audit management letters and by review of
695 Commission members to be achieved by each department, agency or institution supported by the general funds of the
696 church and establish time schedules of progress by which each department, agency or institution shall be required to
697 conform in order to produce the greatest benefits for the Church. 9) supervise and structure policy for the productive

698 operation of an Office of Research, Planning and Evaluation. 10) The Commission shall recommend to the General Board
699 of the AME Church the paid staff, qualified academic training and professional experience, to serve as (a) Director of
700 Financial Oversight, (b) Director of Planning and Evaluation and (c) Director of Research. The three Directors will employ
701 one supporting staff member to implement their functional assignments.

702 Phase I – Financial Oversight Arm of the Financial Management Program Overview/Duties The Financial Oversight Arm
703 would be responsible for ensuring independent audit committees are assigned, functioning, trained, and provided tools to
704 oversee the audit process for each Connectional Department, Agency and Institution. Each audit committee will coordinate
705 their work through the Financial Management Program Committee. The final audit reports for each Department, Agency
706 and Institution will be provided directly to the Program Committee. The Director of Financial Oversight and Committee
707 would be responsible for preparing and providing summary reports of each Department, Agency and Institution annually at
708 the General Board meetings of the church and quadrennially provide a summary report regarding each Department, Agency
709 and Institution to the General Conference body. These summaries will include audit results, management letter
710 recommendations, Committee recommendations for financial procedure and process improvements and other pertinent
711 information. The summaries would be submitted to the Commission on Statistics and Finance 30 days prior to presentation
712 to the annual General Board. The complete report quadrennial report will be available for dissemination to all General
713 Conference delegates 3 months prior to each General Conference for review, discussion information,
714 sharing/dissemination...)

715 Composition Oversight Program Chairperson - The Commission on Financial Management Program would elect among the
716 commission members, an Director of Financial Oversight, that would be employed by the General Conference (AMEC) on
717 a part-time basis (potentially \$50-\$75,000 annually). This program chair would provide oversight, training, tools and
718 coordination to the group of audit committees. The director would provide annual reporting to the Commission on Statistics
719 & Finance, General Board and General Conference on all matters pertaining to the Financial Oversight work completed by
720 the Financial Management Program Committee.

721 Audit Committees Independently selected Audit Committee members shall be drawn from qualified volunteer members
722 from the general populus of the AME Church or in the case of the Institutions with existing audit committees, from the
723 governing boards of those institutions. Upon organization, the Financial Management Program Committee shall solicit
724 interested volunteer members willing to be trained to serve on audit committees. All Connectional Departments, Agencies
725 or Institutions that have existing audit committees shall agree to be governed by the guidelines, policies and procedures
726 established by the Commission on Financial Management Program which will be required of all audit committees. They
727 shall submit to the Commission their selected/appointed audit committee persons, or the Commission on Financial
728 Management Program will assign qualified volunteers from the pool of those who volunteer from all districts as needed.

729 Each independent audit committee would consist of 3-5 volunteer persons (no person in a paid AME Church position can
730 serve on an audit committee) based on the size of the Connectional Department, Agency or Institution. The audit
731 committees would also elect/select a Chair and Vice Chair of the committee from their members. The Chairperson would be
732 responsible for reporting to the Director of Financial Oversight.

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734 Staffing

735 The staff under the Director of Financial Oversight would be limited to two administrative persons, employed part-time at a
736 cost of no more than \$20,000 annually each. One administrative person will be assigned coordination of the audit
737 committees, and the second person will be responsible for assisting with coordinating the audit reporting.

738 The Independent Audit Committees will perform the following duties: (1) Selection of external auditor (2) Coordination and
739 review of the engagement letter and any specific audit requests. (3) Direct coordination with the auditor during the audit
740 process to review progress, ensure cooperation and provide oversight and instruction if any material error or irregularities
741 are discovered. (4) Meet with the auditor after the completion of the audit to review the audit report and management letter
742 concerns. (5) Summarize the report and recommendations and report to the Financial Oversight Chairperson and Program
743 Committee.

744 Phase II - Planning & Evaluation Phase II would begin 2 years after Phase I is fully operational. The Director of Planning
745 and Evaluation would be implemented under the same financial support of part-time compensation and one support person.
746 This program director would draw from the audit reports and recommendations to evaluate the effectiveness and financial
747 viability of the existing Connectional Departments, Agencies and Institutions and coordinate with the Commission on
748 Financial Management Program and various commissions and boards to assist with outlining needed improvements and
749 changes and timelines for completion of agreed-upon changes. The Director of Planning and Evaluation and Committee
750 would be responsible for preparing and providing summary reports of recommendations on each Department, Agency and
751 Institution annually at the General Board meetings of the church and quadrennially provide a summary report regarding

752 each Department, Agency and Institution to the General Conference body.

753 Phase III - Research Phase II would begin 1 year after Phase II is fully implemented and operational. The Director of
754 Research would be implemented under the same financial support guidelines as the other Director positions with a part-time
755 compensation chairperson and one part-time paid support position. The Director of Research will gather information from
756 all areas of the AME Church and from many outside resources to recommend and implement significant process and
757 program changes that can make our Zion stronger, more viable, more responsive, and more prepared for the challenges we
758 will face as we endeavor to spread the Good News to all areas of the world. The Director of Research and Committee would
759 be responsible for preparing and providing summary reports of recommendations on each Department, Agency, and
760 Institution annually at the General Board meetings of the church and quadrennially provide a summary report regarding
761 each Department, Agency and Institution to the General Conference body.

Bill Number
Title CLO 12 - Stewardship and Finance Commission as Standing Commission
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

762 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

763 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Part V, Section I. Local Church Organization
764 - Required; and Section II. Local Church Organization - Optional Commissions, specifically, Subsection A. Guidelines for
765 establishing Commissions (page 113) and Subsection C.3. Commission on Stewardship and Finance (page 117).

766 **Intent**

767 To move the requirements for the Commission on Stewardship and Finance from Section III (Optional Local Church
768 Organization), and place them under Section II, Subsection A.4. (Auxiliaries), thus qualifying the body as a standing
769 commission.

770 **Rationale**

771 For several years, the local church has been encouraged to establish a Central Budget Fund (as is established on the
772 Episcopal District and Connectional levels). Increasingly at Quarterly Conferences, presiding elders regularly inquire if the
773 local church in question has a central fund. The requirement for establishing a Central Budget Fund is written under the
774 duties of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance. It is specified in paragraph 4 of said section (page 104) that the fund
775 is administered by the Commission on Stewardship and Finance. However, these requirements are laid out under the above
776 cited section, designated for optional local church organizations.

777 The existence and function of an administrative body such as this commission is vital to effectual fiscal management in the
778 local church and cannot be optional, but must be mandatory. It needs to be established as a continuously functioning,
779 standing unit, as are similar bodies at other levels of the Connectional Church. The Commission on Stewardship and
780 Finance is currently required to carry out the financial obligations of the church under the direction of the Official Board
781 and leadership of the pastor, including developing a budget and administering the Central Budget Fund. These functions
782 need to be performed by a representative cross - section of the local church components and membership. Members should
783 possess relevant skills and experience that can advance the fiscal health and wellbeing of our Zion.

784 **Current Text**

785 Part V, Section I. C. Page 99 – No Language

786 Part V, Section II, p. 99 – Local Church Organization/Optional Commission A. Guidelines for establishing Commissions 1.
787 Types There may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter
788 defined: (a) The Commission on Membership, Evangelism, and Discipleship, (b) The Commission on Christian Education,
789 (c) The Commission on Missions and Welfare, (d) The Commission on Stewardship and Finance, (e) The Commission on
790 Public Relations, (f) Commission on Christian Social Action, and (g) The Commission on Health.

791 2. Chairpersons a) The pastor shall be the chairperson of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance and the ex-officio
792 chairperson on the other commissions. b) The chairperson of each commission shall be a steward and therefore, a member

793 of the Official Board and Quarterly

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795 Conference to which he or she is amenable.

796 c) Exception: The chairperson of the Commission on Missions and Welfare, whose chairperson may be either a steward or a
797 trustee. d) Chairpersons shall make monthly reports to the Official Board and also quarterly reports to the Quarterly
798 Conference. 3. Election of Members

799 a) The members shall be elected by the Church Conference, except that the superintendent of the Church School, president
800 of the Allen Christian Fellowship, director of the Young People's Division of the Women's Missionary Society, directors of
801 Bureau Service Agencies and additional members who shall be nominated by the pastor and elected by the Quarterly
802 Conference.

803 b) The director of Christian Education shall be an ex-officio member of this commission. 4. Composition a) Each
804 Commission shall be composed of no fewer than three nor more than seven members who are in good and regular standing
805 in the AME Church and eighteen years of age or over. b) This rule may not apply in the case of mission charges, and does
806 not apply to the Commission on Stewardship and Finance, which shall be composed of an equal number of stewards and
807 trustees plus Official Board members-at-large. The total number of persons on this commission shall not be fewer than three
808 (3) nor more than nine (9). c) Each commission shall cooperate with the Connectional and Annual Conference Commission

809 **Amended Text**

810 Add a new, Section I. C. to Part V. as follows: C. Stewardship and Finance Commission 1. Purpose The Commission on
811 Stewardship and Finance shall promote and cultivate Christian stewardship and administer the financial program of the
812 church.

813 2. Composition a.) The Commission shall be composed of an equal number of stewards, trustees and Official Board
814 Members at- large. The total number of persons on this commission shall not be fewer than three (3) nor more than nine (9).
815 This rule may not apply to mission charges. b.) The members of the commission shall be elected by the Church Conference.
816 Where there is a member of the local church who possesses accounting expertise, such person should be considered for
817 election. c.) The pastor shall be the chairperson of the commission. 3. Duties In keeping with the overall function, the duties
818 of the commission are as follows: a.) At the beginning of each conference year, the commission shall set up an annual
819 budget for the station, circuit or mission and shall submit the same to the Official Board for its action and determination. b.)
820 Upon approval of the annual budget by the Official Board, the commission shall, under the direction of the board, take
821 action to provide the income sufficient to cover same, and shall administer the funds received according to the plan of the
822 Official Board. The approved budget may be presented to the Church Conference. c.) There shall be an annual "Every
823 Member Canvas" for individual pledges. Contributions and payments shall be credited to the respective contributor and a
824 proper and accurate account shall be kept of each contributor and each contribution and payment. d.) All funds shall be
825 deposited promptly in a bank approved by the Official Board and the account shall be in the name of the local church. e.)
826 Funds received shall be disbursed as the Official Board direct, subject to the approval of the pastor. Any request for
827 expenditure not included in the approved budget must come before the Official Board for pre- approval, with the consent of
828 the pastor. f.) The income received each month shall have been shared proportionately among the budgeted items after the
829 pastor's salary and that of the entire church staff shall be given priority. g.) A report of all receipts and disbursements and of
830 unpaid obligations against the budget shall be made by the financial secretary and treasurer(s) to the Official Board each
831 month and to the Quarterly Conference. h.) It shall be the continuing duty of the commission to inform the congregation of
832 the financial needs of the church.

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834 i.) No lottery, raffle, or other games of chance shall be used in raising money for any purpose.

835 4.) Central Budget Fund The work of the local church requires the support of each member. Participation through services
836 and gifts is a Christian duty and a means of grace. In order that all members of the AME Church on the local level may
837 share in its manifold ministries at home and abroad, and that work committed to us may prosper, the following financial
838 plan is hereby duly approved and adopted. [See Part II, Section VII: Stewardship Tithes and Offerings (Rules for Giving)]
839 i.) There shall be established a central fund in the local church known as the "Central Budget Fund". ii.) The various causes
840 and services included in this central fund shall be: a.) Ministers' Support b.) Benevolence c.) Christian Education d.) Public
841 Relations e.) Connectional Budget f.) Conference Budget (District of the Conference) g.) Community Project h.) Current
842 Trustee expense i.) Purchases and Repairs j.) Church Expansion (Local) k.) Travel (Minister and Lay) l.) Extra Budget
843 Projects m.) Insurance n.) Contingency iii) All monies used by organizations of or for the church shall be reported
844 immediately to this fund. Each commission component shall be permitted to draw on this fund, upon presentation of a
845 voucher previously prepared for such purposes. Each organization shall withdraw funds for incidental needs using the same

846 procedure.

847 Part V Section II; p. 99 - Local Church Organization/Optional Commissions A. Guidelines for Establishing Commissions 1.
848 Type There shall be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are herein defined:
849 (1) The Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship, (2) The Commission on Christian Education, (3) The
850 Commission on Missions and Welfare, (4) The Commission on Public Relations, (5) The Commission on Christian Social
851 Action, and (6) The Commission on Health.

852 2. Chairpersons a.) The pastor shall be ex-officio chairperson on the commissions. b.) The chairperson of each commission
853 shall be a steward and therefore a member of the Official Board and Quarterly Conference to which he or she is amenable.
854 c.) Exception: The chairperson of the Commission on Missions and Welfare, whose chairperson may be either a steward or
855 trustee. d.) Chairpersons shall make monthly reports to the Official Board, and also quarterly reports to the Quarterly
856 Conference. 3. Election of Members a.) The members shall be elected by the Church Conference, except that the
857 Commission on Christian Education shall be composed of the pastor, the superintendent of Church School, president of the
858 Allen Christian Fellowship, director of the Young People's Division of the Women's Missionary Society, directors of
859 Bureau Service Agencies and additional members who may be nominated by the pastor and elected by the Quarterly
860 Conference. b.) The director of Christian Education shall be ex-officio member of this commission

Bill Number
Title CLO 9 - Transparency of Connectional Budget (4)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

861 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

862 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Part IX Church Finance, Section I. General
863 Summary of the Budget

864 **Intent**

865 To restore the Church Finance Section to the 2024 Book of Doctrine and Discipline (BODD).

866 **Rationale**

867 The 2020 Discipline does not include a Church Finance Section as done in prior editions. The decision to delete the Church
868 Finance Section from the 2020 Discipline out of concerns about legal risk promotes a burden of non-access to basic
869 Connectional financial data. Furthermore, charging members \$5.00 to purchase the financial booklet is inefficient and
870 insulting. Why should a member have to pay to gain access to the financial status and budget projections for the church? To
871 promote member trust in our church financial transactions the Connectional Budget must be included in the BODD, be fully
872 transparent and free to all members in good and regular standing.

873 **Current Text**

874 There is no current text or existing legislation for the proposed bill.

875 **Amended Text**

876 There is no new wording or amended text other than restoring Section IX Church Financial Section back to the 2024
877 Discipline

Bill Number
Title CLO 7 - Revisions Committee – Time at General Conference
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee

Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

878 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

879 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, page 271, Part XIV, Section 1. G.6.g

880 **Intent**

881 To increase the Revision's Committee's time at each session of the General Conference devoted to revisions of The
882 Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

883 **Rationale**

884 There has been limited consideration to the Revision Committee's time allocated for revisions to The Doctrine and
885 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church at the General Conference. The change is needed because there is not
886 adequate time devoted to the numerous proposed changes during the General Conference. This increase in time will allow
887 for more bills to be considered.

888 **Current Text**

889 At least one (1) hour shall be devoted each session to the revision of The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
890 Episcopal Church.

891 **Amended Text**

892 Part XIV Conferences, Section I. The General Conference G. General Conference Committees 6. The Revisions Committee
893 g. At least two (2) hours shall be devoted each session to the revision of The Doctrine and Discipline of the African
894 Methodist Episcopal Church. At a minimum all bills shall have been read by the end of the second business session. It shall
895 be considered

Bill Number
Title CLO 2 - Commission on Internal Audit (2)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

896 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

897 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021. Page 113, Section II. Local Church
898 Organization - Optional Commissions

899 **Intent**

900 The purpose of the Commission on Internal Audit will be to consistently monitor the policies and procedures of the
901 Commission on Stewardship & Finance to ensure that the internal controls over financial transactions are being adhered to,
902 that financial reporting to the Annual Conference, District, Official Board, and other leadership groups within the church is
903 accurate and supported by proper documentation. This Commission reviews financial transactions for consistent application
904 of internal controls to avoid instances of fraud, misappropriations, and incorrect reporting. This bill provides a checklist for
905 members of the Commission on Internal Audit to follow to ensure their financial reporting is reliable.

906 **Rationale**

907 The current Doctrine and Discipline has no requirements for systematic auditing of the church records. The consistent
908 application of audit procedures is a critical need in order to ensure that the financial reporting is accurate and reliable. Most
909 churches cannot afford to expend the monies required for an external audit to be conducted by a certified public accounting
910 firm. This bill allows a local church to form an Internal Audit Commission charged with performing internal audit
911 procedures to verify key financial statement components and assets to ensure correct financial reporting to the Official
912 Board, Quarterly Conference and Annual Conference. The lack of specific prescribed steps to verify financial records has

913 continually led to incorrect and unreliable financial reporting that has resulted in foreclosures, IRS liens and other negative
914 consequences for our local churches.

915 **Current Text**

916 Section II. Local Church Organization - Optional Commissions A. Guidelines for Establishing Commissions 1. Types There
917 may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter defined: a) The
918 Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship b) The Commission on Christian Education, c) The Commission
919 on Missions and Welfare, d) The Commission on Stewardship & Finance, e) The Commission on Public Relations. f) The
920 Commission on Christian Social Action, and g) The Commission on Health.

921 **Amended Text**

922 Section II. Local Church Organization - Optional Commissions A. Guidelines for Establishing Commissions 1. Types There
923 may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter defined: a) The
924 Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship b) The Commission on Christian Education, c) The Commission
925 on Missions and Welfare, d) The Commission on Stewardship & Finance, e) The Commission on Public Relations. f) The
926 Commission on Christian Social Action, g) The Commission on Health and, h) The Commission on Internal Audit.

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928 D. Duties of Each Commission

929 8. Commission on Internal Audit a. Qualifications (1) Must be a member in good standing in the local church, participating
930 financially. (2) Must be approved to serve on the internal audit committee by the Official Board or Church Conference. (3)
931 Must commit to 30-45 days of each year to work consistently on the internal audit for the local church. (4) Must participate
932 in all internal audit committee meetings held in preparation for an upcoming internal audit (5) Must participate in all
933 internal audit committee training sessions (6) Must be willing to sign the final internal audit report as a member of the
934 committee and stand in agreement with the committee.

935 b. Duties The duties of this commission are as follows: (1) Collate, check, and analyze spreadsheet data (2) Examine the
936 church accounts and financial control systems (3) Gauge levels of financial risk within the church (4) Check that financial
937 reports and records are accurate and reliable to ensure assets are protected (5) Identify if and where processes are not
938 working as they should and advise on changes to be made (6) Prepare reports, commentaries and financial statements (7)
939 Serve as a liaison with Official Board and Pastor to present findings and recommendations (8) Ensure procedures, policies,
940 legislation and regulations are correctly followed and complied with

941 INTERNAL AUDIT CHECKLIST Audit for the period of January 1, to December 31,

942 Church Name City & State Federal Tax ID Number Senior Pastor Steward Trustee Financial Secretary /Treasurer

943 Date/s Audit Conducted Audit Committee Members & Titles Date Received by Senior Pastor Date Received by Official
944 Board Date Received by Church Conference

945 AUDIT COMMITTEE CERTIFICATE To the Senior Pastor, Official Board and Church Conference: The internal audit
946 committee has inspected the financial position of the church in accordance with audit guidelines adopted by the Church
947 Conference. We have taken steps to see that the financial statements and report of the Financial Secretary/Treasurer's funds
948 present fairly the assets and liabilities of the church; and that the receipts and expenditures and changes in all fund balances
949 for the audit year are in accordance with the principles authorized by the Church Conference. Our inspection and certificate
950 are NOT to be construed as an audit and opinion rendered by a Certified Public Accountant.

951 Date Audit Committee Chair _____ SECTION I-UNDERSTANDING THE
952 BOOKKEEPING SYSTEM YES NO

953 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 14:37:10

954 1. Does the church have a policies and procedures manual?

955 2. Has the audit committee agreed the audit shall cover ALL funds of the church? 3. Are the books and records that support
956 the work retained in a secure location? 4. Is there a secure backup of the books and records? Does this include original cash
957 receipts and disbursement records? Does it include a file of published and accepted Financial Reports? Does it contain
958 payroll and general ledger information? 5. Do checks exceeding a certain level require two (2) signatures? If yes, \$ 6. Is a
959 chart of accounts in use that includes all church funds? 7. Is the primary bookkeeper a paid employee of the church? 8. Does
960 the church's insurance policy include a Fidelity Bond for this position? If yes? How much \$

961 SECTION II-UNDERSTANDING AND VERIFYING THE FINANCIAL REPORTS YES NO

962 1. Working from a full-set of the FS/Treasurer's final year-end reports: 2. Do they include a year-end balance sheet in
963 separate fund form?

964 3. Do they include a Revenue and Expense statement for all funds of the church? 4. Is the Revenue and Expense statement
965 in comparable form? Meaning, does it reflect prior year/budgeted amounts/variance to budget, etc.? 5. Are discrepancies
966 over 10% in the comparative statement explained when the reports were presented/communicated/reviewed? 6. Are any
967 bank accounts in excess of FDIC insurance limit of \$250,000? If so, has the church considered an additional bank account
968 for the overage? 7. Have you verified the authorized signatory names and Federal Tax ID number (on page 1) on all bank
969 accounts of the church? The names should be current, and the Federal Tax ID number should be that of the church for ALL
970 accounts.

971 SECTION III-AUDIT DOCUMENTS REVIEWED/CONFIRMED BY AUDIT COMMITTEE YES NO N/A

972 1. Official Board/Joint Board minutes confirming approval of annual budget and monthly financial reports 2. Does Annual
973 Report to the Denomination report financial information consistent with the Treasurer's approved year-end financial report?
974 3. List of persons authorized for check signing (confirm with bank), fund withdrawal or transfer, and disbursing approval 4.
975 List of securities, trust and endowments held 5. Review of last year's internal audit letter. Were recommendations approved
976 and complied with?

977 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 14:37:10

978 6. Bank statements for the audited year, plus last statement for previous year and first statement for current year. Used
979 to complete attached proof of cash report for all accounts. 7. Paid checks (if checks or copies are returned) and deposit slips
980 (Sample at least 5% of checks). Are there any unusually large deposits or disbursements/electronic withdrawals? 8. Payroll
981 records with Form I-9, W-2, W-4 and State and Federal withholding records. Only guest or temporary clergy and lay
982 persons should receive a 1099 Form for their compensation! 9. Savings Account or Fund Account statements 10. Other
983 Investment Records. Are there any unusually large deposits or disbursements/electronic withdrawals?

984 SECTION III A-BANK ACCOUNTS (from bank statements only)

985 Institution & Branch Type of Account 1/1 Beginning Balance 12/31 Ending Balance

986 SECTION III-AUDIT DOCUMENTS REVIEWED/CONFIRMED BY AUDIT COMMITTEE (cont'd) YES NO N/A

987 1. Is/Are the checking accounts reconciled monthly? Verify reconciliation reports? 2. In a sample of at least 5% of paid
988 check: Do paid check have authorized signatures?

989 Do paid check have endorsements? Do payees & amounts match the disbursements register? 3. Have all voided check been
990 accounted for? 4. Are disbursements supported by vouchers approved by authorized party other than check signer? 5. Are
991 those persons counting receipts required to be unrelated? Those counting funds should never be those able to authorize
992 disbursements. 6. Are receipts records compared with bank deposits for the year? 7. Are all transfers between accounts able
993 to be traced? 8. Do any bank accounts regularly exceed the FDIC insured limit of \$250,000 per account? 9. Does a clergy-
994 controlled discretionary fund exist outside of the primary church accounts? It must be audited during this process. 10. Does
995 documentation support any checks written to "Cash"?

996 SECTION IV-REVENUE & CASH RECEIPTS YES NO N/A

997 1. Do the record of total receipts agree with the amounts recorded in the cash receipts journal? 2. Are total contribution
998 budgets compared to actual, and are significant differences investigated?

999 3. Do acknowledgements of contribution in excess of \$250 include a statement that any goods or services provided consist
1000 solely of intangible religious benefits? 4. Are files kept on life income, endowment, annuity gifts including information on
1001 use of proceeds and restrictions

1002 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 14:37:10

1003 maintained and adhered to?

1004 SECTION V-PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT YES NO N/A

1005 1. If your church is not incorporated, are your Trustees up- to-date with the local court? Please complete the list on the
1006 following page of your Trustees. 2. Is there a list of fixed assets, showing date of purchase and cost?

1007 3. Has an extensive physical examination of property and assets been made to the best extent possible? If so, year? 4. Are
1008 the land and buildings carried on the financial statements?

1009 5. Are any liens outstanding against any property and equipment?

1010 SECTION VI-LIABILITIES & PAYROLL TAXES YES NO N/A

1011 1. Have total wages been reconciled with quarterly Federal Form 941, Form W-2, and Form W-3 2. Have total withholding
1012 taxes been reconciled with Form 941?

1013 3. Has it been determined that all Federal & State withholding taxes were remitted on a timely basis, to avoid penalties? 4.
1014 Are pension/retirement payments up-to-date for all eligible employees?

1015 5. Is a current, signed Form W-4 on hand for all employees? 6. Has all required indebtedness been properly authorized by
1016 appropriate church officials? (Pastor, Trustees, Official/Joint Board, Church Conference, etc.) 7. Do unpaid balances per
1017 church records match balances as reported by any/all creditors? 8. Is a detailed schedule of all loans prepared, including
1018 name of creditor, date of origin, original amount of debt, interest rate payment schedule, monthly payment, unpaid balance,
1019 loan purpose, and authorizing body?

1020 SECTION VII-OTHER: YES NO N/A

1021 1. Was a proper housing allowance resolution adopted for all employed clergy and was this resolution recorded in the
1022 minutes by the Steward/Deacon/Trustee Board? 2. Has insurance coverage been reviewed? Make sure that any new
1023 construction or additional programs – daycare, schools, etc have not left the church underinsured.

1024 3. Has there been an inquiry as to whether there are any contingencies or commitments facing the church (e.g, legal action)
1025 with prospects of potential loss? 4. Is there an insurance risk control/risk management plan in effect to help minimize
1026 potential loss?

1027 5. Is there a current space use agreement and/or insurance certificate on file for all organizations regularly using the church
1028 property/facility? 6. If computers are used for financial or congregant data are files backed up at least weekly? Back-up
1029 should be in a secure site.

1030 SECTION VII A-LIST OF APPROVED TRUSTEES The following were formally appointed through the Circuit Court
1031 of _____

1032 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 14:37:10

1033 Name of Trustee

1034 Address Year Appointed

1035 Required Attachments: 1. Year-end Treasurer’s report. Show total receipts and total disbursements for the year. Please
1036 comment on any variances of 10% or more in any report item. 2. Proof of Cash form for all bank accounts of the church.
1037 Should reflect reconciliation of cash balances at year-end. Committee should follow-up on unexplained variances. 3. Copy
1038 of insurance declarations page (front page of policy, typically). The entire policy is not required to be submitted. 4. Copy of
1039 Audit Committee Findings and Recommendations on Policies and Procedures.

Bill Number
Title Commission on Internal Audit (3)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1040 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1041 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021. Page 113, Section II. Local Church
1042 Organization - Optional Commissions

1043 **Intent**

1044 The purpose of the Commission on Internal Audit will be to consistently monitor the policies and procedures of the
1045 Commission on Stewardship & Finance to ensure that the internal controls over financial transactions are being adhered to,
1046 that financial reporting to the Annual Conference, District, Official Board, and other leadership groups within the church is
1047 accurate and supported by proper documentation. This Commission reviews financial transactions for consistent application
1048 of internal controls to avoid instances of fraud, misappropriations, and incorrect reporting. This bill provides a checklist for

1049 members of the Commission on Internal Audit to follow to ensure their financial reporting is reliable.

1050 **Rationale**

1051 The current Doctrine and Discipline has no requirements for systematic auditing of the church records. The consistent
1052 application of audit procedures is a critical need in order to ensure that the financial reporting is accurate and reliable. Most
1053 churches cannot afford to expend the monies required for an external audit to be conducted by a certified public accounting
1054 firm. This bill allows a local church to form an Internal Audit Commission charged with performing internal audit
1055 procedures to verify key financial statement components and assets to ensure correct financial reporting to the Official
1056 Board, Quarterly Conference and Annual Conference. The lack of specific prescribed steps to verify financial records has
1057 continually led to incorrect and unreliable financial reporting that has resulted in foreclosures, IRS liens and other negative
1058 consequences for our local churches.

1059 **Current Text**

1060 Section II. Local Church Organization - Optional Commissions A. Guidelines for Establishing Commissions 1. Types There
1061 may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter defined: a) The
1062 Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship b) The Commission on Christian Education, c) The Commission
1063 on Missions and Welfare, d) The Commission on Stewardship & Finance, e) The Commission on Public Relations. f) The
1064 Commission on Christian Social Action, and g) The Commission on Health.

1065 **Amended Text**

1066 Section II. Local Church Organization - Optional Commissions A. Guidelines for Establishing Commissions 1. Types There
1067 may be constituted in each local church the following commissions, whose respective duties are hereinafter defined: a) The
1068 Commission on Membership, Evangelism and Discipleship b) The Commission on Christian Education, c) The Commission
1069 on Missions and Welfare, d) The Commission on Stewardship & Finance, e) The Commission on Public Relations. f) The
1070 Commission on Christian Social Action, g) The Commission on Health and, h) The Commission on Internal Audit.

1071 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 14:15:27

1072 **D. Duties of Each Commission**

1073 8. Commission on Internal Audit a. Qualifications (1) Must be a member in good standing in the local church, participating
1074 financially. (2) Must be approved to serve on the internal audit committee by the Official Board or Church Conference. (3)
1075 Must commit to 30-45 days of each year to work consistently on the internal audit for the local church. (4) Must participate
1076 in all internal audit committee meetings held in preparation for an upcoming internal audit (5) Must participate in all
1077 internal audit committee training sessions (6) Must be willing to sign the final internal audit report as a member of the
1078 committee and stand in agreement with the committee.

1079 b. Duties The duties of this commission are as follows: (1) Collate, check, and analyze spreadsheet data (2) Examine the
1080 church accounts and financial control systems (3) Gauge levels of financial risk within the church (4) Check that financial
1081 reports and records are accurate and reliable to ensure assets are protected (5) Identify if and where processes are not
1082 working as they should and advise on changes to be made (6) Prepare reports, commentaries and financial statements (7)
1083 Serve as a liaison with Official Board and Pastor to present findings and recommendations (8) Ensure procedures, policies,
1084 legislation and regulations are correctly followed and complied with

Bill Number
Title Management of Commission Audits
Submitted By Gloria Teresa Byrd
Email hiejrl137@gmail.com

1085 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1086 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 2021, Part XII the General Board Section IV.
1087 Duties: F. Assess Financial Accountability of the Church Departments and Agencies. Section II- Connectional
1088 Commissions Headquarters and Office of Resource -Institutional Development. Section 7a -c. Commission on Financial
1089 Management Program. Pages 254-256.

1090 **Intent**

1091 To develop a useful responsibility for The Commission on Financial Management and Program that has never been used as
1092 intended.

1093 **Rationale**

1094 Every June, the General Board meets and each Commission is responsible for their own official audit to be presented to the
1095 Statistics and Finance Committee who in turn present to the General Board. Forensic Audits are not always presented and
1096 the selection of an audit person or company can easily become a friend helping out to reduce the fee for an audit but can
1097 lead to complications and fraud. To avoid inconsistency, it is recommended that a selection of one company to provide
1098 audits for the General Board be managed by a reliable qualified committee.

1099 **Current Text**

1100 Delete the current text for this Commission On Financial Management and Programs substituting the following
1101 responsibilities.

1102 **Amended Text**

1103 a. Composition. The General Board of the AME Church shall appoint a five (5)-person committee to constitute the
1104 management of audits of all commissions. The chair of the General Board and Treasurer shall serve as ex officio member of
1105 this committee. b. Qualification: These appointees must possess the formal education and professional experience in finance
1106 management to provide the expertise required to perform the duties of this committee. c. Duties: It shall be the duty of this
1107 Committee to perform the following functions: 1) This committee shall select a company to perform an audit of all
1108 Commissions of the church with the approval of the General Board. Together they must determine the length of the
1109 contract. 2) This audit should be performed at least 90 days prior to the scheduled General Board meeting. 3) The
1110 committee is responsible for presenting the audits to Statistics and Finance for review prior to opening of the board meeting
1111 who in turn will present to the full Board. 4) This committee along with the officers of the General Board shall review the
1112 audit company contract annually and give reports to Statistics and Finance.

Bill Number
Title Annuity Protection Act
Submitted By Jeffrey Leath
Email jeffreynleath@aol.com

1113 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1114 Page 232 (Part XIII, Section I, D., 3.) – Page 334 (Kindle)

1115 **Intent**

1116 To prevent the Commission on Retirement Services, OR ANY OTHER RELATED ENTITY, from changing the third-party
1117 administrator without the knowledge and consent of program participants. Therefore, a NEW "g." is proposed.

1118 **Rationale**

1119 The Annuity Crisis, and its aftermath, have proven the risks of allowing various entities to act without prompt and full
1120 disclosure of significant details of our business relationships. The current relationship with Wespath provides a transparent,
1121 secure, and trustworthy instrument for the management of retirement funds. This relationship must not become threatened
1122 by a small group of people acting in the shadows. This legislation will force our representatives to inform the participants of
1123 significant changes to the administration of the annuity program, and it will require a majority vote of participants in the
1124 selection of a company to manage funds which are for their benefit.

1125 **Current Text**

1126 None. New "g." to be added to existing text.

1127 **Amended Text**

1128 g. The Department of Retirement Services, the Commission on Retirement Service or any other entity with authority to
1129 choose the third-party administrator, shall not change the third-party administrator without participant agreement
1130 demonstrated by a majority vote of those participants. Such vote must be administered by an independent company which
1131 specializes in such polling hired by the General Board. The balloting may be by internet and/or mail. The poll shall be
1132 secure, secret and no party may receive reports except on who has or has not voted and the numerical/statistical total result.
1133 The poll must include the name of the proposed new service provider; the cost of the proposed service; reasons for the
1134 proposed change in vendor; and, the term of the proposed contract. The result of the poll shall be forwarded to the President
1135 of the General Board, the President of the Council of Bishops, and the CIO who shall disseminate the information to
1136 relevant commissions and publicize the same in the Christian Recorder.

1137 All laws, or parts of laws, in conflict with this legislation are hereby repealed.

Bill Number
Title Mandatory Inclusion of the Connectional Budget in the Printed Discipline
Submitted By Virgil G. Glenn, III
Email rev_glenn@yahoo.com

1138 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1139 None. In the 2012 Doctrine Discipline the Connectional Budget (2013-2016) followed "The Appendix" (p. 691-699) and
1140 before the "Glossary."

1141 **Intent**

1142 To correct an omission from the 2016 & 2021 Doctrine and Discipline. The Connectional Budget which guides spending
1143 and projects income for the ensuing Quadrennial shall be printed in the Doctrine and Discipline as a mandatory section and
1144 not as a separate document.

1145 **Rationale**

1146 For transparency, the Connectional Budget should be in the printed Doctrine and Discipline, not in a separate document.
1147 The Connectional Budget which guides spending and projects income for the ensuing Quadrennial shall be printed in the
1148 Doctrine and Discipline as a mandatory section and not as a separate document. Expected Budgetary expense: None.

1149 **Current Text**

1150 None

1151 **Amended Text**

1152 The Connectional Budget (2025-2028) should follow the "Bibliography" and precede the "Glossary."

1153 **II. Organizational Structure**

Bill Number
Title Adjusting CONVO to assist in streamlining legislation process for the General Conference
Submitted By Mark Johnson, Penny Oliver & Ruben Braziel II
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1154 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1155 Part XIV, Section G., 6. c., page 271 Revisions Committee

1156 Part XI, Section IV, F., 1. o. and v., pg. 192 General Secretary/CIO Duties and Responsibilities

1157 **Intent**

1158 To enhance the established purpose of the CONVOs; outline it as the primary aggregating mechanism for proposals to be
1159 introduced and discussed prior to the General Conference; to adjust the deadline for legislation to be considered at the
1160 General Conference; and to establish a CONVO Planning Committee to organize bills and discussions for the CONVOs.

1161 **Rationale**

1162 Currently, the CONVO functions as an “informal part” of the decision-making process of African Methodism. This is
1163 counter to its intended purpose as serving as the primary aggregating mechanism for proposals to be considered at the
1164 General Conference.

1165 To assist in making the General Conference legislation voting process more efficient and productive, the move to create a
1166 pipeline of bills to the CONVOs and earlier submission dates is necessary. The modified process will result in earlier
1167 discussions and consensus making the number of bills that come before the General Conference vetted and more
1168 manageable.

1169 An earlier analysis noted discussions on the floor of the General Conference cost \$ 52 K vs \$ 8 K at a CONVO. With the
1170 current 90-day deadline for General Conference submission, bills can be forwarded to the General Conference without ever
1171 being vetted or discussed in a CONVO or among the general church. This practice is not advantageous nor is it efficient in
1172 preparing legislation for General Conference. An earlier deadline will ensure that bills will be able to be presented to the
1173 General Church via the CONVO for discussion, possible modification and consensus. The goal is to scrutinize, revise, and
1174 merge bills making the number of bills that come before the full General Conference reviewed and manageable.

1175 **Current Text**

1176 CURRENT TEXT Part XIV, Section G., 6. c., page 271 Revisions Committee All bills and proposed legislation must be in
1177 the hands of the General Secretary of the AME Church at least ninety (90) days prior to the opening of the General
1178 Conference.

1179 CURRENT TEXT Part XI, Section IV, F., 1. v., pg. 192 General Secretary/CIO Duties and Responsibilities Upon the call
1180 by the Council of Bishops, the General Secretary/Chief Information Office (CIO) shall notify the General Board and global
1181 Church that the purpose of the two CONVOs prior to the General Conference shall be to introduce and

1182 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:35:13

1183 vet (examine, scrutinize, assess and/or evaluate) proposed legislation.

1184 **Amended Text**

1185 PROPOSED NEW WORDING Part XIV, Section G., 6. c., page 271 Revisions Committee All bills and proposed
1186 legislation must be in the hands of the General Secretary of the AME Church (9) months prior to the opening of the General
1187 Conference.

1188 PROPOSED NEW WORDING Part XI, Section IV, F., 1. v., pg. 192 General Secretary/CIO Duties and Responsibilities
1189 Upon the call by the Council of Bishops, the General Secretary/Chief Information Office (CIO) shall notify the General
1190 Board and global Church the purpose of the CONVOs. The General Secretary/CIO shall also report the dates and deadlines
1191 to receive bills for the legislation CONVOs. The CIO shall post the final list of bills from the CONVOs to be forwarded to
1192 the General Conference on the AMEC website 90 days prior to the General Conference.

1193 PROPOSED NEW SECTION PART XIV, Conferences; Section 1. The General Conference M. CONVO A. Purpose The
1194 CONVO serves as an open forum to facilitate strategic planning and visioning for the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
1195 The CONVO is also a preliminary and mandatory step toward submitting bills for the General Conference. Only bills
1196 submitted by the 9-month deadline prior to the General Conference and presented on the agenda of the legislative CONVOs
1197 for review & discussion shall be considered for the General Conference.

1198 The goal of the legislative CONVO is to scrutinize, revise, and merge bills making the number of bills that come before the
1199 full General Conference vetted and manageable. Upon the CONVO attendees’ return to their Episcopal Districts, attendees
1200 are expected to present and discuss said discussions and proposed legislation with clergy and laity in their Episcopal
1201 Districts. (already in Discipline, moved to new section)

1202 B. Convenings The CONVO shall meet at least twice during the quadrennial period. Two of the CONVOs shall be devoted
1203 to proposed legislation. The final CONVO, a legislative CONVO, shall be in the Winter prior to the General Conference.

1204 The said CONVOs shall be held at the sites of the third (3rd) and fourth (4th) Bishops Council and General Board meetings
 1205 and shall be one (1) day prior to or one (1) day after the said meetings. (already in Discipline, moved to new section)

1206 C. Duties The CONVO Planning Committee shall have the General Secretary/CIO report the purpose and dates of the
 1207 CONVOs. They shall also report the deadlines to receive bills for future legislative CONVOs. The final deadline for
 1208 submitting bills for consideration for the upcoming general conference shall be 90 days 9 months prior to the General
 1209 Conference.

1210 The General Secretary/CIO shall forward all legislation submitted by the Legislative Task Forces, Components,
 1211 Departments, and individuals to the CONVOs. Bills with financial implications must be submitted with estimated cost. The
 1212 General Secretary/CIO shall post the submitted bills thirty (30) days prior to the upcoming CONVO on the A.M.E.C.
 1213 website.

1214 The CONVO Planning Committee is responsible for organizing related bills to be presented for initial review and
 1215 discussion. The committee shall assign numbers to the bills and note the authors/submitters of each bill. The Commission
 1216 shall assign subgroups of related bills among plenary sessions for review and discussion. The goal is to scrutinize, revise,
 1217 and merge bills making the number of bills that come before the full General Conference reviewed and manageable.

1218 In the CONVO discussions, a bill can be amended/modified and maintain its assigned number with the author's consent.

1219 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:35:13

1220 Related bills can be merged and modified, with the authors consent, and assigned a new number. A bill(s) can be
 1221 subdivided, with the author's consent, and assigned a new number or character, however, it must maintain the original
 1222 intent/subject matter.

1223 Only bills presented on the agenda of the legislative CONVOs shall be forwarded to the General Secretary/CIO for the
 1224 General Conference. No new bills can be created at the final CONVO, only revisions or merges. The CIO shall post the
 1225 final list of bills to the A.M.E.C. website (90) days prior to the General Conference.

1226 D. Composition: The CONVO Planning Committee shall include the Chair – a Bishop, 5 clergy, and 5 lay members. Each
 1227 clergy or lay member category to include at least one young adult member, at least one member from Districts 14 – 20 and
 1228 one Presiding Elder. (add CIO/Secretary)

Bill Number
Title Redistricting Episcopal Districts in 2028
Submitted By Mark Johnson, Penny Oliver & Ruben Braziel II
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1229 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1230 No current text in the BODD to merge episcopal districts.

1231 **Intent**

1232 To mandate a plan of action and the implementation of a redistricting plan. The merger/consolidation of selected episcopal
 1233 districts, in a staged method over four years, to be created/design and led by a special reorganization/merger committee.

1234 The episcopal districts reduction merger plan must conclude with a minimum of two state side episcopal districts which will
 1235 subsequently reduce personnel by at least two Bishops. Additional benefits will be improved administrative efficiency, cost
 1236 savings, and an increased equity among the episcopal districts.

1237 The merger effort will be financed by an AMEC Budget allocation and sponsors.

1238 **Rationale**

1239 In the years since the 2008 the AMEC Redistricting Feasibility Report, the AME Church concerns regarding fiscal
 1240 efficiencies and right sizing administration has been the topics of numerous discussions and forums. Recounting these issues
 1241 has fallen short of adopting or more importantly implementing reorganization processes to remedy these
 1242 concerns/deficiencies. The redistricting of the episcopal districts is often one of the most recounted options suggested to the

1243 church.

1244 The 2008 Feasibility Study supports the following benefits: 1. Redistricting will help the denomination to be more equitable
1245 in assessments and budgets. 2. Accountability as districts become more manageable by virtue of size. Furthermore,
1246 redistricting should lead to more equity in Episcopal assignments. 3. Districts that are more manageable in size should lead
1247 to improved accountability and management. 4. Reducing staff can be one of the options to help the demonization stay
1248 solvent.

1249 **Current Text**

1250 No current text in the BODD to merge episcopal districts

1251 **Amended Text**

1252 New Text

1253 Composition The Merger Committee shall include a Bishop Council appointee as the Chair, 2 Presiding Elder Council
1254 appointees, 3 additional clergy and 6 lay appointees (1 Lay Organization, 1 WMS, 1 RAYC or a young adult 18-36 years of
1255 age). A representative/appointee of the AMEC legal counsel, Board of Incorporators, and an appointee of the AMEC
1256 Finance department.

1257 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:16:02

1258 **Organization**

1259 The Committee will recommend additional support and or stakeholders to assist in the implementation process. The
1260 Committee shall have the authority to hire support and include additional stakeholders as consultants.

1261 **Duties & Timeline Year One** The merger committee will organize and produce a tentative plan of action and timeline of the
1262 scheduled phases of implementation. They will make their initial draft report to the first General Board Meeting following
1263 the General Conference. The final implementation plan shall be approved by the General Board with one year of the
1264 General Conference.

1265 **Year Two & Three** The committee shall complete the checklist for implementation of the approved plan. They shall make
1266 progress reports at each General Board meeting.

1267 **Year Four** The details of the merger shall be promoted among the districts for implementation at the close of the next
1268 General Conference.

1269 **General Conference** The new district will be birthed and a newly assign Bishop shall be appointed.

1270 **Financial Implications** TBD

Bill Number
Title Board of Trustees
Submitted By Pamela Tilley
Email heritageh@sbcglobal.net

1271 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1272 Page 287, Section N, Item #2 and Page 288, Section N, Item #5 d.

1273 **Intent**

1274 The intent of this bill is to improve the expertise, skill set and to set term limits for the annual conference trustees. This bill
1275 is to support the annual conference trustees in resolving underutilized properties, financially draining properties, and
1276 repurposing properties for greater ministry. In order to change the culture of the Annual Conference, the same trustees
1277 should not serve on multiple levels of the Episcopal Districts during the same period of time. Additionally, the
1278 qualifications and diverse skills of persons including spiritual gifts, real estate experience, and legal expertise should be
1279 identified at each level to improve the standards of the trustees.

1280 **Rationale**

1281 The mismanagement of church entrusted properties is documented in the public domain (LA Sentinel, AME Church, June 8,
1282 2016; Washington Post, AME Church, September 8, 2022; Patch.com, AME Church, September 8, 2022). Feedback from
1283 multiple Annual Conference members revealed that the culture of complacency and unawareness among the membership
1284 and the trustees of the Annual Conference contributed to the mismanagement of church properties.

1285 Once again, the collective actions of the annual conference speak volumes in its financial burdens as a result of our cultural
1286 complacency. The role and accountability of the trustees at multiple levels should be reexamined in its procedures and
1287 actions after each annual conference. Changing the process will lead to a change in the culture.

1288 **Current Text**

1289 They shall be elected for a term of one (1) year, or until their successors have been elected, and shall be the Trustees of the
1290 Annual Conference Corporation and shall administer all property of the Annual Conference.

1291 Minutes and actions of the Annual Conference Trustees shall be recorded and copies provided to the bishop and each
1292 member of the Board of Trustees and annual conference.

1293 **Amended Text**

1294 They shall be elected for a term of one (1) year, not to exceed three (3) consecutive years and not holding multiple trustee
1295 positions in the Episcopal District. They shall be the Trustees of the Annual Conference Corporation and shall administer all
1296 property of the Annual Conference. The work of the board of trustees should be measured by its accomplishments.

1297 Minutes and actions of the Annual Conference Trustees shall be recorded and copies provided to the bishop and each

1298 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 18:44:12

1299 member of the Board of Trustees and annual conference. Detail summaries of financial implications should be clear and
1300 transparent to the entire Annual Conference in writing. All properties and assets of the church should be properly vetted by
1301 the Annual Conference prior to any sell or transfer taking place.

Bill Number
Title Transfer of Property
Submitted By Pamela Tilley
Email heritageh@sbcglobal.net

1302 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1303 Pages 71 and 72, Section B

1304 **Intent**

1305 The intent of this bill is to improve transparency, accountability and purposeful resolution of AME church properties for the
1306 good of the local and connectional church. To repurpose properties that enable growth and economic support for current and
1307 future ministries. Finally, to improve additional checks and balance practices that further promote accountability of church
1308 assets and holdings.

1309 **Rationale**

1310 In years past, AME church properties have been sold and transferred without the knowledge and input of the local church
1311 and the annual conference. Civil actions and media details of inappropriate financial resolutions of church properties and
1312 entities have cost the AME churches unprecedented financial burdens. Mismanagement of church entrusted properties is
1313 documented in the public domain (Washington Post, AME Church, September 8, 2022; LA Sentinel, AME Church, June 8,
1314 2016; Patch.com, AME Church, September 8, 2022). These are some of the actions that have resulted in revenue not serving
1315 the local church, its members and most importantly its resources for ministries.

1316 **Current Text**

1317 The Board of Trustees, duly elected by the local church as provided by The Doctrine and Discipline of the African
1318 Methodist Episcopal Church, may take such steps to purchase, mortgage, sell, transfer and convey real and personal
1319 property, PROVIDED that such transfer has been duly approved by the resolution in Quarterly Conference of the said
1320 church, and also by the trustees of the Annual Conference in which the property is located, and of which the presiding
1321 bishop is president.

1322 The Board of Trustees and members of the local church hold property of whatever kind IN TRUST for the Annual
1323 Conference of the General Church and not in their individual capacities. When the local church shall be incorporated under
1324 The African Methodist Episcopal Church, all property – real, personal, or mixed – shall be deeded to it in its corporate
1325 name. IN TRUST for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Incorporated. Failure of the local church to deed said
1326 property to the local church corporation shall not eliminate the Connectional, IN TRUST character of the property or change
1327 the authority and duty of the local trustees and members to administer the property as directed by The Doctrine and
1328 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The local church corporation shall have the power to sell, convey
1329 and dispose of both real and personal property as directed by The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist
1330 Episcopal Church. The proceeds of or from the sale of any local church property shall be held IN TRUST for the African
1331 Methodist Episcopal Church or disbursed for another improvement of other property owned by it, or to be purchased by it.
1332 No property shall be sold except with the approval of the Quarterly Conference by Resolution.

1333 **Amended Text**

1334 Page 72, Section B (New text added) 1. The annual conference trustees shall develop a standard document that outlines a
1335 comprehensive evaluation and

1336 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 18:26:35

1337 review process to be used by the local church. This process should ensure appropriate analysis of the church properties to
1338 determine their value and appropriate disposition prior to any sell or transfer. 2. The local church shall complete the
1339 evaluation and review process and submit the appropriate documentation along with the quarterly conference resolution to
1340 the annual conference trustees. 3. This practice should be followed at all trustee levels.

Bill Number
Title CLO 3 - Consistent use of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Emblem - The Anvil and the Cross
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1341 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1342 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Page 22, Part 1. New Legislation

1343 **Intent**

1344 To ensure the Anvil and Cross emblem is a part of the design of logos created and used by churches, offices, publications,
1345 and organizations throughout the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

1346 **Rationale**

1347 The AMEC has a unique history that is symbolized in her emblem of the Anvil and the Cross. This emblem distinguishes
1348 our denomination and our beliefs. The elements of this unique symbol signify our belief in Jesus Christ, the Cross, and
1349 celebrates worship as held in our first church, the Anvil. By making the Anvil and the Cross the official emblem of the
1350 Church, we are easily identified as the AME Church denomination in our publications, correspondence, and other
1351 presentations. Because of the unique nature of each component, department, and level of the church, it is not necessary to
1352 use the same emblem, just the inclusion of the Anvil and the Cross on the logos. The logo for Women in Ministry is a good
1353 example of a unique emblem that includes the Anvil and the Cross. The proposed legislation makes for a more identifiable
1354 Connectional Church. As examples of unique emblems/logos, consider the swish for Nike and the red flame for the United
1355 Methodist Church. See the note below from Forbes.com that succinctly sums up the reasons for using the right logo
1356 (emblem in our case).

1357 NOTE: According to Forbes.com: The right logo says everything without saying a word. It connotes feelings of honor, trust,
1358 pride, excellence and integrity. It conveys a series of virtues and a set of values without pages of copy and a team of
1359 copywriters. It evokes a sense of connection between a brand and consumers. It establishes a bond between a company and
1360 its community of fans, friends, critics, allies and champions.

1361 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/theyec/2018/11/30/the-importance-of-having-the-right-logo/?sh=1281c9bb1ccb>

1362 **Current Text**

1363 Part I, Section I-V Historical Preamble, Mission, Vision, Purposes and Objectives

1364 **Amended Text**

1365 Part I. HISTORICAL PREAMBLE, MISSION, VISION, PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES, AND EMBLEM. New Section,
1366 Page 22. SECTION VI. THE EMBLEM The African Methodist Episcopal Church has a unique emblem that identifies our
1367 denomination and our heritage. The components of this unique symbol are the Anvil and the Cross. The cross signifying our
1368 belief in Jesus Christ and the Anvil signifying our history of worship in our first church, Mother Bethel, a blacksmith shop.
1369 The Anvil and the Cross emblem should be included, regardless of size, in the logos of each church, department, and
1370 components noted are readily identified with the AME Church denomination.

Bill Number
Title A What's New Page for the AME Book of Doctrine & Discipline (BODD)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1371 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1372 NONE

1373 **Intent**

1374 Provide a page in the 2024 Discipline and future editions that succinctly describes key new information for readers.

1375 **Rationale**

1376 The BODD is a must have resource book for members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The BODD is updated
1377 every four years and members are encouraged to purchase the latest edition. Unfortunately, many members refuse to
1378 purchase the latest edition because of the perception that "my old copy is just as good as the new copy". A "What's New"
1379 page located at the front of the BODD will offer readers an opportunity to see the new highlights and incentivize readers to
1380 purchase the latest copy.

1381 A "What's New" page is a common practice for academic publishers when marketing new editions of textbooks for faculty
1382 and students. A "What's New" page would inform readers about important updates, new legislation, new personalities
1383 (Bishops, General Officers), etc., not published in prior editions. Fundamentally, a "What's New page" fosters readership
1384 and helps answer the question: Why should I buy the new edition?! A "What's New" page for the BODD is long overdue
1385 and makes sense for our members.

1386 **Current Text**

1387 No current language is present for this proposed bill.

1388 **Amended Text**

1389 The proposed bill is brand new.

Bill Number

Title General Conference Composition
Submitted By Joelynn Stokes for Connectional AMEWIM
Email jtstokes@jtstokesandassoc.com

1390 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1391 Page 370, Part XIV Section I A

1392 **Intent**

1393 To bring fair representation of Connectional components

1394 **Rationale**

1395 To adjust the disparity among Connectional Components in the General Conference Composition.

1396 **Current Text**

1397 The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops; the general officers elected by the General Conference; the
1398 General Secretary/CIO of the General Conference; the presidents of the universities and colleges; the deans of seminaries
1399 that have been in operation continuously for one (1) or more years prior to the General Conference; the president and
1400 treasurer of the Women’s Missionary Society; the editor of the Women’s Missionary Magazine; the director of the Young
1401 People’s and Children’s Division; the Connectional presidents of Women in Ministry (WIM), Richard Allen Young Adult
1402 Council (RAYAC), Young People’s and Children’s Division (YPD) and Lay Organization; Episcopal District Lay
1403 Presidents; the president of the Connectional Council; the Executive Director and Medical Director of the Health
1404 Commission; active-duty military and veterans administration chaplains who have been ordained for at least four (4) years
1405 preceding the General Conference and those who are retired with a minimum of twenty (20) years of service in the Armed
1406 Forces of the United States; former World War II Chaplains who are in good and regular standing in their annual
1407 conferences; the administrators of all Connectional institutions (i.e., Douglas Hospital); the President of the Connectional
1408 Presiding Elders Council, and elected clergy and lay delegates from each annual conference.

1409 **Amended Text**

1410 The composition of the General Conference shall be the bishops; the general officers elected by the General Conference; the
1411 general secretary/CIO of the General Conference; the presidents of the universities and colleges; the deans of seminaries
1412 that have been in operation continuously for one (1) or more years prior to the General Conference; the president and
1413 treasurer of the Women’s Missionary Society; the editor of the Women’s Missionary Magazine; the director of the Young
1414 People’s and Children’s Division and one at large seat; the Connectional President; the Central/Southern Africa Coordinator
1415 of Connectional WIM and one at large seat of Women in Ministry (AME/WIM), the connectional presidents of the Richard
1416 Allen Young Adult Council (RAYAC); and one at large seat, Young People’s and Children’s Division (YPD) and Lay
1417 Organization; Episcopal District Lay Presidents; the president of the Connectional Council; the Executive Director and
1418 Medical Director of the Health Commission; active-duty military and veterans administration chaplains who have been
1419 ordained for at least four (4) years preceding the General Conference and those who are retired with a minimum of twenty
1420 (20) years of service in the Armed Forces of the United States; former World War II Chaplains who are in good and regular
1421 standing in their annual conferences; the administrators of all Connectional institutions (i.e., the Bishop Sarah Frances Davis
1422 Connectional Women’s Missionary Society Outpatient Health Clinic); the President of the Connectional Presiding Elders
1423 Council, and elected clergy and lay delegates from each Annual Conference.

Bill Number
Title Lay Delegate Electoral College Qualifications
Submitted By Penny S. Oliver/Dierdre D. Rockeymoore
Email penny.oliver52@yahoo.com

1424 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1425 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021; Part XIV, Page 262 & 264, Section 1, C2
1426 and D2.

1427 **Intent**

1428 To clarify the qualifications of the Lay members to be elected to the Electoral College.

1429 **Rationale**

1430 There are occasions where the pool of candidates to be elected to the Lay Electoral College are not knowledgeable of the
1431 Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church or the process of the General Conference. To ensure the
1432 Lay Delegates to the Electoral College are deemed qualified they should participate in various training activities on the
1433 local, District of the Annual Conference, where one exists, and the Annual Conference of the Church.

1434 **Current Text**

1435 Every lay member elected a delegate by an Electoral College shall be a member of said college and a person of good,
1436 natural or acquired ability who knows and loves The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church
1437 and has maintained a full, good and regular membership in said church four (4) consecutive years next preceding the
1438 General Conference, and shall have been a member of his or her local church for six (6) months next preceding the meeting
1439 of the Electoral College. No lay member shall vote—or be voted for—more than once in a quadrennium as a delegate to the
1440 Electoral College.

1441 **Amended Text**

1442 Every lay member elected a delegate by an Electoral College shall be a member of said college and a person of good,
1443 natural or acquired ability who knows and loves The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church
1444 and has demonstrated full and effective participation in various training activities on the local, District of the Annual
1445 Conference, where one exists, and the Annual Conference of the Church, maintained a full, good and regular membership in
1446 said church four (4) consecutive years next preceding the General Conference, and shall have been a member of his or her
1447 local church for six (6) months next preceding the meeting of the Electoral College. Attendance and training activities on all
1448 levels should be verified by the local church. Full and effective attendance and training will be documented using the
1449 following suggestions: answering roll call at local, district, or annual conference meetings, serving in leadership positions at
1450 local, district, or annual conference levels, active participation in committees at the local, district, or annual conference
1451 level. No lay member shall vote—or be voted for—more than once in a quadrennium as a delegate to the Electoral College.

Bill Number
Title Restructure of General Board - 1
Submitted By Jeffrey Leath
Email jeffreynleath@aol.com

1452 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1453 Page 211 (Part XII, Section I) – Page 305 (Kindle)

1454 **Intent**

1455 Restructure Membership of the General Board to make members more effective and to distribute responsibilities to other
1456 qualified members of the denomination. Reducing the number of district representatives from 5 to 3 will free other persons
1457 to serve important functions outside the immediate General Board structure.

1458 **Rationale**

1459 The current tasks assigned to the General Board are too numerous for the allocated representatives. Moreover, current
1460 restrictions on membership exclude many available, gifted people from tasks which do not receive adequate attention. The
1461 Agenda of the General Board is not functional, and the meetings lack productive focus. This is the first of a series of
1462 proposals to create a more conducive atmosphere for the General Board to exercise executive responsibilities in an orderly
1463 manner. We must end the assumption that five people (from each district) can cover the represented interests of the entire
1464 church with expertise and oversight.

1465 **Current Text**

1466 The composition of the General Board shall be the active bishops of the Church, executive directors of the various general
1467 departments, including the Treasurer/ Chief Financial Officer and General Secretary/ CIO of the Church. The General
1468 Board shall also be composed of five (5) representatives from each Episcopal District. Even numbered districts shall be
1469 represented by three (3) ministers and two (2) lay. Odd numbered districts shall be represented by three (3) ministers and
1470 two (2) lay during the quadrennium 2021-2024. (remainder of section is unchanged)

1471 **Amended Text**

1472 The composition of the General Board shall be the active bishops of the Church, executive directors of the various general
1473 departments, including the Treasurer/ Chief Financial Officer and General Secretary/ CIO of the Church. The General
1474 Board shall also be composed of three (3) representatives from each Episcopal District. Even numbered districts shall be
1475 represented by two (2) ministers and one (1) lay, and odd numbered districts shall be represented by one (1) minister and
1476 two (2) lay during the quadrennium 2024-2028.

1477 **III. Church Development, Expansion, and Social Action**

Bill Number
Title Allow Trustees to make emergency improvements without waiting for the church approval.
Submitted By Theodore Whitaker
Email twhitake@columbus.rr.com

1478 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1479 Page 100, Section 5, c) (Duties)

1480 **Intent**

1481 Give authority to the Trustees to make emergency modification or improvements to the building or property without waiting
1482 for a church vote for approval.

1483 **Rationale**

1484 There are many time sensitive emergency or critical situations what immediate action or required action is necessary.
1485 Examples of these occurrences, but not meant to be inclusive, are 1. Safety item that may put personnel in danger if not
1486 addressed immediately, and 2. Items that are required to be addressed per local or state regulatory authorities.

1487 **Current Text**

1488 They shall make improvements upon the property or real estate when authorized to do so by a majority of legal members of
1489 the church.

1490 **Amended Text**

1491 They shall make improvements upon the property or real estate when authorized to do so by a majority of legal members of
1492 the church. However, when personnel safety would be compromised without the action, or the action is being directed by
1493 state or local regulatory authorities, the trustees may determine the appropriate action and proceed without waiting for
1494 approval vote by the majority of legal members. This is because there is a high probability of approval under the
1495 circumstances.

Bill Number
Title Not enough persons available to nominate twice the number of trustees to be elected.

Submitted By Theodore Whitaker
Email twhitake@columbus.rr.com

1496 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1497 Page 99, Section 3d (Mode of election)

1498 **Intent**

1499 Provide an allowance for those churches that do not have 6 persons available or interested (twice the number of trustees to
1500 be elected) to meet the requirement in section b, 1) of having a minimum of 3 trustees.

1501 **Rationale**

1502 The membership of many churches across the connection is declining. There are many churches that do not have 6 people
1503 available or interested in being trustees. With that decline and lack of interest comes the issue of not having enough people
1504 to nominate twice the number of persons to be elected as trustees. So, wording should be added to address this dilemma of
1505 breaking the rule of not having a minimum of 3 trustees or picking 3 from less than 6 nominees.

1506 **Current Text**

1507 The minister at the meeting for election shall nominate twice the number of persons to be elected. Said persons shall have
1508 given consent in writing for their names to be placed in nomination.

1509 **Amended Text**

1510 The minister at the meeting for election shall nominate twice the number of persons to be elected. Said persons shall have
1511 given consent in writing for their names to be placed in nomination. Exception: If there are not 6 person that are willing to
1512 be placed in nomination, to meet the twice the number requirement, the pastor or person conducting the election, shall
1513 instruct the voters to still vote for up to three persons to be elected trustees for the list of nominees (still by majority vote).

Bill Number
Title Minimum in-person Quarterly Conference meetings for Presiding Elders
Submitted By Mark Johnson, Penny Oliver & Ruben Braziel II
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1514 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1515 Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, C. Administrative Functions (BODD 2021, page 162)

1516 **Intent**

1517 The requirement that a Presiding Elder (PE) at least meet once in-person will enhance the PE's ability to assess the pastor's
1518 efficiency and the effectiveness of the ministry of the local church. An in-person visit shall also assist in the interpersonal
1519 relations among the PE, local leadership, as well as the members of the local church, and provide for the physical
1520 assessment of the property.

1521 **Rationale**

1522 Now that the Covid 19's grip is loosening, the pandemic has certainly forced us to incorporate new ways to operate and
1523 administer church business. The incorporation of virtual meetings helped us to adapt, survive, and in some cases, thrive
1524 these last few years. While it is true that virtual meetings will never have the depth of connection that a face-to-face meeting
1525 provides, many have learned that virtual meetings should play a more significant role in our church business affairs in the
1526 future. However, we should not allow the new model to replace necessary interpersonal relations and practices among the
1527 leadership and their members.

1528 During the pandemic, most Quarterly Conferences were held virtually. Considering virtual meetings will likely continue to

1529 be an alternative meeting option, an in-person Quarterly Conference is still necessary and has significant value. As
1530 administrator, advisor, and supervisor, the PE's personal viewing and assessment of the local church's members and it's
1531 temporal/property assessment over a year is valuable and a reasonable expectation to ideally fulfill the role of the PE (not
1532 just a financial and or statistical reporting at the Quarter).

1533 **Current Text**

1534 Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, C. Administrative Functions (BODD 2021, page 162) C. Administrative
1535 Functions 1. The presiding elder holds a Quarterly Conference in every church and circuit every three (3) months, four (4)
1536 times a year to determine the efficiency of the pastor, the effectiveness of the ministry of the churches, and "to give proper
1537 direction to all the affairs of the churches in the Presiding Elder District."

1538 **Amended Text**

1539 C. Administrative Functions 1. The presiding elder holds a Quarterly Conference in every church and circuit every three (3)
1540 months, four (4) times a year to determine the efficiency of the pastor, the effectiveness of the ministry of the churches, and
1541 "to give proper direction to all the affairs of the churches in the Presiding Elder District." The time and method of meetings
1542 (in-person or virtual) shall be selected by the presiding elder after consultation with the pastor. At least one (1) of the four
1543 (4) Quarterly Conferences shall be in person.

1544 Financial Implications: No financial resources needed.

Bill Number
Title Minimum in-person Quarterly Conference meetings for Presiding Elders (2)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1545 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1546 Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, C. Administrative Functions (BODD 2021, page 162)

1547 **Intent**

1548 The requirement that a Presiding Elder (PE) at least meet once in-person will enhance the PE's ability to assess the pastor's
1549 efficiency and the effectiveness of the ministry of the local church. An in-person visit shall also assist in the interpersonal
1550 relations among the PE, local leadership, as well as the members of the local church, and provide for the physical
1551 assessment of the property.

1552 **Rationale**

1553 Now that the Covid 19's grip is loosening, the pandemic has certainly forced us to incorporate new ways to operate and
1554 administer church business. The incorporation of virtual meetings helped us to adapt, survive, and in some cases, thrive
1555 these last few years. While it is true that virtual meetings will never have the depth of connection that a face-to-face meeting
1556 provides, many have learned that virtual meetings should play a more significant role in our church business affairs in the
1557 future. However, we should not allow the new model to replace necessary interpersonal relations and practices among the
1558 leadership and their members.

1559 During the pandemic, most Quarterly Conferences were held virtually. Considering virtual meetings will likely continue to
1560 be an alternative meeting option, an in-person Quarterly Conference is still necessary and has significant value. As
1561 administrator, advisor, and supervisor, the PE's personal viewing and assessment of the local church's members and it's
1562 temporal/property assessment over a year is valuable and a reasonable expectation to ideally fulfill the role of the PE (not
1563 just a financial and or statistical reporting at the Quarter).

1564 **Current Text**

1565 Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, C. Administrative Functions (BODD 2021, page 162) C. Administrative
1566 Functions 1. The presiding elder holds a Quarterly Conference in every church and circuit every three (3) months, four (4)
1567 times a year to determine the efficiency of the pastor, the effectiveness of the ministry of the churches, and "to give proper
1568 direction to all the affairs of the churches in the Presiding Elder District."

1569 **Amended Text**

1570 C. Administrative Functions 1. The presiding elder holds a Quarterly Conference in every church and circuit every three (3)
1571 months, four (4) times a year to determine the efficiency of the pastor, the effectiveness of the ministry of the churches, and
1572 “to give proper direction to all the affairs of the churches in the Presiding Elder District.” The time and method of meetings
1573 (in-person or virtual) shall be selected by the presiding elder after consultation with the pastor. At least one (1) of the four
1574 (4) Quarterly Conferences shall be in person.

Bill Number
Title Class Leaders
Submitted By Joelynn Stokes for Connectional AMEWIM
Email jtstokes@jtstokesandassoc.com

1575 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1576 pp. 165-166, Part V, Section 1.A.c

1577 **Intent**

1578 To update the class leader's duties, qualifications, and responsibilities

1579 **Rationale**

1580 Have the section on class leaders' responsibilities and work reflect the changes in the church and the roles of modern-day
1581 class leaders. For example, most classes do not meet weekly, very few class leaders collect money from class members and
1582 the band of societies is archaic in its writing.

1583 **Current Text**

1584 c. Class Leaders

1585 1) Assignment One of the persons assigned to each class is the class leader.

1586 2) Appointment Class leaders must be appointed annually by the minister. They shall serve for one (1) year and may be
1587 appointed as long as their conduct is satisfactory.

1588 3) Examination They shall be examined quarterly by the minister and the presiding elder.

1589 4) Duties a) to meet the members in class once a week, to inquire how each soul prospers, to visit their members from time
1590 to time and to receive what they are willing to contribute for the support of the Gospel; b) to read the rules of Band Societies
1591 to those who meet with the class for the first time; c) to visit other classes frequently; d) to converse with their pastors
1592 frequently and freely; e) to admit non-members to their class meeting no more than three (3) times, with none of them to be
1593 consecutive; f) to exclude, suspend, and expel members from the class meeting; g) to watch over new members with special
1594 care and recommend those who are eligible at the end of ninety (90) days for full membership, upon their profession of
1595 saving faith in the Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ; h) to report to the Official Board 1) those who are sick, 2) those who
1596 walk disorderly and will not be reprovved and 3) the amount of money collected for the support of the Gospel, paying the
1597 same to the stewards; i) to serve as leaders for children's classes. Such leaders shall perform the duties as outlined above
1598 and, in addition, give

1599 Submitted on: 2023-11-26 22:37:57

1600 instruction in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

1601 Belin, Rev. Dr. Roderick D.. The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021: Fifty-First
1602 Edition (p. 166). AME Sunday School Union. Kindle Edition.

1603 **Amended Text**

1604 c. Class Leaders

1605 1) Assignment One of the persons assigned to each class is the class leader.

1606 2) Appointment Class leaders must be appointed annually by the minister. They shall serve for one (1) year and may be
1607 appointed as long as their conduct is satisfactory, and they remain in good and regular standing. At least one person shall be
1608 appointed to serve members of the church's virtual or online community.

1609 3) Qualifications a) They shall be examined annually by the pastor b) They shall be active members of the church for more
1610 than 1 year c) they shall be persons of great moral conduct and integrity who have professed saving faith.

1611 4) Duties a) to communicate with the members in class monthly, and meet with the class quarterly to inquire how each soul
1612 prospers, to visit their members from time to time; b) to review the catechism of faith with the class annually; c) to visit
1613 other classes periodically; d) to converse with their pastors frequently and freely; e) to admit non-members to their class
1614 meeting no more than three (3) times, with none of them to be consecutive; f) to refer to the Pastor members who need to be
1615 excluded, suspended, and expelled members from the class meeting; g) to walk with members ensuring they complete new
1616 members class and recommend those who are eligible at the end of ninety (90) days for full membership, upon their
1617 profession of saving faith in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; h) to report to the Official Board 1) those who are sick, 2)
1618 those who walk disorderly and will not be reprov'd and i) Where applicable, to serve as leaders for children's classes. Such
1619 leaders shall perform the duties as outlined above and, in addition, give instruction in The Doctrine and Discipline of the
1620 African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Bill Number

Title Letter of Good and Regular Standing
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Submitted By Joelynn Stokes for Connectional AMEWIM
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Email jtstokes@jtstokesandassoc.com
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1621 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1622 Page 234,

1623 **Intent**

1624 To ensure letters of good and regular standing are not arbitrarily withheld

1625 **Rationale**

1626 To preclude denial of letters for clergy in good and regular standing.

1627 **Current Text**

1628 It shall be the duty of every member of the Annual Conference to attend its sessions.

1629 **Amended Text**

1630 It shall be the duty of every member of the Annual Conference to attend its sessions. Upon request, a member in good and
1631 regular standing of the Annual Conference may request a letter stating same. Absent extenuating circumstances, the letter of
1632 good and regular standing or denial of a letter shall be issued within 90 days of the request. The written denial must include
1633 why the requesting member is not considered in good and regular standing.

Bill Number

Title Evangelist Missionary

Submitted By Owen Kingsley Alex
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Email darlington4really@yahoo.com
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1634 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1635 Evangelist Missionary
1636 **Intent**
1637 Missionary
1638 **Rationale**
1639 Evangelist
1640 **Current Text**
1641 Missionary work
1642 **Amended Text**
1643 As Evangelist Missionary world

1644 **IV. Worship and Sacraments**

Bill Number
Title New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
Submitted By Bill Dickens
Email dickensb@comcast.net

1645 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1646 There is no reference in the current 2021 Book of Doctrine and Discipline.

1647 **Intent**

1648 The intent of this proposed legislation is to officially recognize the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) as the official
1649 translation adopted by the AME Church for liturgy, worship and Christian Education activities.

1650 **Rationale**

1651 There are over 450 English translations of the Bible. These translations vary in theological accuracy. Too often too many
1652 Bible translations are used in AME pulpits. Based on academic research, the NRSV is the best translation that effectively
1653 communicates the original Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic languages The AME Church indirectly supports academic research.
1654 The Scriptures that define the 2021-2024 Quadrennial Theme are based on NRSV translations (see page 6 of the 2021
1655 BODD). Furthermore, the Liberating Faith AME Church School lesson text use the NRSV as the primary translation for our
1656 students. The AME Church should directly adopt her preferred Bible translation. That adoption should be NRSV and
1657 expressed in the AME Book of Doctrine and Discipline.

1658 **Current Text**

1659 There is no current text.

1660 **Amended Text**

1661 There is no amended text.

1662 **V. Ministry and Orders (ministry – local church)**

Bill Number
Title CLO 10 - Trustee Participation in the Negotiation of Pastor's Housing Allowance

Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee

Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1663 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1664 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Page 98, Part V, Section I. A. b. 5) d

1665 **Intent**

1666 Add a member of the Board of Trustees to be included with the Board of Stewards for the negotiation of the pastor's
1667 housing allowance when there is a parsonage available and the pastor elects not to reside in the parsonage.

1668 **Rationale**

1669 This legislation addresses the disparity in the process of the Board of Stewards negotiating the housing allowance without
1670 conferring with the Board of Trustees to ensure a complete understanding of the costs of maintaining the residence and any
1671 other costs that should be considered when the church enters into a housing allowance agreement at the same time the
1672 church is responsible for maintaining and equipping a parsonage. The Board of Trustees can provide invaluable insight that
1673 ensures that the best interest of the pastor and the church are considered simultaneously during this important process.

1674 Per the above reference, the Board of Trustees is responsible for securing housing for the pastor's family. The Board of
1675 Trustee is also responsible for the upkeep, maintenance and taxes on the parsonage, which includes, but is not limited to,
1676 utilities, upgrades, landscaping, HVAC systems, roofing, window replacement, appliances, carpeting, painting, real estate
1677 taxes, and homeowners' insurance.

1678 Because of the expenses associated with the maintenance of the parsonage, the funds needed for these expenses may affect
1679 funds available for, and should be considered in negotiation of, the pastor's housing allowance. The duly elected Trustees
1680 are the ones who are given the responsibility of being knowledgeable about these expenses and are equipped to provide
1681 valuable insight on what is in the best interest of the church and pastor as it relates to the housing allowance. Therefore, the
1682 Board of Stewards and the Board of Trustees, together, should negotiate the housing allowance for the pastor when (s)he
1683 elects to seek accommodations apart from the available parsonage.

1684 **Current Text**

1685 SECTION I. LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION – REQUIRED A. Boards, Licensed Missionary Workers, and
1686 Organizations of Ministries b. Trustees 5) Duties d) They shall secure, by purchase or hire, a house for the pastor's family
1687 and comfortably furnish it. In lieu of this arrangement, the pastor may be given a housing allowance. If a housing allowance
1688 is given, it is the Stewards' duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with the pastor.

1689 **Amended Text**

1690 SECTION I. LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION - REQUIRED A. Boards, Licensed Missionary Workers, and
1691 Organizations of Ministries b. Trustees 5) Duties d) They shall secure, by purchase or hire, a house for the pastor's family
1692 and also comfortably furnish it. In lieu of this arrangement, the pastor may be given a housing allowance. If a housing
1693 allowance is given, it is the Stewards' duty to negotiate a reasonable

1694 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 05:45:07

1695 housing allowance with the pastor. If the church has a parsonage and the pastor chooses not to reside in it, a designated
1696 member of the Board of Trustees shall be included in the negotiation of the pastor's housing allowance. B. It should be
1697 noted, and clearly understood that only under these circumstances and conditions, where the local church is giving or
1698 negotiating a housing allowance for the Pastor, while at the same time in possession of a parsonage that the Pastor elects not
1699 to reside in, will the local Board of Trustees have a representative be included to collaborate with the Board of Stewards for
1700 the negotiation of the Pastor's Housing Allowance.

1701 No cost is expected.

Bill Number

Title CLO – 11 Ministerial Training Board Composition

Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1702 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1703 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Part VII, Section III, Subsection C -
 1704 Ministerial Training Board (Committees on Instruction); Pages 135 and 136.

1705 **Intent**

1706 INTENT To amend the composition of the Ministerial Training Board to include lay instructors.

1707 **Rationale**

1708 RATIONALE Under the current composition listed in the Doctrine and Discipline in Section C, there is no requirement that
 1709 the members of the Training Board be only ordained persons as is the case with the Board of Examiners. The Course of
 1710 Instruction includes classes that credentialed members of laity are highly qualified to teach. The AME Church should take
 1711 full advantage of its resources in an effort to get the best results in all its endeavors, for the benefit of our Zion. Therefore,
 1712 lay persons who are certified and qualified to teach classes in the Course of Instruction should be retained for the purpose,
 1713 thus promoting clergy and laity collaborating in the training of our ordained servants.

1714 **Current Text**

1715 CURRENT TEXT Part VII, Sec. III. C1.; Appointment of Dean and Nomination of Staff, Page 135. The presiding bishop
 1716 shall appoint the Dean of Ministerial Training of the Conference. The dean, in turn, shall nominate the staff (committees)
 1717 which shall be confirmed by the Annual Conference.

1718 **Amended Text**

1719 PROPOSED NEW WORDING Part VII, Sec. III. C1; Page 135 The presiding Bishop shall appoint the Dean of Ministerial
 1720 Training of the conference. The dean, in turn, shall nominate the staff (committees) which will consist of highly qualified
 1721 and/or certified clergy and laity which shall be confirmed by the Annual Conference. Financial Implications: Should be
 1722 neutral as the composition is changing and not necessarily the number of instructors.

Bill Number
Title Consult the Trustees Before Negotiating a Housing Allowance for the Pastor
Submitted By Theodore Whitaker
Email Twhitake@columbus.rr.com

1723 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1724 Page 100, Section 5, d) (Duties)

1725 **Intent**

1726 Require that the Trustees to be consulted before the Stewards go into housing allowance discussions with the pastor.

1727 **Rationale**

1728 The Trustees are responsible for housing for the pastor. It stands to reason that the Trustees should be involved in the
 1729 decision to offer a financial compensation instead of housing (a housing allowance).

1730 **Current Text**

1731 . . . If a housing allowance is given, it is the Stewards duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with the pastor. . .

1732 **Amended Text**

1733 . . . If a housing allowance is given, it is the Stewards duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with the pastor.
1734 However, the Trustees are to be consulted before the Stewards go into negotiations with the pastor. . . .

Bill Number
Title CLO 5 - Providing IRS Required Documentation for the Pastor's Housing Allowance Benefit
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1735 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1736 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church - 2021 Part V-Local Church Organization, Section
1737 1.A.2, a.2), b), Page 95 & Part VIII-Ministerial Classifications, Rules and Support, Section III. Ministers' Bill of Rights
1738 Paragraph 2) a) Parsonage or Housing Allowance, Page 154

1739 **Intent**

1740 The goal of this legislation is to provide guidance to Pastor's and Steward's on how properly provide and document a
1741 housing allowance benefit for the Pastor.

1742 **Rationale**

1743 The housing allowance exclusion is a benefit that all pastors and Stewards in the AME should be versed in and understand
1744 how to maximize the tax effect of the pastor's compensation package. The goal of this legislation is to provide clarity within
1745 the Doctrine and Discipline on how this benefit should be incorporated into a pastor's compensation package. As we are
1746 aware, a properly designated housing allowance is excludable from federal and state taxation although it is subject to self-
1747 employment taxes for pastors who have not elected Form 4361 treatment which excludes the housing allowance from self-
1748 employment taxes.

1749 Per IRS Publication 517, the clergy housing allowance must be calculated as the lower of two (2) options; a. pastor's actual
1750 expenses, or b. fair rental value of a fully furnished and equipped home in the geographical area of the church. The Doctrine
1751 and Discipline has similar references in the above noted paragraph when it references "negotiated salary and benefit
1752 package shall be commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of the local
1753 congregation." Therefore, the Pastor's actual expenses should be calculated based on the attached worksheet, and the benefit
1754 should be maximized and reported correctly on a W-2 so that a pastor's compensation package can follow IRS guidelines
1755 and requirements. The housing allowance should be maximized prior to the pastor receiving other forms of compensation
1756 which are fully taxable.

1757 All Pastors are eligible to receive a housing allowance if a parsonage is not being provided. Many receive incorrect
1758 compensation documentation and are forced to forego the benefits of the housing allowance exclusion and do not have
1759 correct information to document their entire compensation package. This legislation will provide the steps to properly
1760 implement a housing allowance benefit.

1761 **Current Text**

1762 Part V-Local Church Organization Section 1.A.2a – Stewards Paragraph 2) b) The benefits include, but are not limited to:
1763 pension or retirement, insurance(s); health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance*; self-employment
1764 tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel: connectional, episcopal district, conference, inner parish,
1765 and all other related to official duties.

1766 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:57:25

1767 Part VIII-Ministerial Classifications, Rules and Support, Section III. Ministers' Bill of Rights, Paragraph 2) a) Parsonage or
1768 Housing Allowance In the alternative, the Stewards of the local church may negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with
1769 the pastor.

1770 **Amended Text**

1771 Proposed NEW wording Part V-Local Church Organization Page 95, Section 1.A.2a – Stewards Paragraph 2) b) The
1772 benefits include, but are not limited to: pension or retirement, insurance(s); health, disability, professional liability, key
1773 person life insurance*; self-employment tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel: connectional,
1774 episcopal district, conference, inner parish, and all other related to official duties. The Board of Stewards and the Board of
1775 Trustees will work to assist the Pastor in implementing the most tax-advantageous compensation package by ensuring that
1776 the housing allowance is maximized per the attached housing allowance worksheet. Other benefits would be considered
1777 after the housing allowance has been maximized.

1778 Part VIII - Ministerial Classifications, Rules and Support, Section III. Ministers' Bill of Rights Paragraph 2) a) Parsonage or
1779 Housing Allowance, Page 154 In the alternative, the Stewards and Trustees of the local church may negotiate a reasonable
1780 housing allowance with the pastor.

1781 *** Unable to attach/paste worksheet. Please notify to discuss Pastor's Housing Allowance Worksheet Request for
1782 Housing/Parsonage Allowance

1783 Submitted By: Calendar Year: 2021 Submitted To:

1784 Please accept this as my request for a housing/parsonage allowance in the amount of \$ \$0.00 for the calendar year stated
1785 above. This request is made pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 107, and I represent that I am qualified, pursuant to
1786 said section and the regulations there under, to receive the same.

1787 Actual Expenses 2021 Est. Expenses 2022 I Mortgage / Rent Payment II Taxes A. Real Estate Taxes B. Personal Property
1788 Taxes III Insurance A. Fire B. Homeowners C. Renters D. Other: IV Home Improvements A. New Roof B. Additions,
1789 Garage, Carport C. Fence, Landscaping D. Driveway, Paving, Sealing

1790 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:57:25

1791 E. Other:

1792 V Maintenance and Repairs A. Appliances B. Plumbing C. Fence, Landscaping

1793 D. Driveway, Paving, Sealing E. Other: VI Appliances and Furnishings A. TV, VCR, Stereo, DVD Player, etc. B. Piano,
1794 Sewing Machine

1795 C. Lawnmower, Vacuum Cleaner D. Dryer, Dishwasher, Refrigerator E. Lawn Equipment F. Lawnmower, Vacuum Cleaner
1796 G. Carpet, Tile, Wood Floors H. Other: VII Decorative Items A. Drapes, Curtains, Blinds B. Throw Rugs C. Wallpaper,
1797 Paint, Molding, Shelving D. Paintings, Pictures, Knick-Knacks E. Bedspreads F. Sheets, Linens, Towels G. Other: VIII
1798 Utilities A. Gas B. Electricity C. Water and Sewer D. Cable TV E. Garbage Removal F. Other:

1799 IX Miscellaneous A. Home Cleaning Supplies B. Broom, Mops, Sweepers, etc. C. Light Bulbs, Home Supplies D: Other:

1800 Column Totals: \$0.00 \$0.00 Total Estimated Fair Market Rental Value: \$0.00

1801 Fair Market Rental Value I Annual Rental Value including furnishings II Utilities \$0.00 III Maintenance & Repairs \$0.00
1802 Total Fair Market Rental Value \$0.00

1803 I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided above is both accurate and truthful, and I submit it as
1804 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:57:25

1805 the basis for a housing/parsonage allowance, which will be excluded from my taxable salary. I further agree to notify this
1806 Board/Committee of any substantial changes in the total amounts reflected.

1807 Date

1808 Date

Bill Number
Title (New) Worksheet: Pastor Compensation – Salary and Benefits Reference(s)
Submitted By Mark Johnson, Penny Oliver & Ruben Braziel II
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1809 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

- 1810 • The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (BODD) 2021 Part VIII, Section II., B. (Page
1811 152). • The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Part V, Section I., A.,2., a.,2., b). (Page 96).

1812 **Intent**

- 1813 • Creating a uniform worksheet for developing and reporting the Pastor’s Compensation • Standardizing the reporting
1814 mechanism of the pastor’s compensation

1815 **Rationale**

1816 The Pastor’s Compensation should be determined after the stewards review of the specific needs of the pastor and
1817 congregation. The local church should form a compensation package that is the most generous and appropriate they can
1818 provide considering the adherence to the BODD regarding the applicable benefits to pastors who are full-time servants of
1819 the church. A worksheet will assist the stewards and the pastor by simplify a pastor’s compensation presentation and assist
1820 in negotiations. The worksheet will provide as an alternative to deriving the pastor’s support from the church’s annual
1821 conference report.

1822 **Current Text**

1823 Section II. Ministerial/Pastoral Support (Page 152) A. Salary Guidelines B. Salary of Ministers The salary of a full-time
1824 minister shall be negotiated by the pastor and the steward board. The negotiated salary and benefit package shall be
1825 commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of the local congregation. The following
1826 benefits apply to those ministers who are full-time servants of the church. They shall be adhered to per the Doctrine and
1827 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and open to negotiations in all cases. The benefits include but are not
1828 limited to pension or retirement insurance(s): health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance*; self-
1829 employment tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel: connectional, episcopal district, conference,
1830 inner parish and all other related to official duties.

1831 **Amended Text**

1832 Section II. Ministerial/Pastoral Support (Page 152) A. Salary Guidelines B. Salary of Ministers The salary of a full-time
1833 minister shall be negotiated by the pastor and the steward board. The negotiated salary and benefit package shall be
1834 commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of the local congregation. The following
1835 benefits apply to those ministers who are full-time servants of the church. They shall be adhered to per the Doctrine and
1836 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and open to negotiations in all cases. The benefits include but are not
1837 limited to pension or retirement insurance(s): health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance*; self-
1838 employment tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel: connectional, episcopal district, conference,
1839 inner parish and all other related to official duties.

1840 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 04:00:17

1841 Each local church shall report to the Annual Conference and the Presiding Bishop the Worksheet: Pastor Compensation –
1842 Salary and Benefits. The worksheet will illustrate the negotiated salary and benefits of the serving/current pastor agreed
1843 upon by the board of stewards. This confidential worksheet should be kept in the pastor’s file (together with other important
1844 personnel documents) as well as the church’s file of the annual conference.

1845 Attachment Worksheet: Pastor Compensation – Salary and Benefits (Draft & Sample)

1846 Use this worksheet to illustrate the negotiated salary and benefits of the serving/current pastor agreed upon by the board of
1847 stewards. This confidential worksheet should be kept in the pastor’s file (together with other important personnel
1848 documents) as well as the church’s file of the annual conference.

1849 *** unable to attach/paste worksheet. Please notify to discuss attaching.

Bill Number
Title (New) The Local Church’s Base Compensation Worksheet for Newly Appointed Pastors
Submitted By Mark Johnson, Penny Oliver & Ruben Braziel II

1850 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

- 1851 • The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021 Part VIII, Section II., B. (Page 152).
1852 • The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Part V, Section I., A.,2., a.,2., b). (Page 96).

1853 **Intent**

- 1854 • Clarifying the pastor's compensation – base salary & benefits • Establishing a uniform worksheet for documenting the
1855 local church's Base Pastor Compensation for newly appointed pastor • Standardizing a method for comparing compensation
1856 of new pastoral appointments.

1857 **Rationale**

1858 The Pastor's Compensation should be determined after the stewards review of the specific needs of the pastor and
1859 congregation. The local church should form a compensation package that is the most generous and appropriate they can
1860 provide considering the adherence to the BODD regarding the applicable benefits to pastors who are full-time servants of
1861 the church.

1862 Each church should annually review and report to the Annual Conference and the Presiding Bishop its Base Compensation
1863 Package (see Worksheet – Base Compensation Package). The base compensation shall reflect the congregation's
1864 determination of what they are able to pay and start negotiations with a newly appointed pastor. The negotiated
1865 compensation would consider the pastor's credentials, experience, full-time status, and the church's present financial
1866 condition.

1867 The submitted base compensation worksheet would be used to compare churches' pastor compensation package to another
1868 church.

1869 **Current Text**

1870 Section II. Ministerial/Pastoral Support (Page 152) A. Salary Guidelines B. Salary of Ministers The salary of a full-time
1871 minister shall be negotiated by the pastor and the steward board. The negotiated salary and benefit package shall be
1872 commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of the local congregation. The following
1873 benefits apply to those ministers who are full-time servants of the church. They shall be adhered to per the Doctrine and
1874 Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and open to negotiations in all cases. The benefits include but are not
1875 limited to: pension or retirement insurance(s); health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance*; self-
1876 employment tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel: connectional, episcopal district, conference,
1877 inner parish and all other related to official duties.

1878 **Amended Text**

1879 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 03:53:23

1880 **Amended Text**

1881 Section II. Ministerial/Pastoral Support (Page 152) A. Salary Guidelines B. Salary of Ministers The Compensation of
1882 Pastors 1. Compensation: The compensation of a full-time minister pastor shall be negotiated by the pastor and the steward
1883 board. It shall include the negotiated salary and the benefit package. It shall be commensurate with the cost of living in the
1884 given geographical area and the ability of the local congregation. The benefits include but are not limited to: parsonage or
1885 housing allowance, pension or retirement*; insurance(s) (health, disability, professional liability); key person life insurance
1886 1 (benefactor inclusion), self-employment tax, continuing education allowance, and travel allowance (connectional,
1887 episcopal district, conference, inner parish, and all other related to official duties).

1888 2. Base compensation of newly appointed pastor: Each church shall report to the Annual Conference and the Presiding
1889 Bishop its Base Compensation Package (see Worksheet –Base Compensation Package). The base compensation shall reflect
1890 the congregation's determination of what they are able to pay as the base of negotiations of a newly appointed pastor. The
1891 negotiated compensation of the new pastor shall consider the pastor's credentials, experience, full-time status, and the
1892 church's present financial condition.

1893 The local church's Base Compensation Worksheet shall be used as a tool by the Presiding Bishop for comparing and
1894 determining new pastoral appointments.

1895 Attachment

1896 Base Compensation Worksheet Use this worksheet to illustrate the pastor's annual base compensation plan agreed upon by
1897 the church in cases of a newly appointed pastor. The local church shall submit to the annual conference the following
1898 worksheet:

1899 *** Unable to attach/paste worksheet. Please notify to discuss attaching the worksheet.

Bill Number
Title CLO 4 - Local Minister Annuity/Insurance Program Participation
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1900 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1901 Page 157, Part VIII, Section IV., The Local Ministry, B. Local Deacon & C. Local Elder & Part XIII, Section 1. D., & Page
1902 228. D. 2. a. Ministerial Annuities Plan, 1 **Intent**

1903 The AME Church to expand the criteria for eligibility into the annuity and insurance benefit program to a Local Minister *
1904 that serve as a pastor to a local charge continuously for at least two years, with an expectation that they will continue to
1905 serve in that same capacity.

1906 &

1907 The AME Church to provide the same access to the annuity/insurance rights and privileges to local Elders that serve as
1908 pastors as itinerant Elders and other employees.

1909 **Rationale**

1910 There are instances throughout the connection particularly in rural areas of the Church, local ministers* are assigned to
1911 serve as supply pastors for a prolonged appointment. They are responsible for all financial obligations of their church.
1912 However, they are currently not eligible to participate in the annuity and insurance programs of the AME Church. Two
1913 years of service as pastor is deserving of an exception of eligibility criteria of an annuity/insurance program.

1914 Secondly, it should be noted the change of term Local Elder to Local Minister* to encompass the various types of clergy
1915 who may be applicable to this scenario. The AME Discipline defines Local Ministers as Local Deacons and Elders who are
1916 authorized to perform specific pastoral duties in a particular charge under the specific supervision of their itinerant elder
1917 (page 893 of the 2021 AME Discipline). Often, supply pastors are local ministers, however, this proposed bill only
1918 references those local ministers that are appointed and serve as a pastor to a local charge continuously for at least two years.

1919 **Current Text**

1920 Page 228. D. 2. a. Ministerial Annuities Plan, 1.Included in this coverage shall be all bishops, general officers, college
1921 presidents, deans of theological seminaries, itinerant elders, and salaried personnel of the connectional departments of the
1922 AME Church, including our hospitals, church schools and colleges.

1923 &

1924 Page 214, D.2.a 1) Included in this coverage shall be all bishops, general officers, college presidents, deans of theological
1925 seminaries, itinerant elders and salaried personnel of the connectional departments of the AME Church, including our
1926 hospitals, church schools and colleges.

1927 Submitted on: 2023-12-01 03:28:22

1928 **Amended Text**

1929 Page 228. D. 2. a. Ministerial Annuities Plan, 1.Included in this coverage shall be all bishops, general officers, college
1930 presidents, deans of theological seminaries, itinerant elders, other local ministers that serves as a pastor to a local charge
1931 continuously for at least two years, with an expectation that they will continue to serve in that same capacity, and salaried
1932 personnel of the connectional departments of the AME Church, including our hospitals, church schools and college.

1933 & Included in this coverage shall be all bishops, general officers, college presidents, deans of theological seminaries,
1934 itinerant elders and all other ordained persons receiving an appointment to a pastoral charge, and salaried personnel of the
1935 connectional departments of the AME Church, including our hospitals, church schools and colleges. Financial Implications
1936 There are no financial implications beyond the local church.

Bill Number
Title CLO 14 - Supervision and Evaluation of Pastors
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

1937 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

1938 There is no current text or existing legislation for the proposed bill. Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, Supervisory
1939 and Advisory Function. 2021 BODD, Page 165. New insert.

1940 **Intent**

1941 To establish a process for evaluating the performance of pastors; to timely identify areas of concern for the local church and
1942 implement a system of recourse and documentation used in future assignments.

1943 **Rationale**

1944 The number of lawsuits and conciliatory hearings bought within and against the AME Church and its leadership based on
1945 itinerant elders' discontent with their pastoral assignments remains alarmingly high. This pervasive litigious tendency has
1946 been costing the AME Church millions of dollars. This burdensome situation could be greatly alleviated, if not avoided if
1947 common human resource policies regarding employee performance evaluation, supervisory counseling, and documentation
1948 were in place and adhered to.

1949 In secular society, employment policies require that a supervisor meets with an employee at least twice during the year to
1950 evaluate the employee's progress against previously agreed upon goals- accomplishments, challenges and failures are
1951 specifically discussed and documented, along with amended goals and new timelines, if necessary to achieve goals.
1952 Decisions on church leadership assignments should be based on capabilities and work product that serves the needs of the
1953 congregation, community, and objectives of the AME Church, not undermined by emotional affiliation and political
1954 influence.

1955 If the status of a pastoral charge is significantly diminished (attending membership and financial resources) less than a year
1956 after a pastor is assigned, then the root cause needs to be determined and addressed. This is done with supervisory
1957 intervention, including meeting with the pastor, documenting the discussion, and final conclusions, and establishing new
1958 expectations, Strategies, and consequences of not meeting reasonable expectations.

1959 Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, Supervisory and Advisory Function. 2021 BODD, page 165. It may also need to
1960 be referenced in the "Minister's Bill of Rights".

1961 Attachment: Pastor Evaluation Template

1962 **Current Text**

1963 Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, Supervisory and Advisory Function. 2021 BODD, page 165. No language exists.

1964 **Amended Text**

1965 Part VIII, Section V. The Presiding Elder, Supervisory and Advisory Function. 2021 BODD, page 165. No language exists.
1966 New insert.

1967 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 17:16:43

1968 The presiding elder shall meet with each pastor of his or her district privately during the quarterly conference meeting and
1969 provide verbal and written evaluations that include the pastor's concerns as well as the congregation. The Quarterly
1970 Conference process allows for congregational input. Goals and objectives must be clear. Prior to Annual Conference, and
1971 before the third quarterly Conference, the presiding elder must discuss with the said pastor the status of the local church and

1972 his/her performance at that charge, citing preceding Quarterly Conference evaluations, reports, and written communications
1973 from members. These meetings shall be documented, showing the date, venue, and signature of both pastor and presiding
1974 elder of the discussion and final assessment.

1975 If there were concerns during a quarterly visit a follow-up meeting shall be convened prior to the next Quarterly Conference
1976 in order to evaluate accomplishments and progress against agreed and signed to goals in the previous meeting. Continued
1977 follow-up should be made post Annual Conference for remaining unresolved concerns. Documentation from these meetings
1978 shall be entered into a secure personnel storage file and copied to the presiding bishop. The information should be
1979 referenced in making pastoral appointments.

1980 The bishop shall be made aware of adverse or irreconcilable situations between the pastor and congregation as the presiding
1981 elder becomes aware, and the case referred to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee. The presiding elder is to provide
1982 sufficient or adequate supervision of mission and smaller churches and circuits that will lead to a more informed and
1983 accurate evaluation.

1984 SEE ATTACHED SUGGESTED EVALUATION FORM FOR USE (To be standardized for all Districts) Pastor Evaluation
1985 Form

1986 SUGGESTED PASTOR'S ANNUAL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FORM Pastor's
1987 Name _____ Local Church _____ Number of years as Pastor _____
1988 Conference _____ PE District _____ Presiding Elder _____
1989 _____

1990 The following is the Key to rate performance: [5] Excellent; [4] Good; [3] Average; [2] Needs improvement; [1] Poor (refer
1991 to EAP or MEC).

1992 Circle the appropriate number. A. Administrative management and leadership skills 1. Demonstrates awareness of job
1993 responsibilities.....5 4 3 2 1 2. Demonstrate creativity in accomplishing
1994 tasks.....5 4 3 2 1 3. Shows consistency in financial reporting on all levels of the
1995 church.....5 4 3 2 1 4. Strives to achieve evangelistic goals and vision set by the Church5 4 3 2 1 5.
1996 Pastor attends the majority of all Episcopal and PE District meetings.....5 4 3 2 1 6. Demonstrates effective
1997 Leadership and work ethics.....5 4 3 2 1

1998 B. HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS 1. Demonstrates effective resolution problem-solving skills.....5 4
1999 3 2 1 2. Has maintained or grown his congregation during the Conference year.....5 4 3 2 1 3. Demonstrates
2000 compassion toward his congregation and others.....5 4 3 2 1 4. Support spiritual growth through effective
2001 preaching and teaching.....5 4 3 2 1

2002 C. COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION SKILLS 1. Demonstrates effectiveness in people
2003 skills.....5 4 3 2 1 2. Demonstrate the ability to solve conflictual
2004 situations.....5 4 3 2 1 3. Does he encourage views and ideas from others in decision-
2005 making.....5 4 3 2 1 4. Is the Pastor able to communicate his vision to the congregation.....5 4 3
2006 2 1 5. Is the Pastor seeking to build effective public relationships with the community.....5 4 3 2 1

2007 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 17:16:43

2008 D. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

2009 1. Demonstrates spiritual wellness.....5 4 3 2 1 2. Promotes physical
2010 wellness.....5 4 3 2 1 3. Demonstrates growth in theological
2011 beliefs.....5 4 3 2 1 4. Understands the History, Traditions, and Polity of the AME
2012 Church.....5 4 3 2 1

2013 5. Demonstrates and promotes effective teaching and learning practices.....5 4 3 2 1 SCORE _____

2014 Comments by the Presiding Elder _____ Comments by the
2015 Pastor _____

2016 Pastor's Signature _____

2017 Presiding Elder's Signature _____

Bill Number

Title CLO – 11 Ministerial Training Board Composition (2)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

2018 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

2019 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Part VII, Section III, Subsection C -
 2020 Ministerial Training Board (Committees on Instruction); Pages 135.

2021 **Intent**

2022 To amend the composition of the Ministerial Training Board to include lay instructors.

2023 **Rationale**

2024 Under the current composition listed in the Doctrine and Discipline in Section C, there is no requirement that the members
 2025 of the Training Board be only ordained persons as is the case with the Board of Examiners. The Course of Instruction
 2026 includes classes that credentialed members of laity are highly qualified to teach. The AME Church should take full
 2027 advantage of its resources in an effort to get the best results in all its endeavors, for the benefit of our Zion. Therefore, lay
 2028 persons who are certified and qualified to teach classes in the Course of Instruction should be retained for the purpose, thus
 2029 promoting clergy and laity collaborating in the training of our ordained servants.

2030 **Current Text**

2031 Part VII, Sec. III. C1.; Appointment of Dean and Nomination of Staff, Page 135. The presiding bishop shall appoint the
 2032 Dean of Ministerial Training of the Conference. The dean, in turn, shall nominate the staff (committees) which shall be
 2033 confirmed by the Annual Conference.

2034 **Amended Text**

2035 Part VII, Sec. III. C1; Page 135 The presiding Bishop shall appoint the Dean of Ministerial Training of the conference. The
 2036 dean, in turn, shall nominate the staff (committees) which will consist of highly qualified and/or certified clergy and laity
 2037 which shall be confirmed by the Annual Conference.

Bill Number
Title CLO 10 - Trustee Participation in the Negotiation of Pastor’s Housing Allowance (2)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

2038 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

2039 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2021, Page 100, Part V, Section I. A. 2b. 5) d

2040 **Intent**

2041 Add a member of the Board of Trustees to be included with the Board of Stewards for the negotiation of the pastor’s
 2042 housing allowance when there is a parsonage available and the pastor elects not to reside in the parsonage.

2043 **Rationale**

2044 This legislation addresses the disparity in the process of the Board of Stewards negotiating the housing allowance without
 2045 conferring with the Board of Trustees to ensure a complete understanding of the costs of maintaining the residence and any
 2046 other costs that should be considered when the church enters into a housing allowance agreement at the same time the
 2047 church is responsible for maintaining and equipping a parsonage. The Board of Trustees can provide invaluable insight that
 2048 ensures that the best interest of the pastor and the church are considered simultaneously during this important process.

2049 Per the above reference, the Board of Trustees is responsible for securing housing for the pastor's family. The Board of
2050 Trustee is also responsible for the upkeep, maintenance and taxes on the parsonage, which includes, but is not limited to,
2051 utilities, upgrades, landscaping, HVAC systems, roofing, window replacement, appliances, carpeting, painting, real estate
2052 taxes, and homeowners' insurance.

2053 Because of the expenses associated with the maintenance of the parsonage, the funds needed for these expenses may affect
2054 funds available for, and should be considered in negotiation of, the pastor's housing allowance. The duly elected Trustees
2055 are the ones who are given the responsibility of being knowledgeable about these expenses and are equipped to provide
2056 valuable insight on what is in the best interest of the church and pastor as it relates to the housing allowance. Therefore, the
2057 Board of Stewards and the Board of Trustees, together, should negotiate the housing allowance for the pastor when (s)he
2058 elects to seek accommodations apart from the available parsonage.

2059 **Current Text**

2060 SECTION I. LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION – REQUIRED A. Boards, Licensed Missionary Workers, and
2061 Organizations of Ministries b. Trustees 5) Duties d) They shall secure, by purchase or hire, a house for the pastor's family
2062 and comfortably furnish it. In lieu of this arrangement, the pastor may be given a housing allowance. If a housing allowance
2063 is given, it is the Stewards' duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with the pastor.

2064 **Amended Text**

2065 SECTION I. LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION - REQUIRED A. Boards, Licensed Missionary Workers, and
2066 Organizations of Ministries b. Trustees 5) Duties d) They shall secure, by purchase or hire, a house for the pastor's family
2067 and also comfortably furnish it. In lieu of this arrangement, the pastor

2068 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 16:22:55

2069 may be given a housing allowance. If a housing allowance is given, it is the Stewards' duty to negotiate a reasonable
2070 housing allowance with the pastor. If the church has a parsonage and the pastor chooses not to reside in it, a designated
2071 member of the Board of Trustees shall be included in the negotiation of the pastor's housing allowance.

2072 B. It should be noted, and clearly understood that only under these circumstances and conditions, where the local church is
2073 giving or negotiating a housing allowance for the Pastor, while at the same time in possession of a parsonage that the Pastor
2074 elects not to reside in, will the local Board of Trustees have a representative be included to collaborate with the Board of
2075 Stewards for the negotiation of the Pastor's Housing Allowance

Bill Number
Title CLO 5 - Providing IRS Required Documentation for the Pastor's Housing Allowance Benefit (2)
Submitted By CLO Legislation Committee
Email mrk19732000@yahoo.com

2076 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

2077 The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church - 2021 Part V-Local Church Organization, Section
2078 1.A.2, a.2), b), Page 96 & Part VIII-Ministerial Classifications, Rules and Support, Section III. Ministers' Bill of Rights
2079 Paragraph 2) a) Parsonage or Housing Allowance, Page 155

2080 **Intent**

2081 The goal of this legislation is to provide guidance to Pastor's and Steward's on how properly provide and document a
2082 housing allowance benefit for the Pastor.

2083 **Rationale**

2084 The housing allowance exclusion is a benefit that all pastors and Stewards in the AME should be versed in and understand
2085 how to maximize the tax effect of the pastor's compensation package. The goal of this legislation is to provide clarity within
2086 the Doctrine and Discipline on how this benefit should be incorporated into a pastor's compensation package. As we are
2087 aware, a properly designated housing allowance is excludable from federal and state taxation although it is subject to self-
2088 employment taxes for pastors who have not elected Form 4361 treatment which excludes the housing allowance from self-

2089 employment taxes.

2090 Per IRS Publication 517, the clergy housing allowance must be calculated as the lower of two (2) options; a. pastor's actual
2091 expenses, or b. fair rental value of a fully furnished and equipped home in the geographical area of the church. The Doctrine
2092 and Discipline has similar references in the above noted paragraph when it references "negotiated salary and benefit
2093 package shall be commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of the local
2094 congregation." Therefore, the Pastor's actual expenses should be calculated based on the attached worksheet, and the benefit
2095 should be maximized and reported correctly on a W-2 so that a pastor's compensation package can follow IRS guidelines
2096 and requirements. The housing allowance should be maximized prior to the pastor receiving other forms of compensation
2097 which are fully taxable.

2098 All Pastors are eligible to receive a housing allowance if a parsonage is not being provided. Many receive incorrect
2099 compensation documentation and are forced to forego the benefits of the housing allowance exclusion and do not have
2100 correct information to document their entire compensation package. This legislation will provide the steps to properly
2101 implement a housing allowance benefit.

2102 **Current Text**

2103 Part V-Local Church Organization Section 1.A.2a – Stewards Paragraph 2) b) The benefits include, but are not limited to:
2104 pension or retirement, insurance(s); health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance*; self-employment
2105 tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel: connectional, episcopal district, conference, inner parish,
2106 and all other related to official duties.

2107 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 15:15:44

2108 Part VIII-Ministerial Classifications, Rules and Support, Section III. Ministers' Bill of Rights, Paragraph 2) a) Parsonage or
2109 Housing Allowance In the alternative, the Stewards of the local church may negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with
2110 the pastor.

2111 **Amended Text**

2112 Part V-Local Church Organization Page 95, Section 1.A.2a – Stewards Paragraph 2) b) The benefits include, but are not
2113 limited to: pension or retirement, insurance(s); health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance*; self-
2114 employment tax; parsonage or housing allowance; continuing education; travel: connectional, episcopal district, conference,
2115 inner parish, and all other related to official duties. The Board of Stewards and the Board of Trustees will work to assist the
2116 Pastor in implementing the most tax-advantageous compensation package by ensuring that the housing allowance is
2117 maximized per the attached housing allowance worksheet. Other benefits would be considered after the housing allowance
2118 has been maximized.

2119 Part VIII - Ministerial Classifications, Rules and Support, Section III. Ministers' Bill of Rights Paragraph 2.a. Parsonage or
2120 Housing Allowance, Page 155 In the alternative, the Stewards and Trustees of the local church may negotiate a reasonable
2121 housing allowance with the pastor.

2122 Pastor's Housing Allowance Worksheet Request for Housing/Parsonage Allowance

2123 Submitted By: Calendar Year: 2021 Submitted To:

2124 Please accept this as my request for a housing/parsonage allowance in the amount of \$ \$0.00 for the calendar year stated
2125 above. This request is made pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 107, and I represent that I am qualified, pursuant to
2126 said section and the regulations there under, to receive the same.

2127 Actual Expenses 2021 Est. Expenses 2022

2128 I Mortgage / Rent Payment

2129 II Taxes A. Real Estate Taxes B. Personal Property Taxes

2130 III Insurance A. Fire B. Homeowners C. Renters D. Other:

2131 IV Home Improvements A. New Roof B. Additions, Garage, Carport C. Fence, Landscaping

2132 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 15:15:44

2133 D. Driveway, Paving, Sealing

2134 E. Other:

2135 V Maintenance and Repairs A. Appliances B. Plumbing C. Fence, Landscaping

2136 D. Driveway, Paving, Sealing E. Other:

2137 VI Appliances and Furnishings A. TV, VCR, Stereo, DVD Player, etc. B. Piano, Sewing Machine C. Lawnmower, Vacuum
 2138 Cleaner D. Dryer, Dishwasher, Refrigerator E. Lawn Equipment F. Lawnmower, Vacuum Cleaner G. Carpet, Tile, Wood
 2139 Floors H. Other:

2140 VII Decorative Items A. Drapes, Curtains, Blinds B. Throw Rugs C. Wallpaper, Paint, Molding, Shelving D. Paintings,
 2141 Pictures, Knick-Knacks E. Bedspreads F. Sheets, Linens, Towels G. Other:

2142 VIII Utilities A. Gas B. Electricity C. Water and Sewer D. Cable TV

2143 E. Garbage Removal F. Other:

2144 IX Miscellaneous A. Home Cleaning Supplies B. Broom, Mops, Sweepers, etc. C. Light Bulbs, Home Supplies D: Other:

2145 DO NOT INCLUDE: Maid, lawn service, groceries, personal toiletries, personal clothing, toys, bicycles, hobby items,
 2146 cassette tapes, CD's, computer games, DVD's, etc.

2147 Column Totals: \$0.00 \$0.00 Total Estimated Fair Market Rental Value: \$0.00

2148 Fair Market Rental Value I Annual Rental Value including furnishings II Utilities \$0.00 III Maintenance & Repairs \$0.00

2149 Submitted on: 2023-11-30 15:15:44

2150 Total Fair Market Rental Value \$0.00

2151 I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided above is both accurate and truthful, and I submit it as
 2152 the basis for a housing/parsonage allowance, which will be excluded from my taxable salary. I further agree to notify this
 2153 Board/Committee of any substantial changes in the total amounts reflected.

2154 _____ Date _____

2155 _____ Date _____

Bill Number
Title SATISFACTION/TERMINATION OF UNPAID PASTORAL WAGES AND LOANS
Submitted By Joelynn Stokes for Connectional AMEWIM
Email jtstokes@jtstokesandassoc.com

2156 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

2157 Part XIV, Section IV

2158 **Intent**

2159 To prohibit the practice of pastors seeking payment for unreported indebtedness upon reassignment or removal.

2160 **Rationale**

2161 All indebtedness must be reported at the quarterly conference. It is unreasonable to expect the succeeding pastor to raise
 2162 funds to cover unreported debt to the former pastor.

2163 **Current Text**

2164 None

2165 **Amended Text**

2166 Any financial agreements between the local church and the pastor, including but not limited to unpaid salary, salary- related
 2167 expenses, benefits, or repayment of loans must be reported as an agreed-upon indebtedness on the adopted Quarterly
 2168 Conference and Annual Conference Reports. The local church shall make every reasonable effort to satisfy all reported
 2169 indebtedness in a timely manner. Any indebtedness owed to the pastor not previously reported on the quarterly conference
 2170 or annual conference forms is void, terminated, and deemed satisfied in full upon the pastor's reassignment, new

2171 appointment, or removal from the charge.

Bill Number
Title Transfer to Another Annual Conference
Submitted By Joelynn Stokes for Connectional AMEWIM
Email jtstokes@jtstokesandassoc.com

2172 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

2173 Page 233, Section III B.9

2174 **Intent**

2175 To ensure certificates are issued in a timely manner.

2176 **Rationale**

2177 To preclude arbitrary denials and delays in issuing certificates without explanation as to reason or cause.

2178 **Current Text**

2179 None

2180 **Amended Text**

2181 ...conference. Absent extenuating circumstances, the certificate of transfer or written denial shall be issued within 90 days of
2182 the request. The written denial must include why the requesting minister is not considered in good and regular standing. The
2183 certificate of transfer once issued shall be accepted by the receiving Bishop. Open transfers shall also be acceptable.

Bill Number
Title Removing Prohibition and Penalty for Licensed or Ordained AME clergypersons from performing Same-Sex Marriages in the United States
Submitted By Virgil G. Glenn, III
Email rev_glenn@yahoo.com

2184 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

2185 Page 377, Section XV. Marriage and Matrimonial Relations, B. Same-Sex Marriage, 3.

2186 **Intent**

2187 Removing the penalty imposed upon Licensed and/or Ordained AME Ministers for performing same-sex marriages not on
2188 AME properties, which would still prohibit same-sex unions or blessings to take place in any AME church property,

2189 **Rationale**

2190 Same-sex marriage remains the law of the land in all 50 states and territories of the United States under the Supreme Court's
2191 5-4 ruling in Obergefell v. Hodges in 2015.

2192 **Current Text**

2193 Therefore, the AME Church strictly prohibits and forbids any AME Church clergyperson, licensed and/or ordained, from
2194 performing or participating in, or giving any blessing to any ceremony designed to result in any pairing between persons of
2195 the same-sex gender, including, but not limited to, marriage or civil unions. a. Any AME Church clergyperson licensed

2196 and/or ordained charged with violating this rule shall be referred to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee. b. If the charges
2197 are sustained, the bishop shall suspend the clergyperson and shall convene the Trial Committee within forty-five (45) days.
2198 c. If the charges are sustained by the Trial Committee, such person’s ordination shall be revoked by the Annual Conference
2199 and he or she shall be relieved of his or her orders and/or license.

2200 **Amended Text**

2201 Remove Point 3 and sub-points and remake point 4 into point 3, taking out the word “Further” and making “The” the
2202 beginning of point 4.

Bill Number
Title Evangelical Missionary
Submitted By Owen kingsley Alex
Email darlington4really@yahoo.com

2203 **Page Reference in Current AME Discipline**

2204 Evangelical Missionary youth of africa

2205 **Intent**

2206 Missionary willing to attend the upcoming CONFERENCE

2207 **Rationale**

2208 Missionary work and meeting other christian

2209 **Current Text**

2210 i am Evangelical Missionary from Africa interested in attending The upcoming conference and also meeting another
2211 Christian in conference

2212 **Amended Text**

2213 i am Evangelical Missionary from Africa interested in attending The upcoming conference and also meeting another
2214 Christian in conference
