COUNCIL OF BISHOPS

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, *President*

August 24, 2018

Dear African Methodist Episcopal Church Family:

In less than two weeks, members of Black Churches from across the United States will gather in response to the "Call to Conscience – Forward to Action" events to be held September 5th and 6th. Historically, the Black Church has been "the conscience of the nation." With all that is going on in our nation; racism, sexism, anti-immigration, epidemic gun violence, injustice in our criminal justice system, income inequality, voter suppression, and efforts to undermine our democracy, the Black Church must again "call the nation to conscience."

This is an opportunity for the Black Church to reclaim its voice and influence in the world. The greatest period of growth in the Black Church, was when the church was more socially active.
This is not just an AME Church call, but a call to the Black Church. We ask that pastors and laity from all faith communions will be in attendance. Pastors please inform your congregations and ask them to join you in attending.

Events kick-off Sunday, September 2nd with "Social Justice Sunday." Every pastor is asked to preach a sermon related to "social justice." There are a host of scriptures that speak to social justice. Some will be listed at the end of this communication. There are also several hymns that are appropriate to social justice, they will be listed also. Bishop Adam J. Richardson was asked to write a litany for "Social Justice Sunday" and Bishop E. Earl McCloud also volunteered a special litany. They are attached, and you are asked to select one to be used in your worship.

If you have any questions or need information, please call my office (770)-220-1770.

Thank you for your faithfulness and support.

All God's best.

Yours and His,

Reginald T. Jackson

Reginald T. Jackson
President, Council of Bishops

250 Williams St. NW, Suite 2115, Atlanta, GA 30303• Phone: (770)-220-1770 • FAX: (770)-220-9996

Agenda

Wednesday, September 5, 2018

Reid Temple AME Church, 11400 Glenn Dale Blvd., Glenn Dale, MD.
(Transportation from hotel to Reid Temple leaves at 8:30 AM)

9 AM – 12 Noon	Strategic Planning Session a. Evangelical Christians and Conscientious Christians b. Living Our Faith and Beliefs in a secular world c. Explication of Issues "Let your conscience be your guide" – "Standing on the Word"
12:30 PM	Lunch
2 PM – 3:30 PM	Strategic Planning Session Continues d. Mid-Term Elections – National and State Implications Registration, Education, Mobilization, Early Voting, Organization (Transportation returns to hotel at 3:30 PM and leaves for Reid Temple at 6:30 PM)
7 PM	Worship – Reid Temple AME Church, Glenn Dale, MD Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson, Pastor, Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Mt. Vernon, NY Chairman, Conference of National Black Churches

Thursday, September 6, 2018

8 AM	Transportation leaves for Lafayette Park, Washington DC
9 AM	Gather at Lafayette Park
10 AM	"Call to Conscience" Rally, Lafayette Park
12 Noon	"Call to Conscience" Rally ends Leave to Return Home
12:30 PM	Lunch - Bishops, Denominational Leaders, Special Guest Metropolitan AME Church, 1518 M Street Washington DC
2 PM	Press Conference – Metropolitan AME Church
3:30 PM	Leaders meet with Congressional Leaders at US Capitol

Hotels

A block of rooms has been set aside at the following hotels in the name of "AME September."
To receive the special rate reservations must be made by August 25th. The block of rooms originally at the Marriott is full and is being increased this morning.

Marriott Hotel – Marriott College Park Hotel and Conference Center
3501 University Blvd.
Hyattsville, MD.
Kings $119.00 +tax, Studio Kings $179.00 + tax
Phone: (301)-985-7300

Staybridge Suites
10500 East Gate Drive
Lanham, MD.
2-bedroom Suites -$139.00+ tax
1-bedroom Queen - $119.00 + tax
1-bedroom King $139.00 + tax
Phone: (301)-477-7200

Suggested Scriptures Social Justice Sunday

There are inexhaustible Scriptures which relate to justice. Listed below are just a few examples:

Exodus 3:7-14
Deuteronomy 16: 18-20
Proverbs 14:34
Isaiah 1:12-18
Isaiah 28:16-17
Zechariah 7:8-14
Micah 6:1 -8
Matthew 6:10
Matthew 25:35-40
Luke 4:14-21
Luke 18:1-8

Suggested Hymns Social Justice Sunday

Onward Christian Soldiers
I'm On the Battlefield for My Lord
Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus
Am I A Soldier of the Cross
Battle Hymn of the Republic
Lift Every Voice and Sing

The Call to Worship

(Bishop E. Earl McCloud)

LEADER: The AME Church must call this nation to a new consciousness.

PEOPLE: Again, America is facing a period when our democracy is challenged from the inside out.

LEADER: Truth is mocked by lies and alternative facts. People are expected to believe that God does not care when families are separated by the government and it's causes.

PEOPLE: Hear the word of the Lord, because the Lord has charges to bring against those who live in this land and remain silent. (Hosea 4:1; NIV)

LEADER: There is no accountability, no love, little acknowledgement of God. (Hosea 4:1b NIV)

LEADER: While the land mourns, the Black Church does not sorrow as those without hope; but by experience and faith we gather to worship God, who is faithful, and will have the final word in His world and our lives

PEOPLE: We worship and exalt our God, we pray, sing, and exalt our God with joy, for the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Litany

Social Justice: Our Calling to Fulfill

(A Litany by Bishop Adam J. Richardson, 115)

Leader: From the earliest days of human community, the call for Social Justice occurred on the first day someone felt mistreated, marginalized, oppressed, and felt compelled to speak-up to affirm their own humanity; when the first prayer prayed for relief from bigotry, hatred, and the afflictions and assaults that come with being the "stranger."

People: Social Justice, our calling to fulfill!

Leader: The Bible provides theological weight and a spiritual mandate for Social Justice. It is Divinity urging, prompting, inspiring humanity forward, a mighty Demand from the precincts of heaven, and an answer to urgent prayer. It is Moses doing community-organizing among the people of Goshen, with by Aaron by his side, speaking truth to the head of state the Divine imperative, "Let My People Go!"

People: Social Justice, our calling to fulfill!

Leader: It is Mordecai and Esther making a pledge that might include personal peril to take a stand against potential genocide, essentially declaring "Our lives matter!"

People: **Social Justice, our calling to fulfill!**

Leader: It is Amos who warns that even our worship is profaned and repudiated when it is unaccompanied by a heightened concern for neighbors, rather to "... let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

People: **Social Justice, our calling to fulfill!**

Leader: The prophet Micah speaks, "He has shown you what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" It is rooted in the message and ministry of Jesus that leads to Salvation and Liberation, the essence of which is Love.

People: **Social Justice, our calling to fulfill!**

Leader: Civil Rights icon, Diane Nash, exhorts, "It's our responsibility, everybody's responsibility. There are 300 million of us, and Social Change is the job of each of us."

People: **Social Justice, our calling to fulfill!**

Leader: Congressman John Lewis speaks with passion, "When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just — you have a moral obligation and a mandate to do something, to say something, to speak up, to speak out."

People: **Social Justice, our calling to fulfill!**

Leader: Ambassador Andrew Young observes that "The complexity of good and evil in this world is going to always be with us...." It is the reason Social Justice is an ongoing fight for good — clean water, clean air, nutritious food, equal access to health care and education, equal protections under the law, fair and humane immigration policies, and all manner of civil rights. It is standing against racism, against sexism, against religious bigotry, against police brutality, against white supremacy, against unjust laws, against apathy, against violence, against voter suppression, and the thousand and one afflictions that accompany poverty.

People: **Social Justice is, and must be, in the warp and woof of the Gospel we proclaim and sing. It is our calling to fulfill! And now we vote.**

PEOPLE: We worship and exalt our God, we pray, sing, and exalt our God with joy, for the joy of the Lord is our strength.