

THE DAILY INDEX

Rev. Dr. Ore L. Spragin, Jr., Editor

2018 General Conference

Thursday, June 28, 2018

A Welcome From The Motherland

Submitted by Dr. Tyrone Davis

General Secretary, Board of Personnel Services



Day four of the 2018 General Conference opened with Bishop Sylvester Williams, the 58th elected Bishop and the Presiding Bishop of the Third Episcopal District, serving as the worship leader for the International Ministries Service.

The center point of the service was the preached word from the 60th elected Bishop and Presiding Bishop of the 10th Episcopal District, Bishop Godwin T.

Umoette, who challenged the leaders and conference attendees with a message entitled "Be Encouraged". In his message, Bishop Umoette urged the waiting body to "Be encouraged" with the knowledge that "your redeemer liveth" and to, "Hold on to [the hand of] God with unchanging faith." Due to the pressing burden of a heavy time schedule, he concluded his message by singing, "I don't believe He brought me this far to leave me."



Photo by Hill House Media Company

The overall service was truly a worship experience as the conference participated in song, prayer, scripture, and praise. It was moving to watch our brothers and sisters from the Motherland as they led in each aspect of the worship experience. The cadence of their voices, the rhythm of their movement and their dance, and the beauty of their native language touched every observing attendee as an invisible bond was felt that stretched between the two continents.

TECHNOLOGY AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

Submitted by Sis. Rita Washington

Eighth Episcopal District

New technology, entitled QSpeak, was introduced at the General Conference. QSpeak is an easy queueing system that gives presiding officers and attendees the tools needed to conduct a fair and orderly debate. Attendees use an OT1 tablet to signal a request to speak. The software provides the presiding officer with a display of requests organized by name and type.

The attendee signals a request to speak on the tablet. The delegate selects the type of request he/she wants to make and then presses "submit my request to

speakers". Delegate has the option to speak for or against a motion, to seek a point of information, or make a procedural motion.

The delegate request is stored and organized by parliamentary rules and preference by an onsite OT1 specialist. The presiding officer recognizes the speaker, and as the speaker begins, a timer starts and the name of the speaker is displayed on the screen.

Most of the delegates were able to queue their information into the screen, and the presiding officer used that information to facilitate the flow of discussion.

Clickers were used to elect General Officer positions and Judicial Council members. There were a few hiccups but system worked overall and elections were done in a timely manner.

Election of Judicial Council Members

Submitted by Clarence Kelby Heath
clarenceheath68@yahoo.com

Bishop Godwin T. Umottee lead the morning session on Wednesday, July 27. The election for Judicial Council members proceeded immediately following the election of General Officers. The following individuals were clergy candidates: Lawson Adjei, Kevin Agee, Russell Fuller, Bruce Gibson, Yohanna Jarry, James Morris, Karen Walker-McClure, Darryl Wesley, and Jerry D. Woodfork. The body was directed to elect three individuals—348 votes required to be elected.

The result of the first ballot: Adjei-443, Agee-83, Fuller-260, Gibson-185, Jarry-26, Morris-109, Walker-McClure-77, Wesley-191, and Woodfork-475. Two individuals were elected on the first ballot.

The election chair, Bishop James B. Walker, with the assistance of Theresa Duhart, prepared the body for the second ballot. The results were: Agee-40, Fuller-263, Gibson-103, Jarry-2, Morris-68, Walker-McClure-23, and Wesley-139. While Fuller had the most votes, the chair ruled that 348 votes or more were needed to be elected. A third ballot was cast yielding the following: Fuller-366, Gibson-83, Jarry-3, Morris-26, Walker-McClure-9, and Wesley-112. Fuller was elected. Bishop Umottee declared Woodfork, Adjei, and Fuller elected.

The evening session was chaired by Bishop Bobby Best. The election for Judicial Council members continued with lay candidates: Linda Brown-Wright, Shirley Byers, Michelle Jackson, Vernon Johnson, Eric. L. Jones, Bertina Lampkin, Harriett Mendinghall, Barbara Nichols, J. Richet Pearson, and Bernard Snell. The delegation was directed to vote for five persons.

The first ballot was cast and results were: Wright-387, Byers-518, Jackson-154, Johnson-254, Jones-230, Lampkin-355, Mendinghall-77, Nichols-348, Pearson-278, and Snell-426. Chair Best declared Byers, Nell, Wright, Lampkin, and Nichols elected.

The ballot was then cast for alternates--three for lay and three for clergy. Clergy candidates were Kevin Agee, Bruce Gibson, Yohanna Jarry, James Morris, Karen Walker-McClure, and Darryl Wesley. The first three with the most votes would be elected clergy alternates. Having the following result: Agee-346, Gibson-375, Jarry-93, Morris-274, Walker-McClure-359, and Wesley-332, the chair declared Gibson, Walker-McClure, and Agee elected.

The candidates for lay alternates were: Michelle Jackson, Vernon Johnson, Eric L. Jones, Harriett Mendinghall, and J. Richet Pearson. The first ballot was cast: Jackson-328, Johnson-415, Jones-462, Mendinghall-167, and Pearson-391. The chair declared Jones, Johnson, and Pearson elected.

The election for the Judicial Council concluded at 8:05 p.m. Conference Secretary Rev. Jermaine Marshall was directed by the chair to call the names of all persons elected to the Judicial Council.

Corrections: Two corrections are made to yesterday's edition of *The Daily Index*. First, the author of the article "Bishop Walker Reports Advances" on page 1 is Dr. Debra Lowe; it was submitted for her by Rev. Cassandry Keys. Second, Rev. Kai Horn, the author of "Unction to Function" on page 2, serves as pastor of Hopewell Temple CME Church, not Mary Stewart CME Church.

The General Officer Reports

From Monday, June 25, 2018

*Submitted by Sis. Rita Washington
Eighth Episcopal District*

The General Officers Reports that were given on Monday were very informative and exciting. Each officer had a video presentation of his/her ministry efforts and highlights for the past quadrennium.

General Secretary of Lay Ministry, Dr. Clifford Harris, began his report with words of gratitude and thanksgiving to his wife Johnetta, the Connectional Ministry Presidents, and to lay leaders, pastors, Presiding Elders, and Episcopal Leaders who provided opportunities for him to share with God's people. He expressed thanks to Dr. Ore Spragin for providing space in The Christian Index for his monthly column and to Theresa Duhart for assisting him with his online newsletter, "From the Pen of the General Secretary".

Additionally, he explained the Bluejeans program which provides face-to-face interaction in both individual and group settings. This meeting platform appeals to the young adult laity as well as seasoned lay persons and is used for workshops and group interaction through audio and video presentations and conferencing that can be accessed from one's personal computer or another electronic device. Mr. Rickey Fontenot, the 8th Episcopal District Lay Ministry Vice President, was recognized for traveling with him as well as attending every annual conference in the Eighth Episcopal District.

Other highlights included the 2017 Connectional Lay Ministry Institute held in Atlanta, Georgia, and the William L. Graham/Roscoe C. Webb/Yvonne Kennedy Scholarship Fund, which has awarded 36 yearly scholarships to graduating seniors from the nine episcopal districts within the Continental United States. The recommendations of the General Secretary of Lay Ministry were submitted to the Connectional Ministries Standing Committee for their consideration and affirmation.

The President of the Women's Missionary Council, Dr. Princess Rogers Pegues, began her final report to the General Conference with thanks to the Lord for all the blessings she has received and for allowing the Council to be of service to the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and to others for 100 years. She gave details of the Council's 100-Year Anniversary that was held in Kingsport, Tennessee, in February 2018 at the Centennial Executive Board.

Dr. Pegues expressed her gratitude to all who have supported and participated in the many activities of

the missionaries from the local level to the Council level. The amazing work done by the Department Secretaries, Committee and Commission Chairs of being about God's business of feeding the hungry and clothing the naked is a testimony to the work of God's people. The Council donates \$20,180.00 annually to supplement teachers' salaries in Jamaica and more than \$105,000 to support the work being done overseas.

Education has always been one of the Council's major priorities. Through the Helena B. Cobb and P. Ann Pegues Save Our Sons annual scholarship funds, the Council has provided scholarships and grants to help our young people get the best education possible. Furthermore, the Council supports our CME Colleges annually through financial donations. Dr. Pegues made an appeal for us to participate in the My Brother's Keeper program which is an initiative begun under the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama. It is designed to help our boys and young men of color from slipping through the cracks in our society. The President ended her report with her usual closing, "I'll Keep Drinking from My Saucer 'because My Cup Has Overflowed!"

Dr. Jeanette Bouknight, the Executive Secretary of the CME Church, stated that her work has been extensive. She began by informing us that the occupancy rate of the Connectional Headquarters Building is 98%, and many improvements have been made to enhance the appearance of the building.

Dr. Bouknight is the designated Meeting Planner for the CME Church. Contracts have been negotiated for the upcoming 2020 Connectional Youth and Young Adult Conference and the 2022 General Conference. She has also attended site visits for the 2019 CME Unity Summit in Phoenix, Arizona, the 2020 Unity Summit in Dallas, Texas, and the 2021 CME Unity Summit in New Orleans, Louisiana. This is the first time that connectional meetings dates have been set for the next four years.

Her ecumenical involvement included attendance at many of the Commission on Pan Methodist Cooperation and Union meetings, meetings with the National Council of Churches, Churches Uniting in Christ, and the Pan-African Women's Empowerment Network.

Finally, she dedicated this report to the loving memory of her mother, Mrs. Dorothy Elizabeth Counts-Bouknight, and her brother, Rev. Joseph Bouknight, Jr. She expressed gratitude for the love, guidance and affection that has been given by her family members; her department chair, Senior Bishop Lawrence Reddick; the College of Bishops; and her unpaid staff.

The remaining seven General Officer reports were given the following day.

KEEP YOUR HEAD IN THE MIDST OF A GENERAL CONFERENCE

Submitted by Dr. Clifford L. Harris

During a CME Church General Conference, sometimes things go as planned and sometimes they don't; sometimes individuals or groups are happy with the outcome of a vote and sometimes they aren't; and there are times when someone says they are with you and they really aren't.

Staying calm is, perhaps, one of the most difficult challenges a person can face, and keeping one's composure is often easier said than done.

So, what is my point? Amid all the uncertainty of a General Conference, one must always try to address an issue or issues in a way that effectively communicates his/her position or stance.

Additionally, getting emotionally caught up with who is supporting or not supporting a matter, rather than what effect the content of a resolution or recommendation will have on the life and witness of our Zion, can be counterproductive.

It is incumbent on each delegate, in expressing his/her position, to try and do it with a clear mind and a level head. Failure to do so can cause unnecessary tension and misdirected energy which may lead to a lost opportunity or an unfavorable outcome.

Thus, always look to "Keep Your Head in the Midst of a General Conference."

Amazon.com

Submitted by Rev. Kai Horn

Pastor, Hopewell Temple CME Church

Eighth Episcopal District

Committee members converge to make decisions regarding resolutions. Voting delegates find that the ideas, words, and phrases that they think are important issues to guide the church and the community in a new direction, seem not to receive fair consideration. Why? Change for the most part is difficult for people. This is a very common observation. Along with change, comes the economy of commitment which begs the question, "How much do we want to invest in what this new rule of conduct or action is asking us to do?" Most often, the answer is nothing at all.

As I watched the resolution process on today (June 26, 2018), there were some that received recommendations of nonconcurrency that I wished had received more consideration. What occurs when more of the power is shifted to the Lay? What would it look like for Ministry to require a Masters' degree? Could we be equally as satisfied and productive if we received the Masters' for acquired knowledge, understanding that we are giving to the church the very best that we have to give?

These models require more inclusive leadership. These models are more progressive ministry. Inclusive leadership coupled with progressive ministry says that we care enough about the institution of the church and the people to make a conscientious commitment to be the best that we can be. Bishop Marvin Frank Thomas mentioned it in his message, "Will we be a JC Penny church in an Amazon.com world?" I resolve. Amazon.com. Concurrent. Nonconcurrent. Concurrent with Changes. You choose.

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

--Romans 8:6 (KJV)