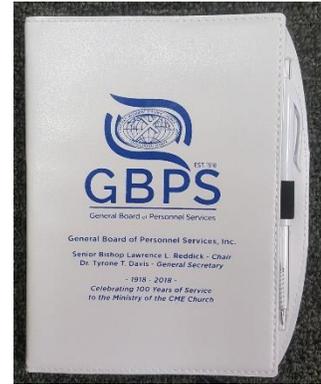




"From Where I Sit ..."

A Centennial Celebration – 100 years of Service!

At the 2018 General Conference of the CME Church in Birmingham, Alabama, the General Board of Personnel Services celebrated its 100th anniversary of service to the CME Church. As a memento of this occasion, we shared a note pad with pen as a part of the registration materials for all attendees of the Conference.



The General Board of Personnel Services can trace its history back to the General Conference of 1918. At that time, it was organized as the Board of Superannuated Preachers, Widows and Orphans (or SPW&O) with the purpose of providing retirement payments to superannuated (or retired) preachers, dependent benefits to widows of superannuated preachers, and additional benefits to orphans of deceased preachers.

Our Board operated under the SPW&O name until it was changed to the Board of Conference Claimants about 1934. Following the General Conference of 1962, the name was changed to General Board of Pensions and in 1978 the name was again changed to The General Board of Personnel Services to accommodate the current 12% Retirement Plan.

A trip down memory lane would reveal that during these 100 years, our Board has only had six General Officers. Reverend Thomas H. Copeland was the first General Officer and serve 16 years (1918-1934) until about the time of the changing of the department's name to Board of Conference Claimants. The Second General Officer was Reverend J. A. Raggin who served the shortest term of four years (1934-1938). He was followed by the third General Officer, Reverend Dr. J. B. Boyd, who served the longest term of 28th years (1938-1966). It was during the latter part of his tenure that the name of our department was changed to the General Board of Pensions. Reverend Dr. D. S. Cunningham, the late father of Retired Bishop Ronald M. Cunningham, became the fourth General Secretary and served for 12 years (1966-1978). Dr. Cunningham laid the groundwork and inaugurated the current 12% Retirement Plan (1969) and led the Church in changing the department's name to its current name in 1978. The fifth General Officer of our department and only living former officer is Reverend Dr. N. Charles Thomas who served the second longest term of 24 years (1978-2002). Dr. Thomas now resides in Hot Springs, Arkansas with his daughter and worships at Cottrell Chapel CME Church. It has been my privilege to serve as the sixth General Officer for the past 16 years (2002 – Present). Having been re-elected at the 2018 General Conference, and by God's Grace, I will conclude my tenure in 2022 with 20 years of service.

This department of the Church has come a long way in its 100-year history and it has much to show as accomplishments beyond its current primary purpose of the 12% Retirement Plan. *Or at least that's the way it looks to me...*

"From Where I Sit"

Tyrone T. Davis, D.Min, is the General Secretary of the Board of Personnel Services

(Copies of earlier articles may be found on the

Personnel Services Webpage of the CME Website at www.thecmechurch.org)