To Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield, Members of the 2016-2020 Commission on Women In Ministry, Our Connectional Consultants and all of you gathered here for the work of AME/WIM.

The Connectional AME/WIM Executive Board offers our continued thanks for your interest in and commitment to the past and future work of AME/WIM. We are steadfastly committed to our quadrennial theme of Standing United, Moving Forward, Stronger Together based on Number 27:6-7.

In December of 2016, The General Board unanimously adopted a resolution committing the church to the intentional pursuit of Gender Justice and Equality. To track the church’s progress in its in intentional pursuit of and commitment to Gender Justice and Equality AME/WIM surveyed its membership -male and female.

Findings from 17 of the 20 Episcopal Districts revealed the following:

* 65% of Episcopal District Finance Committees have no female clergy members
* 88% of Annual Conference Trustee Boards are chaired by male clergy
* 97% of Annual Conference Finance Committees are chaired by male clergy
* 71% of Annual Conference Trustee Boards have no female clergy members
* 78% of Ministerial Efficiency Committees are chaired by male clergy
* 87% of Annual Conference Board of Examiners are chaired by male clergy
* 69% of Deans of the Annual Conference Ministerial Institute are male clergy
* 69% of Annual Conferences have all male Presiding Elders
* 76% of “#1 churches” in Presiding Elder Districts have male clergy
* 83% of Chairs of the Committee on Ministerial orders are chaired by male clergy

As we await the manifestation of the church’s commitment to justice and equality, we continue to stand on the shoulders of pioneering women like the Daughters of Zelophehad, Rev. Jarena Lee, Rev. Carrie Hooper, Rev. Lillian Frier Webb and Mother Charlotte Maxeke. As well as spiritual fathers who mentored, prepared and positioned their daughters for ministry Bishop Frederick Hillborn Talbot who appointed Reverend Dorothy Millicent Stephens Morris, the first female Presiding Elder in the AME Church.

As we look for the church to think outside of the box, move beyond our zones of comfort and be a catalyst of change for our communities, we submit the following recommendations:

1. That the General Board empower each WIM Commission Member to complete an introspective analysis of its Episcopal District’s key leadership positions regarding female clergy and report same to the commission within 90 days.

2. That the General Board empower the Commission Members to encourage WIM leadership at the Presiding Elder District and Conference Coordinators level to work in collaboration with their respective Presiding Elders to prepare and provide workshops and training to assist congregations in fulfilling the churches intentional commitment to gender Justice and equality.

Respectfully Submitted,