

Quincy Monticello District Conference 2021

Church during the pandemic

“Doing something we have never done!”

Presiding Prelate Bishop Adam Jefferson Richardson, Jr.

Dr. Connie Speights Richardson, Episcopal Supervisor

The Rev. Lee E. Plummer, Presiding Elder

Mrs. Mary Plummer, District Consultant

The Rev. Jimmie F. Dickey, Host Pastor

New Bethel A.M.E Church, Host Church

Presenter

The Rev. Bernard E. Hudson, M.Div., Pastor

Arnett Chapel AMEC, Quincy

January 28, 2021



Arnett Chapel
Where ordinary people meet an Extraordinary God!

Focus

- ❖ Biblical Illustration
- ❖ Contemporary Application
- ❖ Impacts of the pandemic
- ❖ Lessons Learned from the Pulpit
- ❖ Lessons Learned from the Pew
- ❖ Takeaways

Biblical Illustration

❖ Genesis 6:14-16. (Illustration Purposes!)

¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of cypress^[b] wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. ¹⁶ Make a roof^[c] for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and put the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks.

Biblical Illustration

- ❖ Noah was asked to do something he had never done!
- ❖ Noah told by God to build the Ark
- ❖ He was strong in faith and chosen for the task but had to deal with...
 - ❖ Emotions
 - ❖ No example
 - ❖ Naysayers!
 - ❖ Threat of Failure

Contemporary Application

- ❖ Florida Division of Emergency Management encourages us to have a disaster plan. What will we do in case of an emergency?
 - ❖ We make plans...
 - ❖ Home
 - ❖ Church

Contemporary Application



- ❖ It's a Different World
 - ❖ That's over there...until it wasn't – too late
 - ❖ Dangerous and huge impacts.

The Pandemic

- ❖ DESPITE ALL THE PLANNING THERE WAS NO CHAPTER IN THE MANUAL FOR WHAT 2020 HAD TO OFFER.
- ❖ What we were about to experience was counter to our culture as Christians.

The Pandemic

- ❖ Along comes COVID-19 and everything we thought we knew about church CHANGED! No longer do it the way we had!
- ❖ We had to adapt on the fly and we found ourselves scrambling.
- ❖ None of the plans addressed this.
- ❖ No blueprint or template for what we needed to do.

The Pandemic

- ❖ Body of Christ
- ❖ Relationship and community
- ❖ Completely dismantled what we do
- ❖ We can't get together
- ❖ How Long?

The Pandemic

- ❖ COVID caused us to have to wear masks, social distance and avoid crowds.
- ❖ This was ok when we thought it was temporary
- ❖ How do we do *Church* like this???????

The Pandemic

- ❖ Church as we knew it was over. –
 - ❖ There was nothing normal about this.
 - ❖ Rethink church!

Lessons Learned from the Pulpit!

- ❖ Shock
- ❖ Pastor going through same pandemic
- ❖ Quickly find a way to continue...
- ❖ How to reach everybody... multiple platforms
- ❖ From Preacher to Producer

Lessons Learned from the Pulpit!

- ❖ Used to Call and Response
- ❖ Format for service – no longer the same
- ❖ How to pastor those you can't see or touch.
 - ❖ Staying connected

Lessons Learned from the Pulpit!

- ❖ Class Leader system – congregational care important
- ❖ Take time to hear the people – meet needs
- ❖ Not just service
 - ❖ Business
 - ❖ Finances
 - ❖ Maintenance
 - ❖ Outreach

Lessons Learned from the Pew!

- ❖ Shock
- ❖ Need to be spiritually fed – used to environment
- ❖ Adjust to means provided – phone, social media, e-platforms

Lessons Learned from the Pew!

- ❖ Not enough – connection to sanctuary (need to be in place)
- ❖ Doesn't feel like church (sacred place)
- ❖ Traditional Views of Church
- ❖ Multiple options (one click away)

Takeaways

- ❖ Learned that the church is more than the building!
- ❖ Even when we return to church some of what we do now will continue.
- ❖ There was room for improvement.
 - ❖ What we do and how we do it.

Takeaways

- ❖ Develop and All Hazards Plan
 - ❖ If it could go wrong – how do we react?
- ❖ Develop reentry plans
 - ❖ How do we do everything we do safely in-light of the new danger?
 - ❖ How do you communicate that plan with members?
 - ❖ Prepare for lower numbers upon return.

Takeaways

- ❖ Change is needed because of the ability to get different tastes and experiences.



Questions Comments