

2024 PLANNING MEETING





A Holy Nation | African Methodist Episcopal Church



African Methodist Episcopal Church

Fifth Episcopal District



***African Methodist Episcopal Church
Fifth Episcopal District***

**2024 Planning Meeting
October 27-29, 2024
Hilton Hotel LAX Airport
Los Angeles, CA**

Mental Health, Music, and Mission

***Scriptures:
Acts 16:25-26***

**Bishop Francine A. Brookins Esq.
*Presiding Bishop***

**Rev. Miriam J. Burnett, MD, MPH
*Episcopal Supervisor***



BISHOP FRANCINE A. BROOKINS, ESQ.

Presiding Bishop, Fifth Episcopal District



REV. MIRIAM J. BURNETT, MD, MPH
Supervisor of Missions, Fifth Episcopal District



Episcopal Greeting

We greet you with Jesus joy as we gather for the 5th Episcopal District Planning Meeting. We've now had the privilege of meeting many of you in person. We've already shared laughter, tears, and the move of the Holy Spirit. Our hearts are truly gladdened and our spirits are filled with anticipation for the many ways God will move through us and among all of us in the days and years to come!

Mental Health, Music, and Mission

Inspired by Acts 16:25-26, our theme of Mental Health, Music, and Mission continues to manifest in unexpected ways

Mental Health

- Chaplain Addison's teachings have opened our hearts and minds to new perspectives on spiritual and clinical healing.
- We've discovered the wealth of human resources within the 5th District as we develop our mental health ambassadors' program.
- We recognize the immediate need to create safe spaces and environments conducive to our own spiritual and clinical healing.

Music

- We have only just begun to make music together. As we intentionally unite in song and prayer as an Episcopal District, we eagerly anticipate God's transformative power breaking chains and shifting atmospheres through our collective presence.

Mission

In our short time together since the General Conference we've confronted difficult realities regarding shrinking memberships, neglected infrastructures, unreliable insurance companies and an ever-changing climate. God has used these challenges to sharpen our vision and given birth to Mission Possible – our plan to empower and revitalize underutilized church properties to address critical social determinants of health.

- In the Midwest Annual Conference Board members have already been appointed and have begun their work, the other 5 Conferences are not far behind.
- Plans and timelines have been set to use our best resources to collaboratively address our common concerns.
- We're excited to announce the official launch of Mission Possible Metaverse Mission in the Missouri Annual Conference. Under the leadership of Rev. Roger Richardson, Ph.D., this initiative will explore what it means to be an AME Church in the digital realm.

Standing Strong in Faith

As we approach a critical juncture in U.S. history with the upcoming presidential election, our faith remains firmly rooted in Jesus Christ of Nazareth. We stand ready to make a difference through our VOTES in every election. Let our prayers and songs propel us to victory in every battle we must fight with our hands and feet!

Perfect submission, perfect delight, Visions of rapture now burst on my sight; Angels descending, bring from above, Echoes of mercy, whispers of love. Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine!

BISHOP FRANCINE A. BROOKINS
PRESIDING PRELATE, 5th EPISCOPAL DISTRICT AMEC



AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Fifth Episcopal District

Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq., Presiding Bishop

October 27-29, 2024 (Pacific Standard Time)

HYBRID: In-Person – Hilton Hotel LAX Airport; Virtual – Via ZOOM

Planning Meeting Master Schedule

Sunday, October 27, 2024

6:00 p.m.

**Economic Development Fund Board Meeting
TBA**

7:00 p.m.

**Fifth District Presiding Elders' Council
Dinner Meeting – Hilton LAX Hotel**

Monday, October 28, 2024

7:30 – 7:55 a.m.

**Prayer in the Atmosphere
5th District Prayer Ministry**

8:00 – 8:45 a.m.

**Morning Manna
5th District Presiding Elders' Council**

8:55 – 10:35 a.m.

PLANNING SESSION I

Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

- **Casting the Vision: Mental Health, Music & Mission**
Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq.
- **Hosting the WMS Executive Board**
Mrs. Deborah Taylor King, *Connectional WMS President*
Ms. Sharon Blaylock, *Meeting Management Director*
- **Hosting the General Conference**
Dr. Marcus Henderson Sr., *Treasurer/CFO*
Ms. Sharon Blaylock, *Meeting Management Director*
- **5th District Hosting Organization and Timelines**

10:45 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

Component Meetings

12:30 – 1:55 p.m.

Lunch



2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

PLANNING SESSION II

- **Budgeting**
P.E. Roosevelt Lindsey, 5th District Treasurer
and 5th District Budget Committee
- **Economic Development Fund**
- **Mental Health Ministry and Movement**
Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien Addison, *Army Chaplain*

5:05 – 6:55 p.m.

Dinner Break

7:00 p.m.

Opening Night Worship through the Sound of Music

9:00 p.m.

Component Meetings

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

8:00 – 8:25 a.m.

Prayer in the Atmosphere – All

8:30 – 9:35 a.m.

Component Reports

9:40 – 10:55 a.m.

PLANNING SESSION III

- **Calendar Review**
- **Mission Possible**

11:25 a.m.

**CLOSING WORSHIP &
COMMISSIONING CELEBRATION**
Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien Addison, *Preacher*



MORNING MANNA
Monday, October 28, 2024
8:00 a.m.

5th Episcopal District Presiding Elders' Council

Presiding Elder Karla Cooper, Worship Leader
Midwest South District

THE DOXOLOGY

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Presiding Elder John Cager

THE OPENING HYMN

BLESSED ASSURANCE, JESUS IS MINE
Hymn #450, AME Hymnal

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His spirit, washed in His blood.

Perfect submission, perfect delight, Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bringing from above Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above, Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long.

THE SCRIPTURE

REMINDER TO LOVE (*please stand*)

Presiding Elder John Cager

Presiding Elder Edmund Lowe

Hear what Christ our Savior says. Love God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. If you love God, then you must love your neighbor and you must love yourself equally. All law and prophesy depend on love. This is how we bring glory to God and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.



THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PREACHER

Presiding Elder Roosevelt Lindsey

THE SONG OF PREPARATION

THE SERMON

Presiding Elder Sheriolyn Curry Hodge

THE INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP & RENEWAL

Presiding Elder Harold Mayberry

THE SINGING AND COLLECTION

Presiding Elder Allen Williams Sr.

Give as the Lord has prospered you. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver.

**There is no Hour of Power today, so this our opportunity.*

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP

Presiding Elder Allen Williams Sr.

THE CLOSING REMARKS



OPENING WORSHIP THROUGH THE SOUND OF MUSIC

The Rev. Jason D. Thompson, Ph.D, Worship Leader

Monday, October 28, 2024

~ ORDER OF SERVICE ~

THE PROCESSIONAL

All Program Participants

THE DOXOLOGY

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Timothy Davis

Leader: As the Fifth Episcopal District Family gathers tonight in the spirit of Paul and Silas, let the rhythms of our ancestors stir our souls!

People: Our hearts beat as one, we're ready to lift our voices in prayer and singing!

Leader: *"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them."*

People: Like the powerful rhythms of the djembe, may our voices rise, breaking the silence of night and the bonds of oppression, calling forth a spirit of healing, the spirit of freedom!

Leader: *Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken.*

People: Let our worship shake the very foundations of injustice, softening hardened hearts and shaking loose the resources needed that all might have access!

Leader: *At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.*

People: In the sacred space, may the kora's melody weave us together, setting our spirits free through the power of music and prayer!

Leader: Feel the pulse of our faith, the syncopation of our hope, the polyrhythms of our love resounding beyond these walls!



People: We are the living drum, the embodiment of praise, resonating with the heartbeat of Africa and the joy of salvation!

Leader: **Come, lift every voice and sing, 'til earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty!**

All: Ashe! Amen! Hallelujah! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord with rhythm and soul!

THE OPENING HYMN OF PRAISE

Presiding Elder Spencer Barrett

(with a short teaching on the importance of Hymns)

ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME

Hymn #5, AME Hymnal

All hail the power of Jesus' name!

Let angels prostrate fall, Let angels prostrate fall;

Bring forth the royal diadem,

And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, And crown Him Lord of all.

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,

Ye ransomed from the fall, Ye ransomed from the fall,

Hail Him who saves you by His grace,

And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, And crown Him Lord of all.

Sinners whose love can ne'er forget

The wormwood and the gall, The wormwood and the gall,

Go spread your trophies at His feet,

And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, And crown Him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,

On this terrestrial ball, On this terrestrial ball,

To Him all majesty ascribe,

And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, And crown Him Lord of all.

O that with yonder sacred throng,

We at His feet may fall, We at His feet may fall!

We'll join the everlasting song,

And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, crown Him, And crown Him Lord of all. Amen.



THE INVOCATION

The Rev. Gabrielle Kennedy

THE OCCASION

The Rev. Jason Thompson, Ph.D.

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Pacific Northwest Annual Conference

THE BENEVOLENT OFFERING

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Desert Annual Conference

**PRAYER FOR PERSONAL, CHURCH AND
COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HEALING**

Mr. Lamar Rose

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Midwest Annual Conference

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Missouri Annual Conference

**PRAYER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE
UPCOMING ELECTION AND BEYOND**

Sis. Charlotte Ned

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

California Annual Conference

THE OFFERING

Those who are able to move are invited to join the giving dance.

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Southern California Annual Conference

**THE INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP
AND PRAYER**

The Rev. M. Jo David Sales, Ph.D.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP

Presiding Elder Roosevelt Lindsey

CLOSING REMARKS AND BENEDICTION

Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq.



CLOSING WORSHIP SERVICE

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

~ ORDER OF SERVICE ~

THE DOXOLOGY

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Concept and guidance by Bishop Francine Brookins developed in collaboration with an AI writing assistant. For use by the 5th Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Freely available for worship use with attribution.

Leader: Hear the rhythms of justice, calling us to action and service!

People: We rise with hearts full of song, ready to heal and make our voices heard!

Leader: As melodies of change blend with timeless hymns in our worship,

People: We attune our spirits to the needs of mind, body, and democracy!

Leader: Let our voices, like freedom songs of old and new, speak our mission,

People: Our hands lift in praise, our feed march to the polls, our votes count!

Leader: In the spirit of ancestors who fought for rights and reformers who push forward,

People: We sing for healing and raise our ballots for a better tomorrow!

Leader: Feel the beat of progress, driving us to care and to vote,

People: We move with compassion, from sanctuary to voting booth!

Leader: As we sway to the Spirit's call, we shake of apathy,

People: Embracing our duty to nurture souls and shape our nation!

Leader: With voices echoing through history and hope ringing for the future,

All: Ashe! Amen! We go forth to worship, to serve, to heal, and to vote!



THE OPENING HYMN

BLESSED ASSURANCE, JESUS IS MINE

*Hymn #450, AME Hymnal
(California Conference Style)*

*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His spirit, washed in His blood.*

*Perfect submission, perfect delight, Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bringing from above Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.*

*Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above, Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.*

Refrain:

*This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long..*

THE INVOCATION

THE SCRIPTURE

Old Testament
Epistle
Gospel

THE SUMMARY OF THE DECALOGUE

THE OFFERING & SONG

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP

The Rev. Miriam J. Burnett, M.D., MPH,
Episcopal Supervisor of Missions

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PREACHER

Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq.
Presiding Bishop



THE SONG OF PREPARATION

THE COMMISSIONING SERMON

Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien Addision
Army Chaplain

THE INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

THE COMMISSIONING SERVICE

THE SPECIAL APPEAL

THE CLOSING REMARKS

Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq.

THE BENEDICTION



**Closing Worship Speaker and
Mental Health Plenary Presenter**

**Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien Addison
Biography**

Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien Addison is an Army Chaplain, spiritual trauma-informed counselor and coach, prolific author, publisher, adult and pediatric hospice chaplain, international speaker, mentor, wife, mother, and grandmother. She is the CEO of Desakajo's Flo which includes publishing, record production, credit empowerment, and travel. Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien is the author of *Does Love Cover...THAT?: The Healing Process of the Fruit of the Spirit*; *Finding Me: A Woman's Theology of Self Identification*; *Beside the Still Waters: Having Faith Even When....*; *The Chick on the Side: From the Heart of a Wife*; *A Conversation With Myself: Healing the Internal Voice*; *Spiritual Alpha Female: Unleashing 9 Leadership Principles from Proverbs 31*; *Refreshing Reflections: 365 Moments of Meditation Military Edition*, *Spiritual Awakening: 7 Shifts From Who I Am To Who I Am Becoming*; *Going Back For Me: Reconciling Pain and Peace When Trauma Collides With Faith*; *Created To Make The Not Good, Good: 9 MasterKeys of a GOOD Wife*; and a contributing writer of *Black Women and Girls Matter: Voices of Resilience, Resistance, and Resolve*.

She has an Associate of Art degree in Early Childhood Education, a Bachelor of Science in Urban Ministry Leadership, a Master of Divinity and a Master of Sacred Theology from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and a Doctor of Theology in Biblical Theology from Alameda University. Dr. Addison is completing a Doctor of Education in Traumatology from Liberty University. She has four units of Clinical Pastoral Education and is certified in Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy through the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE). She is trained in Marriage and Family Therapy from the Council for Relationships in Philadelphia, PA. She is a graduate of the Mental Health Integration for Chaplain Services (MHICS) program through the Uniformed Service University. She is a graduate of Delaware Leadership Academy. God called her into ministry in 1999 and she yielded to the call in 2000. She was ordained in 2003 as a Minister of the Gospel at Gate To Heaven Ministry by Prophet Carnell A. Smith Sr. In January 2006 she was ordained in the Baptist tradition by Bishop Charles M. Hudson Jr. In 2014 she was ordained an Itinerate Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Chaplain Major A'Shellarien is the first woman to serve as Chaplain in the over 240-year history of the Delaware Army National Guard (DEARNG). CH (MAJ) A'Shellarien deployed with the DEARNG 198th Expeditionary Signal Battalion in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Spartan Shield) in 2019. She is the first woman Army National Guard Headquarters Battalion/ Temple Army Readiness Center Installation Chaplain at National Guard Bureau in Arlington, VA. She currently serves as the Delaware Army National Guard 721st Troop Command Chaplain.



COMMISSIONING SCRIPTURE

St. Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Go Preach My Gospel **Hymn #220, AME Hymnal**

"Go, preach my gospel," saith the Lord.
"Bid the whole earth My grace receive.
Explain to them My sacred word;
Bid them believe, obey, and live.

"I'll make My great commission known,
And ye shall prove My gospel true
By all the works that I have done
And all the wonders ye shall do.

"Go heal the sick; go raise the dead;
Go, cast out devils in My name;
Nor let My prophets be afraid,
Through Greeks reproach and Jews blaspheme.

"While thus ye follow My commands
I'm with you till the world shall end;
All power is trusted in my hands;
I can destroy and can defend."

He spake, and light shone round His head,
On a bright cloud to heaven He rode.
They to the farthest nations spread
The grace of their ascended God.



Fifth Episcopal District Young People's Department (YPD)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25TH - Kickoff Night

Attire: YPD T-Shirt & Blue Jeans (no holes) w/tennis shoes

5:00pm - 6:30pm: Welcome Extravaganza

- Registration, Credentials, Campaign & Missions
- Interactive icebreakers and networking games

7:00pm - 8:30pm: SCC Lay Night Spectacular (Everyone)

VISIONARY LAB #1 – PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

8:45pm – 9:15pm: Facilitator: Mar'Queies Johnson

9:30pm – 10:30pm: Vision Board (2024-2025 Planning Session)

12:00PM: Curfew

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26 TH – ACTION PACKED DAY

Attire (during the day): District Polo w/Kahaki bottom

Evening: District Baseball Jersey & choice bottom

7:30am – 8:30am Energizing YPD Worship Service

8:30am – 9:30am Breakfast (Hotel Restaurant)

9:45am – 10:45am VISIONARY LAB #2 – FOCUS ON THE MISSION

Ages 18-26: Facilitator: Marsha Meyers

- Ages 13-17: Facilitator: Laurie Eason
- Ages: 2-12: Facilitator: Rev. Jarrol Taylor
- Directors/Advisors: Leadership with a Purpose (Part 1)

Facilitator: Mrs. Richelle Fry Skinner



10:50am – 11:50am: VISIONARY LAB #3 OPERATING ON SAVED TIME

Ages 18-26: Facilitator: Rochelle Settle

Ages 13-17: Facilitator: Rev. Porter

Ages 2-12: Facilitator: Mr. Paul Overman

Directors/Advisors: Leadership With A Purpose (Part 2)

Facilitator: Mrs. Richelle Fry Skinner

11:50AM – 1:30PM LUNCH (OFF SITE)

SATURDAY (CONTINUED)

2:00pm – 2:50pm VISIONARY LAB #4 What's On Your Mind

- Ages 18-26: Facilitator:
- Ages 13-17: Facilitator: Ms. Angelica Rucker
- Ages 2-12: Facilitator: Ms. Jocasta Harden
- Directors/Advisors: Fireside Chat

3:00pm - 4:15pm: Leadership Launch

- Ages 12-26: Executive Board/ Elections
- Ages 2-11 "Inside Out 2" movie screening

4:15pm – 4:30pm: BREAK

4:30pm - 5:15pm: Ice Crew Challenge

- High-energy team building activities

5:15pm - 7:15pm: Recharge & Refresh

- Dinner break (on your own)
- Prep for evening activities

7:30pm - 8:15pm: All ages: Engaging color-themed tables

8:30pm - 10:00pm: Ice Crew Extravaganza

- Exciting group activities and games

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27TH - Farewell Day

- Departure and safe travels home!



WMS Planning Meeting Agenda

October 28 – 29, 2024

Supervisor Miriam J. Burnett, Presiding

Monday, October 28, 2024

10:40 a.m. – 12:25 pm.

WMS Component Meeting
International Ballroom

- Devotion
- Call to Order
- Roll Call (by sign-in sheet) – Introduction of Supervisor
- Supervisor introduces Connectional WMS President, Mrs. Deborah Taylor King
- Supervisor Greeting and Casts Vision
- Commission leads report
- PME Director reports
- Historiographer/Statistician reports
- Nominating Committee Report
- Elections
- Installation

12:30 – 12:55 p.m.

WMS Luncheon
Plaza A – Lower Lobby
(*registered attendees only*)

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

8:30 – 9:35 a.m.

WMS Component Report



5th Episcopal District Calendar 2024 - 2025

October

October 31, 2024

Mission Possible Board Meeting Desert Mountain
Annual Conference (DM)

November

November 4, 2024

Mission Possible Board Meeting Southern California
Annual Conference (SCA)

November 5, 2024

Election Day

November 6, 2024

Mission Possible Board Meeting Pacific Northwest
Annual Conference (PNW)

November 7, 2024

Mission Possible Board Meeting California
Annual Conference (CA)

November 11, 2024

Veterans Day

November 28, 2024

Thanksgiving Day

December

December 1, 2024

World Aids Day

December 1, 2024

First day of Advent

December 4-5, 2024

General Board Meeting
Atlanta Marriott Marquis
Atlanta, GA

December 24, 2024

Christmas Eve

December 25, 2024

Christmas Day



January

January 1, 2025

New Years Day

January 20, 2025

MLK Day – YPD On not a day off

January 22 – 25, 2025

WMS Executive Board Meeting
Host: 5th District (Garden Grove, CA)

January 25 – 26, 2025

YPD Executive Board and YAM Meeting

January 23 – 25, 2025

Council of Bishops' Retreat

February

February 9, 2025

YPD Souper Bowl of Caring

February 14, 2025

Founder's Day

February 15, 2025

Supervisor Burnett's Birthday

March

March 5 – 6, 2025

5th Episcopal District Mid-Year
Los Angeles, CA

March 14 – 16, 2025

Pan Methodist Commission & Consultation
Atlanta, GA

May

May 7 – 14, 2025

YPD Self Denial Week

June

June 2025

Council of Bishops and General Board Meeting
TBD

July

July 7-11, 2025

Connectional Lay Organization
The 39th Biennial Convention
Atlanta Marriott Marquis - Atlanta, GA

July 24, 2025

Bishop Brookins' Birthday



August

August 13 – 16, 2025

Pacific Northwest Annual Conference
Allen AME Church, Tacoma

August 27 – 30, 2025

Desert Mountain Annual Conference

September

September 9 – 13, 2025

California Annual Conference

September 24 – 28, 2025

Southern California Annual Conference

October

October 8 – 11, 2025

Midwest Annual Conference

October 22 – 25, 2025

Missouri Annual Conference

October 27 – 28, 2025 5th Episcopal District Planning Meeting



MY TRIBUTE TO BISHOP CLEMENT W. FUGH

As the 141st Elected and Consecrated Bishop of our beloved African Methodist Episcopal Church and the newly assigned Presiding Prelate of the 5th Episcopal District, I pause to offer heartfelt thanks to my predecessor, the Rt. Rev. Clement W. Fugh, the 131st elected and consecrated Bishop of the AME Church, and Supervisor (Ret.) Alexia Butler Fugh.

Our journey began at Greater Bethel AME Church in Nashville, in the edifice you built, where you baptized my little brother, Wellington Brookins. I was then in seminary, just entering ordained ministry. Neither of us knew God's plans for our futures.

You would later be elected and serve as the General Secretary who cleared my application to run for a seat on the Judicial Council. When I was elected and later became its secretary, you patiently answered my calls and questions, using your rod and staff to guide me through the then unfamiliar ways of our church.

When I shared my call to the Episcopacy in Jamaica at the Investiture of Bishop Sarah Frances Taylor Davis, you were honest about not supporting me initially. Your truthfulness, when others were not so forthright, deepened my respect for you immensely.

When God sent you to the 5th District, you and Supervisor Fugh were like calm, cooling waters and a breath of fresh air. You supported me and my congregation after our disappointment in 2016, and when I sought to run again in 2020, you prayed and ultimately gave your full and unwavering support. Your unparalleled understanding of African Methodism and political acumen made my election as the 141st Bishop possible.

As a mentor, I've affectionately named you 'Papa Bishop' because of the patience and wisdom you use to help me navigate the complex landscape of our church, teaching me to better understand and honor some traditions, while embracing and encouraging my peculiarity in all our Episcopal ministry spaces.

Bishop Fugh, your impact on my ministry and our beloved AME Church is profound. As I step in to follow you as the Bishop of the 5th, your continued guidance during this whirlwind transition has been invaluable. You've made yourself available day and night, going well beyond merely leaving efficient records. As God ordains my steps, God continues to use you to shape my ministry.

There is so much more, but I'll keep that for a more personal space. May God bless you and the Supervisor, real, real good. Thank you, thank you, and thank you again.

With deepest gratitude and respect,

Bishop Francine Brookins
141st Elected and Consecrated Bishop
African Methodist Episcopal Church

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African Methodist Episcopal Church
Fifth Episcopal District

2024 PLANNING MEETING

