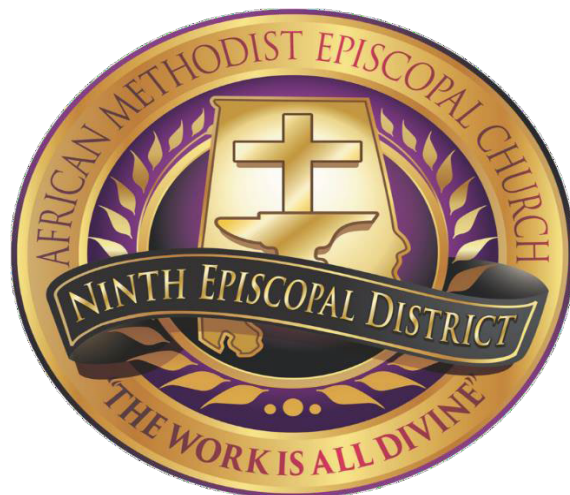


**2026 Christian Education Congress
Ninth Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church**



***The Agenda, Schedule,
and Worship Guide Booklet***

Monday, June 29 – Thursday, July 2, 2026

***Theme: Kingdom Content: Witnessing
for Christ In A Connected World***

Mark 16:15

Bishop Julius Harrison McAllister, Jr.

Presiding Prelate

Mrs. Deana Young McAllister

Episcopal Supervisor

**Alabama A&M University
4900 Meridian Street North || Huntsville, Alabama 35811**



Bishop Julius Harrison McAllister, Jr., Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Deana Young McAllister, Episcopal Supervisor

THE EPISCOPAL GREETING

Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr.
Presiding Prelate

Mrs. Deana Young McAllister
Episcopal Supervisor

Greetings Ninth Episcopal District:

We greet each of you in the Name and the Joy of Jesus, the Christ.

It is with hearts filled with great anticipation that we welcome you to the 2026 Christian Education Congress of the Ninth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. We thank God for the privilege to worship, study, fellowship, and recommit ourselves to the work of building God's Kingdom.

Our theme, *Kingdom Content: Witnessing for Christ in a Connected World*, reminds us that while the methods of ministry continue to evolve, our mission remains the same—to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a world in need of hope, healing, and salvation. Christ's command in Mark 16:15 challenges every believer to faithfully share the Good News through every available opportunity and platform.

We are honored to welcome three of God's most gifted servants in Christendom whose wisdom, homiletical excellence, visionary leadership, and unwavering love for the Church are second to none. We are delighted to welcome Rev. Dr. Marcus D. Cosby, Pastor of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church in Houston, Texas; Reverend Matthew L. Watley, Pastor of Kingdom Fellowship AME Church in Silver Spring, Maryland; and Reverend Eduardo Curry, Pastor of Greater Saint Luke AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. We are confident that their preaching, teaching, and leadership will inspire each of us for greater Kingdom service.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the Christian Education Congress Committee under the outstanding leadership of Mrs. Hattie Nathan, together with Rev. Sheryl Shipman and Rev. Charles Reeves, for their vision, dedication, and countless hours of preparation. We are equally grateful for every Christian Education committee member whose faithful service, teamwork, and commitment to excellence have helped make this Congress possible.

A special word of thanks is extended to Sister Mavis Bush, Sister Ashley Blakely, and Sister Denise Searcy for their faithful service, gracious spirit, and meticulous attention to detail. Your behind-the-scenes efforts have helped create a Congress that is both meaningful and spirit-filled, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to this ministry.

We also offer our sincere appreciation to the Presiding Elders of the Ninth Episcopal District for their steadfast leadership, unwavering commitment, and faithful service. Your willingness to lead, support, and assist wherever needed continues to strengthen our District and we thank God for your partnership in advancing the work of God's Kingdom.

We are especially grateful to the officers, members, and pastor of our host congregation, Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church in Huntsville, Alabama, under the faithful leadership of Reverend Maurice Wright. Thank you for your warm hospitality, generous spirit, and outstanding service in helping make this Congress a memorable experience.

We also express our sincere gratitude to Dr. Daniel K. Wims, President of Alabama A&M University and the university leadership for their gracious hospitality and partnership. Their commitment to excellence has provided an outstanding environment for Christian education, fellowship, and spiritual growth

As we gather throughout this Congress, it is our prayer that every worship experience, seminar, workshop, and broaden your perspective, and equip you to become an even more effective witness for Jesus Christ's connected world.

Thank you for being a part of this year's Christian Education Congress. May God richly bless you as together we continue Moving Forward with Excellence while advancing the Kingdom of God through Christian education, faithful discipleship, and transformative witness.

In His Name because of Christ and Calvary,

Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr.

Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr.
Presiding Prelate

Supervisor Deana Young McAllister,

Supervisor Deana Young McAllister
Episcopal Supervisor
Ninth Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church

CEC Committee,
Mrs. Hattie Nathan, Northeast Alabama Annual Conference, and
Episcopal Director of Christian Education
Presiding Elder Raymond B. Swafford, Director At-Large
Reverend Yvonne Howze, Alabama River Region Annual Conference
Reverend Sheryl Shipman, Northwest Alabama Annual Conference Dr.
D. Michelle Sherrod, Southeast Alabama Annual Conference Reverend
Twillia Burns, Southwest Alabama Annual Conference
Reverend Charles Reeves, Director-at-Large

**Ninth Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church
Christian Education Directors**

Mrs. Hattie Nathan
Episcopal Director of Christian Education
Northeast Alabama Annual Conference

Reverend Yvonne Howze
Alabama River Region Annual Conference

Reverend Sheryl Shipman
Northwest Alabama Annual Conference

Dr. D. Michelle Sherrod
Southeast Alabama Annual Conference

Reverend Twilla Burns
Southwest Alabama Annual Conference

Presiding Elder Raymond B. Swafford
Director At-Large

Reverend Charles Reeves
Director At-Large

CEC Host Church and Pastor
Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church – Huntsville
Reverend Maurice Wright, II – Pastor

Dr. Thalia Love, Christian Education Director
South Birmingham-Huntsville-Bessemer District
Reverend Bruce W. Hunter, Presiding Elder

Ninth Episcopal District African Methodist Episcopal Church 2026 Christian Education Congress Agenda and Schedule

Sunday, June 28, 2026

5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Kit Preparation and Registration Knight Center VIP Room

Monday, June 29, 2026

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

CEC Check-In

Knight Center VIP Room

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Lunch

Wilson Dining Room

Noon – 1:00 p.m. Group A

Knight Center

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Group B

2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Youth Choir Rehearsal

Youth Usher Rehearsal

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Clergy Workshop

Reverend Dr. Marcus D. Cosby

Pastor, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church

Houston, Texas

Moving Forward with Excellence: A 21st Century Approach

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Dinner

Wilson Dining Room

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Group A

Knight Center

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Group B

6:15 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.

Welcome Information

7:00 p.m.

The Church in Worship

Opening Worship Service

Guest Preacher: Reverend Dr. Marcus D.

Cosby

Pastor, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church

Houston, Texas

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast	Wilson Dining Room Knight Center
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	CEC Check-In	Knight Center VIP Room
8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Morning Glory Worship Service	
	Preacher: Reverend Rosalind Amos Pastor, Saint Stephens AME Church Mobile, Alabama	
9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Women’s Missionary Society—Carter’s Reading Club Presenter: Dr. Barbara Johnson	
	WORKSHOP SESSION 1	
9:45 a.m.-11:15 a.m.	Clergy and Laity Sexual Misconduct Training Presenters: Reverend Dr. Eduardo Curry Mrs. Tamara Curry Pastor, Greater Saint Luke AME Church Charleston, South Carolina	
10 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Ages 4-7 Small Acts of Kindness: Safe Screens and Godly Choices Presenter: Ms. Tanzie White	
10:00 a.m.-11:15 a.m.	Ages 13-17 Digital Evangelism 101: Sharing Jesus on Social Media Presenter: Reverend Randy Rhodes	
10:00 a.m.-11:15 a.m.	Ages 8-12 Faith and Technology: Using Technology for God’s Glory Presenter: Dr. Pam Whitehead	
10:00 a.m.-11:15 a.m.	Ages 18-26 Digital Evangelism 101: Sharing Jesus on Social Media Presenter: Reverend L. Nicole Slater	
11:30 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.	Honorable Anthony Daniels Alabama House Minority Leader	
12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch	Wilson Dining Room

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Group A
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Group B

Knights Center

WORKSHOP SESSION 2

12:35 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Ages 8-12

God Online: Learning About Faith Through Safe Technology

Presenters: Rev. Avelyn Swafford and Rev. Alana Jones

Ages 4-7

Click Right: Learning Godly Choices on Screens

Presenter: Ms. LaSonya Walker

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Ages 18-26

Digital Evangelism: Sharing

Jesus on Social Media

Presenter: Ms. Shantez

Carter

Ages 13-17

Digital Evangelism: Sharing Jesus on Social Media

Presenter: Ms. Ebony Moore

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

Clergy and Laity

Moving Forward with Excellence: A 21st Century Approach

Presenter: Reverend Dr. Matthew Watley

Pastor, Kingdom Fellowship AME Church

Silver Springs, Maryland

WORKSHOP SESSION 3, 2:00PM-3:30PM

2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Clergy and Laity

The Power of Knowing: Grant Writing

Presenter: Reverend Raymond Mayes

2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Ages 18-27

Influencing the Culture: Being a Christian Voice Online

Presenter: Reverend Van Harris

2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Ages 13-17

Influencing the Culture: Being a Christian Voice Online

Presenter: Reverend Benjamin Lightner

2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Ages 8-12

God Made Me Special: Bible stories through Media and Creativity

Presenter: Dr. Barbara Johnson

10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. **Ages 4-7**
Representing Christ in Digital Spaces
Presenter: Dr. Thalia Love

11:30 a.m.-1:30 a.m. Lunch

2:00 p.m.-3:45 p.m. S.T.E.M. Training

2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. **Clergy and Laity**
Building a Digital Ministry Strategy
For Your Church
Presenters: Rev. Sheila Williams
Rev. Roosevelt Williams

4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Dinner

7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Basketball Activity

9:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Youth Praise Party & Christian DJ Night

Thursday, July 2, 2026

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Check-Out Knight Center VIP Room

**NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2026 Christian Education Congress**

The Opening Worship Encounter

Monday, June 29, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.

*Reverend Bruce W. Hunter, Worship Leader
Presiding Elder of the South Birmingham-Huntsville-Bessemer District*

THE PRAISE AND WORSHIP

“How Great Is Our God”

How great is our God, sing with me
How great is our God, and all will see
How great, how great is our God
Name above all names
Worthy of our praise
My heart will sing
How great is our God

THE GREAT PROCESSIONAL

“Every Praise”

Every praise is to our God
Every word of worship with one accord
Every praise, Every praise
Is to our God
Sing hallelujah to our God
Glory hallelujah is due our God
Every praise, Every praise
Is to our God
God my savior, God my healer, God my deliverer
Yes, He is, Yes, He is
God my savior, God my healer, God my deliverer
Yes, He is, Yes, He is

THE DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

REVEREND ANTONIO THOMAS

*Presiding Elder,
Camden District*

Leader: Keep your Creator in mind while you are young! In years to come you will experience burdens and troubles and say that you don't find joy anymore. (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

People: **We are the youth of the Church; we will remember to take refuge in God, and we have come to worship. There is joy in knowing Christ!**

Leader: The prophet Isaiah spoke of a day when "even young people will get tired, then stumble and fall." (Isaiah 40:30)

People: **The prophet also said that those who trust the Lord will find new strength, to be strong like eagles, soaring upward. That's why we have come to worship God.** (Isaiah 40:31)

Leader: Jesus said, "Let the children and youths come to Me, and don't try to stop them. People who are like these children belong to God's Kingdom." (Matthew 19:14)

People: **Like the young people who were brought to Jesus by their parents for prayer and His special touch; like those who felt safe to play at His feet - we believe that Jesus has made room for children, teens and young adults in His Kingdom and in His Church. With only a little prodding from our parents, we have also come to worship our God in Christ.** (Matthew 19:13)

*(A Call to Worship by Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr.,
115th Elected and Consecrated Bishop of the AME Church; Retired Senior Bishop)*

THE HYMN OF PRAISE

REVEREND LETTIA WATFORD

*Presiding Elder
Phenix City District*

**Hymn No. 221
How to Reach the Masses
(Lift Him Up)**

How to reach the masses, those of every birth,
For an answer, Jesus gave the key;
"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,
Will draw all men unto Me."

Refrain

*Lift Him up, Lift Him up;
Still He speaks from eternity:
"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,
Will draw all men unto Me."*

Oh! the world is hungry for the Living Bread,
Lift the Savior up for them to see;
Trust Him, and do not doubt the words that He said,
"I'll draw all men unto Me."

Refrain

Don't exalt the preacher, don't exalt the pew,
Preach the gospel simple, full, and free;
Prove Him and you will find that promise is true,
"I'll draw all men unto Me."

Refrain

Lift Him up by living as a Christian ought,
Let the world in you the Savior see;
Then all will gladly follow Him Who once taught,
"I'll draw all men unto Me."

Refrain

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION

REVEREND DWIGHT DILLARD

*Presiding Elder,
Birmingham-Florence-
Tuscaloosa District*

THE CHORAL RESPONSE

"I Just Want to Praise You"

I just want to praise you
Forever and ever and ever
For all you've done, done for me
Blessings and glory and honor
They all belong to you
Thank you Jesus for blessing me!

THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

THE CONGRESS CHOIR

THE SCRIPTURE READINGS

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Joel 2:28-32

REVEREND DR. JACQUELYN DENSON

*Presiding Elder,
Montgomery-Selma District*

New International Version

²⁸ "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

THE EPISTLE
Acts 2:14-18; 37-42

REVEREND DR. WILLIE EUGENE MARSHALL
*Presiding Elder
Ozark-Troy District*

English Standard Version

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." ⁴⁰ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." ⁴¹ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

THE GOSPEL
John 20:19-31

REVEREND DR. FREDERICK SHERROD
*Presiding Elder
Dothan-Eufaula District*

New International Version

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." ³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this

book. ³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

THE PREFACE TO THE DECALOGUE

Hymn #69 || "From All That Dwell"

From all that dwell below the skies, let the Creator's praise arise;
Let the Redeemer's name be sung, Through every land by every tongue.

THE DECALOGUE

REVEREND RAYMOND B. SWAFFORD

*Presiding Elder,
Tuskegee- District*

Leader: Let us express our commitment to keep God's Law.

**People: God of salvation, only You are God. We will make no idols.
We will not invoke with malice your name, O God.
We will remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy.
We will honor our father and our mother. We will not commit murder.
We will not commit adultery. We will not steal. We will not be a false witness.
We will not covet anything that belongs to our neighbor.**

Leader: Jesus said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first Commandment."

People: Jesus also challenged us to live justly with a second Commandment, which is like the first: We shall love our neighbor as ourselves! On these two Commandments depend all the Law and the prophets.
(From the *Anvil*, 2018)

THE GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, Amen.

THE MISSION OFFERING

REVEREND BRIAN K. BLACKWELL

*Executive Director,
Department of Retirement Services,
African Methodist Episcopal Church*

THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE

“We Give Thee But Thine Own”

We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may be,
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee. Amen.

**THE PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENT
OF ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY**

REVEREND MAURICE WRIGHT, II

THE TWELFTH PRESIDENT OF ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY

Dr. Daniel K. WIMS

GREETINGS

SUPERVISOR DEANA Y. MCALLISTER

**THE PRESENTATION OF THE
BISHOP**

REVEREND GLORIA A. HALL
Presiding Elder
West Birmingham-Ensley-Greensboro
District

THE PRESENTATION OF THE PREACHER

BISHOP JULIUS H. MCALLISTER, JR.
The 144th Elected and Consecrated Bishop
African Methodist Episcopal Church
Presiding Prelate, Ninth Episcopal District

THE SERMONIC SELECTION

THE CONGRESS CHOIR

THE SERMON

REVEREND DR. MARCUS COSBY
Pastor, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church
Houston, Texas

THE INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

REVEREND CHARLES LEWIS
Presiding Elder,
Mobile District

“I Give Myself Away”
I give myself away (2x)
So You can use me
I give myself away (2x)
So You can use me

THE WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING

REVEREND MAURICE WRIGHT, II
THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE

“All Things Come of Thee”

All things come of Thee, O Lord; and of Thine own have we given Thee. Amen.

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

MRS. HATTIE NATHAN
*Christian Education Director,
Ninth Episcopal District*

THE DOXOLOGY

THE BENEDICTION

DR. COSBY

**NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2026 Christian Education Congress**

The Morning Glory Worship Service

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

8:00 a.m.

The Reverend Tomeko Harris, Worship Leader

PRAISE & WORSHIP

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Reverend Dr. Eric Brown

THE PRAYER RESPONSE

THE SCRIPTURE READING

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Psalm 95:1-7

Reverend Alfonzo Colvin

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP

Reverend Monique Summers

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PREACHER

Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr

*Presiding Prelate,
Ninth Episcopal District*

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Reverend Rosalind Amos

*Pastor,
Saint Stephens African Methodist
Episcopal Church
Mobile, Alabama*

DECISION TIME

Reverend Dr. Ronald Sterling

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Presiding Elder Raymond Swafford
Christian Education Director At-Large**

THE CLOSING REMARKS

**Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr.
Presiding Prelate,
Ninth Episcopal District**

BENEDICTION

Reverend Ivory James

The Evening Glory Worship Service

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

7:00 p.m.

Reverend Paul Horn, Worship Leader

THE PRAISE AND WORSHIP

THE INVOCATION

Reverend T. Eric Nathan

THE PRAYER RESPONSE

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Reverend Sandra Anderson

John 10:11-16

THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

The Congress Choir

THE BENEVOLENT OFFERING

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BISHOP

Reverend Cleitis Walker

THE PRESENTATION OF THE PREACHER

Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr.
*Presiding Prelate,
Ninth Episcopal District*

THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

The Congress Choir

THE SERMON

Reverend Dr. Matthew Watley
*Senior Pastor,
Kingdom Fellowship African Methodist Episcopal Church
Silver Springs, Maryland*

**THE INVITATION TO
CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

Reverend Dr. Matthew Watley

THE WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING

The Stewardship Committee

Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr.

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reverend Charles Reeves
Christian Education
Director-At-Large

THE DOXOLOGY

THE BENEDICTION

Reverend Watley

**NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2026 Christian Education Congress**

The Morning Glory Worship Service

Wednesday, July 1, 2026

8:00 a.m.

Reverend Dr. Wendell Jones, Sr.
Worship Leader

PRAISE & WORSHIP

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Reverend Jessica Boanerges

THE SCRIPTURE READING

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Joshua 24:14-18

Reverend A. DeVonta Anderson

**THE PRESENTATION
OF THE BISHOP**

Reverend Maurice Wright, II

**THE INTRODUCTION
OF THE PREACHER**

Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr.
*Presiding Prelate,
Ninth Episcopal District*

THE WORSHIP OF MUSIC

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Reverend Dr. Carmen Ellerbee
*Pastor,
Saint Mark
African Methodist Episcopal Church
Tuscaloosa, Alabama*

DECISION TIME

Reverend Debra Ballard

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Dr. D. Michelle Sherrod
Christian Education, Director,
Southeast Alabama Annual Conference**

THE BENEDICTION

Reverend Dr. Ellerbee

Reverend Dr. Marcus Cosby, Senior Pastor

Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church

Houston, Texas



The Reverend Dr. Marcus D. Cosby serves as the Senior Pastor of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, where he has led the intentionally intergenerational congregation since 2004, after previously serving as Associate Pastor beginning in 1998. A native of Chicago, Illinois, and a product of Emmanuel Baptist Church under the leadership of Dr. L. K. Curry, Dr. Cosby is a graduate of Fisk University (B.A. in Religion and English), the Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta (Master of Divinity in Homiletics and Christian Education), and Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard, Illinois (Doctor of Ministry in Homiletics).

Under his leadership, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church has expanded its impact locally and globally through initiatives such as the Wheeler Avenue Christian Academy, a transitional housing facility for homeless single mothers in Houston's Third Ward, and missional outreach in multiple villages in South Africa. Passionate about preaching and equipping preachers, Dr. Cosby has trained more than 100 ministers on Wheeler Avenue's Clergy Team, served as Adjunct Professor of Homiletics at Houston Graduate School of Theology and the Houston extension of the ITC, and in 2013 founded *Preaching with Power and Authority Ministries*, a corporation devoted to promoting relevant biblical preaching for the 21st century.

Dr. Cosby is a member of the Board of Trustees of his alma mater, Fisk University, where he chairs the Academic Excellence and Student Engagement Committee. He has served on numerous boards, including the Home Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention, USA, the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, the African American Pulpit, the Houston Area Urban League, Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston, and the Texas Commission for Community Service and Volunteerism, and as an Advisory Board Member of The Gardner C. Taylor Preaching Archives and Listening Room. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, and a Life Member of the NAACP.

Dr. Cosby has preached, lectured, and taught across the United States, the Bahamas, the Holy Land, and the continent of Africa in conferences, conventions, revivals, retreats, and on university and seminary campuses. Above all, he seeks to encourage and empower all humanity through the timeless and transformative truths found in the Word of God.

He is married to his high school sweetheart, Mrs. Audrey Marie Cosby. They are the proud parents of three daughters—Adrienne Marie (Rev. Dr. Micah R. Gaines), Ashley Marie, and Aliyah Marie—and two sons, Marcus D., II and Matthew D. Cosby, and they rejoice in their grandson, Micah R. Gaines, II, born in 2022.



*Reverend Dr. Matthew Watley, Senior Pastor
Kingdom Fellowship, African Methodist Episcopal
Church
Silver Springs, Maryland*

Reverend Matthew L. Watley is a dynamic and dedicated pastor, renowned speaker, author, professor, entrepreneur, leadership consultant, and visionary 'kingdom builder'.

As the founder and Senior Pastor of Kingdom Fellowship AME Church, Reverend Watley leads and spiritually guides a thriving community of over 8,000 members. In a remarkable testament to his leadership, the church recently transitioned to a cutting-edge facility, the Kingdom Worship Center, valued at \$45,000,000. Reverend Watley's community involvement extends beyond the church. As the Chair of The Black IDEA Coalition, he is dedicated to achieving black parity in employment, investment, and contracting. He also leads the Kingdom Global Community Development Corporation, which provides comprehensive support services to address food insecurity, health issues, and outreach to individuals in various communities.

Rev. Watley frequently speaks on economy, culture, leadership, and health equity issues. He has spoken for Ch2Mhill, The Prudential, Industrial Bank, The American Institute of CPAs, the US Department of Transportation, and the Milken Institute. Rev. Watley founded The Kingdom Network (TKN), a leadership program that supports the development of national clergy.

Rev. Watley is a member of the Board of Trustees of Wiley University, the Advisory Board of the Museum of the Bible, the Board of Visitors of the Howard University School of Divinity, the Sub-Saharan Africa Advisory Committee of EXIM, and an at-large member of the General Board of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He has served as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University and lectured at various higher-learning institutions, including Howard University, Alabama State University, Cornell University, Wesley Theological Seminary, and Wilberforce University.

Pastor Watley also has a BA in Political Science and a Master of Divinity from Howard University, an Executive master's in Leadership from Georgetown University, and a Master of Arts in Education and Human Development from George Washington University. In May of 2021, Pastor Watley was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Wiley College, where he delivered the commencement address to the graduating class of 2021. Rev. Watley is currently a doctoral candidate at Fuller Theological Seminary. He also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., for his commitment to building a stronger nation through volunteer service. Pastor Watley is the author of several books and articles; *Ignite* is his most recent book.

Pastor Watley professes that among his most significant roles are husband, father, and son. He is married to Shawna Francis Watley, a Senior Policy Advisor at Holland & Knight LLC, and has one daughter, Alexandra Elizabeth Watley. The Watley family resides in the Metropolitan Washington Area.



*Judge Reverend Dr. Eduardo K. Curry,
St. Luke African Methodist Episcopal
Church, Senior Pastor
Charleston, North Carolina*

Born the eldest son of eight children to Bishop and Mrs. Eddie Curry, in Monticello, Florida. He attended Tomilson College, where he received an Associate of Business Degree. The University of Tennessee, where he received his Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, and a Master of Science in Criminal Justice with honors. He earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence from the Salmon P. Chase College of Law and Master of Divinity from Payne Theological Seminary.

Presently, Eduardo K. Curry is the owner of The Curry Law Firm, LLC. Additionally, he is a retired Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at South Carolina State University. Rev. Dr. Eduardo K. Curry is a Theologian, Author, Professor and Attorney. He is an Intenerant Elder of the African Methodist Episcopal Currently, he is pastoring at his Eight (8) charge as Senior Pastor and Servant Leader of Greater St. Luke AME Church located in Charleston, South Carolina under the where Bishop James Levert Davis, Presiding Prelate of the Seventh Episcopal District.

He proclaims salvation, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He has pastured the following charges: St. Peters, Cainhoy; Greater Bethel, James Island; Grace Metropolitan at Adams, North Charleston; Tibwin, McClellanville; St. Peter, Cameron; Chavis, Hemingway, and Mt. Carmel, Moncks Corner.

In 2016, he was elected by the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for an eight (8) year term as a global Judge and member of the Judicial Council of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He is currently serving his second term.

He is a member of many secular organizations to include: 100 Black Men of Charleston, NAACP, South Carolina Bar Association, Federal Bar, South Carolina Black Lawyers Association, Thurgood Marshall Black Lawyers Association, American Trial Lawyers, and the Omega Psi Phi Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Mu Alpha Chapter. Past Member and Chair of the Charleston County Commission of Parks and Recreation; Past Chairman of the Board and President of the Charleston Housing Association, Inc.; Vice-President of the Charleston Chapter of the NAACP. He is also a member of the chapter. He is a member of Gothic Lodge Number 212, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

He is married to Retired Judge Tamara Curmingham Curry. They presently have three wonderful children: Eduardo, II, Morgan Elizabeth, Xavier Emanuel, and five adorable grandchildren: Olivia, Cora, Melody, Matthew, and Xavier, II. He practices law in all Federal and State Courts. His favorite phrase is "God is Working in my Life". He derives this from Romans 8:28. "All things work together for the good of them who love the Lord and are called according to his purpose".



The Honorable Tamara C. Curry
St. Luke African Methodist
Episcopal Church, Charleston, SC

Tamara Curry was born and reared in Charleston, South Carolina. She earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from South Carolina State University in 1985 and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1988. She was admitted to practice law in Ohio in 1989 and South Carolina in 1992.

She is currently employed as a Senior Attorney in the General Counsel's Office with the Office of Mental Health.

She is a former Associate Probate Judge for Charleston County, having served from 1998 and served until December of 2022. Judge Curry also presided as one of the judges for the Charleston County Adult Drug Court and in 2003, assisted in starting the first Mental Health Court in the State of South Carolina. She was also appointed to serve as one of the presiding judges for the Charleston County Juvenile Drug Court in 2010 and the Veterans Court in 2017.

Tamara C. Curry has over 10 years of experience conducting workshops on sexual harassment and misconduct in ecclesiastical settings, in both the United States and South Africa. He brings specialized expertise in church law and governance to support faith-based organizations in fostering safe and ethical environments.

Tamara C. Curry was inducted as the president of the National College of Probate Judges (NCPJ) in Ponte Vedra, Florida on November 17, 2017. Judge Curry is the first African American President for the organization, which was organized in 1968 to improve the administration of justice in courts with jurisdiction over decedents' estates, guardianships, and trusts. The National College of Probate Judges was established in response to concern with the time and costs involved in estate administration. It is the only national organization dedicated exclusively to improving probate law and probate courts.

Tamara Curry is involved in the following activities and organizations:

Advisory Board Member American University- Racial and Ethnic Disparities Initiative Advisory Board;
Board of Trustees Allen University; National College of Probate Judges – Past President; Steering Committee -The State of the Criminal Justice System: Initiative Advisory Board; Task Force on the Revision of the National Association of Court Managers Adult Guardianship Guide, 2022;
Task Force on the Revision of the National Probate Court Standards, 2013; South Carolina Association of Probate Judges; Charleston (SC) Chapter of The Links Incorporated - Past President; Past Board of Directors YWCA of Greater Charleston-Past President; South Carolina Bar Association; Charleston County Bar Association; Petigru Inns of Court; National Bar Association; South Carolina Black Lawyers Association; Thurgood Marshall Law Society, Charleston, South Carolina; South Carolina Women Lawyers Association; Alpha Kappa Alpha, Sorority, Incorporated; Charleston Mental Health Center – Mental Health for Heroes - Past Board Member; Center for Heirs Property Preservation-Past Board Member.

She is married to Reverend Eduardo K. Curry, Esquire, of The Curry Law Firm, and they have three children, Eduardo II, Morgan, and Xavier, and grandmother to Olivia, Cora Jane, Melody, Matthew, and Xavier II.