



Council of Bishops African Methodist Episcopal Church

A CALL TO CONVENTION From the Council of Bishops The African Methodist Episcopal Church *“One Nation Under God, With Liberty and Justice for All”*

In 1830, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the First Colored People’s Convention was convened under the leadership of Bishop Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. This historic gathering sought justice not only in the form of emancipation for enslaved Africans, but also addressed pressing issues such as employment, healthcare, education, and broader social concerns. It united the Black Church with other Black organizations and leaders across the United States in a collective pursuit of dignity and equity.

Nearly two centuries later, Black communities and people of color across the nation and the globe continue to confront many of the same injustices. The rallying cry “Make America Great Again,” championed by White Evangelicals, far-right conservatives, and white nationalists, signals a desire to return to an era when civil rights, voting rights, and equal opportunity were denied to our people. For them, America was “great” when white men held unchecked power and everyone else was kept in their place.

Today, the current administration—backed by nearly 40% of the U.S. population—is working to turn back the clock by sixty years. Through executive orders, a Congress that has abdicated its oversight responsibilities, and a Supreme Court dismantling civil rights and expanding presidential authority, they are reshaping the nation in ways that defy the Constitution. America is now bitterly divided—polarized, hateful, racist, and classist. We are not, in spirit or in practice, the United States.

In response to this crisis, a proposal was presented to the Council of Bishops to convene a national gathering of Black denominations and allied organizations. This Convention will bring together Black faith leaders—clergy and laity—as well as national Black institutions to address the urgent issues facing our communities. It will not be a forum for lament alone. Instead, it will offer a deliberate, detailed strategy for the American people to consider as we approach the 2026 elections.

The theme of the Convention is “One Nation Under God, With Liberty and Justice for All”—a call for the nation, as it prepares to celebrate its 250th anniversary, to finally live up to its founding ideals.

Most importantly, the Convention’s platform will be Biblically and theologically grounded. Unlike the distorted narratives often promoted by the evangelical right, our message will reflect the true teachings of the Word of God—affirming diversity, racial justice, opportunity, and care for the poor. A nation under God must be committed to God’s Word and will.

We are assembling some of the nation’s leading theologians, and at the conclusion of the Convention, we will unveil “Project 2027: A More Excellent Way”—a visionary framework offering the nation meaningful choices as it heads into the 2026 elections.

The Black Convention will take place February 24–26, 2026, in Washington, D.C. Details regarding location, registration, and logistics will be announced later this month via national press conference and through denominational and organizational publications.

We call upon the Black Church, civil rights organizations, justice advocates, voting coalitions, educational institutions, the Divine Nine, and all who believe in the promise of “one nation under God” to join us. Clergy, congregants, lay members, young adults, allies of every race and background—come stand with us.

Our Bishops, General Officers, Connectional Officers, ministers, laity, and the entire connection are urged to attend.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO WASHINGTON, THE NATION’S CAPITAL.

Bishop Silvester Scott Beaman, President, Council of Bishops

Bishop Wilfred Jacobus Messiah, Senior Bishop

Bishop James L. Davis, President, General Board

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, Chair of Social Action Commission

Bishop Ronnie Elijah Brailsford, Sr., Co-Chair

Dr. Jackie DuPont Walker, Executive Director/Consultant, Social Action