

2018-2019 AME/WIM Demographics



Detailed Demographics	
Number of female itinerant preachers reported in the connection	2548
Number of female local preachers reported in the connection	1008
Number of female Evangelist and Exhorters reported in the connection	298
Number of female licentiates reported in the connection	280
Number of female licentiates admitted to the Annual Conference in the connection as reported	110
Number of female superannuates (retired preachers) reported in the connection	270
Total Number of women in ministry reported who have died in the connection this fiscal year	39
General Demographics	
Total Number of Women serving in an active Pastoral capacity reported in the connection	1210
Total Number of Women serving in an Institutional Ministerial capacity reported in the connection	114
Total number of Associate Members (male dues paying members) reported in the connection	122
Total Number of Female Bishops in the connection	3
Total Number of Female (Ordained) General Officers in the connection	1
Total Number of Female (non-Lay) Connectional Officers reported in the connection	16
Total Number of Female Presiding Elders reported in the connection	51
Total number of women receiving a Doctoral Degree as reported to the connection	33
Total number of women receiving a Master of Divinity Degree as reported to the connection	38
Summary	
Total number of women in ministry reported in the connection	4514
Total number of preachers in the connection?	TBD

*18 out of 20 District participated in the 2019 Statistical Data Report.

And why should it be thought impossible, heterodox, or improper for a woman to preach? Seeing the Saviour



Celebrating
THE REVEREND JARENA LEE
AND
200 YEARS
*of Women Answering
the Call to Preach in the
African Methodist Episcopal
Church*

died for him, why not the woman? Seeing he died for her also. Is he not whole Saviour instead of half one?" - Jarena Lee

died for the woman as well as the man. If the man may preach, because the Saviour

MR. JARENA LEE

2016-2020 Commission on Women in Ministry

Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield, Chairperson

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5 th District:	Rev. Fran Cary
6 th District:	Rev. Jonetta Prater
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11 th District:	Bro. Charlie Nichols
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13 th District:	Rev. Troy Thomas
14 th District:	Rev. Margaret Fadehan
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16 th District:	Rev. Carlene Sobers
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Rev. Brenda Payne, Presiding Elder

This publication was produced in celebration of the 200th Anniversary of Jarena Lee's receiving a license to preach in the African Methodist Episcopal Church by Bishop Richard Allen. This year marks 200 years of women serving in ministerial capacities in the AME Church.

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ABOUT JARENA LEE & THE AME/WIM JARENA LEE

The now Reverend Jarena Lee, the first preaching woman in the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, was born February 11, 1783 to free parents in Cape May, New Jersey which was then still a slave state. At the age of 7 she was hired out as a servant 60 miles from her home and it was 14 years before she saw her birth family again. She only had 3 months of schooling but learned to read and write and in her 50's, with the help of an editor, she published two editions of her life, religious experiences and journal of itinerant ministry. She made her living as a manual worker, suffering ill health from the rigors of her labor.

At the age of 21, after being introduced to Christianity by a Presbyterian missionary, she began living in Philadelphia where she attended the A.M.E. Church and was converted after hearing Richard Allen, our founder and first Bishop, preach. At the age of 28 she married Joseph Lee, pastor of Snow Hill (now Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church, Lawnside), New Jersey, and after his death 7 years later returned to Philadelphia with her two children ages two years and six months.

From childhood, she had a strong sense of the divine at work in her but struggled with the conviction of her sinfulness until her mid-20's when she experienced sanctification, the "second blessing", and finally felt secure in her salvation. Her call to preach the gospel came with strong visions about 4-5 years later but, when told by Richard Allen that the Methodist Discipline did not allow for women preachers, she suppressed "...the holy energy which burned within me, as a fire..." for over eight years during which time she exhorted and held prayer meetings in private homes.

Her anointing became evident to Richard Allen and others, in particular when at a Bethel service in 1818 the preacher read his text, announced the title of his sermon, began to expound and then faltered. She stood up and completed the sermon, leading Richard Allen to publicly acknowledge her call. She recalled, “*My tongue was cut loose, the lip was touched, the stammerer spoke freely; the love of God and of his service, burned with a vehement flame within me.*” The following year, at the age of 36, Jarena Lee was granted a license to preach.

Though initially reluctant to accept her call, Richard Allen proved to be a genuine and strong ally. Her journal records that during a period when she was tempted to withdraw from the AME Church because of hostile opposition from male clergy, she was sustained by God’s love and Allen’s support. He gave her preaching appointments in churches in and around Philadelphia, and had her accompany him and other male clergy to Annual Conferences in New York and Baltimore where she had opportunities to preach. After Jarena Lee decided to give up her own residence and devote herself to her preaching ministry, Richard and Sarah Allen often cared for her son, James, in her absence, including a period when she was away for 2½ years.

A true itinerant evangelist, she traveled extensively through the Northeast, Canada and the slave states of Maryland and Delaware preaching to whites, coloreds and Indians – to people of all religious persuasions - to rich and poor – to free and enslaved – to the powerful and the powerless. She preached in homes, meeting houses, school houses, court houses, market houses, camp meetings, grave yards, by the roadside, in barns, in the woods, on slave plantations, at quarterly conferences, and in class meetings. Sometimes she travelled alone, and at other times with female companions, with her children or with male preachers. She went by foot (walking an average of 27 miles a day), by boat, sleigh, stagecoach, and railway. In one 14-month period she traveled about 2,800 miles. She often preached several times a day, sometimes into the early morning. In one year alone she preached 692 sermons.

It was as a preacher that she fulfilled the divine plan for her life. She was tireless and impassioned in proclaiming the message of salvation and in her service to humanity. Undeterred by opposition, inclement weather, ill health, lack of resources, personal sacrifices, and her own mortality, she declared, “...it was better to wear out than rust out”.

Jarena Lee stands out in the history of the 19th century, being the second Black woman known to preach, and the best known Black woman of her time, second only to Sojourner Truth. She is also a foundational figure in the history of the A.M.E. Church, having made an invaluable contribution to the growth of the Church with the numbers of converts and new members she brought in, the funds she raised, and the churches she was instrumental in establishing.

A.M.E. women in ministry acknowledge Jarena Lee as our spiritual

We celebrate the life, ministry and legacy of Mrs. Jarena Lee with the herstoric decision made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, April 6, 2016 by the AME Council of Bishops and announced by Bishop John Richard Bryant, Senior Bishop, on Friday, April 8, 2016: Mrs. Jarena Lee will be posthumously ordained at the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where she lived, sacrificed, struggled, and took authority to faithfully fulfill God’s call to preach and serve - 208 years after she acknowledged her call; 207 years after her call was denied; 198 years after she was licensed; and 16 years after AME/WIM’s unsuccessful attempt to have her call to ordained ministry affirmed at the 2000 General Conference - Mrs. Jarena Lee will now be rightly and deservedly referred to and known as The Reverend Jarena Lee. As she wrote in her spiritual autobiography, “*Glory to God in the highest...for the manifestation of His Spirit.*”

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and down in the world and promulgate the Gospel of Christ..." and "... as the poor errand-bearer of a free gospel was assisted from on high."

She travelled extensively through Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Detroit, Canada and even to the slave states of Maryland and Delaware preaching to whites, coloreds and Indians – to people of all religious persuasions – to rich and poor – to powerful and the powerless. She preached in homes, meeting houses, school houses, court houses, market houses, camp meetings, grave yards, by the roadside, in barns, in the woods, on slave plantations, at quarterly conferences, and in class meetings. She went alone, with female companions, with her children, with male preachers. She went by foot (walking an average of 27 miles a day), by boat, sleigh, stagecoach and railway. In one 14 month period she traveled about 2,800 miles. She often preached several times a day – sometimes into the early morning – and in one year alone she preached 692 sermons. In each situation, she found "... the Lord was pleased to give me life, and liberty among the people."

It was as a preacher that she fulfilled the divine plan for her life, and she was tireless and impassioned in proclaiming the message of salvation and in her service to humanity. Undeterred by opposition, inclement weather, ill health, lack of resources, and her own mortality, she declared that "...it was better to wear out that rust out."

Jarena Lee's ability to survive and thrive was based first and foremost in her conviction that she was called by God whose divine authority transcends any human institution or cultural norm. She drew upon biblical precedents to affirm the legitimacy and authority of her preaching. She also had the validation of the fruitfulness of her ministry and her contribution to the expansion of the Church. And she found support in the network of women who facilitated her itineracy – some of them by travelling with her, others by caring for her children in her absence.

Regrettably her sermons have been lost to history. But in her spiritual autobiography, she has left her legacy of the revelation and manifestation of the empowering, liberating, transformative and inclusive Spirit of God. She continues to inspire women to lay claim to and live out their calling to serve a risen Savior, and to manifest the power of the Holy Spirit. Her testimony of taking authority lives on as a womanist for all ages:

"If then, to preach the gospel, by the gift of heaven, comes by inspiration solely, is God straitened: must he take the man exclusively? May he not, did he not, and can he not inspire a female to preach the simple story of the birth, life, death and resurrection of our Lord, and accompany it too with power to the sinner's heart. As for me, I am fully persuaded that the Lord called me to labor according to which I have received, in his vineyard. If he has not, how could he consistently bear testimony in favor of my poor labors, in awakening and converting sinners?"

foremother who in the first decades of the church's existence fought for affirmation of her call to preach and serves as an early role model in the ongoing struggle for female autonomy, asserting in the face of antagonism, "*Right is more than might*".

AME/WIM has been blessed to pay tribute to Jarena Lee in several significant ways. We have published an edition of the *Religious Experiences and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee*. We have established a Jarena Lee Foundation to assist our sisters in ministry and respond to needs in the global Districts. We have made pilgrimages, held commemorative services, and presented a framed sketch of her as a permanent memorial at Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church in Lawnside (formerly Snow Hill), New Jersey, the burial place of Jarena Lee; and we owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. M. Joan Cousins who made the Church at large aware of this her historic location during her tenure as Episcopal Supervisor of the First Episcopal District.

On June 19, 2001, at the site of the General Board/Bishops Council Meeting in Los Angeles, California, AME/WIM held its First Jarena Lee Appreciation Awards Breakfast. This is an occasion to honor the memory of Mrs. Jarena Lee, as well as an opportunity to recognize Episcopal leadership for providing oversight to the organization, to honor or trailblazing sisters in ministry, and to express appreciation to other individuals for their support of the work and objectives of AME-WIM.

Today, we hold our Twelfth Jarena Lee Appreciation Awards Breakfast as part of the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the A.M.E. Church. We celebrate the life, ministry and legacy of Mrs. Jarena Lee with the her historic decision made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, April 6, 2016 by the A.M.E. Council of Bishops and announced by Bishop John Richard Bryant, Senior Bishop, on Friday, April 8, 2016: **Jarena Lee was posthumously ordained at the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.**

Providentially, here in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where she lived, sacrificed, struggled, and faithfully fulfilled God's call to preach and serve - 208 years after she acknowledged her call; 207 years after her call was denied; 198 years after she was licensed; and 16 years after AME/WIM's unsuccessful attempt to have her call to ordained ministry affirmed at the 2012 General Conference - **Mrs. Jarena Lee will now be rightly and deservedly referred to and known as The Reverend Jarena Lee.**

As she wrote in her spiritual autobiography, "*Glory to God in the highest...for the manifestation of His Spirit.*"

TIMELINE OF JARENA LEE'S LIFE

□ 1783, February 11

- She was born to free parents in Cape May, New Jersey which was then a slave state.
- 1790 (circa)
 - She was hired out as a servant maid to Mr. Sharp 60 miles from where she grew up.
- 1804
 - She was introduced to Christianity hearing a Presbyterian missionary preach.
 - In despair over her sinfulness, she was tempted by Satan to drown herself.
 - She moved to Philadelphia and for three months attended a white Methodist church but felt it was not suited for her.
 - She was converted hearing Rev. Richard Allen preach, and joined Bethel Church.
 - She continued in a battle with Satan for her soul, was tempted to drown herself, experienced vivid, distressing visions, and became physically ill.
 - She became convicted of the forgiveness of her sins, and three months later was instructed in sanctification by a colored evangelist, William Scott, and three months later experienced the assurance of the sanctification of her soul.
- 1808 or 1809
 - At the age of 26, she received the call to preach the Gospel and during the night took a text and preached in her sleep.
 - Two days later she told Rev. Richard Allen about the revelation of her call and was told the Methodist Discipline did not allow for women preachers.
- 1811
 - At the age of 28, she married Rev. Joseph Lee and moved to Snow Hill (now Lawnside), New Jersey where he pastored the church now Mt. Pisgah AME, and suffered physically and spiritually from suppressing her call to preach.
- 1817 (circa)
 - Joseph Lee died and she returned to Philadelphia with her two infant children, aged 2 years and 6 months.
- 1818
 - She obtained permission from Bishop Allen to exhort and hold prayers meetings in her home.

“O how careful ought we to be, lest through our bylaws of church government and discipline, we bring into disrepute even the word of life. For as unseemly as it may appear now-a-days for a woman to preach, it should be remembered that nothing is impossible with God. And why should it be thought impossible, heterodox, or improper for a woman to preach? Seeing the Savior died for the woman as well as for the man.

If the man may preach, because the Savior died for him, why not the woman? Seeing he died for her also. Is he not a whole Savior, instead of a half one? As those who hold it wrong for a woman to preach, would seem to make it appear.”

Returning to Philadelphia after her husband’s death, Jarena Lee increasingly felt the affirmation of her spiritual authority and giftedness. At the deathbed of a young man, having prayed for the forgiveness of his sins, she was “...filled with the power of the Holy Ghost – the very room seemed filled with glory.” Some of the ways in which she describes the manifestation of the Spirit of God include: “The Lord was in the camp with a shout.” “We had a sweet waiting upon the Lord.” “We had a might shaking among the dry bones.” “We had a most melting, sin-killing, and soul-reviving time.” “We were sprinkled as with clear water from above.”

Her spiritual anointing also became evident to Richard Allen and others, in particular after the occasion on which the preacher at a Bethel service read his text, announced the title of his sermon, began to expound and then faltered. She wrote that: “...in the same instance, I sprang, as by altogether supernatural impulse, to my feet when I was aided from above to give an exhortation on the text. God made manifest his power in a manner sufficient to show the world that I was called to labor according to my ability, and the grace given unto me, in the vineyard of the good husbandman. The Bishop rose up in the assembly and related that I had called upon him eight years before, asking to be permitted to preach, and that he had put me off, but that he now believed that I was called to that work, as any of the preachers sent.”

At the age of 36 Jarena Lee was finally granted a license to preach. With this recognition she recounted: “My tongue was cut loose, the lip was touched, the stammerer spoke freely; the love of God and of his service, burned with a vehement flame within me.”

Despite Bishop Allen’s validation and support of her ministry, she continued to be met with curiosity, skepticism and disdain. Although many of her detractors came to accept her as a preacher, she faced harsh opposition that at points in her life made her consider leaving Methodism. These challenges she came to view as a test of her faithfulness to God and she describes being comforted by “... the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirits that we are his children in such dark hours.”

A true itinerant, Jarena Lee stated that she “...felt it my duty to travel up

the first half of the nineteenth century, black women such as Maria Stewart, Jarena Lee, and Sojourner Truth were precursors in adopting a scriptural defense of women's rights."

Jarena Lee did not have the knowledge of ethics, sociology of religion, homiletics and other disciplines to explain the working of spiritual authority in human affairs. But in his compilation of the autobiographies of Jarena Lee, Zilpha Elaw and Julia Foote, Dr. William L. Andrews credits Jarena Lee with launching "...black women's autobiography in America with an argument for women's spiritual authority that plainly challenged traditional female roles as defined in both the free and the slave states, among whites as well as blacks. Lee's autobiography offers us the earliest and most detailed firsthand information we have about the traditional roles of women in organized black religious life in the United States and about the ways in which resistance to those roles began to manifest itself."

What Jarena Lee did have was an organic awareness of and unshaken faith in the reality of spiritual authority functioning in her life and in her faith community. She lived with an assurance of God's purpose for her particular life and was clear about the meaning of her life.

Even as a child, Jarena Lee had a strong sense of the divine at work in her. After lying to her mistress about an unfinished task, she recounted that "... the Spirit of God moved in power in my conscience, and told me that I was a wretched sinner." For years, she had such an overwhelming conviction of her sinfulness that she twice considered taking her own life and credited her change of mind to "...the unseen arm of God which saved me from self murder." Before being introduced to Christianity, she had a prolonged emotional struggle over her soul's ultimate destiny, and afterwards she felt constrained from fully devoting herself to her spiritual growth because her Roman Catholic mistress would not allow her to read the Bible. On the occasion of her conversion she recalled that when she prayed for forgiveness of her sin, "...it appeared to me as if a garment, which had entirely enveloped my whole person, even to my fingers' end, split at the crown of my head, and was stripped away from me, passing like a shadow from my sight – when the glory of God seemed to cover me instead." But for four years after she continued to wage a spiritual battle with Satan until she experienced sanctification, the "second blessing", and she felt secure in her salvation.

Her call to preach the gospel came with strong visions about four to five years later. When she revealed this to Richard Allen and he informed her that the Methodist Discipline did not call for women preachers she felt that, "...the holy energy which burned within me, as a fire, began to be smothered." She was given permission to exhort and hold prayer meetings but her call to preach was deferred for eight years. Her understanding and conviction of the sexist injustice of being excluded from preaching are conveyed in her declaration :

□ Bishop Allen publicly acknowledged her call to preach after, in a service at Bethel when Rev. Richard Williams faltered after beginning to preach, she stood and expounded on his text.

□ 1819 (circa)

□ At the age of 36, she was granted a license to preach, becoming the first female preacher in the AME Church, and began preaching at homes in Philadelphia.

□ 1820

□ She began her itinerant evangelism traveling through Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Detroit, Canada and even to the slave states of Maryland and Delaware preaching to whites, coloreds and Indians – to people of all religious persuasions - to rich and poor – to free and enslaved – to the powerful and the powerless. She preached in homes, meeting houses, school houses, court houses, market houses, camp meetings, grave yards, by the roadside, in barns, in the woods, on slave plantations, at quarterly conferences, and in class meetings. She went alone, with female companions, with her children, with male preachers. She went by foot (walking an average of 27 miles a day), by boat, sleigh, stagecoach, and railway. In one 14 month period she traveled about 2,800 miles. She often preached several times a day – sometimes into the early morning – and in one year alone she preached 692 sermons.

□ 1820 or 1821

□ She went to Cape May to visit her mother whom she had not seen for 14 years.

□ 1821

□ In the area of Dennis Creek, New Jersey she opened a school and taught 11 students to raise funds for paying her passage by ship for her son and herself to return to Philadelphia.

□ 1822

□ She was tempted to withdraw from the AME Church because of the opposition she had been facing but was sustained by God's love and was delivered from temptation.

□ 1823

□ She accompanied Bishop Allen and several elders, including the future Bishop Morris Brown, to attend the New York Annual Conference.

- 1823 (circa)
 - She was reunited in Maryland with a sister whom she had not seen for 33 years.
- 1824
 - She accompanied Bishop Allen and several elders to Baltimore to attend the Annual Conference, at which he gave her permission to address the Conference.
- 1827
 - She accompanied Bishop Allen and some elders to Baltimore to attend the Annual Conference.
- 1830 (circa)
 - She suffered from a bilious fever while traveling in Ohio and recovered after four weeks in bed.
- 1831
 - Bishop Richard Allen died on March 26, at the age of 72.
 - She placed her son, who had been living with and educated by Bishop Allen during her absence, with a French cabinet maker as an apprentice.
 - She experienced a period of financial deprivation, poor health, and no home of her own but was unshaken in resting on God's promises.
 - She sent a few weeks with her sister and brother-in-law, Dr. Burton, who treated her for an illness that prevented her traveling and preaching for several months.
 - She visited her mother whom she had not seen for 11 years.
- 1832
 - She continued her travels through New Jersey in spite of an outbreak of cholera and observed President Andrew Jackson's proclamation for a national day of prayer and fasting.
- 1833
 - She began writing her religious experience and exercise which, given her limited formal education, was corrected by an editor to whom she paid \$5
 - She visited one of her sisters whom she was seeing for the second time in 41-43 years.
- 1836

of her labor. The details of her early life are sketchy, serving only as a cursory backdrop to her spiritual experience and to her efforts to fulfill the God-given charge to preach.

At the age of 21 she was introduced to Christianity by a Presbyterian missionary. Soon after she began living in Philadelphia where she attended a white Methodist Church but found that this was not a fit for her. She was then introduced to the AME Church and its founder and first Bishop, Richard Allen, and was converted after hearing him preach. At the age of 28 she married Joseph Lee and relocated to Snow Hill (now Lawnside), New Jersey where he served as pastor. Her husband died about seven years later, leaving her to return to Philadelphia with her two young children – a two year old, and a six month old. Without a steady source of income, she related, “My money was gone, my health was gone, and I was measurably without a home. But I rested on the promises of God.”

Jarena Lee is a foundational figure in the history of the AME Church. She made an invaluable contribution to the growth of the AME Church with the number of converts and new members she brought in and by being “...instrumental in the hand of God of gaining many hundreds of dollars for the connexion, by raising societies where there never had been any, since which time they have grown to such a mass as to build large churches...”. For Jarena Lee’s conviction of her call to ministry and her place as the first preaching woman in African Methodism, ordained AME clergywomen acknowledge her as our spiritual foremother who serves as an early role model in the ongoing struggle for female autonomy and authority.

She also takes a prominent place in the annals of the history of Black women in the 19th century. In her ground breaking study of Black women preachers, *Daughters of Thunder*, Dr. Bettye Collier-Thomas identifies Jarena Lee as the second black women known to preach in the 19th century. In a 1999 pilgrimage to Jarena Lee’s gravesite at Mt. Pisgah AME Church in Lawnside, New Jersey (formerly known as Snow Hill) organized by then AME Historiographer, Dr. Dennis Dickerson, Dr. Collier-Thomas opined that Jarena Lee held the stature of the best known Black women in the 19th century, second only to Sojourner Truth.

Jarena Lee did not have the language of systemic theology to articulate the mystery of spiritual authority in her personal life and in the history of the AME Church. But as Dr. Jacquelyn Grant describes, she like other Black women was able to appropriate certain themes of the Bible that spoke to her reality, and in her sermons, that were always biblically based, she constantly emphasized the theme, “Life and Liberty”.

Jarena Lee did not have the hermeneutical tools to define her understanding of the spiritual authority of the Biblical text. But in recounting the advocacy of Black Baptist women for gender and racial inclusion in the late 19th century, Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higgenbotham writes that “... their biblically based arguments were neither new nor unique. During

Cross Alone' (#155); 'O God, Our Help in Ages Past' (#61); 'I Know That My Redeemer Lives' (#166/167)

Chorale suggestions:

'I Know the Lord's Laid His Hands On Me' (AME Hymnal No. 352)

'Hush, Hush, Somebody's Calling My Name'

'O God, Our Help In Ages Past' (AME Hymnal No. 61)

Leave Singing 'This Little Light of Mine'

'A Charge To Keep I Have' (AME Hymnal No. 242)

God Gave It – She Took It! The Spiritual Authority of Jarena Lee Rev. Sandra Elaine Hanson Smith Blair

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In 1826 a seminal publication was printed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Jarena Lee, an evangelist in the newly established African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church had amassed sufficient funds to finance an account of the first 50 years of her life. After three years, with the assistance of an editor, she had completed a slim pamphlet comprised of about 20 pages. The AME Church Book Concern was reluctant to print it because of its critique of hegemonic hierarchy, so she had 1,000 copies printed for \$38 at her own expense and sold them at camp meetings, churches and on the street. Three years later she was able to print an additional 1,000 copies. In 1849, she printed and sold at least 1,000 copies of a revision of her autobiography which was expanded to 98 pages to cover up to her 60th year, and to include a journal of her itinerant ministry with a log of distances traveled, scriptural texts expounded, places visited, and number of persons converted. There is no historical record of her after this time, and the date of her death is unknown.

Given her life circumstances, Jarena Lee could have been relegated to invisibility in the pages of history. She was born on February 11, 1783 to free parents in Cape May, New Jersey. The state was then and until 1804 a slave state. Lees did not personally experience the horror of chattel slavery, but she was hired out as a servant girl from the age of seven and sent 60 miles from her home. She was not reunited with her birth family for over fourteen years, and saw them after that on only a few occasions. Her family members are never identified by name. She only had three months of schooling but learnt to read and write. She made her living as a manual worker, suffering ill health from the rigors

- Her health was impaired by a severe spell of sickness.
- She printed 1,000 copies of a 20 page pamphlet, *The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee: A Colored Lady Giving and Account of Her Call to Preach the Gospel*, covering the first 50 years of her life, and in less than four months raised from their sale the \$60 needed to cover the printing expenses.

1837

- She visited her sister in St. Georges, Delaware.
- She visited her 78 year old mother and her sister in Cape May.

1839

- She printed 1,000 copies of a 2nd Edition of the pamphlet at a cost of \$38.
- She returned to Philadelphia and learned that her little grandson had died.
- Her sister went to England to attend the 'world's convention'. (Note: The World Anti-Slavery Convention was held at Exeter Hall, London, June 12-23, 1840.)

1840

- She planned to go by boat from Philadelphia to observe a convention of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York but had a premonition of drowning in "a watery grave" and did not board the board. She later decided to attend and became a member of the Society.
- She spent several weeks with her 82 year old mother who was ill and nearly recovered. During that time her 12 year old nephew died.

1842

- In New Hope, PA she visited the family with which she had grown up.
- She returned to Philadelphia and learned that her little granddaughter had died.
- Her health was so impaired from the exhaustion of her journeys she thought she was at death's door but recovered and resumed traveling, "...feeling it better to wear out than to rust out..."

1849

- She printed and sold at least 1,000 copies of, *Religious Ex-*

perience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee, a revision of her autobiography which was expanded to 98 pages to cover up her 60th year and to include a journal of her itinerant ministry with a log of distances traveled, scriptural texts expounded, places visited, and numbers of persons converted.

□ ?

- There is no record of the date of her death. She is buried at Mt. Pisgah AME Church (formerly Snow Hill) in Lawnside, New Jersey.

*Compiled by The Rev. Sandra E.H. Smith Blair
Past Connectional President and
Consultant to AME/WIM Executive Board
January 16, 2015*

PLACES JARENA LEE PREACHED

BICENTENNIAL GENERAL CONFERENCE

Albany	Cecil County, MD	Flushing, Long Island
Ammonsburg	Cecil Cross	Fort George
Ancester	Centreville	Fory's Neck
Athens	Chambersburg	Frankford
Attleboro	Chatham	Fredericktown, MD
Attleborough	Chichester	Frenchtown
Baltimore	Chilicothe	Gallopeler
Barnsborough	Christine	Geneva
Bath	Cincinnati	Georgetown
Beaver Dams	Columbia, PA	Glen Cove
Ben-Salem	Concord	Goshen, NJ
Binghampton	Dayton	Governor Paynter's
Blaketown, NJ	Delaware Bay	Woods
Boomsborough	Dennis Creek	Greenfield
Brantford	Denton	Greensboro
Bridgeport	Detroit	Greensborough
Bridgeton	Downington	Greenwich
Brooklyn	Dundas	Hagerstown
Brownsville	Dunkard	Hales' Mill
Brunswick	Dutch Hill, Long	Hambleton
Bucks County	Island	Harrisburg
Buffalo	Eastern Shore, MD	Harris's Mill
Buffalo Village	Easton	Harvest Straw
Burlington	Elkton	Holidaysburg
Canton's Bridge	Ellicot's Mill	Hillsborough
Cap-teen	Fairfield	Hole in the Wall
Cape May, NJ	Flamburg	Holmesburg
Carslisle, PA	Flatbush	Hudson

Healing in the name of Jesus
Healing in the name of Jesus
Whenever we say His name
Things begin to change
Healing in the name of the Lord

Deliverance in the name of Jesus
Deliverance in the name of Jesus
Whenever we say His name
Things begin to change
Deliverance in the name of the Lord

Yes, we got the power!

Suggested Scriptures, Hymns & Choral Selections

A New Thing/Transformation:

Scriptures: Isaiah 43:16-19; Colossians 1:15-28; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Hymns: 'I Got A New Name' (#350); 'I Know the Lord's Laid His Hands On Me' (#352); 'I Know I've Been Changed' (#357)

Reconciliation:

Scriptures: Genesis 1:27-31; Galatians 3:28

Hymns: 'Amazing Grace' (#226); 'Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove' (#191); 'There is a Balm in Gilead' (#425)

Response to the Call of God:

Scriptures: Romans 10:14-15; 2 Corinthians 4:1-10

Hymns: 'I Love the Lord, He Heard My Cries' (#313); 'A Charge to Keep I Have' (#242); 'Am I A Soldier of the Cross' (#407/410)

Our Dependence on God and God's Awesome Power:

Scriptures: The above Scripture selections can be used with these hymns.

Hymns: 'When I Can Read My Title Clear' ('I'm Going to Trust in the Lord') (#483); 'Must Jesus Bear the

When we shed a ray of light into the darkness of someone's life

When we invite someone to come to church to learn about Jesus

That's the power of the resurrection – life-giving, life-changing, life-affirming power. The resurrection is the power to experience new inner life - a new way being, living, thinking, speaking, relating and acting. It is the power to heal brokenness and find wholeness. It is the power we have to transform our lives and the lives of others in what may seem to be simple, ordinary ways. But the new hope they bring are a miracle in and of itself.

Yes, I got that power. Yes, you got that power. Yes we got that power.

How do I know? How do you know? How do we know?

I know – you know – we know because of the assurances of Jesus we find in the Gospels. Luke 24:49 tells us that we have been clothed with power from on high.

My first personal experience exercising this power was not long after I had acknowledged my call to ministry. A friend came into my office with a terrible stomach ache, and asked me to pray for her. I wasn't sure what would happen but I laid my hands on her stomach and prayed. She broke into tears when the pain eased and she found relief. I knew then that I got that power.

The first time that the power of a healing miracle occurred for me was when I developed a severe sinus infection the week I was to leave for a preaching engagement in Texas. I had all the classic symptoms – heavy congestion, high fever, chills, stuffy head, clogged ears, pain in my jaw. And having to fly only made it worse. I was in bad shape that evening when two sisters came to escort me to the service. But as they prayed for me, laid hands on me, and anointed me with oil the fever lifted, the congestion broke up, my head cleared, the pressure in my ears was relieved, the hoarseness in my voice eased and I was able to preach without symptoms. I knew we got the power!

The Holy Spirit is present with us and available to us. It is actively working in us, guiding and directing us. It is enabling us to take the authority to be living witnesses to the power of God to heal the diseased, give hope to those in despair, bring life where death seems to reign, make whole what is broken in this world, and spread the good news of salvation and eternal life.

We got the power! It is in the name of Jesus!

There's power in the name of Jesus
There's power in the name of Jesus
Whenever we say His name
Things begin to change
There's power in the name of the Lord

Hudson City	Old Lancaster	Stanton Mills
Huntingdon	Palmyra	Steubenville, OH
Huntingdon South	Penningtonville	Susquehanna
Ithaca	Philadelphia	Toronto
Jamaica	Pittsburg	Towanda
Johnstown	Pittsfield	Trenton, NJ
Lancaster	Port Elizabeth	Troy
Lewistown, DE	Port Penn	Uniontown
Little York, Canada	Pottsgrove	Urbanna, OH
Littleton Morris's	Princeton	Utica
Long Green	Rahway	Washington
Lumbertown	Redding, PA	Waynesburg
Macallansburg	Ridge Port	West Chester, NY
Marietta	Rochester	West Zanesville
Melford	Sandusky	Westhaven
Melonnsburg	Salem, NJ	Weston
Middletown	Schenectady	West-town
Montrose	Schuykill	Wheeling
Mount Ephraim, NJ	Shippensburg	White Plains
Mr. John Peakers'	Sinapuxom	Whitehall
Island	Sinclairsville	Wilkesbarre
Mt. Pleasant	Smithboro	Williamsburg
New Brunswick	Smyrna	William sport
New Haven	Snow Hill, NJ	Wilmington
New Lancaster	Solsbury	Woodstown
New York	Springtown	York Haven
New York Camp	St. Catherine	Zanesville
Newcastle	St. Clairsville	
Newhope	St. David	
Niagara	St. George, DE	
Norristown	St. Georgetown	

POSTHUMOUS CONFERRAL OF *HONORIS CAUSA* MINISTERIAL TITLE FOR JARENA LEE

The Bicentennial theme “An Extraordinary Past and an Incredible Future” lends itself to a celebration of the historical milestones and foundational personalities of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It also encapsulates limitless possibilities for the legacy of the Church of Allen to stand as a spiritual light of ministry, worship, evangelism, education, scholarship, activism and inclusivity of all of God's children. One of the ways we, as the sons and daughters- daughters and sons of Allen honor our legacy is through breaking down social barriers, rectifying discriminatory rules, and publically honoring God's call to ministry on the lives of our sisters and brothers. Our communal acknowledgment of God's private call is signified by the ministerial orders of Licentiate, Deacon, Elder, Bishop and by honoring one with the title of “Reverend” when one has completed an intense study process, an examination by elders of the church, demonstration of ministerial gifts and graces and a personal pledge to serve the church

and its leadership.

Born February 11, 1783 in Cape May, New Jersey. She was affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Society in 1804 in Philadelphia at Bethel Church under the pastorate of then Rev. Richard Allen and immediately sensed the "...power to exhort sinners and to tell of the wonders and goodness of Him who had clothed me with His salvation.". Her journals of experiencing the call to preach four or five years after her sanctification and hearing God in the "impressive silence" say to her, "Preach the Gospel, I will put words in your mouth and will turn your enemies to become your friends." Two days later telling Rev. Allen of her "duty to preach", she was informed women were exhorters but there was no doctrinal precedence for women preachers.

Jarena Lee continued to hold prayer meetings, exhorted, married, had two children, became a widow, lost one child as she wrestled with being faithful to God's call on her life and human's deferral of that same call. Her first congregation was five persons. Eight years later she was anointed during a worship service and rose to preach "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9) as a personal testimony and God convicted then Bishop Allen that she was indeed called to preach. She was officially licensed in 1819 at age 36 to exhort, hold prayer meetings, and travel at times with Bishop Allen including preaching assignments at Bethel Church. Lee preached in private homes, schools, public meeting houses, in open fields and churches across denominations, races and ethnicities. Over the course of four years she self-reported travelling 1600 miles and walking 211 miles because she was "willing to suffer as well as love". She preached 138 sermons one year, raised money for the connection and planted churches across the East Coast and Canada.

She died in God's service but without all the rights and privileges of an AME minister.

Jarena Lee, first known preaching woman of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, is recognized across Black Christendom as the mother of Black and White preaching women. Her extraordinary devotion, obedience dedication and ministerial work for the cause of Christ, the Church of Allen, and the world laid the foundation for countless women and men in ministry.

Following the work of Bishop Allen in allowing Lee to live out her call, women and men sought to persuade the church to recognize the call of women to the preaching ministry. An 1844

petition to the General Conference to license women was rejected. In 1848 the Daughters of Zion Women's Society petitioned the General Conference and faced opposition led by Bishop Daniel Payne. In 1852 Bishop Paul Quinn tried unsuccessfully to get a resolution approved to license women. In 1884 Bishop Henry McNeal Turner ordained Sarah

It shows the power of Peter to heal in the name of the resurrected Christ. He got the power!

We got that power – the power of the resurrection! The question is: Do we believe we have that power? Do we accept that we have that power? Are we living in our power? Do we claim that power and use it to the glory of God? Do we allow that power to give witness to Jesus Christ?

Sometimes we don't know what to do with this power. Too often we discredit and scoff at it. A lot of times we are afraid of it because we don't understand it. A secular world easily rejects the reality or possibility of miracles. With our rational mind we have difficulty with things that are not tangible. This power is something that we can't hear, touch or taste. But we definitely can feel it if we are open to it. And we certainly can see the results of it at work.

We may not restore someone with an incurable disease. We may not bring activity into paralyzed limbs. We may not give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, or voice to the mute. We may not remove the weight of mental illness or depression. We may not breathe new life into a deceased person. But the power of the resurrection is not just to perform these extraordinary, spectacular miracles. And miracles are just as possible today as they were in the Early Church.

Through our faith in and witness to the love and power of Jesus Christ, we have the power to touch and transform lives, hearts, minds, spirits, and futures.

Our lives and actions may be the only Bible some people read

Our testimony may be the only sermon some person hears

We have the power to make a difference in the lives of others through our deeds which oftentimes speak louder of God's presence than our words do.

When we say a prayer for and with someone

When we speak a word of hope and encouragement to the downcast

When we extend a helping hand to someone in need

When we share a meal with a hungry person

When we assist a homeless person to find shelter

When we clothe someone without adequate attire

When we support a struggling single parent raising a family

When we lend a comforting shoulder to the bereaved

When we offer guidance to children and youth as they seek to find themselves and their purpose in life

got the power! Calling Tabitha by name, Peter spoke just one word ‘*anistemi*’ – commanding her, “Get up”!

When Tabitha opened her eyes and sat up, Peter called the disciples and widows in to see for themselves that she was alive. Can you imagine that praise party!! They must have shouted themselves hoarse!!

When word of this healing miracle spread through Joppa many people came to believe, just as residents in and around Lydda were converted after the healing of Aeneas. The evidence of Jesus’ resurrection power draws people to faith.

This Greek verb ‘*anistemi*’ is also used elsewhere in the Book of Acts to refer to Jesus arising or being raised up. This is Luke’s way of emphasizing that Jesus’ prophetic and healing ministry did not end when He died. It continued through the prophetic and healing ministries of His disciples and apostles.

The divine power that Jesus had to raise the widow’s son at Nain and Jairus’ daughter empowered Peter to restore Tabitha’s life. The divine power of Jesus to heal paralytics was the power imparted to Peter to heal Aeneas.

Peter got that power! The source of that power was not his human resources but the work of the Holy Spirit. It was not his human abilities but the power of the resurrected Christ. The miraculous acts done by Jesus were now being performed by His disciples in His name.

This was the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise to them that they would “...receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:6-8)

This portion of the Book of Acts records Peter’s evangelism and his witness and work for the Lord being carried out in many regions among different nationalities. At the end of this narrative we see him staying with Simon, a tanner, while he continued his ministry in Joppa for some time. Leather workers were considered ritually impure because they handled the skins and hides of unclean and dead animals. But Peter’s acceptance of Simon’s hospitality is evidence of him being prepared for a mission to Gentiles and others outside the circle of Judaism.

The story of this miracle in Joppa is one of resurrection hope and resurrection power. It bears witness to the power of the Easter faith.

It shows the power of Tabitha to share Jesus’ love by doing good works and making a difference in the lives of others. She got the power!

It shows the power of the faith of a community of believers. They got the power!

A. Hughes a deacon in the North Carolina Conference only to have the action overturned in 1888 as the General Conference approved the licensing of women evangelists. As Jarena Lee intoned, God’s call is never limited by law or society.

Lee’s legacy includes nineteenth century preaching women Sophie Murray and Elizabeth Cole of Bethel, Baltimore; Rachel Evans of New Jersey; and Harriet Felson Taylor of Union Bethel in Washington. Lee’s determination reaches to the twentieth century as the AME Church began ordaining women as local deacon in 1948, local elder in 1956 and finally itinerant deacons and elders in 1960. Following Lee’s obedient model, Rev. Carrie T. Hooper in 1964 was the first woman to run for bishop. The first female Presiding Elders, Rev. Dorothy Morris of the Guyana Conference (16th District, Bishop Frederick H. Talbot, 1973); Rev. Cornelia Wright of the West Virginia Annual Conference (3rd District, Bishop Vinton R. Anderson, 1983) and Rev. Esther Ntinda of the Northeast Zambia Conference (17th District, Bishop Richard A. Chappelle, 1990) took their place in leadership of the church.

It is because of God’s grace, the sacrificial service and example of Jarena Lee, the work of the Council of Bishops and the General Board, the Ad Hoc Commission on Women in Ministry (1977), the Connectional Women in Ministry (1988), the Women’s Missionary Society, the Lay Organization, Dr. Jayme Coleman Williams and women and men in ministry over the course of our extraordinary history that opened the way in the twenty-first century for the election and consecration of the 117th Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie (2000), the 122nd Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry (2004) and the 126th Bishop Sarah Francis Davis (2004). As we enter the next century anticipating an incredible future the Church of Allen includes some 4000 ordained itinerants, locals, licensed evangelists, and exhorters, licentiates and superannuated women in ministry.

Today, July 13, 2016, two hundred twelve years after this phenomenal woman answered God’s call to “Go Preach my gospel”, we, the Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church having reviewed the life and legacy of Jarena Lee, examined her unquestionable devotion to God, read of her adherence to the duties and responsibilities of a minister in this Zion, and have seen and understood the evidence of her deep legacy now posthumously affirm the life and ministry by conferring the ministerial title Itinerant Elder to Reverend Jarena Lee (*Honoris Causa*).

Ecclesial Affirmation by Senior Bishop McKinley Young and the Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church at the Bicentennial General Conference held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To sponsor a connectional conference at least once during each quadrennium.

To support and provide assistance and outreach to women in ministry in the Fourteenth through Twentieth Episcopal Districts.

To compile a complete and accurate record of all women in ministry in the A.M.E Church.

Subsequently, efforts were focused on strengthening the organization of AME/WIM in the Episcopal Districts, gathering data on women across the Connection for the updated publication of a directory of women in ministry, and sponsoring two conferences in Atlanta in January 1991 and January 1994. An official AME/WIM Hymn was commissioned, written by Rev. Deborah Burney of the Fifth Episcopal District. In addition, several publications were prepared for sale, including a reprint of the journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee, the first preaching woman of the AME Church, as well as a documentary herstory of AME/WIM from 1976-1992. Publication of a newsletter, *Bricks Without Straw*, began, and work was initiated on documenting the stories of pioneer women in ministry in a video production.

On June 30, 1996 in Louisville, Kentucky at the seat of the 45th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference, Rev. Sandra E.H. Smith Blair of the Fifth Episcopal District was elected as Connectional President. Officers elected to serve during the 1996-2000 Quadrennium were: the Reverends Alyson Browne Johnson (1st District), First Vice President; E. Anne Henning Byfield (4th District), Second Vice President; Sherryl Matlock (10th District), Third Vice President; Cynthia Verdell Brown (7th District), General Secretary; Eunice Paddio-Johnson (8th District), Corresponding Secretary; Lois M. Woodard (5th District), Financial Secretary; Earnestine Barkley Drayton Sellers (11th District), Treasurer; and Elizabeth Scott (3rd District), Herstorlographer. Rev. Rolyn Dix (13th District) who had been elected Worship Leader passed away in August 1996 and Rev. Deborah T. Dennie (13th District) was appointed by the Executive Board to serve out the term of office. Consultants to the Executive Board were Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant Callaway Professor of Systematic Theology at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta and Rev. Dr. Teresa Fry Brown, Professor of Homiletics at Emory University, Chandler School of Theology in Atlanta, both of the 6th District. Bishop C. Garnett Henning, Sr., Presiding Prelate of the Nineteenth Episcopal District was assigned as Chairperson of the Commission on Women in Ministry for the 1996-2000 Quadrennium.

On July 9, 2000 in Cincinnati, Ohio at the seat of the 46th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference, Rev. Blair was reelected President. At that herstoric General Conference, Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie of the Second District was elected the first female Bishop of the A.M.E. Church and assigned to the Eighteenth Episcopal District and to serve

cas was endowed made her a pillar of her community. She got the power!

Her testimony of practicing her faith through serving others lives on today. Many missionary and benevolent societies are named for her. A number of churches in Europe have stained glass windows paying tribute to her acts of charity and good works. The Catholic Church commemorates Tabitha as the patron saint of tailors and seamstresses. Both the Lutheran and Episcopal Church celebrate her in a feast day during their liturgical calendars.

She got the power!

Her sudden death created a crisis among the grief stricken members of the early Church in Joppa. They prepared her for burial by washing her body and laying her in an upper room. But one detail the author Luke does not mention is her body being anointed with burial salts according to Jewish practice. Being a physician he would have been familiar with Jewish custom, so this omission is striking. We can understand that Tabitha's death left such a vacuum in their midst that the believers could not image life without her. Very likely they were in that first stage of grief – denial and disbelief. Maybe completing the burial ritual would have brought closure they were not ready to accept.

But I don't think that was the real reason. We read that the disciples sent two men to Lydda with an urgent message asking the apostle Peter to come immediately to Joppa. In the pericope preceding this text, it is recorded that on an evangelistic mission in Lydda, just 10 miles southeast of Joppa, Peter healed Aeneas who had been bedridden for eight years.

Now, the folk in Joppa had no land lines, no cell phones to text, no fax machines, no typewriter, no computer, no postal service, no Western Union, no email, no Internet, no Twitter, no Facebook, no Pinterest, no Yelp, no blogs, no television, no radios, no daily newsletters, no news magazines. But they had heard about Peter! And they had heard about Aeneas! True, it may have taken a few hours to cover ten miles – about the distance of running 40 laps around a track. But the word got to them - as I am sure it got out to other places. After all, that healing was a miracle – a dramatic, spectacular one that got people's attention!

The believers in Joppa needed a miracle to restore Tabitha. And the person they believed could do it was only ten miles away. They were confident in the power of their faith. So they acted on their faith. They got the power!

And God showed favor to their faith. Peter came to Joppa and was taken to the upper room where he was surrounded by a gathering of widows, weeping and showing him their clothes made by Tabitha. Clearing the room, Peter knelt in prayer invoking the power of the Spirit and preparing himself as the channel of God's spiritual power. And he

dom, and the New Weight Watchers 360 with spokesperson Jennifer Hudson. This song, 'The Power', by the group Snap! is particularly known for its hook: "I've got the power!"

Power is something each of us possesses to some degree or another. It is the ability to do something - the capacity to act in a particular way - the capability to direct or influence the behavior of others - the faculty to sway the course of events - the competence to control people or organizations - the exercise of legal or official authority.

From a human perspective, we identify the source of power with physical strength – mental acuteness – moral integrity – exceptional skills – outstanding expertise – personal charisma – social status – mastery of knowledge. We tend to focus on power that is measured by or evident in the physical or material or human realm.

But an even more potent source of power – in fact the greatest power of all - is that of the Spirit of God. And we see it at work in the account of this healing miracle in Acts Chapter 9.

It is a touching story about the death of a woman who was a beloved and vital member of the Christian community in Joppa, an ancient Mediterranean seaport northwest of Jerusalem. She was a believer of great faith and deep compassion. Her ministry was doing good works and performing acts of charity to assist the poor and needy. She was especially concerned with helping widows who were some of the most vulnerable people in Biblical society. Without a male relative to provide for them widows were often destitute and dependent on the goodwill of others. This angel of mercy devoted her time and resources to making clothes for widows.

There is a lot we don't know about this unique woman. We don't know if she was young, middle-aged or elderly. We don't know if she was unmarried, married or a widow. Although she must have had access to some resources to be able to provide clothing for widows, we don't know whether or not she was wealthy. We don't if she had been ill or what caused her unexpected death.

But one important thing we know about her is that she is referred to as '*mathetria*', the Greek word for female disciple that only appears three times in the Book of Acts (9:1-2, 38; 18:24-26b). She was a committed Christian who selflessly demonstrated the love of Christ by caring for those in need.

The other thing we know about her is that her name, which means Gazelle, is translated in the text in Aramaic as Tabitha, and Greek as Dorcas – indicating that her ministry of sharing and generosity reached out among both Jewish and Hellenistic or Gentile believers. This tells us that this saintly woman was well known and highly regarded as a leader in both communities.

The power of the gift of love and compassion with which Dor-

as Chairperson of the Commission on Women In Ministry for the 2000-2004 Quadrennium. Officers elected to serve during the 2000-2004 Quadrennium were: Rev. Dr. Lois Poag-Ray (2nd District), First Vice President; Rev. Kimberly L. Detherage, Esq. (1st District), Second Vice President; Rev. Izora Johnson Adamson (7th District), Third Vice President; Rev. Tabitha Lucas Miller (7th District), General Secretary; Rev. Joni Dent Clark (4th District), Corresponding Secretary; Rev. Pamela Mason (5th District), Financial Secretary; Rev. Deloris Prioleau (2nd District), Treasurer; Rev. Faith Maycock (11th District), Worship Director; and Rev. Elizabeth Scott (3rd District), Herstorlographer. Rev. Pretty Masuku (19th District) was elected as Overseas Coordinator providing liaison with the four Episcopal District Presidents in Central and Southern Africa. The Reverends Drs. Jacquelyn Grant and Teresa Fry Brown continued as Consultants.

During Rev. Blair's term of office, a number of initiatives were taken to strengthen and expand the organization. The bylaws were revised; the offices of Herstorlographer and Overseas Coordination for Southern Africa were established; the establishment of seminary campus chapters was approved; a new dues system was established for the global districts; activities and reporting were structured programmatically and by committees; reporting forms were restructured; legislation was approved to include the Connectional President in the *Book of Doctrine and Discipline* as a voting member of the General Conference; the Jacquelyn Grant Sister to Sister Fund was established to assist women in ministry from the global districts; the Jarena Lee Appreciation Awards Breakfast was launched to pay tribute to individuals for their support of AME/WIM; the service of installation of connectional officers elected for the quadrennium was scheduled at the site of the annual meeting of the General Board/Bishops' Council; in each quadrennium a connectional conference was held (January 1999 in St. Louis, Missouri, with the theme "*Living On Holy Ground*"; and June 2002 in Tampa, Florida with the theme, "*God's Women Growing With Grace: Tools For a New Day*") with a closing Ecumenical Heritage Breakfast to honor trailblazing women in ministry in the AME Church and other denominations; a commemorative service was held at Mt. Pisgah AME Church in Lawnside, New Jersey, the burial place of Mrs. Jarena Lee, the spiritual foremother of AME women in ministry, and a framed sketch of her was presented to the church as a permanent memorial; a second official AME/WIM hymn was commissioned and written by Deborah Burney of the Fifth Episcopal District; an AME/WIM kente stole was created; and membership was established with the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA/Women In Ministry. In addition, AME/WIM took leadership in developing legislation revising the AME Church Clergy Misconduct Policy and including it in the *Book of Doctrine and Discipline*.

On July 4, 2004 in Indianapolis, Indiana at the seat of the 47th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference, Rev. Dr. Lois A. Poag-Ray

ABOUT WOMEN IN MINISTRY

African Methodist Episcopal Women in Ministry (AME/WIM) is the official professional organization for women pursuing excellence in ministry in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.

AME/WIM is an international organization serving the 20 Episcopal Districts of the AME Church in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean and the continents of Africa, Asia, South America and Europe.

AME/WIM is led by an Executive Board elected by the active membership - women preachers from across the Connectional AME Church.

AME/WIM currently serves supports and provides encouragement to more than four thousand women serving in ministerial capacities at every level throughout the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

AME/WIM 2016–2020 QUADRENNIAL THEME

In September of 2016 the Executive Board of AME/WIM intentionally assessed the state of Women in Ministry in the AME Church by reviewing the commissioning mission, purpose and objectives of AME/WIM. In doing so, the board gave prayerful thought and consideration to the denominations Quadrennial Theme - “The African Methodist Episcopal Church: A Social Justice and Liberating Faith.”

Trusting in the stated and inferred commitment of the AME Church to justice, and believing that the pursuit of justice includes Gender Justice, Connectional AME/WIM established the **2016-2020 Quadrennial theme: “Standing United, Moving Forward, Stronger Together”** based on Numbers 27:6-7 (NRSV)

6 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 7 The daughters of Zelophehad [the women] are right in what they are saying; you shall indeed let them possess an inheritance among their father’s brothers and pass the inheritance of their father on to them.

#Standing United

AME/WIM is unified and focused on empowering and encouraging WIM across the connection.

#Moving Forward

AME/WIM is intentional about focusing on the future of our church, we are faith forward. We belong to a new generation and we are focused on exercising our gifts, fulfilling our pur-

All: Who was the first woman licensed to preached in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Who reminds us to always honor the call of God on our lives. Who taught us to resist with boldness, to lead with wisdom and to preach the gospel in season and out of season. Amen.

We Got The Power

A Sermon By Rev. Sandra Elaine Hanson Smith Blair

*Past President and Consultant to the AME/WIM Connectional Executive Board
Associate Minister, St. Paul AME Church, Berkeley, California
Adjunct Faculty, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California*

³⁶Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, “Please come to us without delay.” ³⁹So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, “Tabitha, get up.” Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴²This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

(Acts 9:36-43 – NRSV)

In January 1990, an album was released by two German dance music producers. A particular single on this became a massive international hit and was one of the defining pop singles of that year. It was the first rap based track to hit #1 in the United Kingdom. Versions of the song were released by a number of solo singers and groups. Portions of the sound recording were reused in different songs by over 40 prominent hip-hop and dance artists. By 2010, the song had been featured in 14 movies, including ‘The Fresh Prince of Bel Air’. In 2013 it was sung at the 70th birthday celebration of Queen Silvia of Sweden. It has inspired television commercials for products such as the Duracell Energizer battery, a major home improvement store in the United King-

People: *May we, also, believe and live your Word, O Lord.*

Reader: O Lord, how grateful we are for Jarena Lee and all others who do not judge your creation with old eyes, but who look with new eyes upon everything that you have made because they believe and live your Word: "If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see everything has become new."

People: *May we, also, become new and look with new eyes, O Lord.*

Reader: O Lord, make us ministers of reconciliation, reconciled to you, reconciled to one another in Your Name.

People: *May we, also, be made ministers of reconciliation, O Lord. We ask this in Your Glorious Name. Amen.*

"In The Company of My Sisters" Inc.
Reverend Edna M. Parker
February 8, 2018

Leader: We walk in the company of our sisters who have gone before, sisters of the faith both named and unnamed.

Sisters: They are mothers, judges, prophets, poets, preachers, bishops, teachers; who are near us in the shadow of awareness, in the crevices of memory, in the landscape of our dreams.

Leader: We walk in the company of you whose names have been lost and silenced.

Sisters: Who kept and cradled the wisdom of the ages.

Leader: We walk in the company of Bishop Sarah Frances Davis.

Sisters: Who reminded us that the effectual fervent prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective.

Leader: We walk in the company of Sojourner Truth.

Sisters: Who stood against oppression, righteously declaring, "Ain't I A Woman."

Leader: We walk in the company of the Reverend Lillian Friar Webb.

Sisters: Who taught us that "In every caterpillar there is a butterfly."

Leader: We walk in the company of Alice Walker.

Sisters: Who named the lavender color of womanist strength.

Leader: We walk in the company of the Reverend Jarena Lee.

pose, individually and collectively, in possessing the promises of God.

#Stronger Together

AME/WIM pursues justice for all. All WIM are equally valued, and we seek to have everyone share equitably in the distribution of power, knowledge, resources and access to leadership.

The story of Zelophehad's daughters is one of encouragement, empowerment, and engagement.

The Bible mentions Zelophehad's daughters by name five times and gives legitimacy to their pursuit of justice – Gender Justice.

- Numbers 26:33; 27:1-7; 36:1-12;
- Joshua 17:1-6; and
- 1 Chronicles 7:15

HERSTORY OF AME/WIM

AME Women have proclaimed the gospel since the inception of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church in 1787. Jarena Lee (1783-18??), the first preaching woman, was allowed by Richard Allen to preach and was licensed but was refused ordination. Both women and men sought to persuade the church to recognize the call of women to the preaching ministry. In 1844, 1848 and 1852, petitions to the General Conference to license women were rejected, and in 1864 the General Conference let a resolution to license women die. In 1888, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner's 1885 ordination of Sarah A. Hughes as a Deacon in the North Carolina Conference was overturned by the General Conference, but the licensing of women as local preachers was approved though it prohibited them being assigned and defined their role as evangelists. The Church began ordaining women as Local Deacon in 1948 and Local Elder in 1956 but not until 1960 were women ordained to Itinerant orders.

After the 1960 General Conference permitted the ordination of women as Itinerant Elders, Rev. Carrie Thomas Hooper (1894-1996) announced her run for the Episcopacy, becoming the first woman to run for the Episcopacy at the 1964, General Conference in Cincinnati, OH. Rev. Hooper offered herself for Episcopal Service five times: 1964 General Conference- 11 votes; 1968 General Conference-12 votes; 1972 General Conference-29 votes; 1976 General Conference-54 votes; and 1980 General Conference- 4 votes

Efforts over recent decades to affirm the role and equality of women in the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and to address the need for eliminating discrimination and injustices based on gender were

initiated at the 1976 General Conference held in Atlanta, Georgia when a position paper written by Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant was presented on the status of women, and the female ministers of the A.M.E. Church met to voice their concerns about the lack both of representative participation in the governing process of the Church and of incentives for females to enter A.M.E. ministry.

When a delegation of women (including Reverends Grant, Nurjhan Govan, Alyson Browne Johnson, Mary Ann Bellinger, Alice McNair, and Jeane B. Williams) took these issues before the 1977 session of the Council of Bishops, held in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the Council reaffirmed its interest in women's concerns and appointed Bishops John Hurst Adams, and Frank Madison Reid, Jr. to work with the Ad Hoc Committee on Women in Ministry as advisors. Between 1977 and 1980 the Committee, chaired by Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant with Rev. Jeane B. Williams as Acting Chairperson, conducted research on the herstory of women in ministry in the A.M.E. Church and compiled information on the location of women across the Connection.

In 1980, women in ministry representing eight episcopal districts met at the site of the 41st Quadrennial Session of the General Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. Rev. Jeane B. Williams of the First Episcopal District was elected President. During the quadrennium Rev. Ida V. James (4th District) served as Vice-Chairperson; and the office of Secretary/Treasurer was held successively by the Reverends Gwendolyn McCoy, Gertrude Foster and Caria Sneed. A restructured Committee on Women in Ministry began working with the Bishops to have coordinators appointed to represent the female clergy in their episcopal districts as well as compiling a directory of women in ministry and planning a conference of clergywomen in the AME Church which was held in Atlanta, Georgia in January 1983. Rev. Williams provided leadership until 1984 with oversight assigned to Bishop Vinton R. Anderson, Chairperson of the Commission on Liturgy and Worship.

In 1984 Rev. Carolyn Tyler (now Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry) of the Fifth Episcopal District was elected President in Kansas City, Missouri at the seat of the 42nd Quadrennial Session of the General Conference. She served until 1988 under the leadership of Bishop Frederick H. Talbot, Chairperson of the Commission on Ministry and Recruitment. During her term of office a connectional conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia in January 1986, the directory was updated, and drafting of the bylaws and policy for AME/WIM was initiated.

In 1988, at the seat of the 43rd Quadrennial Session of the General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas Rev. Lillian Frier Webb of the First Episcopal District was elected President of the Connectional AME/WIM organization and served until 1996. The Executive Board during her first term of office was: The Reverends Alyson Brown Johnson, (1st District), General Secretary; Gloria Barrett (3rd District), Corresponding Secretary; Lillian Benjamin Rainey (2nd District) and Sherryl A. Matlock

ALL: May the Reverend Jarena Lee's courage and her tenacity to persevere continue to be a torch that lights the path for women fighting for religious equality everywhere. AMEN!

Written by Reverend Pamela Rivera
Connectional AME/WIM Director of Worship and Liturgy 2016-2020
Tenth Episcopal District
2/9/2019

JARENA LEE LITANTY (5th Episcopal District)

This worship service honoring Jarena Lee was designed in 1997 by the Program Committee of the Fifth Episcopal District AME/WIM for use in WIM meetings or church services

Reader: O Lord, thank you for Jarena Lee, first among preaching women in the African Methodist Church. May we be inspired and encouraged by her deep Love for You and all people...

People: *Yes, Lord.*

Reader: and by her recognition of the great gift you gave her and her determination to bring it forth into the world as You directed...

People: *Yes, Lord.*

Reader: and by the courage and commitment she evidenced in enduring great hardships in order to fulfill Your mission.

People: *May we, also, move with courage and commitment, O Lord.*

Reader: O Lord, thank you for Jarena Lee who brought thousands to the bounty of your table because she believed and lived Your Word: "Our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

People: *May we, also, be competent ministers of your new covenant, O Lord.*

Reader: O Lord, thank you a thousand times for men and women like Richard Allen and Jarena Lee who believed and lived Your Word: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set a liberty them that are bruised."

All: *“And why should it be thought impossible, heterodox, or improper for a woman to preach, seeing the Savior died for the woman as well as the man?” Second, “If the man may preach, because the Saviour died for him, why not the woman, seeing he died for her also?” Third, “Is he not a whole Saviour, instead of a half one, as those who hold it wrong for a woman to preach, would seem to make it appear?”*

Leader: Let us affirm as spiritual descendants of Rev. Jarena Lee we may instruct and inspire and continue the vision to be proclaimers of the truth, empowers of the disenfranchised, and servants of the Church.

Congregants: Let it be so. Let it be so

Litany in Celebration of Rev. Jarena Lee

She Shall Not Fall!

Leader: God is no respecter of person; gender is not the criteria for those whom God calls or chooses;

People: God looks at the heart.

Leader: God did not instruct us to march to the cadence of genderism, sexism or any other ism that may restrict and bind our mandate to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

People: We are called to obedience to God and we are free from the chains and weights of humanity that attempts to keep us quiet, still and fearful.

Leader: The voice of history still speaks encouraging us to press forward and not give in to the pressures of those who disavow the call to preach, the call to teach and the call to evangelize based upon gender.

People: We must go where God sends us and say what God tells us to whomever God directs us to speak. Silence is not an option!

Leader: Jarena Lee heard a call beyond her own inter-consciousness to go and preach the Good News.

People: Although unpopular and not sanctioned by the social and religious norms of her day Jarena Lee dared to say yes to the mantel of ministry with authority, boldness and buoyancy.

Leader: Jarena Lee stood firm on her call to preach and did not allow anyone or anything dictate or derail her Kingdom assignment.

(10th District), Regional Assistant Secretaries; E. Anne Henning Byfield (4th District), Treasurer; Rolyn Dix, (13th District), Financial Secretary; Pearlina Chase (16th District); Historiographer; Esmay Walsh, Worship Leader; Deborah K. Blanks, (1st District), Parliamentarian. Consultants were: Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant (6th District), Rev. Elizabeth Scott (3rd District), Presiding Elder Cornelia Wright (3rd District), and Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward (1st District).

During Rev. Webb's second term of office the Executive Board officers were: The Reverends Carolyn Tyler Guidry (appointed Presiding Elder in the 5th District in 1994), First Vice President; Gloria Barrett (3rd District), Second Vice President; Sherryl A. Matlock (10th), Third Vice President; Alyson Brown Johnson (1st District), General Secretary; Sarah Frances Davis (10th District), Financial Secretary; Rev. E. Anne Henning Byfield (4th District), Treasurer; Gertrude Trescott (7th District), Worship Director; Rev. Elizabeth Scott (3rd District), Historiographer.

The General Board at its 1989 meeting in Houston, Texas voted to establish a 19-member Commission on Women in Ministry and appointed as Chairperson, Bishop Robert Thomas, Jr. Presiding Prelate of the Nineteenth Episcopal District. In 1992 at Orlando, Florida, the 44th Session of the General Conference took the historic step, during the business session at which Bishop H. Harford Brookins presided, of accepting the resolution to admit the Commission on Women in Ministry. Bishop McKinley Young, Presiding Prelate of the Fifteenth Episcopal District, was assigned as Chairperson for the 1992-1996 Quadrennium.

The by-laws governing the Connectional AME/WIM were also adopted by the General Conference at that time, thereby empowering the organization to pursue its objectives which as listed below reflect more recent revisions approved by the subsequent General Conferences:

To recognize and support women in ministry as an integral part of the AME Church.

To raise the consciousness of the A.M.E. Church on women's issues.

To address the issue of sexism in the A.M.E. Church.

To address issue of opportunities for women in ministry in the A.M.E. Church.

To support women in the pastoral ministry.

To affirm specialized ministries, for example: chaplaincy, writing, teaching, counseling, research, prison, youth, geriatric, singles, street, health care, family/life relations, music, homeless, HIV/AIDS and religious education ministries.

To encourage academic training for ministry.

of the Second Episcopal District was elected Connectional President of AME/WIM. This General Conference was also a herstoric Conference that elected not one but two women to the Bench of Bishops – Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry of the Fifth Episcopal District and Bishop Sarah Frances Taylor Davis of the Tenth Episcopal District. Bishop Davis was assigned to the Eighteenth Episcopal District and to serve as Chairperson of the Commission on Women in Ministry for the 2004-2008 Quadrennium. The other officers elected to the Executive Board were: First Vice-President, Rev. Delphine L. Vasser (10th District); Second Vice-President, Rev. Kimberly L. Dethrage, Esq. (1st District); Third Vice-President, Rev. Diane Burl (12th District); General Secretary, Rev. Aleta Pearson (12th District); Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Carolyn Davis (7th District); Financial Secretary, Rev. Pamela Mason (5th District); Treasurer, Rev. Deloris Prioleau (2nd District); Worship Director, Rev. Faith Maycock (11th District); Herstoriographer, Rev. Barbara J. Barbour (2nd District); and Rev. Pretty Masuku Harrison (19th District), Coordinator for Central and Southern Africa. Three consultants to the Executive Board also assisted with the work of AME/WIM: Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant, and Rev. Dr. Teresa L. Fry Brown, and Rev. Sandra Smith Blair, Immediate Past President.

The theme selected for the 2004-2008 Quadrennium was, “*God’s Women Launching Out Into the Deep*”. The tradition was continued of worship services being held on the Sunday evening before the opening of the annual General Board meetings. In June 2005, along with the installation of officers at the seat of the General Board meeting in Dallas, Texas (10th District), the Fifth Annual Jarena Lee Appreciation Award Breakfast was held, and in June 2006 the Sixth Annual Jarena Lee Appreciation Award Breakfast was held in North Charleston, South Carolina (7th District). Following the close of the June 2006 General Board meeting, the 7th Quadrennial Conference with the theme, “*Celebrating Herstories: A Legacy of First Fruits*” featured plenary sessions, worship services, workshops, and the closing Ecumenical Heritage Prayer Breakfast. The Executive Board adopted a ‘shared governance’ model of leadership involving the Presidents and Vice Presidents, and committed to consensus decision making. An AME/WIM website was initiated to expedite dissemination of news and information. The vision for AME/WIM campus chapters that was formalized in the revised Bylaws approved by the General Conference in 2004 was realized with the establishment of a chapter at Payne Theological Seminary, announced at the installation of Rev. Dr. Leah Gaskin Fitchue as the first female President of the seminary in November 2004. President Lois Poag-Ray was nominated by Ecumenical Officer, Bishop E. Earl McCloud, Jr, to serve as the Pan-Methodist member on the United Methodist Church Commission on the Status and Role of Women. Collaboration was initiated with Rev. Dr. Paula Matabane, film producer and Professor of Radio, T.V., and Film at Howard University in Washington, D.C. on a film documentary on AME/WIM; and the publication, *Herstory: Traveling Down Memory Lane-Remembering the Past; Living the Present* was compiled

Tenth Episcopal District
2018’

**In Remembrance of Rev. Jarena Lee
Written by Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield**

- Leader: We have entered this sanctuary remembering the life of Rev. Jarena Lee.
- Congregants: Through her witness, we know our doubts will diminish while our faith will prevail.
- Leader: We are here without fear and hesitation to proclaim the power of God,
- Congregants: for we have spirit of Rev. Jarena Lee’s prophetic rhetoric and zeal.
- Leader: Her spiritual autobiography is more than her story
- Congregants: It is a testimony for the unquenchable search for justice, we also seek.
- Leader: Our beloved Bishop Richard Allen did not initially agree with Jarena Lee about her godly call to preach saying the “Discipline knew nothing at all about . . . women preachers.”
- Congregants: Her response represented her strength and tenacity to serve her God and her Church: “*O how careful ought we be, lest through our bylaws of church government and discipline, we bring into disrepute even the word of life.*”
- Leader: Her response confronted Bishop Allen that nothing is impossible with God.
- Congregants: Her life’s witness demonstrated that “possibility” with many saved, churches built, and communities restored with schools, and mission support. Further in 2016, she finally received posthumously, her full ordination.
- Leader: Her courage laid the foundation that the church of Allen is a place of empowerment and utilization for all marginalized people.
- Congregants We give glory to God for her boldness and ask that we continue to journey for full equality for women and other marginalized people in the church of Allen and beyond, remembering:

- 2013** Bishop Sarah Frances Davis (126th) dies on November 9, 2013
- 2016** Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield (135th) elected a Bishop in the AME Church
- 2016** General Conference passes a resolution to confer on Jarena Lee, making her The Reverend Jarena Lee
- 2017** Presiding Elder Dorothy Millicent Morrison dies at the age of 103.

RESPONSIVE READINGS/ LITANIES/CALLS TO WORSHIP

Call to Worship in Celebration of Rev. Jarena Lee

Leader: I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

People: In obedience to the call and command of God, we gather together as believers and the Bride of Christ.

Leader: As People of the Anvil, we stand together upon the foundation of unwavering faith, unshakable hope and steadfast determination to give gratitude to God in this sacred place.

People: We give thanks and lift up holy hands to the God of creation and the Sustainer of life for the opportunity to serve the Lord, the Church, and humanity with gladness.

Leader: With grateful hearts we collectively lift our voices to sing a new song with passion and power celebrating the gift of leadership recognizing those who are called to the frontline of ministry and mission: male and female.

People: Where two or three are gathered together, touching and agreeing, the Lord will be in the center.

All: How blessed we are, in the presence of God: Standing United, Moving Forward, Stronger Together. Come, let us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. AMEN!

By Reverend Pamela R. Rivera,

Connectional AME/WIM Director of Worship and Liturgy 2016-2020

by Connectional Herstorlographer Barbara Barbour for distribution at the 2008 General Conference. The Executive Board's Legislative Committee with the leadership of Connectional Second Vice President, Kimberly Detherage, Esq. prepared bills for submission to the General Conference proposing revisions and clarification of the clergy sexual misconduct policy as well as to the AME/WIM Bylaws, and including AME/WIM in the listing of General Conference Committees.

On July 6, 2008 in St. Louis, Missouri at the seat of the 48th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference, Rev. Kimberly L. Detherage, Esq. of the First Episcopal District was elected Connectional President of AME/WIM. Bishop Jeffrey Nathaniel Leath was assigned as Chairperson of the Commission on Women in Ministry for the 2008-2012 Quadrennium.

The other elected officers were: First Vice-President, Rev. Carolyn Habersham (5th District); Second Vice-President, Rev. Francine A. Brookins, Esq. (5th District); Third Vice-President, Rev. Katurah York Cooper (14th District); General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Betty Deas Clark (7th District); Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Dr. Monica Spencer (2nd District); Financial Secretary, Rev. Karla J. Cooper (5th District); Treasurer, Rev. Cynthia Harvin (2nd District); and Worship Director, Rev. Shirley Inkton Bowers (12th District). During the Quadrennium the Executive Board voted to accept Rev. Lola S. Gresham Russell (6th District) to fill the office of Herstorlographer.

In addition to the elected officers, three consultants to the Executive Board continued to assist with the work of AME/WIM: Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant, Rev. Dr. Teresa L. Fry Brown, and Rev. Sandra Smith Blair, Past President.

During the General Conference in 2008, the women of Districts 14-20 met and elected Presiding Elder Mapeete Mokhosi (18th District) to serve as Coordinator for Central and Southern Africa and provide, with the establishment of the 20th Episcopal District, liaison with the five Episcopal District Presidents in the region. The quadrennial theme for 2004-2008 was "Navigating the Space Between Call and Response: Stewardship of our Finances, Interpersonal Relationships, Self-Care & Institutional Relationships.

In July 2012, at the 49th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference held in Nashville Tennessee, Rev. Kimberly L. Detherage, Esq. was elected to serve a second term as Connectional President of AME/WIM. Bishop Clement W. Fugh was assigned to the Fourteenth Episcopal District and to serve as the Chairperson of the Commission on Women in Ministry. The other officers elected were First Vice President, Rev. Carolyn Habersham (8th District); Second Vice President, Rev. Francine A. Brookins, Esq. (5th District) ; Third Vice President, Rev. Dr. Erika D. Crawford, (1st District); General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Betty Deas Clark, (7th District); Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Dr. Monica Spencer, (16th District); Financial Secretary, Rev. Tyronda

Howse Burgess, (13th District); Treasurer, Rev. Cynthia L. Harvin, (2nd District); and Worship Director, Rev. Pamela Rivera, (10th District). Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant, Rev. Dr. Teresa L. Fry Brown, and Rev. Sandra Smith Blair, Past President, continue to serve as Consultants to the Executive Board.

During Rev. Detherage's tenure several initiatives and goals have been initiated and implemented. The main goal has been to strengthen the internal structure of AME/WIM and increase the means of communication, dialogue and interaction among women in ministry throughout the 20 Episcopal Districts. Bimonthly teleconference meetings with the Episcopal District Presidents have been instituted. AME/WIM was one of the organizations that submitted legislation to increase the age of the persons entering the itinerancy. One major change to the AME/WIM bylaws was the implementation of the election of all officers on all levels of AME/WIM. No longer are the Episcopal District Presidents appointed by the Bishop or the Coordinators appointed by the Presiding Elders. A new interactive website has been established; a data base was created on the *amewim.com* website to gather statistical information about women in ministry; the organization has actively engaged in social media as a means of communication; and fiscal accountability has been maintained. In 2008, the AME/WIM logo was created by Obverse. AME/WIM also initiated the Jarena Lee Foundation, contributed \$5,747 to the 16th Episcopal District Haiti Relief; and contributed AMEC publications to the 16th Episcopal District Ministry Empowerment Institute.

The April-June 2010 edition of the the *A.M.E. Church Review* was dedicated to A.M.E. Women in Ministry and Leadership. Women in Ministry from across the Connection contributed articles, sermons, theological papers, letters, historical data and biblical studies on women in ministry.

In 2010, AME/WIM organized and successfully held the 8th Quadrennial AME/WIM Conference in Philadelphia, the First Episcopal District: "*Celebrating 50 years of women's ordination as Itinerant Elders in the AMEC, 1960-2010.*" More than 249 women from 16 Episcopal Districts were in attendance at this 3-day event that included: sermonic witness from all three women Bishops in the AMEC; engaging learning sessions; a pilgrimage to Mt. Pisgah AME Church in Lawnside, New Jersey, the gravesite of Mrs. Jarena Lee, the first woman to be licensed to preach in the A.M.E. Church; and provided women clergy within this church an opportunity to celebrate, dialogue and worship together from the context of the Christian ministry that we share.

At the 49th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference held in Nashville, Tennessee, in July 2012, AME/WIM presented its preliminary statistical data on AME/WIM. In addition, AME/WIM submitted a resolution commemorating the July 21st, 2012 centenary of the Rev. Dorothy Millicent Stephens Morris, whom Bishop Frederick H. Talbot

second time

- 1972** Rev. Carrie Thomas Hooper runs for the Episcopacy for the third time.
- 1973** Bishop Frederick H. Talbot broke with the tradition of nearly two centuries when he appointed Reverend Dorothy Millicent Stephens Morris Acting Presiding Elder (16th Episcopal District)
- 1976** Rev. Carrie Thomas Hooper runs for the Episcopacy for the fourth time
- 1976** Rev. Jacquelyn Grant presents a position paper on Women in Ministry
- 1977** Ad Hoc WIM Committee established with Rev. Jacquelyn Grant as chair
- 1980** Rev. Carrie Thomas Hooper runs for the Episcopacy for the fifth time
- 1983** Bishop Reverend Vinton R. Anderson appointed Rev. Cornelia Wright Presiding Elder, making her the first female Presiding Elder in the United States.
- 1988** The Commission on African Methodist Episcopal Women In Ministry established
- 1992** The Commission on African Methodist Episcopal Women In Ministry admitted by the General Conference
- 1996** Rev. Carrie Thomas Hooper dies at the age of 102
- 1996** Recommendation to the General Conference to elect a female clergy to the Episcopacy
- 1996** Bishop C Garnett Henning encouraged the General Conference to revisit the AME Church motto, noting that its language was "un-inclusive"
- 2000** Dr. Jayme Coleman Williams, the first elected female General Officer, presented a Special Resolution in compliance with rule #15 in support of elected a female to the Episcopacy.
- 2000** Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie (117th) is elected the first female Bishop in the AME Church
- 2004** Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry (122nd) and Bishop Sarah Frances Davis (126th) elected Bishops in the AME Church
- 2012** Rev. Teresa Fry Brown, PhD, elected as Historiographer making her the first clergywoman to hold a General Office.
- 2012** Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry (122nd) retires.

IN THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

- 1787** Founding of the AME Church
- 1809** Jarena Lee denied licensed to preach
- 1817 / 1819** Jarena Lee licensed to preach
- 18??** Death of Jarena Lee
- 1848** Ordination of women comes before the General Conference for consideration in the form of a petition by the Daughters of Zion. The General Conference granted permission for women to preach in churches and receive licenses, but not ordination.
- 1852** Ordination of women comes before the General Conference for the second time, it is again rejected.
- 1856** Ordination of women comes before the General Conference for the third time, it is again rejected.
- 1868** Ordination of women comes before the General Conference for the fourth time, this leads to the creation of the office of Stewardess, female evangelist, and deaconess.
- 1884** Women were licensed to preach in the AME Church.
- 1885** Bishop Henry McNeal Turner ordained Sarah Hughes an itinerant deacon
- 1887** Ordination of women rescinded by Bishop Jabez P. Campbell
- 1888** The General Conference affirms Bishop Campbell's order to rescind the ordination of Sarah Hughes. Women are confirmed as Evangelist.
- 1936** Martha Jane Keys, a pastor and evangelist from Kentucky, initiated the legal challenge to women's exclusion from ordination introducing a bill at the General Conference calling for the ordination of women. The bill failed.
- 1948** The General Conference authorized the ordination of women as Local Deacons
- 1956** The General Conference authorized the ordination of women as Local Deacons
- 1960** The General Conference authorized the ordination of women as Itinerants
- 1964** Rev. Carrie Thomas Hooper of the New York Annual conference becomes the first female candidate for the Episcopacy
- 1968** Rev. Carrie Thomas Hooper runs for the Episcopacy for a

appointed as the first female Presiding Elder in the A.M.E. Church and the 16th Episcopal District. The resolution was adopted by the General Conference and in August 2012 was presented to Rev. Morris by President Kimberly L. Detherage who travelled to Guyana, South America to join Bishop Sarah F. Davis and the 16th Episcopal District in celebrating Rev. Morris' 100th birthday with her. Also, at the General Conference, a book of articles published by AME/WIM about Women in Ministry using the Quadrennial Theme "*Navigating the Space Between Call & Response: Stewardship of Finances, Physical and Spiritual Self Care, Interpersonal Relationships and Institutional Relationships*" was sold out and is currently being updated for a second edition.

In September 2012, the Executive Board met and set its goals and objectives for the 2012-2016 Quadrennium, the theme for which is "Positioned to Lead: Take Thou Authority" (1 Corinthians 9:1-2, Message Bible). In December 2012 at its meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas, the General Board adopted the following recommendations made by AME/WIM and presented by the Commission on Women in Mission which stated:

That the AME Church, through its Bishops and Presiding Elders, be intentional in considering the educational background and experience of all clergy, in particular women, as they make Pastoral assignments and recommendations for persons to serve in areas of leadership in which women clergy are underrepresented: in the delegation to the General Conference; on the General Board; and on Episcopal District and Annual Conference Committees such as the Board of Examiners, Board of Trustees, Ministerial Efficiency, Judiciary and Finance.

That the AME Church, through its Bishops and Presiding Elders, be intentional about including women in ministry as worship participants, workshop presenters, teachers and trainers at Episcopal District, Annual Conference, and Presiding Elder District conferences and events.

In June 2013 at its meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, the General Board adopted a recommendation made by AME/WIM and presented by the Commission on Women in Ministry that a report card be developed to measure the recommendations of inclusivity of women in ministry on all levels of the church as stated in the above two points. At the June 2014 General Board meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, AME/WIM presented to the Commission on Women in Ministry preliminary data on the report card it created to measure inclusivity.

On August 6-9, 2014, the 9th quadrennial conference of women in ministry will be held in Charleston, South Carolina. The conference theme is "*Mission Possible: Positioned to Lead: Take Thou Authority*". The conference is dedicated to the memory of Bishop Sarah Frances Taylor Davis, Presiding Prelate of the Sixteenth Episcopal District, who

passed away on November 9, 2013. The theme, "Mission Possible", which was selected for her investiture as President of the Council of Bishops of the A.M.E. Church in Kingston, Jamaica on June 24, is the guiding principal of our Quadrennial Conference theme. As we position ourselves as leaders and emerging leaders in the A.M.E. Church and take our authority as women of God, we recognize that her life bears witness for us that the Mission is Possible. At the Friday, August 9 Service of Commitment and Surrender, the inaugural "Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Mission Possible Award: Influencing the World for Christ, Fulfilling the Great Commission" will be presented to a recipient who demonstrates a lifetime commitment to the ideology of Bishop Sarah Frances Davis and a dedication to the advancement of women in ministry.

We received notice on April 8, 2016, that the Council of Bishops gave serious consideration to and accepted the recommendation of the Commission on Women in Ministry to posthumously ordain Jarena Lee, the first woman preacher of the AME Church, at the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference in Philadelphia, PA.

The Posthumous Conferral of Honoris Causa Ministerial Title for Jarena Lee, "act of ordination," took place on July 13, 2016, two hundred twelve years after this phenomenal and fearless woman yielded the call. Dr. Teresa Fry Brown, Ph. D. composed and read a resolution to the General Assembly affirming that the Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church had "reviewed the life and legacy of Jarena Lee, examined her unquestionable devotion to God, read of her adherence to the duties and responsibilities of a minister in this Zion, and have seen and understood the evidence of her deep legacy now posthumously affirm the life and ministry by conferring the ministerial title Itinerant Elder to Reverend Jarena Lee (Honoris Causa)."

When the elections for General Office and the Episcopacy took place on Monday July 11, 2016, Dr. Teresa Fry Brown, Ph. D was re-elected as the Historiographer / Executive Director for The Department Of Research And Scholarship. Dr. Brown was seated as the only woman General Officer, notwithstanding the candidacy of seven women. Later that day, Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield was made the 135th elected and consecrated Bishop of the church. Bishop Henning Byfield was one of five women candidates for the episcopacy and her election now means there are two active women Bishops on the Bench, the other being Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, the 117th elected and consecrated Bishop; and one retired woman, Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry, the 122nd elected and consecrated Bishop.

On Sunday July 10, 2016 at 2:30 PM at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, Women in Ministry convened their quadrennial elections. Candidates were asked to submit Statements of Interest, photos and videos to the nominating committee chaired by Rev. Sandra Smith Blair (5th District) by February 11, 2016, the birthday of Rev. Jarena Lee. This

information was shared with the constituents via the AME/WIM website and sent directly to members with email addresses on file.

All eligible voters were asked to present a picture I.D. upon arrival and sign in. Plans to vote via electronic ballot had to be abandoned due to technological challenges and as a result, voting took place via the traditional casting of ballots. Dr. Teresa Fry Brown, served as the chair of the election committee where Rev. Dr. Erika D. Crawford, (1st District) was elected President. The other officers elected were Rev. Ammie Davis, 1st Vice President (8th District); Rev. Dr. Monica Spencer, 3rd Vice President (16th District); Rev. Dr. Louise Jacksons, General Secretary (3rd District); Rev. Tyronda Howse Burgess, Financial Secretary (10th District); Rev. Angelique Mason, Treasurer (2nd District), Rev. Dr. Janie Dowdy-Dandridge (13th District), Herstorlographer; Rev. Pamela Rivera, Worship & Liturgy Director; Rev. Nomalunmgelo Pamella Vena (18th District), Central/Southern Africa Coordinator. At a later date the board appointed Rev. Joelynn Stokes, Esq., (4th District) as 2nd Vice President and Rev. Garland Higgins (6th District) as Communications Secretary to fill the vacancies of those office.

At the close of the General Conference Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield, a former connectional AME/WIM officer was appointed Chair of the Commission on Women In Ministry.

Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Grant, Rev. Dr. Teresa L. Fry Brown, and Rev. Sandra Smith Blair, Past President, continued to serve as Consultants to the Executive Board; and the board saw fit to diversify the consultants to reflect the various offices that clergy women in the AME Church hold, adding Presiding Elder Brenda Payne (10th District) and Chaplain Benita Livingston (13th District).

AME/WIM continues to celebrate the increasing number of women in ministry in the AMEC; the diversities of ministries which they are performing; the appointment of women to the pastorate, and to major charges; the number of women clergy holding Annual Conference offices such as Dean of the Board of Examiners and serving on the Board; membership on committees such as the Finance Committee; the inclusion of women as worship leaders, preachers and teachers at Conferences and Connectional meetings; the growing number of female Presiding Elders; the seating of women in the General Board; and the greater presence of women in the Episcopal District delegations to the General Conference.

Yet, we recognize that our mission also continuously calls us to keep pressing to eliminate sexist and discriminatory practices and that we must continue to raise our voices until there is full equity and inclusion of women in ministry in the life, ministry, and leadership of the A.M.E. Church.

HERSTORICAL TIMELINE OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY