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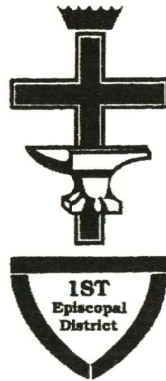
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First Episcopal District  
African Methodist Episcopal Church

# The Official Minutes

*The 4th Session*  
*Western New York Annual Conference*

May 10-12, 2000



CONVENED AT  
Israel African Methodist Episcopal Church  
381 Hamilton Street  
Albany, New York 12210

PHILIP R. COUSIN, *Bishop*  
REV. DR. ERNESTINE MIRIAM WARD, *Presiding Elder*  
REV. HAROLD L. RUTHERFORD, *Host Pastor*  
REV. DR. WAYNE A. JOHNSON, SR., *Chief Secretary*  
REV. DR. MICAH D. CHANDLER, *Assistant Secretary*

**First Day - Morning Session  
Wednesday, May 10, 2000**

The Fourth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church convening with the Israel AME Church, Albany, New York assembled for organization and opening worship service at the Lewis Swyer Theatre in New York State Plaza was called to order on Wednesday, May 10, 2000 at 8:45 A.M. by Bishop Philip R. Cousin, Sr., Presiding Prelate, First Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. After greeting the Annual Conference, Bishop Cousin read from Psalm 46.

The Bishop stated that in the midst of our difficulties that God is our present help. God is always there when we need Him and He continues to be our refuge and strength. The Bishop also stated that there is beauty in stillness and we must take the time to forget who we are and forget about our respective situations so that God can direct our lives. We spend too much time worrying about things that are insignificant and we should not become perplexed when there is no need to. God brings us out more than conquerors! In the midst of the storms of life, we must learn how to stand still remembering that God is a very present help in the time of trouble.

The Chief Secretary, the Reverend Wayne Arthur Jones, Sr. was then presented to read the Annual Conference Roll Call.

**ROLL CALL - MAY 2000**

<b>Itinerant Elders</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Bishop Philip R. Cousin, Sr. ....	X	
Rev. Ernestine M. Ward .....	X	
Rev. Natalie Alford .....	X	
Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley .....	X	
Rev. Ella Brandon .....	X	
Rev. Pedro A. Castro, Jr. ....	X	
Rev. Micah D. Chandler .....	X	
Rev. William Cobb, Jr. ....	X	
Rev. Thomas Davis .....	III	
Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. ....	X	
Rev. Elijah Green .....	Excused	
Rev. Kemperal J. Hinsley .....	X	
Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr. ....	X	
Rev. George L. Larkins, III .....	Excused	
Rev. Robert L. Reynolds .....	X	
Rev. Harold L. Rutherford .....	X	
Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse .....	X	
Rev. James C. Waters .....	(Superannuation)	

<b>Itinerant Deacons</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Rev. Betsy Crumity .....	X	
Rev. Percy Jones .....	X	

<b>Local Elders</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Rev. Rosalyn Baugh .....	X	
Rev. Samuel L. Bell .....	X	
Rev. Robert Bradley .....	Excused	
Rev. Hester Duhart .....	III	
Rev. David Irving, Sr. ....	X	
Rev. Isabel M. Johnson .....	X	
Rev. Henry Lewis, Jr. ....	X	
Rev. Sandra Palmer .....	X	
Rev. Anne Hargrave-Pinn .....	III	
Rev. Nina Porter .....	X	
Rev. Burnie J. Savage .....	X	
Rev. Linda D. VanAlystne .....	X	

<b>Local Deacons</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Rev. Clarence Bass .....	III	
Rev. Olivia Eades .....	X	
Rev. Leeland Jones .....	Excused	
Rev. Grace Johnson .....	X	
Rev. Jeanette Johnson .....	X	
Rev. George McKnight .....	X	
Rev. Corrine A. Summers .....	X	

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE OFFICERS

<b>Name/Office</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Sister Erielyne McDaniel .....	P	
Conference Branch President		
Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse .....	P	
Vice Chairman Trustee Board		
Sister Toni Yvonne Harris .....	P	
Conference YPD Director		
Conference Director of Music		
Brother Thomas Davis .....	P	
Conference Lay President		

<b>Name/Office</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
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Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley ..... P  
Conference Evangelist President

Rev. Louis P. Attles ..... Transferred  
Conference Christian Ed. Chairman

Sister Thelma Lanier ..... P  
Conference Christian Ed. Director

Sister Deborah Bush-Wright ..... P  
Young Adult Network

Bro. Joe L. Thomas, Sr. .... P  
Conference Church School Supt.

Rev. Harold L. Rutherford ..... P  
Director of Stewardship  
Dean of Ministerial Institute  
Chairman, Board of Examiners

### END OF ROLL CALL

The following changes were made to the Annual Conference Roll:

#### Transfers:

<b>Name</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
The Rev. Louis P. Attles	WNY Conf.	NJ Conf.
The Rev. Joseph N. Cousin	WNY Conf.	Phil. Conf.
The Rev. Dr. Dennis Dickerson	WNY Conf.	13th Episcopal District

The Secretariat extends its apology to the Rev. Lorraine Fields-Bradley for omitting her name in the listing of the Itinerant Elders of the Western New York Annual Conference Roll Call. Presiding Elder Ward was then called upon to read the organization for the Annual Conference.

**Western New York Annual Conference Organization**

- Presiding Prelate ..... Bishop Philip Robert Cousin, Sr.
- Episcopal Supervisor ..... Dr. M. Joan Cousin
- Chief Accountant ..... Dr. Joseph D. Tull
- Treasurer ..... The Rev. Norvell Goff, Sr.
- Chief Secretary ..... The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr.
- Assistant Secretary ..... The Rev. Micah D. Chandler
- Statistical Secretary ..... The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
- Chief of Protocol and  
Special Messenger to  
the Presiding Bishop ..... Bro. J. Carl Bland
- Conference Marshals ..... The Rev. Sandra Palmer  
The Rev. Isabel Johnson  
The Rev. William Cobb, Jr.  
Sister Lenora Johnson
- Reporters to the Church Papers ..... The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds  
Sister Fredia A. Hanley-Johnson
- Social Action ..... The Rev. Delores V. Wynn
- Reporter to the Secular Press ..... Sister A. Marie Goff  
The Rev. Micah D. Chandler
- Conference Church School Supt. .... Bro. Joe Thomas, Sr.
- Conf. Lay Organization President ..... Bro. Thomas Davis
- Conference Director of Music
- Conference YPD Director ..... Sister Toni Yvonne Harris
- President of the  
Conference Branch
- Women's Missionary Society ..... Sister Erielyne McDaniel
- Young Adult Network ..... Sister Deborah Bush-Wright
- WNYAC Representatives  
to the District Self Help Board ..... The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.  
The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse  
Sister Bertha Webb
- President Dept. of Evangelism ..... The Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley
- Conference Director of Stewardship .... The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford
- Christian Education Chairman ..... The Rev. Ella Brandon
- Christian Education Director ..... Sister Thelma Lainer

A motion was made by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. that the organization of the Conference be adopted. Motion carried.

Presiding Elder Ward then presented the organization of the Finance Committee:

**Finance Committee**

- The Rev. Richard Allen Stenhouse, Chairman
- The Rev. Dr. Ernestine M. Ward
- The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
- The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford
- The Rev. Micah D. Chandler
- The Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley
- The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr.
- The Rev. Ella Brandon
- The Rev. William Cobb, Jr.
- The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Treasurer
- Lay Members:
- Sister Lucretia Bowie
- Dr. Elmer Green
- Bro. Thomas Davis
- Sister Elizabeth Ruth

A motion was made by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. to receive the organization of the Finance Committee. Motion carried.

The organization of the Conference Trustee Board was then presented by Presiding Elder Ward:

**The Trustee Board**

- The Rev. Dr. Ernestine M. Ward
- The Rev. Micah D. Chandler
- The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford
- The Rev. William Cobb, Jr.
- The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr.
- The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
- The Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley
- The Rev. Robert Reynolds
- The Rev. Ella Brandon
- Lay Members
- Dr. Elmer Green
- Bro. Thomas Davis
- Sister Bertha Webb
- Sister Caroline Hoffman

A motion was made the Rev. Richard Allen Stenhouse and seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. to receive the organization of the Trustee Board. Motion carried.

The organization of the Judiciary Committee and Triers of Appeals was given by the Presiding Elder:

**The Judiciary Committee:**

The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford  
The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.  
The Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley  
The Rev. William Cobb, Jr.

**The Triers of Appeals:**

The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.  
The Rev. Micah D. Chandler  
The Rev. Natalie P. Alford  
The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds  
The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr.

A motion was made by the Rev. Richard Stenhouse and seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. to receive the organization of the Judiciary Committee and the Triers of Appeals. Motion carried. Bishop Cousin then asked the Presiding Elder to read for informational purposes only the members of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee.

**Ministerial Efficiency Committee:**

The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse  
The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds  
The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.  
The Rev. Ella Brandon  
The Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley  
The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr.  
The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford

The Lay Delegates to the Annual Conference were then read by the Presiding Elder.

**Delegates to the Annual Conference**

CHURCH	NAME
Bethel, Buffalo .....	Sis. Beverly Abram
Israel, Albany .....	Dr. Elmer L. Green
Saint John, Niagara Falls .....	Sis. Rosemary Mims
Baber, Rochester .....	Sis. Gayle Gayton
Agape, Buffalo .....	Sis. Delores A. Durant
Delaine-Waring, Buffalo .....	Bro. David Lewis
Bethel, Schenectady .....	Sis. Lucille Grimes

First Church, Lockport .....	Bro. Charles Jones
Saint Mark, Kingston .....	Sis. Rebecca Lowery
Payne, Chatham .....	Sis. Naomi Pitts
Bethel, Lackawanna .....	Sis. Lois Cobb
Bethel, Olean .....	The Rev. Rosalind Baugh
Bethel, Coxsackie .....	Sis. Lucretia P. Bowie
Bright Chapel, Syracuse .....	Sis. Angela P. McDowell
Saint James, Utica .....	The Rev. Samuel L. Bell
Mount Zion, Buffalo .....	Sis. Margie Truesdale

**Information given to the Conference:**

The Presiding Bishop noted that the Western New York Annual Conference is leading the way in supporting the new First District Insurance program. The Delaware and New England Annual Conferences are also supporting this new program.

All Pastoral Reports will be read this afternoon. Pastors are asked to be cognizant of the fact that others pastors have to read their reports.

The boundaries of the Annual Conference will be the first four rows on the left side of the theatre. The Annual Conference membership was then asked by our Presiding Bishop to prepare for the morning worship service.

**Opening Day Worship Service**

Out of District Guest present: The Reverend Jeanette Williams, 11th District First District Presiding Elders and Pastors visiting the Annual Conference:

**NEW YORK:**

The Rev. Dr. Larry Eugene Dixon, the Rev. David Byron Cousin, Sr., the Rev. Dr. O'Neil Mackey, Sr., The Rev. Henry A. Belin, Jr., the Rev. James E. Lawrence, the Rev. Melvin Wilson, the Rev. Bertha S. Wright, the Rev. Eugene Wright, the Rev. Robert A. Brown, The Rev. S. Frank Emmanuel, the Rev. Alice Hughes, the Rev. Shirley Dowling, the Rev. Floyd N. Black, the Rev. Robert Bailey and the Rev. A. Earl Jordan.

**NEW JERSEY:**

The Rev. Dr. Archie Richmond, the Rev. Alma Mack, the Rev. Lavern McClellan, the Rev. Donald Brown, the Rev. Louis P. Attles, the Rev. Edward Smart, the Rev. Howard L. Grant, and the Rev. Dr. John G. Ragin.

**PHILADELPHIA:**

The Rev. Dr. Alexander Stephens, the Rev. Dr. Herman Rhodes, the Rev. Dr. Carl D. Ogden, the Rev. Dr. Earl R. Jefferson, the Rev. Vernal E. Simms, the Rev. John Justice, and the Rev. Wassetta Moses.

NEW ENGLAND:

The Rev. Dr. Herbert L. Eddy, the Rev. Dr. Donald Tucker, and the Rev. Gregory G. Groover, Sr.

DELAWARE:

The Rev. Dr. Joseph D. Tull

Musical selections were: "Worthy Is The Lord", "Where You Gonna Run on Judgment Day?", "Lord of All", and "Let the Praise Begin." The Scripture Lessons were: Old Testament, Isaiah 53:4-10 and New Testament, I Corinthians 13:1-8.

Presiding Elder Ward presented the Bishop. Bishop Cousin greeted the Congregational Officers present and the out of District guests, the Episcopal district family and thanked Presiding Elder Ward for the very fine manner in which she has dedicated herself for the enhancement of this Annual Conference. It has been 63 years since an Annual Conference was held in Albany, New York. Thanks were also extended to the pastors and laity of this Annual Conference for their support in making a dream become a reality. It is the Bishop's hope that the Western New York Annual Conference will have life and vitality.

In presenting the preacher for the Annual Sermon, Bishop Cousin stated that in 1973, while pursuing his Doctor of Ministry degree at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, he was looking for Baber AME Church. He was unable to locate the church at that time. In 1993, his first New York Annual Conference would be held at Baber Church. "One plants, another waters but God gives the increase." Thank God for the vision of the late Dr. John Dixon and the tenacity of the preacher, the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. The Baber family hosted the 1999 Lay Biennial Convention as a result of the preacher of the hour's organizational skills. Bishop referred to him as "being productive, loyal and committed." The sermon hymn, "I've a Message from the Lord" was then sung.

The Baber Church combined choirs favored the Annual Conference with two selections, "It Shall be Done" and "Changed." The Annual Sermon Preacher was the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor, Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York. His sermon title was "Bitter Waters Made Sweet." The scripture text: Exodus 15: 22-27.

The invitation to Christian Discipleship was made by the preacher of the hour as the choir sang, "He's Sweet I Know." The Finance Committee was then called to receive the morning offering. Announcements were then made by the host pastor, Reverend Harold L. Rutherford.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion was then administered with Bishop Cousin serving as the chief celebrant. The Reverends Richard A. Stenhouse, Robert L. Reynolds, Lorraine Fields Bradley, Micah D. Chandler, and Wayne A.

Johnson, Sr. assisted in the distribution of the communion. Following communion, the Annual Conference sang "What a Fellowship" and the benediction was pronounced by the preacher of the morning, the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., "And the sang a hymn a went out."

First Day  
Afternoon Session

Devotions were conducted at 3:45 P.M. by members of the Western New York Annual Conference Department of Evangelism, the Rev. Lorraine Field Bradley, President.

Presiding Elder Ward read the summary for the Buffalo-Albany-Rochester District. The pastors of the District were then asked to be prepared to read. The pastors read in the following order:

CHARGE	PASTOR
Bethel, Buffalo .....	The Rev. Richard Stenhouse
Israel, Albany .....	The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford
St. John, Niagara Falls .....	The Rev. Micah D. Chandler
Baber, Rochester .....	The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
Agape, Buffalo .....	The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr.
Delaine-Warring, Buffalo .....	The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
Bethel, Schenectady .....	The Rev. Kemperal J. Hinsley
Payne, Chatham .....	The Rev. Ella Brandon
St. Mark, Kingston .....	The Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley
First, Lockport .....	The Rev. Henry Lewis
Bethel, Coxsackie .....	The Rev. Isabel Johnson
Bethel, Olean .....	The Rev. Rosiland Baugh
Bright Chapel, Syracuse .....	The Rev. Percy Jones
Mount Zion, Buffalo .....	The Rev. Anne Hargrave Pinn
Bethel, Lackawanna .....	The Rev. William Cobb, Jr.
St. James, Utica .....	The Rev. Samuel Bell

Request for the Presiding Elders Return

The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford spoke concerning the faithfulness of Elder Ward and requested her return for another conference year. The Rev. Norvel Goff Sr. also spoke concerning the Presiding Elder's return to the District. The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse thanked the Bishop on behalf of the pastors and laity of the Conference for his superb leadership, fatherly guidance and brotherly affection. The Annual Conference wishes Bishop Cousin and our Episcopal Supervisor, Dr. M. Joan Cousin much success in their Episcopal Service to our Zion.

### Observations by Bishop Cousin

Bishop Cousin thanked the clergy and laity on the unique manner in which the pastoral reports were presented. The Worship Service in celebration of Lay Night will be held this evening at 7:30 P.M. The Rev. Melvin Wilson, Pastor of Saint Luke AME Church, New York, New York will be the preacher. It is requested that members of the Conference be present for the annual Lay Night Service. The afternoon session concluded with the singing of "Together Let Us Sweetly Live" and the First District Benediction.

### First Day Evening Session

The evening worship service was conducted by the Lay Organization of the Conference, Bro. Thomas Davis, Conference President. The worship leader for the service was Bro. Meredith Anding, Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York. The evening sermon was delivered by the Rev. Melvin Wilson, Saint Luke AME Church, New York, New York. His subject was "Deciding to Live" which was taken from Psalm 118:1-17. Please refer to the Conference printed program for participants.

### Second Day - Morning Session Thursday, May 11, 2000

The Department of Evangelism conducted the morning devotional services. The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford, Conference Stewardship Director presented Dr. Earl Jefferson, First District Director of Christian Education who gave the morning seminar. Following the seminar, the Annual Conference prepared for the morning business session. The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. led the conference in singing "My Hope is Built."

Following prayer, the Bishop greeted the Annual Conference and called the Chief Secretary to read the proceedings of the First Day Morning Session. Motion was made by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse that the minutes of the first day morning session would be received and adopted with the necessary corrections should there be any. Corrections to the first day morning session -- Bishop Cousin noted that the Rev. Joseph N. Cousin was transferred to the Philadelphia Annual Conference and not the New Jersey Annual Conference. Motion carried.

The proceeding of the first day afternoon session were then read. Motion was made by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse that the minutes be received and adopted with the necessary corrections should there be any. Presiding Elder Ward noted that the name of the Rev. Lorraine Fields was incorrect and that her name should be noted as: The Reverend Lorraine Fields-Bradley. Motion carried.

The proceedings of the first day evening session were then read. Motion was made by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by the Rev. Richard Allen Stenhouse that the minutes be received and adopted with the necessary corrections should there be any. Motion carried.

Bishop Cousin thanked the Secretarial staff for the quality of the minutes and the accurateness of recording the proceedings of our Annual Conference. The Bishop then called upon Mr. Clarence Fleming, Chief Financial Officer of the First Episcopal District who gave an outstanding presentation of the financial strength of the Episcopal District and informed us of other Self-Help initiatives sponsored by the Episcopal District.

Following Mr. Fleming's presentation, the Bishop called upon Dr. Darne Scott, First Episcopal District Construction Manager. Mr. Scott informed the Annual Conference that at this moment, the First Episcopal District Construction Company is presently engaged in over \$20,000,000 worth of construction projects. The construction projects undertaken are not only new projects but renovations.



well. The net worth of the First Episcopal District excluding buildings owned by local congregations but including our churches and parsonages is valued at 347,000,000.00.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Presiding Elder Ward thanked the Bishop and his guest for this informative update on the financial strength of the District and the construction projects being completed at this time. She asked that the Annual Conference would give the Bishop a standing ovation for his Self-Help programs initiated during his tenure as our Presiding Prelate of the First Episcopal District. In thanking the Annual Conference, the Bishop encourages the First Episcopal District Church family to "hold fast to our programs."

Bishop Cousin acknowledged the presence of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Green, the pastor of the Saint Mark AME Church, Orlando, Florida. Dr. Green is a candidate for Episcopal Honors in our Zion. The Annual Conference then was asked to prepare for the Noon Day Worship Service.

#### **Hour of Power Service**

The Worship Leader for this service was the Rev. Ella Brandon. The power and presence of the Holy Ghost in the Fourth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference was a powerful experience. God's spirit descended upon us, touched us, and revived our souls.

The combined area choirs of Albany Kingston area graced us with a musical selection entitled "Our God is an Awesome God." The Rev. Ella Brandon presented the Bishop who presented the preacher for the hour, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Green.

Following the singing of the Sermonic Hymn, "More About Jesus" Bro. John Bradley favored the conference with the singing of "God Is." The Annual Conference was blessed with the presence of the "Senior Bishop of all Methodism," Bishop Decatur Ward Nichols the 59th Elected Bishop of our Zion. With the seating of Bishop Nichols, Dr. Green announced his text and subject. Sermon Text: Job 1:20-21. Sermon Title: "The Battleground of Worship."

Dr. Green extended the invitation to Christian Discipleship which was followed by the Finance Committee being called upon to receive the afternoon offering. Bishop announced that we would reassemble at 3:15 P.M. to hear the report of the Board of Examiners and the report from the Committee on Presiding Elder's Support and Apportionment. Announcements were given by the Pastor and Bishop Nichols greeted the Annual Conference this afternoon. The Doxology was sung and the benediction was pronounced by the preacher of the day, the Rev. Samuel Green.

#### **Second Day Afternoon Session**

The afternoon session of the Annual Conference opened with the devotional services conducted by the Department of Evangelism, the Rev. Lorraine Field Bradley, president. After extending greetings, Bishop Cousin called for the report of the Board of Examiners. The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford, Dean called upon the Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr., secretary of the Board to read the report.

#### **The Report of the Board of Examiners**

*The Rev. Harold L. Rutherford, Dean  
The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Secretary  
The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds, Registrar  
Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward, Consultant*

To the Presiding Prelate, Bishop Philip Robert Cousin, Sr., and the members of the Fourth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

We, The Board of Examiners, wish to make the following report

We have conducted an Institute for all candidates who have been recommended by their Local Church and District Conference for the Ministry of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

As per the Discipline we have instructed, interviewed, and examined all applicants concerning their conversion experience, their call to preach and their striving toward the mark of perfection. The following is our report and recommendations of all persons seeking ordination to the Itinerary in the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

#### **Class on Second Year Studies**

##### **BRO. KIRK BELLESEN**

Brother Bellesen is a member of Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor. He is 39 years of age, married and the father of our children. He will be attending St. John Fish College, Rochester, New York this fall.

*The Board recommends that Bro. Bellesen complete the requirements per Discipline for the Itinerant Ministry.*

**SIS. CHRISTINE SLAUGHTER**

Sister Slaughter is a member of Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, the Rev. Norvell Goff, Sr., Pastor. She is 36 years of age, single. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Purdue University and will be pursuing a Master's of Divinity degree at Northeastern Seminary, Rochester, New York.

*The Board recommends that Sister Slaughter complete the requirements per Discipline for the Itinerant Ministry.*

**SISTER CYNTHIA LARKINS**

Sister Larkins is a member of Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor. She is 44 years old, married and a mother of four children. She is currently a student at Monroe Community College pursuing an Associate Arts degree.

*The Board recommends that Sister Larkins complete the requirements per Discipline for the Itinerant Ministry.*

**Local Relations**

**Admissions:**

**BRO. RICHARD JACKSON** is a member of Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor.

**BRO. WILLIE K. MITCHELL** is a member of Bright Chapel AME Church, Syracuse, New York, the Rev. Percy Jones, Pastor.

**SISTER BEVERLY ABRAM** is a member of Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York, the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, Pastor.

**BROTHER HERMAN BOYER** is a member of St. John AME Church, Niagara Falls, New York, the Rev. Micah D. Chandler, Pastor.

**Second Year:**

**SISTER DEBORAH MCKNIGHT** - Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor.

**SISTER LOIS COBB** - Bethel AME Church, Lackawanna, New York, the Rev. William Cobb, Jr., Pastor.

*The Board recommends their election and ordination as Local Deacons for their respective churches at the forthcoming District Conference. The Board has received the letters requesting their ordination.*

**Fourth Year:**

**REV. GEORGE MCKNIGHT** - Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor.

**REV. CORRINE SUMMERS** - Payne AME Church, Chatham, New York, the Rev. Ella Brandon, Pastor.

*The Board recommends their election and ordination as Local Elders for their respective churches at the forthcoming District Conference. The Board has received the letters from the respective churches requesting their ordination.*

**THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS:**

*The Reverends Harold L. Rutherford, Norvel Goff, Sr., Robert Reynolds, Natalie P. Alford, Richard A. Stenhouse, Micah D. Chandler, Wayne A. Johnson, Sr., Lorraine F. Bradley, George Larkins, III and Presiding Elder Ernestine Miriam Ward, Consultant.*

The Committee on Presiding Elder's Support and Apportionment was then called to read their report. Motion was made by the Rev. Harold L. Rutherford and seconded by the Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. to receive the report. Motion carried.

The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse made a motion to receive all other literary reports as information. Seconded by the Rev. Harold L. Rutherford. Motion carried.

The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse noted that there was no response from the Elder's return to the District from the Buffalo area since Rev. Harold L. Rutherford and Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. had spoken for the Albany-Kingston and Rochester areas respectively. The Rev. Micah D. Chandler spoke in behalf of the Buffalo area and asked for the return of Dr. Ernestine Miriam Ward as the Presiding Elder for the Buffalo-Albany-Rochester District of the Western New York Annual Conference.

Bishop Cousin then asked "The Senior of Senior's", Bishop Decatur Ward Nichols to greet the Annual Conference. Bishop Nichols was accompanied to the Annual Conference by his daughter, Mrs. Sioux Nichols-Taylor, member of All Saints Temple AME Church, Mount Vernon, New York. She is also a lay delegate to the General Conference from the New York Annual Conference.

Following Bishop Nichols remarks, Bishop Cousin stated that the Annual Conference will reassemble this evening at 7:30 P.M. for the evening program which is sponsored by the Department of Christian Education, Mrs. Thelma Lanier Conference Director.

## Second Day Evening Session

The evening program was sponsored by the Department of Christian Education. Mrs. Thelma Lanier is the Conference Director. This program was a tribute to our Episcopal Leaders for their dedication to the youth of our Annual Conference. (Refer to printed program for details.)

## Third Day - Morning Session Friday, May 12, 2000

The Department of Evangelism conducted a very spirited Devotional Service, the Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley, President. Upon his arrival, Bishop Cousin greeted the Annual Conference and called upon the Secretary to read the minutes of the Second Day proceedings. The proceedings of the Second Day were read by the Conference Assistant Secretary, the Rev. Micah D. Chandler. Motion was made by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. that the minutes of the Second Day Morning Session would be received and adopted with the necessary corrections should there be any. Corrections to the Second Day Morning Session - the benediction was given by Dr. Samuel Green not the Reverend Sylvester Beaman. Motion carried.

The proceedings of the Second Day Afternoon Session were then read. Motion was made by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. that the minutes be received and adopted with the necessary corrections should there be any. Motion carried.

The proceedings of the Second Day Evening Session were then read. A special program was prepared by the Conference Department of Christian Education in honor of our Episcopal leadership for the past eight years. Motion was made by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. that the minutes be received and adopted with the necessary corrections should there be any. Motion carried.

Following the adoption of the second day proceedings, Bishop Cousin asked the secretary to prepare to answer the Disciplinary Questions. Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr., the Conference Chief Secretary, assisted by the Rev. Micah D. Chandler, Conference Assistant Secretary, answering the questions with the following responses.

1. Who are the preachers admitted on trial?  
See report of the Board of Examiners.
2. Who will remain on trial?  
See report of the Board of Examiners.
3. Who are admitted or readmitted to full connection?  
None at this time.
4. Who have been elected and ordained Deacons?  
The following persons have been recommended for election and ordina-

tion as LOCAL DEACONS at the forthcoming District Conference of the Buffalo-Albany-Rochester District: Sister Deborah McKnight, Bethel AME Church, Rochester, New York; Sister Lois Cobb, Bethel AME Church, Lackawanna, New York.

5. Who have been elected and ordained Elders?  
The following persons have been recommended for election and ordination as LOCAL ELDERS at the forthcoming District Conference of the Buffalo-Albany-Rochester District: The Rev. George McKnight, Bethel AME Church, Rochester, New York; The Rev. Corrine Summers, Payne AME Church, Chatham, New York.
6. Who have been located this year?  
None.
7. Who have been elected by the General Conference to exercise the Episcopal Office and to superintend the African Methodist Episcopal Church? The Superintendency of the African Methodist Episcopal Church has been entrusted to the active Bishops of the AME Church.
8. Who are the Supernumerary preachers?  
The Supernumerary preachers are the Reverends Elijah Green, Thorman Davis, Pedro A. Castro, Jr., Natalie Alford and George A. Larkins, III
9. Who are the superannuated preachers?  
Superannuated preachers: The Rev. James C. Waters.
10. Who have been expelled from the Connection by this Conference?  
None.
11. Who have withdrawn this year from this Conference and the Connection?  
None.
12. Are all the preachers blameless in life and conversation?  
Bishop Cousin announced that all characters of the ministers in the Western New York Annual Conference were declared passed.
13. What members of the Conference have died this year?  
None.
14. Have all the preachers subscribed to the Christian Recorder, and also to The AME Review, The Voice of Mission, The Journal of Christian Education, The Secret Chamber, or The Missionary Magazine?  
Yes.

15. What preachers are indebted to any of the departments or the church publications?  
None.

16. (a) Does each station, circuit, or mission in this Annual Conference have a Lay Organization?  
All congregations do not have a Lay Organization.

- (b) If not, what stations, circuits, or missions in this Annual Conference do not have a Lay Organization?  
A list is requested from the Conference Lay President, Bro. Thomas Davis.

17. When shall this Annual Conference meet next?  
The date for the next Annual Conference will be given by Bishop Cousin at the First Episcopal District Planning Meeting to be held at the Headquarters Building on June 8-10, 2000.

18. Where shall our next Annual Conference be held?  
The Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse and Bethel, Buffalo, New York have extended an invitation for the Fifth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference to be held at Historic Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York.

19. Where are the preachers stationed?  
The preachers will be assigned at the will of the Bishop with a single eye to the glory of God.

#### **Motion to close the Annual Conference**

The Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr. made a motion, seconded by the Revs. Richard Allen Stenhouse and Norvel Goff, Sr. that the Fourth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference close "sine die" with the reading of the pastoral appointments. Motion carried.

#### **Point of Information by Bishop Cousin**

Bishop stated that he is required by the positive law of our Zion to fill vacant pastoral appointments with Itinerant Elders (primary choice) and Itinerant Deacons (second choice). In the Western New York Annual Conference, Local Elders are presently pastoring because of a shortage of Itinerant Elders and Deacons. If an Itinerant Elder or Deacon desires to pastor a congregation, he (the Bishop) must comply with the positive law of the church and assign that Itinerant Elder or Deacon. This Annual Conference is not like other Annual Conferences within the confines of the First Episcopal District, where there is an overabundance of Itinerant ministers. In the New York Annual Conference there are about 65 Itinerants.

In the Philadelphia Annual Conference there are about 40 Itinerants. In the Wanda Annual Conference there are 6 Itinerants.

The Bishop further stated that one third of the pastoral appointments in the Western New York Annual Conference are presently filled by ministers in local relations. The history of the Western portion of New York reveals that there was a time when the area had many churches in major cities. This is no longer the case and many of our churches that were once opened are now closed.

#### **Words of Commendation for**

#### **The Presiding Bishop and Missionary Supervisor**

The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse asked all members of the Western New York Annual Conference to stand as words of commendation were given noting numerous accomplishments of our majestic Episcopal leaders, Bishop Philip Robert Cousin, Sr. and Dr. M. Joan Cousin. A round of applause followed.

#### **Welcome to the Rev. Philip Robert Cousin, Jr.**

At 12:00 P.M., this afternoon, the Western New York Annual Conference paused to have a service of Celebration honoring our Episcopal Leadership. Among the Western New York Annual Conference is the eldest son of our Bishop, Episcopal Supervisor, the Rev. Philip Robert Cousin, Jr., pastor of Saint Joseph AME Church, Durham, North Carolina. The Rev. Cousin, Jr. currently pastored that church that his father built and we elected to the Episcopacy of our Zion from 1976. The Rev. Wayne Arthur Johnson, Sr. Conference Secretary, was asked by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse in behalf of the Western New York Annual Conference to extend greetings to our guest.

In welcoming the Rev. Cousin, Jr. to the Annual Conference, the Rev. John Sr. thanked the Rev. Cousin, Jr. for sharing this moment with the Annual Conference and thanked the Cousin family for allowing this visionary team (his mother and father) to share their hopes and dreams for African Methodism with the Episcopal District family in general and with Western New York in particular. He hoped that the Western New York Annual Conference family will be considered an extension to the Cousin family.

#### **The Report of the Statistical Secretary**

The Reverend Robert L. Reynolds, Conference Statistical Secretary was commissioned upon by the presiding Bishop to give the statistical report for this Annual Conference year. The Rev. Reynolds reported that the number of members in the Western New York Annual Conference is 4,389, noting an increase of 5% for the year. Total income for the Annual Conference is \$2,213,702.52, which is a 28% increase for the year.

After closing reflections, the Annual Conference prepared for the Service of Celebration honoring our Presiding Bishop and Missionary Supervisor, Bishop and Mrs. Philip Robert Cousin, Sr.

#### **The Service of Celebration**

The Rev. Dr. Ernestine M. Ward, Presiding Elder was the worship leader; hymn of praise, "Blessed Assurance"; Invocation, Rev. Jeanette Johnson; Worship through Music, Israel Church Choir; the Reading of the Holy Scripture, Sister Sharon Stenhouse; the Purpose, the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.; the Presentation of the Preacher, the Rev. Lorraine Fields Bradley; the Sermonic Solo, Bro. John Bradley; the Sermon, the Rev. Philip Robert Cousin, Jr., Pastor, Saint Joseph AME Church, Durham, North Carolina. His sermon text was Acts 9:31-42; Sermon title, "Expect the Extraordinary."

Special presentations were made by Sister Florzina Haizlip, Representing Governor George Pataki and Dr. Minehart, representing Bishop Susan Morrison, Albany Area, United Methodist Church.

The Doxology was sung and benediction was given by the guest preacher, the Rev. Philip Robert Cousin, Jr. The program will continue at the Special luncheon held immediately following the Service of Celebration.

#### **Third Day - Afternoon Session**

#### **The Church at Study**

The Annual Conference Church School convened at 4:00 P.M. at the New York State Plaza Building, Albany, New York. Brother Joe Thomas, Sr. is the Church School Superintendent. The background scripture was II Corinthians 4. The printed text was II Corinthians 4:4-18 and the Golden Text was II Corinthians 4:8-9. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

#### **Third Day - Evening Session**

#### **Closing and Commissioning Service**

The Closing Worship and Commissioning Service of the Fourth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference convened at the New York State Plaza Building, Albany, New York. The service began promptly at 6:30 P.M. with the processional of the Combined Choir (comprised of Albany Kingston Area Choirs) the Presiding Elders Ernestine M. Ward and Joseph D. Tull; the Rev. Dr. Earl R. Jefferson; participating clergy; and the Presiding Prelate of the First Episcopal District, Bishop Philip Robert Cousin, Sr., singing Hymn 568, "God of Our Fathers."

Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward served as the Worship Leader. Following the Doxology, the host pastor, the Rev. Harold L. Rutherford gave the Call to Worship. The Hymn of Praise, "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" was line led by the Rev. Linda VanAlstyne. The invocation was given by the Rev. Richard Stenhouse, followed by the singing of the choral response, "Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart."

The musical selections were "Order My Steps in Your Word" and "God of the Mountains." The scripture lesson from the Old Testament, Genesis 37:1-11 was read by Rev. Micah D. Chandler, the New Testament, Luke 2:41-46 was read by the Rev. Wayne A. Johnson, Sr. The Summary of the Decalogue was given by the Rev. Robert L. Reynolds.

Presiding Elder Ward presented the Chief Pastor of the First Episcopal District, the Right Rev. Philip R. Cousin, Sr. After greeting the Conference Bishop recognized Presiding Elder and Mrs. Joseph D. Tull. Bishop also thanked and commended the Rev. Harold L. Rutherford and the Israel Church Family for their excellent manner in which they entertained this Annual Conference. This is the first time both pastor and congregation have done this, and the Bishop noted that he will not take another 63 years before they host another Annual Conference. In giving his final remarks to the Annual Conference concerning his aspiration for this area of the First District's jurisdiction, the Bishop then proceeded to introduce and present the preacher for the evening's Commissioning and Closing Service, the Rev. Dr. Earl R. Jefferson.

Following greetings, Dr. Jefferson reflected upon the friendship and working relationship he has shared with Bishop Cousin during the last eight years. Comments were also made concerning the leadership of the Episcopal Supervisor, M. Joan Cousin. Following other remarks, Dr. Jefferson then announced his subject.

After the sermon, the Conference was led in the Hymn of Invitation and Dr. Jefferson extended the Call to Christian Discipleship. Bishop Cousin then called for the Finance Committee to receive the offering. The Financial Report was given by Dr. Tull, First Episcopal District Accountant.

Following the singing of "A Charge To Keep I Have" Bishop Cousin proceeded to distribute certificates to the various components and specialized ministries within the Western New York Annual Conference. Bishop Cousin further stated that he does not desire to make changes at the site of the Annual Conference. At the conclusion of the series of Annual Conferences, the needs of the entire First District will be reviewed. Should changes be necessary, those changes will take place at the First Episcopal District Planning Meeting which will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the Headquarters, June 8-10, 2000.

The Annual Conference then was led in the singing of "Go Preach My Gospel." The scripture lesson selected by Bishop Cousin was Luke 9: 1-6 and the prayer was given by the Bishop. The Bishop proceeded to make the pastoral appointments. With the conclusion of the distribution of the Pastoral Appointments, the Doxology was sung and the benediction was pronounced by the Chief Pastor, Bishop Philip Robert Cousin, Sr.

**End of the Third Day Session  
and  
4th Session of the  
Western New York Annual Conference**

**Annual Conference Financial Report**  
**WESTERN NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2000**

I. RECEIPTS:	
Outreach Ministry, Connectional Claims	
Connectional Budget .....	\$23,1
Ministerial Annuity .....	18,5
Periodicals .....	2,1
II. EPISCOPAL DISTRICT MINISTRY	
Continuing Education .....	3,1
District Administration .....	5,2
Gifts for Missions .....	1,1
Headquarters Budget .....	7,6
III. ANNUAL CONFERENCE OPERATIONS	
Annual Conference Development .....	4,3
Roll Call .....	8
Advance Offering .....	2,5
Conference Sustentation .....	2,4
Other (Christian Ed., Church School, Evang. Ecumenical, etc.) .....	2,9
IV. WORSHIP IN GIVING .....	
TOTAL .....	85,3

I. DISBURSEMENTS	
Outreach Ministry, Connectional Claims	
Connectional Budget .....	\$23,1
Ministerial Annuity .....	18,5
Periodicals .....	2,1
II. EPISCOPAL DISTRICT MINISTRY	
Continuing Education .....	3,1
District Administration .....	5,2
Gifts for Missions .....	1,1
Headquarters Budget .....	7,6
III. ANNUAL CONFERENCE OPERATIONS	
Annual Conference Development .....	4,3
Annual Conference Expense* .....	15,7
Other (Christian Ed., Church School, Evang. Ecumenical, etc.) .....	2,9
Annual Conference Sustentation .....	2,4
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS .....	\$85,3

RECAPITULATIONS	
Receipts .....	\$85,3
Disbursements .....	\$85,3
Balance .....	

\*Ministerial Institute, Bd. Examiners Expense, Printing, Supplies, Cabinet, Conf= Visitors, transportation, clerical staff, conference officers, etc.)