5-15-2003

Events; 2003-05-15; WNY; Annual AME Conference (2)

Bethel A.M.E. Church

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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SEVENTH SESSION
Western New York Annual Conference
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
May 15-18, 2003

Baber African Methodist Episcopal Church
650 Meigs Street
Rochester, New York 14610

BISHOP ZEDEKIAH L. GRADY
Presiding Prelate

MOTHER CARRIE R. GRADY
Episcopal Supervisor

REV. ERNESTINE M. WARD
Host Presiding Elder

REV. NORVEL GOFF, SR.
Host Pastor

REV. NATALIE P. ALFORD
Chief Secretary
Thursday, May 15, 2003

First Day, Morning Session
The Seventh Session of the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, convening at the Baber African Methodist Episcopal Church, Rochester, New York, assembled in the sanctuary for the purpose of organization on Thursday, May 15, 2003 at 8:30 A.M. Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady, the 111th elected Bishop of our Zion called the conference to order for the purpose of organization.

The Chief Secretary, The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford, was presented to read the Annual Conference Roll Call.

Western New York Annual Conference
Roll Call May 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Itinerant Elders</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverend Ernestine M. Ward</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Ella Brandon</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Pedro A. Castro, Jr.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Micah D. Chandler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend William C. Cobb, Jr.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Elijah Green</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Robin Franklin</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Kemperal J. Hinsley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend John C. Justice</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend George L. Larkins, III</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Robert L. Reynolds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Christopher Haynes</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Itinerant Deacons</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Absent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reverend Kirk Belleson</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Horace T. Cromer</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Betsy Crumity</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Percy Jones</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Christine Slaughter</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverend Craig Wright</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Superannuation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Absent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reverend James C. Water</td>
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</table>

### Local Elders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Absent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reverend Rosalyn Baugh</td>
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<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverend Frances Harris Barner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Samuel L. Bell</td>
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<td>Reverend Hester Duhart</td>
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<td>Reverend Olivia Eades</td>
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<td>Reverend David Irving, Sr.</td>
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<td>Reverend Grace Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Jeanette Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Henry Lewis, Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend George L. McKnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Sandra Palmer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Ann Hargrave Pinn</td>
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<td>Ill, excused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Nina Porter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Burnie J. Savage</td>
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<td>Reverend Corrine A. Summers</td>
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<td>Reverend Linda D. VanAlstyne</td>
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<td>Reverend Delores V. Wynn</td>
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<td>Reverend Beverly Abrams</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Clarence Bass</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ill, Excused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverend Herman Boyer, Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Lois Cobb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Richey A. Jackson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Leeland Jones</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ill, excused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Deborah McKnight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Tracey Morrison</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverend Annie P. Wilson</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**END OF ROLL CALL**

### Transfers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reverend Angelo S. Dawson</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>From NE to WNY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Western New York Annual Conference Organization

- **Presiding Prelate**: Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady
- **Episcopal Supervisor**: Mother Carrie R. Grady
- **Chief Accountant**: Dr. Joseph D. Tull
- **Treasurer**: The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
- **Chief Secretary**: The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford
- **Assistant Secretary**: The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart
- **Statistical Secretary**: The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds

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

- **Chief of Protocol and Special Messenger to The Presiding Bishop**: Rev. Horace Cromer
- **Conference Marshals**: Sister Della Harris, The Rev. Henry Lewis, Jr., Bro. Curtis Johnson
- **Reporters to the Secular Press**: The Rev. Dr. George L. Larkins, I, Sister A. Marie Goff
- **Conference Church School Supt.**: Bro. Joe Thomas, Sr.
- **Conference Lay Organization President**: Bro. Thomas Davis
- **Conference Director of Music**: Sister Toni Yvonne Harris
- **Conference YPD Director**: Sister Toni Yvonne Harris
- **President of the Conference Branch, WMS**: Sister Louise McCoullum
- **Young Adult Network**: TBA
Reverend Richard Stenhouse presented the following:

**WNYAC Representatives**
- The Rev. Norvell Goff, Sr.
- The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse
- Sister Bertha Webb

**Social Action**
- The Rev. John C. Justice

**President, Dept. of Evangelism**
- The Rev. John C. Justice

**Conf. Director of Stewardship**
- The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.

**Christian Education Chairperson**
- The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart

**Christian Education Director**
- Sister Thelma Lanier

**Christian Education Members**
- The Rev. Ella M. Brandon
- The Rev. John C. Justice

**Dean of the Ministerial Institute and Chairman of the Board of Examiners**
- Buffalo Area Dean: The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse
- Rochester Area Dean: The Rev. Norvel L. Goff, Sr.
- Albany Area Dean: The Rev. John C. Justice

**Director of Presiding Elder’s Assessment**
- The Rev. Robert L. Reynolds

**Members**
- The Rev. Richard Allen Stenhouse
- The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
- The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford
- The Rev. Ella M. Brandon
- The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart
- The Rev. Craig J. Wright

A motion was made by the Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by the Reverend John C. Justice that the organization of the Conference be adopted. Motion carried.

Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse continued with reading the organization of the Finance Committee:

**The Finance Committee:**
- The Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse
- The Reverend Dr. Ernestine M. Ward
- The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr.
- The Reverend Robert L. Reynolds
- The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford
- The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart
- The Reverend John C. Justice
- The Reverend Ella M. Brandon
- The Reverend Angelo Dawson

**Lay Members:**
- Sister Lucretia Bowie
- Bro. Thomas Davis
- Sister Gayle Gayton
- Sister Dorothy Truehart

A motion was made by the Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by John C. Justice to receive the Finance Committee. Motion carried.

Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. then presented the organization of the Conference Board of Trustees:

**The Board of Trustees:**
- The Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse, Vice Chairman
- The Reverend Dr. Ernestine M. Ward
- The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford
- The Reverend John C. Justice
- The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart
- The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr.
- The Reverend Ella Brandon
- The Reverend Robert L. Reynolds

**Lay Members:**
- Sister Rebecca Lowery
- Sister Caroline Hoffman
- Sister Lenora Johnson
- Bro. Robert Dubose
- Sister Della Harris

A motion was made by the Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse and seconded by The Reverend John C. Justice to receive the organization of the Board of Trustees. Motion carried.
The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. presented the organization of the Judiciary Committee and Triers of Appeals.

**The Judiciary Committee:**  
The Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse  
The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr.  
The Reverend Robert L. Reynolds  
The Reverend Ella M. Brandon

**The Triers of Appeals**  
The Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse  
The Reverend Robert L. Reynolds  
The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford

A motion was made by the Reverend John C. Justice and seconded by The Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse to receive the organization of the Judiciary Committee and Triers of Appeals. Motion carried.

The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. presented the members of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee:

**Ministerial Efficiency Committee:**  
The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse  
The Reverend Robert L. Reynolds  
The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr.  
The Reverend John C. Justice  
The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart

A motion was made by The Reverend John C. Justice and seconded by The Reverend Richard Allen Stenhouse to receive the organization of the Ministerial Efficiency Committee.

A motion was made by The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by the Reverend John C. Justice that the Boundary of the Annual Conference would be identified as the first seven rows across the church. Motion carried.

Pastors, preachers, delegates and all members of the annual conference were then instructed by the Bishop to sit within the boundaries of the conference.

Bishop Grady asked the delegates to stand and asked they if had received their books. Bishop Grady had a few for distribution on a first come basis. (First Episcopal District, Schedule of Annual Conference). The Presiding
Elder then read the names of the Lay Delegates to the Annual Conference:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bethel, Buffalo</td>
<td>Sister Dorothy Travis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baber, Rochester</td>
<td>Brother Thomas Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint John, Niagara Falls</td>
<td>Sister Carol Woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel, Albany</td>
<td>Sister Lorraine Tucker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agape, Buffalo</td>
<td>Sister Alene Lewis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaine-Waring, Buffalo</td>
<td>Bro. David Lewis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel, Schenectady</td>
<td>Sister Della Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel, Lackawanna</td>
<td>Sister Laura Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Mark, Kingston</td>
<td>Sister Rebecca Lovato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Church, Lockport</td>
<td>Bro. Charles Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel, Olean</td>
<td>Sister Lucille Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel, Coxsackie</td>
<td>Sister Lucretia Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint James, Utica</td>
<td>No Delegate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright Chapel, Syracuse</td>
<td>Sister Angie McDeaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Zion, Buffalo</td>
<td>Sister Margie Tisdale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payne, Chatham</td>
<td>No Delegate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Point of Information. Bishop Grady spoke on the theme “Saving, Serving, and Serving for Christ” (2 Corinthians 8:5)

SAVING: Bishop Grady stated “that before we can help save souls we must save ourselves. It is very difficult to do. First, you should have a personal encounter with Jesus.” He went on to say, that “If you are saved, you cannot see the kingdom. It is our duty that we compel them to accept Christ.”

SACRIFICING: Bishop Grady stated that so many get the idea it’s just going to church. They say, “I’m going to church to give this $1.00. We need $10.00 and beyond. What we need is 10% of your time as well as your gifts — time and talents. Everybody present today has something to give. If you only have one, use the one God gave you. Some may sing and some may dance. Don’t be jealous. Bishop shared a portion of his ministerial journey, such as courses in hymnology, and different types of creative fundraising.

SERVING: Bishop Grady reminded us that we are to serve God, our pastor. When things don’t go well, don’t leave your church. No one will run you away from your church. Preachers come and go. Bishops can go.
A word of concern was voiced by Bishop Grady regarding the amount of communication that takes place between AME's. In other words, AME's talk too much. Other churches don't talk about their pastors.

The Chief Secretary, the Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford read the letter to the conference that Bishop Grady received from the Reverend Christopher Haynes, dated 21 April 2003, stating his resignation from the AME Church. The Bishop put the matter before the conference for a vote. It was moved by the Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. to accept the letter. Motion passed.

Bishop Grady had an opportunity to speak with Bishop Ingram who recently was injured in a tragic car accident in South Africa, the driver was killed. Bishop Ingram informed Bishop Grady that he was coming along and that he had walked 8 feet today.

There was also mention that members of our conference were involved in a van accident last night. One member broke a finger. The other passengers were not physically hurt.

Greetings were extended to The Reverend Dr. Lambert who is the host pastor for the General Conference. The conference was then recessed by the Bishop to prepare for the morning worship service.

Opening Day Worship Service

The Rev. Dr. Estemine Miriam Ward was the Worship Leader. The Western New York Annual Conference Department of Evangelism led a brief devotional service. The Conference rose and reverently sang the Processional Hymn “The Church’s One Foundation.” Following the Doxology, the host pastor, The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. gave the Call to Worship. The Conference sang the Hymn of Praise, “And Are We Yet Alive” which was led by the Reverend William C. Cobb. The Invocation was given by The Reverend Robert Reynolds and the Baber AME Church Choir led in the singing of the Choral Response, “More Love To Thee, O Christ.”

The musical selection, sung by the Baber AME Church choir was titled “Wonderful, Glorious, Marvelous, Worthy to be Praised.” God’s spirit as in the sanctuary and the praises to God went up! The Scripture Lesson for the worship service were as follows: Old Testament, Psalm 27 read by the Reverend Angelo Dawson; The Epistle read by The Reverend Horace Coert; and the Gospel according to St. John 15 was read by the Reverend Fer Castro and Romans 5:1-5 by The Reverend Dr. George L. Larkins, Ill. The Conference was lead in full Decalogue by The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse. The Conference was blessed with the music of the host conference choir who sang “Glad to be in the Service.” The gifts for missions were then received and the offertory was sung. The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford led conference in the Litany. Worship through music continued as the Baber AME Church Liturgical Dancers danced unto the Lord as Bro. C. J. Reo sang the lead with choir, “Bread of Heaven”. The St. John AME Church choir sang “We’ve Come To Praise Thy Name” to the glory of God!

After establishing protocol, the Presiding Prelate of the First Episcopal District of our Zion, Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady was presented by Presiding Elder Ward. In presenting Bishop Grady, the Presiding Elder spoke of splendid pastoral record noting his outstanding service to our Zion. His phenomenal accomplishments of his episcopacy were also noted. Bishop Grady thanked Presiding Elder Ward for her gracious introduction.

Bishop Grady presented the preacher for the Annual sermon. Following singing of the Sermonic Hymn, “O Thou in Whose Presence” AME HY No. 83, which was lined by The Reverend Ella M. Brandon. The Anni Sermon preacher was the Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart, Pastor, Saint John A.M.E. Church, Niagara Falls, New York. Her sermon title was “One Secret”, scripture text, Joshua 1:6-7 and I Thess. 5:23-24. The Invitation to Christian Discipleship was made by the preacher of the hour as the choir sang, “The Lord will make a Way Some How.” The Finance Committee, then called to receive the morning offering.


Bishop Grady asked Sister Louise McCoullum, president of the Western New York Missionary Society, to present our esteemed supervisor of the First Episcopal District, Mother Carrie R. Grady who then greeted the conference. Bishop Grady complemented the music of the two choirs Baber and St. John.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion was then administered with Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady serving as the chief celebrant. The Presiding Elders of the First Episcopal District also assisted Presiding Elder Ward in the distribution of the communion. Assisting were The Rev. Dr. O’Neil Mackey, Sr., Rev. Vernon L.T.F. Lowe, Sr. Rev. Harold L. Rutherford, Rev. Dr. Herbert L. Eddy, and Rev. Dr. Joseph D. Tull.

Following communion, the Annual Conference sang “What A Fellowship”. Bishop Grady again thanked the visitors to the Annual Conference for their presence. The host pastor, The Rev. Robert Reynolds, then made announcements. Bishop Grady asked the Annual Conference to reconvene at 3:15 P.M. Bishop Grady also stated that he would like a representative from each of the visiting conferences to give a short greeting. The benediction was pronounced by the preacher of the morning, the Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart.

They Sang a Hymn and went out.”

First Day, Afternoon Session

Members of the Western New York Annual Conference Department of Evangelism, The Rev. Annie Wilson, Bethel (Buffalo) delivered a meditation at 3:00 P.M. Her scripture was taken from St. Matthew 7:7 and she preached from the theme, “Are You Asking, Are You Sending, Are You Knocking?”

Bishop Grady conducted the election of Delegates and alternates for the General Conference 2004. The election are as follows:

Delegates
- Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward
- The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse
- The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr.
- The Reverend John C. Justice

The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse asked with the permission of the Bishop if a single ballot could be submitted. The Bishop approved and the Clerk Secretary submitted a unanimous ballot. Motion carried.

Alternates
- The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart
- The Reverend Robert Reynolds
- The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford
- The Reverend Ella Brandon

The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. asked with the permission of the Bishop if a single ballot could be submitted. The Bishop approved and the Clerk Secretary submitted a unanimous ballot. Motion carried.

The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse asked Bishop Grady for permission to submit The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. as the lead delegate. It was granted.

Bishop Grady greeted our guests.

He then called First Episcopal District candidates to speak to the Conference in the following order: New York, The Rev. Carrie Nobles; Philadelphia, Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Leath; New England, Rev. LeRoy Attles; New York, Rev. Simons Bouie; Philadelphia, Rev. Dr. Earl Jefferson.

After the greetings were made, Bishop Grady spoke about our support for our own candidates. Presiding Elder Ward was then asked to read her summary for the Buffalo-Albany-Rochester District.

We were then recessed by the Bishop and instructed to return for the evening Annual Lay Night Service and the morning workshop to be presented by Rev. Dr. Earl Jefferson at 8:00 A.M.

First Day Evening Session

The evening’s worship service was conducted by the Conference I Organization under the leadership of Bro. Thomas Davis, Conference President. The worship leader for the service was Bro. O.B. Wynn, J Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York. After a spirited program of songs and praise the conference was blessed with the message delivered by the Rev. Dr. Richard Allen Lewis. Brother Thomas Davis extended an invitation for individuals to join the “Lay Organization.” (See Appendix I) Brother Tom Davis reported the results of the Lay Election College held in the afternoon.

Bishop Grady asked Sister Louise McCoullum, president of the Western New York Missionary Society, to present our esteemed supervisor of the First Episcopal District, Mother Carrie R. Grady who then greeted the conference. Bishop Grady complemented the music of the two choirs Baber and St. John.

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Alternates
The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart
The Reverend Robert Reynolds
The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford
The Reverend Ella Brandon

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The evening’s worship service was conducted by the Conference Organization under the leadership of Bro. Thomas Davis, Conference President. The worship leader for the service was Bro. O.B. Wynn, Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York. After a spirited open program of songs and praise the conference was blessed with the message delivered by the Rev. Dr. Richard Allen Lewis. Brother Thomas Davis extended an invitation for individuals to join the “Lay Organization.”

Appendix I) Brother Tom Davis reported the results of the Lay Elect College held in the afternoon.
Members of the Conference Department of Evangelism conducted a praise service. The Reverend Delores Wynn delivered a short meditation Those in attendance were blessed.

Christian Education Workshop
Reverend Dr. Earl Jefferson conducted a worship entitled, “What Are We Called To?” As a point of information, Dr. Jefferson noted that we were being joined by Dr. Kenneth Hill, Director of Christian Education in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Following opening remarks, Dr. Jefferson took a little time to explain what constitutes a Litany. A Litany contains a common responsive which is repeated throughout. Even persons who are unable to read or be able to share in the Litany. He firmly stated that if there is not a common response which is repeated, it is not a Litany, but a responsive reading.

We heard from Dr. Hill. Dr. Hill stated that we were called to “Do Something for God, Be Something for God, Know something about God.” He defined Christian Education as the process by which our interactions with another are formed, informed, and transformed into the image of God. So, do we educate: to lift up our Christ-likeness before the people of God, the people of God. God is an educator, God creates so God can educate us. Dr. Hill furthered stated that the Gospels record that Jesus taught 89 times and preached 11 times. All of our meetings are teachable moments. We do we educate? Everywhere! What do we need to know? More about Jesus, more about the Word, more about the prophets, more about the history of the Christian Church. Who do we educate? Everyone. How do we educate? Through lecture, service, parables, examples and liturgy.

Dr. Jefferson thanked Dr. Hill and continued with the workshop. Dr. Jefferson stated that we are obligated by the Great Commission to do something. He discussed the question: What is the Church? What is the purpose of the Church? What are the responsibilities of the Church? The Great Commission is a mandate to do mission, evangelism, stewardship, church growth. What are we called to? We are called to a life of teaching, sharing, understanding, caring and loving.

Dr. Jefferson then taught on the First District Theme, “Saving, Sacrificing and Serving for Christ” II Corinthians 8:5. Saving begins with ourselves. Sacrificing, we must be willing to offer ourselves and all of our resources to the Lord. An important point to remember is that all we have has
entrusted to us by God. When we realize that we are not giving God what He has given us, but instead giving God what He has entrusted to us, then perhaps we will be more generous in our giving. Serving, we must recognize that we are ambassadors for Christ, serving the Lord and His people with gladness.

Bishop Grady thanked Dr. Jefferson for his presentation. Bishop Grady then asked the Conference to stand and sing “Blessed Assurance.” The minutes of the first day morning session were read by the secretary. Bishop Grady called for a motion to accept the minutes as read with any necessary corrections; the motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. The motion carried.

Bishop Grady asked Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward to continue the pastoral summation. The reports were as follows: Bethel, Buffalo, New York; Baber, Rochester, New York. As a point of information, Bishop Grady acknowledged the presence of Bishop Preston Williams. The reports continued with St. John, Niagara Falls, New York; Delaine Waring, Buffalo, New York; Agape, Buffalo, New York; Bethel Schenectady, New York; St. Mark, Kingston, New York; Payne, Chatham, New York; First AME, Lockport, New York; Bethel, Coxsackie, New York; Bethel, Lackawanna, New York; St. James, Utica, New York; Bright Chapel, Syracuse, New York; Mt. Zion, Buffalo, New York and Bethel, Olean, New York.

Rev. Stenhouse informed the conference that Rev. Pinn has paid off the $35,000 mortgage on Mt. Zion. The Conference owes her a debt of gratitude for this was accomplished even while being ill. Bishop Grady asked if the Conference had a victory song. The Conference sang blessings to the Lord by singing, “Victory Is Mine.”

Rev. Stenhouse asked Pastors and delegates to stand. He likened the Elder Ward to fine wine that gets better with age and an elegant young lady. She is the one and only irreplaceable Elder. He then asked Bishop Grady to return her to us for one more year.

Bishop Grady called on Dr. Kenneth Hill to greet the conference. Dr. Hill called Rev. Goff to stand with him. He spoke of Bishop Baber. He presented Rev. Goff and Baber Church with two photographs of Bishop Baber and the prayer he offered at the White House. Dr. Hill shared his background and experiences as Christian Education Director of African Methodist Episcopal Church for the past 12 years and his candidacy for Bishop. Bishop Grady stated that we would now break until the “Hour of Power.”

The Hour of Power
The Preacher: Reverend Edward Bailey, Pastor of Bethel, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; scripture, Jonah Chapter 1; subject, Dangerous People in the Church. Following the service, the conference concluded the morning session.

Afternoon Session
A brief devotional period was offered by the Department of Evangelism. Meditation was given by Rev. Corrine Summers entitled, “It’s an It Job.” Bishop Grady called for the Board of Examiners Report to be read.

Board of Examiners Report
To Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady, and the members of the Seventh 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 to the Ministry in 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 recommendation of those persons seeking ordination to the Itinerancy in the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Class on Second Year Studies
Sister Cynthia Larkins
She is a member of First AME Church in Lockport, New York. Rev. George Larkins is her pastor. She will graduate in June 2003 with an Associate of Arts degree from Monroe Community College. In September 2003 she will enroll in Robert Wesleyan College in pursuit of the Bachelor of Arts degree. The Board recommends that Sister Larkins remain on hold until completion of her degree.
Class on Third Year Studies
Rev. Kirk Bellesen
Rev. Bellesen is the pastor of St. James AME Church, Utica, New York. He has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Robert Wesleyan College. He will enroll in Northeastern Seminary this summer.
The Board recommends that Rev. Bellesen remain in the Class on Third Year Studies.

Rev. Horace Cromer
Rev. Cromer is pastor of St. Mark AME Church in Kingston, New York. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Buffalo. Rev. Cromer is currently in pursuit of the Master of Divinity Degree at Colgate Rochester Divinity School.
The Board recommends that Rev. Cromer remain in the Class on Third Year Studies.

Class on Fourth Year Studies
Rev. Betsy Crumity
Rev. Crumity is a member of Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, where the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. is her pastor. Rev. Crumity was not enrolled in seminary this semester, but will return in the Fall.
The Board recommends that Rev. Crumity remain in the Class on Fourth Year Studies.

Rev. Percy Jones
Rev. Jones is currently the Pastor of Bright Chapel AME Church in Syracuse, New York. Rev. Jones is preparing to enroll in Northeastern Seminary.
The Board entertained a motion that Rev. Jones be referred to the Ministerial Efficiency Committee.

Rev. Christine Slaughter
Rev. Slaughter is a member of Baber AME Church in Rochester, New York, where the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. is her pastor. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Purdue University. Rev. Slaughter will graduate in 2004 with a Master of Divinity degree from Northeastern Seminary, Rochester, New York. Rev. Slaughter’s interests are Christian Education and Pastoral Counseling.
The Board recommends that Rev. Slaughter remain in the Class on Fourth Year Studies.

Rev. Craig Wright
Rev. Wright is currently the Pastor of Bethel, Coxsackie. He is enrolled in Virginia Union New York Theological School.
The Board recommends that Rev. Wright remain in the Class on Fourth Year Studies until the completion of his degree.

Local Relations

Candidates for Admission
Sister Isabell Johnson, Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor. Born August 18, 1949. She has a High School diploma.
Sister Laura Owings, Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor. Born January 28, 1956. She has a High School diploma.

The Board recommends that these persons be Admitted on Trial to the Western New York Annual Conference as candidates for Local Orders at Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York.

First Year

Third Year
Rev. Beverly Abram, Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York, Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, Pastor
Rev. Herman Boyer, Jr., St. John AME Church, Niagara Falls, New York, Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, Pastor
Rev. Ricky Jackson, Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor
Rev. Tracy Morrison, Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor
Rev. Annie Wilson, Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York, Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, Pastor

The Board recommends that they continue in the Institute.
Fourth Year
Rev. Lois Cobb, Bethel, Lackawanna, New York, Rev. William Cobb, Sr., Pastor. Rev. Cobb has completed the Institute. The Board recommends that she be given a certificate of completion.

Rev. Deborah McKnight, Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York, Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Pastor. The Board has received a request from the respective church and pastor requesting her ordination. The Board recommends her election and ordination as a Local Elder for Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York.

The Board of Examiners
Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse
Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
Rev. John C. Justice
Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart
Rev. Natalie P. Alford
Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
Rev. George Larkins, Ill
Rev. Ella Brandon
Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward, Consultant

Rev. Eleanor Dawson, Bethel, Schenectady, came into the Western New York Annual Conference when her husband was appointed Pastor of Bethel. A request has been made by the Church and her pastor, The Reverend Angelo Dawson that she be received for local relations. Bishop Grady called for a motion to accept the recommendation; motion made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart.

Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the overall report of the Board of Examiners. A motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. This ends the report.

Point of information. Bishop Grady spoke of male pastors and with wives who are clergy. He cautioned against clergy spouses attempting to interfere in the workings of the church. We then continued with the reading of Literary Reports.

State of the Church: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; motion made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Robert L. Reynolds.

State of the Country: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart. Bishop Grady stated that this was a very informative report and he would like to see it published.

Presiding Elder’s Support: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; a motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.

Temperance: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; a motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.

Missionary: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; a motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.

Missions, Circuits and Stations: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; a motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.

Deeds and Abstracts: Rev. Stenhouse reported on Mt. Zion.

Charge Classification: No Changes

Publications: No report.

Bishop Grady acknowledged Rev. Winton Hill, candidate for Bishop. R Hill is pastor of Bethel, Stamford, CT. Bishop Grady would like ev Conference to have a Son’s of Allen. Rev. Stenhouse recommended R Angelo Dawson as coordinator. The session ended with the singing of “gether Let Us Sweetly Live.” The Conference had difficulty recalling words to this hymn. Bishop Grady stated that we will learn it.

Second Day, Evening Session
The Department of Christian Education conducted this evening’s service. Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, Conference Chairperson, Sister Thelma Lanier, Conference Director.
Saturday, May 17, 2003

Third Day, Morning Session

Members of the Conference Department of Evangelism conducted a short praise service. Reverend Eleanor Dawson delivered a meditation. Those in attendance were blessed.

Due to the absence of the Secretary, Bishop Grady called for the reading of the Pastoral Report of Israel, Albany. The report was read by Rev. John C. Justice.

Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse asked to finish the report of the Board of Examiners. Rev. Kirk Bellesen, who was absent on Friday, May 16th, when the report of the Board was read, was examined by the Bishop.

Point of Information. Bishop Grady suggested that the Board of Examiners make certain that all candidates know the history of the church. He stressed that this cannot be left to Seminaries as most of them do not teach the history of the AME Church. He recommended the Romance of the AME Church be required reading for all candidates.

It was the recommendation of the Board that Rev. Kirk Bellesen remain in the Class on Third Year Studies until he completes the educational requirements. Bishop Grady called for a motion. A motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. Bishop Grady called for the reading of the remainder of the Literary Reports.

Evangelism: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; motion made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.

Christian Education: Sister Thelma Lanier apologized for the lateness of the report. She thanked Rev. Hart for assisting her in preparation of the report. There were several issues raised about the Youth of the Year Contest. Dr. Earl Jefferson suggested that the conflict be resolved by declaring the contest a tie and having two contestants represent Western New York at the Congress.

Social Action: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; motion made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, seconded by Rev. George McKnight.

Education: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; motion made by Rev. Robert Reynolds, seconded by Rev. Horace Cromer.

Christian Education: Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report; motion made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, seconded by Rev. Robert Reynolds.

Rev. Stenhouse asked Bishop Grady to add Rev. Angelo Dawson to the Conference Trustee Board and Board of Examiners. It was also noted that the Ministerial Efficiency Committee had no report, as the individual to whom the report was given did not appear.

Rev. Stenhouse requested to read the Report of the Special Committee. Committee acknowledged the desire of Grace Community Church to the African Methodist Episcopal Church and outlined the criteria to be prior to the 2004 Annual Conference. Bishop Grady asked for a motion to accept the report. A motion was made by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by Rev. John C. Justice.

The minutes of the Second Day Morning Session were read. Bishop Grady called for a motion to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections. A motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.

The minutes of the Second Day Afternoon Session were read. Bishop Grady called for a motion to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections. A motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Bellesen.

The minutes of the Second Day Evening Session were read. Bishop Grady called for a motion to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections. A motion was made by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by Rev. John C. Justice.

Bishop Grady asked the Secretary to prepare to read the Disciplinary Questions. Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, Assistant Secretary, answered the questions with the following responses.
Disciplinary Questions

1. What preachers were admitted on trial?
   Sister Isabel Johnson and Sister Laura Owens

2. Who remains on trial?
   None at this time

3. Who are admitted or readmitted to full connection?
   None at this time

4. Who have been elected and ordained Deacons?
   None at this time

5. Who have been elected and ordained Elders?
   Rev. Deborah McKnight, Local Elder for Baber, Rochester

6. Who have been located this year?
   None at this time

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 Church.
   1. John H. Adams
   2. Frederick H. Talbot
   3. Vinton R. Anderson
   4. Frank C. Cummings
   5. Phillip R. Cousin
   6. Henry A. Belin, Jr.
   7. John R. Bryant
   8. Richard A. Chappelle
   9. McKinley Young
   10. Robert V. Webster
   11. Zedekiah L. Grady
   12. Cornel Hennings, Sr.
   13. William P. DeVeaux, Sr.
   14. Theodore Kirkland
   15. Adam Richardson
   16. Richard Norris
   17. Vashti M. McKenzie

8. Who are the supernumerary preachers?
   The Reverends Elijah Green, Pedro A. Castro

9. Who are the superannuated preachers?
   The Reverend James C. Waters

10. Who has been expelled from the Connection by this Conference?
    None

11. Who have withdrawn this year from this Conference and the Connection?
    Reverend Sandra Palmer

12. Are all preachers blameless in this life and conversation?
    Bishop Grady 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?
    Reverend Hester Duhart

    Yes

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

16. Does each station, circuit, or mission in the Annual Conference have a Lay Organization?
    All churches who do not have a Lay Organization

16b. If not, what stations, circuits or missions in this Annual Conference do not have a Lay Organization?
    St. James, Utica, New York

17. When shall we hold our next Annual Conference?
    At the call of the Bishop.
18. Where shall our next conference be held?
The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart, pastor of St. John AME Church, Niagara Falls, New York, extended an invitation for the Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference to be held at St. John AME Church, Niagara Falls, New York.

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

Point of Information. Bishop Grady commented that though we are a small conference we are not the smallest. Bishop Grady thanked the pastors for their leadership and the members for their fellowship. He emphasized that we must be missionaries in that we pay special attention to the young people. Bishop Grady stressed the importance of bringing them into the church. Bishop Grady also inquired as to whether or not there would be persons to be ordained next conference. Bishop Grady also thanked Presiding Elder Ward for her leadership over this District. Rev. John C. Justice asked all Pastors and members to stand as she expressed our deepest gratitude to Rev. Norvel Goff, Sister A. Marie Goff, and the Baber Family to their hospitality.

Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. accepted our thanks on behalf of Sister A. Marie Goff and the Baber Church Family. He stated that Baber has been called to serve and they have endeavored to do just that. He also thanked Elder Ward for her leadership and guidance this conference year.

Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse expressed thanks to Bishop and Mother Carr R. Grady for being present with us. He indicated that we look forward another year and we will be prepared for Gradyism. Elder Ward also thanks the Bishop for allowing her another opportunity to serve as a delegate to the General Conference.

Memorial Service
The Committee on Memoirs was called upon by Bishop Grady to conduct the Memorial Service. The Committee used the program prepared by the First Episcopal District. Rev. Hester Duhart was remembered.

The Service of Ordination
The Preacher: The Rt. Rev. Preston Williams, Bishop of Our Zion; Scripture, Mark 16; Subject, “You Got the Power.”

May 18, 2003
The Closing and Commissioning Service

The Closing and Commissioning Service opened with the Processional Hymn #520, “We’re Marching to Zion.” All those in attendance sang with uplift voices to the glory of God.

The Hymn of Praise, “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing” was lined by Reverend Angelo Dawson. Rev. John C. Justice offered the invocation and the prayers of the people were heard. The choir and conference respond to the invocation with singing of “Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart.” Hymn No. 189. We were then blessed by the Conference Choir’s selection.

Our scripture lessons were read by Richard A. Stenhouse (Mark 6:6-11), Rev. William C. Cobb, Jr. (Romans 4:1-7), and Reverend Ella M. Brande (St. Matthew 5:12-6). The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart offered the Summary of the Decalogue. The Conference Choir then led the Conference in the singing of “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing” and all were blessed. The Reverend Robert L. Reynolds requested the Gif for Missions.

Our illustrious Presiding Elder, the Rev. Dr. Ernestine M. Ward, asked the Bishop Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse to present our esteemed Presiding Prelate, The Rt. Rev. Zedekiah L. Grady. This was followed by the lining of the Sermonic Hymn, “Amazing Grace” by the Reverend Percy Jones.

Bishop Grady took his text from St. Matthew 24:9-10, “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by nations for My name’s sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.” For a subject he elected to use: “You will be hated, but Preach.” Bishop Grady then extended the Invitation to Christian Discipleship. This was followed by the Offering and Offertory.

The Bishop called on Sister Stenhouse, First Lady of Bethel AME Church, Buffalo to present and introduce our Episcopal Supervisor, Mother Carr R. Grady. As she addressed the Conference, Mother Grady said she was delighted to have been here for the Seventh Session. She thanked everyone and especially Rev. Goff and Sister Goff. She also thanked the Missionary and YPD Director. The WMS meeting was good and read a poem, “God Did Not Promise.”

Bishop Grady recognized visitors who were not of this conference. Jim We of Team Challenge along with the Reverend Nate McFarland and student
Bishop Grady invited Bishop Williams to have a few words. He told a story about how much he enjoyed being with Bishop Grady. He discussed the charge in Africa. There are 64 presidents, 1000 pastors, 200,000 members, and 119 preachers were ordained last week. He talked about how the preachers travel by foot and the increase in church growth. But on the flip side, he talked about the sickness, AIDS, malaria, meningitis, and starvation. He mentioned how dangerous it is over there and mentioned the accident Bishop Ingram was in. He thanked us for praying for them.

Bishop Grady asked for a special offering for Bishop Williams' district. The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse gave the offertory prayer.

Bishop Grady then called for the reading of the Special Resolution by the Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart and the Statistical Report, which was read by the Reverend Robert L. Reynolds. After the reading of these two items, Bishop Grady asked the Reverend Joseph D. Tull to read the Financial Report to the Conference. Bishop called for a motion to accept the report and the motion was made by The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by the Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. Motion carried.

Bishop Williams asked the choir to sing, “Order My Steps.” After singing, Bishop Grady then thanked everyone for good leadership and asked that applause be given. He then proceeded to distribute certificates to various components and specialized ministries within the Western New York Annual Conference.

Presentation of the Pastoral Appointments/Certificates
The Annual Conference was then led in the singing of Hymn No. 220, “Preach My Gospel” lined by The Reverend Dr. Jefferson. The prayer was given by Rev. Dr. Tull; scripture, Joshua 1:1, was read by Dr. Jefferson.

Certificates for Conference Appointments were given out. Bishop and Mrs. Grady left the conference for a short period of prayer and meditation before the appointments were handed out. Upon their return the Bishop then proceeded to make the pastoral appointments. With the conclusion of the distribution of the Pastoral Appointments, the Doxology was sung and Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady pronounced the benediction. We then proceeded to the closing Hymn No. 45, “God Be With You Till We Meet Again” and departed.

Report on the State of the Church
(Recommendations)

1. Develop Leadership Training Seminars - Each church must require the Official Board to complete a 6-8 week seminar to learn how to be an effective officer. It is a must that all official board members learn the AME policy.

2. Church Expansion - Using the statistical data gathered from the organization of the Western New York Annual Conference as a foundation, the conference must begin new studies to identify potential areas in Western New York for church expansion opportunities. In addition, the conference must develop ways to effectively use local and itinerant ministers, who are unassigned, to expand our church in areas where there is no AME presence. Church expansion is vital in order to strengthen and expand our Zion.

3. Growth and Retention. We must develop a Conference program for growth and retention. We need to provide training for ministers and laymen in the area of evangelism. We must provide discipleship training to all members. We must effectively use the class leader system.

4. Clergy must be held to a high level of standards in the area of ethics and morals. They must be held accountable for their behavior when it is detrimental to self and the Body of Christ.

5. All churches should be required to become accessible to the physically challenged.

6. We must develop position papers on the critical issues facing our society, i.e., abortion, death penalty, homosexuality, same-sex marriages, political agenda, etc. and share them with our communities using various media outlets.

7. Time should be set aside during District meetings to provide training opportunities to address recommendations.

8. We must celebrate our history. All churches must be required to celebrate Founder’s Day. We must develop a Founder’s Day Celebration Guide to be provided to each church to assist them in implementing a community-wide celebration.
9. To form AME Alliances - We must come together to address common issues which face our community - as churches we stand as a loud voice together compared to individual voice. We must address the issues of violence in our community, stop standing by as our children are threatened by this violence. We must address the issue of health care that is paralyzing elderly in the area of prescription drugs and insufficient nursing home care. We must address the issues of police profiling, economic disparity and maintaining a healthy body.

Committee Members:

Statistical Report

To: Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady, Sr., Mother Carrie R. Grady, Supervisor, Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward, visiting Clergy, Pastors, Officers and Members of this Seventh Annual Session of the Western New York Annual Conference, I beg your leave to make this seventh year annual statistical report.

Total Number of Conversions ......................... 96
Total Number of Accessions .......................... 223
Total Membership ..................................... 4,243
Percent of Increase .................................. -3%
Total Amount Raised from All Sources ............ $2,442,997.00

Respectfully submitted,
Reverend Robert L. Reynolds
Statistical Secretary
Reverend Ernestine M. Ward
Presiding Elder
Department of Evangelism Report

"Evangelists Saving, Sacrificing and Serving For Christ... Let's Keep on Doing It to the Glory of God" (II Cor. 8:5)

To God Be The Glory!!! I extend sincere thanks and gratitude to the Presiding Prelate of this dynamic, spirit-filled conference the Rt. Rev. Zedekiah L. Grady, Mother Grady and my Presiding Elder, Rev. Ernestine M. Ward for the opportunity to serve as Conference President.

What a might God we serve. Indeed it has been a privilege and pleasure to serve as the Conference President of the Western New York Conference Department of Evangelism. I feel strongly that it is vitally important that we must not grow tired or weary in doing what God has called us to do. I hold in high regard the dedication and efforts of the twenty-eight registered Evangelists of the Conference as well as the untold number of evangelists who go about doing God's work every day.

I want to convey to the entire Department of Evangelism of the Conference that truly we've come this far by faith. It was not my doing, but everyone doing their part. It was the groundwork which was laid that allowed me to easily occupy a position that had been so well established by my two predecessors. God's blessings to all my co-laborers in the gospel.

Across this vast Western New York Annual Conference God has and continues to do great things and it does not yet appear what we shall be. We must continue to keep our hand in the hand of the Master.

Our future goals include giving leadership for two or more outreach ministries of witnessing in areas where there is a great need to organize and a retreat to encourage not only the evangelists but all of God's faithful servants, regardless of the position as we come together in a blessed time of revival.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. John C. Justice
Conference President, WNY Annual Conference
Department of Evangelism

Rev. Corrine Summers
Secretary/Treasurer, WNY Annual Conference
Board of Christian Education Report

To Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady, Mother Carrie R. Grady, Presiding Episopls, Ernestine M. Ward, Rev. and Mrs. Norvel Goff, Sr., Rev. Alexander Stephenson, Dr. Earl Jefferson, Pastors, Delegates, members and friends of this Seven Session of the Western New York Annual Conference: Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Work of the Department of Christian Education

This year local directors have participated in several workshops and meetings in their areas. On September 28, 2002 twenty eight persons met at Israel AME Church to plan our work for the Conference year. Handbooks were distributed to all local directors and ministers in the Albany area.

On October 2002, the directors of the Buffalo Area met at Bethel, Buffalo to plan an institute to take place in April 2003. The local directors effectively planned a well organized institute covering several areas of concern. The theme of this institute was: “Christian Education as Effective Evangelism.” Workshop topics included: The Role of Christian Education, What is Christian Evangelism, Prison Ministries, New Perspectives in Church School, Youth Ministries, Music, and Black History. The Saturday session was attended by 21 persons. The Chairperson and Director were workshop facilitators. We wish to thank Rev. Stenhouse for his support of this venture.

We would like to highlight the work of local Departments of Christian Education.

St. James, Utica reports that they are organizing the WMS, Church School, and Christian Education Board.

First AME Lockport, reports that Vacation Bible School was held for an entire month last summer. It was attended by adults and young people. Free lunch and field trips were part of the program.

St. Mark, Kingston, reports that they are involved in the religious training of their members. A Youth Choir has been organized and will participate in worship during Youth Night.

Bethel, Schenectady has established a Liturgical Dance Ministry. There are plans to begin a Youth Choir.

At St. John, Niagara Falls, youth serve as worship participants on the Second Sunday of each month. Special events were held to commemorate the founding of the AME Church. Among them was a Founder’s Day Breakfast. During the 11:00 service the Christian Education Department reenacted the Walk Out of St. George’s. Family night is held several times during the year.

Israel, Albany reports that a Youth Bible and Adult Bible Studies have begun. At Christmas there was an intergenerational program for the entire church which incorporated the celebration of Christmas and Kwanza. Lewis Williams III wrote an Easter play entitled, “What Would the World Be Like If Jesus Had Not Come.” It was presented at the Easter program.

Bethel, Coxsackie as an awareness exercise and to foster empathy for those with hearing loss, children were to sign various Bible verses.

Payne, Chatham. A game show format was used to present biblical and historical facts.

Future Focus

More workshops and planning session will take place in 2003. Several excellent suggestions arose from the April 12 Institute. They include: community involvement, Christian Education Training for Directors, Youth and Church Members. We would also like to establish long and short term goals of the Board. One of our goals for the 2003-2004 year is to hold a replication of the Christian Education Congress for youth between the ages of 5 and 12. We would also like to see a greater representation of WNY at the Youth Congress and participation in the Youth for Christ Turnaround Contest which will take place at Founder’s Day 2004.

Bishop we thank you for affording us the opportunity to serve the Conference on this level.

Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart
WNY Conference Chairperson

Mrs. Thelma G. Lanier
NY Conference Director
Special Resolution of the Seventh Session of the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

Whereas this Seventh Session of the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was held at Baber African Methodist Episcopal Church, Buffalo, New York.

Whereas, the First Episcopal District has been tremendously blessed with this leadership team our beloved Bishop Zeekiah L. Grady and Mother Carrie R. Grady in the First Episcopal District and the Western New York Annual Conference, and pledge our support to them.

Whereas, we extend gratitude and sincere appreciation to The Reverend Norvel Goff, Mrs. Anna Marie Goff, and the Officers, and Members of Baber African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Whereas, we gather to report on our stewardship of that which the Lord has entrusted us and we give Him praise for His faithfulness.

Whereas, we have been challenged with every preached message.

1. Provisions of health care for many in this nation come up lacking.
2. Violence in our schools and in our neighborhoods are a severe threat.
3. HIV/AIDS continue to spread rapidly through the African American communities of New York State, being the number one cause of death among African Americans ages 25 and 44.
4. The rate of teenage pregnancy has increased in the African American community while it has declined in other sectors of society.
5. Prisons are being filled with African American males faster than they can be filled.
6. Western New York has the highest rate of unemployment in the State of New York.
7. Those who prey on the innocent threaten elderly adults.
8. The gatekeepers responsible for providing the educational skills required for youth to become fully functioning adults have fallen short of their mission.
9. The racial educational gap is real and it is not shrinking. In the words of Dora Height; “The time to mobilize is now, because every year lost in a child’s education could be a child lost.
10. The budget crisis of Western New York is in a constant flux and has a great deal to do with the uncertainties of educating our young.
11. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa has left millions of children orphaned. Many areas of the continent continue to face drought, famine, tribal clashes, child prostitution, children in military.

12. The terrorist attacks continue to threaten the daily living in these United States and in the world.

Therefore, we the members of the Seventh Session of the Western New York Annual Conference hereby resolve the following:

- We resolve to strengthen our presence and witness in corners of Western New York that we have been blessed to inhabit.
- We resolve to reclaim our status in the community, by returning to a time when churches were at the center of life.
- We resolve to address the conditions of our times by putting in place intentional ministries to meet the very basic needs of survival – food, shelter, and clothing.
- We resolve to minister to the needs of those in prisons, as well as their families.
- We resolve that while we affirm and empower our youth, we will in no way neglect the adult and senior adult members of our Zion and our communities as they too face innumerable life adjustments and threats.
- We resolve a threat of terror anywhere is a threat of terror everywhere.
- We further resolve to respond to the challenges of this millennium from our vantage point, with a viewpoint consistent with that which we are, THE PEOPLE OF GOD. As II Chronicles 7:14 states, “If My people who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

Respectfully Submitted
The Special Resolution Committee of the Western New York Annual Conference
The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford
The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart
Sis. Louise McCoullum
Bro. Thomas Davis
Sis. Toni Harris
Sis. Thelma Lanier
Bro. Charles Jones, Delegate

16 May 2003