5-13-2004

Events; 2004-05-13; WNY; Annual AME Conference

Bethel A.M.E. Church

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bethel-ame

Part of the History Commons

Recommended Citation
"Events; 2004-05-13; WNY; Annual AME Conference." Bethel A.M.E. Church. Monroe Fordham Regional History Center, Archives & Special Collections Department, E. H. Butler Library, SUNY Buffalo State. https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bethel-ame/115

This Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Church Collections at Digital Commons at Buffalo State. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bethel A.M.E. Church by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at Buffalo State. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@buffalostate.edu.
The Official Minutes
The 8th Session
of
The Western New York
Annual Conference
First Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church

May 13-16, 2004
St. John AME Church
917 Garden Avenue
Niagara Falls, New York

The Right Reverend Zedekiah L. Grady, Presiding Bishop
The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, Host Pastor
The Rev. Ernestine M. Ward, Host Presiding Elder
Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford, Chief Secretary
First Day, Morning Session
Thursday, May 13, 2004

The Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, convening at St. John AME Church, Buffalo, New York, assembled in the sanctuary for the purpose of organization on Thursday, May 13, 2004, at 8:30 A.M. Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward presented Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady, the 111th elected and consecrated Bishop of our Zion. Bishop Grady called the conference to order for the purpose of organization.

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

Roll Call - May 2004

<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>The Reverends:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernestine M. Ward</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natalie P. Alford</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ella Brandon</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro A. Castro, Jr.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William C. Cobb, Jr.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelo S. Dawson</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norvel Goff, Sr.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elijah Green</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Franklin</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jocelyn K. Hart</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemperal J. Hinsley</td>
<td>Military Chaplain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John C. Justice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George L. Larkins, Ill</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert L. Reynolds</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Allen Stenhouse</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITINERANT DEACONS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Reverends:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirk Belleson</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horace Cromer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betsy Crumity</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percy Jones</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Slaughter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig Wright</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUPERANNUATION**

Rev. James C. Waters: Hospitalized

**LOCAL ELDERS**

The Reverends:

- Rosalyn Baugh: Present
- Samuel L. Bell: Present
- Robert Bailey: Present
- Olivia Eaces: Present
- David Irving, Sr.: Present
- Grace Johnson: Present
- Jeanette Johnson: Present
- Henry Lewis, Jr.: Present
- Deborah McKnight: Present
- George L. McKnight: Present
- Anne Hargrave-Pinn: Present
- Nina Porter: Present
- Burnie J. Savage: Present
- Corrine A. Summers: Present
- Linda D. Van Alstyne: Present
- Delores V. Wynn: Present

**LOCAL DEACONS**

The Reverends:

- Beverly Abrams: Present
- Clarence Bass: Present
- Herman Boyer, Jr.: Present
- Lois Cobb: Present
- Eleanor Dawson: Present
- Richey A. Jackson: Present
- Leeland Jones: Present
- Tracey Morrison: Present
- Annie P. Wilson: Present

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

### Western New York Annual Conference Organization

**The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse presented the following:**

- **Presiding Prelate**: Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady
- **Episcopal Supervisor**: Mother Carrie R. Grady
- **Chief Accountant**: Rev. Herbert L. Eddy
- **Treasurer**: Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
- **Chief Secretary**: Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford
- **Assistant Secretary**: Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart
- **Statistical Secretary**: Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
- **Chief of Protocol & Special Messenger to the Presiding Bishop**: Rev. Horace Cromer
- **Conference Marshals**: Rev. Craig J. Wright, Rev. Henry I. Lewis, Bro. Curtis Johnson
- **Reporter to the Secular Press**: Rev. Dr. George L. Larkins, III, Sister A. Marie Goff

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

**The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. presented the following:**

- **Conference Church School Superintendent**: Bro. Joe Thomas, Sr.
- **Conference Lay Organization President**: Bro. Thomas Davis
- **Conference Director of Music**: Bro. C. J. Rolls, Bro. Whitley, Sister Paula Young
- **Conference YPD Director**: Sis. Toni Yvonne Harrell
- **President, Conference Branch WMS**: Sis. Louise McCoullur
A motion was made by the Rev. John C. Justice and seconded by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse that the organization of the Conference be adopted. Motion carried.

Presiding Elder Ward presented the following:

Social Action ................................................................. Delores V. Wynn
President, Dept. of Evangelism ...................... Rev. John C. Justice
Conference Director of Stewardship .......... Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
Christian Education Director ......... Bro. Charles Rogers
Christian Education Members ............ Rev. Ella M. Brandon
                        Rev. John C. Justice
                        Rev. Betty Crumley

Dean of the Ministerial Institute &
Chairman of the Board of Examiners
Buffalo Area Dean ....................... Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse
Rochester Area Dean .................. Rev. Norvel L. Goff, Sr.
Albany Area Dean ....................... Rev. John C. Justice
Presiding Elder's Assessment ................. Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
                     The Reverends:
                        Richard Allen Stenhouse
                        Norvel Goff, Sr.
                        Natalie P. Alford
                        Ella M. Brandon
                        Jocelyn K. Hart
                        Craig J. Wright
                     Lay Members:
                        Bro. Thomas Davis
                        Sis. Rebecca Lowery
                        Sis. Lucretia Bowie

The Finance Committee
Rev. Richard Allen Stenhouse, Chairman
Rev. Dr. Ernestine M. Ward
Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford
Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart
Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr., Treasurer
Rev. John C. Justice
Rev. Angelo Dawson
Rev. Ella Brandon
Lay Members:
Sister Lucretia Bowie
Bro. Thomas Davis
Sister Gayle Gayton
Sister Paula Young

A motion was made by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. John C. Justice to receive the organization of the Finance Committee. Motion Carried.

Presiding Elder Ward then presented the organization of the Conference:

Board of Trustees
Rev. Richard Allen Stenhouse, Vice Chairman
Rev. Dr. Ernestine M. Ward
Rev. John C. Justice
Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart
Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford
Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr.
Rev. Ella Brandon
Rev. Robert L. Reynolds
Rev. William C. Cobb
Rev. Angelo Dawson
Lay Members:
Sister Bertha Webb
Sister Rebecca Lowery
Sister Caroline H. Veasley
Sister Lenora Johnson
Bro. Robert Dubose
Bro. Elmer Green
2:1-5 read by the Rev. John C. Justice. The Epistle was Philippians 4:10-13 read by the Rev. Ella Brandon. The Gospel was St. John 15 read by the Rev. Ann Hargrave Pinn. The Conference was led in the full Decalogue by the Rev. Angelo Dawson. The Conference was blessed with another selection from the host conference choir. The Rev. Craig J. Wright made the appeal for the Gifts for Missions and the offertory was sung. The Rev. Robert Reynolds led the Conference in the Litany.

Presentation of the Presiding Prelate

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 the splendid pastoral record noting his outstanding service to our Zion. The 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 the singing of the Sermonic Hymn, "O Master Let Me Walk with Thee," which was lined by Reverend Horace T. Cromer. The Annual Sermon preacher was the Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford, Pastor, Agape AME Church, Buffalo, New York.

Her sermon title was "Taking It to Another Level," scripture text, Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11; focus 8. The Rev. Dr. Alford taught and preached about the points Jesus stressed in "Taking It To Another Level." Jesus commanded the 11 disciples to 1) Go somewhere - Jerusalem, 2) Do something - wait for the gift of the Father, and 3) be something else - witness for Jesus. The presence of the Holy Ghost was with us. The Invitation to Christian Discipleship was made by the preacher of the hour as the choir sang, "Just As I Am." The Finance Committee was then called to receive the morning offering.


Bishop 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 also recognized the presence of his sister, Sister Eunice Blackwell who is a member and Steward at Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York. Bishop complemented the music of the choir from St. John AME Church and they continued to render music before the Communion Service.

Holy Communion Service: The Sacrament of Holy Communion was then administered with Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady serving as the chief celebrant and Presiding Elders Ernestine M. Ward and Herbert L. Eddy. Also assisting were the Reverends Melvin Wilson and David Cousin. Following communion, the Annual Conference sang, "What A Fellowship," and Bishop Grady again thanked the visitors to the Annual Conference for their presence. The host pastor, The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, then made announcements.

Bishop Grady asked the Annual Conference to reconvene at 3:00 P.M. The benediction was pronounced by the preacher of the morning, The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford, "And they sang a hymn and went out."

End of First Day Morning Session

First Day Afternoon Session

Members of the Western New York Annual Conference Department of Evangelism, the Rev. Troy Lynn Carr delivered a message for the deviations at 3:00 P.M. Bishop Grady asked for a down home song, "The Lore Been Good To Me" was sung after which the Bishop asked for another: the conference members sang "Come Go With Me to that Land." Bishop Grady said it sounded good. Bishop Grady called for the reading of the reports. Presiding Elder Ward was then asked to read her summary for the Buffalo-Albany-Rochester District. The pastors of the District were then asked to prepare to read. The pastors read in the following order.
2:1-5 read by the Rev. John C. Justice. The Epistle was Philippians 4: 10-13 read by the Rev. Ella Brandon. The Gospel was St. John 15 read by the Rev. Ann Hargrave Pinn. The Conference was led in the full Decalogue by the Rev. Angelo Dawson. The Conference was blessed with another selection from the host conference choir. The Rev. Craig J. Wright made the appeal for the Gifts for Missions and the offertory was sung. The Rev. Robert Reynolds led the Conference in the Litany.

Presentation of the Presiding Prelate
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 the splendid pastoral record noting his outstanding service to our Zion. The 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 the singing of the Sermonic Hymn, “O Master Let Me Walk with Thee,” which was lined by Reverend Horace T. Cromer. The Annual Sermon preacher was the Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford, Pastor, Agape AME Church, Buffalo, New York.

Her sermon title was “Taking It to Another Level,” scripture text, Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11; focus 8. The Rev. Dr. Alford taught and preached about the points Jesus stressed in “Taking It To Another Level.” Jesus commanded the 11 disciples to 1) Go somewhere-Jerusalem, 2) Do something-wait for the gift of the Father, and 3) be something else-witness for Jesus. The presence of the Holy Ghost was with us. The Invitation to Christian Discipleship was made by the preacher of the hour as the choir sang, “Just As I Am.” The Finance Committee was then called to receive the morning offering.

Holy Communion Service: The Sacrament of Holy Communion was administered with Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady serving as the chief celebrant and Presiding Elders Ernestine M. Ward and Herbert L. Eddy. Also assisting were the Reverends Melvin Wilson and David Cousin. Following communion, the Annual Conference sang, “What A Fellowship,” and Bishop Grady again thanked the visitors to the Annual Conference for their presence. The host pastor, The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, then made announcements.

Bishop Grady asked the Annual Conference to reconvene at 3:00 P.M. The benediction was pronounced by the preacher of the morning, The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford, “And they sang a hymn and went out.” End of First Day Morning Session

First Day Afternoon Session
Members of the Western New York Annual Conference Department of Evangelism, the Rev. Troy Lynn Carr delivered a message for the devotions at 3:00 P.M. Bishop Grady asked for a down home song, “The Lord Been Good To Me” was sung after which the Bishop asked for another; the conference members sang “Come Go With Me to that Land.” Bishop Grady said it sounded good. Bishop Grady called for the reading of the reports. Presiding Elder Ward was then asked to read her summary for the Buffalo-Albany-Rochester District. The pastors of the District were asked to prepare to read. The pastors read in the following order.

Albert Turk, Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Leath; New England: Rev. Dr. Herbert Eddy; Delaware: Reverend Sylvester Beaman and Rev. Terry Hasse; Bermuda: Rev. Dr. Micah Chandler.

Bishop 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 also recognized the presence of his sister, Sister Euni Blackwell who is a member and Steward at Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York. Bishop complemented the music of the choir from St. John AME Church and they continued to render music before the Communion Service.
Bishop Grady asked the conference to sing a victory song. “Victory is Mine” was sung. Bishop Grady thanked Presiding Elder Ward, the pastors and members for the exceptional work accomplished. He commended the work and leadership of the Reverends Richard Stenhouse and Norvel Goff, Sr. These two have stood by the Presiding Elder who is one of the best in the AME Church. Bishop Grady further stated that Presiding Elder Ward is from down home, South Carolina and has done well.

Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward asked her nephew, Administrative Staff and her sister Mary Williams to join her at the podium. Presiding Elder Ward gave a brief history of her accomplishments as pastor, New York Annual Conference Secretary and work with the Evangelism Department. She commends the bishop for his support, and knows that it is better to leave while people still want you. She stated that she was not retiring, but moving to another level. The conference attendees rose to their feet and gave the presiding elder a round of applause.

Bishop Grady stated that PE Ward will serve until the Planning Meeting. Bishop Grady instructed the Reverends Richard Stenhouse and Norvel Goff to take the leadership and plan a celebration for the presiding elder.

Rev. Richard Stenhouse asked the clergy and laity of the WNYA Conference to stand. He addressed Presiding Elder and extended thanksgiving for the presiding elder for her faithfulness even during times of health challenges. He stated that we, WNYAC, are not ingrates and the pastors have agreed to give you 2 quarters and will do a great send off. He commends her in her plans for making this WNYAC a reality.

The Reverend Norvell Goff, Sr. addressed Presiding Elder Ward and thanked her for her efforts in making the WNYAC a reality. He stated that he and the Reverend Stenhouse have agreed to plan a retirement event. There will be a journal and we plan to give you your flowers while you can smell them. He asked all clergy and lay to stand. He stated that we will carry this out as we have stated it on the conference floor. Bishop Grady wants all people involved in this event. Presiding Elder Eddy had words of support for their long time friendship and professional work history.

Candidates: Bishop Grady called for the following individuals: The Rev. Dr. Earl R. Jefferson, Candidate for the Office of Secretary/Treasurer – Christian Education; The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Leath, candidate for the bishopric. We were then recessed by the Bishop and instructed to return for the evening Annual Lay Night Service at 7:00 P.M.

Visitors Recognized: Bishop Grady recognized the following: The Rev. Woolridge spoke of the uniqueness and warm spirit of the WYNAC. I spoke of what others can learn from what the WNYAC has been able to accomplish in 8 years. Presiding Elder Lowe said being in the WYNAC is like being back home and that he came to support his friends. He spoke of Presiding Elder Ward and how she is one of the finest Presiding Elders that has ever come this way.

End of First Day Afternoon Session

First Day Evening Session

The Conference Lay Organization under the leadership of Brother Thomas Davis, conference President. The worship leader for the service was Sister Barbara Lane, Local Lay President, St. John AMEC, Niagara Falls, NY. After a spiritual opening program of songs and praises, the conference was blessed with the message delivered by Bro. Thomas Green.
Bishop Grady asked the conference to sing a victory song. "Victory is Mine" was sung. Bishop Grady thanked Presiding Elder Ward, the pastors and members for the exceptional work accomplished. He commended the work and leadership of the Reverends Richard Stenhouse and Norvel Goff, Sr. These two have stood by the Presiding Elder who is one of the best in the AME Church. Bishop Grady further stated that Presiding Elder Ward is from down home, South Carolina and has done well.

Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward asked her nephew, Administrative Staff and her sister Mary Williams to join her at the podium. Presiding Elder Ward gave a brief history of her accomplishments as pastor, New York Annual Conference Secretary and work with the Evangelism Department. She commends the bishop for his support, and knows that it is better to leave while people still want you. She stated that she was not retiring, but moving to another level. The conference attendees rose to their feet and gave the presiding elder a round of applause.

Bishop Grady stated that PE Ward will serve until the Planning Meeting. Bishop Grady instructed the Reverends Richard Stenhouse and Norvel Goff to take the leadership and plan a celebration for the presiding elder. The Reverend Norvell Goff, Sr. addressed Presiding Elder Ward and thanked her for her efforts in making the WNYAC a reality. He stated that he and the Reverend Stenhouse have agreed to plan a retirement event. There will be a journal and we plan to give you your flowers while you can smell them. He asked all clergy and lay to stand. He stated that we will carry this out as we have stated it on the conference floor. Bishop Grady wants all people involved in this event. Presiding Elder Eddy had words of support for their long time friendship and professional work history.

Candidates: Bishop Grady called for the following individuals: The Rev. Dr. Earl R. Jefferson, Candidate for the Office of Secretary/Treasurer of Christian Education; The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Leath, candidate for the bishopric. We were then recessed by the Bishop and instructed to return for the evening Annual Lay Night Service at 7:00 P.M.

Visitors Recognized: Bishop Grady recognized the following: The Rev. G. Woolridge spoke of the uniqueness and warm spirit of the WYNAC. He spoke of what others can learn from what the WNYAC has been able to accomplish in 8 years. Presiding Elder Lowe said being in the WYNAC is like being back home and that he came to support his friends. He spoke of Presiding Elder Ward and how she is one of the finest Presiding Elders that has ever come this way.

End of First Day Afternoon Session

First Day Evening Session

The Conference Lay Organization under the leadership of Brother Thomas Davis, conference President. The worship leader for the service was Sister Barbara Lane, Local Lay President, St. John AMEC, Niagara Falls, NY. After a spiritual opening program of songs and praises, the conference was blessed with the message delivered by Bro. Thomas Green. Sir...
ters Eleanor Bowman and Beatrice Canty extended the appeal for membership. Brother Thomas Davis also extended the appeal for all non-cler-gies to join their local lay organization.

End of First Day Evening Session

Second Day
Friday, May 14, 2004
Morning Session

Christian Education Workshop
Rev. Dr. Earl Jefferson conducted a workshop for Christian Education entitled, “Music in the Church.” Dr. Jefferson defined Christian Education as any and everything that aids people to become more Christ-like.

Worship, stated Dr. Jefferson, means “worth.” So when we worship we sing praise to God as an act of worth-shop. Bishop thanked Dr. Jefferson for his presentation. Bishop Grady asked the Chief Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford to read the minutes from the First Day Session. Bishop Grady called for a motion. The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. made the motion that the minutes be accepted as read with any necessary corrections; and seconded by the Reverend Craig Wright. Bishop Grady commended the Chief Secretary and asked the conference to give her an applause. Bishop Grady called the Rev. Winton M. Hill, III, candidate for the bishopric. He extended his greetings and requested the conference prayers and support as he seeks the office of bishop. Bishop Grady called for the Literary Reports. The Literary Reports were read as follows:

Education: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Craig Wri and seconded by Rev. Horace Cromer. Motion carried.

Social Action: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Craig Wri, and seconded by Rev. Horace Cromer. The motion carried.

State of the Country: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. John Justice and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. The motion carried.

Ministerial Classification: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. and seconded by Rev. Horace Cromer. The motion carried.

Presiding Elder’s Support: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Craig Wright, and seconded by Rev. Horace Cromer. The motion carried.

Sons of Allen: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Horace Cromer and seconded by Rev. Betsy Crumity. The motion carried.

Church Classification: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. John C. Justice, and seconded by Rev. Dr. George Larkins, III. The motion carried.

Evangelism: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Betsy Crumity and seconded by Rev. Pedro Castro. The motion carried.

Missions, Circuits and Stations: The committee read the statement condition for Grace Community AME Church’s admission to the WNY Conference. The church will be brought into the conference, be on trial for three years, and under the leadership of a senior pastor. Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report. Rev. Pedro Castro asked if I could speak to the bishop in private. This report was tabled while Bishop met with Rev. Castro.

Church Classification:

Rev. Dr. Earl Jefferson conducted a workshop for Christian Education entitled, “Music in the Church.” Dr. Jefferson defined Christian Education as any and everything that aids people to become more Christ-like. Dr. Jefferson taught and discussed at length “Music in the Church.” He used examples of the different meter types such as 8 meters; Common Meter 4 or 8-6-8 meters; short meter 6-6-8-6, hymn of praise, a litany, and the Versicle and Response. Scriptural references were given for further explanations. For example, I Chronicles 29:14 is where the offertory comes from: I Chronicles 29:14. The language used in our offertory is often misquoted. The text reads as follows: But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.”

Worship, stated Dr. Jefferson, means “worth.” So when we worship we sing praise to God as an act of worth-shop. Bishop thanked Dr. Jefferson for his presentation. Bishop Grady asked the Chief Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford to read the minutes from the First Day Session. Bishop Grady called for a motion. The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. made the motion that the minutes be accepted as read with any necessary corrections; and seconded by the Reverend Craig Wright. Bishop Grady commended the Chief Secretary and asked the conference to give her an applause. Bishop Grady called the Rev. Winton M. Hill, III, candidate for the bishopric. He extended his greetings and requested the conference prayers and support as he seeks the office of bishop. Bishop Grady called for the Literary Reports. The Literary Reports were read as follows:
Temperance: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. The motion carried.

Bishop Grady asked Presiding Elder Eddy to convene until he returned from tending to a matter that needed his attention. Presiding Elder Eddy asked that the conference sing songs of praise. The were: “We are Climbing Jacob’s Ladder,” “Come and go with me to my Father’s House,” and “Woke up this morning with My Mind stayed on Jesus.”

Bishop Grady returned and continued with the Literary Reports.

Sunday School: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. John C. Justice and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. The motion carried.

Brother Joe Thomas informed the conference that the Conference Church School session will convene at 8:00 A.M. at St. John AME Church on Sunday morning.

Missionary Report: The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. William C. Cobb and seconded by Rev. Craig Wright. The motion carried.

Bishop Grady stated that we would now break for the “Hour of Power” and lunch and upon our return we would continue with the reading of the reports.

**Hour of Power**

_The Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Earl Jefferson_

_Scripture: Mark 6:30-44_

_Subject: Turn it Over to Jesus_

Dr. Jefferson listed the following points for the WNYAC:

1. If in the desert don’t waste prayer time telling God you’re in the desert
2. Be the called out ones God needs
3. Recognize when in the desert trying to respond may be too busy trying to satisfy self, maybe you don’t under the people;

4. Overall message is this; little becomes much in the Master’s hand.

End of the Second Day Morning Session

**Second Day**

**Afternoon Session**

A brief devotional was offered by the Rev. David Irving, Sr. Scripture: Isaiah 52:7; theme: Who are You running to? Presiding Elder Ward asked the conference to sing, “Rise Shine, Give God the Glory” and this song of praise was sung with uplifted voices. Presiding Elder Ward then asked for members of the conference to sing their favorite hymn or selection. The singing of “Blessed Assurance”, “Down at the Cross”, and “Pass Me not O Gentle Savior” were sung throughout the sanctuary. Bishop Grady greeted the Conference and asked if everyone had a good lunch. Everyone said yes. Bishop Grady said, in a joyful way, “don’t you go to sleep.” The conference responded with laughter. Bishop Grady then called for the remaining literary reports.

**Board of Christian Education:** The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Robert Reynolds and seconded by Rev. Craig Wright. The motion carried.

**State of the Church:** The committee read the report, Bishop Grady asked for the motion to accept the report; the motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Craig Wright. The motion carried.

Bishop Grady commended the committee and stated that this report should be published. Bishop Grady called for the Board of Examiners Report to be read. The report is as follows:

To the Presiding Prelate, Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady and members of the Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference, First Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

We, the Board of Examiners, wish to make the following report.
Board of Examiners Report

We have conducted an Institute for all candidates who have been recommended by their Local Church and District Conference to 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 Itinerant or Local Ministry in the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Class on Second Year Studies

Rev. Eleanor Dawson: has petitioned the Board for a change in classification from local to Itinerant. Rev. Dawson has received two master degrees and has completed one year of seminary.

The Western New York Annual Conference Board recommends that Rev. Dawson's request be granted and she be elected and ordained an Itinerant Deacon and be placed in the Class of Third Year studies. The motion was made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff. The motion carried.

Sister Cynthia Larkins: Sister Larkins is a member of First AME Church, Lockport, New York. The Rev. George Larkins is her pastor. Sister Larkins graduated in June 2003 with an Associate of Arts degree from Monroe Community College, Rochester, New York. She is currently enrolled as full-time student at Houghton College in pursuit of the Bachelor of Arts degree. Sister Larkins anticipates a 2005 graduation.

The Board recommends that Sister Larkins remain on hold until the completion of her degree.

Class on Third Year Studies

Rev. Kirk Bellesen: Rev. Bellesen is the pastor of St. James AME Church in Utica, New York. He has a bachelor of Arts degree from Roberts Wesleyan College. Rev. Bellesen is not enrolled in seminary. Rev. Bellesen asked to be excused.

Rev. Horace T. Cromer: Rev. Cromer is the pastor of St. Mark AME Church in Kingston, New York. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Buffalo. Rev. Cromer has completed 19 credits toward the Master of Divinity degree at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Although he was not enrolled in seminary this year, he anticipates continuing as a full-time student in the fall of 2004. Rev. Cromer had a family emergency.

Bishop Grady stated that he must receive a supplemental report.

Class on Fourth Year Studies (Itinerant)

Rev. Betsy Crumity: Rev. Crumity is the pastor of Bright Chapel AME Church in Syracuse, New York. Rev. Crumity has completed all but 11 credits towards the Master of Divinity degree; however, she is not enrolled in seminary at this time. She plans to enroll in September 2004 and anticipates a 2005 graduation.

The Board recommends that Rev. Crumity remain in the Class on Fourth Year Studies until the completion of her Master of Divinity Degree.

Rev. Percy Jones: Rev. Jones has not communicated with the Board of Examiners this year, not did he appear before the Board.

The Board recommends that Rev. Jones be referred to the Committee on Ministerial Efficiency.

Rev. Christine Slaughter: Rev. Slaughter is a member of Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York. The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. is the pastor. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Purdue University. Rev. Slaughter has completed the course
Board of Examiners Report

work and will graduate with a Master of Divinity degree from Northeastern (Roberts Wesleyan College), Rochester, New York.

The Board recommends that Rev. Slaughter be elected and ordained an Itinerant Elder.

Rev. Craig Wright: Rev. Wright is the pastor of Bethel AME Church in Coxsackie, New York. He is currently enrolled in Seminary.

The Board recommends that Rev. Wright remain in the Class on Fourth Year Studies.

Bishop Grady called for the motion to accept the recommendation; motion made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. The motion carried.

Local Relations:

First Year
Sister Isabelle Johnson: Sister Johnson is a member of Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York. The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. is her pastor. The Board has received a request from the respective church and pastor requesting her ordination.

The Board recommends Sister Johnson's election and ordination as a Local Deacon for Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York.

Sister Laura Owings: 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 Sister Owings' election and ordination as a Local Deacon for Baber AME Church, Rochester, New York.

Fourth Year
Rev. Beverly Abram: Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York. The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, pastor. The Board has received a request from the respective church and pastor requesting her ordination.

The Board recommends Rev. Abram's election and ordination as a Local Elder for Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York.

Rev. Herman Boyer, Jr.: St. John AME Church, Niagara Falls, New York. The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, pastor. The Board has received a request from the respective church and pastor requesting her ordination.

The Board recommends that Rev. Boyer be elected and ordained as a Local Elder for St. John AME Church, Niagara Falls, New York.

Rev. Lois Cobb: Bethel AME Church, Lackawanna, New York. The Rev. William Cobb, pastor. The Board has received a request from the respective church and pastor requesting her ordination.

The Board recommends that Rev. Cobb be elected and ordained as a Local Elder for Bethel AME Church, Lackawanna, New York.


The Board recommends that Rev. Morrison remain in the Class on Fourth Year Studies.

Rev. Annie P. Wilson: Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York. The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, pastor. The Board has received a request from the respective church and pastor requesting her ordination.

The Board recommends that Rev. Wilson be elected and ordained as a Local Elder for Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York.
Board of Examiners Report

Bishop Grady called for the motion to accept the recommendation; motion made by Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse and seconded by Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. Motion carried.


Visitor: The Reverend Ed. Bailey brought greetings from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He thanked Bishop Grady for allowing him an opportunity to speak about the Underground Railroad Project. Bishop asked Rev. Dr. George Larkins to pray a closing prayer and to include the Rev. Angelo Dawson’s family for the recent passing of his uncle.

Second Day Evening Session

The Department of Christian Education conducted this evening’s worship service, the Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart, Conference Chairperson, and Sister Thelma G. Lanier, WNYA Conference Director. The worship leader for the service was Sister Asha Parker, St. John AME Church, Niagara Falls, New York. It was spirit-filled evening with worship through song and dance. A special tribute was rendered to Bishop and Mother Grady.

In his remarks, Bishop Grady commended the youth and encouraged them to use their gifts, reminding them that they can be whatever they want to be. After remarks, the benediction was offered.

End of the Second Day Evening Service

Third Day, May 15, 2004
The Morning Session

Sister Cynthia Larkins offered a brief devotional. Scripture: Romans 8:39; Theme: Who Loves You? Bishop Grady greeted the conference and
called for the reading of the minutes. The Chief Secretary, The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford read the minutes of the proceedings of the second day. After the reading of the minutes Bishop Grady called for a motion.

Second Day, Morning Session: The Rev. Novel Goff, Sr. made a motion to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections. The Rev. John C. Justice seconded it. Motion carried.

Second Day, Afternoon Session: The Reverend Richard A. Stenhous made a motion to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections. The Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. seconded it. Motion Carried.

Second Day, Evening Session: The Rev. Novel Goff, Sr. made a motion to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections. The Reverend John C. Justice seconded it. Motion Carried.

Supplemental Report from the Board of Examiners
Bishop Grady called for the Supplemental Report from the Board of Examiners. The Rev. Jocelyn K. Hart read the supplemental report stated as follows:

Class on Third Year Studies
Rev. Kirk Bellesen: Rev. Bellesen is the pastor of St. James AME Church in Utica, New York. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Roberts Wesleyan College. Rev. Bellesen is not enrolled in seminary. The Board recommends that Rev. Bellesen remain the Class on Third Year Studies.

Rev. Horace T. Cromer: Rev. Cromer is the pastor of St. Mark AME Church in Kingston, New York. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Buffalo. Rev. Cromer has completed 19 credits toward the Master of Divinity Degree at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Although he was not enrolled in seminary this year, he anticipates continuing as a full-time student in the fall of 2004. The Board recommends that Rev. Cromer remain in the Class on Third Year Studies.

Class On Fourth Year Studies (Itinerant)
Rev. Percy Jones: Rev. Jones has not communicated with the Board Examiners this year, nor did he appear before the Board. Rev. Jones submitted a letter to Bishop Grady indicating his withdrawal from the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Bishop Grady stated that he was sorry and that Rev. Jones did take the opportunity to speak with him. Bishop indicated, as stated previously, that the Chief Secretary, The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford get Rev. Percy Jones ordination papers. Bishop Grady asked the Secretary to prepare to read the Disciplinary Questions. The Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford, Chief Secretary, answered the questions with the following responses.

The Disciplinary Questions
1. Who are the preachers admitted on trial?
None at this time.

2. Who will remain 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?
Sister Isabelle Johnson, Local Deacon for Baber, Rochester
Sister Laura Owings, Local Deacon for Baber, Rochester

5. Who have been elected and ordained Elders?
Rev. Christine Slaughter, Itinerant Elder
Rev. Beverly Abrams, Local Elder for Bethel, Buffalo, NY
Rev. Herman Boyer, Jr., Local Elder for St. John, Niagara Falls, NY
Rev. Lois Cobb, Local Elder for Bethel, Lackawanna, New York
Rev. Annie Wilson, Local Elder for Bethel, Buffalo, New York

Point of Information:
Bishop Grady asked Presiding Elder Ward if there are any Local Elders pastoring? The Presiding Elder affirmed that there are two: The Rev. A. Hargrave-Pinn, Mt. Zion AME Church, Buffalo and the Rev. Roslyn Bau in Bethel, Olean. Bishop Grady reminded the conference that Local Elders do not receive an appointment from the Office of the Bishop.
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 our Zion.

   1. Bishop John Hurst Adams, 8th Bishop
   2. Bishop Frederick Hilborn Talbot, 90th Bishop
   3. Bishop Vinton Randolph Anderson, 92nd Bishop
   4. Bishop Frank Curtis Cummings, 95th Bishop
   5. Bishop Phillip Robert Cousin, 96th Bishop
   6. Bishop Henry Allen Belin, Jr., 104th Bishop
   7. Bishop John Richard Bryant, 107th Bishop
   8. Bishop Richard Allen Chappell, Sr., 108th Bishop
   9. Bishop McKinley Young, 109th Bishop
   10. Bishop Robert Vaughn Webster, 110th Bishop
   11. Bishop Zedekiah Lazette Grady, 111th Bishop
   12. Bishop Cornal Garnet Hennings, Sr., 112th Bishop
   14. Bishop Theodore Larry Kirkland, 114th Bishop
   15. Bishop Adam Jefferson Richardson, 115th Bishop
   16. Bishop Richard Franklin Norris, 116th Bishop
   17. Bishop Vashii Murphy McKinzie, 117th Bishop
   18. Bishop Gregory Gerald McKinley Ingram, 118th Bishop

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

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?
   The Reverend Percy Jones.

12. Are all the preachers blameless in 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?
   None

   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?
   St. James AME Church, Utica, New York

17. When shall this Annual Conference meet next?
   At the call of the Bishop.

18. Where shall our next Annual Conference be held?
   The Rev. Richard Allen Stenhouse, pastor of Bethel AME Church, Buffalo, New York, extended an invitation for the Ninth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference to be held at 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 to God.

This ends the reading and responses to the Disciplinary Questions.
Point of Information: Reverend Justice asked that all members of the WNYA Conference please stand. Reverend Justice acknowledged a great gratitude to Presiding Elder Ward for her guidance and leadership to Zion for those who were born, and nurtured into this conference. There will be a future expression in the form of a celebration for Rev. Ward that is already being planned.

Reverend Justice offered words of appreciation to the host pastor, the Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart and the entire membership of St. John AME Church for their having hosted this Eighth Session of the WNY Annual Conference. “On behalf of the WNY Annual Conference membership, we thank each of you for your welcoming spirits and care shown to each of us during this Annual Conference.”

The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse acknowledged how grateful we are have had the opportunity to share in the leadership with Bishop and Mother Grady. We will continue to cherish the words that you shared with us and we shall remember that we are the youngest, but certainly not the least.

Presiding Elder Ward received a letter from the Reverend Samuel Bell, Local Elder for First AME Church, Lockport, New York, dated 7 April 2004. The letter states that he is retiring this year. Presiding Elder Ward indicated that Reverend Bell has served at Payne, Chatman, St. James, Utica and at First AME Church, Lockport. We don’t retire locals. Rev. Stenhouse stated that we do not retire locals, but we will send our appreciation. Bishop Grady called for the adjournment.

Motion to Close the Annual Conference
The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse was made a motion, seconded by the Reverend Norvel Goff, Sr. that the Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference closes Sine Die with the reading of the Pastoral Appointment; Motion carried.

Memorial Service
The Memorial Service was held to call the roll for the WNY Annual Conference members who since we last met, have transcended this life, for life eternal.

The names are: Bishop Webster’s wife, Mother Carole Webster; Presiding Elder Wombly; Sister Alberta Jentons; Bro. Olan Jackson; Bro. Harris; Sister India Richmond, wife of Presiding Elder Archie Richmond; Sister Susie Johnson, wife of the late Presiding Elder Johnson, New Jersey.

Following the singing of “When We All Get To Heaven” the benediction was given and the Annual Conference prepared for the Service of Ordination.

The Service of Ordination
The Preacher: The Rev. Dr. James Arnell
Scripture: I Samuel 17: 31-37
Subject: Trust in the Lord

Itinerant Elder: The Rev. Christine Slaughter
Re-obligation as an Itinerant Elder: The Rev. Eleanor Dawson
Local Elders: The Revs. Beverly Abrams, Herman Boyer, Lois Cobb, Annie Wilson

Local Deacons:
The Reverends Isabelle Johnson
The Reverend Laura Owings

After being blessed by the preaching of the word, Bishop Grady recessed the conference for lunch and instructed us that we were to return on Sunday morning for Church School and the Closing and Commissioning Service.

End of the Third Day Morning Session

Fourth Day
Sunday, May 16, 2004

The Closing and Commissioning Service
The Closing and Commissioning Service opened with the Processional Hymn No. 5, “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name.” All those in attendance sang with uplifted voices to the glory of God. The Rev. John C. Justice lined the Hymn of Praise, “Crown Him with Many Crown,” Hymn No. 174. The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse offered the invocation and the prayers of the people were heard. The choir and conference responded to the invocation with the singing of “Spirit of the Living God,” Hymn No. 29.
Point of Information: Reverend Justice asked that all members of the WNYA Conference please stand. Reverend Justice acknowledged a great gratitude to Presiding Elder Ward for her guidance and leadership to Zion for those who were born, and nurtured into this conference. There will be a future expression in the form of a celebration for Rev. Ward that is already being planned.

Reverend Justice offered words of appreciation to the host pastor, the Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart and the entire membership of St. John AME Church for their having hosted this Eighth Session of the WNY Annual Conference. "On behalf of the WNY Annual Conference membership, we thank each of you for your welcoming spirits and care shown to each of us during this Annual Conference."

The Reverend Richard A. Stenhouse acknowledged how grateful we are to have had the opportunity to share in the leadership with Bishop and Mother Grady. We will continue to cherish the words that you shared with us and we shall remember that we are the youngest, but certainly not the least.

Presiding Elder Ward received a letter from the Reverend Samuel Bell, Local Elder for First AME Church, Lockport, New York, dated 7 Apr. 2004. The letter states that he is retiring this year. Presiding Elder Ward indicated that Reverend Bell has served at Payne, Chatman, St. James Utica and at First AME Church, Lockport. We don’t retire locals. Rev. Stenhouse stated that we do not retire locals, but we will send our appreciation. Bishop Grady called for the adjournment.

Motion to Close the Annual Conference
The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse was made a motion, seconded by the Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. that the Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference closes Sine Die with the reading of the Pastoral Appointment. Motion carried.

Memorial Service
The Memorial Service was held to call the roll for the WYN Annual Conference members who since we last met, have transcended this life, for life eternal.

The names are: Bishop Webster’s wife, Mother Carole Webster; Presiding Elder Wombly; Sister Alberta Jentons; Bro. Olan Jackson; Bro. Harry Earle; Sister India Richmond, wife of Presiding Elder Archie Richmond; Sister Susie Johnson, wife of the late Presiding Elder Johnson, New Jersey.

Following the singing of “When We All Get To Heaven” the benediction was given and the Annual Conference prepared for the Service of Ordination.

The Service of Ordination
The Preacher: The Rev. Dr. James Arnell
Scripture: I Samuel 17: 31-37
Subject: Trust in the Lord

Itinerate Elder: The Rev. Christine Slaughter
Re-obligation as an Itinerant Elder: The Rev. Eleanor Dawson

Local Deacons:
The Reverends Isabelle Johnson
The Reverend Laura Owings

After being blessed by the preaching of the word, Bishop Grady recessed the conference for lunch and instructed us that we were to return on Sunday morning for Church School and the Closing and Commissioning Service.

End of the Third Day Morning Session

Fourth Day
Sunday, May 16, 2004

The Closing and Commissioning Service
The Closing and Commissioning Service opened with the Processional Hymn No. 5, “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name.” All those in attendance sang with uplifted voices to the glory of God. The Rev. John C. Justice lined the Hymn of Praise, “Crown Him with Many Crown,” Hymn No. 174. The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse offered the invocation and the prayers of the people were heard. The choir and conference responded to the invocation with the singing of “Spirit of the Living God,” Hymn No.
619. We were then blessed by the Conference Choir’s selection, “I W. Sing Unto the Lord.”


The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. offered the Summary of the Decalogue. The Conference Choir then led the Conference in the singing and all we blessed. The Rev. William Cobb requested the Gifts for Missions. The illustrious Presiding Elder, the Rev. Dr. Ernestine M. Ward asked the Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford to present our esteemed Presiding Prelate, the Rev. Zedekiah L. Grady. This was followed by the lining of the Sermon Hymn, “I’ve A Message from the Lord,” AME Hymn No. 215 by the Rev. Kirk Bellesen.

Bishop Grady took his text from Hebrews 12:1 “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us ...” and for a subject he elected to use: Christian Discipleship. This was followed by the Offering and Offertor. The Bishop called on Sister Stenhouse, First Lady of Bethel AME Church Buffalo to present and introduce our Episcopal Supervisor, Mother Carr. As she addressed the Conference, Mother Grady said she was delighted to have been here for the 8th Session. She thanked everyone especially Rev. Hart and the St. John Church family. She also thanked the Missionaries and YPD Director. The WMS meeting was good and presented full reports. She also acknowledged the new work of Grace Community AME Church. In closing, she read a poem entitled, “God did n Promise.”

Bishop Grady recognized visitors who were worshipping with us. Bishop Grady then called for the reading of the Special Resolutions by the Chi Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Natalie P. Alford. Bishop called for a motion to accept the report and the motion was made by the Reverend Norvel Go Sr. and seconded by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse. Motion carried.

Bishop Grady then called for the reading of the Statistical Report, which was read by the Rev. Robert L. Reynolds. Bishop called for a motion to accept the report and the motion was made by the Rev. John C. Justice and seconded by the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse. Motion carried.

Bishop Grady then called for the reading of the Financial Report for the Conference. Bishop Grady thanked everyone for good leadership and asked that applause be given. He then proceeded to distribute certificates to the various components and specialized ministries within the WNY Annual Conference.

Bishop Grady thanked Presiding Elder Ward for her service and stated that she is one of the best Presiding Elders in the AME Church, and that she has done an outstanding job. She is not retiring for now just stepping down. The WNY Annual Conference needs to give her a good send off. Bishop Grady then called the Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse to announce the plans or the Presiding Elder’s retirement celebration.

The Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, co-chair informed the conference that a worship service is being planned for our presiding elder. The event will be at Bethel, Buffalo on Friday, 28 May 04. Bishop Grady will preach. A journal is going to be published and the Rev. Robert Reynolds will be contacting the churches. This has to take place before the Planning Meeting.

The Rev. Norvel Goff, Sr. co-chair asked the pastors to be intentional about responding. There will be a mass of choirs and representatives from across the conference are asked to participate. Buses and vans will be available for transportation from Baber to Bethel, Buffalo. Every component head will be responsible for a certain amount. Journal ads: full page, $200; half page, $100; quarter, $50. Bishop Grady thanked the Revs. Stenhouse and Goff and wants to see it all at the event. He thanked the Pastors and Spouses, Presiding Elder Ward, Presiding Elder Eddy and his wife, Dr. Earl Jefferson for the lecture and sermon and his wife, the musicians and choir, stewardess, ushers, Rev. Jocelyn Hart, host pastor, his blood sister, Sister Eunice Blackwell.
Bishop Grady and Mother Grady departed for meditation and asked the choir to give a mini-concert until they returned. Presiding Elder Eddy presiding. When Bishop and Mother Grady returned Bishop began the 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 Rev. Dr. Jefferson. Presiding Elder Eddy gave the prayer. The scripture was read, Joshua 1:1-8, by Rev. Dr. Jeffers.

Certificates for Conference appointments and the Pastoral appointments were given out. With the conclusion of the distribution of the Paste, Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady pronounced the benediction. We then proceeded to sing the Closing Hymn No. 45, “Take the Name of Jesus with You” and departed.

End of the Fourth Day Session
and of the Western New York Annual Conference

Special Resolution of the Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference Of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

Whereas, this Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was held at St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church, Niagara Falls, New York.

Whereas, the First Episcopal District has been tremendously blessed with the leadership and direction of our Episcopal Leaders, the Right Reverend Zedekiah Lazett Grady and the Episcopal Supervisor, Mother Carrie Robinson Grady, have given the First Episcopal District and the Western New York Annual Conference, and we pledge our support to them.

Whereas, the Lord has blessed our Presiding Elder Ernestine M. Ward, we praise and thank God for giving her the opportunity to serve.

Whereas, we extend gratitude and sincere appreciation to the Reverend Joecelyn Kahn Hart and the Officers and Members of St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church for hosting this Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference with warm and welcomed spirits.

Whereas, we gather to report our stewardship of that which the Lord has entrusted to us.

Whereas, we have been challenged with every preached message, and indeed when we consider the conditions of our world we must follow the Lord’s command and be about “Taking it to Another Level” to advocate for the members of our communities of which we serve. We will endeavor to do these things because all levels of life are being impacted by the events of the world.

- We must be concerned for the provision of health care, for many members of this nation are lacking much in a land of plenty, and it continues to push the Lord and the Least back to the margins when Jesus came to eliminate the margins.
- We must become more active in helping to decrease, and where possible eliminate violence in our schools and neighborhoods as violence poses a tremendous threat to the continued demise of our youth and adults alike.
- We must remove the blinders from our eyes and look for ways to promote awareness, education, and political support, both financial and through the enactment of laws that include all members of society in the care and cure of African Americans who are infected and affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The research data shows that HIV/AIDS continues to spread rapidly through the African American communities in Western New York at devastating speeds. HIV/AIDS is the number one cause of deaths among African Americans in New York and more specifically includes women of childbearing ages. If African American women who bring forth the new generations, and men are among the largest groups infected, it doesn’t take much to realize that if we sit ideally by, our race can possibly die off.
- We must take better care of our youth when it comes to sex education. Teen-age pregnancy continues to increase in the African American Community. In some cases, research data shows that there is a direct correlation between teenage pregnancy and low self-esteem. The church needs to be concerned.
- We must challenge our local political officials that the Church is not pleased that Western New York has the highest unemployment rate in the state of New York.
- We must continue to be gatekeepers for ensuring that every child who finishes school at the elementary level is able to read, write and able to complete basic math skills.
- We must not allow our government, on any level, to treat our elderly adults without the dignity afforded them, be it in law or in action.
- We must not become comfortable in our quest for equal justice in education, housing and in every level of life as God had ordained that we can receive.
- We must voice our concerns for the budget issues of the Western New York.
- We must make our concerns known about the number of deaths that have occurred after the War on Iraq was declared that it is over.
- We must during this election year, not allow a reputed outcome of the 2000 election occur by not exercising our right to vote and to mobilize others also.
Therefore, we the members of this Eighth Session of the Western New York Annual Conference hereby resolve the following:

- We resolve to strengthen our presence and witness in every community of Western New York that we have been blessed to inhabit and serve.
- We resolve to reclaim the church status in the community, by returning the church to a time when the church was the center of life within its community.
- 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 prison, as well as their families.
- We resolve that we empower our youth, we will in no way neglect the adult and senior members of our Zion and our communities as they too face innumerable life adjustments and threats of the time.
- We resolve that 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 who we are, the people of God, the called and commissioned. As Acts 1:8 states "But you will receive power when the Holy Ghost comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." We can and must take these issues to another level.

Respectfully Submitted
The Special Resolution Committee of the Western New York Annual Conference
16 May 2004

The Reverend Dr. Natalie P. Alford
The Reverend Jocelyn K. Hart
The Reverend Dr. George Larkins, III
Sis. Louise McCullum
Bro. Thomas Davis
Sis. Toni Harris
Sis. Thelma Lanier
Delegates:
Sis. Rose King
Sis. Esther Clark
Sis. Lucretia Bowie