

Report

of the

Restructuring Commission



Forty-Ninth Session
of the

General Conference

CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER
Charlotte, North Carolina

July 18-24, 2012

African Methodist Episcopal
Zion Church

BISHOP GEORGE W. C. WALKER, SR., CHAIRMAN
BISHOP KENNETH MONROE, FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN
BISHOP JAMES E. MCCOY, SECOND VICE CHAIRMAN

To the Board of Bishops, General Officers, and Delegates of the 49th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.* The members of the Restructuring Commission after conscientious study, deliberation and diligent work over the period of the past quadrennial submit the following report.

The General Conferences of 1976 appointed a Restructuring commission, and each successive General Conference including the 48th General Conference of 2008, appointed a commission on restructuring. The mandate given to the Restructuring Commission was to review and develop recommendations that would enhance the operation of the General Departments and Administrative Boards, review and make recommendations for a new operating structure for the A.M.E. Zion Church, and develop a plan for permanent contiguous Episcopal Districts.

In preparation to fulfill its mandate to the General Conference, the Restructuring Commission under the guidance and direction of its Chairman, Bishop George W. C. Walker, Sr., First Vice Chairman, Bishop Kenneth Monroe, and Second Vice Chairman, Bishop James E. McCoy., set forth the agenda for the quadrennium.

The Commission therefore, identified and focused its attention and work in the following areas of concern along with the action of appointing sub-committees that had the responsibility to study and make recommendations to the Commission for further action.

- Merging of Administrative Boards and Departments; chaired by Reverend Dr. Lewis Anthony.
- Sharing Publication Staff: chaired by Mrs. Lula Howard.
- Indigenous Overseas Work; chaired by Reverend Anthony Witherspoon

Proposed Re-alignment of Departments

I

“There is a myth that drives many change initiatives into the ground: that the organization needs to change because it is broken. *The reality is that any social system (including an organization or country or a family) is the way it is because the people in that system (at least those individuals and factions with the most leverage want it that way...*” There is no such thing as a dysfunctional organization, *because every organization is perfectly aligned to achieve the results it currently gets.*”

No one who tries to name or address the dysfunction in an organization will be popular. *Enough important people like the situation exactly as it is, whatever they may say about it, or it would not be the way it is...Clearly, the system as a whole has decided to live with the gap between espoused value and the current reality...Closing the gap would be more painful to the dominant coalition than living with it.*¹

Careful review of Zion’s history in the development and organization of its agencies reveals a process of brilliant innovation often stymied by deplorable under- funding, mythical oversight and mercurial leadership.²

The *Restructuring Commission* (hereinafter cited *Commission*) has consistently warned that the failure to critically analyze our structures, execute a Strategic Plan and boldly fashion agencies that will “serve the present age” properly reflecting membership in the twenty-first century, would have ruinous consequences for our future. Despite valiant efforts these warnings have largely gone unheeded.

The General Conference should be clear that the proposed re-alignment and consolidation of departments represents an *overdue beginning* that is a **short term** solution targeted to accomplish:

- Belated implementation of General Conference directives (*See, II (B) infra*)
 - Heighten efficiencies
 - Elimination of duplication
-

- Improved administrative synergies within current connectional budget allotments and allocations

Given the tragic history of inadequate funding of our departments and General Officers, none should indulge the fable widely and sincerely held by some, that re-alignment of agencies will recoup major budgetary savings that can be applied to assessment reduction. If one has cut to the bone, the next cut destroys the skeleton!

At best, the proposed consolidations will only shift needed resources to under-funded but critical functions that our departments must discharge.

II

Accordingly, the Commission recommends the following *merger* and *re-alignments* of Departments and functions:

(A)

- *Department of Publications* including all publications, periodicals and the Star of Zion

The Department of Publications shall be managed by the *Secretary of Publications* who shall supervise the Editors of *all* publications and periodicals. *The Secretary of Publications* shall be the Editor of Church School Literature elected by the General Conference.

The Editor of the Star of Zion shall be *elected* by the General Conference

(B)

- *Department of Evangelism Church Growth and Development*

Pursuant to the directives of the 48th Session of the General Conference, the Bureau of Evangelism and the Departments of Church Extension and Home Missions are **merged** to form the *Department of Church Growth and Development*.

The department shall be managed and directed by the *Secretary of Evangelism and Church Extension* who shall perform and discharge, all the duties and legal obligations vested in the Director of Evangelism and Secretaries of Church Extension and Home Missions as set forth in the *2008 Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church*. *The Secretary of Evangelism and Church Extension* shall be *elected* by the General Conference.

(C)

- *Department of Christian Education*, headed by the *Secretary of Christian Education*

The Secretary of Christian Education shall manage and supervise the department as provided in the *2008 Book of Discipline* of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and shall implement all General Conference directives enumerated therein.

The Secretary of Christian Education shall be *elected* by the General Conference.

(D)

- *Department of Global Missions*, headed by the *Secretary of Global Missions*

The Department of Global Missions shall be the successor to the current Overseas Missions Department as provided in paragraphs 613-634 of the 2008 Book of Discipline *supra*. The Overseas Missions Board is re-named the *Global Missions Board*.

The Secretary of Global Missions shall perform the duties and managements of the Secretary-Treasurer of the Overseas Missions Department and shall be elected by the General Conference.

(E)

Connectional Budget Department continues as provided Part VII, chapter II, paragraphs 377-416 of the *2008 Book of Discipline*.

- The **Chief Financial Officer** of paragraph 411 is **re-designated: Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer** and shall be **elected** by the General Conference.

(F)

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for
Department of Insurance, Security and Ministerial Relief formed by the merger of the Department of Relief and Department of Brotherhood Pension Service as set forth in paragraphs 471-479 and 481-489 of the 2008 Book of Discipline *supra*.

The Department shall be managed and directed by the **Secretary of Insurance and Pensions** *Benefit Services* who shall perform all duties and legal obligations vested in the Corresponding Secretary Treasurers of the Department of Relief and Department of Brotherhood Pensions.

The Commission further recommends that the **Secretary of Insurance and Pensions** shall produce at each **Connectional Council**, written proof of the following:

1. **Certifications** that the Secretary is bonded and meets the actuarial and insurance requirements of the state where the Department is incorporated and registered and, the several states where applicable, where the Department does business.
2. **Certifications** that the Department is in compliance with the laws of the United States, particularly the Department of the Treasury (Internal Revenue Service).
3. **Certification** that the Department is current in all contracts, obligations, premiums, payments to service providers, insured and beneficiaries.

Registered Agent

The Commission recommends that the Registered Agent of all Departments and Church Agencies shall be the **Secretary of the Board of Bishops** of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and that all Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of our Departments and agencies be amended to reflect this directive of the **49th General Conference**.

The General Secretary-Auditor of the AME Zion Church, shall receive service of process or government notifications for the *Secretary of the Board of Bishops* but shall *immediately* inform the *Secretary of the Board of Bishops* of service of process or other governmental notifications concerning any Department or Agency by phone and writing within 24 hours of receipt of the same.

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(G) PG128-129

- *Department of Public Affairs, Social Concerns and Convention Management* formed by the merger of the Department of Public Affairs and Department of Health and Social Concerns.

The new department shall be managed and directed by *the Secretary of Public Affairs and Convention Management* who shall perform the duties assigned the Director of Public Affairs and Director of Health and Social Concerns.

The *Secretary of Public Affairs and Convention Management* shall appoint and supervise a *Director of Social Concerns* who shall discharge the duties of the Director of Health and Social Concerns subject to the approval of the appropriate Administrative Boards and the Connectional Council.

The Secretary of Public Affairs and Convention Management shall be *elected* by the General Conference.

(H) PG.129

Department of Historic Preservation and Scholarship shall assume the duties heretofore assigned to the *Historical Society* of the AME Zion Church as provided in the applicable sections of the *2008 Book of Discipline*

- The duties of the Department shall be discharged and coordinated by the *Archivist and Historiographer of the AME Zion Church* as set out in the 2008 Discipline. The Archivist shall hire and oversee an *Editor of the Quarterly Review* in collaboration with the Department of Publications.

The Archivist shall maintain a current history of the AME Zion Church and shall be *elected* by the General Conference.

(I)

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- *The General Secretary-Auditor* to perform the duties set-forth in Part VII, paragraphs 372-376 of the *2008 Book of Discipline* except the Commission recommends that paragraph 374.11 thereof, be amended to read:

11. *The General Secretary-Auditor* shall hire and supervise a licensed Auditor/CPA to perform the auditing functions of that office. We further recommend that each fiduciary Administrative Board secure a CPA/Auditor advisor to assist in the evaluation of reports of the Departments and agencies they oversee.

*The Connectional Council*³

112 years ago, the General Conference at the recommendation of the Board of Bishops created the *Connectional Council* and delegated to it, the authority and duty to oversee the Departments and make such rules as may be necessary for the improvement of their operation.

Unfortunately, the *Connectional Council* has largely turned into a session for hearing reports, hardly ever discharging the specific duties set out in the *Book of Discipline* for executive oversight and rulemaking.

The *Commission* strongly urges that the *Connectional Council* undertake a serious and immediate review of its duties of Departmental oversight and rule making.

It is clear beyond peradventure, the critical duty of the *Connectional Council* to perform its assigned *executive functions*, can no longer be neglected or suffer benign marginalization.

III

Administrative Boards

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All Administrative Boards that had oversight over predecessor Departments will continue with appropriate conforming amendments to the *Book of Discipline* that will reflect new agency structures and titles.

2012 Election of General Officers

Should the recommendations of this Commission be adopted after the election of General Officers, we recommend that any *incumbent* General Officer so elected, be permitted to serve at full salary for a period not to exceed two years, as a *transition consultant* under the supervision and direction of the new Secretary.

Conclusion

88 years ago at the 27th *Quadrennial Session* of the General Conference Zion's policy concerning its departments was expressed in the battle cry: "*elimination by consolidation.*" This resulted in the consolidation of the Home Missions and Church Extension Departments, later disjoined.⁴

In 1936, 76 years ago, the 30th *Quadrennial Session of the General Conference* did more "consolidation". The present Christian Education Department was formed by the merger of three departments, while other agencies were led by part-time General Officers with meager financial support.

The office of *Auditor* was created in 1908 but did not function. The 27th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference (1924/88 years ago), combined the office of Auditor and General Secretary in one office: General Secretary-Auditor.

In the same way, the *Public Relations and Social Service Department* was established and placed in the General Secretary offices. Later, these functions were removed from the General Secretary and severed to form two separate agencies by action of the General Conference in 1952.

The *Departments for Ministerial Relief and Brotherhood Pension Service* experienced similar mercurial and rocky fates, necessitating the Board of Bishops in their report 60 years ago to the 35th *Quadrennial Session of General Conference*:⁵

“Your Chief Pastors have been put to the painful responsibility of removing from office, two general officers and the treasurer within the reach of two years.

It is a palpable fact that we had to become awakened to the trend towards the breakdown in the honest administration and the faithfulness of duty in some of our departments. We share the regrets of the church that this climate has come upon us, but being the responsible group to execute the laws and regulate the affairs of our Zion, your chief pastors found it seriously imperative to take corrective action...We therefore moved from office two officials whose departments showed gross irregularities in handling funds, that left serious losses of our people’s hard-earned and sacrificial money, that could not be accounted for by the officers...”

Interestingly, the Bishops also declared: “The Board of Bishops brings to the attention of the delegates of this General Conference that we are solely responsible for the type of persons we elect to fill these very important offices. *Your Bishops feel that persons elected to these General Offices should have some previous training to fit them for the heavy and exacting responsibilities that shall be theirs, if and when elected.*” (Emphasis supplied)

Indeed, Santayana was right: *“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it!* The repeating cycle of crisis reorganization, tragic under funding and unconscionable expectations of General Officers must end.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said it best:

“This is no time for romantic illusions and empty philosophical debates...This is the time for action...Without recognizing this we will end up with solutions that don’t solve, answers that don’t answer and explanations that don’t explain.”⁶

“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is the thief of time...We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time

is deaf to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residues of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words: "Too late."⁷ Zion still has a choice. May history and future generation's record, she chose well!!

SHARING PUBLICATIONS STAFF

In its continuing effort to fulfill its mandate, namely to review and develop recommendations that would enhance the operation of the General Departments and Administrative Boards, review and make recommendations for a new operating structure for the A.M.E. Zion Church, the Commission pursued the feasibility of staff sharing by the various periodicals where practical.

The sub-committee's assignment was to explore the idea with the editors of Zion's publications about the possibility of sharing staff and finding ways to become more efficient and effective in the publishing of their respective periodicals.

The central focus of this effort was to set forth the proposition of sharing a secretary and a subscription coordinator. With the exception of the *Star of Zion*, sharing one full time secretary seemed feasible for two of the editorial offices in the A.M.E. Zion Corporate Headquarters.

The second proposal that was presented dealt with the establishment of a centralized subscription data base. The editors of *The A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review and The Church School Herald-Journal* indicated a centralized subscription data base for all periodicals would be beneficial and could be effective for all of the editors, with some exceptions. Although the office for the *Missionary Seer* is not in the same locale, the application of computer technology would allow for this periodical to be included in a centralized subscription data base.

The discussion with the editors of the different publications exposed some concerns and potential barriers that would prohibit the sharing of staff and developing a centralized data base.

I. The method of receiving subscriptions.

The majority of subscriptions come through the annual conferences. Some come directly from individuals who send the payment for their subscription(s) to the office of the periodical.

II. The requirement for the number of periodicals that must be subscribed to differs in conferences within some Episcopal Districts. Subscriptions requirement is not consistent throughout the Episcopal Districts.

It was indicated that some conferences only require subscriptions for two periodicals a year. Another conference allows subscribers to pay every other year for the *Star of Zion*. Editors receive a different subscription list from each conference.

III. Are the subscriptions received in a timely manner?

A lack of timely receipt of subscriptions from the conferences is a major concern. Some are received up to three to four months later.

IV. Other issues that need to be addressed including efforts towards providing workable solutions are:

- 1) A format for a centralized data base would need to be developed.
- 2) An equal number of subscriptions are not received by each editor.
- 3) The periodicals are published bi-monthly and quarterly.
- 4) Development of a uniformed format for submitting subscriptions.
- 5) Development of a system to update subscriptions information for editors during the conference year. The system would also need to include information to indicate when periodicals are returned. Currently they are not returned to the office of the editor.
- 6) If periodicals are mailed as second class and returned because of incorrect addresses, the return item cost is doubled.

The sub-committee pursued some avenues for information and to enhance their ability to propose feasible solutions to address the stated concerns. The committee contacted the editor of The United Methodist Church's *Response magazine* to gain insight in the way their subscriptions are processed. It was revealed that they do not process subscriptions themselves. They use a fulfillment service called Camby & West in Congers, NY. Camby and West collect the subscription payments, maintain the magazine's subscription lists,

including subscription additions, address changes and deletes; generate the mailing labels from the lists and send them electronically to the printer, which also mails the magazine.

As a result of the work of the sub-committee on Sharing of publications staff(s), the Restructuring Commission makes the following recommendations:

1. Consolidation of the publishing interests and placement of one full time secretary supervised by the Secretary of Publications.
2. Hire a Subscription Coordinator whose duties will be to establish a centralized data base; update the records for all periodicals; keep track of expiration dates, new subscriptions, address changes; and serve as the contact person for the annual conference periodical committee and or subscription personnel. The subscription coordinator will be supervised by the Secretary of Publications.
 - a. The data for the *Missionary Seer* subscriptions would also be included under the Subscription Coordinator and managed at the A.M.E. Zion Headquarters.
3. The office of the *Missionary Seer* be located at The AME Zion Church Corporate Headquarters.
4. The attached Periodicals Subscription Form (or one similar) be adopted as a standardized form for submitting subscriptions by the annual conferences.

The Overseas Work

Prior to 1993, the strength of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Africa was primarily seen in Western West Africa, Eastern West Africa and Angola, but with the organization of the South Africa Annual Conference in 1993, Malawi in 1998, and Mozambique in 1999 tremendous growth increased Zion's visibility and strength in these areas.

In consideration of the ever-expanding work in Africa, the Restructuring Commission continues to address concerns relating to the type of

structure and relationship needed to provide for a more effective and efficient evangelistic involvement by the A.M.E. Zion Church on the Continent of Africa.

The impact of the rapid growth has produced some ever-increasing challenges for the effective oversight and administration of the African Work, and that there are now out of necessity five Bishops assigned to this expanded work in Africa. The fact that there are now five Bishops assigned to various parts of our work in Africa is not to be viewed pessimistically, but rather as a testimony to a vigorous evangelistic emphasis to implant the gospel in as many geographical areas as possible.

We recognize that our future relationship with the work in Africa might out of necessity include some model of indigenous leadership for the African Work. The absence of a visionary plan to develop a systematic approach for the alignment of various conferences, in keeping with the expansive growth has created an inefficient use of resources and travel time. The current alignment of African Conferences results in a travel scenario where several of the Bishops in Zion cross over each other's work, in an effort to get to their own Episcopal areas on the continent.

Western and Eastern West Africa are areas that have already proven to be areas (for the most part) that may be able to foster/nurture indigenous leadership that will yield productive fruit almost instantaneously, as Zion has long been established there.

The South African Conference is still relatively new, less than 20 years old. It is too early to identify persons who have served in traveling ministry in the A.M.E. Zion Church for 20 years.

It has become increasingly clear that the need for electing indigenous Bishops is ever more pressing. The expanded work in at least two Episcopal areas of Africa demands the presence of a Bishop in the Episcopal area on a full time basis.

The cost of travel for stateside Bishops, Missionary Supervisors and staff to travel back and forth is quickly becoming a deterrent for a regular visible presence on the work;

Recommendations

That the denomination approve a plan for Indigenous Leadership at the 2012 General Conference, to become effective between 2016 – 2020 (respectively), which allows time for helping to put in place necessary measures for making a complete transition.

1. That the bishops assigned to these Episcopal areas help to prepare the area for indigenous leadership by identifying and presenting qualified candidates, at least to the Board of Bishops and Connectional Council prior to the General Conference ensuing, respectively;
2. That the qualifications for becoming a candidate as an indigenous Bishop in our church not be changed/alterd (per special proviso) in any way to demean the office. Candidates seeking the office of Bishop will do so with the understanding that upon being elected indigenous Bishops, they will serve as such throughout their tenure as Bishops, as this will promote continuity, cohesion and an even stronger evangelistic thrust throughout the Episcopal District;
3. That indigenous leadership becomes effective by 2016 for the Western West Africa Episcopal District, which comprises:
 - A. West Ghana
 - B. East Ghana
 - C. Mid-Ghana
 - D. Liberia
 - E. North Ghana
 - F. Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)
 - G. Togo:
4. That indigenous leadership becomes effective by 2016 for the Eastern West African Episcopal District, which comprises:
 - A. Nigeria
 - B. Central Nigeria
 - C. Rivers Nigeria
 - D. Lagos-West Nigeria
 - E. Mainland Nigeria
 - F. Cross Rivers Nigeria
 - G. Northern Nigeria
 - H. Southern Nigeria

- I. South Eastern Nigeria
- J. Akwa ~~NIGERIA~~
- K. Port Harcourt ~~NIGERIA CONF~~

5. We recommend working toward establishing the ~~Southwest~~ ^{Central South} Africa Episcopal District to be established by 2016, to comprise of:

- A. Angola - East - West ~~Angola~~
- B. South Africa

6. That indigenous leadership becomes effective by 2020 for the work in Angola and South Africa.

7. That the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church make the India Annual Conference autonomous, effective immediately to allow the already increasingly growing work there to continue to flourish uninhibitedly. *Referred to Episcopal Committee*

8. That the A.M.E. Zion Church humbly and honorably withdraw from the following areas due to lack of integrity:

- A. Malawi, Central Africa
- B. Mozambique, Central Africa

9. That the following Overseas Conferences remain attached to American work at this time until further study can be completed that may be able to establish Indigenous Leadership for the same, namely:

- A. London-Midland
- B. Guyana
- C. Jamaica
- D. Bahamas Islands
- E. Virgin Islands
- F. Trinidad-Tobago
- G. Barbados
- F. ~~St. Vincent~~

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RESTRUCTURING COMMISSION:

- I. It is recommended that this 49th Session of the General Conference approves the continuation of the Restructuring Commission.
- II. It is recommended that this 49th Session of the General Conference approves the proposed re-alignment of departments as specified in this report on pages 2-8.
- III. It is recommended that this 49th Session of the General Conference approves the proposed format for the publications of the A.M.E. Zion Church as specified in this report on page 12.
- IV. It is recommended that this 49th Session of the General Conference approves the proposed format for enhancing the Overseas work as specified in this report on pages 14-15.

CONCLUSION

Famously, the great philosopher George Santayana of Harvard declared: *"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."*

Any honest review of Zion's history relating to its agencies and departments reveals *a past not remembered!*

The past has been characterized by under funding, inconsistent oversight and accordion like stop gap measures of mergers and realignments that arrested the bleeding for a season, without meaningful treatment of the cause. The Restructuring Commission appeals to the delegation of this 49th session of the General Conference to critically and genuinely consider the recommendations in this report and decisively commit to the proposed changing for the good competent progress.

¹Ronald Heifetz, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009), 17-18

²David Henry Bradley, *A History of the A.M.E. Zion Church, Volume II 1872-1968* (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1970), 149-187

³Bradley *supra*, *History of AME Zion*, 384

⁴Bradley *supra*, *History of AME Zion*, 164-167,

⁵Bradley, *supra*, *History of AME Zion*, 180-181

⁶Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 60

⁷King, *supra*, *Where Do We Go from Here*, 158

Respectfully Submitted, The Restructuring Commission

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Bishop Kenneth Monroe, First vice Chairman

Bishop James E. McCoy Second Vice Chairman

Mr. Jerry McComb

Rev. Dr. W. Robert Johnson III

Mrs. Rosetta Dunham

Rev. Alfred Carson

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Rev. Anthony Witherspoon

Mrs. Lula Howard

Rev. Keith Harris

Mrs. Gwendolyn Brumfield

IMPORTANT
From

SOZ

Explains why information re approval
of recommendations is not in
the Minutes of the 49th Session
of the GC.

STAR OF ZION

Official Voice of the African
Methodist Episcopal Zion Church



In an effort to comply with the law enacted by the Forty-ninth Quadrennial Session of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church's General Conference, the Board of Bishops requested the General Secretary Auditor to produce a copy of the official audio session where the Restructure Commission made its report. The Commission presented within its report the implementation of indigenous leadership for the Western West Africa and Eastern West Africa Episcopal Area in 2016.

The General Secretary Auditor explained why the proceeding was inadvertently omitted from the condensed minutes and subsequently, the Discipline. The procedural volleying during the session required a skilled and attentive secretariat. Some positions may henceforth require professional transcription.

The challenge presented was the mechanism by which such an initiative would result in an attainable and sustainable system to facilitate the election of indigenous leadership in two of Zion's most faithful and productive areas. The expansion of Eastern West Africa under the leadership of Bishop Solomon Dorme Lartey, the expansion of the Eastern West Africa work for twenty four years under Bishop Samuel Chuka Ekemam, and the recent embrace of a native son of Western West Africa Bishop Seth O. Lartey find the nations, government and people applauding the actions of the General Conference. The report of the Reconstructing Commission and the mandate of the General Conference transcended personal or political considerations addressing the future of our Biblical outreach.

The following steps provide a structure to accomplish the recent law of our church.

1. Candidates for Episcopal service in the Western West Africa and Eastern West Africa Districts (herein indigenous area) will meet the criteria required for eligibility as prescribed by the book of Discipline. (With an ATS accreditation equivalent accepted since ATS does not evaluate theological institutions in these countries)
2. Eligibility for indigenous leadership has the following criteria. The candidate must be a legal resident of the Episcopal area in which they are seeking to serve. This must be their primary residence nine months prior to the opening of the 2016 General Conference. The elected Bishops covenant to domicile at least ten out of twelve months each year in their native land.
3. The candidate must be a member of an Annual Conference within the Episcopal areas and in good standing.
4. The Annual Conference and the presiding Bishop must verify and certify the candidates eligibility. They must then be certified by the Board of Bishops and authorized for the ballot by the General Secretary Auditor of the AME Zion Church.
5. There will be a general election for all certified candidates to fill the first two slots on the 2016 ballot for Bishop. If no indigenous candidate is elected, the following two slots will be for their election by the General Conference. Only the persons who meet the qualifications for indigenous leadership in the aforementioned areas are eligible for election on the indigenous leadership ballots.
6. Bishops elected to those areas will attain the number of their election in succession. However, rotation to the presidency of the Board of Bishops (defacto head of the church) will not ensue until one quadrennium of Episcopal service has been completed. A review of the Indigenous Leadership structure will be presented to the Fifty First Quadrennial Session of the General Conference by a select committee appointed by the Board of Bishops.
7. Bishops elected under this proviso, covenant to remain and strengthen Zion in their respective Episcopal Area through residency and assignment, without term limits and rotation. The maximum number of years of Active Episcopal service will be twenty, at which time retirement compensation will be granted.
8. Compensation is covered in the Discipline through the Connectional Budget allocation for overseas Episcopal travel.
9. Salary and exclusions for said Episcopates shall follow the formula for Episcopal leadership, with the Connectional Budget Board having the fiduciary responsibility to determine the necessary adjustments, if any, to effectuate fair and equitable distribution of resources to these Connectional Claimants.

The Board of Bishops
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church