Report of the General Secretary-Auditor

**The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church,
Board of Bishops' & Connectional Council Meeting**

July 18th – 21st, 2017

**Knoxville Marriott Hotel
501 East Hill Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37915**

**The Reverend J. Elvin Sadler, D.Min.,
General Secretary-Auditor**

**Bishop Staccato Powell, Chairman
Commission on Discipline Codification**

**Bishop Mildred B. Hines, Board Chairperson
Board of Records, Statistics and Archives**

**Bishop Dennis V. Proctor,
President, Board of Bishops**

**Bishop George E. Battle, Jr.,
Senior Bishop**

Introduction

To Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, President of the Board of Bishops, Bishop George E. Battle, Jr., Senior Bishop, members of the Board of Bishops and members of the Connectional Council.

Grace, Mercy and Peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus, the Christ. It is with tremendous humility that I give my first report as General Secretary-Auditor of our great Zion! The Lord has been both kind and merciful to me and for this I am grateful.

I began my work as General Secretary-Auditor on August 1st. My team and I spent the first several weeks organizing and arranging the office. We began our work by providing Episcopal Certificates of Consecration and Assignment to the Board of Bishops. I also met with the Chairs of the Board of Records, Statistics and Archives (Bishop M.B. Hines) and the Commission on Discipline Codification (Bishop S. Powell) to set the agenda for the work ahead. The following is a report of the work:

The Book of Discipline

The work of the Book of Discipline continued after the General Conference. The Commission on Discipline Codification, having met almost every Monday from September, 2015 until March, 2016, covered much of the work of combing through the 2012 Book of Discipline and making necessary corrections. This arduous work positioned us to be ready to move quickly with the coding and printing of the 2016 Book.

Another dynamic which helped us with speeding up the printing of the 2016 Book of Discipline was the use of technology with the General Conference Secretariat. With the approval

of Bishop Frencher and the consent of Dr. W. Robert Johnson, a system was developed and put into place to bring congruence to the minute-taking process. A Chair for the Secretariat was selected (Dr. Sheila Quintana) who assisted in critiquing and implementing the new process. Each member of the Secretariat was provided a Chromebook laptop from Google. This allowed all members to take minutes within the same technology platform. The members also used Google Docs to create minutes in real time. Each session had a team of three members, of which one of them served as the master scribe. As this person typed, everyone else could see their entry. If there were corrections, the section was highlighted until the end of the session. The appropriate team would meet, following the close of the session, and make all necessary revisions. At the end of each day, the entire Secretariat would meet and agree on the minutes for the day. Those minutes would be "locked" and presented to the next morning's session, in electronic format. At the close of the General Conference, the minutes were 95% complete. Once the Revisions Committee compiled its final report and placed the language in its final form, they gave it to the Secretariat who inserted the proper language into its proper place. The minutes were finished within one week of the close of the General Conference.

The Commission on Discipline Codification met on September 20th to tentatively code the new language in the appropriate places in the Book of Discipline, pending the certification of the Compilation Committee. The Compilation Committee met October 6th, 2016, completed its work and certified the minutes. The Book was formatted and the Commission met by conference call to approve the work. Several more reviews and revisions were made by members of the Commission as well as members of the Board of Bishops. The final revision was submitted to the printer on January 20th, and the 2016 Book of Discipline, in hardback form, was presented during the 2017 Board of Bishop's meeting. We are currently moving towards publishing the Book in electronic

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format: we hope to have it soon. The price is $24.95 for the hardback and $21.00 for the electronic version.

I would like to thank Bishops Dennis V. Proctor, Michael A. Frencher, Sr. Nathaniel Jarrett and Warren M. Brown and Dr. W. Robert Johnson, III for their work leading up to this quadrennium and Bishops Staccato Powell, Michael A. Frencher, Sr. and Warren Brown for their ongoing work, to bring the 2016 Book of Discipline to bare.

Quarterly and Annual Conference Reporting Forms

Another area of concern and concentration is the automation of our Quarterly and Annual Conference forms. With the assistance of the Presiding Elders' Council, a prototype form was developed and presented to my office. Our office took these forms and used the format to create an interactive form, using Microsoft Excel. A partnership with a Microsoft partner (AppTech Corporation) was forged who assisted us with the further development of the forms and a web-based platform for the deployment of the system.

The South Atlantic and Western Episcopal Districts were used as the test markets. The process was presented to the Laity, Pastors, Presiding Elders and Bishops for each Episcopal District. Presiding Elders went through special training and participated in the initial entering of the information. The system has been revised several times and is now ready for full roll out. The system, when fully deployed, will provide secured user access and real time forms and information to each church, Presiding Elder District, Annual Conference and the Connection. Each Pastor, Presiding Elder, and Bishop will have a unique user id and password. When the unique user ids and passwords are entered, the person will be able to access the area that is uniquely theirs. They

will be able to go in, fill out reports and send them. The Presiding Elder will be able to access each church on their District and access the Quarterly Conference reports electronically from a computer or smart device. Each Bishop will be able to go into any church in their Episcopal District and review the information, at any given time, and be able to review the most recent information that is inputted for that church. Our office will have real-time information on our Denomination and will provide dashboards that reflect the key indicators that the Denomination chooses to publicize, at any given time.

Each of the stateside Bishops selected a date for the training of their Presiding Elders, Pastors and key Laity in your Episcopal District and, to date, all but one of the stateside Episcopal Districts have been trained. A four hour one day training has been used to adequately prepare the people for the new process: two hours with the Bishop and Presiding Elders and two hours with the Episcopal District members. We continue to offer training to each District, as needed. The plan is to complete the implementation of Overseas by December. We ask that the Church will bare with us this first year as we gain a more accurate statistic on the numerical condition of the entire Connection.

As a part of our partnership with Microsoft, each church is receiving a free version of Microsoft Office 365 online to be used by the Pastor and congregation. Each Bishop and Presiding Elder District will be provided with a free version of Microsoft Office 365 that can be downloaded onto five desktop, or laptop computers and five tablets or smart devices. This includes:

1. Microsoft Word,

2. Excel,

3. PowerPoint,

4. Office,

5. Skype for Business,

6. OneDrive with one TB of memory,

7. SharePoint,

8. One Note, and twelve other applications to use.

To manage the platform, provide new and updated forms, and training modules, each church will be asked to pay an annual license fee. For churches of 0-99 members, the annual license will be $25.00 per year and for churches with 100+ members, the license will be $50.00. Fees will be collected at the time of training and annually, beginning in January, 2018. Mission & Overseas Areas will be given special consideration.

GSA Website

One of the mandates that came out of the General Conference was the development of a website to provide relevant and up to date information on the various aspects of the reporting for the Denomination. www.AMEZionGSA.com website has been developed to provide the Denomination with a one stop source for all Doctrine, Polity, Information and Research regarding our Church and trends relating to the Church Universal. The website will provide the following:

1. A **Reporting** tab to access all reports relative to Connectional reports, i.e. Connectional Council minutes, and General Conference resolutions, revisions, reports of Bishops, General and Connectional Officers and Official Minutes and all other information relative to our Connectional meetings;

2. An **FYI** tab to provide "how to" trainings on various administrative protocols and leadership and organizational principles and explain actions on various aspects of AME Zion Doctrine and Polity;

3. A **Records** tab to access Quarterly Conference forms (1st Phase) and all pertinent reporting forms (2nd Phase);

Forms Update

The office is currently in the process of updating the forms we use for various aspects of our Denominational work. The forms will go through a two-step process. 1) We are in the process of doing an initial updating of the current forms to allow for date inclusion and greater manipulation of the documents. 2) We will then do a major upgrade to make forms interactive, where necessary, and more easily accessible and user friendly. The initial forms are now available on the GSA website.

Archivist

Per the direction of the General Conference, the Archivist of the Denomination now falls under the Office of the General Secretary-Auditor and the Board of Records, Statistics and

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Archives. The annual contract of the Archivist (Dr. William McKenith) began on January 1st, 2017 for one year, subject to renewal. As a part of the Archivist's responsibilities, he is responsible for the facilitation of the Walls Advisory Board and the continued archiving of the history and artifacts of the Denomination. Meetings with Dr. Vergil Lattimore of Hood Theological Seminary and Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins of Livingstone College have taken place. It is the intent of the Board to continue the partnership between the three principals and digitize, archive and display the historical artifacts of The A.M.E. Zion Church. We will also seek funding opportunities through grants from private funding sources to help to fund these endeavors.

Chaplaincy

The Book of Discipline charges the Office of the General Secretary-Auditor with the responsibility of serving as the endorsing agency and posit for records and endorsements for chaplains of all agencies. Dr. Vergil Lattimore serves as the endorsing agent for the Office. All military personnel have been re-certified for this fiscal year and files for all others are being updated. The General Secretary and Endorser have met and have established protocols to be used at all levels of the chaplaincy. Current chaplains are being contacted to update their files, as well as identifying other chaplains in various fields to apprise them of the requirements of our endorsement process.

Legal Authorization

We are living in an age where legal documentation is being required of all churches, new or established, to provide evidence of incorporation and tax status. The Patriot Act is requiring banks to request churches to provide evidence of their status. With this being the case, it is becoming more and more necessary that the Denomination establish a corporate 501c3, for purposes of verifying banking relationships. Churches will still need to provide their own Tax Identification Numbers (TIN). The Office will provide verification for churches who request in writing the need to open accounts. Protocols will be put into place to assure that churches are submitting proper documentation and operating procedures for proper fiscal responsibility.

Zion Connect MRM

We are excited to present to the Church, in partnership with AppTech Corporation (a Microsoft Partner), a revolutionary world-class database management system for all A.M.E. Zion Churches that will assist with membership tracking, communications, scheduling, giving, and even more user-friendly access to forms. We present to you now *Zion Connect MRM*:

*"The vehicle that connects the Church, Kingdom and Community"*

Zion Connect MRM

AppTech is honored and excited to work with AME Zion Church to provide a full service, state-of-the-art Church Management System for a reasonable monthly subscription fee. We are literally working overtime to try and deliver a product by the middle of July that has enough important features to make it well worth the subscription fee. But our long-term intention is to partner with your awesome organization to develop a system that is second to none, without changing the original rate.

Our main design goal of this application is to use cutting edge technologies to facilitate deeper connections between the great people of the AME Zion Church around the world. That is a tall order and we intend on filling and refilling it for as long as God gives us strength and creativity! We intend on using blogs, media files, real-time messaging tools, and mobile geo tracking technology to build an app that serves as home base for a community, not just a website. If we don't make the world smaller for your members, then we have failed.

The initial offering of this product will have the following features:

CHURCH HOME PAGE
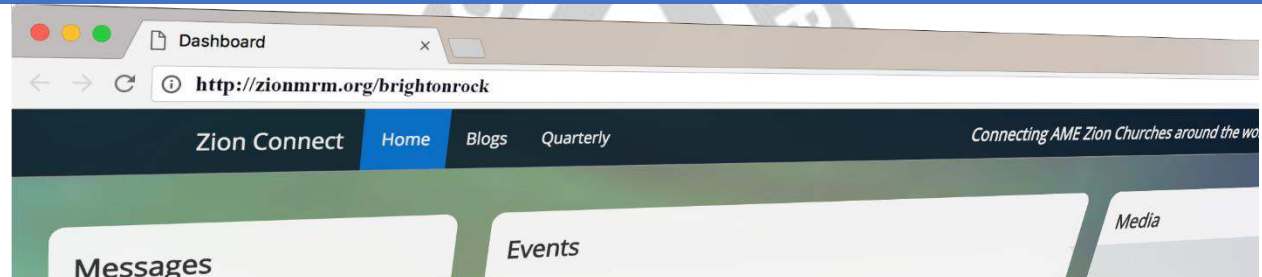
Each church (including smaller churches) will have their own website portal that can be customized for their individual needs. The main page will be available to the general public and will contain:

- *Upcoming Events: A list of publicly available events with full pictures and descriptions of the event as well as any info needed for when/where and how to register.*
- *Media Files: A listing of any media files that can be played directly from the browser or phone browser. This can include a welcome message, past sermons, walkthroughs of the church, etc.*
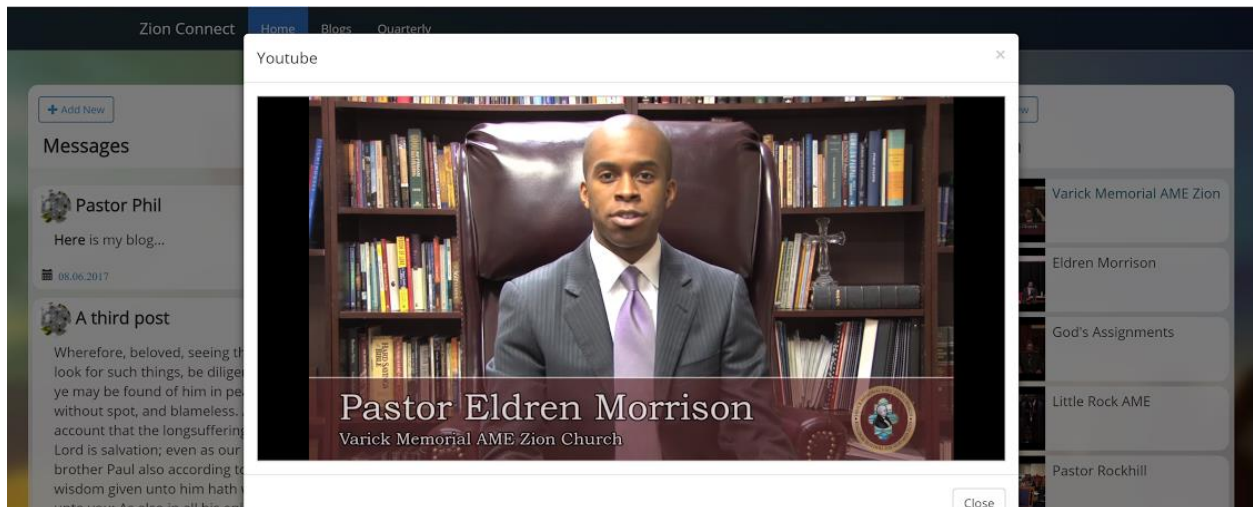
- **Blog Posts:** *Blogs associated with and hand-picked by the church to display. For instance, maybe a church wants to have a Pastor's Corner blog that will show the latest posting of the local pastor on the main page.*
- **Corporate Marquee Section:** *The top of the web page will show any Corporate Level messages or announcements for the entire denomination. By simply adding a message at the corporate office, the message will scroll across the Home Page of all logged on users in the denomination.*

ONLINE DONATIONS

When the church turns this feature on, they will be able to accept donations via Credit Card or PayPal account. The donations can be single donations or even reoccurring donations (i.e. someone could easily sign up to give $100/month). These donations are deposited directly into the church account.

This feature should more than pay for the subscription fee of the application.

Quarterly / Annual Report of Ministry of Kindness

All boards/ministries/organizations operating in the name of the church are amenable to the Quarterly Conference and as such are required to make quarterly and annual reports.
Additional reports should be made as requested by the Church Members Conference and/or the Pastor

A.M.E. Zion Church * Brighton Rock   Pastor in Charge * Rev. Brenda E Jones

Charge * Barbara Smith   Presiding Bishop * Bishop W Darin Moore

Presiding Elder * Rev. Kenneth W Crowder   Annual Conference * Virginia

Q1 Start * 01/01/2017   Q1 End * 03/31/2017

Q2 Start * 04/01/2017   Q2 End * 06/30/2017

Q3 Start * 07/01/2017   Q3 End * 09/30/2017

Q4 Start * 10/01/2017   Q4 End * 12/31/2017

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
inistry of Kindness	400	250	520	300
cumenical and Social oncerns	100	150	720	680

. CATEGORY AND AMOUNT OF BENEVOLENCE PAID

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
aid to Sick/Needy/Distressed	0	0	40	0
laintenance Fee	500	0	200	800

gnature: *   Date: *
06/01/2017

clear

Submit

Each member church will have access to a form based Quarterly Reporting system that is much easier to use and manage than the current Excel-based system. Using best of class form techniques and responsive technologies that will work across all devices including PC/MAC/iOS/Android, these forms will make the Quarterly Reporting Process much easier to complete and monitor.
The forms will flow directly into the database without the need for uploading. The data will then be immediately available for the Presiding Elder and Bishop to review along with the local pastors.

EMPOWER TOOL

The Empower Tool is a full-service people tracker. This tool is designed to help pastors and leaders grow and advance the people in their congregations. Along with standard features of a CRM like name, addresses, phone numbers and family members, this tool will focus on a person's roles and responsibilities within the church. The tool will track the following attributes for each member:

- *Demographics information like name, family, addresses, contact information.*
- *Roles such as pastor, class leader, Minister of Kindness, etc.*
- *Goals such as the steps needed to achieve a position within the church or the denomination as well as personal and spiritual goals.*
- *Important events and achievements like baptisms, class completions, marriage, etc.*
- *Prayer Requests for this member and their family.*

CONNECT TOOL

For this release, the Connect Tool will be a simple chat-based tool for members to communicate across the denomination if granted permission to do so by their church. The forums will have the option of being moderated if desired which will provide the ability for someone to audit and approve each post before it goes public.

We will work closely with your leaders and members for future releases of this tool. Our dream is to leverage the most innovative technologies available to make this feature an amazing connector of people. Some options may include accessibility options, messenger style apps and even proximity apps that allow the members to find each other when they are in the proximity of one another.

FEEDBACK TOOL

One of the most important tools that we will launch starting with the first version of the site is the ability for the users to be actively involved in helping us make the site better and more effective for your church. We promise to take the time to read, pray over and consider each and every one of the suggestions that we receive. This isn't just a job for us. We feel honored and blessed to participate in this amazing ministry and we want to honor and respect the wishes of your members and leaders.
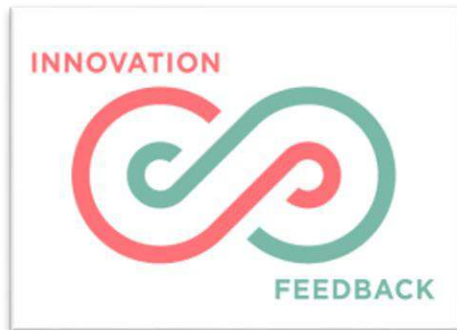
FUTURE FEATURES

- *iOS and Android apps: These apps will provide all the features of the website as well as amazing new features like the ability to have churches pop up on a user's phone when they are driving in the vicinity of the church. The church could easily display the upcoming events, sermon notes, or even live-stream the service going on inside!*
- *Full accounting and accounting integration features. This would include such options as QuickBooks integration and full auditing and reporting.*
- *Full scheduling tool for appointments events, conferences including registration services.*
- *Offering/Collection tracking*
- *IRS Tax Statements printed and/or emailed to members*
- *Subscriptions tracking/billing services*
- *Live services like parent/child tracking for Sunday School, Live Streaming of services, etc.*

SUPPORT

AppTech will provide state-of-the-art support services online as well as real person live support during normal business hours. When we get enough churches signed up that we need to hire additional support personnel, we will seek to find people within your organization that would like to join our team before going outside the church.

TRAINING

We are dedicated to making this application a great success. One of the best ways for us to achieve that is to recognize and empower the users within your churches that become experts in the application and then employ their help to train others. When we get enough participation to warrant seminars and training sessions, we would love to do as many of these events as we can afford to do in as many cities as will have us.

GIVING BACK

Lastly, AppTech wants to give back to AME Zion Church and the communities that you serve. It is our sincere hope and dream that we would be able to invest some of the revenue from this application in programs, schools, job opportunities, training opportunities, etc. that help further the cause of AME Zion Church.

Furthermore, it would be our honor and pleasure to personally serve in these programs when and where possible.

FEE STRUCTURE

We have worked out the lowest fee structure that will allow us to pay for the server technologies, support services, and development services. All of the features of the application will be available to all subscribing churches, regardless of their size. The fees are on a sliding schedule based on the size of the church because larger churches will use more storage and database resources than smaller ones.

Church Size	Monthly Plan	Yearly Plan
100 members or less	$9.99	$99.99
More than 100 members	$9.99 + $0.08/member over 100.	$99.99 + $0.80/member over 100.

SIGN UP NOW!!!

PureFlix, Inc.

We are excited about a Strategic Alliance with the largest religious movie production company

in the world, PureFlix (www.pureflix.com), the makers of ***God is Not Dead, God is Not Dead 2,***

Woodlawn, The Case for Christ, Veggie Tales and many more. More information will be shared

about this exciting partnership in the near.

Ongoing and Future Endeavors

    A. Evaluative Instruments – The key to creating ministries of excellence lies in one's ability to self-evaluate. We are in the process of developing pastoral, congregational and presiding elder evaluative instruments to enhance our ministry efforts.

    B. Document Digitization – We will continue to digitize all documentation associated with the General Secretary-Auditor.

    C. Grant Procurement for Archives & Other Endeavors – We will seek grants to assist with funding the strengthening of data accumulation and research to better assess and evaluate how we do ministry, as well as funding the archives of our denomination, and other endeavors, such as emergency response, outreach, etc.

    D. Protocol Manual for Administrative Procedures and Training Modules – Working with the Senior Bishop, Bishop Hines and the Board of Records, Statistics and Archives, we will develop protocols and processes to create systems and structures for more effective ministry execution. We will also provide "How to" training modules on a wide range of ministry areas.

  I. Audited Financial Statement - Attached, please find the audited financial statement for January through December, 2016.

In and for the Sake of the Kingdom and *"The Freedom Church"*,

Respectfully, Submitted,

The Reverend J. Elvin Sadler, D.Min., General Secretary-Auditor