

**THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH**  
**EPISCOPAL OFFICE DESCRIPTION**  
**Office of the Bishop**

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. A Traveling Minister for twenty years in *The A.M.E. Zion Church*.
2. At least 40 years of age.
3. Who has one living spouse (meaning, a former spouse and present spouse cannot both be alive).
4. Who has an earned advanced degree in theology from an accredited institution of higher learning must submit transcripts of same to the General Secretary at the time of filing as an official candidate.
5. Who has not been expelled from our Church or another communion.

**SPIRITUAL MATURITY AND VITALITY**

Must meet all the biblical qualifications for church leadership. They will need seasoned faith and maturity as demonstrated by many years of consistent and faithful Christian living and service.

**PERSONAL MATURITY AND MINISTRY-CONGRUENT CHARACTER**

Must be emotionally healthy, resilient, constructive, and wise, demonstrating the personal qualities that mark strong leadership and durability. They will require strong interpersonal skills and should be recognized as a servant-leader, be outgoing and friendly.

**FAMILY ALIGNMENT**

It is essential that the Bishop be able to balance wisely the responsibilities of home and work.

**MINISTRY CALLING AND GIFTING**

Should be able to verbalize a sense of God-given calling to vocation. They must have gifts that are strategic to the fulfillment of the position description: leadership, administration, and teaching.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Bishops are set apart to serve as models of servant leadership and must exercise their responsibilities consistent with an ethic of Christian love.
- Public or private actions or statements intended to humiliate or demean an individual are unacceptable.
- Recognizing that the church is to make disciples and that the disciple-making process is best accomplished at the level of the local church.
- A Bishop will have the support and health of the local congregations within their Episcopal area as their primary concern.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES:**

1. To preside in the Annual and General Conferences.
2. To form the Presiding Elder Districts according to the judgment of the Annual Conference.
3. To appoint Preachers under the following restrictions:

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(a) A Bishop shall appoint the Preachers to charges annually and that appointment shall become effective 30 days from the close of the Annual Conference or wherever such appointment is announced. Such advanced notice shall only be abrogated with the mutual consent of the Pastor involved in the transfer. A 60-day notification will be given for changes of appointments, except in extreme circumstances.

(b) The Bishop shall appoint Pastors upon the consideration of their abilities, training and experiences. An appointment shall be valid until the convening of the next Annual Conference and can only be changed by the mutual consent of the Bishop and the Pastor or for either judicial causes and or the immediate good of the congregation as expressed in writing by the Board of Stewards. Efforts should be made to reach mutual consent before such a change is made. However, the failure to do so shall not prevent the Bishop from making an appointment. To maintain our commitment to itinerancy, a Pastor is permitted to serve a charge as long as their ministry is profitable to the congregation, unless there is a need for their service at another congregation. Pastors shall be appointed to charges by the Bishop for one year at a time, but may be allowed to remain in a charge for as long as the Bishop sees fit.

(c) A Bishop shall not appoint any Preacher to a pastoral charge who is not a subscriber to our official periodicals.

4. To change in the interim of the Annual Conference, the appointments of the Preachers as necessity may require.
5. To receive and transfer Ministers according to law, the Bishop will not transfer a Preacher from one Conference to another without the Minister's consent.
6. A Bishop shall travel throughout the entire Episcopal District to which they are assigned to oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the work.
7. To expand the Church through missions and evangelism by establishing new churches and enlisting local Bishops support for world mission.
8. To provide each Annual Conference with a program of instruction and inspiration emphasizing the necessity of evangelism.
9. To consecrate Bishops who have been elected by the General Conference, to ordain Deacons and Elders who have been elected by the Annual Conference and furnish them with credentials.
10. To decide all questions of law in the Annual Conference subject to an appeal to the General Conference, but the application of law shall in all cases be with the Annual Conference.
11. To appoint Presiding Elders over District for the efficiency of the work.
12. To sit as judge when appealed to by a Minister convicted by a trial committee and to call and preside over the Court of Appeals for a Minister convicted by an Annual Conference.
13. To see that no one is elected a delegate to the General Conference who is not entitled to that privilege according to law.
14. The Bishop and Annual Conference shall stress the importance of the mission conferences section of Zion's Benefit Services and urge deeper interest in a more loyal support of superannuated ministers, widows, and orphans.
15. There shall be established a Harriet Tubman Association to hold and develop the home property of the Underground Railroad heroine of our race, and noble, courageous leader in Church and nation, now become a saint of memory, for the price she paid for the freedom of her race, and glory of her nation. It was bequeathed by Harriet Tubman of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

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16. The Bishop may appoint in the Episcopal District, with discretion, a director of Christian Education of Youth; a director of Christian Education of Young Adults, director of Christian Education of Children, and a director of Boy Scouts for the Episcopal District, the Annual Conference and the Presiding Elder's District.
17. The Bishop may appoint in the Episcopal District, with discretion, a director of Christian Education for the Episcopal District.
18. The Bishop may appoint in the Episcopal District with discretion, a Board of Christian Education for the Episcopal District. The Christian Education for the Episcopal District shall be under control of said board. The director Christian Education of the Episcopal District shall be amenable to the Board of Christian Education of the Episcopal District.
19. The Bishop shall appoint in every Annual Conference director of Christian Education whose duty is shall be to unify, supervise, and promote the work of Christian Education in the districts and church composing the Annual Conference, through the district directors of Christian Education.
20. The Bishop shall appoint in every Annual Conference a conference Board of Christian Education. The Christian Education program for the Annual Conference shall be under control of said board. The conference director shall be amenable to the conference board.
21. The Bishop shall appoint in every Presiding Elder's District a District Director of Christian Education whose duties shall be to supervise, unify and promote Christian Education in the respective districts through the District Director of Children, Youth, Young Adults and Adults. The said director shall be amenable to the District Board of Christian Education.
22. The Bishop shall also appoint in every Presiding Elder's District, a District Director of Christian Education of Children; a District Director of Education of Young Adults; a District Director of Christian Education of Youth and a District Director of Christian Education of Adults who duties shall be to supervise, unify, and promote the work of Christian among the respective age groups in the Churches on the district through the church directors of Christian Education, superintendents, presidents of Varick Christian Endeavor Societies, Director of Youth Work and other Christian Education officer in the local church. There shall be appointed by the Bishop of the conference in each Presiding Elder's District a Director for each of the four division of Church School membership, namely: Church, Youth, Young Adults and Adults, whose duty it shall be to unify, supervise and promote the work of Christian Education in all the Churches of the District.