

**The Department of Church Growth and Development
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**

A Guide for Directors of Evangelism



Welcome to the Ministry of Church Growth and Development
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THE BUREAU OF CHURCH GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

OUR PURPOSE: The Bureau of Church Growth and Development offers resources and evangelistic events to strengthen discipleship and equip believers to share their faith in Jesus Christ.

OUR PASSION: Our passion is to educate, encourage, and assist the Denomination, so that all believers, whether clergy or laity, will be empowered to witness for Christ in whatever situation they find themselves.

1. We challenge Christ followers to live more fully as credible, committed Christian Disciples of Jesus Christ, to share their faith with boundless love, and incredible boldness, to impact their world with greater courage and integrity on behalf of Jesus Christ.
2. We are passionate about proclaiming That all need to be saved, all can be saved, all can know that they are saved, and all can be saved to the uttermost.

WHAT WE DO: We attend to the needs of presiding elders, pastors, and the bishops, cultivating leadership, providing evangelism resources, and bible studies to strengthen the witness of their districts and congregations.

1. We attend to the needs of laity, nurturing their commitment to witness and live out the wholeness of the Christian faith demonstrating integrity in their evangelistic practices and working for reconciliation in the relationships.
2. We help Zion grow at home through ministry of Home Mission by providing mission church support, pastoral support and emergency assistance as required.

HOW WE DO IT: We sponsor a Quadrennial Evangelism Congress that focus on inspiration, information and implementation and impact for church growth and evangelistic success.

1. We make available training materials, inspirational books, well-prepared and well-informed instructors providing leadership keys, mutual learning opportunities, relationship building, vital connections and encouraging collaboration.

WHY WE EXIST: In order that the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church may conform more closely to the spirit and mission of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ and employ the most effective means for the accomplishment of the chief end of the Gospel- the salvation of souls, and that the church may more vigorously promote and apply the moral and spiritual agencies by which men are rescued from sin and trained for Heaven and to systematize the work of evangelism within the denomination.

We exist because people need resources that encourage faithful discipleship and enable grace-filled faith sharing in a secular environment; clergy need to be renewed in their understanding of the importance of evangelism and the way it intersects all the ministries of the church; and finally, congregations need guidance, support and encouragement in order to faithfully live out the gospel in the contexts of disagreement, division and difference.

THE JOB DESCRIPTION AND INSIGHTS For DIRECTORS OF EVANGELISM

Local Directors of Evangelism - We begin with the Director of Evangelism of the local church because it is in the local church that the real work of evangelism must take place. It is in the nurturing environment of the local church that disciples of Christ are made. Dr. Dallas Jenkins, the former Director of the Bureau of Evangelism, gives excellent guidelines for local Directors of Evangelism. "Local Directors are selected and nominated by the Pastor and confirmed by the Quarterly Conference. They should be persons of high character, deep commitment to our Lord, and filled with a passion for the souls of men. They should be aware of the need to create throughout the church what we call "the evangelistic climate." They should be persuaded of the need to extend the spiritual influence of the church throughout the community. They should be ready to respond to the call of the Department to attend sessions for training, spiritual enrichment and evangelistic challenges. When such a person has been nominated and confirmed, his or her name, address and telephone number should be forwarded to the District Director of Evangelism. The District Director of Evangelism then files the name, address and telephone number with the Conference Director of Evangelism, [who reports it to the Regional (Episcopal District) Director] who reports it to the Director of the Department of Evangelism. Along with the Local Director of Evangelism, a limited number of persons should be selected to aid in the projection of the program of evangelism within the church. The number of persons on the Board of course, will vary with the size of the church, the interest in evangelism and the will of the Pastor. The size of the

Board (Committee or Commission), it is to be hoped, will also be influenced by the number of committed persons available to serve.”

District Directors of Evangelism - Dr. Jenkins gives excellent guidelines for District Directors. “District Directors of Evangelism should meet the same high standards of Local Directors, but in an even more advanced degree, if possible. The District Director is normally nominated by the Presiding Elder in Cabinet at the Annual Conference and appointed by the Bishop who presides over the Conference. As in all other appointments, of course, where there is a vacancy the Bishop may appoint District Directors at any time during the Conference Year. Moreover, as is well known, the Bishop need not accept the nomination of the Presiding Elder, but reserves the right and privilege to appoint whomsoever, in his godly judgment, he may see fit as the District Director. As in other appointments, the Presiding Elder may appoint a District Director in the interim of an appointment by the Bishop, which may or may not be confirmed by the Presiding Bishop. The District Director should have a District Board of Evangelism with whom he can consult, plan and implement the program of evangelism in the Presiding Elder District. In the absence of such a Board, he should consult freely with both the Pastors and lay leaders to be assured of their support and cooperative leadership. At the District Conference, an opportunity should be provided by the Presiding Elder for the District Director to make his report, to conduct evangelistic seminars, workshops and/or clinics. He should work closely with the Conference Committee on Evangelism to see that the emphasis of the General Church is reflected in their reports. He should, together with his Board, utilize every opportunity to make the spirit of evangelism felt throughout the worship experiences of the Conference. In some instances, it may be possible for him to conduct an evangelistic service during the District Conference. Presiding Elder District Revivals should be held. In some cases, it may be necessary to sectionalize these Revivals where the District is large or widely scattered. The Director may plan and direct a District Convocation and such other projects for redeeming the world in his area as may be feasible. He should report all activities to the Conference Director, [to the Regional Director] and to the General Director.

Conference Directors of Evangelism -To the Conference Directors of Evangelism Dr. Jenkins gave the following words of insight and wisdom: “Conference Directors are an important Cog in the wheel of evangelism. Either the work will prosper under his hand or wither and die depending upon his commitment, acceptability, passion and training for the herculean task laid upon his shoulders. He should, therefore, be chosen carefully and after much prayer for divine guidance in the selection. It is important to realize that a viable program of evangelism is more than the noise, emotionalism and revivalism that have stereotyped evangelism to the detriment of the church for so many years. Therefore, the Director will not only be a religious person, but also a competent administrator, organizer and teacher of men. He will be a person capable of making intelligent reports, conducting schools of evangelism, representing the Conference in ecumenical gatherings, and giving guidance to the District Directors and Pastors in developing programs on the District and local church levels. The Conference Director is expected to develop and give guidance to the Conference Convocation and to serve as a resource person to the District Director for the District Convocations. He should work closely with the Conference Committee on Evangelism to see that the emphasis of the General Church is reflected in their reports and should, himself, make a report to the Annual Conference. In some instances, it will be possible to have an entire worship service during the course of the Conference with an evangelistic thrust under his leadership.

He should check with the Conference Program Committee on such opportunities. Of course, the Conference Director will make his annual report to the Director of the Department [And the Regional Director of Evangelism]. Such reports should show the number of accessions, conversions, revivals, evangelists, clinics, convocations, etc. within the bounds of the Conference. The Conference Director is appointed by the Presiding Bishop of the Conference. He should see that his name, an address [telephone number], as well as District Directors in his Conference are registered with the Director of Evangelism [And the Regional Director of Evangelism]. This registration should also include the names of all Conference Evangelists.”

The Episcopal or Regional Directors of Evangelism - The Title, Regional Director of Evangelism, now denotes that individual who will be responsible for the Evangelism program of an Episcopal District. This office is now synonymous with Episcopal District Director of Evangelism, because the Regions of the Bureau of Evangelism are now identical to the 12 Episcopal Districts. The Regional Directors are appointed by the Bishops of the Episcopal Areas or Regions. The Regional Directors are most effective in this office, when there are Regional Boards of

Evangelism with whom they may consult concerning the work. They should meet the same high standards of the Conference Directors of Evangelism and must utilize many of the same skills and abilities. Always working in line with the vision of the Bishop, Regional Directors may help plan and implement the special evangelistic initiatives of the Episcopal District or region, such as convocations, crusades, revivals, workshops and seminars. The Regional Directors will serve as the key contact persons for the Director of the Bureau of Evangelism and will be heavily relied upon to keep the Bureau informed concerning the work of evangelism in the region. Their reports should come annually to the Bureau along with the yearly updates concerning the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the Conference, District and Local Directors in their region.

The Executive Director of the Bureau of Evangelism - “The General Conference shall elect a Director of Evangelism, whose tenure of office shall be for four years and until his successor is elected. He shall be an Ex-officio member of the Board of Evangelism and shall be the chief Executive Officer of the Board. He shall under the direction of the Board and the provisions of the Discipline, have the general Directorship of Evangelism, conduct the general correspondence and tentatively pass upon the qualification and fitness of Evangelists to be appointed by the Board. He shall make a survey of the field from time to time and under the direction of the Board and upon the invitation of Pastors, assign Evangelists to certain territory. He shall confer often with the Board as to the best method of regulating support for the Evangelists both in cities and in rural districts, the length of time an Evangelist should spend at any given place and how he is to be entertained while there. He will be expected to call a meeting of the Evangelists when convenient so as to exchange opinions as to the best methods of conducting an evangelistic campaign where several churches may combine to that end. “

THE JOB DESCRIPTION AND INSIGHTS For GENERAL EVANGELIST

According to The Book of Discipline, the Board of Evangelism has been given authority to hire General Evangelists to serve across the Church. However, in the words of Dr. Jenkins, “The Evangelists must meet the high standards set by the Board for this ministry and, as a result, persons who might qualify are difficult to find. Added to this is the problem of setting a method of adequate support for such helpers.” The Discipline states that:

Evangelists employed by the Bureau of Evangelism shall be known as General Evangelists, provided their whole time is given to the field, and their support shall be regulated by the Board. No one hereafter shall be styled a General Evangelist, nor shall any particular support be provided for anyone who is not employed and recognized by the Board and who does not give his whole time to the work. Once a Minister decides to become a General Evangelist and is employed by the Board, he must subscribe to and abide strictly by the regulations of the Board, or he will be dismissed.

Conference Evangelists -The Discipline directs that “A Minister of an Annual Conference, who desires to give part of his time to Evangelism subject to an appointment to a Pastoral Charge by the Bishop, shall be styled Conference Evangelist, whose sphere of operation shall be confined to his Conference Territory, except when the Director of Evangelism invites him to assist in an effort.” Dr. Jenkins shares invaluable insights that will inspire and enlighten Conference Evangelists.

It is expected that those who are appointed Conference Evangelists by their Bishops will take an active part in promoting the work of evangelism “within the bounds of the Annual Conference.” No doubt, numerous opportunities will be provided for them to exercise their gifts in the several pulpits. However, he should not feel limited by the number of invitations coming from the pastors. “The fields are white unto harvest” and many possibilities will emerge as he prayerfully surveys the many areas of possible service. The Conference Evangelists should be near the top of the Conference and District Directors’ lists of human resources. His talent should be channeled by the Director into neglected fields of need. Homes for the aged, convalescent homes, prisons, jails, parks, playgrounds, industries, streets, civic and fraternal bodies are but a few of the places where an intelligent sharing of the message can pay large dividends. Conference Evangelists should see that their names and addresses [and telephone numbers] are registered with the Director of Evangelism in order that he may be reached for us in those United Crusades where he can serve. During the District and Annual Conferences, the Conference Evangelists can be quite helpful in setting the spiritual tone of the worship services by his voluntary leadership in prayer and praise, spiritual life groups and in informal cell discussions on the grounds. All Conference Evangelists should be ready to take the leadership in inspiring attendance

and participation at all Evangelistic Convocations, whether on the District, Conference, Regional or General Church level. Of course, he should expect to attend himself and participate in all sub-groupings where he might both make a contribution and receive help in his own development.

Lay Evangelists - Dr. Jenkins has a word of encouragement and instruction for the Lay Evangelists as well. Students of church history are aware that the Christian Church began as a Lay Movement. It is significant that the A.M.E. Zion Church, following this historic line, also began as a Lay Movement. Methodism generally, and Zion Methodism particularly, owes a great deal of its numerical growth and evangelistic fervor to the effective labors of thousands of unheralded lay evangelists. The Department of Evangelism stands ready to register those lay workers who wish to be more clearly identified as evangelists. Such persons should write a letter of intent, countersigned by their pastors, Pastors will find in their congregations many lay helpers who, while not ready to take on Holy Orders or register with the General Church as a Lay Evangelist, will nonetheless be ready to give invaluable service at the local level. The Department encourages the use of such exceptional persons to all the fields of service ready to receive their unique ministry.

www.ameziondevelopment.org
www.otismcmillan.org

