



# 2023 MID-YEAR MEETING

## *The Power of Prayer*

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

### OPENING WORSHIP SERVICE THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023 · 6:30 PM

DANIEL PAYNE COMMUNITY PLAZA | 1500 DANIEL PAYNE DRIVE | BIRMINGHAM, AL 35214

#### *Our Preachers Include:*

#### THE PROPHETIC VOICES OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY



Rev. Jessica Boanerges



Rev. Deborah Butler



Rev. Sandra E. Cole



Rev. Mattie Edwards



Rev. Ruby Heard-Bustamonte



Rev. Kimberly Martin



Rev. Monique Summers



BISHOP HARRY L. SEAWRIGHT, PRESIDING PRELATE  
REV. SHERITA MOON SEAWRIGHT, EPISCOPAL SUPERVISOR

**NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT OF THE  
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
2023 Mid-Year Convocation

*The Opening Worship Service*

Thursday, March 30, 2023  
6:30 p.m.

*Reverend Dr. Carmen Walker, Worship Leader*  
*Pastor, St. Mark AME Church – Brighton*  
*President, Women in Ministry – 9<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District*

**THE DOXOLOGY**

**Hymn #647 [Tune: Old 100]**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Reverend Debbie Dowdell**  
Pastor, St. Mark AME Church  
- Guerryton

- Minister: I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord, our feet shall stand within Your gates, O Jerusalem.
- People: **For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand, I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.**
- Minister: Because of the house of the Lord, our God, I will seek Your good.
- People: **Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God.**
- Minister: Blessed are they that dwell in Your house Lord, I have loved Your habitation, the place where Your honor dwells.
- People: **For the Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him.**
- Minister: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight. O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.
- People: **O sing unto the Lord a new song for He has done marvelous things. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth and sing praises.**

**THE OPENING PRAISE**

**Reverend Loretta Fuller**  
Pastor, Greater St. Joseph AME Church  
-

**Hymn #1**  
**“O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”**

O for a thousand tongues to sing My great Redeemer's praise,  
The glories of my God and King, the triumphs of His grace!

My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim,  
To spread through all the earth abroad the honors of Thy name.

Jesus! The name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease,  
'Tis music in the sinners' ears, 'tis life, and health, and peace.

He breaks the power of canceled sin, He sets the prisoner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean; His blood availed for me.

He speaks and listening to His voice, new life the dead receive;  
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice; the humble poor, believe.

Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb, your loosened tongues employ;  
Ye blind, behold your Savior come; and leap, ye lame, for joy. Amen.

**THE INVOCATION**

**Reverend Dr. Constance Wheeler Bishop**  
Pastor, Mt. Moriah AME Church  
-Cottonton

**THE CHORAL RESPONSE**

**“Thank You Lord”**  
Thank you, Lord, (3x)  
I just want to thank you, Lord.  
You’ve been so good. (3x)  
I just want to thank you, Lord.

**THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC**

## THE SCRIPTURE READING

The Old Testament  
Ezekiel 37:1-14

**Reverend Celeste Adams**  
Pastor, Stringer Street AME Church

The Epistle  
Romans 8:6-11

**Reverend Sarah Calhoun**  
Pastor, Clayton Circuit  
Marianna AME Church  
Shiloh AME Church

The Gospel  
John 11:1-6; 17-27

**Reverend Cassandra Palmer**  
Supply Pastor, Woodward Chapel  
AME Church - Bessemer

## THE DECALOGUE (SUMMARY)

**Reverend Debra Ballard**  
Pastor, Bethel AME Church  
- Dolomite

Hear what Christ our Savior says, "You shall love the Lord Your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. The second is like unto it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

## THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

## THE PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP

**Reverend Kendra Walker-Jacobs**  
Pastor, Salem Chapel AME Church - Salem

## THE PRESENTATION OF THE PREACHERS

**Bishop Harry L. Seawright**  
Presiding Prelate of the  
9<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District  
of the AME Church

## THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

*Prophetic Voices of Women in Ministry  
The Seven "I Am" Statements of Christ*

Reverend Jessica Boanerges  
Pastor, Jones Chapel AME Church - Fairfield

Reverend Deborah Butler  
Pastor, Bethel AME Church - Elba

Reverend Sandra E. Cole  
Pastor, Mt. Zion AME Church - Rhodesville

Reverend Mattie Edwards  
Pastor, Lee Chapel AME Church - Auburn

Reverend Ruby Heard-Bustamonte  
Pastor, Wayman Chapel AME Church - Selma

Reverend Kimberly Martin  
Pastor, Metropolitan AME Church - Mobile

Reverend Monique Summers  
Pastor, St. Luke AME Church - Opelika

**THE INVITATION TO  
CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

**Reverend Shelia Williams**  
Pastor of Ministries and Outreach,  
St. John's AME Church - Montgomery

**THE BENEDICTION**

## *The Messengers*



*Reverend Jessica Renee Boanerges*

Rev. Jessica Renee Boanerges is a graduate of the University of North Alabama with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Communications/ Broadcast Journalism. During college, Jessica interned with Radio Star 94, writing, producing and voicing commercial spots for businesses in the area. She was the voice for a local Radio Station-Mix 103.5 which aired in Northwest Alabama on weekends for the Clear Channel Corporation and a News Reporter for WZZA in Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

During college, in October of 2003, Jessica confessed her calling and preached her initial sermon on February 1, 2004, under her spiritual father, the Rev. T.W. Parker Sr. On August 19, 2006, Jessica moved to Atlanta, GA, to begin Seminary/Graduate work at the Interdenominational Theological Center.

On October 6, 2007, Jessica was ordained an Itinerant Deacon in the North Alabama Annual Conference under Bishop T. Larry Kirkland. During seminary, Jessica maintained the Honors and Dean's List, served as President of the Junior Class, Recording Secretary for the Turner Student Fellowship, and the Student Christian League during her second year. She was the recipient of the following Scholastic awards: John A. Middleton Scholarship, Samuel Hopkins Giles Award and the E.D. Curry Award. During her senior year, Jessica became the newly elected 2008-2009 President of the Turner Student Fellowship of the Turner Theological Seminary (AME Denomination) and a member of the Turner Theological Seminary Board of Trustees.

On May 2, 2009, Jessica graduated from Turner Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree and she was ordained an Itinerant Elder the fall of 2009. God has blessed her to minister throughout the state of Georgia, Southern California, and Alabama.

In November of 2009, Bishop James L. Davis appointed Jessica to serve as Pastor for Saint Paul and Dulaney A.M.E. Churches in Camden, AL. At the 2011 Planning Session, Jessica was promoted to the Ward Chapel A.M.E. Church family in Selma, AL. All God needed was one year to further groom Jessica for yet another Ward Chapel A.M.E. Church located in

Montevallo, AL. She began serving in Montevallo on November 10, 2012. During her time in Montevallo, the ministry expanded, and God was glorified! Under her leadership, debts were

cleared, Souls were Saved and bodies were healed. The church and parsonage went through several major renovations inclusive of new roofs on both buildings and completely paid off. On October 12, 2014, Pastor Boanerges was awarded the 2014 Female Pastor of the Year for Shelby County.

On June 25, 2017, Bishop Harry L. Seawright promoted Pastor Boanerges to Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Mobile, AL. During her time at Metropolitan, a few renovations and additions were made, such as a new roof on the parsonage, new doors, church sign, music room dedication and a \$14,000 dollar sound system that was paid in full. The church also became completely debt free. Pastor Boanerges has served in the Southwest Conference as the Board of Examiners Secretary, the Women in Ministry Coordinator and the 9th Episcopal District Christian Recorder Liaison. Pastor Boanerges was recently featured in the Mobile Bay Magazine for her leadership and ministry impacting the church and the city of Mobile. On April 2, 2022, Bishop Harry L. Seawright promoted Pastor Boanerges to Jones Chapel A.M.E. Church in Fairfield, AL. Pastor Boanerges is happily married to Bro. Jacob, and they have one son Israel.

Affectionately known as Pastor Jessica, she has a love and compassion for all of God's people! Pastor Jessica's focus is Souls Saved and Lives Changed through the Word and Spirit of God for they truly Work Together!



*Reverend Deborah Ann Butler*

Rev. Deborah Ann Butler was born in Luverne, Alabama to the late Rev. Willie Ben & Cristineggi Butler. Rev. Butler's early education begins in Crenshaw County at Luverne Elementary and High School with the completion of a High School Diploma from Luverne High. Rev. Butler furthered her educational studies to include a Bachelor's in Rehabilitation Counseling at Troy University, Troy, Alabama, currently pursuing her Master's degree in Elementary Education with Grand Canyon University, Phoenix Arizona completing in the Fall of 2023.

Rev. Deborah Butler is a born-again Christian giving her Initial Sermon in November of 1997 at the Samuel Chapel A. M. E. Church in Prichard, Alabama and licensed in 1997 as well. Deborah received her Itinerant Deacon Ordination in September 2000 and Itinerant Elder in 2001. Rev. Butler is the highly and esteemed Pastor of the Bethel A. M. E. Church in Elba, Alabama.

Rev. Deborah Butler is currently employed by the Barbour County School System where she is the Third Grade Reading Teacher at Barbour County Intermediate School where her passion is to help the students learn to read and love reading. Deborah is an active member of the Mizpah Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star, Allen Lily Chapter #700, Luverne, Alabama.



*Reverend Ruby Heard-Bustamonte*

Reverend Ruby Heard-Bustamonte is a native of Bessemer, Alabama. After graduating from Brighton High School, Brighton, Alabama, she matriculated at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. While there she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Health, Physical Education and Recreation. She also earned a Master of Arts in Education and a Master of Public Health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She also holds a Master of Divinity from Samford University, Beeson School of Divinity, Birmingham, Alabama.

Rev. Ruby has worked extensively in various occupations throughout her years of employment. Some of those positions include a Science Teacher with the Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity (JCCEO); a Police Officer with the Birmingham Police Department; and a Deputy U.S. Marshal, Savannah, Georgia. She retired in 2006 as a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Huntsville, Alabama.

While working for the FBI in Newark, New Jersey from 1987-1998, Rev. Ruby was called into the ministry under the pastorate of the Rev. Dr. William D. Watley at St. James A.M.E. Church, Newark, New Jersey. However, it was not until Rev. Ruby was transferred to Huntsville, Alabama that she answered the call. Rev. Ruby was licensed

to preach in December 2001 from the late Rev. Dr. Wayne P. Snodgrass, Senior Pastor, Progressive Union Missionary Baptist Church, Huntsville, Alabama. After moving to Calera, Alabama in 2006, Pastor Ruby received her license to preach in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 2009. Her ministerial career has included pastorates at the former New Cedar Grove A.M.E. Church, Autaugaville, Alabama; St. Paul A.M.E.



Church, Sylacauga, Alabama; and Grant Chapel A.M.E. Church, Calera, Alabama. She began worshipping and ministering at St. John A.M.E. Church under the pastorate of the Reverend Doctor Ronald D. Sterling in 2018 until 2020. She received a temporary appointment to Gaines Chapel A.M.E. Church, Sardis, Alabama during the first virtual conferences in 2020. In December 2020, she received her current appointment to Wayman Chapel A.M.E. Church, Valley Grande, Alabama.

Rev. Ruby has a passion for assisting persons within the community of Calera where she lives, and wherever she has and is appointed; as well as beyond. Some of those involvements include the City of Calera, the We Care Outreach Ministry, the Clergy Sisters Outreach Ministry, Victory Counseling Services, Inc., the Calera Police Department and Fire Department, the Shelby County Branch of the NAACP, and as a Volunteer Chaplain with the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. She is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Birmingham Alumnae Chapter. Rev. Ruby is married to John Bustamonte and they are the parents of one son, Ra'Quann Alize Randle-Bustamonte and the dog parents of their Akita named Kuma.



*Reverend Sandra E. Cole*

Rev. Sandra Stanford-Cole has devoted her life to serving God and his people. She has been married to her husband, Bro. Andrew Cole for 16 years. She gave her life to the Lord at an early age at Hopewell AME Church in Florence, Alabama, where she served as YPD Director, Sunday School teacher and often as a Worship Leader.

In 1999, she answered the call to preach. She was ordained as an Iterant Elder in October 2006.

Rev. Cole has pastored two churches. The first being Nichols Chapel AME Church in Florence, Alabama. She is currently the proud pastor of Mt. Zion AME Church in the Rhodesville community, affectionately known as the Bend of the River.

Rev. Cole has a passion to advance the Kingdom of God while preaching under the prophetic anointing. She is a servant and loves connecting with people.

Rev. Cole's favorite scripture is Romans 8:1-2: There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk in the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.



*Reverend Mattie Edwards*

Reverend Mattie Edwards, a native of Russell County, AL, was blessed to have grown up in a large Christian family. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. McCann and Rosie B. Sanders. She has five brothers and four sisters. She attended the public schools of Russell County, AL and is a graduate of Chalava High School, Seale, AL.

After accepting her calling to preach God's Word in 1992; Mattie began to study under the Board of Examiners, and immediately, she began attending American Bible College, an extension out of Tennessee. In 1997, she was the first female to be appointed Pastor on the East Alabama Conference, (now known as the Northeast Conference) Phenix City District of the AME Church. She was appointed to Lee's Chapel AME Church, where she is still serving as Pastor after 24 years, and many lives continue to be touched and changed spiritually.

The appointment to Lee Chapel opened the door for her to become the Phenix City District Women in Ministry President, and she has served as Secretary for the Presiding Elder. Both opportunities gave her the chance to work more closely with people.

Additionally, Reverend Edwards served for three years on the Board of Examiners of the East Alabama Conference; and in 2008, she was the first female to be elected as an alternate to the General Conference from the Phenix City District.

Presently, Edwards serves as Second Vice President of the Women in Ministry in the Ninth Episcopal District, and she is a member of the Employee Security Committee. Reverend Edwards is presently serving as a member of the Board of Examiners on the

Northeast Alabama Conference, Ninth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, where the Right Rev. Harry L. Seawright is Bishop, and the Reverend Dr. Letitia Watford is the Presiding Elder of the Tuskegee District.

Reverend Mattie is also a community activist, and under her leadership and guidance, Lee Chapel reaches out to the community by inviting students from Auburn University to come to Lee Chapel, where the church honors them for their accomplishments and serves them lunch. Bi-annually (winter and spring), we extend an invitation to the boys and girls from the Lee County Youth Development Center to come to Lee Chapel and fellowship with us. During this time, we encourage the young people with an inspirational message and then provide gifts to all the children. In response to this outreach, we have witnessed at least three that have been converted and ten or more of the youth rededicated their lives to Christ.

In 1974, Reverend Edwards received a Diploma in Business Education from Columbus Technical College. She is a 1981 graduate of Phillips College with an Associate Degree in Business Administration, as well as, a graduate of Nichols Thomas Grady School of Religion (1992-1997). In 2015, Reverend Edwards earned a Bachelor of Biblical Studies from Gospel Ministry Outreach Theological Institute, Houston, Texas. Learning is a lifelong journey, she has also earned credits from the Interdenominational Theological Center, and she has earned one unit in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) from the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy.

Serving under African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Pastors, Presiding Elders, and Bishops have really shaped her life, but knowing Jesus as her Savior and Lord, and her walk with Him, has shaped her life more than anything. Reverend Mattie Edwards is the proud mother and grandmother of two daughters and one son: Tonya, Tawanda, and Jonathan, seven grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. She loves the Lord, has a heart for God's people, and a strong supporter of those who have authority over her. Reverend Edwards stands on the word that says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," Philippians 4:13.



*Reverend Kimberly Martin*

The Reverend Kimberly Martin is a native of Birmingham, Alabama. She is the only child of Linda D. Smith. She has been married to Paul W. Martin for over 25 years, a mother of two sons Jonnathan Jr. and Justin, step-mother to Brent and grandmother to Kierra.

Rev. Martin accepted Christ as her personal Lord and Savior at the tender age of 7 and was baptized at The New St. James Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Rev. Dr. L.C. Fisher. She was active as Youth President, Youth Usher and Adult Choir President over her 34 years of faithful service there. She was elected President of The Mt. Pilgrim District Association Youth Department at age 14. God has had His hand on her life from birth.

Rev. Martin is a Master Cosmetologist. In 2014 she was sent to preach at St. James A.M.E. Church in Prichard, Alabama. Her first pastoral appointment was given in 2015 as the Senior Pastor of Greater Peace and Goodwill A.M.E. Church, Crawford, Alabama, (Phenix City) where she served faithfully for 2 years. She served as Senior Pastor of Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church, Trussville, Alabama for 3 years. She also served as Pastor of Bethel A.M.E. Church for a year. She served as Pastor of Greater St. Joseph A.M.E. Church, Autaugaville, Alabama for over a year. She is currently the Proud Pastor of Metropolitan A.M.E. Church, Mobile, Alabama! She is Bi-vocational!

She enjoys life and loves to laugh and love people! One of her favorite passages of scripture is Psalm 100.

Rev. Martin was called into pulpit ministry in 2003 and was ordained as Itinerant Deacon in 2011 in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She was elected and ordained Itinerant Elder in 2019. She is a product of the Birmingham City School system, a graduate of Charles B. Glenn High School. She attended Alabama State University, Montgomery, Alabama. She also graduated from Southeastern School of Cosmetology, Birmingham, Alabama. Rev. Martin is a graduate of The Birmingham

Easonian Baptist Bible College, Birmingham, Alabama, Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Education and a Diploma in Christian Education in May 2016. She also graduated with a Bible certificate in May 2014. She was the first female elected as Vice President of the SGA at The Birmingham Easonian Baptist Bible College in 2015-2016.

In May 2020, she graduated and earned a Master of Arts in Theology from Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Most recently, Rev. Martin graduated from The Ingalls Center of Pastoral Ministries Clinical Pastoral Education Program on August 16, 2019, and graduated from residency in CPE from Princeton Baptist Medical Center in August 2020. Reverend Martin is currently employed as a full-time Hospice Chaplain with Affinity Hospice in Birmingham, Alabama. Rev. Martin's desire is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and cause worldwide salvation! She just wants people to see Jesus Christ through her life! The motto she lives by is: " It's Not About me! It's ALL About Jesus!



*Reverend Monique Summers*

Reverend Monique Summers is a servant pastor, teacher, exhorter, and conference lecturer who has a profound love for God and the kingdom of God. Summers received her license to preach in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 2003 at the fourth quarterly conference, from the late Presiding Elder, Rev. W.M. Boddie. On September 25, 2005 having completed the first- and second-year studies, Summers was ordained as an Itinerant Deacon, and on September 30, 2007 having completed the required coursework for third- and fourth-year studies, she was ordained as an Itinerant Elder in the AME Church.

Reverend Monique Summers is the former Pastor of Pleasant Grove A. M. E. Church-Seale (3 Years), and Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church- Waverly, where she served as the first female pastor for 6 years. In 2017, Summers preached the annual message for the Northeast Alabama Annual Conference making her the first female to preach an annual message in the Northeast Alabama Conference. At the close of that conference, Bishop

Harry L. Seawright appointed her to Historic St. Luke A.M.E. Church-Opelika, where Pastor Summers is presently serving, also, as the first female pastor.

Under her leadership, St. Luke has received favorable reviews as a historical landmark and is now listed in the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage, as well as featured in the Historic Places to Visit for the City of Opelika. Before the COVID 19 pandemic, St. Luke's In the Name of Love Outreach Ministry, a 501c3 organization, launched a summer program that teaches young people about finances and other important life skills. Additionally, under her guidance and management, Summers initiated the Champions of Change Awards Luncheon honoring local citizens for their contributions in arts, education, religion, etc. Last but not least, Pastor Summers started a food pantry ministry in 2020 at St. Luke and later partnered with Lee Chapel AME Church. Together, the churches provide free food monthly to citizens in the Lee County area.

Better Together is not only a memorable phrase but a slogan that Rev. Summers exemplifies as she has partnered with other churches in the community and crossed denominational lines to launch the first Youth Advent Cantata in December 2021 and hosted The Crucified with Christ Community-wide Lent Cantata in March 2022. For the past two years, Rev. Summers has united Lee Chapel and other churches to host Pentecost Praise in the Park, where AME Churches across the Ninth District come together for worship, prayer, praise, and preaching. To God alone be the glory! Moreover, in 2022, we held a Juneteenth Community-wide Celebration on the grounds of historic St. Luke where we were blessed to be a blessing to the community.

Reverend Summers is a member of the A.M.E. Church Women in Ministry, where she previously served as the Coordinator of WIM for the NEAC. Under her leadership, the NEAC WIM membership increased over seventy-five percent, weekly newsletter was distributed, Trailblazer Award & Recognition Luncheon was inaugurated. Additionally, the WIM participated in health fairs, hosted revivals, and in 2017, we had the honor of hosting a Welcome Luncheon for our Supervisor, Reverend Sherita Moon Seawright. Currently, Summers is serving as the 3rd Vice President of the WIM for the 9th Episcopal District as well as "acting" Coordinator for the NEAC Women In Ministry.

Pastor Monique is a former Police Officer and Project Coach and is presently employed with Lee County Youth Development Center, as the Lead Teacher over the Alternative School for Auburn City and Opelika City Schools. Reverend Summers is also the founder of Minister Monique Summers Ministries aka Monique Summers Ministries. Her educational background includes a Master of Arts in Teaching Degree (MAT), Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice (BS), and an Associate's in Applied Science Degree. At present, Rev. Summers is pursuing a D.Min Degree from Turner Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC)- Atlanta.

On March 31st of this 2023, Pastor Summers will celebrate 22 years of marriage with the love of her life, Mr. Perry Shelton Summers. Soli Deo gloria!

