

WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME!!!

Dear Guest:

On behalf of the St. James Family of Faith, I want to thank you for choosing to worship with us. We hope that you experience the presence of God in our celebration of Christ.

At St. James, we do not take your presence for granted. We realize that you are not here by accident but rather by the divine intervention of our Lord and Savior. It was God's marvelous plan that moved you to come to our Church.

We pray that something spoken in a comment, prayed in a prayer, sung in a song or shared in the sermon will speak to your spirit and uplift you. We are working through the power of the Holy Spirit to create an atmosphere whereby all who enter will find spiritual power, direction, purpose and meaning for their life. It is our prayer that you will leave converted, convinced and committed to be a witness for Christ.

If you have questions or need some assistance please feel free to contact us.

**Prayer and blessings,
Rev. Dr. Baron D. Young, Pastor**

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is designed to lead to Christian Discipleship.

You can become a member of the body of Christ and St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church, one of several ways:

- I. Probationary Membership---** Persons who were never a member of a Church or were a member of a Church in another denomination.
- II. Preparatory Membership---** Children under the age of 18 who have been baptized and are placed under parental care and watch care of the Church.
- III. Affiliate Membership---** Persons who are Members of another African Methodist Episcopal Church beyond Harford County and desire a local AME Church home.
- IV. Full Membership ---**Persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and are led by the Holy Spirit to join this Church and complete member training.

A Prayer of Salvation

Dear Father, I believe that Jesus Christ is your only begotten Son and that He became a human being, shed His blood and died on the Cross to remove my guilt and sin that separates me from You. I believe that He rose from the dead physically to give me new life. Lord Jesus, I invite you to come into my heart. I accept You as my Savior and Lord. I confess my sins and ask You to wash them away. I believe that you forgive me and have come into my heart and are living in me right now. Thank you Jesus.

Amen

“LET’S GET ACQUAINTED”

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**Motto of the African Methodist Episcopal Church
“God our Father, Christ our Redeemer,
The Holy Spirit our Comforter,
Humankind our Family”**

A Brief History

St. James AME Church

In 1849 a small group of people met in the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Peaco to commence planning for the erection of a church on Zion Hill, and named this structure Mount Zion Meeting House.

In 1874, the men of the church with the aid of Mr. Tobias Skinner's horse brought the church building down from Zion Hill to its Green Street location. In 1875 the church was renamed St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1992, the physical structure of the church was changed. The sanctuary was enlarged, and a kitchen, pastor's study, finance room, multipurpose room and social hall were added to the church.

Our Denomination

In 1787, Rev. Richard Allen, Rev. Absalom Jones, and a band of followers withdrew from the St. George Methodist Church in Philadelphia because of the "unkind treatment" and discrimination with which these worshippers of African descent faced. They felt they no longer could worship in the congregation that could not affirm them fully as children of God with equal potential and worth. Allen and the followers began worshiping in the blacksmith shop. They founded The Free African Society, which was the beginning of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1816, Richard Allen and representatives from several African churches met and a church organization or "connection" was organized as the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Richard Allen was the founder and first Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. They began the First African American denomination; it allowed and still allows people of African descent self-respect, dignity, and the freedom to worship God wholly, participating to the fullest measure in the building of God's kingdom.

Our Name

AFRICAN means that the church was organized by people of African descent and heritage. It does not mean that the church was founded in African or that it is for people of African descent only. It does mean that those Americans who founded it were of African descent, and we proudly recognize this fact.

METHODIST refers to the church's membership in the family of Methodist churches. Richard Allen, the founder and first active bishop, felt that the form and format of Methodism would best suit the needs of the African Community.

EPISCOPAL refers to the form of government under which the church operates. The Episcopal form of government means that the chief executive and administrative officers of our denomination are our bishops. Their authority is given them by the General Conference, elected representatives of the denomination. Their responsibilities are to oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church, including presiding over annual conferences, making pastoral appointments, ordaining deacons and elders, organizing missions, and generally promoting the interest of the denomination.

CHURCH refers to the "Christian Church," which is a community of people who believe in God and who have accepted Jesus Christ as the guiding example of their lives. We also believe in the third person of Godhead, the Holy Spirit, who enables the believer to become a true and effective servant of God. Jesus Christ is the spiritual head of the Christian Church.

Our Beliefs

In our tradition there are several documents that help to inform our distinctive understanding of the Christian faith. We rely on the Holy Bible, The Book of Doctrine of the AME Church; The AME Hymnal The AME Book of Worship, Episcopal Salutation; Historical Statement; Articles of Religion; and The Gospel Labors of Rt. Rev. Richard Allen.

The A.M.E. Church recognizes and observes two holy sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion. The modes of baptism in African Methodism are pouring, sprinkling, and immersion. Regardless of the mode administered, baptism is a powerful symbol of regeneration and initiation into the community of faith – Christ's Church. Holy Communion serves as a memorial of the death and suffering of Christ and celebrates the abundant life we have through Him.

How We Operate

The General Conference is the legislative body of the A.M.E. Church that meets every four years. The church is managed through a system of five conferences: General -Annual - District Quarterly- Church (local). These conferences are composed of clergy and laity (non-clergy persons). They come together to provide stewardship or activities, resources and relationship towards the advancement of the church.

The Pastor is appointed by the Presiding Bishop to a church (mission, circuit, or station). The Pastor appoints and assigns officers in the local church who serve as the administrative body to include trustees who are elected by the local church and oversee the physical plant of the church.

In the local church, there are two Administrative Boards (Steward and Trustee) which report to members and all officers known as the Official Board who review monthly activities, budgets and plans for the year.

The Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church serves as our ecclesiastical constitution, outlining the Articles of Religion, the General Rules and Rituals, and other services of the church.