

# The AMEC Clergy Family Information Center

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR**  
*Mrs. Ora L. Easley*



## **THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF BISHOPS AND GENERAL BOARD MEETING**

*June 20-21, 2017*

Los Angeles Airport Hilton Hotel  
5711 West Century Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California

Bishop McKinley Young, Senior Bishop  
Bishop Clement W. Fugh, Host Bishop and President, Council of Bishops  
Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President, General Board  
Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, Chair, Commission on Social Action

*Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont Walker, Director, Social Action*



*African Methodist Episcopal Church  
Social Action Commission*

**Bishop Frank M. Reid, III, Commission Chair**

**Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont-Walker, Director/Consultant**

**Mrs. Ora L. Easley, Administrator, CFIC**

*“A Global Ministry of Connectivity, Sharing and Compassion”*

**Mrs. Ora L. Easley, Administrator**



*“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and that whatever you ask in my name, the Father will give you. “John 15:16 (NIV)*

## **GREETINGS:**

To: Bishop McKinley Young, Senior Bishop; Bishop Clement W. Fugh, President of the Council of Bishops and Host Bishop; Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President of the General Board; Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, Chair of the Commission on Social Action; Bishops of the Church; Episcopal Supervisors; General and Connectional Officers; Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont-Walker, Director of Social Action; members of the General Board; members of the Commission on Social Action; my sisters and brothers, ALL. GREETINGS!

A blessed privilege it is to share the annual stewardship accountability report as the Administrator of The Clergy Family Information Center; an online notification ministry reaching outward to AME Church family members in Districts 1-20, a ministry of connectivity, of sharing and of compassion. The primary function of the ministry is the posting of **Bereavement Notifications**. These notifications inform e-mail recipients of deaths occurring within the clergy families of our Zion, from the church leadership downward to those who serve in hard and remote places.

## **THE VERIFICATION PROCESS:**

Deliberate care is exercised with each notification to avoid the posting of erroneous service information which could be disquieting for the families involved. The verification process involves the human element of the ministry, as telephone calls are made to confirm service arrangements with funeral establishments. Families in their hours of grief, make service hour changes and other service adjustments. Or when telephone calls are made, to merely express sympathy to a bereaved family. It is encouraging that many notifications are now received from Episcopal District Offices. However, as an added precaution, experience has taught, to cross-check all notifications received for accuracy prior to posting; in instances of hurriedness mistakes can be made.

## **THE FOLLOWING STEPS ARE TAKEN FOR MOST BEREAVEMENT NOTIFICATION POSTED TO THE CONNECTIONAL CHURCH FAMILY:**

- I. Telephone calls are made to the designated funeral establishment to verify arrangements provided. (Districts 1-13). Also for correct spelling of names.
- II. International calls are made to verify Episcopal Family Bereavements when the occasion warrants.
- III. A cross check is made to see if the funeral establishment has an online guest book to insert in email as a clickable link.
- IV. When a funeral establishment is not listed, phone calls are often made to a family member or an office staff to secure a family member's phone number or email address.
- V. Message of condolence on behalf of the CFIC ministry and the SAC are emailed to the bereaved family member or placed on an online Guest Book.
- VI. Finally, a summarization of each bereavement posted is logged, that the CFIC website might be updated monthly.

How heart rendering is the time spent speaking with bereaved family members, some sharing cherished moments or human interest moments about the lives of their deceased loved one. Also, they express their gratitude, as they say, "how pleased they are that someone from the connectional AME Church thought well enough of the family to call and express words of sympathy." The array of funeral programs received, lovely handwritten notes and email words of gratitude, validates over and over, how significant the CFIC ministry has been in the lives of bereaved families over the days, months and years.

\*\*A concerted effort is made to verify every notice posted, therefore, follow-up information, updates and addendums **are only posted** at the request of the Presiding Bishop in which the deceased resides or unless the deceased is a part of the Church Leadership requiring a greater distribution of details.

### **CONGRATULATORY ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Congratulatory announcements are shared on Friday, providing opportunity for commendations, congratulations and well wishes to be extended by the AME Church family to those who are praising God for the Joy of significant milestones reached in their lives.

### **CONGRATULATORY ANNOUNCEMENT GUIDELINES:**

The following are posted by The Clergy Family Information Center: Graduations, baccalaureate degrees and above; academic achievements; birth of PK's, grandchildren and great-grandchildren; birthday celebrations – 70 years and above, 75, 80, 85; 90, etc.; weddings of ministers, PK's, grandchildren and great grandchildren; wedding anniversaries-25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, 55th, 60th and above and noteworthy achievements.

\*Congratulatory Announcement's NEW Design, one (1) photo can now be included with each congratulatory announcement.

### **STATEMENTS OF GRATITUDE:**

As the Clergy Family Information Center (CFIC) continues its Ministry of Outreach, Statements of Gratitude from clergy families may now be posted each week on Thursday, for those who wish to express gratitude to the Connectional AME Church family for kindnesses shown during their season of bereavement.

### **OTHER NOTIFICATIONS POSTED:**

- Bereavements affecting the AMEC Chaplaincy and President and Deans of the AME Church Institutions of Higher Education
- Bereavements affecting the leadership of the Connectional Lay Organization and Women's Missionary Society
- Bereavements occurring within the staff of Episcopal District Offices and staff of the General Officers
- Prayer requests received from the Bishops, Episcopal Supervisors and the General and Connectional Officers

### **THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT POSTED BY THE CLERGY FAMILY INFORMATION CENTER:**

- For profit advertisements (patrons, ad requests, event tickets, sale of books, pamphlets CD's, or DVDs).
- Photos of deceased family members are **Discouraged** as inclusion on Bereavement Notices; **Encouraged** are links to the mortuary or newspaper's Guest Book.

## OUTREACH TO ENHANCE MINISTRY PRESENCE:

• For a greater degree of professionalism, the ministry continues to maintain its dedicated email domain, acronym, **AMECFIC.NET**. • The Ministry also continues to house its global website @ domain URL [www.amecfic.org](http://www.amecfic.org) in cyberspace, which has received over **166720 visitors**, maintain a business telecommunication account and utilizes Tech 360 Support for 24 hour technical services on the desktop, laptop computers, and tablet.

### -Web Site Home Page-



**The Clergy Family Information Center**

Left to right: Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, Social Action Commission Chair, Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont-Walker, Director, Social Action Commission and Mrs. Ora L. Easley, Administrator, The Clergy Family Information Center.

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Necrology 3/2013 - 12/2013
Necrology 1/2014 - 2/2014
Necrology 3/2014 - 5/2014
Necrology 6/2014 - 9/2014

## WEB MINISTRY RATIONALE:

- To make available necrology information, especially bereavements occurring within the Episcopacy and General Officer-ship for annual conference statisticians who compile annual necrology reports.
- To make The Clergy Family Information Center posting guidelines available.
- To spread the ministry message to a global audience via cyberspace.

**OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA UTILIZED:** Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

## EMAIL MARKETING:

**Rationale - to post bulk email more effectively and to alleviate SPAM blocks**

Email marketing was contracted as the work of the ministry became more and more problematic when posting bulk communications which contained social or political overtones or as stated in response email from the ministry domain provider, *inappropriate content*, per AT&T "White List Agreement" for non-profits. Also, due to reports of **SPAMMING** from email providers, particularly Yahoo, Hotmail and AOL creating mass bounce-backs. This situation was due to inserting manually into the CFIC database, email addresses provided by presiding elder district offices; via a non-individual subscription

process. The decision was made to alleviate the problematic situation and bounce-backs by "Stepping out in Faith" and securing MailChimp Email Marketing Services. Email Marketing is fee based and allows for posting of graphics; it allows email recipients to adjust their own email preferences and it saves 90% of the clock hours normally utilized to post a notification. However, it has a "0" tolerance on SPAMMING.

A feasibility study was also, conducted and the decision was made, as suggested by a senior technical adviser, to delete from the CFIC database, email addresses entered manually which showed NO history of reading activity, or had noted spam in their activity history. It was a meticulously slow process. Yet, a database inclusive of non-individual subscribers, entered manually, where the process had not been explained to the email recipients, even with the "opt out" preference available, could have potentially become a ministry liability.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION:**

The CFIC ministry is available to post bereavement notifications day and evening, seven-days a week including holidays, excluding Easter, Christmas & New Year's Day. A laptop computer is carried to all church conventions, on vacations and on overnight holiday outings, to be available to post bereavement notices, should the need arise.

### **BROADEN READERSHIP:**

In March of 2017, the Editor of the Christian Recorder began including the bereavement notices and congratulatory announcements in the AME Church Christian Recorder, giving the ministry information posted a wider readership.

### **IN GRATITUDE:**

Gratitude is extended to Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, Social Action Commission Chair, for his support, magnanimous spirit and ministry affirmation, and to Episcopal Supervisor Marlaa MeShon Hall Reid, for her keen interest. Likewise, gratitude is extended to Bishop Jeffrey Nathaniel Leath, Presiding Prelate of the Thirteenth Episcopal District and Episcopal Supervisor, Susan Jones Leath, MD, for their prayers and encouragement. Kudos' to my clergy spouse, Presiding Elder, Reverend Dr. William W. Easley, Jr., for his caring spirit and support.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The google translator has been added, which translates into 103 languages; therefore, for more inclusiveness, that Episcopal Districts 14-20 be encouraged to submit bereavement notices and congratulatory announcement to the presiding elders or an Episcopal District designee, who would in-turn submit bereavement notifications to the administrator of the Clergy Family Information Center.

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Ora L. Easley*