



"From Where I Sit ..."

Seven Whirlwind Days and ...Thank you!

IT'S OVER! The 37th Quadrennial Session and the 38th General Conference has come and is now gone. And what a conference it was! Ten days packed into seven called for enormous creativity and skilled craftsmanship of the presidors for each of the sessions. And when it was all over I felt like the lowly enlisted man in the missile silo in the movie War Games, who during the midst of presumed nuclear missile attack when asked by a four-star general to report in shouted in response, "We're here! We're still here!" Yes, the CME Church is "still here!"

There is much that I could say about this General Conference but I will leave the overall report to the Editor of the Index. I will say that we have elected three new bishops: Bishop Bobby R. Best of Houston, TX (assigned to the 9th Episcopal District), Bishop Marvin F. Thomas of Atlanta, GA (assigned to the 2nd Episcopal District) and Bishop Charles J. King of Louisville, KY (assigned to the 11th Episcopal District). Our prayers are for them in their new work as consecrated leaders of our Zion. Much more of the details about these persons will be found in other pages of the Christian Index.

However as a General Officer, I would like to note the changes in our ranks. Of the ten positions that are subject to quadrennial elections, one (the President of the Women's Missionary Society) will be decided in 2015, four officers were re-elected by unanimous election, two officers successfully won re-election in contested races, and three new officers were elected. Re-elected as General Secretaries by unanimous election were Dr. Leo Pinkett (Ministry to Men) who now begins his third 4-year term, Dr. Roderick D. Lewis, Sr. (Publications) who now begins his second 4-year term, Dr. Clifford Harris (Lay Ministry) who also begins his second 4-year term, and me [Dr. Tyrone T. Davis] (Personnel Services) now beginning my fourth 4-year term. Throughout the 2-year campaign election period, those of us who were unopposed were keenly aware that until Monday evening's last call for potential candidates prior to the casting of ballots on Tuesday, any person present at the General Conference might still opt to have their name posted on the Tuesday ballot for either of our positions. Needless to say, neither of us could begin to rest any easier until the motions for unanimous elections had been fully carried.

The two officers who were successful in continuing their incumbency in contested elections were Dr. Carmichael Crutchfield (Christian Education) who now begins his fourth 4-year term and Dr. Jeanette Bouknight (Executive Secretary) who now begins her second 4-year term. Although Dr. Crutchfield faced two challengers and Dr. Bouknight one, both of these incumbents were re-elected on the first ballot.

Among the newly elected General Officers is Dr. Faith A. Allen elected General Secretary of Evangelism and Missions. A native of Little Rock, AR and completing her 10th year as the Pastor of Detroit, MI's Carter Metropolitan CME Church, Dr. Allen comes to this office having earned a B.A. from Bethel College, North Newton, KS; a M.Div. from Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO and a D.Min. from United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH with an emphasis on Christian Education and Urban Ministries. A daughter of the parsonage, Dr. Allen's ministerial journey spans nearly 25 years. A member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., she is a published devotion writer, revivalist and speaker.



Dr. Ore L. Spragin, Jr., Presiding Elder of the Northwest District of the West Tennessee Region was elected Editor of *The Christian Index*. A native of Clarksdale, MS, Dr. Spragin comes to the Index with a B.S. from Jackson State (MS) University, a M.Div. from Wesley Biblical Seminary, Jackson, MS, and a Th.D. in Methodist Studies from the Graduate Theological Foundation, Mishawaka, IN. The author of three books: *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (2010); *The History of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (1870-2009): Faithful to the Vision* (2011); and *An Exposition of The Apostles' Creed* (2014), Dr. Spragin has conducted seminars both in the United States and abroad in the areas of church history and doctrine, spiritual formation and Christian discipleship, biblical studies, worship, and church leadership. He is married to Phyliss Morgan Spragin, and they have two children.



Dr. Victor Taylor, the former General Secretary of Lay Ministry (1998-2010), was returned to the ranks of General Officer-ship as the General Secretary of Finance. A native of Saint Louis, MO, Dr. Taylor is currently a local member and the Recording Steward of the New Hope CME Church, Evanston, IL. Employed as an investment counselor since 1982, he has a B.A. from Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA and a MBA in Finance and Managerial Economics from Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. Married to Wanda Fay Taylor, he is the father of two children and has one granddaughter.



Also present to witness the elections of the CME Bishops and General Officers were two General Officer colleagues from the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Dr. Mary A. Love (Secretary-Editor, Department of Church School Literature) and Mrs. Shirley Welch (Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer). Dr. Love is one of the longest serving General Officers among the current members of the recently formed Association of Black Methodist General Officers Council (composed of General Officers from the three black Methodist Churches) and she will conclude 36 years of service when the AME Zion General Conference meets in 2016.

Yes, the 37th Quadrennial Session and the 38th General Conference has now ended and much was crammed into the seven-day schedule. And in the midst of the whirlwind of activities, some things went undone. One of the things that went undone and was apparently unnoticed was the extension of an opportunity for the newly elected and successfully re-elected General Officers to express appreciation to the body for their respective elections. Perhaps the schedule was just too tight. In any case, we who were elected and re-elected felt caught between the desire to say thank you and the weight of the overwhelming emphasis placed on keeping the schedule. Whatever the reason, let me take this opportunity on behalf of each of my colleagues, Dr. Carmichael Crutchfield, Dr. Leo Pinkett, Dr. Rodrick D. Lewis, Sr., Dr. Clifford Harris, Dr. Jeanette Bouknight, Dr. Faith A. Allen, Dr. Ore L. Spragin, Dr. Victor Taylor and me for the support, well wishes and votes of the delegates of this past General Conference and our combined request for your prayers and continued support as we undertake the important tasks that you have assigned and entrusted to our hands for the next four years. Together we pledge to give our best in service. After all, service is what this work is all about. Or at least that's the way it looks to me ...

"From Where I Sit"

Tyrone T. Davis, D.Min, is the General Secretary of the Board of Personnel Services
(Copies of earlier articles may be found on the
Personnel Services Webpage of the CME Website at www.thecmechurch.org)