

**The Triumphant Twentieth Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church**

**Annual Report
Council of Bishops and General Board**

**June 19-21, 2017
Los Angeles, California**

Quadrennial Theme: "A Mind To Work!"

Scripture: Nehemiah 4:6 and St. Matthew 6:33

6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Motto: Last in Number, But First in Spirit and Service

**T.E.A.M. 20th
(Together Each Achieves More)
Countries of Malawi, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tanzania and part of Mozambique**

**The Right Reverend Ronnie Elijah Brailsford, Sr.
Presiding Prelate**

**Rev. Carolyn Elizabeth Brailsford
Episcopal Supervisor**

**The Right Reverend McKinley Young
Senior Bishop**

**The Right Reverend Clement Fugh
President, Council of Bishops**

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To The Right Reverend McKinley Young, Senior Bishop, The Right Reverend Clement Fugh, President, the Council of Bishops and General Board members:

To God be the glory! What an amazing journey! We are so very blessed to be able to participate in kingdom building in five countries in Africa--Malawi, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tanzania and part of Mozambique. God has allowed us to be assigned to these five nations of the world. We are the Episcopal Leaders of **T.E.A.M. (Together Everyone Achieves More) 20th of The Triumphant Twentieth Episcopal District**. This was my and Supervisor Carolyn Elizabeth Brailsford's first year and it was a great, fulfilling and enjoyable year in ministry and marriage. Praise the Lord!

Our work the first year has focused on building on the work of our predecessors of the 20th Episcopal District: **Bishop and Supervisor Wilfred J. Messiah (2004-2008); Bishop and Supervisor Julius H. McAllister (2008-2012); and Bishop and Supervisor Reginald T. Jackson (2012-2016)**. We are grateful for the work each of them did to pave the way for the work we are doing now. We are also grateful for the information and advice shared pertaining to the district. It was a seamless transition.

A special thanks goes to the Jacksons and the Sixth Episcopal District for adopting the 20th Episcopal District and the McAllisters and the Eighth Episcopal District for their strong financial support this past term. Their support helped us to go forward to serve and be a blessing to God's people. They have not forgotten what it was like to serve in this district, the poorest financially in the entire AMEC world wide. For instance, unemployment in most of these five countries are around 90%!!! The median annual income is approximately \$600.00 to \$1,800.00. The operations and ministry of the district are greatly dependent on the AMEC, presiding bishop, supervisor and faithful supporters.

Many others including the **bishops, supervisors and people of Episcopal Districts Seventh, First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth, Eleventh, and Fifteenth; along with Global Witness and Ministry, Connectional Women's Missionary Society and Young People's Division; several connectional pastors, churches, and individuals** supported the work, mission and ministry of the 20th Episcopal District this year. **We say thank you very much to each of you.** Your prayers, encouragement and financial support made a profound difference in the lives of many in the District! Those who have us scheduled for support later this year, we say thank you in advance.

To God be the glory! We had a very good year of ministry. For instance, we **visited 96 churches and 9 schools in three of the five countries**. It is our goal to visit all 202 churches and 29 schools in the five countries by May of 2018. The distances are very far apart from church to church and school to school. Many of the roads are very bad and long. A normal one hour trip in America can take three hours or longer in many places there! In many rural areas, there are no roads to the churches, just walking paths. Sometimes, people made and cut a way for us to get to the church. Nevertheless, God has given us this mission of **"Going to the People"** and with His help, we will fulfill this God-given assignment. **The love, kindness, generosity,**

warmth, and appreciation of the people make the journeys worth it. They are so happy to see the bishop and supervisor; many have never attended an annual conference. It becomes an historic moment for them and us!

We held the usual **six Annual Conferences**. We must incorporate the newly established annual conference of Uganda. In addition, we visited and held a **Leadership Seminar and Meeting** in each of the seven annual conferences as part of the training process in the district during the year. We covered various AMEC Doctrine and Discipline matters in that most of the people have never seen or read it. There are the language challenges as well. These sessions were well attended and received.

We have added a Saturday to each annual conference for a day of **Christian Education and Theological Institute Training**. This will help to augment our Post Annual Conference Strategic Planning for the district going forward. We are encouraging **Christian Education** at every level of the district and the **Class Leader System** in order to strengthen the churches and the effectiveness of the ministry in the local churches.

We started what will be a series of mission trips in the five countries. In a **partnership with the Wesley Foundation of the United Methodist Church of the University of South Carolina and Bwalia Hospital of Lilongwe, Malawi**. We held a week of free medical, dental and eye services with donated glasses. We served nearly 2,500 persons. This was a tremendous success! Other groups want to come.

There were many highlights during the year. A few of them are listed as follows:

Episcopal District Summary of Highlights of the year August 1, 2016--May 31, 2017

1.) Visited 96 of the 202 churches and made contributions to each of them on behalf of the AMEC. This was a "Going to the People" ministry. The receptions were amazing, singing and dancing to celebrate their "spiritual parents' visit." (The Travelogue of notes and photos are on my Face Book page.)

2.) Visited nine (9) of 29 AMEC owned schools and made contributions to each of them for some school supplies, including connectional AMEC funds earmarked for Sizane High School, one of the top schools in Zimbabwe.

3.) Had a Health and Education Initiative in Lilongwe and Salima, Malawi areas and provided free medical, dental and eye services to nearly 2,500 persons.

4.) All connectional obligations were met: Connectional AMEC Budget and Global Development Council Budget and Registration.

5.) Held seven (7) Leadership Trainings and Meetings, one in each Annual Conference for all presiding elders, pastors, episcopal and annual conference leadership.

- 6.) Sponsored all five (5) General Board members at the December 2016 meeting with airfare, extra days lodging and meals.
- 7.) Sponsored all sixteen (16) persons at the Global Development Council meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa February 21-24, 2017 with transportation, lodging, registration and meals.
- 8.) Co-sponsored one (1) person, our lay president to attend the Connectional Lay Organization Executive Board meeting in Baltimore, Maryland in April 2017.
- 9.) Provided support to several church projects for building and repairs or upgrades and made contributions to 96 churches overall.
- 10.) Bought uniforms for the choir at Sizane High School, one of the best in the region.
- 11.) Provided ministerial stipends to all the presiding elders and pastors at the annual conferences and presiding elders during church visitations.
- 12.) Provided all churches hosting the annual conferences with financial sustentation support for the conference delegates and attendees.
- 13.) Purchased a motorbike for the presiding elder in the newly established Uganda Annual Conference.

Women's Missionary Society and YPDers Highlights

- 1.) Provided relief of food, water, clothes, temporary shelter and financial support for churches and individuals who were impacted by floods in Malawi and Zimbabwe. WMS and Lay Organization teams were sent to give direct help. We visited the Malawi region personally. WMS leadership from Zimbabwe joined WMS in Malawi to serve the people. We are T.E.A.M. 20th.
- 2.) Responded to emergency relief for individuals and churches in the Episcopal District--food, education fees, fire destruction, etc.
- 3.) Visited orphanages and elderly at homes to provide assistance and ministry.
- 4.) Received support of the Atlanta North Georgia Annual Conference WMS to sponsor the education fees of 15 children, youth and young adults: Sarah's Scholars.
- 5.) Sponsored ten (10) of twenty-one (21) persons that attended the Y.A.M. (Young Adult Members) Summit in Johannesburg on May 11-14, 2017.
- 6.) Sponsored two (2) of four (4) persons to attend the WMS Executive Board Meeting on January 25-29, 2017.

**AMEC Doctrine and Disciplinary 2012 Questions
The Statistical Report**

1. The number of annual conferences: 7 (Uganda was added in 2016.)
2. The number of members in each annual conference:

Malawi North:18,191 (42 churches)	Malawi Central:15,047 (50 churches)
Malawi South:5,173 (16 churches).	Uganda: 1,236 (12 churches)
Northeast Zimbabwe:8,019 (36 churches)	Central Zimbabwe:4,018 (25 churches)
Southwest Zimbabwe:6,000 (21 churches)	

There are a total of 202 churches and approximately 57,684 members.
3. The amount of the General Budget Fund apportioned:
 - a.) The Episcopal District: \$2,000.00
 - b.) Each of the annual conferences: Zero (Paid out of Economic Development Fund.)

The small amounts actually submitted by the churches, after expenses for church hosting of the conference, remain with the annual conference for local projects. The mid-year funds have been earmarked for support of the schools and education.
4. The amount of the General Fund collected and sent to the office of the Chief Financial Officer of the AME Church, from each of the annual conferences: Not Applicable
5. If this represents an increase, the same amount, or a decrease as compared with last year's report, list the following, and give details: Not Applicable
- 6.) Ministers who have been expelled during the year: None.
- 7.) Ministers who have withdrawn from the connection during the year: None.
- 8.) Congregations that have split or withdrawn from the connection during the year: One. The name was: Kholomana AMEC on the Mulanje District.
- 9.) Give details of new churches organized or established during the year: Three
 - a.) Chickawa AMEC---This is a new mission work on the Mulanje District.
 - b.) Masoko AMEC---This is a new mission work on the Karonga Central District.
 - c.) Mntchilima AMEC--This is a church that joined us on the Mulanje District.
- 10.) Travel Distances Overseas: Land---10,956; Air/Nautical---97,262

Report on the Churches

Challenges and Opportunities to Make A Positive Difference

The Leadership Seminars and Meetings, along with visitation to 96 churches, have identified the ten top needs and concerns for the Twentieth Episcopal District. They are as follows:

- 1.) People must be more intentional in working together as a team as we operate as a body of Christ: One God, one faith and one baptism. This must transcend tribes, tribal

traditions, history, language dialects, etc. Like the Apostle Paul, we must forget those things which are behind and press toward the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13, 14) Furthermore, our love for each other must reign supreme. (St. John 13:34, 35)

2.) Need for food, water and clothes during times of drought or floods. The people are primarily agricultural in many areas and this is how they survive.

3.) There is a need for clean water at the churches and in the community. This need is usually fulfilled by drilling "boreholes." Many walk miles to obtain clean water in certain village areas.

4.) There is such a strong need for a greater understanding of the Doctrine and Discipline of the AMEC, our beliefs, structure and governance. It would help if they had written material in their languages: Chichewa, Shona, Swahili, Portuguese, Tonga, etc.

5.) There is a strong need for training and education of the clergy and laity leadership. This will be one of the best investments for eventually addressing many of the socio-economic challenges in these countries.

6.) Clergy persons need transportation. Many are walking miles, riding bicycles or taking public transportation to get to the church they pastor once a week or less.

7.) Many church buildings are old and in need of repairs or replacement. Many have dirt floors; have hardened mud as mortar to hold the self made brick walls together. (The lack of cement and sand for mortar led to the collapse of five buildings this year within flood zones.) Finances for cement, sand and metal sheets and timber for roofs are needed.

8.) Many of the churches need furnishings. The people are oftentimes sitting on dirt floors or hardened dirt benches. (See my Face Book travelogue.)

9.) There is a great need for employment or entrepreneurial micro economic endeavors. This would enhance their personal life style and support of the churches and clergy leadership. Some clergy do not receive any compensation for the entire year!

10.) Most of our churches are in the rural areas. We are missing out greatly on the demographic shift to the larger cities. I am meeting many former AMEs in cities like: Lilongwe, Blantyre, Kasungu, and Mzuzu, Malawi where not one AMEC building exists! The situation is worse in the countries of Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda.

Suffice it to say, the work and opportunities are very great in the Twentieth Episcopal District. However, we are excited to build on the prior great works done by others and continue to help transform this district. We compare our challenges to a huge elephant. The proverbial question can be asked, "how do you eat an elephant?" The answer is, you eat an elephant (challenges) one bite at a time with loyal, committed, dedicated and determined people that have "a mind to work." We have adopted the Nehemiah Model of trusting God, self help, working hard together, and staying focused as a guide.

Report on the Schools

Challenges and Opportunities to Make A Positive Difference

This is a partial report because each of the 29 schools have not submitted the requested reports. I have started to establish an active Board of Education Commission for each Annual Conference. They will facilitate the evaluation, assessment and recommendations for each of these schools. I have visited nine (9) of the reported 29

schools. I have received a formal report on the six (6) schools of the Southwest Zimbabwe Annual Conference and Statical Reports from sixteen (16) of the Malawi Central Annual Conference. The work is still underway. However, the needs lifted so far seem to be consistent for the schools. They are as follows without particular priority:

- 1.) Most of the schools are Primary, grades 1-8. There is a great need for Secondary schools, grades 9-12 in many areas to enhance the education levels.
- 2.) Few students have the resources to go to high school, professional school or college. This lack of education is a major hindrance to the person and country.
- 3.) Lack of support and upkeep have made several schools vulnerable to a government take over or threatened closure of the school completely. For instance, I visited Matema Primary school where an old toilet collapsed and a child was injured and taken to the hospital. The building, like many others, need to be torn down and rebuilt.
- 4.) There is a great need for text books, especially in their languages; paper to write on, writing instruments, chalk, clean clothes, etc.
- 5.) Seating is needed for many schools as children are sitting on the floor as they learn.
- 6.) More block buildings are needed as some teachers have 50-60 students in a small classroom. The teacher to student ratio is very high. The conditions are heart-breaking!
- 7.) More teachers are needed. I visited one school that has over 1,000 students, but only 18 teachers and staff.
- 8.) More decent block buildings are needed for classrooms and administrative space.
- 9.) More cottages, teacher housing, staff accommodations, are needed for the teachers to live in and be close to the schools.
- 10.) Playground equipment and play items are needed for outside student activities.
- 11.) Some schools need fences to secure AMEC property and provide better protection for the children.
- 12.) Most of the schools need stronger interactive board members that can help provide governance and access resources for them.
- 13.) There is a need for biology, chemistry and other laboratories to upgrade the learning processes.
- 14.) There is a great need for technology upgrades such as computer labs.
- 15.) There needs to be enhanced training and ongoing professional development of all the staff and teachers.
- 16.) Some of the schools need clean water access such as "boreholes" on site.
- 17.) Furnishings are needed for most of the classrooms.
- 18.) There is a need to make repairs and improvements to buildings that can be saved. (i.e. roofs, doors, walls, windows, etc.)
- 19.) There is a great need for the AMEC to really be very active and invest in these schools. For instance, Sizane High School has been receiving financial support from the Connectional AMEC since the 1980's. Today it has 1,439 students and is one of the top high schools in the country of Zimbabwe. It is the top AMEC school in the 20th Episcopal District. It has been a great investment!

Ninety-six (96) Churches Visited by Countries and Presiding Elder Districts

Country: Malawi (67)

Salima District (3): Thomas Chapel AMEC (2), Mtumbira AMEC (2), Allen Chapel AMEC

Lilongwe District (4): Bethel AMEC (2), Chang'ombe AMEC (3), Chandawira AMEC, Chizala AMEC

Mulanje District (6): McAllister AME International Worship Center (2), Ebenezer AMEC, Kundwelo AMEC, Mt. Zion AMEC, Chitapata AMEC, Chikwawa AMEC

Kasungu Southeast District (6): Chimwangombe AMEC, Kasikizi AMEC, Misedza AMEC, Munyanyu AMEC, Chimwaye AMEC, Mtheba AMEC

Kasungu East District (6): Madzi Ayera AMEC, Boma AMEC, Allen Temple AMEC, Chasato AMEC, Kasungu Chipale AMEC, Chilinda AMEC

Kasungu West District (5): Mdawi AMEC (2), Chetete AMEC, Chengwe AMEC, Phanga AMEC, Chasomba AMEC

Kasungu Southwest District (5): Nineveh AMEC, Mwitha AMEC, Kunga AMEC, Rinevwa AMEC, Mkwiti AMEC

Kasungu North District (6): Chimphere AMEC, Mwangalava AMEC, Mwaghulambo AMEC, Mwenilondo AMEC, Tchowo AMEC, Ngonha AMEC,

Karonga Central District (7): McAllister AMEC (4), Tukoma AMEC, New Jerusalem AMEC, Kasisi AMEC, Masoko AMEC, Kasoba AMEC, Thomas Chapel AMEC

Karonga North District (2): St. Rachel AMEC (2), Kaporo AMEC

Karonga Songwe District (5): Ngalamu AMEC (2), Itharavi AMEC, Lemero AMEC, Wovwe AMEC, Ilinga AMEC

Rumphi/Mzimba District (8): Rumphi AMEC, Kavula AMEC, McAllister Mzuzu Chapel AMEC, Mphompha AMEC, Kasenga AMEC, Luwazi AMEC, Mkombezi AMEC

Chitipa District (4): Chitipa Boma AMEC, Ibuluya AMEC, Syumbi AMEC, Navitengo AMEC

Country: Zimbabwe (27)

Harare District (8): Bright Temple AMEC (2), Sims Chapel AMEC, Chitungwiza AMEC, Forbes Vengasayi AMEC, Kambuzuma AMEC, Philip Life Center AMEC (2), Domboshava AMEC, Webster Chapel AMEC

Mutare District (1): Rumbidzai Temple AMEC

Nyanga District (2): Rusape AMEC, Matema AMEC

Masvingo South District (2): Bota AMEC, Gow Temple AMEC

Mashonaland West District (3): Mhondoro AMEC, Chakari/Chegututu AMEC, Allen Chapel AMEC

Midlands District (3): Mt. Zion AMEC, Hlanghani AMEC, Amaveni AMEC

Matelebeland East District (5): Stephen AMEC, Ngwenya AMEC, Nyathini AMEC, Gumtree AMEC (2), Nkulumane AMEC

Matelebeland North District (3): Messiah Temple AMEC, Thomas Temple AMEC, Ball Tabernacle AMEC

Country: Tanzania (2)

Karonga North District (2): Ikoma AMEC, Libugha AMEC

