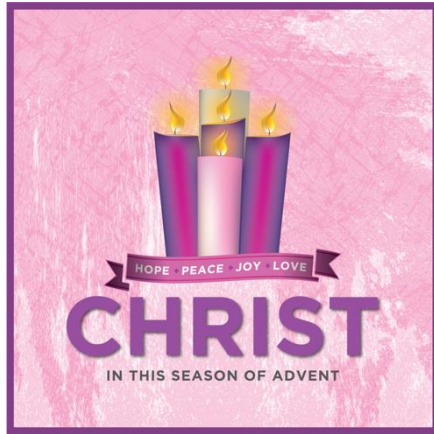


The Joy of Giving

The season of Advent is about waiting, watching, and preparing for the coming of Jesus. Through this season, we mark the time leading up to G*d's arrival on earth, wrapped in flesh in the person of Jesus. We also contemplate and mark the time leading up to the return of Jesus – completing the Divine work of love, justice, grace, mercy, and peace begun with the abundance of creation. We celebrate what G*d prepared to give, gave, and gives to us; we celebrate the opportunity to echo G*d's generosity.

Each year, _____ AME Church is responsible for about \$_____ in contributions to the denominational church *beyond* the local church and obligations we have for general maintenance, bills, salary. Approximately \$_____ (total assessment) of _____'s (church name) expense is paid over the course of the Annual Conference year. \$_____ (first part of assessment) of _____'s (church name) expense is paid at the _____ meeting; the remaining \$_____ (second part of assessment) is paid at Annual Conference. During this season of Advent 2018, the Stewardship & Finance Commission of _____ (church name) is asking each member to consider a weekly sacrificial contribution (*above and beyond* your tithes and offerings) of **\$125 each week (for \$500 over the course of Advent)**. This gift will enable _____ (church name) to be prepared for these obligations. We are praying for at least ____ (number) full participants – through the days of Advent. *Whatever* you can give will be a blessing! The connectional AME Church has an annual budget of \$14,371,890. Through this Advent Guide, please be reminded of some of the most important aspects of the AME Church for which assessments are raised and paid here at _____ (church name) and in other local AME churches globally.

Not able to give financially or want to know what more you can do? For starters, **Fast and pray** for the health and future of the African Methodist Episcopal Church – its congregations and leaders throughout the world. Your prayers have positively constructive power!



AME Church

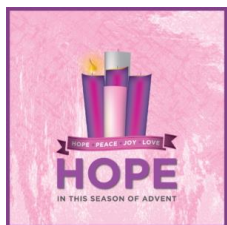


Advent 2018

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2 December 2018

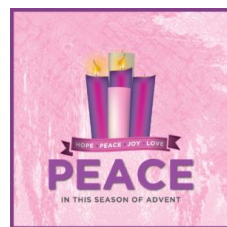
Did you know that 24% of the connectional AME Church’s budget provides for four-year and junior colleges and theological seminaries under the auspices of the AME Church? These schools are among the historically Black colleges and university in the United States. This also includes support for educational programs that meet the AME Church mission, but are not under its auspices.



Prayer: G*d of wisdom, thank you for educational institutions that function because of Your faithfulness to the AME Church and the faithfulness of the Church’s members to You! Bless students, teachers, administrators, and denominational leaders with resources needed for these schools to thrive, making manifest the **hope** of our ancestors. **AMEN.**

9 December 2018

Did you know that approximately 13% of the connectional AME Church’s budget supports churches and mission work in the Caribbean, Africa, India, and Europe? Soon after the incorporation of the AME Church in 1816 (following Richard Allen and Absalom Jones



walking out of St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia), leaders of the denomination contemplated ways to connect with those on the continent of Africa. A relationship of mutual learning and respect among Black students fighting racism in the United States and apartheid in South Africa developed at Wilberforce University and accounts for the establishment of the AME Church there.

Prayer: G*d, our help in every age, remind us always that as much as we have done to those most wanting among us we have also done unto You. Thank You for the **peace** You give us as we learn to love You through service. May all people in all places share the testimony that You are our shepherd and we have no want. **AMEN.**

My Name: _____ | My Name: _____
My Gift: _____ | My Gift: _____
Date: 2 December 2018 | Date: 9 December 2018

16 December 2018

Did you know that approximately 8% of the connectional AME Church’s budget supports the direct work of building a strategic networked community around a common faith and justice mission? The infrastructure and organized meetings of the AME Church enable vocalized concerns, demands, and celebrations of people of African descent in and beyond the United States. The AME Church continues to be a megaphone for justice – magnifying the voices of the least in our society, demonstrating that none are free until all are free. While administrative and contingency funds budgeted in the Church largely account for parts of the budget not highlighted in this Guide, even *those* expenses contribute to strengthening and sustaining this connection.



Prayer: G*d of joy, thank you for the spark we feel and fuel when we are “always eating and meeting.” For the eucharistic bond we share as AMEs, we give you thanks. Convict us and empower us that we might not just sit back and enjoy our fellowship, but rather be mobilized by the fire of Your Holy Spirit to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with You. **AMEN.**

23 December 2018

Did you know that approximately 6% of the connectional AME Church’s budget supports research, scholarship, historiography, church school materials, hymnals, and other publications in the AME Church? The AME Church publishes various materials that strengthen individual members’ relationship and walk with G*d – while also strengthening the church as a socially informed and spiritually grounded community.



Prayer: G*d of love, thank you for teaching us to love you, our neighbors, and our selves through study, teaching, and writing in and through local AME churches. Allow us to glow with such **love** as the flame of learning is rekindled in each of us. Strengthen new scholars with a love for learning and for Your church. **AMEN.**

My Name: _____ | My Name: _____
My Gift: _____ | My Gift: _____
Date: 16 December 2018 | Date: 23 December 2018