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FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK

I would like to begin by thanking God for what he alone has put together for this body of Christ, called, Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church. It has taken quite some time to compile all of this data for training every new convert. However, I must say that it will be worth the time spent putting it together for the spiritual growth of the church.

It is my intent to further disciple the entire body of Christ through constant and reinforced training in the biblical truths of the scripture. It is important for every true child of God, who has a "hunger and a thirst for righteousness", to apply themselves in the principles of God’s word and press their way towards that higher prize which is in Christ Jesus.

I’ve learned over the years, and from experience that new converts must be indoctrinated into the church. It is our duty to provide as much training as possible to every new babe in Christ. More often than not, people join church without the slightest clue as to what they have gotten themselves into, and as a result of this, many folks who have made that walk down the aisle of change end up reverting back to their old ways i.e. meaning the old man, and they do so because they just don’t know and there’s no one putting forth the effort to teach and train them up in the way that they should go.

We are organisms designed to grow. I am sharing this fruit of the vine with you because it is my duty to do so as your under Shepherd. The bible declares that, "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Like Peter and John, I can truly say that, "silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I'm willing to give to you.‘

The Devil has figured out that he no longer has to fight the church. He has learned that penetration is far better than persecution. What’s my point? Well, you really don’t have a true and faithful member until you have a member who is willing to go through the process of being taught. When people join church and don’t want to be taught the word of God, that’s a strong indication that the devil is trying to infiltrate (penetrate) the church. A true child of God is one who is willing to receive instruction; one who is not just a hearer of God’s word, but a doer of God’s word.

So, if you really want to know the test of obedience, then take the time to not only read but also to be a part of those who are willing to be taught, and then be the doer of what you’ve been taught. Therein is the true measure of your test, becoming the doer.

Blessings,

Reverend J. Elvin Sadler, D.Min, Pastor/Servant Leader
Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church
THE HISTORY OF METHODISM

In America, it is generally conceded that Methodism first shed its light in the city of New York. About the year 1765 when a plot of ground on John Street was leased and two years later purchased and the first chapel built. During the entire early struggle of the new organization, Black people figure prominently in Methodism even to devoting of the building for the first organization. Between the years 1765 and 1796 the number of Black members increased greatly. So much so that caste prejudice forbade their taking the Sacrament until the white families were all served. This and the desire for other church privileges denied them induced them to organize among themselves.

The first church organized in 1796 and built in 1800 was called Zion. The founders chose this name because, “it was the name most frequently used in the Bible to designate the church of God,” even Zion Hill before there was a worship house. Among the leaders of the movement was James Varick, who was the first Bishop and to whom is attributed the founding father of the Zion Church. Zion church was incorporated in 1801 by the name “The African Methodist Episcopal church in New York.” Methodist Episcopal was always in the title to exhibit the retention of the doctrine and form of church government under which the denomination originated. “African” was prefixed to the rest of the title of this church because it was to be controlled by descendants of Africa, in the interest of humanity, regardless of race, color, sex, or condition. Therefore, these people of African descent, with an indubitable pride in the Fatherland and abiding love of kinship, desired to maintain their identity, their ancient cultures and background for posterity. Because another organization came into existence around the same time, with the same title, and so much confusion was brought about, the General Conference of 1848 voted to make ZION a part of the denominational name, henceforth, to be known as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church.

1.1 Methodist – It’s Beginning


WHO: John Wesley, an evangelist and his brother, Charles Wesley, a writer.

WHY: Out of protest. The religion of England was Roman Catholicism, a faith which gives the Pope all the authority in to how one should worship God. The Wesley brothers felt that each individual should be free to worship God at will. So, out of protest, the Protestant Church, which is simply a Christian Church or a group of Christians, split from the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th Century because of a desire to study the bible and worship God in their own way, was organized.

HOW: These brothers along with a few other students held services daily in the Holy Room. Other students on the campus; in an attempt to make fun of them, would say, “… there goes those Methodists.” This was in reference to their methodical worship. From the repetition of this scenario, the name “Methodist” was accepted.
1.2 What Methodists Believe

- We believe that all men are sinners.
- We believe that God the Father loves all men and hates all sin.
- We believe that Jesus Christ died for all men to make possible their salvation from sin through their belief.
- We believe that all who repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ receive the forgiveness of sin.
- We believe that all that are accepted as the children of God may receive the inward assurance of the Holy Spirit to that fact.
- We believe that all that are made “new creatures” in Christ Jesus are accepted as the children of God.
- We believe that all who truly desire to seek it may love God with all their hearts, souls, minds and strength and their neighbors as themselves.
- We believe that a man born of god is consecrated and set apart for service unto God and that the process of growth begins and is followed by degrees of development ever having as its goal entire sanctification and Christian perfection.
- We believe that the gift of the Holy Spirit is possible unto all men as a guide, a teacher and a light.
- We believe in the Kingdom of God which means the reign of God in every area of human life and society.
- We believe that all who persevere to the end shall be saved but that souls may lapse from grace and become partially corrupt or even fall wholly away from God and be lost forever.
- We believe that God is eternal and Jesus is the conqueror of the grave and we, being united by faith with Him share His everlasting life.

WHAT IS THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH?

2.1 What Zion Methodists Believe

Zion Methodists believe in the basic rules of Methodism.
Zion Methodists believe in the spirit of evangelism and a heartwarming experience that operate in the areas of thought, feeling and action.
Zion Methodists believe in the practice of democracy and brotherhood in all relationships.
Zion Methodists believe that every man is a free man and should not be shackled by chains of discrimination and prejudice.
Zion Methodists believe in every man having a full opportunity of exercising his spiritual and natural gifts within the Christian fellowship.

Zion Methodist other beliefs – See Affirmation of Faith and the Articles of Religion Below.
THE A.M.E. ZION STRUCTURE of Our *CONNECTION*

Our denominational affiliation is the A.M.E. Zion Church. The A.M.E. Zion Church is guided and governed by the Holy Bible and it's rules and regulations outlined in The Book of Discipline. In the Book of Discipline are the Doctrines of The A.M.E. Zion Church (Articles of Religion). Below is a listing of the structure of our church:

1. The A.M.E. Zion Church (Parent Body)
2. General Conference
3. Board of Bishops
4. Connectional Council
5. Episcopal District
6. Annual Conference
7. District Conference
8. Quarterly Conference
9. Leaders’ Meeting
10. Members’ Conference

3.1 General Conference

The General Conference: The church denomination you have joined is unique in its connection. Its affiliation is Methodist made possible by John Wesley and retained by our protesting and founding fathers. It has twelve Bishops. The General Conference is the major gathering of the denomination which meets every four years beginning the first Wednesday in July (date subject to change) and lasting for two weeks at a place designated by a commission which sets the place two years before the sessions begin. It is the law making body of the church which is empowered with the responsibility of making and changing or amending the laws that are changeable with special exceptions alluding to our articles of faith, doctrine and existing standards. The episcopacy shall not be done away with nor the plan of itinerancy. Laws granting trials to ministers and appeals shall remain intact. The same applies to our laity. Our general rules shall not be destroyed. The General Conference elects bishops and assigns them to their Districts. It tries, expels, impeaches or disrobes Bishops, elects General officers, guards the destiny of the Connection, hears and receives reports of departments and regulates the work, discipline and polity of each. There is no appeal from the General Conference. In the interim of the General Conference, the Bishops govern the church and interpret its laws and mandate.

3.2 Annual Conferences

The Annual Conference is composed of a Bishop, all traveling ministers, preachers in full connection, lay delegates duly elected from the various churches within its bounds, the missionary and education officers. The Bishop is the presiding officer. The Annual Conference has power to make laws for its operation as long as those laws are not in conflict with the laws of the Connection. It can make other annual conferences with limitations, examine the domestic affairs of its missions, hear complaints against any of its members and dispose of them according to law. Support for the general church commitments comes from the Annual Conference. It is divided into a convenient number of Presiding Elder Districts. It hears reports from Presiding
Elders, Pastors, Delegates, District Officers of Missionary and Christian Education Departments, committee on audit and treasures. It receives the prorata for General Claims and the attendant levies. The Annual Conference admits ministers and assigns them, according to law, to their respective churches. The Annual Conference can drop Ministers that have not answered roll call. This body also elects Delegates to the General Conference.

3.3 District Conferences

Which meet once a year and is presided over by a Presiding Elder, who is appointed by the Bishop. The District Conference is a division of the Annual Conference. It is composed of all the traveling ministers, superannuated supernumerary, local Elders, Deacons, Local Preachers, Exhorters and all officers in the Missionary and Christian Education Department, Laymen Council Pres. etc. The District Conference duties include looking into the spiritual and temporal affairs of churches, schools and benevolent societies within its bounds; to inquire into the recommendation of the quarterly conference, grant new or renew local preacher’s licenses. The District Conference also examines preachers who are studying to be admitted to the Annual Conference. The District Sunday School Convention is the name of the meeting where the church school's organizations are separate from the District Conference. The District Directors of Christian Education Preside alternately under the leadership of the Presiding Elder.

3.4 Local Churches

The Local Churches are the cornerstones of The A.M.E. Zion Connection. The Pastor is ordained and appointed by the Bishop to a Local Church. Pastors are to preach/teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ by knowing both Old and New Testaments and continue in Kingdom Building. The Pastor, in the local church is the only one who has appointing and nominating authority of officers to positions of leadership. Pastors are to also pursue education and be trained in administration.

Quarterly Conferences - which meet 4 times a year. This Conference is unique in that it is a local barometer reflecting the conditions existent in the local church. Members of this conference, which meets every three months, consist of traveling ministers Local Elders, Deacons, Preachers, Exhorters, Class Leaders, Trustees, Stewards, Stewardess, Deaconess, all Missionary Departments. Superintendents of Church School, presidents of clubs, Secretary and Treasurer of Christian endeavor. All General Officers and ministers are amenable to the Quarterly Conference within whose bounds they reside. The Presiding Elder appoints time and place of the Quarterly Conference. The Quarterly Conference is quite important as it is a law making body. Its duties include:

1. Examining the officers of our fellowship.
2. Granting or withholding approval of the character of the members of the Quarterly Conference.
3. Examination of Exhorters and Local Preachers, renew or revoke license and makes recommendation to the District Conference.
4. Recommendation of suitable candidates to the Annual Conference for ordination.
5. Hearing appeals and determining appropriate redress.
6. Election of delegates to the Annual and District Conferences.

Class Leaders' Meeting - usually meet once a month as a group. Individual Class Leader meets with their members once a week to see how their soul is fairing, via seeing class member at church, phone call, email, etc.
Members’ Meeting/Conference - meets when called by the Pastor. Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion is our local church. We are part of the Piedmont Episcopal District; Western North Carolina Annual Conference; Piedmont Episcopal District of the AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH.

Whenever there is any business to be attended to by the local Church not otherwise vested in the Steward’s meeting, Board of Trustees, Leaders Meeting or Quarterly Conference, the members in Full Connection shall be called together in a Member’s Conference to consider the matter. The Pastor in charge shall have the sole right to make the call for and preside over the Member’s Conference.

The agenda of a member’s conference may include the following:

1. Organizational Plans
2. Development Plans (update Budget)
3. Expansion Plans
4. Other Ideas, Plans, Discussions that shall promote the general good of the fellowship.

3.5 The Connection Is Divided Intro:

3.5.1 EPISCOPAL DISTRICTS -

There are eleven (11); They are sometimes called ‘Episcopal Areas’. Each presided over by a Bishop. We have twelve (12) active Bishops. We have over 6,600 churches worldwide. We are located on 5 continents, i.e., North America, South America, Africa, Europe and Asia.

3.5.2 BOARD OF BISHOPS -

Meets twice a year; oversees the general supervision of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, which also includes hearing the reports of our General Officers and the report from each President our six (6) Church supported schools (seminaries/universities/colleges).

3.5.3 GENERAL OFFICERS -

Who oversee the operation of the Departments of the Connection. There are 13 General Officers and the general church pays their salaries. Each post is elected every 4 years.

3.5.4 CONNECTIONAL COUNCIL -

Which meets once a year, and these Administrative Boards make recommendations to the Board of Bishops and the General Conference. It is composed of all members of administrative boards.

3.6 Our Assessments

Each member of the local church is called on to pay money set aside for our support of the CONNECTION.

1. General Claims - paid to your Class Leader. Each dollar is broken down in this manner: 44 cents to educational institutions; 15 cents to operate departments of the Connection; 13 cents for the Pension Fund and death benefits; 4 cents for widows and rural ministers; 4 cents pays our General Officers and operates their offices; 4 cents pays for our Bishops and their office needs; 3 cents operates our Publishing House; 2 cents for Harriet Tubman House and camps, and 1 cent reserve. These figures are not exact, but are very close.
2. District Askings – Helps with the general expense of the District office.

The Methodist tradition requires that the local church (the roots), support the CONNECTION. The Connection, at the General Conference, determines what amount each conference must pay and, in turn, the conference determines what each local church must pay. These amounts are determined by the number of persons on the rolls of each church. If each member does not carry his or her own weight, other members are burdened with a heavier load. This is why it is so very important that every member of the local church help by carrying his/her own share of the responsibility to support the local church and, in turn, support the worldwide CONNECTION of ZION.

3.7 Membership

*There are two (2) classes of Membership in ZION:*

3.7.1 Probationer -

A person who has made the public declaration to join the church but has not fulfilled the requirements as set forth by the AME Zion Church for Membership in Full Connection. Each new member is received on probation unless that person has a 'letter of transfer' from another recognized Christian Church. That person is not required to wait for the full probationary period. The Probationer is admitted to the next step after spending a period of study with the pastor and when they have given satisfactory evidence of a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

3.7.2 Member in Full Connection -

Is a member who has completed the required study for probation, has received the Right Hand of Fellowship before the congregation and is enrolled as a member of the local Church.

3.8 Membership Privileges

1. Participation in local church boards and auxiliaries.
2. Voting in local church meetings.
3. Can represent the local church as a delegate to a District, or Annual Conference
4. Can become involved with the worldwide program of the Connection

3.9 Membership Responsibility

1. Seek to Grow in the Spirit Filled Life and Reflect the glory of God in your lifestyle and attitude
2. Regular attendance at Worship Services.
3. Regularly commune with God by Daily Prayer, Meditation and Bible Reading
4. Respect church doctrine and authority
5. Be receptive to pastoral leadership
6. Attendance, when possible, of weekly church meetings, Bible Study, Prayer Service. Officers are strongly encouraged by the Pastor to attend.
7. Use your spiritual gifts by Membership in at least one church ministry.
8. Seek to Live in harmony with one another
9. Giving:  
   a. Tithes - one-tenth of your income,  
   b. General Offering - regular amount weekly,  
   or c. as God hath prospered you (I Cor. 16:2)
10. Paying Class Dues, General Claims and supporting church fund raising efforts as you are able.

11. Receiving Holy Communion – (offered first Sunday of each month)

12. Baptism - One must be Baptized before becoming a full member. (Para. 91 - A.M.E. Zion Discipline) - There are 3 modes of Baptism, ie; Sprinkling, Pouring and Immersion. If you were baptized as a child or as an adult, that's fine. We discourage being baptized more than once, but if you insist, we will honor your request.

3.10 The Qualifications for Leadership in Zion Methodism

A. They must be members in Full Connection.
   1. The requirements for Probationary Membership (The Book of Discipline Part II [2004], p. 14)
      a. An earnest desire to be saved.
      b. A willingness to forsake evil and endeavor to lead a holy life.
      c. A determination to attend the appointed means of grace.

   2. The requirements for Full Membership (The Book of Discipline Part II [2004], pp. 16-17)
      a. Confirmation of the Baptismal Covenant
      b. “Saving faith” in the Lord Jesus Christ
      c. Belief in the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures
      d. A willingness to be cheerfully governed by the rules of the church
      e. A willingness to hold sacred the ordinances of God
      f. A willingness to endeavor to promote the welfare of the Redeemer's Kingdom
      g. A willingness to cherish friendly feelings toward all persons, especially church members
      h. A willingness to contribute of their earthly substance according to their ability to support the gospel and the other benevolent enterprises of the church.

B. They must be members in Good Standing. (Book of Discipline [2004], pp. 36, 194, 118-120)
   1. They must be persons of regular attendance to the appointed means of grace.
   2. They must be persons of solid piety and spirituality.
   3. They must be persons of sound moral character.
   4. They must be persons of faithful stewardship.
   5. They must be persons of good relations with others, especially members.

C. They must know Methodist Doctrine. [Beliefs & Theological Emphases] (Discipline [2004], p. 172)

D. They must know & uphold Church Polity & Discipline. (Discipline [2004], pp. 172, 194)

E. They must be committed to Evangelism. (Discipline [2004], p. 172, par. 445; p. 194, par. 491)
   1. They must evidence the desire to witness to the gospel of the kingdom of God.
   2. They must evidence the ability to witness to the gospel of the kingdom of God.
   3. They must evidence the practice of witnessing to the gospel of the kingdom of God.
F. They must submit to Authority.
   1. They must obey leadership conditionally. [Hebrews 13:17; Romans 13:1, 2]
   2. They must respect leadership absolutely. [Romans 13:6, 7; 1 Peter 2:13-18]
   3. They must appreciate leadership sincerely. [1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13]

3.11 Duties and Responsibilities Of Officers, Leaders And Ministers

The prerequisite: All serving must be SAVED!

3.11.1 Presiding Elders

The Presiding Elder is the official of the A.M.E. Zion Connection charged with the responsibility of seeing that each local Church under his Supervision understands and complies with the policies and programs of the Connection. The Bishop appoints the Presiding Elder.

The position of a Presiding Elder is administrative and advisory through the District Conference.

   The duties are as listed:

   1. Administrative Function

   a. The Presiding Elder holds a Quarterly Conference in every Church and circuit every three months, four times a year to determine the efficiency of the Pastor, the effectiveness of the Ministry of the Churches, and “give proper direction to all the affairs of the Churches in the Presiding Elder’s District.”

   b. The Presiding Elder will preside in the District Conference, Church School and Allen Christian Fellowship Conventions, and Quarterly Conferences and see that the business of the Conferences and Conventions are in strict accord with the current Doctrine and Discipline of the A.M.E. Church.

   c. In the absence of the Bishop, the Presiding Elder will have, as The Doctrine and Discipline of the A.M.E. Church directs, charge of all traveling and local Preachers in the District. The Presiding Elder will change, receive or appoint during the intervals between Annual Conference.

   d. On a petition from the members through the Official Board, and where the interest of the Church demands it, a Presiding Elder may change or move a Pastor in the intervals of the Annual Conference after strict investigation and written consent of the Presiding Bishop. The Pastor in question should be assigned to another field of labor, commensurate with the former appointment, if possible.

3.11.2 Pastors

The official head of every local congregation is the Pastor. He is appointed to his position by the Presiding Bishop of the Annual Conference in which the Church is located, and is responsible for the total program of the Church to which he is appointed.
The responsibilities of the Pastor include:

a. Total oversight over every minister, preacher, exhorter and official of the local church;
b. Making sure that every minister, preacher, exhorter and official behave themselves well and to also give ministers and local preachers systematic work;
c. Serving as the ex-officio president of every board/organization in the local church;
d. Serving as the interpreter of the law in the local church;
e. Leading in the development of the overall program of the church;
f. Serving as the initiator of any court proceedings regarding charges brought against a member in the local church.
g. Chief Liturgist of ALL worship services;
h. Total appointing and nominating authority of all offices in the local church;
i. Sole authority to call a members' meeting and the organization of the local church.

3.11.3 Preacher’s Steward

The Preacher’s Steward is appointed by the Pastor, confirmed by the Quarterly Conference. The Preacher’s Steward is Chairperson of the Steward Board.

The duties are as listed:

* The Preacher's Steward is to make sure that the responsibilities of the Steward Board is carried out by all Stewards.
* To see that all necessary provisions are made for the temporal relief & comfort of the Pastor in Charge.
* To be responsible for making such appeals to the congregation as necessary for the financial support of the church and Pastor.
* To meet the Board of Stewardess and advise them as to the Pastor's and family comfort and needs temporarily.
* To provide the elements of the Lord's Supper.

3.11.4 Stewards

The mission is to be accountable to make an exact accounting of all tithes, offerings and contributions made to the church. Ensure the stewardship and distribution of church resources to edify the congregation, provide support to the Pastor, his family, relief for the needy and distressed members of the church.

The duties of the Stewards are as follows:

* To make provisions for the moving expenses of the Pastor and provide a parsonage for the Pastor and family.
* To make sure the needs of the Pastor and his/her family are met.
* To seek and relieve the needy and distressed members.
* To be stimulants for the spiritual life of the church by being present at all services, willing to lead devotion and assist with worship when needed.

* They are expected to support and promote all projects, programs and financial obligations of the church.

* The Stewards are to receive monies collected.

* They are to have at least two representatives to assist in counting monies received each Sunday or any special service.

* Stewards should be present at all board meetings called by the Chairperson or Pastor.

* Stewards should attend weekly Bible Study and/or Sunday School.

* Stewards are to lead the way in keeping harmony and peace.

### 3.11.5 Trustees

The mission is to take charge of care, maintenance and security of church property. Initiate necessary improvements to the church and maintain order and the proper decorum to be observed throughout God’s house of worship.

The Trustee is a man/woman over 21 years of age and in good standing in his/her local church. Trustees, except for the Pastor, shall be elected annually by the Members of the Church, upon the nomination of the Pastor in charge. At their first meeting of the new conference year, the Trustees are to elect a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. The Chairperson is to call all meetings to order and preside over said and to direct the affairs of the Board. Further, he/she is to work in concert with other officers of the Church and Pastor for the good of the church. The duties of the Trustees are as follows:

* To take care of the physical property of the Church.

* To see that such property is clean at all times, properly heated and properly ventilated.

* To receive and disburse according to the budget for the church, monies turned into their hands.

* Trustees should be present at all board meetings called by the Chairman or the Pastor.

* Trustees should attend weekly Bible Study and/or Sunday School.

* Trustees are to order and decorum at all times.

### 3.11.6 Class Leaders

All Class Leaders are sub-pastors who are urged to be concerned with the welfare of their members.

* The Class Leaders are to advise the Pastor of any sickness, death or distress of any member of his/her class.
* Class Leaders are requested to hold Class Meetings at least twice in a quarter for the purpose of instruction and group support.

* All Class Leaders are required to attend weekly Bible Study and/or Sunday School, as well as encourage their class members to do the same.

### 3.11.7 Budget/Finance Board (Stewardship Ministry)

This Board is appointed by the Pastor, approved at the members meeting. The treasurer and Asst. Treasurer are to be a part of this Board and are amenable to this Board.

* This Board is to aid in raising money to meet the needs of the local church's commitments.
* It handles and pays out the money upon presentation of vouchers with proper endorsement.
* This Board is to keep the membership informed as to its economic assets and liabilities.
* This Board is to keep membership informed as to how well or how poorly the worshippers give, thereby alerting the church to raise its level of giving to strengthen the church's total program commitment.

### 3.11.8 Deaconess

The word deaconess can be synonymous with the word helper. The mission is to prepare for the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism. The Deaconess Board's main concern is mercy, both within and without the church. The Deaconess Board assists the Pastor in ministering to the sick and shut-in. Specific duties may include:

* The Deaconess will go about doing good - ministering to the poor, visiting the sick, pray for the dying, seek the wandering, comfort the sorrowing, serving the sinner and be ever ready to take up any duty for which willing hands cannot otherwise be found.

* The Deaconess are also responsible for attending to the preparation of the Sacraments of the church.

* They are to maintain the appearance and apparel of the altar.

* They are to keep flowers on the rostrum and to cover chancel rail on occasions.

* Deaconess are to be consecrated to serve in this capacity.

### 3.11.9 Stewardess

The duties of the Stewardess are:

* To assist the Stewards, Preacher's Steward in making provisions for the support and comfort of the Pastor and his/her family.

* To lead in the spiritual welfare of the church.

* To be available to assist the Pastor in any way on Sunday morning or special services.
* To serve in any other capacity the Pastor deems necessary.

3.11.10 Board of Christian Education

This is the Church School Board. It is made up of all departments of the local church: The Pastor serves as Chairman of the BCE, it also consists of a Director of Christian Education and all Directors of Christian Education in the local church, superintendent, etc. It serves as the programmatic arm of the local church.

* **Its duties are:**

  * To make provisions for the organization, guidance and supervision of the Christian Education of children, youth, YACM (young adults in Christian Ministry) and adults in the local church.

3.11.11 Director of Christian Education

This person will provide that all areas of this department are supplied with a Director. The Director of Christian Education will:

* Have oversight as to the function of the various departments (children, youth, young adults and adults).
* See that the Department is supplied with necessary materials to ensure a successful program.
* Provide that all special days are observed with programs.
* Provide that our children, as well as adults, are instructed in Zion Methodism.

The Director of Christian Education is also responsible for doing whatever is necessary to promote a successful Sunday School program and Vacation Bible School. The Christian Education Department is encouraged to take part in as many District, Conference, Connectional Christian Education activities as possible. They are to make certain that the church is always properly represented at these activities.

3.11.12 Superintendent of Sunday School

* The Superintendent of Sunday School is responsible for the effectiveness of the school and the departments in meeting prime objectives of the Sunday School.
* At times, with limited resources, space and personnel, the Superintendent must improvise, keep the teachers encouraged, and provide opportunities for advancement.
* He/she must encourage learning and make room for developing skills, which may lie latent in teachers and pupils alike.
* The Superintendent must work closely with the departmental heads in evaluating and preparing ideas and suggestions for the improvement of the work.
3.11.13 **Ministry of Kindness - (Poor Steward)**

This officer serves as Treasurer for the collection of funds for the less fortunate among the membership and beyond. He/she keeps a faithful account of all monies received and pays it out according to the dictates of the Leaders (Class Leaders) and Pastor. There are no other duties assigned this person by the Discipline.

3.11.14 **Ushers**

A servant of the Church. A person whose duties are many:

* Attend his/her own meetings and obligations, to oversee the church congregation and visitors as to seating direction, ventilation, order and decorum, to spot trouble, illness and any other necessity.
* To be on time, greet people warmly and be at one's station early in order to acquaint oneself with the order of the day.
* To observe when to admit worshipers to the service, help provide for babies and young children and be a good public relations person.
* The usher must observe the Pastor so as to respond to cues, which he/she may flash, unobserved by untrained eyes.
* The usher must be a person of great patience and understanding, not easily riled or ultra sensitive.
* The usher must, out of loyalty and dedication, have a desire for success of worship always, to visit with the Pastor, Church and Choir when outside invitations are extended to the church.

3.11.15 **Minister of Music**

* The Minister of Music is to be responsible for the direction and rehearsal of the music ministry of the church.
* He/she visits with the Pastor and Church when outside invitations are extended, and if unable to attend will try to make provisions for a musician to be present.

3.11.16 **Choir**

* The Choir is one of the most noticeable groups a church has.
* It sings at all major services of the church, and it must share the ecumenical outreach with the Pastor and Members and it is to be diligent in its rehearsals and loyally dedicated to service.
* The Choir's duty is to be Christian and always be a medium of evangelism.
3.11.17 Woman’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society
*The Parent Body - ages 41 +
*YAMS - Young Adult Missionary Society - ages 22-40
*Youth Missionary Society - ages 13-21 (Jr. 13-16) (Sr. 17-21)
*Buds Of Promise - ages 1 - 12 (Readiness: 1-3; Beg.: 4-6; Primary: 7-9; Jr: 10-12)
*Bureau of Supply - Entire Church may be asked to participate
*Life Members Council - All ages may purchase a LM stole - $30.00 &/or $100.00
Matron/Patron

The W.H.&O.M.S. shall seek to:

* Promote growth in the knowledge and understanding of God and His plan for redemption for the world.
* Teach the concepts of Christian missions and provide experiences for participation in mission work and its ministries.
* Exemplify the principles of Christian living and to win others to Christ.
* Promote the cause of World Evangelism.
* Serve as financial support system to undergird the world mission outreach of the A.M.E. Zion Church, at home and overseas.

3.11.18 Lay Council

Historically, lay persons have played an important role in the organization, development and growth of the Church. The historical role that lay persons played in our overall development can be seen in our early leadership, in the liberation struggle of Black Americans. Those early leaders included a number of well-known personalities such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglas. Therefore, to full marshal the resources of our laity and maximize their efforts in the total mission of our church, a Lay Council was organized.

Lay Councils are represented at all levels of our organization. They include Lay Councils at the Episcopal District, The Annual Conference, the District Conference and the Local Church.

The Local Lay Council is to *deepen the spiritual life, *disseminate information, *cultivate denominational loyalty, and *expand the denomination through education and evangelism.

Any person, a member in good standing of Steele Creek A. M. E. Zion Church, is urged to become a member of the Lay Council and support its programs and objectives.
3.12 Special Ministries

3.12.1 Culinary Ministry

The Culinary Ministry is to coordinate all meal functions taking place at Steele Creek and oversee the upkeep of the kitchen of SC including keeping the kitchen stocked with necessary supplies.

3.12.2 Acolytes

The word 'acolyte' is taken from an ancient Greek word that meant 'companion' 'attendant' or 'helper.' The Acolytes are therefore chosen and set apart to symbolically bring the presence of God into the sanctuary by lighting candles and assist in the celebration of worship. As they light the candle lighter again before extinguishing the candles and process out with the lighted candle lighter, they remind people that when we scatter out into the world, we take the Lord (Jesus) with us.

3.13 Other Ministries

Each Local Church is encouraged to have as many Ministries as needed, to Minister to your entire congregation and especially to Minister to each individual.

Affirmation of Faith: Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, The Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he shall judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, The holy Catholic Church, the Communion of saints the forgiveness of sins, The resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.
A.M.E. ZION CHURCH ARTICLES OF RELIGION

4.1 ARTICLES OF RELIGION WITH BACK-UP SCRIPTURES

Article 1. – Of Faith in the Holy Trinity
Deuteronomy 6:4 (NIV.); Nehemiah 9:6; Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 10:10; Psalm 90:2; Ephesians 4:6; I John 4:13-16; I Timothy 1:17.

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in the unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Article 2. – Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made Very Man

The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile His father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

Article 3. – Of the Resurrection of Christ

Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again His body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man’s nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he shall return to judge all men at the last day.

Article 4. – Of the Holy Ghost
Matthew 28:19; John 16:7, 13; Romans 8:16; II Peter 1:21; II Corinthians 3:17.

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and Son, very and eternal God.

Article 5. – The Sufficiency of the Holy Scripture for Salvation

The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority there never was any doubt in the Church. The names of the canonical books are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings, The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes of the Preacher, Canticle or Song of Solomon, Four Prophets the Greater, Twelve Prophets the Less. All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.
Article 6. --- Of the Old Testament
Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:27,44.

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man. Wherefore they are not to heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from god by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the Civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

Article 7. – Of Original or Birth Sin
Romans 5:12, 19; Ephesians 2:1-9.

Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly say), but is the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

Article 8. – Of Free Will
John 15:5; Romans 5:6; Ephesians 2:1-10; Philippians 2:13.

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and to calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to god, without the grace of God by Christ assisting us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

Article 9. -- Of Justification of Man
Romans 3:28; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9.

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

Article 10. – Of Good Works
Romans 3:20; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8; Galatians 5:22.

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God’s judgments; yet they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

Article 11. – Of Works of Supererogation

Voluntary works, besides, over and above God’s commandments, which are called works of Supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogance and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for His sake than of bounden duty is required: Whereas Christ saith plainly, When we have done all that is commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

Article 12. – Of Sin after Justification
Jeremiah 3:22; Mark 3:28-30; I John 1:9; I John 2:1; Revelation 2:5.

Not every sin willingly committed after justification is a sin against the Holy Ghost and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin
and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And, therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here; or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

**Article 13. – Of the Church**
*I Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 20:28.*

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things of necessity required of the same.

**Article 14. – Of Purgatory**
*Exodus 20:4; Matthew 4:10; Mark 2:7.*

The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshipping, adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocations of saints, is a fond thing; vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrants of Scripture, but repugnant to the word of God.

**Article 15. – Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People Understand**

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive church, to have public prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.

**Article 16. – Of the Sacraments**
*Matthew 26:26; Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 11:23,24.*

Sacraments, ordained of Christ, are not only badges or tokens of Christian men’s profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace and God’s good will towards us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in Him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Jesus Christ our Lord in the gospel; that is to say Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Those commonly called Sacraments, that is to say confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the corrupt following of the Apostles and partly are states of life allowed in Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, because they have not any visible sign of ceremony ordained of God.

The sacraments were ordained of Christ to be gazed upon or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them, And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves condemnation as Saint Paul saith: “For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (I Cor. 11:29)

**Article 17. – Of Baptism**
*Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 22:16.*

Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of differences whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration of the new birth. The baptism of young Children is to be retained in the Church.
Article 18. – Of the Lord’s Supper


The supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ’s death; insomuch that to such is rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the body of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine into the body of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of the sacrament, hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.

The sacrament of the Lord’s supper was not by Christ’s ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

Article 19. – Of Both Kinds


The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay People, for both parts of the Lord’s Supper, by Christ’s ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike

Article 20. – Of the One Obligation of Christ Finished Upon the Cross

Hebrews 9:28, 10:26; Romans 6:9, 10; Acts 4:12.

The Offering of Christ, one made, is a perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit.

Article 21. – Of the Marriage of Ministers

Matthews 8:14; Acts 21:9; I Timothy 3:2; I Corinthians 9:5.

The Ministers of Christ are not commanded by God’s law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore, it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness.

Article 22. – Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches

Romans 14:5; I Corinthians 14:26; I Peter 2:16.

It is not necessary that the rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have always been different, and may be changed according to the diversity of the countries, times and men’s manners, so that nothing be ordained against God’s Word. Whatevsoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the Church to which he belongs, which are repugnant to the Work of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offended against the common order of the Church and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren,

Every particular Church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.
Article 23. – Of the Rulers of the United States of America
Matthew 22:21; Roman’s 13:1, 3, 4;

The President, The Congress, the General assemblies, the Governors and the Councils of State as delegates of the People, are the Rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United states, and by the constitutions of their respective States. And the said States are a sovereign and independent Nation, and ought not to be the subject to any foreign jurisdiction. As far as it respects civil affairs, we believe it the duty of Christians, and especially all Christian Ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of country where they may reside and to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the powers that be; and therefore, it is expected that all our Preachers and People who may be under any foreign Government will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.

Article 24. – Of Christian Men’s Goods
Exodus 20:15; Matthew 5:42; I John 3:17;

The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast, not withstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesses, liberally to give alms to the poor according to his ability.

Article 25. – O Christian Men’s Oaths
Jeremiah 4:2; I Samuel 20:17; II Corinthians 1:23.

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James His Apostle; so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the Magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet’s teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.
5.1 Who We Are: Our Statements

- Our Vision Statement (Why we exist)
- Our Mission Statement (What we intend to do)
- Our Faith Statement/s (What we believe [Articles of Religion])
- Our Values Statement (What we practice)

5.1.1 Our Vision Statement (Why we exist)

The vision of Steele Creek is to become a PREMIER Regional 21st Century Kingdom Missionary Outpost of the A.M.E. Zion Church meeting the needs of its members and community by Empowering the Saints in Ministry through Love to Yearn for the Presence of God, Study the Word of God, Witness to the Power of God and Serve in the Ministry of God.

5.1.2 Our Mission Statement (What we intend to do):

We, the Steele Creek Nation, are a PEOPLE:

“Empowered by Love to Transform Lives through Worship, Word, Witness & Work”

Our Church Motto:

“A Church Created to Worship”

5.1.3 Our Faith Statement/s (What we believe [Articles of Religion])

As Methodist, we believe in statements of faith called Articles of Religion. There are 25 Articles that speak to our:

- Belief in GOD (Father, Son & Holy Spirit),
- Belief in the WORD_ of God (correction & salvation),
- Belief in Free WILL, Sin and the Justification of Sin, and Repentance of Sin, and the Power of the Cross,
- Belief in the Church, the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church & Sacraments, and

5.1.4 Our Values Statement (What we practice)

At Steele Creek, it is our ultimate goal that every member practice the lifestyles found in Micah 6:6-8 of walking in obedience and holiness by:

- Doing - (treat others as we desire to be treated),
- Loving - (treat others with kindness even when they’re undeserving), and
- Walking - with Our God (always bowing down before the Lord in humble submission).
There are nine (9) values that we strive to have govern our lives as believers in Christ.

We seek to practice:
1. Unquestioned OBEDIENCE;
2. Uninterrupted ORDER;
3. Unapologetic OVATION;
4. Passion for His PEOPLE (Converted & Unconverted);
5. EXCELLENCE in Ministry;
6. Mutual Respect & Trust;
7. Unconditional Forgiveness;
8. Integrity in Leadership; and

SOME HISTORICAL FACTS OF STEELE CREEK A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

The earliest known recollection of Steele Creek African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church dates back to around 1861. An acre of land is recorded in Mecklenburg County, having been deeded to the trustees on the twentieth day of December, 1887. Under the leadership of Rev. George Pharr, an improvised open air structure called the "brush arbor" was the first known place of worship. A desire for a more permanent place to worship led the congregation in the building of "The Steele Creek Mission A.M.E. Zion Church". As time went by, many improvements were made.

The new church was completed in the fall of 1996, under the pastorate of Rev. Charles Reid. On December 1, 1996, church members marched from the old church located at 6414 South Tryon Street to the new church at 1500 Shopton Road. The new church was dedicated by the Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church, The Right Reverend Cecil Bishop, on Sunday July 27, 1997.

Previous Pastors identified by senior members of the current church:


In July of 2010, Reverend J. Elvin Sadler began his tenure as pastor of Steele Creek A.M. E. Zion Church.
OUR RELATIONSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN THE KINGDOM

7.1 SALVATION : The New Birth and What It Means

7.1.1 Introduction:

At some point in your decision to accept Christ into your life, you were probably told that according to the scriptures: Now, you are saved or you have been born again. Did you ever wonder what all of this meant? What does the word saved mean? Or, What Am I Saved From? If you've ever wondered about this, let us attempt to answer these questions and any other related questions through the light of God's Word.

7.1.2 Why We Must Share Christ with Others

When we are born of our mother's womb, we are born into our natural family, which is called our natural birth. As a result of our natural birth we are born a sinner. A sinner is simply one who sins. Sin is the transgression (disobedience) of God's commandment. In other words, we are born into the world with the mind to disobey God.

7.1.3 How We Became Sinners

Remember: The creation story of the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden and the fact that sin is the disobedience of God's commandment. Adam sinned against God when he ate of the forbidden fruit that the Lord commanded him not to eat. The moment Adam sinned he died, just as God said. But what type of death was God referring to at this point because Adam did not die physically until some 930 years later.

It was spiritual death that God was referring to; because of God's Holiness he hates SIN, not the SINNER and he will not allow sin to go unpunished. God also, demands that the penalty of sin be paid before man can stand in his presence again.

Therefore, when Adam sinned, he could no longer fellowship with God, and as a result, his soul became spiritually separated from God, which was spiritual death. Through that action you and I were born into a sinful nature (or became sinners). And exactly why is this? Because when God created Adam he became the father of the human race. Since all of us are descendants of Adam, the spiritual death of Adam passed on to us, making us sinners. Also, just as Adam could not stand in the presence of God without the penalty of sin being paid, neither can we stand in the presence of God without our sins being paid for:

The real question is, "Who makes provisions for the penalty?" The answer is God.

Since we could not merit righteousness or even deserve it, and could not make ourselves righteous, God was the only one who could make provisions for the penalty. Here are some scriptural references to explain God's provision.

- John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
• II Corinthians 5:21 "For He (God) hath made Him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

• John 1: 12 "To many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

From the scriptures we see God is the only one who made provision for our redemption through the bloodshed death of Christ on the cross. At the moment we received Christ into our lives, we were saved from the penalty of sin. Also, at the same moment we were born from above (born again) into the family of God as an heir of God, Joint-heir with Christ, inheriting eternal life (New Life), which was our spiritual birth or as we know the new birth.

7.1.4 Roman’s Road of the New Birth

• Romans 3:10 - As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
• Romans 3:23 - For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
• Romans 5:8 - But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
• Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
• Romans 10:9-10 - That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
• Romans 10:13 - For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Summary:

The only way one receives the new life is to be born into the family of God. One is born into the family of God the moment he or she (man, woman, boy, girl) accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her Savior.

7.1.5 Results of the New Birth

A. We have become a new creature in Christ. II Corinthians 5: 17
B. We have become a child of God. John 1:12
C. We have become an heir of God and join-heir with Christ. Romans 8:17A
D. We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Ephesians 1:3
E. We have been delivered from darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. Colossians 1:13
F. We have overcome the world. I John 5:4
G. We are called to be and make Disciples Matt. 28:16-20
7.2 Discipleship

A disciple is a student or follower of a certain doctrine or lifestyle. Discipleship, therefore, is a process or act of one living out one’s life as a disciple. Discipleship, in this sense, deals with one’s lifestyle as a follower of Jesus Christ. A disciple of Jesus would, therefore, follow the ways, teachings, and doctrine of Jesus.

Every born again believer is (should be) a disciple. Because we have decided to accept Jesus as our Savior, becoming a disciple means that we are also willing to accept Jesus as Lord. When Christ becomes Lord, we say that we are giving Him COMPLETE control over our lives. Our every action, will, and desire becomes the actions, will and desires of Christ. We are no longer our own, we are totally His.

As a member of Steele Creek, the role of the disciple/member is to become a follower of Christ by covenanted to abide by the Vows of Membership.

SACRAMENT: The Acts and Symbols of the Faith

8.1 What is a Sacrament:

A sacrament is a re-enactment of a significant historical religious ACTS which helps to bring greater clarity and meaning to the Believer each time the Believer comes in contact with the symbol or act.

While there many different forms of sacraments, the two sacraments central to the life of the Believer in the A.M.E. Zion Church are:

- BAPTISM, and
- The Lord’s SUPPER.

WATER BAPTISM - Its Meaning and Importance

8.2 Introduction: (To the new convert)

Due to a lack of in understanding of the Sacrament, the importance of Water Baptism in the life of the Believer is lost. This is largely due to the fact the Water baptism is not a requirement for salvation, but its observance and its symbolism add meaning to the spiritual life for the believer. The target of this section will be an attempt to enlighten the believer on the importance of water Baptism through the discussion of the following topics:

- What is Water Baptism
- Brief History of the Development of Water Baptism
- Why should We Observe Water Baptism
- When should We Be Baptized
8.3 What is Water Baptism?

The word Baptism means immersion and immersion means baptism by plunging the whole person into water to bury in the water. While immersion was the principle METHOD of baptism used in the Bible, there are instances where the methods of sprinkling and pouring water were also used.

**Question:** What is Water Baptism symbolic of?

**Answer:** Baptism symbolizes (portrays) the death, burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The submergence under water aspect portrays the believer's identity with the death and burial of Jesus Christ. The emergence from the water portrays the resurrection and life of Jesus Christ. Finally, Water Baptism is also a witness to the world that one is no longer united with the Devil, but united with Christ.

8.4 Brief History of the Development of Water Baptism

Water Baptism was instituted before Christ's ascension into heaven. The resurrected Christ commissioned His disciples, saying, "Go Ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" - Matthew 28:19

8.5 Why should We Observe Water Baptism?

A. The Lord commands us to -Matthew 28:19 B. It is the first act of obedience to the Lord after conversion - Acts 2:38

8.6 When Should We Be Baptized?

One should be baptized as soon as possible after his conversion. Being baptized before conversion has no meaning or significance. This understanding helps to dispel the myth that says a person is saved because he has been baptized. This is not true. A Person is not saved because he has been baptized but rather, he is baptized because he is saved.

8.7 Infant Baptism

Another aspect of baptism that we celebrate as Methodist is the ritual of infant baptism. Infant baptism is the act of parents or guardians bringing children to be baptized under the covenantal relationship of the parents.

The scriptural reference is taken from the covenant established between Abraham and God as spoken of in Genesis 17.

- As God established the covenant with Abraham through the circumcising of the male foreskin on the 8th day, we as New Testament believers present our children, as a form of dedication to God.
- We are in essence saying: “as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord".
When we bring a child for baptism, the parents are saying that they will bring that child up in the fear and instruction of the Lord.

The parents also vow that they will teach the child
- the nature and meaning of this sacrament.
- the basic foundations of the faith
- to attend to the Appointed Means of Grace, such as:
  - Private Worship of God;
  - Public Worship of God;
  - Giving of One’s Earthly Substance;
  - Doing good to all men, especially those of the household of faith;
  - Sowing no discord.
- everything that a Christian ought to know for their soul's health.

The parent/guardian teach the child so that the child will learn those things that will assist them in living a wholesome and holy life in the sight of God.

Upon completion of baptism, the child becomes a member on probation and is either placed on the infant (cradle roll), or if older, on the children/youth roll;

Once the child reaches the age of accountability (understanding), they are then required to walk down the aisle and profess their own faith relationship with God and accept Jesus as their personal Savior.

The ultimate purpose of baptism is to serve as an outward symbol to the world of the new relationship we have with God and Christ Jesus.

THE LORD’S SUPPER (Partaking and Meaning of Communion explained)

9.1 Introduction:

Just like Water Baptism, the Lord's Supper is also a sacrament that should be observed with importance and meaning in the life of the Believer. It holds great significance because Jesus instituted the New Covenant with His disciples and all Believers for ETERNITY. The Lord's Supper is not a prerequisite for salvation, but, its observance and its symbolism do add meaning to the Spiritual life of the Believer. Therefore, in this lesson one's understanding of partaking and the very meaning of the Lord's Supper will be enhanced by discussing the following:

- When and Why was the Lord's Supper instituted?
- Why partake of the Lord's Supper?
- What's our Preparation before partaking of the Lord's Supper
- What is the symbolism of the two elements (Bread and the Cup)?

Let us begin our lesson with the discussion of "When and Why' was the Lord's Supper instituted.
9.2 When?

The Lord's Supper was instituted on the night our Lord met with His disciples to keep the annual Passover and also the same night in which he was betrayed. (Remember, the feast of Passover was celebrated every year for some 1500 years to remind the Israelites of how God had delivered them from bondage of the Egyptians; how God did not allow the death angel to kill the first born child of any Israelite family that obeyed God by putting the blood of the Passover lamb upon the door posts of their house).

9.3 Why?

During the Lord's Supper, Jesus took the opportunity to inform His disciples that they would no longer need to celebrate the Passover as they traditionally had because after tonight, he was going to become their Passover lamb. His body was going to be sacrificed and broken for them and his blood was going to be shed for them, I Corinthians 5:7. The Lord's Supper was going to be from that night on a memorial of His death and suffering. Henceforth, whenever one partakes of the Lord's supper, he will be showing the Lord's death until Christ's return.

9.4 Why Partake of the Lord's Supper?

We are to partake of the Lord's Supper because God commands us to do so in His Word. According to I Corinthians 11:25, we find these words, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me."

9.5 What's our Preparation before partaking of the Lord's Supper?

Before we partake of the Lord's Super in a meaningful way, it is essential that we engage in an honest Self-Examination. We find these very words in 1 Corinthians 11:28, which says, "But let a man Examine himself and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." And I'm certain that all of us should be able to ask that question — What are some areas in our lives that should be examined?

9.5.1 The following are some areas that should be examined:

- We should examine ourselves to see if there is any unconfused Sin. All of our sins must be covered by the blood of Jesus, in order to maintain communion or fellowship with him. According to I John 1:9, which says, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (We are also to confess any bitterness towards God and our fellowman).

- We should examine our Minds to make sure that our Thoughts are those of the ministry of Christ. (Philippians 2:5), When we come to the Lord's table, we are to set our affection on heavenly things, not on earthly things, (Colossians 3:2). When our minds are fashioned in this manner, it is not hard to reflect upon the tremendous sacrifice Christ made for us at Calvary.
- We should examine our motives to see if everything we do and say is Pleasing to God and for his Glory. The Lord said in His Word, that his glory he would not give to another.

9.5.2 What is the Symbolism of the Two Elements?

During the Lord’s Supper, Jesus used the symbolism of two elements that were present at the meal, namely, the Bread and the Cup (wine) to illustrate that the Lord’s Supper was going to become a memorial of His death and suffering. What is the symbolism of the bread and the cup? According to I Corinthians 10:16, the bread is symbolic of Christ’s Body that is to be broken for us and the cup is symbolic of Christ’s blood that is to be shed for the redemption and remission of the sins of mankind forever. Matthew 26:26-30.

Therefore, when a believer participates in the Lord’s Supper, he is showing the Lord’s death until He comes.

9.6 Frequency

The act of the Lord’s Supper should take place as often as the elder/pastor deems necessary for the renewed life of the congregation, but at least once a MONTH.

9.7 How should one prepare and come to take communion?

When one comes to partake of the Lord’s Supper, one should come:

- With a FORGIVEN heart,
- With a FORGIVING heart,
- With no MALICE in their hearts, and
- With the intent to lead a NEW life.

9.8 How should one come to the table for the Lord’s Supper?

While there are many ways to come to the table, Methodists primarily receive communion by kneeling at the altar, with the following happening:

- The celebrant (the pastor or other chief ordained minister) makes an invitation to come,
- Once the ritual of communion has been concluded, the celebrant extends the invitation for those around the altar to take of the bread and drink of the wine,
- The communicant (the person taking communion) comes with their right hand placed over their left and in the shape of the cross,
THE LOCAL CHURCH (The Place where the Family of God gathers to Fellowship with God)

10.1 Introduction:

As children of God born into the Family of God through new Birth, it is NOT God's desire that His Children live the life of Christ staying to themselves?

Understand that private devotion is necessary for keeping oneself strengthened spiritually, but through the aid of the scripture, we see that God also desires balance; that is, it's God's desire that His children also become united in Fellowship and Membership with other family members at a loving church. God's desire is clearly expressed in Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembly of ourselves as the manner of some is but exhorting one another; and so much the more as YOU see the day approaching." In the proceeding verse the phrase exhorting one another means encouraging one another. There are other benefits that God's family receives from fellowshipping, namely Spiritual food, guidance for Spiritual maturity and training for Spiritual service.

Our first aim in this lesson is to talk about ways in which God's family can receive the benefits of encouragement, spiritual food for spiritual growth, and guidance for spiritual maturity, and train for spiritual service. Secondly, we will give some helpful guidelines on how to choose a local church that is true to the Word of God and how often one should attend church.

The Benefits that come from (as a result of) fellowshipping is: Encouragement

God's family receives encouragement in the following ways:

10.2 Participating in Worship Service

One of the best ways that God's family can receive encouragement through fellowshipping is through the worship service. By participating in the worship service; singing, praying, scripture reading and proclamation, each person is able to give strength to the entire body. Encouragement which is so needed in preparing to fight the enemy.

Also, when God's family worship together He promised to be in their midst. There is no greater encouragement than knowing that God is present with you.

10.3 Loving and Caring for one another

God's family can receive encouragement through fellowshipping with one another, through loving and caring for each other. God did not give us a heart full of love just to keep it to ourselves, but he gave it to us so that we may encourage one another by putting our love in action in the form of caring and sharing. It has been said that, "You can Give without Loving, but you cannot Love without Giving." How true it is that genuine love constantly seeks to fulfill needs. There will be times when each of us will face discouragement, depression, loneliness, rejection and persecution, but nothing is more encouraging than to know that you are loved and cared
(concerned) for and that someone is even willing to help share your burdens and your sorrows. Never forget that most people don't care how much you know, but they want to know how much you really CARE.

10.4 Spiritual Food for Spiritual Growth

Another benefit that God's family receives from fellowshipping is spiritual food for spiritual growth. If there is any one thing God desires for His family, is that they grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on a daily basis. Even God said, that His people die for a lack of knowledge. This is why God has set in the local church, Pastors and Teachers to feed His people the Word of God that they need in order to grow spiritually.

10.5 Guidance for Spiritual Maturity

God has not only given Pastors to feed us the Word of God, which is the food for our spiritual growth, but God has also given us Pastors to guide us towards spiritual maturity.

10.6 Training for Spiritual Service

Another benefit that God's family receives from fellowshipping is training for spiritual service. God has many opportunities for ministry for His people and these ministries are designed to compliment the local church where the Believer is matured. God never intended that the total obligation of fulfilling the various ministries should be the Pastor's responsibility alone. It is for this reason that God ordained the Pastor to Train and Equip his people to do the various ministries as well. There is plenty of kingdom-building work to be done by all of us. There are many lost souls to be won to Christ. There is no shortage of lost souls. Therefore, if the body of Christ is to be unified and edified (build-up), then every child of God must invest time and talent, and they must also discipline themselves to be trained for spiritual service.

10.7 How often should One Attend?

One should attend his local church as often and faithfully as he possibly can. As in the natural, one cannot live off of one meal a week also spiritually one cannot reach the level of growth and maturity by attending only one service a week. One should try to faithfully attend the following services:

A. Sunday School
B. Sunday Morning Worship
C. Youth Meeting
D. Weekly Prayer and Bible Study
E. Class Meeting
F. Revivals
G. Church Sponsored Workshops/Conferences
EXPERIENCING THE JOY OF GIVING

11.0 Introduction

The Lord not only desires his children to fulfill the responsibility of supporting the local church and its ministry through faithful membership and attendance, but He also desires fulfillment by faithfully supporting the church by the giving of finances. God has not only ordained giving to be a means by which the local church is to be supported, but he has especially ordained giving to be a means by which we (born-again believers) can be blessed bountifully.

When one stops and thinks about it for a moment, not only does everything he has belong to God, but the person himself belongs to God also. In other words, we really don't own anything, not even ourselves. Psalms 24 verse 1, says, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." Whatever we do have, the lord is just giving us the privilege to be stewards (caretakers) of his blessings and we are to use them wisely.

Someone penned these words in a song that, "You can't beat God Giving", which let's us know that the more we give to the Lord, the more he will give back to us. The real joy of giving comes when one realizes that he doesn't own anything and that he is just a caretaker (Steward) of God's blessings and also, realizing that the more he gives to God, the more God will entrust to him: But how can we experience the joy of giving? To experience the joy of giving one must be instructed in giving and Jesus has a lot to say about giving in the Word of God. Therefore, in this lesson we would like to talk about the following, in light of God's Word:

- What are we to give?
- What is the difference between a tithe and an offering?
- How much are we to give?
- How should we give?
- The Rewards of giving?
- Why Are We To Give?

When God gave His only begotten son that you may have eternal life, He was also giving an example to follow. God gave His best and He is the best example to follow when it comes to giving.

Giving helps support the operations of the local church and its ministry. Giving also helps the church to fulfill the great commission in spreading the gospel to all the nations. Giving also helps to support the pastoral ministry of the local church.

11.1 What Are We To Give?

We are to give tithes and offerings according to Malachi 3:8 which says, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." It is clear from the scriptures that we are to give tithes and offerings.

A good question is "What is the difference between a tithe and an offering?"
11.2 What Is The Difference Between A Tithe And An Offering?

The difference between a tithe and an offering is that your tithe you pay God, and your offering you give God. Consequently your tithes you owe God (Matthew 23:23), and your offering is what you give God above your tithes (Luke 6:38). But how much are you to tithe and how much offering are you to give?

11.3 How Much Are We To Give?

To understand how much you are to tithe, you must first understand what a tithe is. A tithe is one-tenth or ten percent (10%) of your gross earning (before deductions) and not 10% of your take home pay (after deductions). In other words, a tithe is one penny out of every dime; ten pennies out of every dollar; one dollar out of every ten dollars. After you have tithed 10% it causes the 90% you have left to become blessed.

11.4 How Should We Give?

The attitude in which you give is what determines whether the Lord will receive your offering or not. The right attitude in giving, according to II Corinthians 9:7, if you want the Lord to respect (receive) your offering, then you must give with a cheerful attitude. Why? Because the Lord loves a cheerful giver. This means that the Lord wants you to be willing, thankful, and glad about your giving. It is evident Abel gave with this right kind of attitude because the Lord would not have respected his offering if he didn't.

However, the wrong attitude in giving according to II Corinthians 9:7, is that the Lord will not have respect unto your offering, if you give with a mean attitude or only because you just feel obligated to do so. The Lord does not want us to give grudgingly or of necessity.

11.5 The Rewards of Giving?

The following are God's promises to you if you will pay your tithes and offerings.

1. The windows of Heaven will be opened for you and blessings will be poured out where there will not be enough room to receive it. Malachi 3:10
2. The devourer will be rebuked for sakes and the fruits of the ground shall not be destroyed. Malachi 3:11
3. You shall be called blessed by all nations. Malachi 3:12
4. Your barns shall be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. Proverbs 3:1
5. Your liberal soul shall be made fat. Proverbs 11:
6. You will have sufficiency in all things. II Corinthians 9:6-
# WEDDING FACILITIES EXPENSES

MEMBERS OF STEELE CREEK AME ZION

a. There is an additional charge for the custodial services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Wedding and Rehearsal</td>
<td>Sanctuary/Use of classrooms</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reception</td>
<td>Fellowship Hall</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Additional Rehearsal Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Sound System Technician: $100.00

c. Musicians

i. Pianist (To be negotiated)

ii. Organist (To be negotiated)

## NON-MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rental of Sanctuary</td>
<td>(only 6 hours)</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental of the Fellowship Hall</td>
<td>(only 6 hours)</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental of both</td>
<td>(only 8 hours)</td>
<td>$1250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wedding Rehearsal</td>
<td>(only 3 hours)</td>
<td>$125.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal Dinner</td>
<td>(only 4 hours)</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DEPOSIT:** $500.00

A flat fee for all of the items listed above is $1500.00 with a $500.00 deposit.

The rental time for the sanctuary is (6) six hours for the wedding and (3) three hours for the wedding rehearsal. Anything over the allotted times will be billed at an additional cost of $100.00 per hour.

Access to the building for more than two hours prior to the event is not guaranteed.

**All deposits are due upon receipt of application.**
Burial Policy For
Steele Creek AME Zion Church
1500 Shopton Road Charlotte, North Carolina

**Purpose**: This policy and procedures are to govern burials that occur at Steele Creek AME Zion Church Cemetery.

**Definitions**: All members who are in good standing with Steele Creek AME Zion Church and the General AME Zion Church, will be provided a burial plot free of charge. A person is considered to be a member in good standing if he or she has obtained such membership pursuant to AME Zion Church Book of Discipline (dated 2004), Chapter V entitled “Membership”. This includes probation and baptized children, as those terms are defined in Chapter V, Section I and IV respectively of the aforementioned Book of Discipline.

**NOTE**: Pursuant to Chapter IV, Section VII, Paragraph 88 of the Book of Discipline.

Stewardship: The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church recognizes God to be the Sovereign Owner of all things and man/woman as His stewards. Stewardship bring into focus a deeper understanding of this relationship and obligation of Christians to be a faithful and personal response to God’s love through the commitment of our temple, time and treasure. Every member is advised to acknowledge the principle of giving and systematic portion of all income in the form of a tithe (i.e., at least 10 percent of all income) to support the Gospel through the local church, and the various benevolent enterprises of the Church as well as the General Church in the form of GENERAL CLAIMS.

**NOTE**: Pursuant to Chapter V, Section VI, paragraph 3 of the Book of Discipline.

If a member absents him/her selves from the church, by leaving the town or vicinity of his/her Church and does not communicate with his/her Class Leader or Pastor and does not keep up any portion of their obligations known as “Stewardship”, then their name shall be stricken from the Church roll book after six months of such absence and their names shall be placed in the Probation Book.

**POLICY**:

A. Non-members will not be buried in the Steele Creek AME Zion Church Cemetery.

B. With respect to children, who are under the age of eighteen, they must meet one of the following criteria in order to be entitled to a burial plot:
   1. They are children of parents who are in good standing, as defined in the Book of Discipline under “MEMBERSHIP”.
   2. All children under the age of eighteen who have joined the church, but their parents have not become members will be treated as members in good standing despite the fact that their parents are non-members.

C. Person’s that turned eighteen years of age.
   1. Any young person that turns eighteen years of age shall have six months to become a member in good standing and remain entitled to a burial plot. This includes “probationers” and “baptized children” as those terms are defined in Chapter IV, Section I and IV ad defined in the Book of Discipline under “MEMBERSHIP”.
   2. If such person is a full-time student in an institution of higher learning and under the age of 26, in which case such person (the student) must maintain a good standing as a student member, i.e., by making payment of one half of the duly assessed GENERAL CLAIMS.
D. Inactive Membership:
   1. All members who are disabled, but were in good standing prior to the set back must have been declared disabled by the Social Security Administration and/or by a private insurance carrier.
   2. However, the Pastor and the respective Class Leader must determine when a member has reached the inactive status. The Pastor, Class Leader, and at least three Trustees are the finder of facts and those facts must be reasonable and supportive of all circumstances surrounding the disabled member being placed on the inactive member list, to be treated as a member in good standing while in an inactive status.

E. Procedure for Opening and Closing of graves:
   1. At the death of a Steele Creek AME Zion Church member, who had the intention of using a grave plot in the Cemetery, the following must take place as soon as possible;
      A. A family member of the (deceased church member) must contact the Pastor and the Class Leader of the deceased.
      B. The Pastor or the Class Leader will the contact the Chairman of the Trustee Board or designee.
      C. The family member must understand that Steele Creek AME Zion Church will not be responsible for any cost associated with the opening or closing of a grave site: this business shall be conducted through the Funeral Director.
      D. However, all graves that are opened/closed in Steele Creek AME Zion Cemetery shall be performed under the supervision of the Chairman of the Trustee Board or designee.
      E. The family member must understand that all gravesites must be prepared for steel vaults, and that all gravesites must have a gravestone/headstone within 90 days after Burial.
      F. Members and Family Members must understand that no gravestone/headstone or any other type marker can be placed in the Steele Creek AME Zion Church Cemetery to reserve a gravesite. Gravestones/headstones are to be placed at the time of death: the only exception is for Husband/Wife duel stone if one proceeds the other in death.

F. Kitchen Committee:
   1. At the death of a Church member, the kitchen committee may be requested to serve food to the family after the burial.
   2. If this request is made, the committee will only serve family members up to 100 people or less, financed by the church.

G. Right, Board of Trustees:
   1. To amend any or all of the above provisions, if it becomes necessary.
   2. If provisions become necessary all changes must be approved by no less than two-thirds of the Board of Trustee’s Members.
   3. To make the final decision as to the entitlement of any deceased person for a burial plot, or to veto the decision of the Pastor and/or Class Leader with cause.

Revised May 22, 2014
EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN
FOR:

1500 Shopton Road
Charlotte, NC 28217
EMERGENCY PERSONNEL NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

DESIGNATED RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS

A. Pastor  
B. Trustees  
C. Ushers

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Name: TBD Phone:  
Name: TBD Phone:

AREA/FLOOR MINITORS (If applicable):

Area/Floor: ____________ Name: ___________________ Phone: (__________________)  
Area/Floor: ____________ Name: ___________________ Phone: (__________________)  

ASSIGNMENT TO PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED (If applicable):

Name: __________________________________ Phone: (__________________)  
Name: __________________________________ Phone: (__________________)  
Name: __________________________________ Phone: (__________________)  

The church occupies one building in the 1500 block of Shopton Road the number of members and guests fluctuate as needed to meet mission requirements of the organization. Unless otherwise specified, the emergency contact for this building will be one of the following.

1. The pastor in charge of service during service hours.  
2. The trustee present within the building.  
3. The individual in charge of Meetings /etc being held within the church.

Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church Trustees are responsible for the building when it is occupied or not. However, when the Church is occupied by a responsible designee for their purpose, (service, meeting, and rehearsals) he / she will respond appropriately to the situation as it develops, contact the appropriate authorities, delegate responsibilities, and assist as directed emergency response personnel.

For routine actions regarding the facility and plan, (______________________) will be the primary contact person. He / She can be reached at (_____) – (____)-(______) wk / (_____) – (_______) (cell).
EMERGENCIES

A. Church Disturbances.........................................................Code-50
B. Fire and Fire Alarms.........................................................Code-100
C. Lockdowns.................................................................Code-200
D. Bomb Threats...............................................................Code-300
E. Natural Disaster.............................................................Code-400
F. Power Failure.................................................................Code-500
G. Death, Medical Emergencies, and Illness..........................Code-600
H. Accidents.................................................................Code-700
I. Quarterly Fire Drill Procedures

ATTACHMENTS

A. Crisis Management Team Members (Trustee’s)
B. Severe Weather Safety Drill
C. Action Plan
D. Duty Roster Schedule
E. Internal Lockdown Accounting Procedures

Sanctuary, Hallway, or Fellowship Hall Disturbance

The trustees and ushers will respond as necessary and relay relevant information to the Pastor or his designee, and will have the disturbance removed from the property.

TRUSTEES MUST BE AT THEIR ASSIGNED DUTY STATION BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER WORSHIP SERVICE. A DUTY ROSTER SCHEDULE IS ATTACHED.

ADMINISTRATIVE COVERAGE SCHEDULE

Church Parking Lot (Tower Side)..............................................TBD
Church Parking Lot (Shopton Road Side)....................................TBD
Front Entrance.........................................................................TBD
Inside of Shopton Road side Entrance....................................TBD
*Inside of Tower Side Entrance............................................TBD

*Insure that the Fellowship Hall Outer Doors are locked.
In the event of a situation that requires members and guests to remain in the sanctuary, information will be directed in a calm voice over the public address system stating “Members and guests, this is an internal / external lockdown”. This will signal members to remain in the sanctuary until an all clear is given.

**PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

1. Lock sanctuary doors.
2. Do not leave the sanctuary for any reason until told to do so by the pastor or his designee. Do not follow any other orders.
3. Everyone is to remain in the secured area and wait for further instructions.

**Fire and Fire Alarm Procedures**

1. The Fire Evacuation Map will be posted and prominently displayed in each room within the church.
2. Any fire is to be reported immediately.
3. The person who witness or observe the fire is to sound the fire alarm.
4. Pastor or designee trustee will call 911 for the Fire Department.
5. That trustee will greet the Fire Captain and escort him / her to the electrical panel box, while another appointed trustee will escort the other fire personnel to the fire location.
6. Only attempt to put out small, manageable fires (the size of a small wastebasket). **DO NOT Destroy any Evidence.**
7. The following stations must be properly manned as indicated by the ringing of the fire alarm.

   Front entrance (all restrooms).................................................................TBD
   Hallway Shopton Road side (all classrooms, offices, and restrooms)...........TBD
   Hallway Tower Side (all rooms, offices, and restrooms)..............................TBD
   The Sanctuary............................................................................................TBD

This is to ensure that **NO** members or guests are present in any room, to turn off all equipment, all lights, and close all windows and doors. **BUT NOT LOCKED WINDOWS OR DOORS.**

8. Members must exit the building in a clam, quit, and orderly manner as quickly as possible.
9. Members and Guests must not block entrances and doorways as they may need to be accessed by safety personnel.
10. Members are required to identify any missing person as soon as possible to the nearest usher, class leader, or trustee.
11. The trustees will conduct an immediate search of the last known place within the church where this person was last seen.

12. Members and guests are to remain outside the building within the staging area until the fire department officials declare the church is safe to re-enter.

**USHERS AND CLASS LEADERS ARE REQUIRED TO DOCUMENT NAMES OF MISSING MEMBERS AND GUESTS IF KNOWN, AND REPORT TO TRUSTEES FOR ADMINISTRATED PURPOSES.**
Quarterly Fire Drill Procedures

Every church is required to have a fire drill procedure, and to conduct monthly, or quarterly fire drills to ensure proper safety measures are known and practiced by every individual in the church.

Role of Safe Church Coordinator

1. The coordinator will insure that the fire department and alarm company are called and informed of the time and date of the drill.
2. Insure that the alarm system is placed in “test” mode.
3. Instruct designee to sound the alarm and document the time.
4. Have the designee’s report to you when each section of the church have evacuated and are in the staging area via hand signs.
5. Once the evacuation time is documented and all members and guests are accounted for, the fire drill is considered complete.
6. Document the last time called in as the “end time” for the drill.
7. Signal designee to cancel the alarm.
8. Make the announcement to all members and guests that it is now safe to re-enter the church.
9. Call the fire department and the alarm company to alert them that the drill is over and revert the alarm to “active” status.

Role of Trustees

1. Trustees should identify a designee to replace them in the event of an alarm if they are absent from church and insure they know all procedures as outlined above.
2. Upon sounding of alarm, report to their assigned duty station and monitor members and guests exiting from the building.
3. Assist ushers with maintaining order and clearing the halls expeditiously.
4. Once your hallway is “clear”, note the time report to the staging area and await the Church Safe Coordinator.
5. Conduct a search (if necessary) for any missing member or guests

Role of Ushers

1. Quickly and quietly escort members and guests to the outside and take attendance. Report missing members or guests to the nearest trustee.
2. Maintain discipline (order) of members and guests.
3. Remain outside until the “all clear” is received to re-enter the building.
**Lockdowns**

Lockdown is an “action” that is executed when a crisis occurs on church property involving a potentially dangerous situation (armed intruder, hazardous material leak, etc.). The goal is to maintain a safe and orderly environment ensuring safety for members and guests within the church.

**External Lockdown**

This will occur when the danger is **OFF PROPERTY** but could impact church safety.

1. You will hear over the PA system, “Members and guests, this is an external lockdown”
2. All members, guests and ushers will quickly move within the sanctuary for accountably.
3. All external doors will be locked and double checked by the nearest trustee.
4. All members, guests, and ushers will remain inside the sanctuary until you hear “Members and guests, this is an all clear to resume normal activities”.

During an external lockdown, you may continue to move inside the building under close supervision. This means that no member or guests should be allowed to leave the church unless it is an extreme emergency. You may continue the normal operation with lights on, but **DOORS LOCKED. DO NOT OPEN** the door for anyone until you can positively identify the person.

**Internal Lockdown**

This will occur when the threat or danger is **ON PROPERTY** (in our building).

1. You will hear over the PA system “members and guests, this is an internal lockdown”.
2. Move quickly to the sanctuary (the designated area for this situation). Before closing the door, visually check the hall and pull only persons who you can identify in.
3. Move away from view of the door.
4. Ushers **TURN ALL LIGHTS OFF!** And place window shades over the windows. **DO NOT** open the doors or come out until you hear “members and guests, this is an all clear to resume normal activities.”
5. When the notice of internal lockdown is given and if you are not near the sanctuary, you must barricade yourself in another room by locking the door and placing furniture in front of the door. **STAY OUT OF SIGHT!**
**Bomb Threats**

In most instances, a bomb threat is received through a telephone message. It is important that the person who receives the call gather as much information as possible. Try to get answers to the following questions, up front.

1. Where is the bomb located within the building?
2. When will it explode? (Time)____________
3. When was it placed there?

At the same time the person who receives the call must also notify the pastor or a trustee who will initiate the bomb threat evacuation procedures listed below.

See the attached *(TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST)* next page!

**Evacuation Procedures**

Trustees will be responsible for securing a safe evacuation route or routes to a secure designated staging location. *This location will change with each threat and will be announced over the PA system, so all must pay close attention.* Trustees should ensure that classrooms and offices doors are propped open and that few windows on each hallway are open.

The following are things not to do once threat announcement has been made.

1. Do not touch any light switch, use walkie – talkies, or use cell phones during a bomb threat. Stress to the members and guests that no electrical equipment can be used during the bomb threat (video games, Ipods, walkman, etc.).
2. Ushers should quickly escort members to the designated area and immediately get a head count.
3. Class leaders should identify and quickly escort guests to the designated area and immediately get a head count.
4. Once the head count from both the ushers and class leaders has been conducted, that information should be forwarded to the designated trustee.
5. If any guests or members are not accounted for the designated trustee, Police and other authorities will search for the missing guests or member.
6. It is important, and we must demand that **NO PERSONS** are to leave our property in a vehicle was parked anywhere on our on grounds before we received threat.
7. All members and guests must remain in the staging area until directed by the pastor or his designee that “members and guests, this is an all clear to resume normal activities”.
TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

INSTRUCTIONS: BE CALM, BE COURTEOUS. LISTEN. DO NOT INTERRUPT THE CALLER.

YOUR NAME: _____________________ TIME: ____________ DATE: ____________

CALLER’S IDENTITY SEX: Male___ Female __ Adult ___ Juvenile ___ Approx Age___

ORIGIN OF CALL:  Local _____ Long Distance _____ Cell Phone __________

VOICE CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPEECH</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>___Loud</td>
<td>___Soft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___High</td>
<td>___Deep Pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Pleasant</td>
<td>___Raspy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Intoxicated</td>
<td>___Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACCENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANNER</th>
<th>BACKGROUND NOISES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>___Local</td>
<td>___Not</td>
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<tr>
<td>___Foreign</td>
<td>___Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Race</td>
<td>___Other</td>
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BOMB FACTS

PRETEND DIFFICULTY HEARING – KEEP CALLER TALKING – IF CALLER SEEMS AGREEABLE TO FURTHER CONVERSATION, ASK QUESTIONS LIKE:

- When will it go off?  Certain Hour Time Remaining___________
- Where is it located?  In what area of the building _____________
- What kind of bomb?  A ________________________________
- What kind of package is in?  A ________________________________
- How do you know so much about the bomb?  A ________________________________
- What is your name and Address?  A ________________________________

If the building is occupied, inform the caller that detonation could cause injury or death. Once you hang up the phone do not answer another line or call.

Did the caller appear familiar with plants or building (by his/her description of the bomb location)? Write out the message in it’s entirely and any other comments on a separate sheet of paper and attach to this checklist. At the same time activate the evacuation procedures.
**Power Failure**

**EXTENDED POWER LOSS**

In the event of extended power loss to the church facility certain precautionary measures should be taken to prevent other damage to the facility.

- Unnecessary electrical equipment and appliances should be turned off in the event that power restoration would surge causing damage to electronics and effecting sensitive equipment.
- Coordination should be made to turn off and drain water lines in the event of a long term power loss.
- Add propylene-glycol to floor drains, toilets and sinks to prevent traps from freezing.
- Equipment that contains fluids that may freeze due to long term exposure to freezing temperatures should be moved to heated areas, drained of liquids, or provided with auxiliary heat sources.

Upon Restoration of heat and power:

- Electronic equipment should be brought up to ambient temperatures before energizing to prevent condensate from forming on circuitry.
- Fire and potable water piping should be checked for leaks from freeze damage after the heat has been restored to the facility and water turned back on.
Natural Disaster

SEVERE WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS

1. General

Weather conditions that present an imminent danger or loss of life take precedent over concerns for continuity of normal operations. Under such conditions all operations will be discontinued and members and guests will be directed to shelter until the threat has passed.

There is no essential mission conducted by Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church that cannot be discontinued in a weather emergency or natural disaster. Evacuation of all members and guests to designated shelter will be undertaken when tornado or other destructive weather is probable.

The Emergency Coordinators (____________________) or (_______________________) are responsible for disseminating severe weather warnings and coordinating Steele Creek AME Zion Church response(s) event of a Tornado, or Earthquake emergency.

2. Shelter Areas

In the event of severe weather, all members and guests should proceed to safe area and “drop and tuck” until and all clear signal is given.

Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church members and guests will move to both enter left and right hallways of the church and lay face down in the event of a Tornado, or Earthquake emergency.

The following is a view from the front entry doors:

LEFT SIDE: Ushers should direct all members and guests who are sitting on the left side (Shopton Road side) of the church to proceed into to the hallway on that side, half should use the left front exit toward the carport and the other half should use the left rear exit toward the men restroom and proceed to the hallway. Note any overage on that side should use the men restroom, room#? and the finance room, room#?.

RIGHT SIDE: Ushers should direct all members and guests who are sitting on the right side (tower side) of the church to proceed out of right front exit toward the ladies restroom and proceed into to the hallway on that side. These members and guests should fill the ladies restroom, room#? and then fill the child care room, room#?. Note overage should proceed to the right hallway toward the conference room, room#?

CENTER: Ushers should direct all members and guests who are sitting in the center row of the church to proceed out of the right side exit toward the tower side. Note: once outside of the sanctuary they should turn left toward the water fountain and stop at that point. The Deaconess room, room#? will be used to house members and guests.
When a warning is issued by sirens (a steady 3 minutes tone at the onset of weather warning) or by other means, we will have about 5 to 10 minutes to seek inside shelter. Stay calm and await instructions from the Emergency Coordinator or the designated official.

Trustees will insure that all members and guests are away from outside walls and not in line with any windows before taking cover themselves.

Consider the following,

- Hallways on the lowest floor away from doors and windows, and
- Rooms constructed with reinforced concrete, brick, or block with no windows.
- Stay away from outside walls and windows
- Use arms to protect head and neck. “DROP AND TUCK”
- Remain sheltered until the tornado threat is announced over or all clear.

3. Plan Review and Testing

This plan will be reviewed annually. Evacuation plans will also be tested twice each year once in April focusing on tornados and thunderstorm hazards, and once in October focusing on winter storm hazards.

4. Additional Considerations

   A. After Action Reports (AARs) will be conducted following each test to determine improvements to this plan.

      b. Consider inviting Charlotte Fire Department and other Emergency Response personnel in during the conduct of test.

5. Actions Following Severe Weather or Disaster

   a. If Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church buildings are damaged during a disaster, and once all members and guests have been accounted for by the emergency coordinator(s) in a written accountability report should be issued by the trustees. Further, a determination will be made for the storage of equipment. Coordination will be with the insurance company. This will depend upon how widespread the damage to the property is and to what degree equipment relocation is required.
Death, Medical Emergencies, and Illness

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church personnel will dial 911 for all medical emergencies:
- When calling 911, provide the following information:
  a. Nature of medical emergency,
  b. Location of the emergency (address, room number if possible),
  c. Your name and phone number in case the call is dropped and not ID by the 911 system.
- Do not move the victim unless absolutely necessary.
- If possible, attempt to identify medical person within to provide the required assistance prior to the arrival of professional medical help.
- If a person trained in First Aid are not available; at a minimum attempt to provide the following assistance:
  a. Stop the bleeding with firm pressure on the wound (note: avoid contact with blood or other bodily fluids.
  b. Clear the air passages using the Heimlich maneuver in case of choking.

(Attempt first aid ONLY if trained and qualified)
Steele Creek AME Zion Church Incident Report

To be completed by staff within 12 hours of incident/accident

Incident Date______________ Incident Time___________ Weather Condition____________

Injured Person Name:
____________________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

Phone Number: ______________________________ Cell Number: _______________________

Gender: _______________________________ Date of Birth: ___________________________

Details of Incident:
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

What was stated to be the cause of the injury? _______________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

How did the injury occur? _________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Witness or Witnesses to the Incident:
Name: ______________________________________ Phone Number____________________
Name: _______________________________ Phone Number____________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

Does injury require Hospital/Physician? YES_____ NO____

Name of Hospital Transported to: _________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

Report Prepared By :________________________________________ Date: ________________
EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

FIRE DEPARTMENT: 911
AMBULANCE: 911
POLICE: 911
CHURCH FACILITY MANAGER ( )–( )–( ) _______________

UTILITY COMPANY EMERGENCY CONTACTS

ELECTRIC:
WATER:
GAS:
TELEPHONE COMPANY:
EMERGENCY REPORTING AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Unless otherwise notified directly by Church Facility Manager. Steele Creek AME Zion Church members and personnel will report the following emergency incidents to the Church Facility Manager/s at (____) – (____)-(____)wk / (_____ – (_______)(cell).

- MEDICAL
- FIRE
- SEVERE WEATHER
- BOMB THREAT
- EXTENDED POWER LOSS
- ACTIVE SHOOTER
- OTHER (specify) _________________________
  (e.g. hostage taking)
Evacuation route maps are to be posted in the facility. The following information will be marked on evacuation maps.

1. Emergency exits
2. Primary and secondary evacuation routes
3. Locations of the extinguishers
4. Fire Alarm Pull stations’ locations
5. Assembly points (Staging Areas)

Evacuation and assembly practice must be conducted and documented.

The last emergency evacuation and assembly practice conducted by Steele Creek A.M.E. Zion Church was on:

__________________ Fire Drill
__________________ Fire Drill
__________________ Gas pipe Leak/Break
__________________ Church Tornado Drill (practice)
__________________ Bomb Threat
__________________ Active Shooter