Lee Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church

New Members Orientation

1. Church History
   1. Formation
      1. The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) was founded in 1787 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by a group of Americans whose ancestors came from Africa.

The founding father of the AME church, Richard Allen, organized this denomination in response to racial discrimination, inhumane treatment and denial of freedom of worship for Africans by white worshipers of St. George Methodist Episcopal Church.

Under Allen's leadership, the African worshipers of Philadelphia were able to purchase an old blacksmith shop which was converted into Bethel A.M.E, the first of the African Methodist Episcopal Churches. Bethel means House Of GOD.

* 1. What Is The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME)?
     1. African - Our church was organized by people of African heritage.
     2. Methodist - Our church is a member of the family of Methodist Churches. This means the emphasis is on the plain and simple gospel which even the unlearned can understand and an orderly system of rules and regulations are in place to facilitate learning.
     3. Episcopal - The form of government under which our church operates. The Episcopal form of government means that the chief executive and administrative officers of our denomination are our Bishops. The Bishops are responsible for overseeing the overall spiritual and temporal affairs of the connectional church.
     4. Church - The Christian Church is a community of people who believe in GOD and who have accepted Jesus the Christ as Lord and Savior. Savior meaning Jesus paid the price for our sin and Lord meaning we are now led by his will and not our own.
  2. Mission
     1. The mission of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is to minister to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and environmental needs of al1 people by spreading Christ's liberating gospel (good news) through word and deed. Areas of activity are
        1. Preaching the gospel
        2. Feeding the hungry
        3. Clothing the naked
        4. Housing the homeless
        5. Cheering the fallen
        6. Providing jobs for the jobless
        7. Prison, hospital, nursing home, senior citizen outreach ministries
        8. Encouragement of economic development

1. Our Major Beliefs
   1. The Apostle's Creed
      1. Creed - A statement of what one believes. The Apostle's Creed is normally read during a worship service.
      2. The Apostle's Creed states our faith in:
         1. GOD the Father
         2. Jesus his only begotten Son
         3. The Holy Spirit
         4. The Church
         5. Forgiveness of Sins
         6. The Resurrection
         7. Everlasting Life
2. Articles Of Religion/Catechism of Faith
   1. The 25 Articles of Religion - State the Methodist protest against the errors of Roman

Catholicism. The AME “Know Your Church” manual contains a copy of the Articles of Religion.

* 1. Catechism of Faith - A summary of the principles of our denomination in the form of questions and answers. The AME Discipline contains the Catechism on Faith.

III. Salvation

1. What is Salvation?

(A) Salvation is the work of GOD by which GOD saves man from eternal death caused by sin and gives man eternal life.

1. How is Salvation Obtained?

(A) Romans 10::9-10 declares **“**If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in

your heart that GOD raised him from the dead you shall be

saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with GOD and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.”

1. Salvation by whom and through whom.
   1. Salvation is offered to man by GOD through the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. (\* Acts 4: 12; Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 10:12-14, I Thess 5:9 \*)

IV. Baptism

* 1. What is Water Baptism?

1. Water Baptism is an outward symbol of an inner choice to forsake sin and receive

Salvation. Water Baptism pictures the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus the Christ. (\* Luke 3:16; Matt 28:18-20; Rom 6:3-11 \*)

1. Baptism is a work of GOD
   1. A spiritual circumcision that cuts away sins. (\* Col 2: 11-13 \*)
2. Symbolic of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. (\* Rom 6:3-11 \*)
3. Baptism is a washing and regeneration. (\* Titus 3:4-5 \*)
4. Baptism is an appeal for a good conscience toward GOD. (\* Hebrews 9:14 \*)
5. Why Baptism?
   1. GOD commands baptism. (\* Luke 3:16, Luke 3:21-22, Matt 28: 18-20, Mark 16:15-16,

John 1:33 \*)

* 1. For Remission of sins. (\* Acts 2:38, Acts 22: 16 \*)
  2. We put on Christ through baptism. (\* Gal 3:26-27 \*)

1. Is Salvation Found in Water Baptism?
   1. Salvation in baptism is not found in the water. (\* Rom 5:9; Eph 1:7 \*)
   2. Salvation in baptism is possible because of the resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

(\* I Cor 15:17, Rom 6:4-5, Col 2: 12-13 \*)

1. AME Methods of Baptism
   1. Immersion
   2. Pouring
   3. Sprinkling
2. The AME church recognizes infant baptism. The AME church does not "re-baptize" any person.
3. Tithing
   1. What Is Tithing?
      1. Tithing is returning one tenth of your increase to GOD because GOD requires us to do so as glory and honor to GOD. Tithes and offerings are different. (\* Mal 3:8-12 \*)
   2. When Did Tithing Originate?
      1. According to Hebrews 7:1-10, Abraham offered tithes to Melchizedek, High Priest of GOD before the law was given to Moses.
   3. Net Or Gross, On What Should I Tithe?
      1. There are different schools of thought. I suggest the individual seek GOD on the matter. One thing to keep in mind is originally the tithing society was agriculturally based. No taxes, pension, social security and other deductions were taken before the people received a paycheck, so their net and gross income would have been the same.