



Oak Grove

African Methodist Episcopal Church

2024 - 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

THE SEASON OF I WILL
DEUTERONOMY 23:23 (NRSVA)

PRESENTED TO THE 139TH SESSION OF THE MICHIGAN ANNUAL CONFERENCE **FOURTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT**

REV. CINDY RUDOLPH, SENIOR PASTOR | REV. DR. H. MICHAEL LEMMONS, PRESIDING ELDER
MRS. JENNIFER DIXON WRIGHT, EPISCOPAL SUPERVISOR | BISHOP FREDERICK ALAN WRIGHT, SR., PRESIDING PRELATE



ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025

THE SEASON OF I WILL
DEUTERONOMY 23:23 (NRSVA)

PRESENTED TO
THE 139TH SESSION
of the
Michigan Annual Conference
Fourth Episcopal District

Rev. Cindy Rudolph, Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. H. Michael Lemmons, Presiding Elder

Mrs. Jennifer Dixon Wright, Episcopal Supervisor

Bishop Frederick Alan Wright, Sr., Presiding Prelate



A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

²³ Whatever your lips utter you must diligently perform, just as you have freely vowed to the Lord your God with your own mouth. (Deuteronomy 23:23)

To Bishop Frederick Alan Wright, Sr., Presiding Prelate, Mrs. Jennifer Dixon Wright, Episcopal Supervisor and the 139th session of The Michigan Annual Conference, I greet you with the joy of the Lord which is my strength.

This Conference Year was proclaimed to be the Season of "I Will" taken from a book entitled "I Will" by Thom S. Rainer. He argues that we need to stop saying *I could, I might, I can, or I should*, and recognize that now is the time to stand up and say, "I Will." As we traversed through the season, we examined ourselves and began to strategize, to ensure that we would not simply say "I will," but walk in "I will."

In recognition of the command given by God in the book of Deuteronomy, we worked diligently to *perform whatever we had vowed unto the Lord*. As a result of our "I Will" mindset, we experienced tremendous growth in our church, from increasing our outreach to welcoming numerous families and individuals as new members of "The Grove."

As part of our ongoing community engagement, our Commission on Christian & Social Relations held an expungement fair, as well as a driver's license restoration event. Likewise, we held a series of civics training workshops, and we consistently promoted voter registration and turnout.

We ventured into new territory with *The Trial of Jesus in the Modern Era*, a reimaging of the prosecution of Jesus. The production featured numerous legal professionals from Oak Grove, including judges, attorneys, and law students. It was a tremendous success and will be back by popular demand.

During our 37th Annual Come Home for Christmas outreach, we blessed 119 families, including 317 children with a myriad of gifts, toys and clothing. In addition, we distributed gift bags and toiletries to 532 senior citizens in nearby senior facilities and our Caring & Sharing Ministry showered 200 additional families with holiday food boxes.

Our Trustees and Church Staff were faithful and thorough in their oversight of multiple renovation projects throughout the church, including ten restrooms. All Oak Grove ministries and organizations labored assiduously in ways that have increased our impact and blessed the surrounding community and beyond.

I want to offer special thanks to Bishop Frederick Alan Wright, Sr. for his steadfast prayers, support, and excellent leadership. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Pastor of this wonderful and amazing Church. Likewise, I give thanks to our Supervisor, Mrs. Jennifer Dixon Wright, for her support and fortitude in leading the women and youth of this great District with compassion and love. Special thanks to our Presiding Elder H. Michael Lemmons and First Lady Anita Lemmons for their unwavering support and dedication to the Soaring South District.

The incredible accomplishments contained in this report would not be possible without the perseverance of the Trustee Board, led by Sis. Valerie Lott-Paramore and the Steward Board, led by Bro. Kahn Thompson and Bro. Nathan Ford. Their faithfulness has enabled Oak Grove to consistently thrive.

I must offer my extreme gratitude to Rev. André Spivey, JD, Executive Minister, Sis. Jacqueline Lawson, Church Administrator, Sis. Katrina Dunigan, Church Secretary, Sis. Gwendolyn Montgomery, Executive Assistant to the Pastor, and the entire Oak Grove Staff for their above and beyond dedication. Thank you to the Ministerial Team who have provided spiritual support in ways that have inspired and equipped the congregation. Much thanks to the Ministry and Organization Leaders as well as the many volunteers who worked tirelessly to keep our congregation and community informed and spiritually engaged. Of course, none of what we do would be possible without the loving and generous members of the Oak Grove congregation, to them I offer a million "thank-yous."

I am forever grateful to my husband, Dr. Lawrence Rudolph and my daughter McKenna for the daily inspiration they provide and their willingness to share me with the Church. Thank you to my mother-in-law, Mary Rudolph, for her never-ending support and love. I firmly believe that *eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, nor has it entered into the hearts of people, what God has prepared for those who love Him!* (1 Corinthians 2:9)

In Christian Service,

Pastor Cindy Rudolph

THE PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2025

SUMMARY

Episcopal District	Fourth District
Annual Conference	Michigan
138th Session	August 13 - 16, 2025
Church	Oak Grove AME Church, Detroit
Presiding Bishop	Rt. Rev. Frederick Alan Wright, Sr.
Presiding Elder	Rev. Dr. H. Michael Lemmons
Pastor	Rev. Cindy Rudolph

NUMERICAL STATISTICS

Conversions	9
Accessions	75
Baptisms	4
Full Membership	2,145
Property Valuation	\$5.2 Million
Insurance Coverage	\$5.2 Million
Church School Membership	200
Lay Organization Membership	42

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

Total Income	\$2.0 Million
Total Church Indebtedness	\$0
Receipt on General Budget	\$42,000
Cash on General Budget	N/A
Total Money Reported to Conference	\$21,171

FINANCIAL OUTREACH

- Funds raised and gifts provided for The 37th Annual Come Home for Christmas outreach served 532 seniors and 119 families with a total of 317 children.
- Donated \$18,500 in holiday food baskets through the Caring & Sharing Outreach Ministry.
- Awarded \$24,200 through the Elizabeth B. Crews Scholarship Fund.
- Provided \$4,794 in utility, rent, and other assistance to families in the Metro Detroit Area.
- Supported the Detroit fundraising efforts for the UNCF: \$1,500
- Provided \$5,000 in Mission support: Los Angeles Fire Relief, church roof in Malawi, Africa, and Camp Baber.

OUR HISTORY

(Abbreviated)



Oak Grove African Methodist Episcopal Church had its beginning in 1920, as a Sunday School class. A small group of committed Christians were faithfully dedicated to holding weekly meetings in the residence of Mrs. Cornelia Davis. Prior to Oak Grove becoming an official organism of African Methodism, it owed so much to the tandem guidance and leadership of Reverends B. E. Evans and V. L. Eckridge. Under the leadership of Reverend Marshall Pearson, it became fully accepted into the Michigan Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The church's original name, "St. Luke," was changed at the request of the Conference because a church bearing the same name was already in existence. Thanks to the vision and the keen insight of Mrs. Martha Hughes, who took note that the church was located in an area distinguished by the splendor of many beautiful oak trees, it was not difficult to understand why she suggested the church be named "Oak Grove."

It was in 1921 when the men of the church, with their own hands and labor of love, built the congregation's first church home. This small wooden structure was on the corner of Kentucky and Chippewa Streets. The building was known for its bell tower. In approximately 1926, the beloved bell in the tower came crashing down when the wooden church burned to the ground. On August 26, 1928, the congregation laid the cornerstone for the second church structure, this time made of brick.

Relocation

In the year 1959, the congregation of Oak Grove relocated to the corner of Cherrylawn and Pembroke, its present location. Shortly after in 1961, Reverend David E. Mitcham, was appointed pastor. During Reverend Mitcham's tenure, the church broke ground for its present building.

Expansion

During Reverend Mitcham's pastorate, the congregation grew and the need to expand the facility in order to accommodate various church programs and more space for worship became evident. On Sunday, August 2, 1987, the church broke ground for expanding the facilities. On October 19, 1987, Reverend Gregory G. M. Ingram was appointed the ninth minister to "shepherd the flock." Three months after Reverend Ingram arrived, the plans of the expansion program were enlarged to accommodate even more space. In the year 2000, shortly after Dr. Gregory G.M. Ingram was elected Bishop, Dr. Robert Brumfield was appointed Pastor of Oak Grove. Under his leadership, the church continued to grow and prosper. In the year 2019, after nineteen years of prosperous leadership Dr. Brumfield was appointed Presiding Elder. At that time Bishop John Franklin White appointed our first female pastor, Reverend Cindy Rudolph as Senior Pastor.

Pastors

Oak Grove has truly been blessed by the ministry of thirteen pastors between its inception and the present. They were: Rev. B. E. Evans (first pastor), Rev. V. L. Eckridge, Rev. Marshall Pearson, Rev. A.W. White, Rev. Samuel C. Davis, Rev. William Walker, Rev. Robert A. Schley, Rev. L.L. Lawrence, Rev. James Dixon, Rev. David E. Mitcham, Rev. Dr. Gregory G.M. Ingram, Dr. Robert E. Brumfield, and Rev. Cindy Rudolph.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Rev. Cindy Rudolph

SENIOR PASTOR

Rev. André Spivey, J.D.

EXECUTIVE MINISTER

CHURCH MINISTERIAL STAFF

Rev. Roberta Brown
Rev. Dr. Jennifer Campbell
Rev. Sammie Clay
Rev. Gordon Cooley
Rev. Dr. Marcus Cylar
Rev. Millicent DasGupta
Min. Pamela Fisher, PhD
Rev. Cloteal Fowler (Retired)
Rev. Andra Henning
Rev. Romona Irvin
Min. Ariel Johnson

Rev. Brenda Jones
Rev. Dr. Bruce Jones
Rev. Tunisia Jones
Min. Candace Purifoy
Min. Osborne Purifoy, III
Rev. Dr. Alice Patterson (Retired)
Rev. Theresa Redden
Rev. Nansi Rowe (Retired)
Rev. Nicole Smiley
Evg. Denise Wellons-Glover
Rev. Pamela Whitesell

STEWARDS

Kahn Thompson, Pro Tem
Nathan Ford, Assistant Pro Tem
Rosemary Brewer
Morse Brown
William Butler
Alethia Carr
Dwight Collins
Cheryl Dabney
Katrina Dunigan
JaRon Foster
Saran Hartley
Josephine Henyard
Tanya Hines
Sonya Hubbard
Gary Hyatt
Destiny Jackson
Jerome Maben
Angela McPherson
David Montgomery
Sonya Moore
William Polk
Arnold Simmons
Charlene Thomas
James Thrower
Deborah Turner
David Wheeler
Bettina Dozier, Emeritus

TRUSTEES

Valerie Lott-Paramore, Pro Tem
Willie Barnes
Esther Brewer-Jones
Robert Brooks, III
Hon. Lesley Fairrow
John Golson
Adonicio Harley
Gregory Hines, Sr.
Jurlene Hurst
Lacedra Jones
Larry Knight
Steven McReynolds
Dr. Tyloaha Parker
James Randolph
Sharon Simpson
Al Smiley
Shema Spivey
Sherry Stamps
Wendy Williams*
Dr. Clinton Donaldson, Emeritus

* Deceased

MINISTRY LEADS

Adult Church School

Rogers Foster

Altar Guild

Dr. Yvette Collins & Anna Samson

Christian Education

Rev. Roberta Brown

Church School

Melissa Samson & Yolanda Sain

Come Home for Christmas

Dr. Rita Teague

Culinary Ministry

Deborah Turner

God Squads

Rev. Andra Hening

Liturgical Dance Ministry

Dr. Rita Teague

Patricia Beard, Choreographer

Married Couples Ministry

Robert Brooks, III & Dr. Marva Brooks

Master's Men Ministry

Adonicio Hartley, Jaron Foster & William Winfrey

Media Ministry

Jacqueline Lawson

Ministry to Women

Rev. Dr. Jennifer Campbell

Music Ministry

LaShawn Gary

Nancy Marsh WMS

Katrina Dunigan

New Members Ministry

Rev. Andra Henning

Princess Nunley & Patricia Clark

Stewardesses

Clara Blackmon

Sunbeam Inspirational Choir

Phelecia McCall

Transportation Ministry

John Golson

We Care Ministry

Rev. Brenda Jones

Young Adult Ministry

Rev. Dr. Marcus Cylar

EVENTS & MEDIA ARTS

Hugh Hatten, Lead

Shavonne Atkins

McAlina Bell

Tiffany Crayton

Sonya Hubbard

Tywanna Johnson

Jenita Moore

Sonya Moore

Jordan Sain

Shema Spivey

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADS

Caring & Sharing

Willie Barnes

Commission on Christian & Social Relations

John Golson

Courtesy Guild

Hon. Lesley Fairrow

Elizabeth B. Crews Scholarship Committee

William Butler

Financial Peace University

Wendy Williams*

Girl Scouts of the USA

Angela McPherson

GriefShare

Rev. Brenda Jones

Health Commission

Karen Williams

Lay Organization

Arnold Simmons

Prevention & Protection

David Wheeler

Richard & Sarah Allen Usher Board

William Polk

Senior Dignitaries

Diane Walker

Senior Usher Board

Rosemary Brewer

Shepherd's Care

Stella Moore

OFFICE STAFF

Gwendolyn Montgomery, Executive Assistant

Jacqueline Lawson, Church Administrator

Katrina Dunigan, Church Secretary

Jennifer Morris, Church Accountant

Karen Taylor, Financial Analyst

David Wheeler, Facilities Manager

Wayne Campbell, Maintenance Team

Hassan Clifton, Maintenance Team

Richard Nelson, Maintenance Team

Carla Stamps

MaLeea Standfield

Kahn Thompson

Chris Washington

Lorri English,

Wedding Coordinator

Rogers Foster,

Photographer

Scholarship Awards



Gabrielle Stegger



Cebrea Welch



Allena Smiley



Celynn Welch



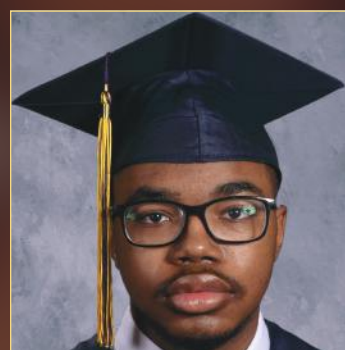
Kamari Dokes



Noah Stamps-Freeman



Morgan Black



Gregory Das Gupta, Jr.



Angel Jones



Jayden Dokes



Adriana Chene't



Azavier Pines



Kylah Kiel



Aaliyah Wheeler



Zatavia Wilson



Azekel Hartley



Kendall Spivey

Traditions are the foundation for success. For over two decades, with the support of our congregation, a legacy of educational support continues.

There were 17 scholarships awarded totaling \$24,200.

- **Pearlena Lowe Memorial Award**
Morgan Black | Junior
Biology, Health, and Science
University of Michigan
- **Elizabeth B. Crews Award**
Noah Stamps-Freeman | Junior
Media Arts and Psychology (Dual)
Wayne State University
- **Paris Ross Award**
Celynn Welch | Sophomore
Veterinary Nursin
Michigan State University
- **Elizabeth B. Crews Award**
Aaliyah Wheeler | Junior
Digital Art
Wayne State University
- **Master's Men - Joe Cotton Award**
Azavier Pines | Freshman
Biology
Alabama A & M University
- **Master's Men - James Harris Award**
Gregory Das Gupta, Jr. | Sophomore
Mechanical Engineering
Michigan State University
- **Juanita Ellerson Memorial Award**
Adriana Chene't | Junior
Nursing
Eastern Michigan University
- **The Revels - Roe Family Award**
Allena Smiley | Freshman
Mechanical Engineering
University
- **Julian Rambo Award**
Jaden Dokes | Senior
Exercise Science
Western Michigan University
- **William and Juanita McGill Award**
Azekel Hartley | Sophomore
Mechanical Engineering/Applied Physics
Morehouse College
- **John Evan Cash Memorial Award**
Kamari Dokes | Junior
Psychology, Chemistry and Biology (Dual)
Howard University
- **Beatrice Dokes Memorial Award**
Cebrea Welch | Sophomore
3D Animation
Savannah College of Art and Design
- **John Evan Cash Memorial Award**
Kendall Spivey | Junior
Political Science
Villanova University
- **Oak Grove Lay Organization Award**
Gabrielle Stegger | Sophomore
Pre-Nursing
Wayne State University
- **James and Marla Thower Award**
Angel Jones | Senior
Healthcare Administration
University of Nebraska at Omaha
- **Dr. Clinton and Marie Farrell Donaldson Award**
Zatavia Wilson | Freshman
Marketing
University of Michigan
- **Elizabeth B. Crews Award**
Kylah Kiel | Freshman
Nursing
Morgan State University

Back 2 School Rally





What can we say!

Each year we continue to say that last year's Back 2 School Rally was the best. This event proves that history repeats itself because last year's rally was the best!

Our members and community partners came together to bless children in grades Kindergarten through 12 with book bags filled with supplies and other items to ensure they had the items they needed for another successful school year.

In addition, again, our community partners were an integral part of the rally. Olympia Development/Little Caesars Pizza; Anna Sablonski-Thard; DTE; Cirkul Drink Company; DWIHN (Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc, Detroit Alumnae Chapter; Kiwanis B4K; Public Service Credit Union: Matt Maillard and Chris Taylor of United Way of Southeastern; WCCCD Downtown District; BOMBAS Socks; Meijer; Lauren Hollier, Distributive Schools; DAPCEP; WCCCD Dental Hygiene School; Jolly Dental; Oak Village C.A.R.E.S; Bee's Cuts & Styles; Wayne State; Home Depot; Wayne State Another Chance; Levy Band; WCCCD Continuing Education & Workforce Development, Asian Pacific Islander MI; Detroit Parenting Network, DPSD; Cummins Corporation, Lambda Chi Chapter - Chi Eta Sorority, Inc.

The tradition continued with health screening services, workshops, speakers, fun and educational activities.

The pictures truly tell the story.

Veteran's Day Worship



Our Veteran's Worship Service in November not only embraced the service and sacrifices of our Oak Grove veterans but also included a segment to honor family members of our congregation and those currently serving.

Rev. Dr. Bruce Jones, Chaplain Major, U. S. Air Force, Ret. served as our Worship Leader. The Cass Technical High School Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp under the leadership of Master Sergeant Marcus Moore conducted a Presentation of Colors ceremony prior to the start of Worship. During Worship they conducted the Flag Folding Ceremony.

A presentation was made to Rev. Nicole Smiley, Master Sergeant, United States Air Force, Ret. and Michigan National Guard member and Beverlyn Warford, U.S. Army Nurse Corp, Ret. In addition, recently enlisted Sam Echols, now a member of the U.S. Marine Corp was recognized. We were happy to welcome back Rev. Harold Owens, Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel, Ret., from St. John AMEC River Rouge who brought the Word.





37th Annual Come Home for Christmas





This 37th year of Come Home for Christmas was indeed a labor of love. This year's theme "Lift Others as Christ Lifts Us" and scripture Philippians 2:4 (NRSVA) allowed us to focus on the need for our church to rise to the occasion to once again by demonstrating excellent stewardship of the resources that God had provided too us. The focus was to uplift the community and make a difference.

Beginning with the work of our Caring & Sharing Ministry under the leadership of Bro. Willie Barnes and volunteers who labored by taking phone calls, packing, and loading boxes in cars, the ministry was a blessing! For Thanksgiving and Christmas over 400 boxes of food were provided, which includes staples, fresh vegetables, and a turkey.

During that time, we moved into the full spirit of the Christmas season. Shopping began; packages were wrapped and delivered to the church. Packing of Christmas gift bags for seniors was a high priority to ensure that area seniors were not forgotten. Our outreach included a visit to a senior center where Rev. Romona Irvin brought the Word, and the Ballroom Dance Ministry entertained the seniors with their smooth steps.

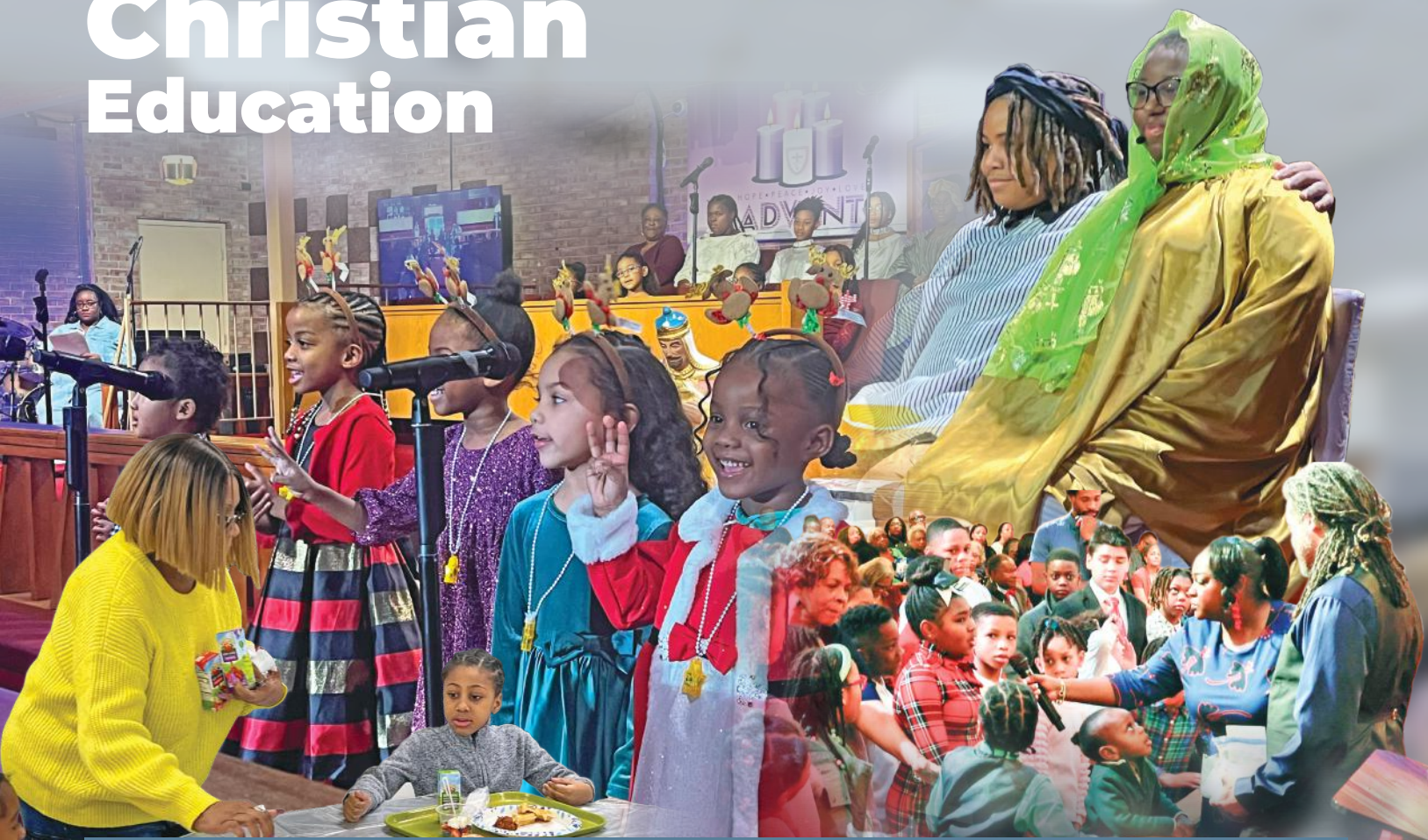
This year we are proud to say, under the direction of Dr. Rita Teague and her team, our Winter Wonderland returned!

This year our members, friends of Oak Grove, and the community played a part in what we were able to provide. This is how your blessing made a difference: six senior centers with 532 residents were blessed with gift bags. Area families totaling 119 with a total of 317 children received gifts including bikes, toys, iPads, clothing, and other items.

Without the help of all of the Ministries and Organizations and our community partners and friends: State of Michigan Department of Human Services, Prison Fellowship, Detroit Medical Center -Sinai Grace, Just Blossom, Dollar Tree, and KNK Designs this would not have been possible.

For our Come Home for Christmas Worship Service we were blessed to hear a Word from Bishop Julius H. McAllister, Jr. Presiding Prelate of the Ninth Episcopal District, who previously served as Oak Grove's Youth Minister over twenty-five years ago.

Christian Education



Each Sunday our Christian Education Department team under the leadership of Rev. Roberta Brown, Min. Candace Purifoy and Min. Osborne Purifoy III, Sis. Yolanda Sain, Sis. Melissa Samson, and the Youth Church instructors are devoted to developing Bible scholars and ensuring that faith is an integral part in the lives of our young people ages pre-school to Grade 12.

There are activities each Sunday that are focused on specific age groups. In addition, there are auxiliary teams such as the Young Prophets led by Bro. William Parker that ensure that our male youth and teens are equipped with not only Biblical teachings but also life skills.

This year two of the activities being highlighted are the Christmas play and the Black History Month events. Our Christmas play, "The Christmas Gifts" was a multifaceted production that included a Musical Selection featuring William on trombone, our Mistress of Ceremony - Kylah, the Prayer - The True Meaning of Christmas - Madison, Welcome - Myles, Scripture - Gabriel and Tori, Musical Selection The Three Great Kings - McKenzie, Drew, Myles, Niraiyah, Brooklyn Journee, Ronald, and DaVonna. The story was presented as a news broadcast with our lead reporter Charles presenting the news as it happened in Bethlehem along with breaking news from other parts of the world. A few commercials were included as well! As the news broke, the world prepared for the coming of our Savior: Jesus.

Our cast included: Narrators - Meadeaux, Tenaj, and William; Commercial Announcements - Gabriel and Shelbi Davis; Shepherds - Gabriella, Zyairre, and Benjamin; Angels - Ava, McKenna; Angel Gabriel - Myles; Mary - Audrey; Joseph - Amir; Sunbeam Choir - Zachary, Brooklyn, Amaya, Angelina, Ayanna, Benjamin, Aniya, Qiana, Tori, Zyairre, Ava, Gabriella, McKenna, and Madison. Closing out the performance was Aniya.

Black History Month

“Foot Soldiers from the Past, Present, and Future”



Scripture: *Colossians 3:23-24* ²³Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

Our Church School again made sure that elements of our history and future were infused each Sunday with their Bible studies. Each Sunday featured an element of this year’s theme. On the first Sunday Ms. Shirley Keys spoke of foot soldiers from 1800 – 1900. On the second Sunday the focus was on 1910 – 2020 with a presentation by Dr. Pamela Fisher and her granddaughter Madison. On the third Sunday the church school attendees dressed in their career choices. During Worship Amir Ware presented two powerful poems devoted to his goals and the goals of other hopeful young people. The last Sunday Bro. William Parker presented a talk “8 Mile for Life” to provide the history to the young people to understand the significance of our church to the neighborhood.

On the final Sunday, “A Taste of Culture” was hosted by the Church School, which featured ethnic dishes and Curry Chicken prepared by Pastor Rudolph.

Our 2025 Living Legends



Jon Campbell

Jon Campbell was born in Detroit, MI. He was an extremely gifted athlete playing multiple sports including basketball, baseball, and football. He was also an avid chess player. He is a graduate of Michigan State University, Central Michigan University, and Oakland University. He has been featured in The Detroit News, Crain's Detroit Business, The Michigan Chronicle, and Michigan Front Page. He serves as a fundraiser to support fellow Spartan alumni. He was the first recipient of the McDonald's Rookie of the Year Award. He is the owner of 15 McDonald's franchises.



Hon. Daphne Means Curtis

Hon. Daphne Means Curtis was employed in the early years in clerical positions that allowed her to utilize her typing and shorthand skills. Her educational journey led her to receive her B.A. from the University of Michigan in 1972 and her J.D. degree from Wayne State University in 1976. Prior to her judicial career, she worked for Legal Aid and the Misdemeanor Defender's Office where she specialized in felony cases. She then practiced law with the firm of Lewis, White, Clay & Graves, focusing on civil litigation. She was appointed to the bench by former Governor James Blanchard and joined the Detroit Recorder's Court in 1990 (the Recorder's Court was merged with the Circuit Court of Wayne County in 1997). She retired from the court in 2017.



James & Cecelia Randolph

James & Cecelia Randolph were both born in the state of Tennessee. James worked for General Motors, and Cecelia worked for Detroit Public Schools. Both have been members of Oak Grove for over 40 years. He serves as a Trustee and is a member of the Master's Men. She serves in the Nancy Marsh Women's Missionary Society. Both are members of the music ministry and other ministries as well. They have been married for 48 years with three children and five grandchildren.

Proclaimers of the Word

Throughout this conference year we have been blessed to have some of the greatest "Proclaimers of the Word" stand behind the sacred desk as a part of tradition or for special Worship. These are additional names:

October

Fifth Pastoral Anniversary
Rev. Samuel Phillips, III
Concord Baptist Church
Brooklyn New York

January 2025

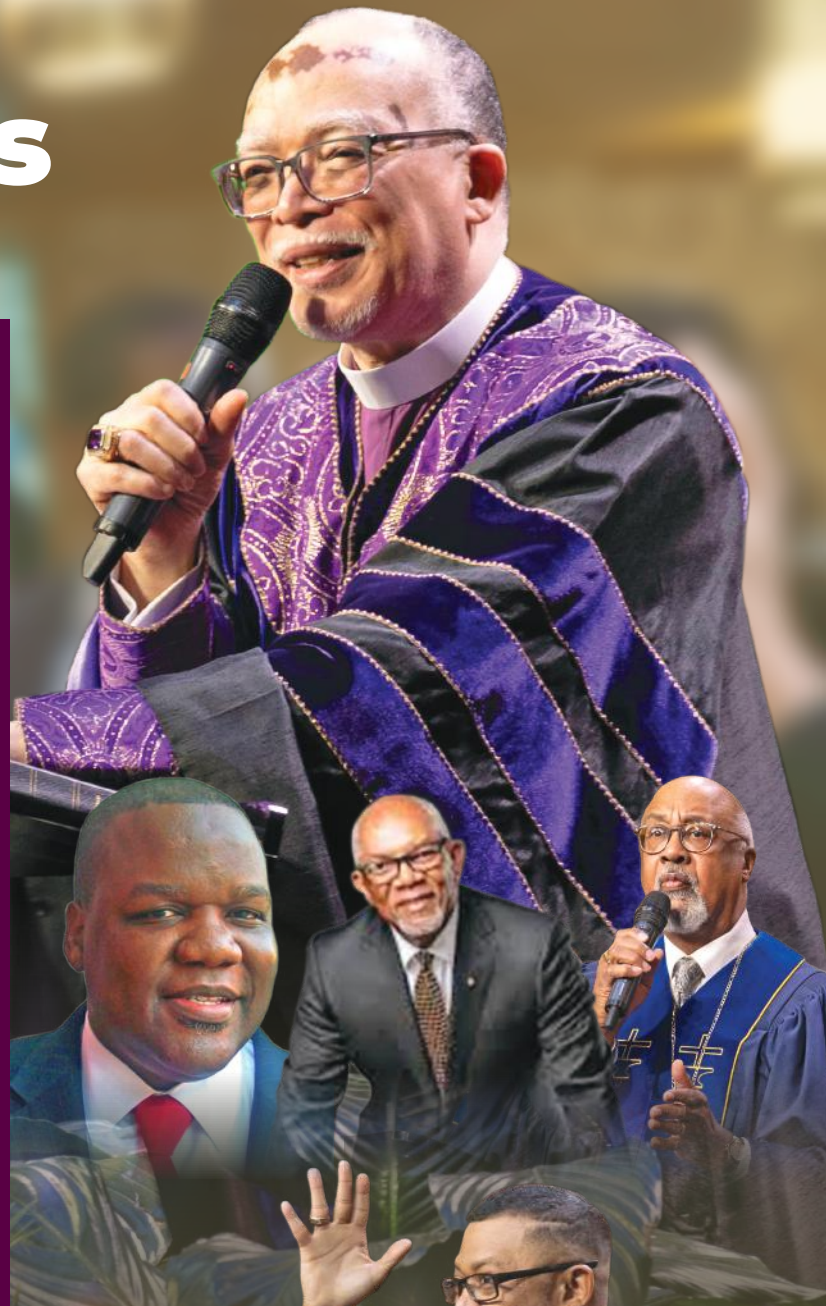
Second Sunday
Rev. Dr. H. Michael Lemmons
Presiding Elder
Soaring South District MI

February

Leadership Summit Weekend
Rev. Dr. E. L. Branch, Pastor Emeritus
Third New Hope Baptist Church
Detroit, MI

April

Palm Sunday
Bishop Frederick Alan Wright, Sr.
Presiding Prelate of the
Fourth Episcopal District



The Call to Preach

We are pleased to present four licentiates to The 139th Session of the Michigan Annual Conference in August 2025.

They are as follows:

Min. Pamela Fisher, PhD,
Min. Arieal Johnson,
Min. Candace Purifoy, and
Min Osborne Purifoy, III.



The Trial of Jesus



Rev. Rudolph often spoke of her wonderment if the trial of Jesus was held today, what would the verdict be. How would people view His actions? A very profound thought during these unsettling times.

To get this question answered, she called upon the experienced legal minds of the church including judges, attorneys, and paralegals. The legal minds went to work. Meetings began, the ideas were developed, scripts were written, sets were built, rehearsals took place, and then it was time for the eagerly anticipated trial. The actual trial included all elements of a courtroom including a bailiff, court reporters, and legal correspondents.

The packed sanctuary, which became a courtroom for the evening, wondered what verdict the jury would reach. Would the verdict be the same? During the deliberations, people in the courtroom were interviewed to give their thought after the prosecution and defense rested. The gallery had mixed feelings and reactions. Then the jury returned: the verdict...not guilty! The courtroom erupted. If this had been the Biblical verdict, what would this verdict mean for humanity?

The Cast

Judge:

Hon. Daphne Means Curtis

News Reporters:

Jenae Anderson, Esq. &
Allura Williams
(JD Candidate Class of 2026)

Prosecutors:

Paul Curtis, Esq. &
Jo Irby, Esq.

Defense Counsel:

Ponce Clay, Esq. &
Kimberley Reed Thompson, Esq.

Simon Peter:

Zachary Anderson, Esq.

Caiaphas:

John Wesley Marsh

Mary:

Carrie Whitfield

Matthew:

Dwight Collins

Nicodemus:

William Mandela Matthews

Jesus:

Min. Osborne Purifoy, III

Court Reporter:

Karen Taylor

Bailiff:

Glenn Walker,
(Ret. Detroit Police Officer)

Clerk:

Zakiya Hollifield

Jurors:

Dietta Atkins
Esther Brewer Jones
William Butler
Alethia Carr

Rev. Dr. Jennifer Campbell
Pat Dysard
John Golson
Kathryn Hillman

Richard McCall
William Parker, Sr.
Valerie Lott Paramore
Kahn Thompson

**Executive Producer
& Visionary:**

Rev. Cindy Rudolph

Associate Producers:

Rev. Andre Spivey
(JD Candidate Class of 2025)
Katrina Dunigan &
Gwen Montgomery

Director:

Hon. Lesley C. Fairrow

Writer:

Hon. Daphne Means Curtis

**Director of
Photography & Sound:**

Hugh H. Hatten

Art Director:

Jelani Curtis &
Jacqueline Lawson

Set Designers:

Edison Kelly &
Larry Knight

Director of Music: LaShawn Gary

31st Anniversary

7 Women of Faith

It never ceases to amaze the messages that are brought forth during our 7 Women of Faith Worship Service. The messages about the women from the Old Testament and New Testament of the Bible are still relevant today.



This conference year we welcomed the following messengers of the Gospel:

Rev. Yolanda Whiten

Newman AME Church
Jochebed | Exodus 2:1-10

Rev. Diana Nash

Empowerment Church
The Servant Girl of Naaman's Wife | 2 Kings 5:2-5

Rev. Dr. Genetta Hatcher

The Room Church
Dorcus | Acts 9:36-42

Rev. Keeley Lucas

Mitcham Chapel AME Church
The Canaanite Woman | Matthew 15:21-28

Rev. Tammy Harris-Banks

St. Paul AME Church - Detroit
Vashti | Esther 4:10-16

Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Nelson

Davison Missionary Baptist Church
Esther | Esther 4:10-16

Rev. Dr. April Hearn

Zion City of Praise
Mary | John 19:25-27



Following messages of hope, deliverance, and commitment, our Culinary Ministry provided a delightful Pancake breakfast.

We thank them as well!

Men's Ministry



This year the men lived their theme and allowed their efforts to work in tandem with their theme "Grow: The Fellowship and Commitment of Men." Their scripture was 1 Thessalonians 3: 12.

Under the direction of Bros. Adonicio Hartley, JaRon Foster, and William Winfrey, the men began this conference year with their first major event in September: the 38th Annual Master's Men Fish Fry. Over 2,000 dinners were served, but more importantly are the lives that were touched. Our ministerial team continued their tradition to talking, witnessing, and praying for those who expressed a need to be addressed.

After a week of rest, it was time for the Annual Men's Day Worship Service where Rev. Dr. Rev. Dr. Anton G. Elwood, senior pastor of St. Philip AME Church, Atlanta, GA brought the Word. The Master's Men Man of the Year was presented to Bro. Kahn Thompson.

Throughout the conference year the men of Oak Grove were committed to supporting the church with their time, talent, and treasures. This is just a partial list of their efforts: Caring & Sharing, Come Home for Christmas, Expungement Fair, and Juneteenth. In May, for Mother's Day, the "chefs" prepared a sumptuous breakfast enjoyed by the ladies of Oak Grove.

They also embraced the need for spiritual growth and healthy living with their walk prior to Men's Bible Study on Saturdays during the conference year.

It was a year filled with service.

Women's Ministry





Our Women's Ministry flourished under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Jennifer Campbell with the assistance of Rev. Pamela Whitesell. Our co-chairs Sis. Carla Stamps and Sis. Donyelle Atkins served in tandem as they led the women through this year's theme: "There's Joy in the Journey" – Psalm 16:11. The theme proved to be engrained in their spiritual growth and their works.

Guided by faith, fellowship, and a deep commitment to service, with God's blessings, they saw remarkable growth in both their ranks and their outreach, fostering a community of dedicated and hard-working women who love and serve the Lord.

Their year began with a powerful Consecration Worship Service, with the Word coming from Rev. Millicent Das Gupta, which set the spiritual foundation for all that followed. They nurtured intellectual and spiritual growth through Monthly Book Clubs and strengthened bonds with Sister Circle Small Groups, meeting regularly for connection and support.

The ministry extended its reach through United Spaces, a monthly gathering in collaboration with Vista Maria Social Services Organization, where we engaged in impactful service. During the Christmas season, they embodied the spirit of giving by supporting Come Home for Christmas families and hosting the candy table at Winter Wonderland, bringing joy and warmth to those in need.

They fostered open dialogue and authentic connections with Candid Conversations, creating a space for heartfelt and meaningful discussions. In March, they celebrated Women's History Month by highlighting the contributions of Black Women in the AME Church, honoring their legacy and influence.

During Holy Week, they embraced faith-filled reflection by hosting the 7 Women of Faith on Good Friday, offering spiritual inspiration and solidarity. Fellowship remained a priority, and the magnificent gourmet coffee hour strengthened the bonds within our congregation.

One of the most memorable moments of the year was welcoming Rev. Dr. Thema Bryant for Women's Day, an occasion that uplifted and inspired all in attendance. We embraced the arts and culture by supporting Broadway in Detroit, gathering to experience the joy of theater at a performance of The Wiz.

Closing the year with warmth and unity, we held a Sister Circle Fellowship, celebrating the journey we have shared and the road ahead.

Young Adult Ministry



The Young Adult Ministry's theme for the conference year was "Impact: Taking Our Place and Making a Difference" (Matthew 5:13-16). They sought to achieve that end through the power of partnership.

In July 2024, they focused heavily on community service as they worked with our Young Adult Ministry partners the "Harvest Time Collective" (comprising Oak Grove, St. Stephen AMEC, Mitcham Chapel AMEC, and Fellowship Chapel) complete projects including painting and gardening for Mrs. Jacqueline Moore and SDM2-Project Education, a neighborhood community center serving young people in the heart of the city of Detroit. Also in July, they created gift baskets for the young ladies at Vista Maria for "Christmas in July." Vista Maria has been a service partner for the Women's Ministry for quite some time, but YAM was able to contribute by delivering these baskets and spending time with sweet and energetic young ladies at the center. Many thanks to Sis. Lauren Black for helping organize this effort. YAM ended the month by assisting with the community voter education forum, organized by Dr. Tyloaha Parker and CC&SR (Commission on Christian & Social Relations). The attendance outnumbered their expectations, and the information shared was immensely valuable as we equipped ourselves for this ever-critical election season.

In September, they once again hosted Worship Night with young-adult guests from the Harvest Time Collective member churches. The Hour of Power with our dynamic music ministry and a message of empowerment from Rev. Dr. Marcus Cylar titled, "Standing on Business."

In November, the Young Adult Ministry hosted their 4th annual Detroit Lions tailgate, hosting over 60 men, women, and children cheered on our team in Honolulu blue and silver to a comfortable 24-6 victory. Refreshments were a hit, and numerous prizes were given away, including the grand prize of two tickets to see the Pistons take on the Golden State Warriors in January 2025. This is an event for which we leaned heavily on our Master's Men Ministry to help us bolster participation, and doing so proved successful. With attendance once again exceeding the previous year's tally, we have fully solidified this tailgate as a signature event for this ministry.

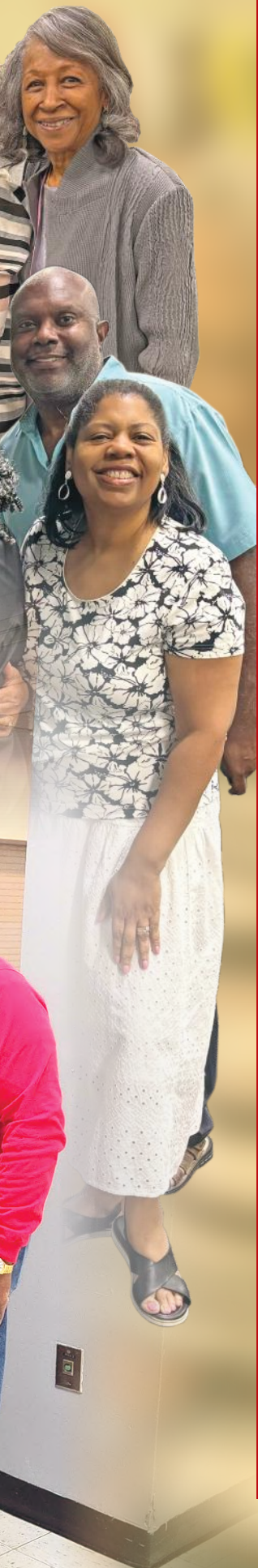
In December, under the direction of Dr. Tyloaha Parker and collaboration with Sis. Lorri English, along with valuable input from Bro. Arnold Simmons, Bro. William Butler, and members of the Elizabeth B. Crews Scholarship Committee, YAM organized "College-ish. It is a college-preparatory forum and panel discussion featuring Oak Grove college students that were home for the holidays. The Mitcham Fellowship Hall was filled with well over 100 parents and students, from inside and outside of Oak Grove, as well as representatives from a dozen HBCUs, each with their own information table. This forum revived what used to be a staple event for us over twenty years ago, and with the success we had with this event, we have set ourselves up to make this another YAM staple for years to come.

YAM participated in various other events throughout the conference year with our Harvest Time Collective partnership, including Game Night with St. Stephen AMEC, a Black History Open-Mic Night with Fellowship Chapel, and a "Seven Last Words" Good Friday Worship experience through the music and arts with Mitcham Chapel AMEC. They are envisioning a continuation of this partnership, as well as work with other ministries throughout Oak Grove. It is by working together with others and operating in their gifts with a spirit of collaboration that they continue to make the impact they desire to make today and beyond.



Lay Organization





The Oak Grove Lay Organization (OGLO), under the leadership of President Arnold Simmons, strives to fulfill the mission of the AME church by educating the laity about the laws, doctrines, and history of our church. We continue to increase our membership with various outreach activities and actively supported all church ministries, organizations, and community initiatives this past conference year.

Account for 2024 - 2025 Conference Year activities included the following:

- Donated six hundred packages of crayons for elementary school students in support of our church's annual **Back to School Rally**.
- Lay Day Speaker was Attorney Jenice Mitchell Ford, General Council, Detroit Public Schools Community District. She spoke passionately about equipping lay people for service in the congregation and in the greater community. We were blessed with a dynamic performance by three young people from the Michigan Fine Arts Academy.
- In November 2024 the OGLO offered a training session featuring guest presenter, Mr. David Murray, Office of Public Engagement, Michigan Secretary of State Office, who gave an overview of state and national election guidelines, community engagement strategies, new voting rights policies and opportunities for Lay members to volunteer as Poll Workers.
- Our Caravan of Care Project is a joint outreach ministry supported by the OGLO and Commission on Christian & Social Relations. Our caravan of cars and decorated church bus visited Oak Grove homebound church members at least once during the summer and fall months. A small gift, hugs and loving smiles were shared.
- Our caring card project sends an average of fifty homebound members a "thinking of you," "condolence" or "get-well" card each month.
- OGLO members participated in the church's annual holiday (Thanksgiving and Christmas) food basket preparation, packing, and delivering to more than two hundred families.
- For "Come Home for Christmas," Winter Wonderland, OGLO members provided Gingerbread Men cookies for children to decorate and enjoy. We also visited seniors and purchased gifts for children in foster care.
- Our fundraising project sold 160 Equal Justice Initiative calendars to raise \$1K to support our annual church scholarship donation.
- We purchased books for National Reading Month (March 2025) and gifted them to our Oak Grove elementary school students.
- OGLO members attended meetings held by Bishop Frederick A. Wright, Sr., (Planning Meeting and Spiritual Empowerment Midyear Convocation), Michigan Conference, Fourth District and Connectional Lay Organization to ensure laity support of the total functioning of our AME church.

The Nancy Marsh Women's Missionary Society



This year the theme “Missionaries – The Heartbeat of God: He Wants It All” with the supporting scripture from Ephesians 2:10 and Matthew 22:37-40, spoke volumes of the work of missions and outreach: Praying, Praising, Persistent, Proactive and Partnerships.

The work continued with donations and participation with the Back-to-School Rally, Church Women United, Michigan Conference WMS Prayer Calls, various local, conference, district and connectional meetings, events, and initiatives.

They adopted preschool class for this conference year from the Detroit Academy of Arts and Sciences, Detroit, where our passionate Preschool Team visited monthly throughout the school year. They provided classroom support, clothing and toys, and helped to raise the student’s literacy awareness by highlighting a book of the month followed by a literacy activity to reinforce the lesson.

The NMWMS, in partnership with our YPD, ministered and facilitated monthly Worship and Outreach events at the adopted senior facility, Oak Pointe Nursing and Rehab Center, Detroit, assisted by our own, Rev. Theresa Redden. In December we hosted a Christmas event for our senior friends with food and Christmas gifts, which featured entertainment by our own Oak Grove Ballroom Dance Ministry as well as a much-needed Word by our Rev. Romona Irvin. They also sponsored, made donations, and walked in support of The Alzheimer’s Foundation. They sent bi-monthly cards to our sick and homebound members, supported and facilitated “Go Red Heart Health Sunday, Pink Sunday for Breast Cancer Awareness, and Orange Sunday for Gun Violence Awareness, where our special guest was Chief Todd Bettison of the Detroit Police Department (DPD) and DPD Officers, who addressed the congregation and worshiped with us for the entire service. They staffed a greeting card table at the Come Home for Christmas (CHFC) “Winter Wonderland” as well as adopted CHFC families and, again, were Angel Tree Family callers. They partnered with our Lay Organization and The Black Child Family Institute to provide and facilitate “March is Reading Month” by setting up book distribution stations within our Christian Education/Sunday School department, ensuring that each Youth Church attendee received a book of their choice on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.

The NMWMS highlights of the year consisted of the WMS Annual Emphasis Day, where our guest preacher was the dynamic Rev. Dr. April Hearn, Pastor of Zion City of Praise, Detroit, who expanded on our theme from Jeremiah 1:4-8 by emphasizing that when you serve God, you can’t quit when you get ready. God wants your life and your lips, your prayers and your performance – He Wants It All!!

At the end of the conference year, they were so blessed to bridge and welcome three (3) former YPDers into the Senior Missionary Society: Sisters Allura Williams, Adriana Chene’t, and Breanna Strickland. These awesome young adult sisters were stoled and officially received as members of the Women’s Missionary Society, locally and world-wide.

To God Be the Glory for all that He has done and will do as the NMWMS “strengthen our faith and continue the ministry of Jesus Christ by service and witness in the world.”



Young Peoples Division





Our YPD has participated in a host of meaningful service projects throughout the 2024 - 2025 conference year. Participation included the Come Home for Christmas Winter Wonderland, where YPD sponsored the ornament-making station, allowing children to create festive decorations as part of our holiday outreach.

A major project this year was the Souper Bowl of Caring where they raised \$637 for the Fire Relief Fund and \$727 for the Food Pantry at First AME in Pasadena, CA. This gift was sent as a blessing to those who were impacted by the devastating fires.

In March, YPD hosted a Reading Month Pajama Party, where 37 youth participated in reading activities, Bible word scrambles, Bible trivia, and other engaging games. Attendees were served chicken and waffles with fruit, adding to the fun and fellowship. We thank our Culinary Ministry for the fantastic breakfast!!!

As part of our commitment to intergenerational outreach, they also visited Oak Pointe Senior Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility, where they spent time with residents and brought smiles through conversation, a Christmas party, a Black History Month trivia game, and a spring craft session where youth and senior friends created butterfly sun catchers.

Additionally, YPD took part in the Memorial Garden Clean-Up, learning the value of community and honoring YPD members who lost their lives.

They finished the conference year with our YPD Annual Day, the theme was "Faith Over Fear," and they are standing on that. Scripture 2 Timothy 1:7 "God has not given us the spirit of fear but of love power and a sound mind." Min. Osborne Purifoy, III and Min. Candace Purifoy delivered the Word.

Each of these projects helped YPD live out its mission of service, leadership, and spiritual growth.

The Commission on Christian & Social Relations (CC&SR)



The Commission began the 2024-25 conference year with a focus on voter education and registration. All hands were on deck at their July political forum where several candidates for local office presented their case and current office holders explained their duties and responsibilities. A civics lesson was also given by our local high school civics teacher. They continued with voter registration rallies at Bradford High School, the District 2 Community picnic, and a host of other community events. They were able to register over 100 voters and educated many more on the role of government and proposals that were on the ballot.



CC&SR celebrated Black History Month with our now annual production of “Black Jeopardy.” This year’s game was fiercely competitive, with new categories such as “Movers & Shakers” and “Black Card Revoked” that stumped a lot of contestants.

Our Community Outreach Division continued to make a difference by hosting our annual Expungement Fair. The 2025 CC&SR Expungement fair was held on Saturday February 22, 2025, at the Johnson Recreation Center in Detroit.

The purpose of the event was to assist residents of the Detroit metropolitan area in completing the documents necessary to file in court to have prior convictions for eligible traffic offenses, misdemeanors and felonies set aside (expunged). The recent passage of the Clean Slate Act in Michigan affords many more persons the opportunity to have their records expunged. Many persons who attended this event in prior years who had convictions that were not expungable were now able to have convictions removed. The session received media coverage from CBS Channel 62. There was a representative from the Michigan Attorney General’s Office who assisted with reviewing eligibility of citizens for expungement and provided I-Chats (copies of criminal records) free of charge. Representatives from the Michigan Secretary of State’s office assisted citizens with driver’s license restoration.

Participant Data: 250 citizens attended, 140 were assisted in completing documents, 10 received driver’s license assistance, 30 were not eligible for expungement, 5 received applications for pardons, 5 picked up applications for family members who were unable to attend, and 60 were unable to complete applications due to time constraints but were contacted via email and given the location of an expungement event scheduled the following week where they could receive assistance. There were seven attorneys, two notaries, ten Oak Grove volunteers, and CC&SR committee members. These persons assisted with registration and escorting citizens throughout the building to the various stations.

Their biennial Historical Journey took them on a four-day trip to the cities of Birmingham, Montgomery, and Selma, Alabama. They visited several museums, learned of the struggle of those that shed their blood for freedom and marched as a group across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. This heartfelt moment was the culminating event of our historical journey. Our final day was blessed with a Worship service at St. John AME Church where Pastor Rev. Dr. Ronald Sterling, pastor, preached a rousing sermon, fed us prior to our departure, and surprised us with a visit by Bishop Julius McAllister Jr., who greeted and took pictures with us. We left Alabama with more conviction to continue the fight for freedom for everyone, everywhere.

Our annual Juneteenth Community Celebration concluded the conference year. The outdoor festival featured entertainment, through the spoken word, musical performances and a DJ. Food was provided by food trucks and vendors had an opportunity to sell their wares. A kids play area was enjoyed by children of all ages. In addition, a community blood drive was held to benefit patients at Corewell Health.

They continue their service to the congregation through our participation in the Caravan of Care ministry. This ministry brings joy to our sick and shut in by visiting them with a caravan of cars and the church bus. The gifts and a personal message from the Pastor is provided to those who are visited.



Married Couples Ministry





This ministry continued their work to tie couples to the Word and to each other. Their scripture Proverbs 18:22 carried them through all the events during this conference year. They worked to fulfill their objective to promote and support the institution of marriage. This ministry provided fellowship opportunities, modeled marriage styles, and supported the covenant of marriage.

Their year began with their Sweetest Day “movie night” in October. It was a sold-out event with 24 couples viewing the movie “The Forge.” In February the Married Couples Day Retreat was held at Eagle Crest Golf Club in Ypsilanti. The theme was “Communication.” The facilitators were Rev. Jerry and Rev. Gwendolyn Hatter. There were 32 couples in attendance. The day consisted of marriage workshops, estate planning, and a bit of fun with a ballroom dance class.

The information provided at the estate planning workshop covering wills and trusts was so informative that Dr. Marva and Bro. Robert felt that the congregation should have the opportunity to hear the presentation as well from Terrence Quinn, Esq., TGQ Law Firm in Ann Arbor. The workshop was held in May with 32 people in attendance.

The year ended with the Covenant Affirmation Ceremony with eight couples participating. The couples’ years of marriage ranged from 10 years to 58 years with highlights such as personal vows, a bride in her original wedding dress, smiles, and tears. The couples were the Andersons, Bonners, Curtis’, Lawsons, Brewers, Bradleys, Whitesells, and Howards. Each couple received a Certificate of Affirmation. There were over one hundred guests in attendance at the reception. The wedding was coordinated by Sis. Lorri English.

This ministry is led by Robert Brooks, III and Dr. Marva Brooks. The planning team consist of Zachary and Jenae Anderson, Esqs., Adonicio and Saran Hartley, Al and Valerie Lott, Ron and Cedasha Munson, and William and Sherda Polk.

Health Commission



Our Health Commission continued their service to ensure that medical needs were met for our congregation during Worship and other events. They continued to serve during special events such as the Back-to-School Rally, Juneteenth Celebration, Heart Health month in February, and many other occasions where needed. This year we are pleased to announce designated seating during Worship for our Health Ministry members should the need arise that a health professional is needed.

The ever-popular Chair Yoga continued this conference year with several sessions on Sunday following Worship in the Mitcham Fellowship Hall. Their proudest accomplishment for this conference year is the successful completion of three CPR and First Aid Training sessions that allowed 27 participants to receive CPR certification. This opportunity is a valuable skill for anyone to learn, as it can save lives in emergency situations. Their partnership with community churches and the Detroit Health Department allows them the ability to provide the services that we need and are greatly appreciated. Their continuing focus is on prevention and education.

Senior Dignitaries



Under the leadership of Sis. Diane Walker, the Senior Dignitaries, had a busy year. They did not let anything interfere with their plans!

They concluded 2024 with a Christmas/theater party. After an enjoyable lunch, they attended a showing of Wicked. In addition, they wanted to make a difference by providing gifts of socks and candy canes to children from Youth Church..

An inspiring Black History Program took place in February. Dr. Carolyn Campbell presented information on the history of Black music and her granddaughter, Jasmin James, a prominent cello player, performed several selections including Lift Every Voice. They concluded the meeting with a mini soul food luncheon.

They continued the Black History theme in March with a visit to the Underground Railroad station at Second Baptist Church in Detroit.

In April they celebrated our annual Senior Dignitary Day Worship Service. During the Worship service 23 people, age 90 and over, were given beautiful planters.

This conference was filled with so many things of which to be thankful.

Pastor's Impact on the Community





This conference year has been non-stop for our Pastor! God has placed her in areas where she has made a positive difference.

These are just a few of the areas where her impact has been felt. Either preaching, giving the invocation, or speaking she has touched thousands of people at a number of events.

- Closing prayer at the Democratic National Convention in August
- Throughout the year multiple appearances America's Black Journal - Black Churches in Detroit
- What's at Stake Breakfast in October
- Black Methodist Fall Revival in November
- NCNW Detroit Section Gospel Brunch in December
- Holy Week Word - Bethel AME Church, Ann Arbor
- Voice of a Prophet Preaching and Leadership Conference in April
- State of the People Power Tour at Wayne County Community College District in May
- 21st Pastoral Anniversary of Rev. Steve Bland, Jr., pastor of Liberty Temple Baptist Church

The last weekend in June was a weekend of Service. The Metro Detroit Pan Hellenic Council consisting of "The Divine Nine" fraternities and sororities of Metro Detroit held a blood drive on Saturday, joined us for Worship on Sunday, and held their scholarship award ceremony following Worship. The Greeks represented in Worship were: Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, and Iota Phi Theta Fraternity.

During Worship Bishop Gregory G. M. Ingram was presented his 50-year jacket for his years of service to Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. In addition, Dr. Lawrence Rudolph, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, presented a Silhouette purse from Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity to his wife, Pastor Rudolph.

Her sermon entitled "I Will Serve" captured the charge of all of the fraternities and sororities and those in the congregation and online. It was such a meaningful way to close out the conference year.

Our Community Engagement & Mission Work

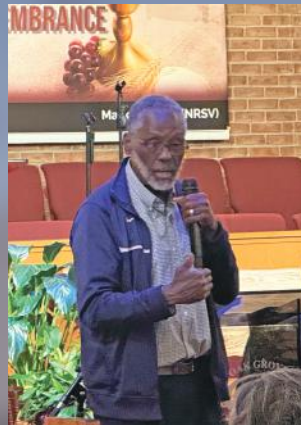
 **OAK GROVE**
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
presents
"Preparing the People for Civic Engagement and Political Awareness"
19801 Cherrylawn
Detroit, MI 48221
313 341-8877

OUR GUEST SPEAKERS **10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Saturdays**

 **SHERIKIA HAWKINS**
Chief of Staff
Pontiac City Council
"We Voted Now What? Strategies for Impactfulness in Our Communities"
March 1, 2025

 **Frank W. Ervin III**
Managing Director
Ervin Policy Group
"Government 101"
April 5, 2025

 **Dr. Ronald Brown**
Professor Wayne State University
"Politics and the Role of the Church"
May 3, 2025
www.oakgroveame.org
Rev. Cindy Rudolph, Senior Pastor



This conference year, Pastor Rudolph continued to drive home our need to be educated and actively involved in the political process. To that end, she created a mini course for Oak Grove members and the community entitled "Preparing the People for Civic Engagement and Political Awareness." There were three workshops held on the first Saturdays of March, April and May.

Sherikia Hawkins, Chief of Staff Pontiac City Council's topic was "We Voted Now What? Strategies for Impactfulness in Our Communities. Frank Ervin, III, Managing Director of the Ervin Policy Group and Erica Bell, Partner/General Counsel, Ervin Policy Group, presented a detailed course in "Government 101." Our final presenter was Wayne State University Professor Ronald Brown. He presented "Politics and the Role of the Church." A true history lesson on how we got here and what our strategy should be going forward.

It was our honor to host 56 students from Howard University for an evening of dinner and conversation. The students were in Detroit for one as a part of their working spring break program. Rev. Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Bro. Tom Allen, Howard Moms and Dads and others joined in the conversation.



Our Progress

The Trustee Board, under the leadership of Sis. Valerie Paramore, Trustee Pro Tem, continued their work.

The major accomplishments this year included:

- Upgraded lighting in the sanctuary to improve the viewing of the Worship experience for those on site and online.
- Addition of two 85-inch monitors in the sanctuary to provide visual support during Wordship and other events.
- Beautification and restoration of eight restrooms. The remaining restrooms will be completed in the 2025-2026 conference year.
- Resurfacing and striping of the parking lot.
- The Charles Harris and Pearl Flowers Atrium was upgraded with the replacement of the flooring, addition of tiling, and upgrades to the planting boxes and flower beds.
- Our Transportation Ministry expanded with the purchase of a 12-passenger van.

These are just a few of the projects that took place during the conference year. The Trustee Board continues their focus of being committed to the needs of Oak Grove.



The Motherland

This year your contributions benefited a number of mission works both at home and abroad. We are very proud of the assistance that we provided to replace a roof on one of the churches in Kasungu, Malawi. The pictures represent the before and after. Your tithes and offerings made a difference.



Oak Village C.A.R.E.S. Our Community Development Corporation

Oak Village Community Development Corporation for the Advancement, Renewal, Equity and Success (C.A.R.E.S.) continues their work. Each year the successes are measured by growth and strengthening of community partnerships.

In Spring 2023 the nonprofit organization purchased a lot on 20050 Ohio Street with the goal to create a Neighborhood Community Garden. They were able to change the lot permit status from residential to garden. The garden's name is "Oak Village C.A.R.E.S. Community Garden." This conference year they were awarded a Neighborhood Beautification Grant from Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency.

As part of their mission statement – "Community" they have received favorable support from the neighbors on the block and the community. Students from University of Detroit Jesuit built six of the plant beds. The Neighborhood Block Club (Ohio 19000's and 20000's) have assisted in planting, adding lot enhancements, and ongoing watering. This collaborative effort is a true testament that building a community takes everyone, with a spirit of LOVE!!



BEFORE



AFTER

MISSION STATEMENT

Oak Grove African Methodist Episcopal Church strives to set a Christian standard within the Metropolitan Detroit area, Nation, and World through its commitment to Missions, Evangelism, Proclamation and Study of the Word, Worship and Stewardship. We are called to make a difference by serving the total needs of our members and people from all walks of life, regardless of age, gender, national origin or economic background.



19801 Cherrylawn
Detroit, MI 48221
(313) 341-8877
www.oakgroveame.org

Rev. Cindy Rudolph, Senior Pastor