

# *The Council President's Report and Message*

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**R**ejoice and Greetings to Senior and Host Bishop Marshall Gilmore, Patron Bishop Lawrence L. Reddick III, Past Patron Bishop Nathaniel Linsey, Patron Bishop Emeritus C. D. Coleman, Bishop Thomas L. Hoyt President of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, my bishop, Bishop Paul A. Stewart, and Mrs. Earline Stewart, other distinguished members of the College of Bishops, their wives and widows, Council Officers, Immediate Past President Dr. Judith E. Grant, Dr. Sylvia M. Faulk President Emeritus, Executive Board Members, General Officers, Judicial Council, Connectional Officers, Clergy, Missionaries, Laity, Ecumenical and Special Guests.

Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice! I greet you in the name above all other names, the one who calls us into this ministry of "Meeting the Challenges of a Changing World." I speak of Jesus the Christ.

## **Reflective Moments of Gratitude**

I am honored, thankful and humbled to have the privilege of making my first report to the Executive Board of the mission, ministry and the accomplishments of the work of the Women's Missionary Council of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Let me thank the delegates to the 15th Quadrennial Assembly held in Charlotte, North Carolina, July 28 thru August 3, 2003 for electing me the Ninth President of this great organization.

What a challenge and an opportunity to be of service to mankind. I have spent many hours in organizational matters, and I am grateful to each of you for your help and encouragement. These six months has been a learning experience in the pathway of faith. I have realized that "*great pressure means great power.*" I know what prayer can do. For if we pray and trust in God and wait patiently, that simply provides the occasion for God to show up and display His almighty power.

"I always pray with joy...being confidence of this that He who began a good work in you, will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philipians 1:4, 6.

We are fortunate to have a great slate of Officers, Division Leaders, Secretaries, Chairpersons, Affiliate Representatives, and Region Presidents. I commend each of you for the work and creativity you have exhibited since being elected or appointed.

I am grateful for the committed missionaries who serve daily in their local churches and communities. Many times at great sacrifices, you do it with such love, joy, patience and courage, for this we say *thank you*.

To Patron Bishop Lawrence L. Reddick, III, thank you for your wisdom, guidance and the high measure of understanding given to me. Words of gratitude and thanks to the entire College of Bishops and their wives for their support and 1to the General Officers for your encouragement and kindness.

.The Women's Missionary Council will be 86 years old this year. We celebrate this great legacy by remembering the great missionaries who had a dream, an unconquerable conviction and the stamina to do something about it. For 85 years the Women's Missionary Council have been in the fore front providing leadership, scholarships and giving assistance to our CME Colleges. They were ordinary women with extra ordinary challenges and potential who God used in extra ordinary ways. They were just the kind of missionaries we need today to focus on the many challenges we face in this changing world. They are the kind of missionaries we need to cope with the pressing challenges of crime, teen pregnancies, gang wars, drug addiction, poor education, unemployment, AIDS and the many ills that affect our society. There are so many challenges and need, before us, that we don't have time to procrastinate or squander about prevailing issues.

I want to commend the Women's Missionary Council for its ability to support education through the Helena B. Cobb Scholarships, Grants and financial support to our CME Colleges, Overseas Missions, Hunger and Meals for Millions, your support to the Organization and Promotion Department, Eula H. Harris Life Membership, your participation in the affiliate organizations: World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women, Church Women United, National Council of Negro Women, American Bible Society, and Bread for the World. Additionally, I would like to thank the Handbook and Constitution and Bylaws Committee for compiling and editing our Women's Missionary Council Manual in such an expeditious manner. They are ready!! Make sure you take one home.

### **Who Will Speak For Our Children**

“Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.”

*James Baldwin, Nobody Knows My Name, 1961*

“Just because a child's parents are poor or uneducated is no reason to deprive the child of basic human rights to health care, education, and proper nutrition. Clearly we ignore the needs of black children, poor children, and handicapped children in this country.”

*Marian Wright Edelman*

*Quoted in Psychology Today, June 1975*

*Keith A. Russell, Editor-In Chief of “The Living Pulpit” October-December 2003 Editorial “Who will speak for the Children”.* We have a crisis in our own land, of plenty, there are warning signs regarding the needs of children and the youth. Youth unemployment is at its highest level in over fifty years. The Bush administration is seeking to lower the standards of quality in the administration of Head Start. Head Start has been one of the most successful programs for low-income children. Now, if standards are reduced, states will be free to cut further their already diminished commitment to children and youth. With states facing huge deficits, Head Start and other programs for the young will be significantly reduced. Who will speak for the children? What will they say? What is the role of the church in this crisis? Who will advocate, who will protect the children?

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### **What's Wrong with Our Children?**

Lord what's wrong with our children?  
Children having children  
Children killing children  
Children killing others  
Children killing themselves  
Children roaming streets alone or in gangs all day and night  
Children floating through life like driftwood on a beach  
Children addicted to tobacco and alcohol and heroin and cocaine and pot  
Drinking and drugging themselves to death to escape reality  
Children being locked up in jails with adult criminal mentors or all alone  
Children dying of AIDS  
Children bubbling with rage and crushed by depression

What's wrong with our children, Lord?  
Adults are what's wrong with our children  
Parents letting children raise themselves-or be raised by television  
Children roaming the streets because there's nobody  
At home or paying enough attention  
Children going to drug houses that are always open instead of school  
Houses and church houses that are often closed  
Children seeing adults be violent to each other and to them

What's wrong with our children?  
We're what's wrong with our children  
Adults telling children one thing and doing another  
Adults making promises we don't keep and preaching what we don't practice  
Adults telling children to control themselves while slapping and spanking  
Adults telling children to be honest while lying and cheating  
Adults telling children not to be violent while marketing and glorifying violence  
Adults telling children to be healthy while selling them junk food and  
Addicting them to smoke and drink and careless sex  
We are what's wrong with our children.  
Lord, help us to repent.

**( Hold My Hand: Prayers for Building a Movement to Leave No Child Behind.)**

What is the role of the Women's Missionary Council? The S.O.S. (Save Our Sons) initiative by Vice President Princess Pegues is right on target, I applaud her for her vision. However, in our efforts to save our sons, we must not forget our daughters, who are also in trouble. We know that children literally represent the future. We are challenged to find creative ways to save all of our children.

## Moments in America for All Children

Every 20 seconds	A child is arrested.
Every 23 seconds	A baby is born to an unmarried mother.
Every 36 seconds	A child is abused or neglected.
Every 37 seconds	A baby is born to a mother who is not a high school graduate.
Every 41 seconds	A baby is born into poverty
Every 59 seconds	A baby is born without health insurance
Every 60 seconds	A baby is born to a teen mother
Every 2 minutes	A baby is born with low birth weight.
Every 4 minutes	A baby is born to a mother who receives late or no prenatal care.
Every 6 minutes	A child arrested for drug abuse.
Every 8 minutes	A child is arrested for violent crimes.
Every 19 minutes	A child dies before his first birthday.
Every 42 minutes	A child or teen dies in an accident.
Every 3 hours	A child or teen is killed by a firearm.
Every 5 hours	A child or teen commits suicide.

*Children's Defense Fund Action Council-2003*

..... *who will speak for our children?*



## A Celebration for Everybody

Sometimes God's people are prone to celebrate their faith for their own benefit. God requires us to reach out to those who tend to be left behind. Psalm 68 recognized that praising the Lord was a way of including everybody. Some of the groups mentioned in Psalm 68 who had cause to celebrate God's greatness:

- Orphans (*The fatherless*)
- The lonely
- The prisoner
- The poor
- Victims of War
- People of other races

Let us recognize others in our worship and celebrations of the Lord today. Who do you know that's left out or left behind? If we are going to meet the challenges of this changing world, we must share the responsibility of being an advocate for those left behind.

Another area of concern is Elderly Abuse. We are living longer, thousands of senior citizens are being mistreated by family, care givers, and others. They suffer in silence from abuse because they are too afraid to turn in their abusers. The Illinois Department on Aging says it will handle about 8,000 reports of elder abuse by the end of the fiscal year in June. Let's multiply that by 49 other states. We must be an advocate for seniors by educating them about different kinds of elder abuse such as confinement, physical, emotional, financial, and sexual abuse.

**-The most common form of elderly abuse is financial exploitation.**

## Violence

Violence threatens, injures and kills countless people of all ages everywhere in the world. The spiral of violence continues, both on a domestic, and international level.

The decade to overcome violence around the world (2001-2010) is an initiative of the World Council of Churches a global movement. Churches seeking reconciliation and peace calls churches, ecumenical organizations and all people of good will to work together at all levels (local, region, global) with communities, secular movements people of living faiths for peace, justice and reconciliation. It call us to empower those oppressed by violence and to act in solidarity with those struggling for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Dr. Thelma Dudley, the 6th President of the Women's Missionary Council, captured it well when she penned the Missionary Song we love so well.

*“Many, many hands are called to do the master’s will  
From all around, God’s wide, wide world, we answer, yes we will.*

*We are missionaries, we are CME’s, we are missionaries Loyal CME’s*

*We’re feeding God’s hungry children, A loving task, we find, we’re clothing  
God’s naked children. Round’ the world-all the time.*

*We’re helping one another. Our young to educate; our seniors are the others,  
for whom more time we make.”*

We celebrate because we appreciate the great things that God has done in and through the Women’s Missionary Council. Many tasks have been completed, we have achieved much, and the people have been served. However we cannot rest on past laurels. The harvest is great! Can we count on you?

### **Presently we are:**

- Developing goals and objectives through our Department Secretaries, Commissions, Chairpersons, Affiliate Representatives for this Quadrennial (See Compilation and Statistics Book).
- Assisting with the payment of salaries for the Joseph C. Coles and the Mae C. Linsey Schools in Jamaica. (\$5,040.00)
- Assisting our Seminary students at Phillip School of Theology (\$2,300.00)
- Providing Funds for Helena B. Cobb four year scholarship recipients (6@ \$4,000.00 per year and 4@ \$1,000.00 per year.)
- Planning to give financial donations to all of our CME Colleges, Lane, Miles, Texas, and Paine College.
- Completed the Constitution and Bylaws manual.

*“...I will not offer to God that which cost me nothing”*  
II Samuel 24:24

**Share the Vision, Rejoice with Me!**

Much has been accomplished and I am glad about it. To whom much is given much is required.

**SHARE THE VISION, REJOICE WITH ME!**

- I see missionaries getting involved in educating our children.
- Our adult members mentoring our Mattie E. Coleman and Phyllis H. Bedford members.
- Developing Prison Ministries: United States has the highest inmate population in the world -- 1,962,220 in 2001.
- Adopting and sponsoring children who are in homeless shelters.
- Assisting in writing grants and proposal for our churches.
- Voter’s Registration Drives-This year, more that ever; we need to mobilize grassroots voters. The stakes couldn’t be higher for low-income and minority communities.
- Develop channels to influence public policy ( in a nonpartisan manner) on issues affecting women.
- Establish a system of information technology that would electronically connect all aspects of the council.
- Work to close the digital divide by developing vendor relationships that allow members access to equipment and software.

**Region Conferences**

Our Region Presidents continue to present creative Missionary Projects. (Read their reports in the Compilation and Statistics Booklet) Region presidents your position is a valuable asset to this organization. Wethank you for your labor of love.

**Statistical Data**

Number of Region Conferences	32
Number of Reports received	32
Number of Societies	1,473
Number of Adult Circles	1,147
Number of Adult Members	18,996

Number of Phyllis H. Bedford Departments	420
Number of Phyllis H. Bedford Members	2,875
Number of Mattie E. Coleman Departments	582
Number of Mattie E. Coleman Members	4,930
Number of Rossie T. Hollis Departments	628
Number of Rossie T. Hollis Members	5,604
Number Added	319
Number of Deceased	2,548
Total Society Members	32,375
Number Participating NCNW	189
Number Participating CWU	1,111
Number Participating WFMUCW	349

Amount Reported \$(100.00 Marchers)  
Lena Jones Rice Marchers 579,045.15

*This report does not include the 10th Episcopal District 8 Region Conferences, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Haiti, and Jamaica.*

#### **President's Itinerary**

Aug. 9, 03	Funeral Services - Rev. Dr. James Hawkins, Columbus, GA
Aug. 11-14, 03	Southeast MO, IL & WI Region Conference, Oconomowoc, WI
Aug. 19-21,03	Southern California Region-Missionary Speaker, San Diego, CA
Aug. 24-29,03	17 <sup>TH</sup> CME Convocation- New Orleans, LA
Sept. 5-6,03	On-Site Visit Hyatt Regency DFW, Dallas, TX
Sept. 12-13,03	Board of Trustee Meeting, Lane College-Jackson, TN
Sept. 19-21,03	Transition Meeting-WMC, Marriot Hotel-Memphis, TN
Oct. 16-18,03	One Church-One School Partnership-Hilton Hotel-Chicago, IL
Nov. 4-7,03	National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA and Installation Service for Bishop Thomas L. Hoyt-Jackson, MS
Nov. 13-15,03	World Federation of Methodist & Uniting Church Women Region IV, Mrs. Belvia J. Strickland, Chairperson-Lisle, IL
Nov. 21-23,03	Constitution-Bylaws & Handbook Committee Meeting, Holiday Inn Select-Chicago, IL
Dec. 3-7,03	National Council of Negro Women Leadership Conference, Hyatt Regency-Washington, D.C.
Dec. 9,03	Funeral Service of Mrs. Narsis Lakey, Westside CME Church- Atlanta, GA
Dec. 11,03	Second On-Site Visit, Hyatt Regency-Dallas, TX
Dec. 12-14, 03	Senior Bishop Marshall Gilmore 50th Years of Ministry, Cathedral Of Love CME Church- Dallas, TX
Dec. 19-20, 03	Winter Council, SE, MO, IL & WI-Beloit, WI
Jan. 3-8, 03	General Officers Meeting, Pastor's Conference, Phillip School of Theology Board of Trustee Meeting and 54 <sup>TH</sup> Founder's Day
Feb. 6-7, 04	Lane College Board of Trustee Meeting-Jackson, TN
Feb. 7-9, 04	Missionary Society Speaker, St. Luke CME Church-Shreveport, LA
Feb. 29, 04	Missionary Society Speaker, Carter Metropolitan CME Church, Forth Worth, Texas.
Mar. 2-7, 04	Executive Board Meeting, Hyatt Regency DFW-Dallas, TX

It is my fervent prayer that one of the final outcomes of this Quadrennial will be ACTION: (Accountable, Committed, Tenacious, Inclusive, Obligation, and Network) that will help us to be God's agents for positive and personal changes on all levels. My prayer is that the Lord will use the Women's Missionary Council to help His people be the link between the power of God and the Challenges of the changing world.

Real service is always hard and demanding with many difficulties, but there is a certain greatness in service that cannot be acquired in any other way. God has given us many signs to guide us in making sure that the Women's Missionary Council is still here in this century, serving as a beacon of light of hope to unborn generations. We have a great and immediate challenge before each of us, to realize that we hold in trust the work of other people. Mrs. Caroline Poe, Dr. Mattie E. Coleman, Mrs. Rossie T. Hollis, Mrs. Helena B. Cobb, Mrs. Eula F. Harris, Mrs. Phyllis H. Bedford, Dr. Pauline B. Grant, Dr. Thelma J. Dudley, Dr. Sylvia M. Faulk, and Dr. Judith E. Grant, many unnamed missionaries who at great sacrifice kept the dream alive. Just as these leaders showed us the way, we must continue to keep the dream and legacy alive. Refuse to be satisfied any longer with meager accomplishments. Aspire to a higher, a nobler and full life.

Then and only will we be able to *Rejoice and Celebrate*.

Rejoice,



Elnora P. Hamb  
9th President of the Women's Missionary Council  
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Women's Missionary Council join with the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical organization in the Decade to Overcome Violence 2001-2010. Website: [www.wcc-coe.org/dov.2](http://www.wcc-coe.org/dov.2)
2. That the Women's Missionary Council Network with Project Vote the Nation's Leader in Non-Partisan Voter Registration and Mobilization Work with Minority and Low-income Americans. (1-800-546-VOTE (8683) or visit website: [www.projectvote.org](http://www.projectvote.org).)
3. That each Region Conference select an Editorial Representative who shall submit monthly articles for her/his Region to the Editor for Publication in the Missionary Messenger.
4. That the Women's Missionary Council support the One Church-One School, A Community Partnership Program by encouraging each Missionary Society to Partner with a school in your community. (For information call Mrs. Phedonia Johnson, National Director of One Church, One School, at (773-651-0071).
5. That every Missionary, Pastor, Presiding Elder, and Bishop be a subscriber to the Missionary Messenger.
6. That the Women's Missionary Council support the S.O.S. (Save our Sons) Initiative, Helena B. Cobb Scholarship and increase our giving for Hunger and Meals for Millions.
7. That the Women's Missionary Council develop channels to influence Public Policy (In a Nonpartisan Manner) on issues affecting women.
8. That we concentrate and commit ourselves to make a concerted effort to organize Rossie T. Hollis, Mattie E. Coleman, and Phyllis H. Bedford Departments on all levels.
9. That the Women's Missionary Council select ministries to help our Triumphant Motherland-Tenth Episcopal District through the Overseas Mission Department.
10. That the Women's Missionary Council publish an E-mail directory for quicker dissemination of information.
11. That the Women's Missionary Council be an advocate for Elder's Abuse in our communities.
12. That we extend thanks to Senior Bishop and Mrs. Marshall Gilmore and the Members of the Eighth Episcopal District for the hospitality shown to the Executive Board Members and all those in attendance.