

Social Action Commission - African Methodist Episcopal Church

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Liberty and Justice for All”

Following the tragedy at Mother Emanuel AME Church, Charleston, South Carolina where nine of our congregants were murdered by a white racist, the question was raised of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), “what’s next”? What will the AME Church do 195 years after Denmark Vesey, a founder of Mother Emmanuel, sought to address the ills of slavery? What will the African Methodist Episcopal Church do? Out of this tragedy, God has provided the AME Church an opportunity to impact our nation, to motivate the United States to confront and destroy the demonic spirit of racism.

Social Action Commission Chair, Bishop Reginald T. Jackson announces that, “On September 2nd the AME Church joined by our sister communions; the AME Zion and CME churches will hold a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, DC at 10AM. Joining in solidarity will be the National Council of Churches and other faith communions, who following the Charleston tragedy reached out to African Methodism to offer their support. At the press conference we will call upon the nation’s elected political leadership, citizens, and people of good will across the nation to confront and take action to end racism.” In 2008, following the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States of America(USA) , it was said that the USA was now in a post racial period. This was absolutely false. In fact the election of the nation’s first Black president infuriated some in this country who viewed the election of a Black president as unacceptable. Protests were heard echoing sentiments like, “we want our country back”, or that “Barack Obama could not be president because he is from Kenya”. In addition evidence surfaced of racial profiling by law enforcement which targeted Blacks, and resulted in unarmed Blacks being unjustly killed by law enforcement. The USA has documented: 1) the proliferation of guns in the Black community, mass incarceration where Blacks are jailed disproportionately compared to whites, systematic economic injustice denying opportunity and hope to many Blacks; 2) a public school system which fails to provide Blacks a good education exacerbating Black unemployment, poverty, family breakup while creating a feeder system for the correction system. In fact, following the national election in 2012, a deliberate and racist effort to suppress the Black vote has emerged with renewed energy. Racism is a major problem in the USA and we can no longer continue to be in denial about it. The AME Church and our sister communions must seize this moment to lead our nation in confronting and destroying racism, unless we allow it to continue to destroy us and our children.

The Council of Bishops and the Social Action Commission call upon our clergy and laity to join us in Washington, DC in September, as we call our nation to action against racism. On Tuesday, September 1st there will be a worship service at John Wesley AME Zion Church, 16th St., Washington, DC at 7PM and the press conference on Wednesday, September 2nd at 10AM. The address for the National Press Club is 529 14th St., NW, Washington, DC.

The press conference will not be the beginning and end of this effort. There will be interaction and meetings with the White House, Cabinet members, Congress, governors and other agencies. Very important to this effort will be the support and participation of local churches all across the nation. Racism occurs most often in local communities. An “Action Guide” will be prepared to assist local churches in this effort. Historically, the Black church has been the conscience of the nation; and we shrink not from that conscience stirring role for the nation once again.

Weekly updates will be provided as we come closer to September 1st. Be in prayer now that God will lead and bless our effort. We can do nothing without God.

For further information please contact Sistah “Jackie” Dupont Walker, Director of Social Action for the AME Church at (213)494-9493.