

AME Mid-Year Convocation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 9, 2006 - The Seventh Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church will convene at the Florence Civic Center, March 16-18, 2006, for a Mid-Year Convocation. The Right Reverend Preston Warren Williams II, Bishop for the state of South Carolina, will preside over the convocation. Clergy and lay delegates from each of the more than 500 congregations within the state, will be in attendance.

The Mid-Year Convocation is an annual time of spiritual renewal, strategic planning and financial accountability. It is known for its grand worship services and profound teaching sessions. This year's Convocation is certain to equal, if not surpass, those of other years. Preparations are being made for more than 2,000 worshipers at the Holy Communion Service on Thursday, March 16, 2006, at 7:00 p.m.

Bishop Williams is the 119th consecrated bishop of the A.M.E. Church. He was appointed to the Seventh Episcopal District representing the state of South Carolina, during the 47th General Conference of the A.M.E. Church, which met in July 2004. Since this appointment, he has been instrumental in developing new initiatives toward the goal of empowering the lives of the citizens of South Carolina.

Bishop Williams' leadership has had significant impact upon this state. Most noteworthy is the partnership he has developed between the Sons of Allen (the male ministry component of the denomination) and the Department of Juvenile Justice. This partnership has resulted in the creation of several new ministries that address the needs of inmates and their families on the road to rehabilitation and reintegration into the community. Preventative programs have also been developed for high risk youth.

Through Bishop Williams, the A.M.E. Church also partners with the American Association of Retired Persons. Bishop Williams contributed to numerous congregations partnering with local agencies to enhance the availability of health care, reduce the prevalence of preventable illness, address emerging issues in education, assist families in obtaining affordable housing, responding to disasters both local and abroad, and preparing young adults for professional life.

As the chairperson for the board of trustees of Allen University, an A.M.E. facility, Bishop Williams has spearheaded several expansion and new programs. He was instrumental in Allen becoming a member of the United Negro College Fund. He has also facilitated the purchase of land for dormitories and supervised the renovation of several historical buildings. This year enrollment has exceeded those of recent years.

Rev. J. H. McAllister, Sr., and the Mount Zion A.M.E. Church are hosting the Mid Year Convocation. Mount Zion, located on Cheves Street, and is one of the leading congregations of Florence. They have more than 50 ministries that address the needs of the local community.