

Christian Education Sunday

Sunday, September 20, 2020



QUINQUENNIAL THEME EMPHASIS:

Refocusing on Our Purpose,
Reviewing Our Practices, Retooling Our People,
Reaching Our Potential

REVIVING OUR PRAISE

“CONSECRATED”

Joshua 3:5; Acts 3:6-8; Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

SEPTEMBER 2020-SEPTEMBER 2021

Brenda L. G. Smith, Ed.D., LHD

General Secretary, Christian Education Department

Dearly beloved,

We will celebrate Christian Education Sunday throughout Zion on Sunday, September 20, 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all of humanity and interrupted our way of life. As such, the General Conference has been postponed to the summer of 2021. Therefore, the Christian Education Department added a new theme which is “Reviving Our Praise” as our Quadrennial is now a Quinquennial. With mental illness, inappropriate online behavior, domestic violence, suicide and other evils that are plaguing our communities while we shelter-in-place, the focus theme will be “Consecrated.”

As we embark upon the uncharted waters of a new year, as Christian educators, we have before us a shepherd’s responsibility and a leader’s opportunity. As we explore the theme for the last year of our Quinquennial, “Reviving Our Praise”, we have a responsibility to prepare ourselves to develop leadership strategies that have a spiritual focus. Our theme reminds us that we must certainly, “Revive Our Praise” for in doing so, we reconnect with God because He takes delight in our praise. (Psalm 35:27 KJV)

Our focus theme, “Consecrated” refocuses us to holiness. To be consecrated is to be set apart or called out. 1 Peter 1:16 states, “For it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”” Holiness is not a suggestion, but a command that we as Christians must adhere to. Through the avenue of consecration, our praise will be revived and set free. Consecrated means that we intentionally seek ways to flee from sin and pursue His righteousness. Consecrated means that we do not settle for less and make excuses but press toward the mark which is in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14). The late Reverend Dr. Kathryn G. Brown championed the motto, “Excellence without Excuse” because of her commitment to emulation of Christ in her work and play. Being consecrated means going beyond good intentions. Being consecrated means so much more than saying we are consecrated. Our lifestyle of consecration must be consistent with what we preach.

Let us spend time during the year in our churches and conferences having our children, youth, young adults and adults demonstrate and share through words and deeds how they are living “consecrated” lives unto the Lord. We must be diligent and not neglectful in these most significant matters.

As Christian Educators, we must be able to work collaboratively with Christian Educators on all levels to identify those services that are most needed by families and members of our churches and our communities. We must also use the gifts and talents with which we have been blessed to be a blessing to others. We must be living examples of the Christian way of life, and our children, youth and young adults will be witnesses to how we follow God’s commandment, as found in Matthew 28:19-20, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Sincerely,



Dr. Brenda L.G. Smith, Ed.D., LHD

“Reviving Our Praise”

2 Chronicles 20 teaches us that the battle is not ours, but it belongs to the Lord. As three enemies came against King Jehoshaphat and the inhabitants of Judah, God told him not to be afraid but to face the enemies. By doing so, Jehoshaphat organized a choir and as they marched toward the enemy, they began to praise the name of the Lord. Their praise confused the enemy and the bible says that the three armies destroyed themselves. May we never forget that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). However, before going out to face the enemy, the inhabitants of Judah fasted, prayed and got on one accord. They took the time to consecrate themselves before the Lord prior to them going out to face the enemy. Praise is a weapon but we must train to know how to use it. Our training comes through consecration. In fact, praise without consecration is an emotional theatrical performance. When its all over, its business as usual with no change of heart or renewing of mind (Romans 12).

When consecration precedes praise, there is a revival, renewal and refocusing. The late Rev. Dr. Lewis M. Anthony once said, “What’s the point of catching on fire if you can’t explain combustion?” Revival occurs in our hearts when we recognize that we live, move and have our being in the Lord. Something happens on the inside and we begin to identify with the father of Methodism who said that he felt strangely warm. Consecration brings into focus that we are all sinners saved by grace which in fact, leads us to gratefulness and thanksgiving. All of this promotes praise which is authentic, heartfelt and passionate. No one’s praise should be the same for we all have a different testimony. Praise is not a one size fits all but is custom made tailored to one’s experience.

Praise helps us to tell our problems about God instead of telling God about our problems. Praise refocuses us as it did to King Jehoshaphat. Instead of looking at the enemies, he decided to look to God. Praise produces affirmations such as: “He will make a way out of no way! He’s an on-time God, yes, He is! He will never leave me or forsake me! I will win!”

Solomon also looked to God when he finished the temple in 2 Chronicles 6. Solomon prayed on behalf of Israel and asked that the Lord would bless the temple that he built. Solomon mentioned his father David several times in his prayer. He reminded God of the various promises that He made to His father. Verse 7 says “My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. David had the vision, but Solomon had the commission!

Notice what the Israelites did after Solomon’s prayer. They watched as the fire descended and the glory of the Lord came. Then they bowed down with their faces to the ground and worshipped and praised the Lord. They weren’t looking at each other or waiting for the organist to get on key. They were not distracted by what the people had on. They did not argue about who was going to sing the solo or who’s turn was it to usher... Why? Because their focus was not on each other, it was on God! They decided to consecrate themselves and then the glory fell on them.

When the glory comes, ritual transforms into relationship. When the glory comes, dysfunction turns into deliverance. When the glory comes, brokenness changes into a blessing! When the glory comes, it's not business as usual. I realize that my good days outweigh my bad days. That which was supposed to kill me made me stronger... that the very thing that drove me crazy and gave me suicidal thoughts became my testimony. God kept me when I couldn't keep myself. He loved me when I couldn't love myself. He took the time to put the pieces of my life back together when I broke it!

Do you want the glory to come? Do you want the Lord to fill the temple? Then you must pray like Solomon in Chapter 6. Consecrate ourselves, pray and ask God to **"Revive Our Praise."**

The story is told of the young man who refused to go to church when he was invited. He was not a bad man; he just didn't believe. He was not interested in church...and there was only one church in the area. It was cold and dead—a social club, with no decisions being made.

One after another, members went to visit with a sweet potato pie asking him to come to church. He said no. Finally, the Pastor went to the young man's house and asked him to attend church. Again, the young man said no. One day the church building caught on fire, and the whole town ran toward it to help extinguish the flames...including the young man! Someone hollered out: "Hey, this is something new for you, the first time we've ever seen you running to church!" He replied, "This is the first time I've ever seen the church on fire!" John Wesley said that if one catches on fire, folks will come to see you burn. However, a sustainable fire comes from consecrated heart. Only then will praise be revived.

Expect the Great,



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CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020

On behalf of the Board of the Christian Education Department of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, we congratulate Zionites across the world who have successfully completed their Diploma, Associates, Bachelor, Masters, Doctorate and/or Certificate from educational institutions at all levels.

EXCELLENCE WITHOUT EXCUSE

God gave you gifts when you were born. Now He has trained and prepared you to share your gifts with the world. Please be encouraged to pursue this by the following:

- ✓ Give of your best to the Master
- ✓ Be the change that you are looking for
- ✓ Make a difference in your community

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Psalm 105:4 NIV LOOK TO THE LORD

"Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always." Let us never forget where our strength comes from. It comes from the Lord.

James 1:12 NIV YOU DID IT!

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

"LEADERS ARE LEARNSERS"

- The Rt. Rev. W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate
Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District

Never stop learning or reading because the world is an open book. Be teachable and look for ways to grow. Graduation is not just a day but a process because it means to change gradually or by degrees.



Visit us:

www.cedamezion.com

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY 2020 – LITANY**

LEADER: I am called to be a credible, committed, consecrated Christian disciple.

**RESPONSE: I am prepared to be a living example of your good works,
dear Lord, and will continually praise your name.**

LEADER: I am called to be a credible, committed, consecrated Christian disciple.

**RESPONSE: I am committed to spreading the good news of your love
and mercy, Oh God, to all.**

LEADER: I am called to be a credible, committed, consecrated Christian disciple whom you have commissioned to use the gifts with which you blessed me so that I may be a blessing to others.

**RESPONSE: I will serve you with all that is within me and I know that
you will continue to show me the way, the truth, and the life.**

LEADER: As a credible, committed, consecrated Christian disciple, I give you praise. I need you to calm my spirit so that I may receive your direction for my life.

**RESPONSE: God, thank you for your love which allows us to fulfill your
purpose and the call on our lives.**

LEADER: To be committed to Christ means that we must focus on our relationship with You, Dear Lord, not just for today, but for every day that You give your children.

**ALL: Let us together commit ourselves and our lives to God, for
He is the light of the world. There will be no turning back.**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY WORSHIP

Recommended Scriptures: Biblical References – Catching on fire for the Lord

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psalm 35:27• Joshua 3:5• 2 Peter 1:5-15 MSG• 1 Peter 4:10-11• Matthew 5: 14-16 MSG• Romans 12:1-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 Chronicles 6• Acts 2:3, 4• Acts 16:22-34• Jeremiah 20:9• Luke 3:16• John 4 |
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***Recommended Music: (MUSIC MINISTRY)**

Lift Him Up – Page 533 AME Zion Hymnal

They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love – A.M.E. Zion Bicentennial
Hymnal, Page 683

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus – No Turning Back, No Turning Back!

You Tube – The CEDARMONT KIDS

Take My Life, and Let It Be – Page 208 AME ZION Hymnal

“Hush! Somebody’s Callin’ My Name” - Children’s Choir

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s20TTam_Nm4Lord, I Lift Your
Name On High - Liturgical Team)

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=watvch3twsugNAFIK>)

Souled Out Hezekiah Walker

<https://youtu.be/pTPDddFzl0I>

Not where I Belong Building 429

<https://youtu.be/vqIvoFWFhds>

Give Myself away William McDowell

<https://youtu.be/0dwB29pYR40>

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY –

Yes Shekinah Glory Ministries

<https://youtu.be/nvsYcuO6B4w>

Dear Christian Educator,

You will have a full year to creatively explore the Christian Education theme, “Consecrated” and The Christian Education Department invites you to submit to Mrs. Jennifer Armstrong, Director of Administration in the CED office, copies of programs, plays, photos, videos, songs written and other activities that you may use during the year to observe Christian Education Day, and to explore the year’s theme –“Consecrated” and the focus theme – “Reviving Our Praise.”

Our youth are very creative and the church must encourage them to use their gifts, and we must provide for them opportunities to display their gifts and talents to bless the church. We would like your permission to share your suggestions and work with Christian educators through your Episcopal Directors as well, who will, in turn, share with the churches in each Episcopal area.

- Have a special Sunday for grandparents. This year, it is on Sunday, September 13, 2020. Have youth invite their grandparents to church or someone who has been like a grandparent to them. If possible, celebrate this day on September 12th, National Grandparents Day with a panel discussion following service or in the afternoon.
- With the pastor’s permission and with the help of the Christian Education Director, have youth prepare a list of questions regarding issues and challenges that grandparents may have experienced growing up and capture any recommendations that grandparents may have that will contribute to the Christian growth and development of the young people in the church and community.
- Grandparents’ Day would be a lovely time to ask members bring their favorite “dishes” or have refreshments after the panel discussion. Ask permission of participants to video this program.
- During the year, you will also receive additional information that you may wish to use. We want you to also feel free to develop your own materials to share.





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

PASS It On (Y.A.C.M. THEME SONG)

It only takes a spark to get a fire going,
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing;
That's how it is with God's Love,
Once you've experienced it,
You'll spread the love to everyone
You want to pass it on.

What a wondrous time is spring,
When all the trees are budding
The birds begin to sing, the flowers start their blooming;
That's how it is with God's love,
Once you've experienced it.
You want to sing, it's fresh like spring,
You want to pass it on.

I wish for you my friend
This happiness that I've found;
You can depend on God
It matters not where you're bound,
I'll shout it from the mountain top – PRAISE GOD!

I want the world to know
The Lord of love has come to me
I want to pass it on. I'll shout it from the mountain top –PRAISE GOD!
I want the world to know. The Lord of love has come to me. I want to
pass it on!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

“We Are Christian Educators”

(to the tune of “We Are Climbing Jacob’s Ladder)-Written by Dr. Mary Love)

We are Christian Educators.

Red and blue are our colors.

We are Christian Educators.

Red and blue are our colors.

We are Christian Educators.

Red and blue are our colors.

Answering to God’s call.

Visually showing or call.

We are teaching one another.

We are following your Son, Jesus.

We are teaching one another.

We are following your Son, Jesus.

We are teaching one another.

We are following your Son, Jesus.

We are teaching one another.

Striving to be your Church.

Answering to God’s call.

OPTIONAL VERSE –

Rise! Shine! Give God the glory!

Rise! Shine! Give God the glory

Rise! Shine! Give God the glory!

Soldier of the cross!

They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love

based on John 13:35

Page 683 in the AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,

And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,

And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land:

We will work with each other, we will work side by side,

We will work with each other, we will work side by side,

And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride:

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,

And all praise to Christ Jesus, His only Son, And all praise to the Spirit, who

makes us one:

Refrain (after each stanza):

And they'll know we are Christians by our Love, by our Lord, by our Love,

Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love

TIPS FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS

The work of Christian Education covers the gamut of life experiences. Take the time to make relevant connections with various areas of life that affect members of your congregation. Study and use the monthly celebrations in awareness raising opportunities. We are called to be good stewards of all resources. We should not be single focused. Take every opportunity to nurture the body of Christ. Work with the pastor and use the time of announcements and the weekly bulletins to educate. A few suggestions follow for the months of September, October, and November

September



Back-to-School: Plan an activity to bring attention to students' return to school and keeping God first in all things. Be sensitive to families who may be struggling to obtain the needed supplies for school. Plan a project to address the needs of children of incarcerated parents or homeless children. Have a Back-to-School Sunday or a Back-to-School Sunday Revival. Challenge the congregation to be just as concerned about studying God's Word as they are about secular education.



Christian Education Sunday/Week is observed the third week in September. It is a time to highlight the teaching ministry of the congregation and to recognize those who work in the area of Christian Education. Spiritual formation is necessary. Christian education is vital to the process of truly becoming disciples of Jesus.



Grandparents' Day is observed on September 13 and recognizes the older generation and the role they play in the lives of their grandchildren. Note that many grandparents are raising their children and need the support and encouragement of the church.



Labor Day/Sunday began in 1894 to give recognition to laborers who are the driving force to the country's economy.



Overseas Missions Sunday is observed on the fourth Sunday in September and focuses on missions within the A. M. E. Zion Church.



Health Issues Awareness include healthy aging, alcohol and drug addiction recovery, Infant mortality, childhood cancer, leukemia and lymphoma, cholesterol education, pain awareness, prostate cancer, sports and home eye safety, suicide prevention, and sickle cell anemia

October



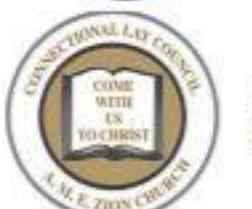
Varick Day is observed on the first Sunday in October to give recognition to James Varick, the founder and first bishop of the A. M. E. Zion Church.



October Clergy Appreciation Sunday/Month is celebrated on October 11, 2020. Note Hebrews 13:7 reminds us to remember our leaders who proclaim God's word to us.



Decision Day is observed on the second Sunday in October to encourage people to make a decision for Christ and encourage an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ.



Laity Sunday is observed the third Sunday in October and commemorates the founding of the A.M.E. Zion Church, October 16, 1796 in New York City.



Mother-in-Law's Day is observed on the fourth Sunday in October



National Boss' Day is observed on October 16 as a time for employees to show appreciation for their employers or supervisors.



Children's Sabbath is the third weekend with an emphasis on the needs of children. This is sponsored by the Children's Defense Fund.



Life Members' Month is October and observed by the W. H. O. M. Society of the A. M. E. Zion Church.



World Communion Sunday is observed on the first Sunday in October and focuses on Christian unity remembering that Jesus shed blood for the redemption of all people.



Health Issues Awareness includes eye injury prevention, breast cancer, domestic violence, Down Syndrome, physical therapy, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, dental hygiene, fire prevention, depression, and mental illness.

November



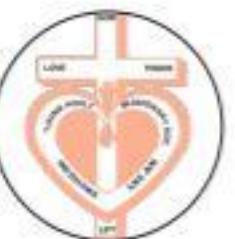
National Bible Week is observed November 21-28 to highlight the importance of reading and studying the Bible.



Thanksgiving is November 25. Lead the congregation in reflecting on their reasons to give God thanks.



Veteran's Day is observed November 11 and is a time to recognize those who have served the country and to pray intentionally for those currently serving.



Willa Mae Rice Day is observed November 7th in recognition of the founder of the Young Adult Missionary Society (Y. A. M. S.) of the A. M. E. Zion Church.



Health Issues Awareness includes diabetes, adoption, caregivers, hospice palliative care, hypertension, lung cancer, Alzheimer's disease, healthy skin, pancreatic cancer, and smoking addiction.

Whose Child Are You?

Scriptures

Romans 8:17 NLT

“And since we are His children, we are His heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.”

<https://www.bible.com/bible/116/rom.8.17.nlt>

Galatians 3:29 NLT

“And now that belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God’s promise to Abraham belongs to you.”

<https://www.bible.com/bible/116/gal.3.29.nlt>

Exercise (Lead children in a discussion of the scriptures)

Exercise A

God’s Word tells us that when we accept Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior, we are heirs of God’s glory. It also tells us that if we share His glory, we must also share his suffering. What do you think this means? (Romans 8:9-39)

(Discussion prompts – does it mean we have to suffer exactly the way Jesus suffered? {On the cross, be whipped, etc.} What are some ways you think children might suffer?

Exercise B

What were God's promises to Abraham? How do we become Abraham's heirs? (See Galatians 3:16 – 4:29 and Romans 4:1- 25)

Exercise C

Complete the Spiritual Family Tree

- The roots represent Abraham and Jesus
- The trunk represents you

The leaves represent gifts and talents you have as a child of God

My Spiritual Family Tree

