

The AMEC Clergy Family Information Center

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
Mrs. Ora L. Easley



THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF BISHOPS AND GENERAL BOARD MEETING

June 20-21, 2017

Los Angeles Airport Hilton Hotel
5711 West Century Boulevard
Los Angeles, California

Bishop McKinley Young, Senior Bishop
Bishop Clement W. Fugh, Host Bishop and President, Council of Bishops
Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President, General Board
Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, Chair, Commission on Social Action

Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont Walker, Director, Social Action



*African Methodist Episcopal Church
Social Action Commission*

Bishop Frank M. Reid, III, Commission Chair

Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont-Walker, Director/Consultant

Mrs. Ora L. Easley, Administrator, CFIC

“A Global Ministry of Connectivity, Sharing and Compassion”

Mrs. Ora L. Easley, Administrator



“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and that whatever you ask in my name, the Father will give you. “John 15:16 (NIV)

GREETINGS:

To: Bishop McKinley Young, Senior Bishop; Bishop Clement W. Fugh, President of the Council of Bishops and Host Bishop; Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President of the General Board; Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, Chair of the Commission on Social Action; Bishops of the Church; Episcopal Supervisors; General and Connectional Officers; Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont-Walker, Director of Social Action; members of the General Board; members of the Commission on Social Action; my sisters and brothers, ALL. GREETINGS!

PRIMARY FUNCTION OF THE MINISTRY (CFIC) – THE POSTING OF BEREAVEMENT NOTIFICATIONS:

A blessed privilege it is to share the annual stewardship accountability report as the Administrator of The Clergy Family Information Center; an online notification ministry reaching outward to AME Church family members in Districts 1-20, a ministry of connectivity, of sharing and of compassion. The primary function of the ministry is the posting of **Bereavement Notifications**. These notifications inform e-mail recipients of deaths occurring within the clergy families of our Zion, from the church leadership downward to those who serve in hard and remote places.

THE VERIFICATION PROCESS:

Deliberate care is exercised with each notification to avoid the posting of erroneous bereavements of service information which could be disquieting and chaotic for the families involved. The verification process involves the human element of the ministry, as telephone contact is made to express sympathy to families and to gather available service information, unless notifications are received from Episcopal District Offices. However, experience has taught, to make follow-up telephone calls to designated funeral establishments to cross-reference for accuracy, where possible, regardless of the source of the message. Bereaved families in their hour of grief, make service hour changes, necessitating verification with the funeral establishment prior to posting the bereavement notice to the connectional church family. **For most bereavement notification posted**, the following steps are taken, regardless of the individual's status in ministerial service:

- I. Telephone calls are made to the designated funeral establishment to verify arrangements provided. (Districts 1-13). Also for correct spelling of names.
- II. International calls are made to verify Episcopal Family Bereavements when the occasion warrants.
- III. A cross check is made to see if the funeral establishment has an online guest book to insert in email as a clickable link.
- IV. When a funeral establishment is not listed, phone calls are made to a family member or office staff to secure.
- V. Calls are made to many bereaved families to verify service information.
- VI. A cross check is made to verify the day of the week with the date listed.
- VII. Email addresses posted are verified by sending a message of condolence.

- VIII. A message of condolence on behalf of the ministry and the SAC are emailed to the bereaved family member or placed on an online Guest Book.
- IX. Finally, a summarization of each bereavement posted is logged that the CFIC website might be updated monthly.

How heart rendering is the time spent speaking with bereaved family members, some sharing cherished moments or human interest moments about the life of their deceased loved one. Also, they express their gratitude, as they say, "how pleased they are that someone from the connectional AME Church thought well enough of the family to call and express words of sympathy." The array of funeral programs received, lovely notes and email words of gratitude, validates over and over the significant of the CFIC ministry in the lives of bereaved families over the days, months and years.

A concerted effort is made to verify every bereavement notices posted, therefore, follow-up information, updates and addendums **are only posted at the request of the Presiding Bishop in which the deceased resides or unless the deceased is a part of the Church Leadership requiring a greater distribution of details.

CONGRATULATORY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Congratulatory announcements are shared on Friday, providing opportunity for commendation's, congratulations and well wishes to be extended by the AME Church family to those who are praising God for the Joy of significant milestones reached in their lives.

CONGRATULATORY ANNOUNCEMENT GUIDELINES:

The following are posted by The Clergy Family Information Center: Graduations, baccalaureate degrees and above; academic achievements; birth of PK's, grandchildren and great-grandchildren; birthday celebrations – 70 years and above, 75, 80, 85; 90, etc.; weddings of ministers, PK's, grandchildren and great grandchildren; wedding anniversaries- 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, 55th, 60th and above and noteworthy achievements.

*Congratulatory Announcement's NEW Design, one (1) photo can now be included with each congratulatory announcement.

STATEMENTS OF GRATITUDE:

As the Clergy Family Information Center (CFIC) continues its Ministry of Outreach, Statements of Gratitude from clergy families may be posted each week on Thursday, for those who wish to express gratitude to the Connectional AME Church family for kindnesses shown during their season of bereavement.

OTHER NOTIFICATIONS POSTED:

- Bereavements affecting the AMEC Chaplaincy and President and Deans of the AME Church Institutions of Higher Education
- Bereavements affecting the leadership of the Connectional Lay Organization and Women's Missionary Society
- Bereavements occurring within the staff of Episcopal District Offices and staff of the General Officers
- Prayer requests received from the Bishops, Episcopal Supervisors and the General and Connectional Officers

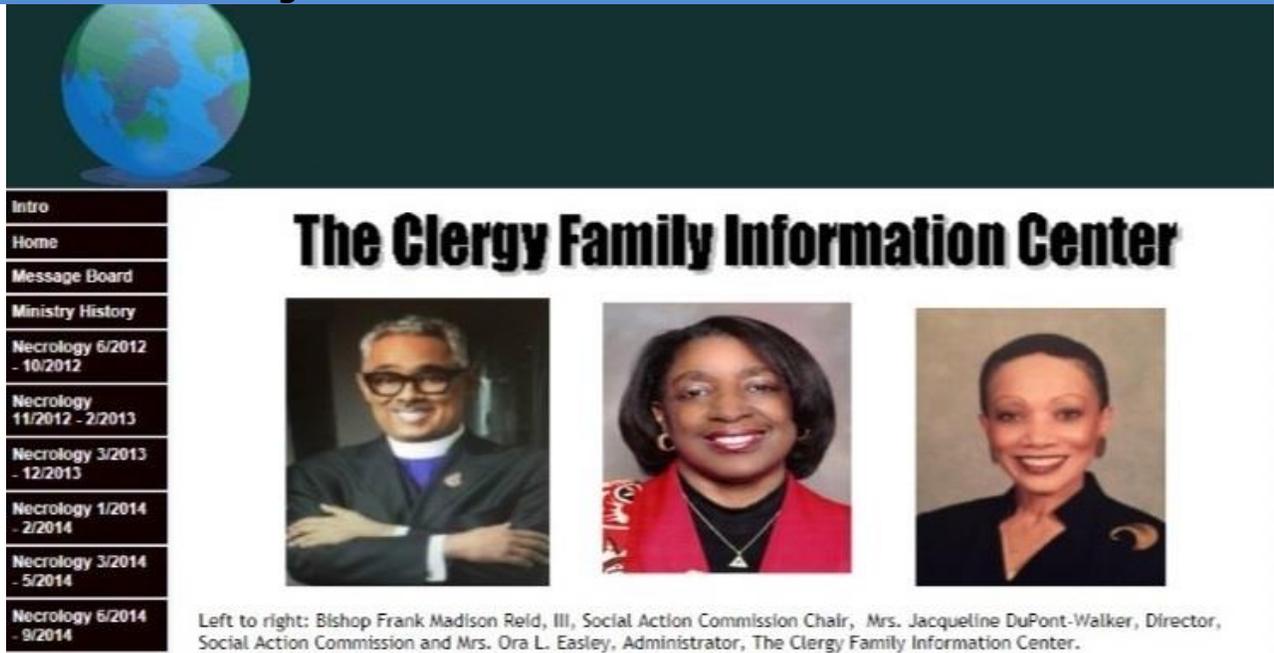
THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT POSTED BY THE CLERGY FAMILY INFORMATION CENTER:

- For profit advertisements (patrons, ad requests, event tickets, sale of books, pamphlets CD's, or DVDs)
- Campaign Advertisements
- Photos of deceased family members are **Discouraged** as inclusion on Bereavement Notices; **Encouraged** are links to the mortuary or newspaper's Guest Book.

OUTREACH TO ENHANCE MINISTRY PRESENCE:

- For a greater degree of professionalism, the ministry continues to maintain its dedicated email domain, acronym, **AMECFIC.NET**. • The Ministry also continues to house its global website @ domain URL www.amecfic.org in cyberspace, which has received over **164,560 visitors**, maintain a business telecommunication account and utilizes Tech 360 Support for 24 hour technical services on the desktop, laptop computers, and tablet.

-Web Site Home Page-



The Clergy Family Information Center

Left to right: Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, Social Action Commission Chair, Mrs. Jacqueline DuPont-Walker, Director, Social Action Commission and Mrs. Ora L. Easley, Administrator, The Clergy Family Information Center.

WEB MINISTRY RATIONALE:

- To make available necrology information, especially bereavements occurring within the Episcopacy and General Officer-ship for annual conference statisticians who compile annual necrology reports.
- To make The Clergy Family Information Center posting guidelines available.
- To spread the ministry message to a global audience via cyberspace.

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA UTILIZED: Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

EMAIL MARKETING:

Rationale; to post bulk email more effectively and to alleviate SPAM blocks –

Email marketing was contracted as the ministry work became more and more problematic when posting bulk communications which contained social or political overtones or as stated in response email from the ministry domain provider, *inappropriate content*, per AT&T "White List" for non-profit's agreement; also, due to reports of **SPAMMING** of email providers, particularly Yahoo, Hotmail and AOL, from some email recipients provided the CFIC office by presiding elder district offices, that were subscribed via a non-subscription process. The decision was made to alleviate the problematic process and bounce-backs by "Stepping out in Faith" and securing MailChimp Email Marketing services. Email Marketing is fee based and allows for posting of graphics; it allows email recipients to adjust their own email preferences and it saves 85% of the clock hours normally use. However, it has a "0" tolerance on SPAMMING.

A feasibility study was conducted and the decision was made, as suggested by an AT&T technician, to delete several email addresses entered manually which showed NO history of reading activity, or had noted spam in their activity history prior to setting up the MAIL CHIMP database. It was a meticulously slow process. Yet, a database inclusive of nonsubscribers entered by the CFIC office received from PE Districts of Episcopal Districts where the process had not been explained, even with the "opt out" preference available, could potentially become a liability.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

The CFIC ministry is available to post bereavement notifications day and evening, seven-days a week including holidays, excluding Easter, Christmas & New Year's Day. A laptop computer is carried to all church conventions, on vacations and on overnight holiday outings, to be available to post bereavement notices, should the need arise.

IN GRATITUDE:

Gratitude is extended to Bishop Frank Madison Reid, III, the Social Action Commission Chair, for his support, magnanimous spirit and ministry affirmation, and to Episcopal Supervisor Marlaa MeShon Hall Reid, for her keen interest. Likewise, gratitude is extended to Bishop Jeffrey Nathaniel Leath, Presiding Prelate of the Thirteenth Episcopal District and Episcopal Supervisor, Susan Jones Leath, MD, for their prayers and encouragement. Kudos' to my clergy spouse, Presiding Elder, Reverend Dr. William W. Easley, Jr., for his caring spirit and support.

RECOMMENDATION:

The google translator has been added, which translates into 103 languages; therefore, for more inclusiveness, that Episcopal Districts 14-20 be encouraged to submit bereavement notices and congratulatory announcement to the presiding elders or a district designee, who would in-turn submit bereavement notifications to the administrator of the Clergy Family Information Center.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ora L. Easley