

**THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE
OF THE
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

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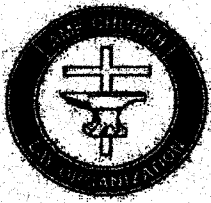
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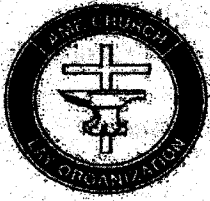


LAY DELEGATES

- a. Every pastor shall publish a notice of the Church Conference that is to elect lay representatives or delegates from his/her local church to the Electoral College at least two weeks prior to the election.
- b. The election must be held at least three months prior to the meeting of the Electoral College. Only full members 18 years old and over of said local church shall be eligible to vote or to be elected a delegate. A majority of those present and voting shall determine the elected delegate and alternate delegate, and no proxy vote shall be counted either at the election of the local church or at the election held in and at the Electoral College.
- c. The youth shall elect their delegates to the Electoral College at the same time, but in a separate place from the election of the adult delegates.
- d. Two member, one adult and one between the ages of 18 – 30¹, in good and regular standing², shall be elected to the Electoral College from each local church.
- e. Anyone 18 years of age who votes for delegates to the Electoral College from the local church and to the General Conference from one Electoral College may not vote where any other Electoral College is concerned.

¹ Youth – In regard to chronological age, the Richard Allen Youth Council is from 26 to 39 years of age. The Connectional Young People's and Children's Division of the Connectional Women's Missionary Society is: Children's Division age level 7 – 12; Youth Division age level 13 – 17; Young Adult Division age level 18 – 26. The Young Adult level for the Connectional Lay Organization is 18 – 30 years old. Generally when *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* refers to Youth, i.e. election of delegates to the General Conference, the age level is between 18 – 30 years old.

² Good and Regular Standing - The terminology full, good, regular, standing, and full communion used specifically as well as generally, as a qualification or eligibility for holding any office or membership in the AME Church. Inclusive in this terminology is an acceptance that one is to be governed by *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* to regularly attend worship and the other means of grace; to contribute regularly to the support of the gospel, the church, its benevolent enterprises, the poor; and to give of one's time and talents to the various ministries of the church.



Lay Electoral College -

- a. The Electoral College shall be composed of one adult and one youth between the ages of 18 and 30, in good and regular standing, from each station, circuit, and mission in the Annual Conference, whose expenses to said College shall be paid by the station, circuit, or mission represented.
- b. The Electoral College shall assemble at the place and hour designated by the Annual Conference and shall organize according to the custom of delegated bodies. The adult lay delegate from the local church hosting the meeting of the Electoral College shall take the chair for the purpose of presiding and processing the voting to elect a temporary chairperson and temporary secretary. After devotional service, the College shall effect a permanent organization, electing a chairperson secretary, two tellers and two clerks and then proceed to elect from its members by ballot, delegates, one of whom must be a youth between the ages of 18 and 30, and alternates, as provided by law under caption of Composition of General Conference. In cases where ballots are required and the election is uncontested, a voice vote may be held. The latest edition on *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority for all elections.
- c. The Electoral College shall elect the same number of alternates, with the same qualifications, and by the same method as delegates.
- d. If, when the results of the balloting are announced, a member of the Electoral College shall desire to contest the results of the election, the chair shall permit the member who announces his/her desire to contest the election to count the ballots in the presence of the members of the College before the meeting in which the election is held either recesses or adjourns. If an error is discovered in the recount, the chairperson must declare the election void and the Electoral College shall elect delegates as provided by law. All ballots cast during the Electoral College shall be delivered to the Annual Conference when certification of the election is presented to the Annual Conference.
- e. If, in composition or activity of the Electoral College, a law of the church is violated, a complaint may be made to and a hearing held at the next session of the Annual Conference which shall adjust the matter.
- f. The secretary of the Electoral College shall prepare and certify over his/her signature a report of the proceedings of the electoral college, including an accurate list of the electoral and an accurate list of the elected lay delegates in order of their election, and forward the same to the presiding bishop of the district and to the secretary of the Annual Conference within 30 days after the election and to the Chief Information Officer (General Secretary) 120 days prior to the opening of the General Conference.

g. The Electoral College shall give each lay delegate and alternate a Certificate of Election, signed by the Chairperson and Secretary, to be presented to the Annual Conference for record.

h. The Annual Conference shall give a Certificate of Election, signed by the bishop, and secretary, to every delegate.

i. It shall be unlawful for any minister to interfere in any way in the Electoral College.

j. Each Episcopal District Lay President shall be a member of the General Conference, by virtue of his/her position. (S)he shall automatically be included in the number of delegates certified at the Electoral College. The District Lay President must be a member in good and regular standing in his/her local church and his/her local Lay Organization.