

**ST. MARK AME CHURCH  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
MARCH 15, 2014**



**STEWARDS AND TRUSTEES  
THE MOVERS AND SHAKERS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH**

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# ARE THEY REALLY THAT AMAZING?

The AME Church experienced an evolution of leadership at the local church level.

In the early AME Church, Trustees were considered the most prestigious and powerful officers. The Trustees maintained responsibility for everything connected with the local church. They controlled the money, the premises, the services and yes, the pastor's salary. As the Church flourished, clergy lobbied for legislation to decrease the power held by these officers.

So, the power held by the Trustees split; creating two separate groups known as the Stewards and the Trustees



THEY'VE GOT THE SPIRIT, BUT CAN THEY PRAY?

STEWARDS

# STEWARDS

- Stewards are the Pastor's cabinet. You serve as the personal advisors to the pastor.
- Stewards must be committed to addressing the spiritual concerns of the church, but remember they have some temporal duties as well. Your primary duty is to the church.
- Stewards are expected to be fair, clear-sighted, level-headed, and capable of exercising good judgment.
- While you may not always agree with the Pastor, it is your responsibility to support his/her vision for the church. Why? Remember, he's the Shepherd of the flock. The Bishop appointed him, not you!



# STEWARDS

- ◉ Stewards must work harmoniously with the Pastor.
- ◉ Stewards must know the appropriate process and procedure for addressing concerns.
- ◉ Stewards must pray, not p-r-e-y. If you're striving to be God's steward, you can't give anyone a spiritual boost, when your own foundation is cracked and heavily flawed.

If you're striving to be God's Steward, you can't give anyone a spiritual boost, when your own foundation is cracked and heavily flawed!

# WHAT DOES THE DISCIPLINE SAY ABOUT THE STEWARDS?

## Stewards must be

- ◉ (1) of solid piety, know and love the Word of God, the African Methodist Episcopal Church doctrine, and The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church;
- ◉ (2) fruitful and of good natural or acquired ability transact spiritual and temporal (financial) business of the church; and
- ◉ (3) a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for at least two (2) years, except in the case of the establishment of a new congregation.

*The Book of Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, pages 61-62.*

# WHAT DOES THE DISCIPLINE SAY ABOUT THE STEWARDS?

- ◉ There shall be no fewer than three (3) and no more than nineteen (19). The pastor is the chairperson of the Steward Board.
- ◉ The Pastor may appoint a chairperson, pro tem to act in his or her absence. All business conducted in his or her absence shall be subject to veto by the pastor. There shall be appointed a Junior Board of Stewards that shall function under the direction of the pastor and Senior Board of Stewards.
- ◉ There shall be a training course for perspective Stewards under the supervision of the Pastor and Senior Stewards.
- ◉ The pastor shall submit nominated Stewards to the Quarterly Conference, which shall confirm or reject them.

# WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF THE STEWARDS?

- ◉ Stewards shall make an exact accounting of all money or other provisions collected for the support of the Pastor.
- ◉ The steward board negotiates the full time salary of the Pastor. The Pastor's negotiated salary and benefits package shall be commensurate with the cost of living in the given geographical area and the ability of the local congregation. The following benefits apply to those Pastors who are full-time servants:
  - (1) pension or retirement;
  - (2) insurances: health, disability, professional liability, key person life insurance;
  - (3) self-employment tax;
  - (4) parsonage or housing allowance;
  - (5) continuing education;
  - (6) travel: connectional, Episcopal district, conference, inner parish, and all other related to official duties.
  - **If a housing allowance is given, it is the Stewards' duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with the pastor.\*\*\*\***
- ◉ They shall make accurate reports of every expenditure of money, whether to the Pastor, church, sick or poor.
- ◉ They shall attend the Quarterly Conference to give advice, if asked, in planning for the church.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, page 62*



# WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF THE STEWARDS?

- They shall attend committee meeting for disbursing of money to churches and give counsel in matters of arbitration.
- Seek the needy and distressed in order to relieve and comfort them.
- They shall write circular letters to societies of a circuit to let them know the state of temporal concern at the last Quarterly meeting and urge them to give more liberally.
- Stewards shall register all baptisms, marriages and deaths within the congregation.
- Stewards shall provide the implements and elements of Holy Communion.
- Each local church shall have its Steward Board conduct a survey of the membership during the Third Quarter with the purpose of determining to what extent each member of the church has supported the church financially, attended the regular means of grace, and supported the various benevolent enterprises of the church. The survey conducted by the Stewards shall contain date, name and address, date of birth, active, inactive, probation, student, left with certificate, left without certificate, deceased and class number.
- The Steward Board shall investigate all members on the roll and submit its findings to the Official Board for approval. The Certified Membership Roll shall be forwarded to the Fourth Quarterly Conference for submittal to the Annual conference. Each Annual conference shall forward all Certified Membership Rolls to the General Church Secretary (**Dr. Jeffrey Cooper, (615) 254-0911**).
- The Stewards shall be subject to the bishops, elders, deacons, and travelling ministers of their church.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, pages 62-63.*

# HOLDING STEWARDS ACCOUNTABLE

- ◉ All Stewards are accountable to the Quarterly Conference, which shall be empowered to remove them for failure or refusal to do their duties.
- ◉ In the interim of the Quarterly Conference, the Pastor shall have the power to suspend a steward for refusing, neglecting or failing to discharge his duties. The Pastor may fill the vacancy until the next meeting of the Quarterly Conference, which shall dispose of the case.
- ◉ The Board of Stewards shall have an appropriately labeled church record book, which shall contain the registration of all baptisms, marriages, births, deaths, probationers, and full members. The Pastor shall see that all the provisions are enforced.

*The Doctrine and of Discipline of the AME Church, 2012,  
page 63*

# APPLICABLE TABLES (COMMITTEES) OF THE STEWARD BOARD

- ◉ **Table of the Minister.** The chairperson of this committee is known as the “**Pastor’s Steward.**” You are not a junior pro-tem of the board. Your duty is to attend to the welfare of the Pastor. Your committee’s efforts reflect the hospitality of the church. You ensure sufficient funds are available for the Pastor’s travel. Your primary job as Pastor’s Steward is to take care of his/her needs. A Pastor’s steward must know his/her responsibilities and never interfere with the duties of the Pro-tem.
- ◉ **Table of Lord.** The chairperson of this table (committee) is known as the “**Holy Steward.**” The committee provides for the elements of the Lord’s Supper. Generally, the Holy Steward has direct supervision over the stewardesses.
- ◉ **The Table of the Poor.** The chairperson of this committee should furnish the Pastor and Stewards with the names and addresses of the sick and indigent of the church so that pastoral attention and care may be given.

IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL PROTECT IT!

TRUSTEES

# TRUSTEES

- ◉ Trustees hold responsibility for the temporal concerns of the church. They maintain and secure all the real and personal property of the church. All church property is held in trust for the AME Church (Connectional).
- ◉ Any decisions made by a trustee should benefit, not hinder the church. If the real property deteriorates, the members of the congregation should look to the Trustees.
- ◉ Trustees are stewards over the property entrusted to them. Trustees must not only maintain property, but you have an obligation to enhance it.
- ◉ Trustees should never allow their church to remain ill equipped.
- ◉ Trustees must ensure that the church has the right equipment to make it efficient. If the church can own equipment, why lease? **Think about it!**
- ◉ Trustees must develop a prudent and strong business sense when it comes to the church.

# TRUSTEES

- ◉ Trustees must inventory the church and all its property, whether real or personal.
- ◉ When leasing property, they must ensure that the rent received is commensurate with the market.
- ◉ They must maintain all real property.
- ◉ If church property lacks adequate insurance coverage, look to the Trustees. If the church sustains a loss due to undervaluation of its insurance, the Trustees can be held liable.

# TRUSTEES

To enable the Trustee Board to function more efficiently, committees can be established to accomplish different tasks.

- ◉ **Housing committee** - address all concerns relating to the parsonage.
- ◉ **Building and grounds committee** - maintenance and upkeep of the church and any other real property owned by the church.
- ◉ **Personal property of the parsonage and church** - routinely inventory all personal property owned by the church.
- ◉ **Insurance** - responsible for annual review of all insurance for all property (personal/real).

# TRUSTEES

**Trustees must keep the premises safe and immediately remedy situations creating harm to people or the premises or causing liability.**

Frequently, Trustees do not know when the building requires repairs. A simple solution would be to develop a Trustee box accessible by the congregation. Members may fill out a card to notify the Trustees of repairs and hazardous conditions.

**Trustees must be hands on people.**

**If you are afraid to get dirty, don't be a Trustee!**



# WHAT THE DISCIPLINE SAYS ABOUT TRUSTEES

- ◉ Trustees must be elected, at least 18 years of age, and instructed in the duties and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees of the local church.
- ◉ The training shall be completed within 60 days after the election, or prior to the appropriate Quarterly Conference, whichever comes first. All Trustees must attend three training sessions. A certificate of Confirmation shall be given to each successful student, to be presented at the appropriate Quarterly Conference, signed by the instructor appointed by the Pastor.
- ◉ To be nominated, a member must have been a member of a local church at least six (6) months and a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for not less than two (2) years, except in case of missions or new work.
- ◉ Any person not in good and regular standing in the Church shall be ineligible to be elected a trustee.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, page 64.*

# WHAT THE DISCIPLINE SAYS ABOUT THE TRUSTEES

- ◉ When civil law does not intervene, the Trustees shall be elected annually by the members of the church.
- ◉ The Pastor shall appoint the time and place for holding the election and **give notice of the same from the pulpit at least ten days, including over two consecutive Sundays, previous to the time of election.**
- ◉ The Pastor shall nominate **twice** the number of persons to be elected.
- ◉ The nominees shall have given written consent for their names to be placed in nomination.
- ◉ Every member 18 years of age or older and in full communion has the right to vote. The election shall proceed until the required number of Trustees shall be elected by majority vote.
- ◉ The Pastor shall declare the results of the election.
- ◉ No officer, member or person shall interfere with the election of Trustees or attempt to disturb or prevent the Pastor from holding election. Those in violation of this law are subject to expulsion from the membership.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, pages 64-65*

# HOW IS THE TRUSTEE BOARD RUN?

- ⦿ The Pastor shall be the chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
- ⦿ His/her signature shall be required to make the acts of the Trustees legal.
- ⦿ If the chairperson cannot be present at a meeting, he/she shall appoint a chairperson pro-tem, whose signature also shall be legal.

The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, page 65

# HOW IS THE TRUSTEE BOARD RUN?

- ◉ The Trustees shall manage all temporal concerns of the church not otherwise provided for and have a treasurer elected by the Board.
- ◉ Trustee shall guard for the Connection all real estate, churches, parsonages, schools, and any other property obtained by the local church.
- ◉ They shall make improvements upon the property or real estate when authorized to do so by a majority of legal members of the church.
- ◉ Trustees shall secure, by purchase or hire, a house for the Pastor's family and comfortably furnish it. In lieu of this arrangement, the pastor may be given a housing allowance. **If a housing allowance is given, it is the Stewards' duty to negotiate a reasonable housing allowance with the pastor.\*\*\*\***
- ◉ They shall pay the moving expenses of the Pastor and family from their previous assignment.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, page 65.*

# HOW IS THE TRUSTEE BOARD RUN?

- ◉ Whenever improvements are to be made, the Pastor shall call together in a Church Conference the voting members of the church, with a majority vote being necessary for improvements to be authorized.
- ◉ When a Church Conference has been properly called and a majority of the legal voters of the church are not present, the majority vote of those present shall be considered legal.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012,  
page 65.*

- ◉ Transfer of local church property requires approval by Annual Conference Trustees
- ◉ Property can only be sold by approved resolution of Quarterly Conference.

# TRUSTEES ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO WHOM?

- ◉ Trustee shall be members of the Quarterly Conference and answerable to that body for their official conduct.
- ◉ The Trustees shall make a report of all receipts and expenditures during the quarter to the Quarterly Conference.
- ◉ Trustee shall not obstruct or interfere in any church.
- ◉ They shall not prevent or attempt to prevent the bishop or ministers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church from preaching, expounding God's Holy Word, or serving as Pastor.
- ◉ They shall not prevent or attempt to prevent the use of the property for religious services or proper activities held from time to time which are recognized by the Annual or General Conference, or by the duly appointed presiding bishop under whose jurisdiction the Pastor is stationed.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, pages 65-66.*

# TRUSTEES ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO WHOM?

- Any trustee ceasing to be a member of the denomination, by reason of expulsion or otherwise, shall immediately cease to be a trustee except in cases of debt for which he/she is joint security.
- In such cases, termination as a trustee will occur when the creditors have been satisfied.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, page 66.*

# TRUSTEES ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO WHOM?

- ◉ In the interim of a Quarterly Conference, the pastor shall have the power to suspend a trustee who refuses, neglects, or fails to discharge his/her duty.
- ◉ The Pastor can fill the vacancy temporarily in the manner prescribed in the selection of a trustee until the next meeting of the Quarterly Conference, which shall dispose of the case. Should the suspension be sustained by the Quarterly Conference, the Pastor shall proceed to fill the vacancy permanently, following the usual mode of election of a trustee.

*The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church, 2012, page 66.*



# WORD TO THE WISE!

- ◉ Enter into prayer and communicate with God before accepting any of these positions
- ◉ Attend church regularly, tithe, and attend Bible study and Sunday school if you intend to be a steward or trustee. You must be active in the life of the church.
- ◉ Invest in liability insurance for Board members.



**Pray, Plan, Proceed!**

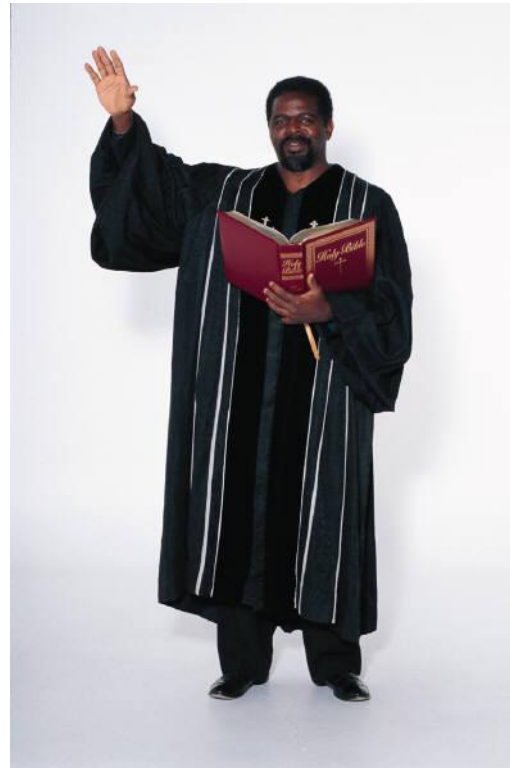
# WHAT WOULD YOU DO (WWYD)

You arrive at Bethel AME Church early Sunday morning. After entering the church, the telephone rings. You answer it. It's your pastor. He's experiencing an emergency which necessitates him to leave immediately for Houston. He's arranged for one of his associate ministers to preach. As a Steward, he's giving you heads up.

- ◉ Who's in charge of the church?
- ◉ What are your responsibilities?

**Big Hint: Leaving is not an option!**

WWYD?



# WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

It's communion Sunday. It's time for the elements to be shared with the congregation. The elements have been consecrated and ready to be administered to the congregation.

- ◉ What's your role as a Steward, when it comes to administering and distributing communion?
- ◉ Can you assist the Pastor with the sacrament?
- ◉ How? *See, The Doctrine and Discipline, 2012, p. 535, does it help?*

**Hint: Can someone say, self serving communion table ?**

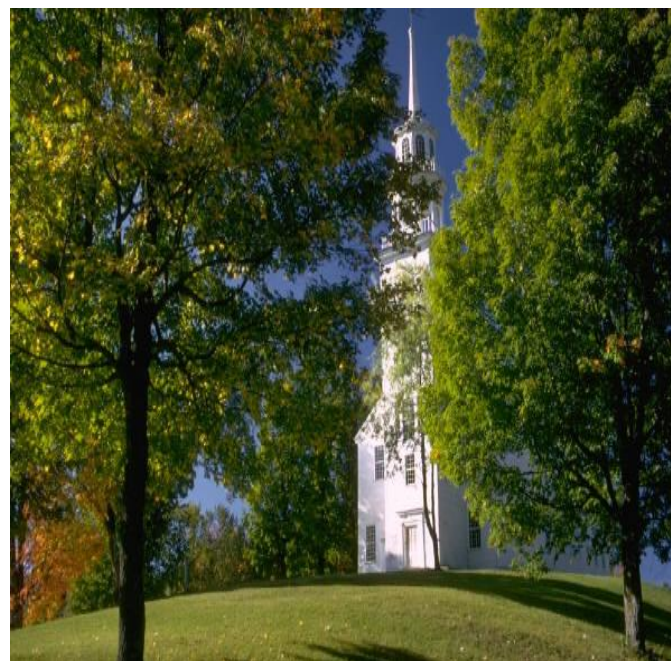


WWYD?

# WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

As a member of the Trustee Board, you've discovered there hasn't been an inventory of the church's personal property in over 20 years. You notice people have hymnals containing the stamp of the church as part of their personal property. You really don't know what happened to the kitchen utensils and cookware. In fact, as you start thinking, you realize the insurance coverage has never been increased, even though property values have skyrocketed.

- ⦿ What is your responsibility?
- ⦿ How do you raise these issues?
- ⦿ Where do you raise these issues?
- ⦿ What should you do?
- ⦿ To whom are the Trustees amenable?



WWYD?

# WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Bishop Havesway appoints Rev. Letta Meout as the new pastor to Stillaway AME Church in Odessa, TX. Rev. Letta Meout lives in Brownsville Texas. Rockaway has a parsonage, but it's being leased. When the pastor arrives at Stillaway, Mr. Trustworthy meets her, but has no keys to open the church.

- ◉ Who has responsibility for relocating the pastor?
- ◉ Who has responsibility for the parsonage/housing dilemma?
- ◉ How does the pastor gain access to the church? *Hint: Breaking and entering is not the right answer!*



**BREAKING AND ENTERING IS NOT AN OPTION!**

**WWYD?**

# QUESTIONS

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