



Why We Were Formed

The idea for the African American Methodist Heritage Center (AAMHC) originated with Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) in 2001. Bishop Forrest C. Stith was asked to take the leadership in providing a way for assuring that the contributions of African Americans to Methodism were recovered and remembered. AAMHC was granted IRS status as a 501 (c) (3) status not-for-profit organization. It should be noted that the organization intentionally used the generic name Methodist. It is hoped that there may come a time when the Methodist denominations of African Americans which split with The Methodist Church because of issues of racism may choose to work with AAMHC in this ministry of the recovery and promotion of our history.

When We Were Formed

With the blessings of BMCR, the African American Methodist Heritage Center (AAMHC) was organized and incorporated in 2001 with an independent Board of Directors. The AAMHC mission statement: The African American Methodist Heritage Center provides research, preserves artifacts and other memorabilia, and protects and promotes the stories of African American people in Methodism.



African American Methodist Heritage Center

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AAMHC

African American Methodist Heritage Center

Who We Are

Board of Trustees: Minister Brenda Bennefield; Rev. Alexis Brown; Rev. David W. Brown, Vice President; Dr. Angella Current Felder, Treasurer; Rev. Fred Day; Rev. Dr. James Ferree, Member Emeritus; Dr. Cynthia Bond Hopson; Rev. Rita Howard; Ms. Ruth Lawson, Secretary; Mr. Donald C. Lusk, Member Emeritus; Bishop Ernest Lyght; Rev. Dr. Walter McKelvey; Dr. Arnold Parks; Dr. Ian Straker; Ms. Mollie M. Stewart, President; Bishop Forrest C. Stith, President Emeritus; Ms. Anne Fleming Williams, Member Emeritus; Dr. John Wright; and Ms. Carol L. Travis, Executive Assistant.

What We Are Doing

1. Using a partnership model to encourage and resource African American local churches to develop and implement processes for collecting, preserving and sharing their histories.
2. Identifying and developing partnerships with other entities (such as HBCU's, general agencies, Commissions on Archives and History and other institutions) that will strengthen the Heritage Center's ability to help the church recover, preserve, disseminate and tell the story of African Americans in Methodism.
3. Developing a library of video interviews with African American laity, clergy, and bishops recounting their experiences in the United Methodist Church since the creation, and subsequent dissolution of the segregated Central Jurisdiction.
4. Enabling the telling of the story of African Americans in Methodism and how the barriers to full participation have been and are being overcome.
5. Identifying and initiating research projects in participation with the academic community.
6. Promoting research on the unfolding story of Pan Methodism.
7. Publishing the AAMHC Journal, a quarterly e-publication that includes news about happenings in the area of African American Methodist history; ideas for the recovery and promotion of African American Methodist history; and resources available to help enrich recovery and promotion opportunities.
8. Offering to local churches and others on a bi-annual basis the opportunity to apply for the Stith grant for historical recovery projects.
9. Engaging in ongoing efforts to solicit, collect, and exhibit African American Methodist Church historical data, material and artifacts for preservation in state-of-the-art archive facilities.

How You Can Help

There are two primary areas in which your help is greatly needed – providing program opportunities and providing financial resources.

Program

1. Tell us your church's story – Send us a copy of the history of your local church.
2. Suggest to us resources or training you may need to be more proficient in your history initiatives.
3. Suggest to us stories for inclusion in the AAMHC Journal.
4. Let us know about history-related initiatives in your area that may help people in other areas enrich their historical recovery and promotion efforts.

Financial

The African American Methodist Heritage Center needs financial support to survive.

For three quadrennia AAMHC received grants, on a declining basis, from the General Conference to operate. Those grants were supplemented by small contributions from persons who responded to requests for support. The General Conference, as a part of its budget-trimming effort, no longer provides financial support. Now, only a small grant from the General Commission on Archives and History, supplemented by contributions from individuals, is available to support this ministry. That means we need your financial support.

An annual contribution or monthly contributions will help us continue this vital ministry.

Contact Us

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