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The Christian Recorder News Break – January 6, 2014 - An Epiphany Message from the Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

An Epiphany Message
The Council of Bishops
The African Methodist Episcopal Church
Jeffrey N. Leath, Acting President

Epiphany is a Christian observance of the revelation of God the Son as a human being, Jesus. It marks the 12th day of Christmas and begins the period between Christmas and Lent. The day commemorates the visit of the Magi (Wise Men) to the infant Jesus and the manifestation of the divinity of Jesus to the non-Jewish world. For

most of us, the incarnation's noisy secular celebration has been muted. Many are back to work or school. These days leading to the Lenten fast are an opportunity to reflect on the divinity of Jesus and the divine call on our lives.

Let us be discerning disciples who are looking for signs of the presence of the living God in our midst. With wisdom, let us receive the information of the world even as the wise men consulted King Herod. By faith, let us heed the spiritual directions that reveal understanding. Sometimes God leads us, like the Wise Men, to "return by a different way."

Let us be praising disciples who worship and adore God the Son. Look beyond the infant Jesus to the Jesus who was baptized in the Jordan River and displayed power at the Cana wedding feast. Lift up voices in praise of Jesus! He is God. He is the only begotten who is both divine and human. He blesses with power, and in His obedience is exalted with honor.

Let us be serving disciples. Service is a glow of the light we have in Christ Jesus. Be light and power that enlightens and warms those within our reach.

We ask our USA A.M.E. disciples to encourage everyone in their circle of influence to take advantage of the opportunities under the Affordable Care Act. Every American needs healthcare. It is the law. It is wise. Do not forget the young adults in your community. Educate, Encourage and Enroll. Pray that all people on earth will receive such a necessity in the near future.

We ask all A.M.E. disciples to pray for peace on the continent of Africa. We especially lift those displaced in South Sudan.

Let us pray:

Gracious God, we praise and adore You! We lift up Jesus, God the Son! We thank You for loving us so much that You put on flesh for our instruction and redemption. We thank You for calling us to be disciples. Make us wise and obedient in that holy walk.

Forgive the disrespect as we try to analyze Jesus as though He is "exactly" like us. Give us wisdom and faith to embrace the mystery of Him who is both like us and, at once, the Eternal God.

Bring peace to places torn by conflicts. Hear the cries of the poor and the hungry. Strengthen our hands to work for comfort and relief. Soothe the bereaved with the presence of the Holy Spirit. Give holy vision to those who lead Your church and the nations around the globe. Continue to bind the Evil One and deliver us from ungodliness.

We ask blessings for the daughters and sons who serve you in the heritage of Richard and Sarah Allen. May this New Year be a time for deepened faith. Grant us sweetness of spirit. Make us appreciative of health and prosperity that we receive at Your hand.

Give power to our testimony and fruit to our discipleship. The Kingdom, Power and Glory are Yours! Hear our prayer through Christ Jesus, the Gift of Light to the whole world. Amen

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Liturgical color for The Epiphany (January 6): White

Liturgical color after the Epiphany: Green
