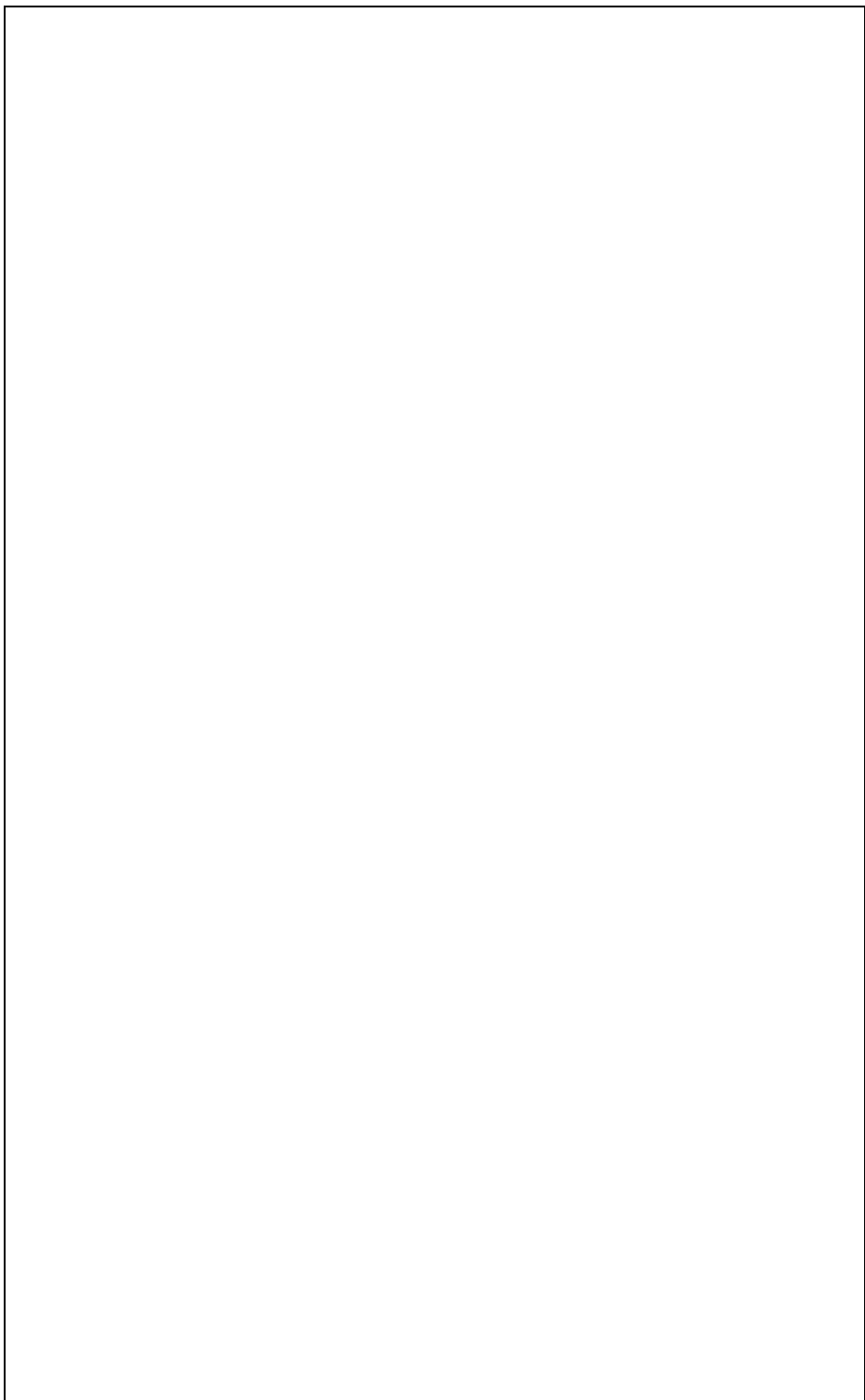


**CHRIST OUR  
REDEEMER  
A.M.E. CHURCH**

**THE SEASON OF H O P E**

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**MEMBERSHIP  
HANDBOOK  
2023**



**CHRIST OUR REDEEMER  
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

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Jennifer Williamson, Administrative Assistant  
Bonita Dent, Chief Financial Officer



**COR CHURCH**  
We are One: Building a Covenant Community

**MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK  
2023**

## **OUR EPISCOPAL LEADERSHIP**



**Bishop Clement W. Fugh &  
Supervisor Mrs. Alexia Fugh**

Bishop Fugh is the Presiding Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District, covering fourteen states from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.

## **OUR PRESIDING ELDER TEAM**



**Presiding Elder:  
Rev. Roosevelt Lindsey, Jr.**

**Dr. Kaye Lindsey  
First Lady of the District**

Reverend Lindsey is the Presiding Elder of the Los Angeles, San Diego, Las Vegas District of the Fifth Episcopal District.<sup>2</sup>

## **OUR PASTOR AND FIRST LADY**



**Rev. Dr. Ralph E. Williamson  
Pastor COR Church**

**Mrs. Jennifer Williamson  
First Lady, COR Church**

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR**

First Lady Jennifer and I are excited about where we are and what God is doing in the life of Christ Our Redeemer. These last few years serving as the spiritual leader of this great congregation have been some of the most challenging and rewarding times of our lives. God has brought us through the COVID pandemic with the unfortunate loss of members, family, and friends from sickness, death, and many other challenges. Still, God has kept and watched over us.

Over the year, we have witnessed an outpouring of the Holy Spirit through our early morning prayer calls. Excellent teachings throughout the week from both clergy and lay. Our youth are on fire, committed, and devoted to serving the Lord. We have witnessed the anointing upon their lives. As they have ministered to those in need. Every 4th Sunday is a testament to their love for the Lord. They lead us in worship with prayer, singing, scripture reading, and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

COR is more than a household name in Orange County; your name represents integrity, respect, stability, and trust. While there are challenges to be met, the church has always faced opposition. As with the AME Church's formation under Richard Allen's leadership, no challenge was too great to overcome. COR Church is empowered to address the opposition, challenges, needs, and concerns of our church and the community. By having a well-thought-out strategic plan, prayer, bible study, biblical training, and following the commandments of God.

Every member is an asset. Your skills, talents, and gifts are what the Apostle Paul calls "treasures in an earthen vessel," created in each of you to enhance God's mission, ministry, and vision. In this season of hope, together with God on our side, we will produce excellence in all we do.

Thank you for allowing First Lady Jennifer and me to serve as your spiritual leaders as we enhance the kingdom of God.

Rev. Ralph E. Williamson, D. Min.  
First Lady, Jennifer Williamson

## **MINISTERIAL STAFF**

Rev. Stephanie Butler- Adams

Associate Minister

Rev. Martha Daniel, Associate Minister

Rev. Toia Rankins, Associate Minister

Rev. Robert Wright, Associate Minister

Rev. Shendona Moore, Associate Minister

Rev. Albert Edwards III, Associate Minister

Rev. Joy White, Associate Minister

## **STEWARD BOARD**

Keith Murray

Nina Boyd

James Boyd

Mathurin Daniel

Lanaghan (Von) Dent

Larry Guillory

Karla Guyer

Starlerra Simmons

LaFonta Wall

Charlotte Brown

Michael Brown

Ernest Garrison

## **TRUSTEE BOARD**

Don Rucker, Pro-tem

Ron Guyer

Bonita Dent

Michele DeVeaux

Leroy Wood

Vanessa Clark

## MISSION

To Minister to the spiritual, social, and physical development of all people.

### **Four Pillars of COR Church**



#### **Seasons of spiritual development:**

**Advent** - November 27-December 24

**Epiphany** - January 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Prayer Revival

**Lent** - February 22 – April 6, 40 days prayer/ fasting

**Pentecost** - May 28



The church must be pragmatic and willing to accept the fact that there is a very diverse culture, a new generation of people with new ideas, and new concepts of how they perceive the church.

In this ever-changing environment where there is so much diversity and at the same time, divisiveness, racial tension, and political turmoil. When the church meets people where they are, the outcomes can be positive and transformative.



On the first day of the week, let each of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper. (1 Corinthians 16:2)

Make every effort to be faithful to God with your time, talent, tithes, and offerings.

Honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first fruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine. (Proverbs 3:9-10)



Church administration is a spiritual ministry that involves the wise stewardship of God's resources to accomplish the work of ministry. Church administration is managing people effectively while efficiently using resources to glorify God. Everything we do evolves around the four pillars of our vision:

# **A SEASON OF HOPE**

## **THINKING BIG**

- Goal #1 Stabilize the Base for Growth
- Goal #2 Stabilize Attendance
- Goal #3 Stabilize Giving/Revenue

## **BEING BOLD IN OUR FAITH**

- “An let us not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

## **BEING BOLD IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES**

- Represent the church in your daily lives –
- In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

## **BEING BOLD IN OUR GIVING**

- On the first day of the week let each of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper. (1 Corinthians 16:2)
- Each member is requested to give faithfully of their tithe.

## **BECOMING BETTER**

- The way we minister to our children
- The way we serve women, men, singles, couples and seniors
- The way we do music, mission, and evangelism
- The way we do administration and communication
- The way we implement policies procedures and manage church property
- The way we approach and implement finances and budgets

## **BUILDING A COVENANT COMMUNITY**

- Re-establish and forge new partnerships that add value to COR and the communities it serves
- Commission ministries and auxiliaries to create community outreach initiatives that ministers to people outside of COR
- Develop integrated communications process to inform members and community of outreach activities and events



## **OUR CHURCH & HISTORY**

Christ Our Redeemer African Methodist Episcopal Church (COR) is the largest A.M.E. Church in Orange County. Since 1991, over 3,700 men, women, and children have connected with COR to belong to an ethnically diverse group of congregants seeking to shape their behavior in line with their belief in Jesus, Christ as their Lord and Savior.

On Sunday, February 3, 1991, Rev. Linda Parker, Gwen Oden, and 25 other believers founded COR on the University of California, Irvine (U.C.I.) campus under the auspices of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Fifth Episcopal District. Led by a series of pastors (Rev. Douglas Patterson, Rev. Parcel Hector, Rev. Crystalline Weaver, and Rev. Edgar Jones), from 1992 through 1998, COR moved to various Orange County locations.

Breaking the string of pastors in August 1998, Rev. Mark E. Whitlock, Jr. was appointed to lead COR and its 10-member congregation where they moved to Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church in Irvine and worshiped at 3P on Sundays. COR eventually was blessed to purchase its own facility at 46 Maxwell and later 45 Tesla, Irvine, California.

In October 2019, Reverend Dr. Ralph E. Williamson was appointed pastor at COR. Rev. Williamson had previously been pastor at First AME Church in Las Vegas for over the last 16 years. Rev. Williamson led COR through the challenging year of 2020, to include the COVID-19 pandemic, unprecedented shootings of unarmed Black men and women and economic challenges.

## **OUR NAME**

### **AFRICAN:** Our Heritage

The word “African” means that the A.M.E. Church was organized by people of African descent and heritage. It does not mean the A.M.E. Church was founded in Africa or for people of African heritage only.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church is a diverse, multicultural denomination with members of every race, creed, and nationality.

### **METHODIST:** What we believe

The AME Church is a member of the family of Methodist Churches.

### **EPISCOPAL:** How our church operates

The word “Episcopal” refers to the form of government under which the church operates. The chief executives and administrative officers of the AME Church are the bishops.

### **CHURCH:** A community of Christian believers

The “Church” is a community of people who believe in God and who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

**OUR MOTO:** “God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, the Holy Spirit our Comforter, Humankind Our Family” is a great summary of what the African Methodist Episcopal Church believes.

## **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MEMBER?**

- As a member, you are making a commitment to the church as it relates to God and your relationship with Christ Jesus.
- As a member you are partnering with other members to fulfill the church mission, vision, and purpose.

### **MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO:**

- Attend worship services regularly
- Attend Bible study and Church School
- Become actively involved in the activities of the church
- Seek after and persuade others to join the church
- Represent the church in their daily lives

## **STEWARDSHIP**

- God blessed them and said to them, *“Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”* Genesis 1:28)

## **WHAT ARE MY FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES?**

*On the COR day of the week let each of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper. (1 Corinthians 16:2)*

- Each member is requested to give faithfully of their tithe.
- A tithe is 10% of your gross income. It is used to cover the many on-going expenses of the church, its ministries, and to maintain our operational overhead.
- Each member is requested to support COR connectional expenses to the AME Church.

## **HOW YOU CAN SERVE**

*Then they asked Him, “What must we do to do the works God requires”?*  
(John 6:28)

## **COR MINISTRIES**

### **For Men**

- Men of Purpose
- Men’s Bible Study

### **For Women**

- Making it Real: Women’s Bible Study”
- Women’s Missionary Society “WMS”
- Lady Praise (Choir)

## **For Youth**

- COR Focus Podcast
- COR Live – Jump Start Worship
- Youth & Young Adults Intercessory Prayer
- YPD – Young People’s Department
- Youth & Young Adults Service Day & Projects

## **For Children**

- Church School
- Children Choir

## **For All Ages**

- Drama Ministry
- Church School
- Musicians
- Praise Team
- Class Leaders
- Greeters
- Prayer Ministry
- Ushers
- Health and Wellness
- Social Media

## **COR Music Worship & Arts**

- Catalyst Drama Ministry
- Musicians
- Praise Team
- Word Became Dance

## **Audio Visual**

- Video
- Sound

## **Visitation Ministry**

- Clergy
- Lay

## **Pastoral Care**

- Bereavement After Care
- Spiritual Counseling

## **Community Outreach**

- COR Food Pantry
- COR Community Development Corporation (CORCDC)

## **COR Boards**

- Steward Board
- Trustee Board
- Official Board
- Stewardess Board

## **Usher Boards (Adult and Youth)**

## **MEMBERS CAN SERVE ON THE FOLLOWING:**

### **Commission on Christian Education**

- Shall carefully study the Christian Education needs of the local church and the means for meeting these needs, with adequate and appropriate literature and proper equipment for the various age groups.

### **Commission on Membership, Evangelism, and Discipleship**

- Shall study the demographics of the community it seek to minister, identify opportunities for the church to engage in meaningful ministries.

### **Commission on Stewardship and Finance**

- Shall set up a budget for the church take action to provide the income sufficient to cover the same and shall administer the funds received.

### **Commission on Mission and Welfare**

- Is to survey and study the needs of the church and the community. It shall oversee and control the local church programs of welfare.

### **Commission on Health**

- Assess the health needs of the congregation, organize a health guild, develop health education training and projects for the congregation, serve as a resource for health information and collaborate with community health agencies and associations.

## **Commission on Social Action**

- Coordinate activities in the areas of social, racial and economic relations; temperance; world peace.

## **Commission on Public Relations**

- It shall be responsible for gathering and disseminating information of public interest to the secular press, religious press, network and cable as other various medias. It shall be responsible for intra- congregation communion as well.

## **WHAT EVERY MEMBER SHOULD KNOW**

### **What is salvation?**

Salvation connects us permanently to the God in whose likeness and image we were created. He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of our mind. Each individual must confess with their mouth and believe in their heart that Jesus is the Son of God (See Romans 10:9-10). Salvation redeems forever the eternal soul of humankind to God who is love.

### **What is baptism?**

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit". (John 3:5) Baptism is not only a sign of our profession of faith and mark of our difference; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. (See John 3:3-5; Romans 6:3-4) There are three methods of baptism recognized in the AME Church: (a) sprinkling; (b) pouring; and (c) immersion.

### **What is prayer?**

Prayer is a conversation that allows us the privilege to communicate with God through our praise, petitions, and supplications. Prayer is extremely important in the life of the believer. We will never know who God is until we develop an intimate prayer life.

### **What is the Holy Communion/The Lord's Supper?**

The Lord's Supper is a symbol of Christ's suffering and death. The bread and wine represent his broken body and shed blood. We take Communion because our Lord Jesus Christ commanded all who love Him and who seek to follow after Him. Holy Communion is served on the first Sunday of every month.

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

### **If I am sick or hospitalized:**

Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. (James 5:14)

The class leader serves as the direct point of contact as a mediator between the member and the pastor. The church office should also be notified to follow up with visitation and meeting the spiritual needs of the person/family member.

### **In the event of a death:**

The loss of a loved one is painful and can be very overwhelming. Members should contact their class leader and call the church immediately to follow up with visitation and meeting the spiritual needs of the person/family member.

### **If I need counseling:**

Contact the church office to make an appointment. Spiritual counseling is made available free of charge to church members for personal matters, marriage, death and grief counseling. The church does not have a licensed therapist or psychologist.

### **If I need emergency assistance:**

Benevolent assistance is made available to those who are in need on a first come basis and as funds are available. All persons must complete a benevolence application. If approved, funds are paid to the vendor and not the applicant for emergency assistance only. Persons who make a request do not have to be a member of COR A.M.E. Church.

## Important Dates 2022-2023

Advent – Christmas Eve	Nov 27 <sup>th</sup> – Dec. 24 <sup>th</sup>
Church Conference	Dec. 10 <sup>th</sup>
Christmas Program 3rd Sunday	Dec. 18 <sup>th</sup>
Christmas 4th Sunday	Dec. 25 <sup>th</sup>
New Year’s Eve – Online - Only	Dec.31 <sup>st</sup>
New Year’s 1st Sunday	Jan. 1st
1st Lady Jennifer’s Birthday	Jan. 8 <sup>th</sup>
Prayer Revival	Jan. 9 <sup>th</sup> – Jan.13 <sup>th</sup>
MLK Celebration 3rd Sunday	Jan. 15 <sup>th</sup>
1st Quarterly Conference	TBA
Church 32 <sup>nd</sup> Anniversary 1st Sunday	Feb. 5 <sup>th</sup>
1st half members Assessment Due	Feb.5 <sup>th</sup>
Founders Day 2nd Sunday	Feb. 12 <sup>th</sup>
Ash Wednesday - Lent	Feb. 22 <sup>nd</sup> – April 6 <sup>th</sup>
Super Sunday CSFU	Feb. 26 <sup>th</sup>
Ministerial Retreat	TBD
Mid-Year Convocation	March14 <sup>th</sup> - Mar.16 <sup>th</sup>
Youth Retreat	March 17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Conference	March 27 <sup>th</sup>
Palm Sunday	April 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Holy Week Revival	April 4 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup>
Good Friday	April 7 <sup>th</sup>
Resurrection Sunday 2nd Sunday	April 9 <sup>th</sup>
District Conference	April 20 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>th</sup>
Mother’s Day 2nd Sunday/Hatitude	May 14 <sup>th</sup>
Couples Retreat	June 9 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup>
Churchwide Vacation Bible School	June 13 <sup>th</sup> - June 15 <sup>th</sup>
Father’s Day 3rd Sunday/Men of Purpose	June 18 <sup>th</sup>
Juneteenth Celebration	June 17 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup>
Pastor’s Birthday 4th Sunday	July 26 <sup>th</sup>
2nd half of Assessment Due	August 6 <sup>th</sup>
Cluster Quarterly Conference	August 12 <sup>th</sup>
Pastor Anniversary 2nd Sunday	October 8 <sup>th</sup>
Annual Conference	October 24 <sup>th</sup> -29 <sup>th</sup>
5th District Planning Meeting	October 30 <sup>th</sup>



