



**The Bureau of Evangelism**  
**African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**  
P. O. Box 217258  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28221-7258

## **DECISION DAY OBSERVANCE 2007**

**“Quality Characteristics of Healthy Congregations”**  
**“Inspiring Worship & Holistic Small Groups”**

Please note the Spiritual Emphasis Week 2008 Information on the last page!



**INSPIRING WORSHIP  
& HOLISTIC SMALL GROUPS**

# **Decision Day Observance 2007**

*October 28, 2007*

*African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church*



## DECISION DAY OBSERVANCE 2007

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church



October 28, 2007

### Theme: Quality Characteristics of Healthy Congregations “Inspiring Worship & Holistic Small Groups”

The Book of Discipline of the A.M.E. Zion Church directs that every Sunday Church School shall emphasize “Decision Day” annually in the month of October. It further directs that each Sunday Church School should undertake an evangelistic quota for active membership. In the recent past the Decision Day Observance has also been an opportunity for the local churches to share financial gifts in support of the Bureau of Evangelism. While financial gifts will be welcomed during this observance, the Bureau is placing its greatest emphasis upon decisions for Christ.

The quadrennial theme [2005-2009] is “**Quality Characteristics of Healthy Congregations.**” Each year we are highlighting two of the eight essential qualities of healthy and growing churches identified by Christian A. Schwarz in his book, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*. From 2005-2006, we focused on “Empowering Leadership” and “Gift-Oriented Ministry.” From 2006-2007 we focused on “Passionate Spirituality” and “Functional Structures.” From 2007-2008 our focus will be on “Inspiring Worship” and “Holistic Small Groups.”

As it relates to *Inspiring Worship*, Schwarz’s research reveals that in healthy congregations worship becomes an inspiring experience for the members of the church. The biblical motto for this quality characteristic comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 which says, “*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.*” When God is pleased with our worship, He manifests His presence and worship becomes an inspiring experience for His people. Psalm 96:1-13 reveals the following about inspiring worship: 1) It is about praise and proclamation, not entertainment and spectatorship. [1-4]; 2) It is about God (God-Centered), not about us (people-centered) [5-6]; 3) It is about what we give God, not what He gives us [7-8]; 4) It is about manifesting God’s holiness in our lives, not just in our praise [9]; 5) It is about submitting to God’s reign, not putting people in bondage [10-13].

Schwarz’s research reveals that in healthy congregations the small groups are dedicated to answering the true questions and meeting the real needs of its members in a holistic way. The biblical motto for this quality characteristic comes from Acts 2:46-47: *They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.* Schwartz stresses that every one of the eight quality characteristic is essential, but if he had to choose the most important one, it would be *Holistic Small Groups*. Holistic small groups are a time proven model for Christian discipleship. To some degree it was utilized by Moses, upon the suggestion of his father-in-law, Jethro. It was the means of disciple-making that Jesus Christ employed with the twelve. It was method used and perfected by John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement. Wesley called this holistic small group, *The Class*; and he referred to its meaningful gathering as *The Class Meeting*.

*The Annual Decision Day Observance is generally held the fourth Sunday in October. However, it may be observed any time during October or even in November, if it is convenient for the local church. During the harvest season, the constituents of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church pause to celebrate the harvest of souls (conversions, new members, re-dedications) gathered during the previous twelve months, as well as those entering the ministry or any form of Christian service. Forms have been provided in order to assist churches in the reporting process.*



**BUREAU OF EVANGELISM**  
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church



**DECISION DAY OBSERVANCE 2007**

Report Form

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor in charge \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Presiding Elder \_\_\_\_\_ P. E. District \_\_\_\_\_

Presiding Bishop \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Conference \_\_\_\_\_

Episcopal District \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**REPORT OF DECISIONS**

| <u>Type of Decisions Made</u> | <u>During Decision Day Observance(s)</u> | <u>During the Year (Nov. 2006 - Oct. 2007)</u> |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Conversions                   | _____                                    | _____  |
| Re-dedications                | _____                                    | _____  |
| New Members                   | _____                                    | _____  |
| The Ministry                  | _____                                    | _____  |
| Christian Service             | _____                                    | _____  |

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