



**E-Newsletter  
January 2025**

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**Upcoming Events**

**2025 Virtual Firm Foundation Covenant Service**

# VIRTUAL FIRM FOUNDATION COVENANT SERVICE

 FEBRUARY 5,  
2025

 6:00  
PM ET



Sermon by  
Bishop George D. Crenshaw,  
Northeastern Episcopal District of the A.M.E.  
Zion Church



Hood Theological Seminary's 2025 Virtual Firm Foundation Covenant Service is scheduled for **February 5, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. ET. The preacher will be Bishop George D. Crenshaw, Northeastern Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Zion Church.** For more information on Bishop Crenshaw, please go [HERE](#).

**This event will be virtual via Zoom.** The Zoom link to attend the event can found be [HERE](#).

This annual service is sponsored by the Board of Bishops of the A.M.E. Zion Church, and at this special gathering, the bishops conduct a moving and inspiring service and bring collections from their Episcopal Districts in support of the Seminary. This free event is open to the public and all are welcome.

[More Information](#)

## 2025 Heritage Lecture Series

The 2025 Bishop Alfred E. and Mrs. Mamie White Endowed Heritage Lecture Series will take place on **Friday, February 7, 2025, at 7:00 pm EST, and Saturday, February 8, 2025, at 10:00 am EST. The lectures will take place virtually via zoom. Please note, there are two Zoom links, one for Friday and one for Saturday.**

**The speaker will be Bishop Michael A. Frencher.** Bishop Michael A. Frencher (retired) is the A.M.E. Zion Bishop-in-Residence at Hood Theological Seminary. For the zoom links and more information on Bishop Michael A. Frencher and this event, please go [HERE](#).

[Zoom Links and More Information](#)

2025 BISHOP ALFRED E. AND MRS.  
MAMIE WHITE ENDOWED  
HERITAGE LECTURE SERIES



Virtual via Zoom  
Feb. 7, 7:00pm EST  
Feb. 8, 10:00am EST

Speaker:  
Bishop Michael A. Frencher  
Retired AME Zion Bishop and  
Bishop in Residence at Hood  
Theological Seminary



**HTS**  
Hood Theological Seminary  
Theological Preparation for Effective Ministry in a Diverse Society

## Job Opportunities



[FEMA Job Opportunities](#)

The Conservation Fund: [Faith and Food Coordinator](#)

## Did you Know?

You can audit a class at HTS! Learning is a lifelong process; continue the journey with us. For clergy, church professionals, and laypersons. All denominations welcome! Read more [Here](#).





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## Alumni News



Congratulations to Rev. Janet Garner-Mullins, MDiv '15 on being appointed to the following local boards:

Clean Aire NC, a non-profit organization, that educates and advocates for clean air policies through innovative partnerships.

Interwoven Congregations- (Interwoven Congregations is an organization that help congregations be agents for racial justice and healing across the country.)

North Carolina Health Care Justice Board- an organization committed to ensuring that all persons have access to quality medical care.

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Congratulations to Rev. Scott Spence, MDiv'15 for publishing his first book, *On the Cusp: Examination of An Apparent Paradigm Shift in the Church*. which has been published through Amazon. You can buy the book [HERE](#). As stated by Rev. Spence, "This book is an ongoing ministry narrative that challenges traditional mindsets and offers a bold vision for navigating the complexities of modern ministry."

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## Celebrating the Success of Elevate 2024!





What an incredible time we had at *Elevate 2024*! This year's sponsorship brought together leaders from across the nation for a transformative experience of learning, growth, and connection.

The *Good Gap* plenary struck a powerful chord, addressing the challenges of bridging the space between mission and manifestation. One attendee described the session as "pleasantly horrifying," sharing how she laughed profusely while confronting the very real struggles church leaders face in this critical work. The session left everyone inspired to embrace the labor required for the harvest.

Workshops led by the phenomenal **Coach Nicole Johnson** and **Apostle Myra Bellinger** were another highlight of the event. Attendees praised their sessions as both practical and profoundly insightful, offering tools and strategies that leaders could immediately apply to transform their ministries. *Elevating Together*, facilitated by these gifted leaders, explored the visionary and administrator relationship, providing a roadmap for strengthening church leadership and impact.

We are so grateful for the connections made, the wisdom shared, and the energy felt at *Elevate 2024*. Here's to the limitless elevation of ministry and mission in the months ahead!

**Save The Date: Stronger Churches Conference 2025 | August 23, 2025**

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## Faculty/Staff News

### Dr. Vergel L. Lattimore



Dr. Vergel L. Lattimore, President and Professor of Pastoral Psychology, attended the Memorial Service for the late Salisbury Mayor and HTS Architect Karen K. Alexander, Catawba Collage Chapel (1/11/25)

He will attend the Princeton University Gala & Pitch Showcase, featuring the HTS D.Min. Students, New Orleans, LA (1/16/25).

He will attend the Historic Family Quilt Unveiling at Pleasant Grove A.M.E. Zion Church, Charlotte, NC (1/19/25).

Dr. Lattimore will represent HTS at the 48th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Service & Celebration, Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Salisbury, NC (1/19/25).

He will attend the Dr. M.L King Celebration Breakfast, Salisbury NC Civic Center (1/20/25).

He will attend the 99th Annual Rowan Chamber Gala “Winter in the Garden Celebration, West End Plaza Event Center, Salisbury, NC (1/23/25).

Dr. Lattimore will attend a meeting of the Gift of Black Theological Education & Black Faith Traditions Collaborative, Philadelphia, PA (1/26/25).

**Congratulations to Dr. Vergel and Mrs. Alcia Lattimore on their wedding** (see picture below). The service was conducted on December 23, 2024, by Dr. Sheldon Shipman, Senior Pastor, Greenville Memorial AME Zion Church, Charlotte, NC.



**Rev. Kimberly Clarke Turner**



Rev. Kimberly Clarke Turner, Director of the Center for Bold Leadership, has been appointed to serve on the board of



## Hood Theological Seminary Receives \$1.5 million Grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.

Hood Theological Seminary has received a grant of **\$1.5 million** from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Ministry in Rural Areas and Small Towns Initiative. The grant will support **the Institute for Ministry in Rural Areas and Small-Towns at Hood Theological Seminary (HTS)**. The aim of the initiative is to provide resources to help churches in rural areas and small towns enhance the vitality of their ministries and strengthen the leadership of the pastors and lay leaders who guide them.

The Institute for Ministry in Rural Areas and Small-Towns at HTS is designed to help rural and small-town churches in North Carolina as they prioritize and respond to very pressing challenges that Christian congregations and ministries are facing now and will continue to face in the future.

**Rev. Damita Wilder, Program Director**, and her program coordinator will lead the four-point grant initiatives:

Continuing Education Program and Workshops for Rural and Small-Town Churches

Rural and Small-Town Academic Programs

Rural and Small-Town Funding Center

Rural and Small-Town Information and Referral Center

**Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President of Hood Theological Seminary** stated that He "is grateful to the Lilly Endowment for entrusting Hood to be a part of a focused effort to support the many rural and small-town churches and ministries in North Carolina. Hood has a strong history of supporting churches and rural communities and looks forward to impacting these communities in a most positive manner."

Hood Theological Seminary is one of 20 organizations from across the United States receiving grants through the initiative, including colleges and universities, denominational agencies, church networks, and parachurch organizations, among others.

"Our hope is that these grants will provide much needed resources and support to rural and small-town churches to help them address their challenges and enhance and extend the many ways that they serve their communities," said **Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion**.

### [About Lilly Endowment Inc](#)

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly, Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. Although the gifts of stock remain a financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its founders' hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana. A primary aim of its grantmaking in religion is to deepen the religious lives of Christians, principally by supporting efforts that enhance congregational vitality and strengthen the leadership of Christian communities. The Endowment values the broad diversity of Christian traditions and endeavors to support them in a wide variety of contexts. The Endowment also seeks to foster public understanding about religion by encouraging fair, accurate and balanced portrayals of the positive and negative effects of religion on the world and lifting up the contributions that people of all faiths make to our greater civic well-being.

### **About Hood Theological Seminary**

Hood Theological Seminary (HTS) is a graduate and professional theological school in Salisbury, North Carolina, dedicated to the education and preparation of women and men for bold and creative leadership in the Christian church and for a diverse world. In January of 2024, the Board of Commissioners of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) reaffirmed the accreditation of Hood Theological Seminary through 2034. The Seminary is approved for the following degree programs: General Theological Studies Certificate, Biblical Studies Certificate, Certificate in United Methodist Studies, Certificate in Christian Education, Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Arts in Chaplaincy, Master of Arts in Christian Education, Master Arts in Christian Ministry, and Doctor of Ministry. The Seminary is approved by the University Senate of The United Methodist Church (UMC) and is the only Seminary in the United States sponsored by the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ).

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## WNCC UMC Event

## Spark: Train the Trainer

This event, presented by the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church (WNCC UMC), is described as a "A Train the Trainer Event on Accompanying Young People As They Discern God's Call." For registration, dates for this training, and more information, please click [HERE](#).

[More Information](#)

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## In Memoriam



The entire Hood community joins together in prayer for and offers sincere condolences to the family and friends of:

**Salisbury Mayor Karen Alexander**, who passed away December 29, 2024. Her obituary can be found [HERE](#).

Chef Carl Brown's wife, **Mrs. Tonja Lynn Harvill Brown**, passed away on December 31, 2024.

**Mr. James T. Love**, brother of Dr. Mary Love, Adjunct Professor of Christian Education, passed away on Wednesday, January 9, 2025.

**Barbara Ann West**, mother of Boris Henderson, D.Min.'24, passed away on January 8, 2025. Her obituary can be found [HERE](#)



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!**

**To all our January Faculty, Staff, Alumni & Donors - A Blessed Birthday with Many More to Come!**



## **Planned Giving**

Create your legacy through a planned gift by remembering Hood Theological Seminary in a bequest or will with gifts of stocks and bonds, gifts of real estate or personal property, life insurance, charitable trust, retirement funds/IRA or life income gifts. By making a planned gift, you will become a member of the [Hood Legacy Society](#).

- ~ Do you have an IRA?
- ~ Are you at least 70 1/2 years of age?
- ~ Would you like to help HTS in its mission to prepare women and men for bold and creative leadership for the Christian church for a diverse world?

If you answered "Yes" to all three questions, please consider an IRA Charitable Rollover.

In an IRA Charitable Rollover, the distribution of up to \$100,000 annually made directly from the IRA custodian to a qualifying public charity, such as HTS, is excluded from gross income and counts toward the required minimum distribution.

**Contact:**

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Visit our [Planned Giving](#) website for lots of helpful information.



## Monthly Giving

Join the Faithful Friends Partner Recurring Monthly Program!

To become a Faithful Friend Partner, click the link below to donate and become a member for a minimum of \$25 monthly.

[Become A Faithful Friend Partner](#)



Your gift is essential in promoting the mission of the Seminary. Every gift, small and large, is greatly appreciated and stewarded responsibly!

It's so easy to [donate securely online](#) or mail your check directly to the Seminary at 1810 Lutheran Synod Dr., Salisbury, NC 28144.

**Contact:**  
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