

LOCAL PASTORS AND BISHOP ATTACK OBESITY PROBLEM

Problem to be addressed at 13th District Meeting on Friday, Nov. 19 at Memphis Marriott East

Co-Pastors Marilyn and Kenneth Robinson of St. Andrew AME Church are among the leadership of the African Methodist Episcopal Church who have been literally “losing it.”

Over the past several weeks, they have taken a spiritual and down-to-earth approach to their personal concerns about weight and health. This Friday (tomorrow) at 9:30 a.m. at the 13th District Conference at the Memphis Marriott East, they will introduce how they lost the weight and will challenge the hundreds attending the conference from Tennessee and Kentucky to do likewise. Helping them tell their stories will be two special guests who have lost a combined 262 pounds.

Since First Lady Michelle Obama has embraced the problem of obesity, Bishop Vashti McKenzie and the 13th Episcopal District of the AME Church have been tackling the obesity epidemic in a new and dramatic way. They enlisted the support of all of the Pastors and the Women’s Missionary Societies of the 13th District and have partnered with the Cookie Congregation, LLC.

While Bishop McKenzie and the Robinsons did not need dramatic weight loss, some members of their congregation do. The two special guests – John Haynes of the singing group Rolls Royce, who lost 118 lbs, and Rev. John Shearin, youth pastor of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in Baltimore, who lost 144 lbs., will provide proof positive that the new plan which includes eating cookies really works.

The Cookie Congregation is a national weight management company to bring a new weight loss program. Every Church and every WMS Society is encouraged to enroll in the program by the internet by logging on www.cookiecongregation.com or by calling toll free 877-355-3438 and by using the affiliate code: “District13.”

The presentation on November 19th will be made by Neil Freidman of the Cookie Congregation, who has been in Memphis all this week extolling the success of combining spirituality and weight loss, along with Haynes and Shearin. The conference which runs through Saturday, November 20, includes a concert by Grammy-nominated gospel artist Byron Cage at St. Andrew AME, 867 South Parkway East.

Pastors, Presiding Elders and other Church leaders in Tennessee, Kentucky have joined the “cookie diet revolution.” Their personal testimonies about weight loss, improved health and losing inches off their waist and losing dress sizes have been remarkable – and it started with Bishop McKenzie. Her testimony is that in less than two months she was able to lose weight and inches – while still maintaining a busy schedule of preaching and conducting the business of the Church. And others noticed and complimented her – and now want to achieve the same.

In the states of Tennessee and Kentucky, some churches like St. Andrew AME Church in Memphis have arranged to be local sites for the weekly weigh-ins, counseling and distribution of the nutritional cookies and other weight loss products, and in other instances churches will be regional hubs where clusters of churches are working together to have their members meet weekly to participate in the program. “Regardless of the arrangement every congregation and every church in Tennessee and Kentucky can participate” says Stan McKenzie, Episcopal Supervisor of the 13th District.

The wife of Stan McKenzie, Vashti Murphy McKenzie was elected as the first female bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She is also the national chaplain of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated and the granddaughter of Delta founder Vashti Turley Murphy.