

**Women's Home and Overseas
Missionary Society**
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

**Mary Gather Meeks
Agape Luncheon**

February 2017
Second Mile Anniversary

Quadrennial Theme:

**“The Great Commission- A Global Outreach”
Personal Transformation**

Mary Gaither Meeks Agape Luncheon

The Call to Worship:

Leader: Jesus said, I am the vine and you are the branches; abide in me as I abide in you.

People: We come to reaffirm and renew our connection with the life-giving Vine.

Leader: Jesus said, I appointed you to go and bear fruit... fruit that will last.

People: We want to be fruitful, productive people whose lives make a difference.

Leader: Jesus said, This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you.

All: Christ, you are the Vine. We are the branches. We will bear your fruit. We will abide in your love and share it.

The Invocation:

My God, You are all that is perfect and worthy of love; kindle in my heart the pure flame of Your love, so that I may love as You consume me with Your love.
Amen.

***The Litany of Love**

Leader: May the Lord show lovingkindness and truth to you.
(2 Samuel 2:6)

People: The Lord makes salvation and deliverance evident and shows lovingkindness to all His people forever. (2 Samuel 22:51)

Leader: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; His love endures forever.
(1 Chronicles 16:34)

People: The Lord's lovingkindness is everlasting.
(1 Chronicles 16:41, 2 Chronicles 5:13, 7:3, 7:6, 20:21)

Leader: Our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, You are a gracious and compassionate God who keeps lovingkindness and in

Your great compassion does not forsake. (Nehemiah 9:31-32)

People: You God have granted me life, mercy, and lovingkindness; And Your care has preserved my spirit. (Job 10:12)

**Leader: All the paths of the Lord are lovingkindness and truth
(Psalm 25:10)**

*People: I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness, Because You have seen my affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul
(Psalm 31:7)*

**Leader: Lovingkindness surrounds those who trust in the Lord
(Psalm 32:10)**

People: Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. (Psalm 36:5)

**Leader: You, O Lord, will not withhold Your compassion from me;
Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me.
(Psalm 40:11)**

All: The lovingkindness of God lasts all day long. (Psalm 52:1)

The Hymn: “Love Lifted Me” #429

The Meditation:

The Blessing and Sharing of Bread: *(a meager meal is suggested)*

The Sacrificial Offering: *(special appeal for second mile offering)*

The Remarks:

The Missionary Benediction:

**God be merciful unto us and bless us and cause His face to shine upon us
and give us peace. Amen.**

Program prepared by:

Angela Davis-Baxter, First Vice President
Dr. Sandra L. Gadson, International President

Mary Gaither Meeks

(Conceived Idea of Agape Luncheon)

Mary Gaither Meeks, daughter of Israel Lee Gaither, Sr. and Carmilla Nichols Gaither was born in Mocksville, North Carolina, May 27, 1911. She received her formal education in the public schools of Mocksville, Price High School and Livingstone College.

Mrs. Meeks began her missionary journey under Anna Hauser who was then serving as District President of the Salisbury District, Western North Carolina Conference. She was District President of the Akron District of the Ohio Conference (1949-1957) and of the Chicago District of the Michigan Conference (1957-1978). Committed to the preparation and inspiration of youth, she served as District Secretary of the Y's and District Chairman of the Life Members Council of the Michigan Conference and as Dean of the Leadership Training Institutes at Clinton Junior College and Lomax Hannon Junior College (1970-1974).

In 1971, she was elected First Vice President of the W. H. & O.M. Society and re-elected in 1975. She brought to that role; a richness of creativity, a wealth of experience and a commitment to excellence. One of her most successful ideas was a resolution she presented to the Executive Board for the Agape Luncheon to be established as a fundraiser for the Second Mile Project in 1973.

She served as a member of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Salvation Army and was a Vice President of the Illinois Council of Churches (1971-1972), served as First Vice President of Church Women United in Illinois (1968-1970). She was the first African American to serve as State President (1971-1974), a member of the National Board of Managers of that organization, a member of the World Federation of Methodist Women, and the National Council of Negro Women.

Mrs. Meeks died on May 6, 1978, while in office. Her quadrennial report to the 1979 Convention was read by President Willa Mae Rice who lifted up Mrs. Meeks' contributions to Second Mile via the promotion of the Agape Luncheon. The delegates to this convention in 1979 voted to name the Agape Luncheon: **The Mary Gaither Meeks Agape Luncheon.**

Source: *Historical Highlights, Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society, Mattie Wilson Taylor*

Sources: <http://love-god-love-others.blogspot.com/>
<http://worshipcalls.blogspot.com/>

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