

The Ransom Pentecostal African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Strategic Plan

2022 - 2027

An Engaged Faith: Toward the New Jerusalem

Vision – To be a dynamic, relevant and viable expression of the Body of Jesus Christ based in Battersea, Wandsworth. We envision an engaged faith that will evangelize humanity and transform our world to reflect the dominant values lived and espoused by our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.

Mission: To Maintain Increased Levels of Collaboration and Visibility for the Church resulting in the increase of Love for God through Our Service to Humankind as guided by Luke 4:18 and 10:27: engaging those around us in order that more of humanity, those we touch, might be instruments for the transformation of our world into the beloved community that God willed from the beginning of creation according to Revelation 21:1-4 and Isaiah 65:17-19.

- 1. Increased Membership**
 - Young Adults**
 - Men**
- 2. Expanded Outreach and Communication**
 - Website**
 - Social Media Presence**
 - Radio Station**
- 3. Budget Growth**
 - Sponsored Programs**
 - External Funding**
- 4. Program Diversity**
 - Social Care**
 - Incubated Entrepreneurism**
- 5. Facilities Upgrade and Modernization**

Afrocentric in Outlook

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was founded by and is led by persons of African heritage. Hence the inclusion of the word 'African' in the denomination's name. The Ransom Pentecostal AME Zion Church is therefore committed to upholding this founding, guiding legacy of the church. The Ransom Pentecostal AME Zion Church identifies with the aspirations and desires of persons of African heritage to establish, maintain and lift up their unique contributions to humanity in the face of persistent racism, xenophobia, social discrimination, economic and political marginalisation. The progress that we seek for ourselves we extend to all those side-lined by privilege and or power. The Ransom Pentecostal AMEZ Church will enter into partnership and collaboration to extend the biblical ideals of equality, equity, justice and freedom to all of God's children.

Prophetic in Ministry

The Ransom AME Zion Church looks to apply biblical truth to the issues of the day and will so guide, educate and empower its membership. Like James Varick, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass and many others of the AME Zion Church we will courageously speak truth to power and to circumstances in which we live, work and thrive. We will preach, teach and model the gospel of Jesus Christ as exemplified by the biblical prophets, the apostles of the early church and the Black Prophetic Tradition. We will address injustice, analyse its operation, bear witness to its evil, and organise and mobilize creative responses to lift up truth in the pursuit of justice.

International in Reach

The Christian mandate is global in scope and therefore missional. The Ransom AME Zion Church will engage in international outreach through its societies, operations, programmes and initiatives as set out in the AME Zion's Book of Discipline and reiterated by its' Board of Bishops. We will support Christian world missions through humanitarian activities and global advocacy. We will advocate and agitate for international peace and equitable sharing of the world's resources. Through spiritual, social, educational, medical, technological, economic and institutional programmes we will uphold the integrity of the 'least of these'. We will take steps to ensure that our evangelism and international outreach, missions, donations, social programmes and advocacy work will seek to impact positively the lives of the peoples and nations of the African continent and its diaspora communities in the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe and the United States of America.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

The Ransom Pentecostal AMEZ Church is committed to extending the biblical ideals of equality, equity, justice and freedom to all of God's children. An in-depth analysis of the current landscape defining the socio-economic and political circumstances surrounding our existence as a Body of Believers raises some serious concerns. As we face one of the most difficult financial and economic times in the history of this country, the need to address five (5) areas is absolutely essential for our

survival: health and well-being, sustainable living standards, higher education and training, entrepreneurship and employment, and criminal justice.

The health challenges faced by people of colour in the United Kingdom has reached critical national levels. Black African women had a mortality rate four times higher than White women in the UK. There is a significant disproportionate number of ethnic minorities detained under mental health legislation in hospitals in England and Wales. For example, Black African women are seven times more likely to be detained than White British women. Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, prostate, breast cancer and mental health issues are some of the more prevalent challenges experienced by our community. The Ransom Pentecostal AME Zion Church is committed to taking a proactive approach to encouraging Health and wellness through early intervention, preventative strategies and promoting good nutrition. Wellness counselling, weight management and healthy lifestyles are given a priority in our church programmes but we recognize that more must be done.

The United Kingdom performs well in many dimensions of well-being relative to other countries. The United Kingdom outperforms the average in income, jobs, education, social connections, safety and life satisfaction. Yet, according to a study by the New Economics Foundation, Thirty million people in the UK will be unable to afford what the public considers to be a decent standard of living by the time the current parliament ends in 2024.

We all know that a good education and skills are important requisites for finding a job. Black Caribbean and Mixed White/Black Caribbean children have rates of permanent exclusion about three times that of the pupil population as a whole. In the United Kingdom, 82% of adults aged 25-64 have completed upper secondary education. Black students are more likely to drop out from higher education than other ethnic groups and least likely to achieve a first or upper second-class degree. White graduates have the highest employment rates of any ethnic group. Black graduates have the lowest and Black Caribbean graduates earn the least.

Statistics show that Black Caribbean pupils have particularly low entry rates to more prestigious universities. At the same time, pupils eligible for free school meals are much less likely than other pupils to go into higher education, particularly to more prestigious universities. They are also almost twice as likely to drop out before the start of their second year in higher education. Graduates who were eligible for free school meals are slightly less likely to be in employment or further study and they earn around 10% less than other graduates.

A living wage is an important means to achieving higher living standards. Rising prices, below-inflation increases in earnings and projected increases in unemployment could result in 43% of households lacking the resources to put food on the table, clothes on our backs or a decent roof over our heads even as Black adults are more likely to live in substandard, overcrowded accommodation. It is commonly expected that by 2024 almost 90% of single parents and 50% of workers with children would fall below a minimum income standard. These statistics clearly show that we cannot depend on the welfare system.

The research shows that Black people experience significantly higher unemployment rates when compared with other ethnic groups. Additionally, Black graduates who leave school with A-levels typically get paid less, and Black workers with university degrees earn less on average than White workers. There is a Lower percentage of Black managers, directors and senior officials when compared to all other groups.

Entrepreneurship promotes economic growth, provides access to goods and services, and improves the overall standard of living. Many entrepreneurs also make a positive impact on their communities and improve their well-being by catering to underserved areas. The role of entrepreneurship in economic development is substantial. After all, entrepreneurs don't just build businesses and grow

their personal wealth; they also impact the economy by creating new jobs and opportunities, driving innovation, and developing new markets, products, and services.

There have been notable Black entrepreneurs throughout UK history. Indeed, the UK's small business landscape is overwhelmingly white. According to the latest Government figures, just 6% of small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that employ at least one person are led by people of minority ethnic groups (MEG). Of them, only 11% are run by Black entrepreneurs. That's an estimated 9,321 Black-led employers out of 5.6 million SMEs in total - just 0.167% of the SME population.

SOLUTION DRIVEN

We intend to address these critical areas with initiatives founded on the principles of Community Empowerment, Capacity Building, Economic Development and partnership and Collaboration.

Community Empowerment seeks to rebalance the power and influence that government, agencies and others exercise over our communities. By establishing processes that increase the people's skills, knowledge and confidence, we seek to provide the ability of people to do things for themselves, and enable people to take control over the decisions, services and activities that affect their lives and communities.

1. Take Control of Development:

Empower communities to take control of their own development. It helps them to identify their needs and priorities, develop strategies to address them, and build their skills and knowledge to implement those strategies effectively. This can lead to increased self-reliance and sustainability.

2. Build Trust and Credibility:

When organizations and individuals have the skills, knowledge, and abilities to carry out their work effectively, they are more likely to be trusted and respected by their organizational peers and partner organizations.

3. Strengthens Resilience:

Empowerment strengthens the resilience of organizations and communities. It helps them to adapt to changing circumstances and to respond effectively to emergencies or crises. This can help to reduce the impact of disasters and other disruptions and to promote recovery and rebuilding.

4. Identify the Need to Change and Support Change:

Empowered communities can more readily identify the need to change, support change and manage it. When organizations and individuals are equipped with the skills and knowledge to manage change effectively, they are better able to adapt to new circumstances and to implement new strategies and initiatives.

5. Improves Accountability and Transparency:

Empowered communities exist in a higher level of trust, accountability and transparency. Individuals and organizations have the skills and knowledge to monitor and evaluate their performance, they are better able to identify areas for improvement and to communicate their successes and challenges to stakeholders with clarity and intentionality.

Capacity Building seeks to promote innovation and creativity that encourages organizations and individuals to think outside the box to come up with new ideas to accomplish our mission in a more efficient and effective manner. We seek to define the methodologies and actions required for our community to guarantee that it has the assets necessary to succeed to include spiritual development and faith formation, fiscal planning and funding source diversification, organizational learning, leadership development, and others.

1. Enhances Organizational and Individual Performance:

Capacity building is essential for organizations and individuals to enhance their performance. It helps organizations to develop skills, knowledge, and abilities to better manage their resources, improve communication, and increase productivity. It also helps individuals to improve their skills and knowledge, which can lead to personal growth and development, better job opportunities, and career advancement.

2. Increases Efficiency and Effectiveness:

Capacity building can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations and individuals. It helps them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and develop strategies to improve their performance. This can lead to improved service delivery, better decision-making, and increased productivity.

3. Promotes Innovation and Creativity:

Capacity building can promote innovation and creativity. It encourages organizations and individuals to think outside the box and come up with new ideas and solutions to challenges. This can lead to improved services, products, and processes, which can benefit the organization and the wider community.

4. Enables Strategic Planning:

Capacity building can enable organizations and individuals to carry out strategic planning effectively. With the right skills and knowledge, they can identify opportunities, set goals, and develop strategies to achieve them. This can help to ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently.

Economic Development seeks to improve the economic well-being and quality of life of our community and the individuals in that community according to targeted goals and objectives. We engage the process of creating and utilizing physical, human, financial, and social assets to generate improved and broadly shared economic well-being and quality of life for our community. We intend to address the material standards of living of our members by raising the absolute level of per capita incomes for members.

1. Supports Sustainability:

Economic development efforts support sustainability efforts. When individuals and organizations have the skills and knowledge to manage their resources effectively, they are better able to promote environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Partnership and Collaboration is crucial to accomplishing our mission and vision as the continuing erosion of our social safety nets requires faith-based organizations to go beyond traditional social services such as food pantries, clothing drives, and other goodwill initiatives. We will identify, partner and collaborate with other organizations and individuals that have a common understanding of the issues, challenges, and opportunities that affect our communities. With this shared understanding in place, we can work together effectively and to achieve shared goals. We seek to work with civic,

business, and governmental organizations to tackle sustainable community initiatives such as affordable housing, affordable senior housing, K-12 education, higher education preparation, job training and placement, small business incubation, alternative banking models, commercial redevelopment, and other transformative community endeavours.

1. Facilitates Knowledge Transfer:

Facilitate knowledge transfer from one organization or individual to another. It helps to share best practices, lessons learned, and innovative ideas. This can lead to improved collaboration and partnerships, and ultimately, better outcomes.

2. Promotes Diversity and Inclusion:

Promote diversity and inclusion by partnering and collaborating with diverse organizations and communities. When individuals and organizations have the skills and knowledge to appreciate and value diversity, they are more likely to create inclusive environments that promote innovation, creativity and growth.