

E. Anne Henning Byfield begins tenure as head of AME church

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [July 14, 2021](#) issue



(Facebook)

Elizabeth Anne Henning Byfield began her tenure as president of the African Methodist Episcopal Council of Bishops on June 15. In this position, Byfield serves as

the titular head of the denomination. She is the third woman in the denomination's 200-year history to hold the role.

Byfield was elected a bishop in 2016 and has presided over districts in Indiana and Illinois. As a bishop, Byfield established a vocational school in Haiti, re-established the AME Church in Cuba, and was instrumental in planting ten churches.

She is the author of several liturgical books as well as *The Essence of My Existence*, a book of poetry. A litany Byfield wrote was used at Rosa Parks's funeral in 2005, and she is included in the fourth edition of *Those Preaching Women*, a collection of sermons edited by Ella Pearson Mitchell and Jacqueline B. Glass.

Last year, Byfield received the lifetime achievement award from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, which aims to sustain and mobilize the Black faith community. She has also been honored with the City of Indianapolis volunteer award for community service and was recently recognized for 25 years of pastoral leadership in service to those living with HIV/AIDS.