



The family of the Reverend Dr. Autura Eason-Williams and
Bishop William A. McAlilly and Members of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Annual Conference of The
United Methodist Church

July 31, 2022

Dear Darrell, Ayanna, John, TJ, Gwendolyn and Bishop McAlilly, and TWKUMC Friends:

We, the 2022 Southeastern Jurisdiction Episcopal Nominees, wish to convey our deepest sympathies in response to the recent tragic death of the Reverend Dr. Autura Eason-Williams. Autura was our sister in Christ. She was faithful, loving, prayerful, bright, and focused. Her gifts as a wife, mother, and Christian clergy leader were a blessing to each of you and all of us in extraordinary ways!

Until recently, she was our co-traveler on the episcopal journey. Her untimely death and the imprint she left remind us of the commitment with which we should aspire to this role. She not only increased the number of nominees but also the quality of the nominees. Her decision to withdraw as a nominee reminds us of the importance of listening to the Spirit in the seasons of our ministries and the high bar of our calling as servant leaders.

We will not continue this work in the same manner as before her death; instead, we have been inspired by her life. We will continue to mourn the loss of her life and the manner in which it was taken. We pray for those who took her life that they might come to know the God of grace, transforming love and forgiveness.

Moreover, we join you in the sure and certain knowledge that she has been received into the eternal and everlasting arms of Jesus, where we hope to join her one day.

May the Lord of the Resurrection comfort you, and may His grace keep all of us *who have longed for his appearing*. (Excerpt from 2 Timothy 4:8 *NIV*)

Grace and Peace,

The 2022 Southeastern Jurisdiction Episcopal Nominees,

Iosmar Alvarez	Kentucky
Sharon Austin	Florida
Tom Berlin	Virginia
Sharon Bowers	Holston BMCR
Fred Britton	Mississippi
Amy Coles	Western North Carolina
Eddie Gleaves	North Carolina
Ken Nelson	South Carolina
Connie Shelton	SEJ Clergywomen
Byron Thomas	North Georgia