

Rev. Sheri D. Smith Clayborn



Rev. Smith Clayborn's commitment to caring and excellence, in addition to her passion for life, are built upon the foundation of a strong family. She is the daughter of life-long educators Gerald and Cassandra Smith of Lynwood, California, and is the youngest of their four children (her siblings are Gerald Jr., Courtney, and Sharon). Her zest for caring and excellence in life and in love were further strengthened on December 30, 2000, when she married her friend, her love, and her partner in ministry, the Rev. Patrick D. Clayborn. God greatly multiplied their blessings with the birth of a son, Patrick D. Clayborn, II,(P2) who is now 10 years old, and three-year-old Joya D. Clayborn– who is the epitome of her name.

Firmly committed to excellence and to a true belief that she must study to show herself approved, Rev. Smith Clayborn is a graduate of Clark Atlanta University where she earned the Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion, and she is a graduate of Candler School of Theology at Emory University where she was awarded a Master of Divinity degree with an emphasis in Black Church Studies. Rev. Smith Clayborn has also gained further training and experience through a Clinical Pastoral Education internship at Covenant Counseling Institute.

Rev. Sheri has been blessed to serve in numerous capacities. She worked as the Educational Consultant for Calvary Community Development Corporation, Morristown, NJ. She also served as the Minister to Women at St. Paul AME Church, in Columbus. She previously served as a pulpit associate at St. James AME Church, Newark, NJ. In addition, she was appointed Dean of Administration for St. James Preparatory School in Newark, NJ, where she also served as the religious education teacher and the coordinator of religious life. Rev. Smith Clayborn also served as the Staff Minister for Congregational and Community Care at St. John AME Church in Fairburn, Georgia. There, her ministries of caring extended outside of the church through her work with Restoring Individuals and Society through Empowerment (RISE), a faith-based nonprofit organization, and through her volunteer efforts with the Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence and Hospice Atlanta. Prior to joining her husband in ministry at Bethel AME, Rev. Sheri served as the Executive Minister of St. John AME Church in Huntsville, AL.

An ordained itinerant elder in the AME Church, Rev. Sheri is a woman called by God, who answers that call continuously. One of her guiding scriptures is Psalm 118:17: "I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord (NRSV)." Through that scripture she is always acutely aware that an integral part of God's assignment for her is to help others to live better lives.

Under the pastoral leadership of her husband, the Rev. Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D., Rev Sheri Smith Clayborn has shown her power as a preacher and teacher in the pulpit at Bethel AMEC, and in churches across the Baltimore area. She was the featured speaker for Mt. Calvary AME's Mother/Daughter luncheon, was the featured Women's Day preacher for Trinity Baptist Church. Served as Organizing Chair for Bethel's "Back 2 School Block Party" and leads Bethel AME's Womens Ministry.

**Sheri is pronounced SHUR-ee