

News & Buzz

Bishop George Battle, former head of the A.M.E. Zion Church, dies at 77

Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr, former Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education member, stands as one of the longest-serving active bishops to serve at A.M.E.



by Destiniece Jaram
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Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr, former head of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. (Photo courtesy of The A.M.E. Zion Church.)

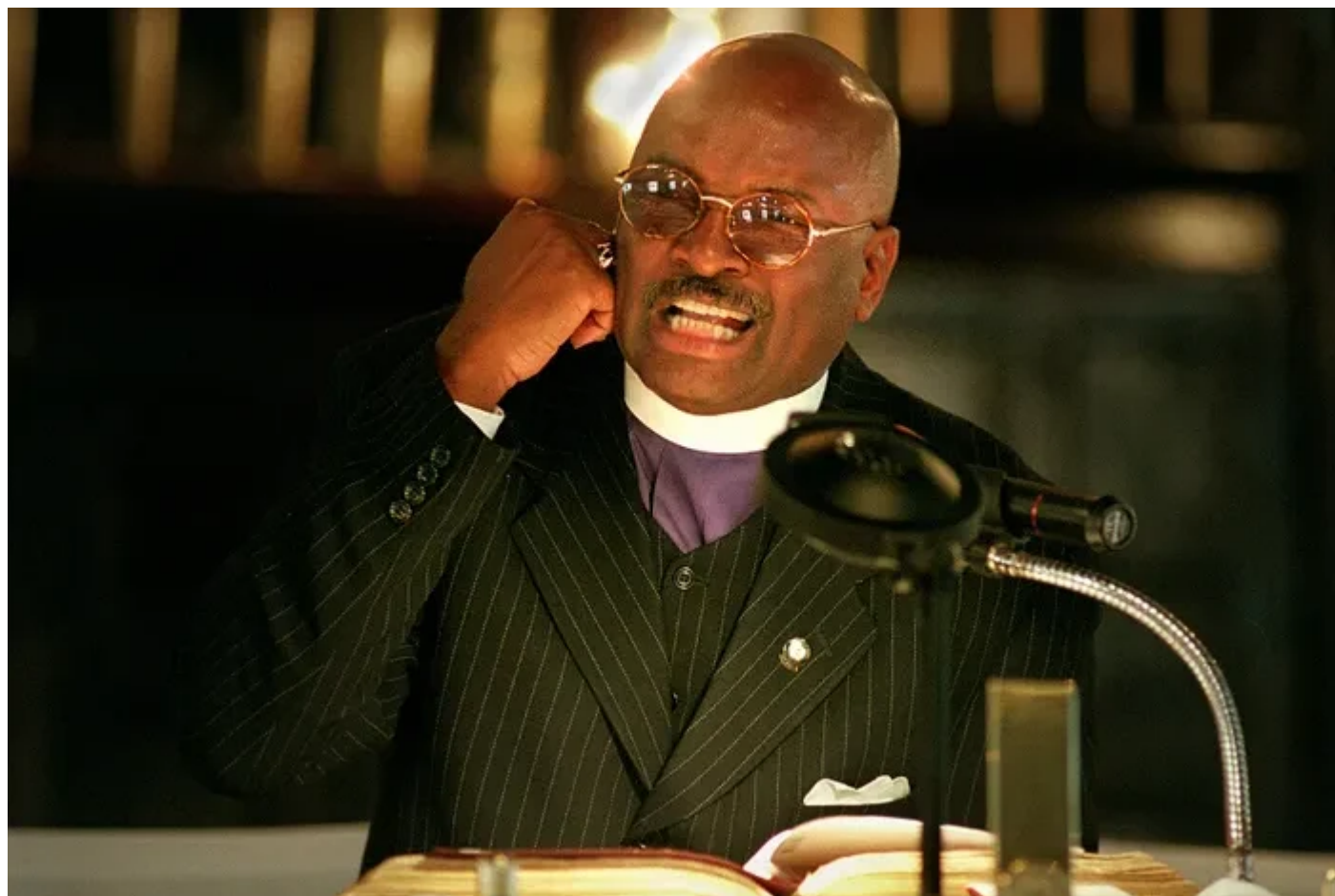
Bishop George Edward Battle Jr, a former head of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church,

died Sunday. He was 77.

Born on May 14, 1947, Battle leaves behind a legacy of “faith, love, and service,” the Board of Bishops of The A.M.E. Zion Church said in a statement. “We acknowledge that, indeed, *a prince and a great man* in the A.M.E. Zion Church has fallen, but he is now in the presence of his Lord, whom He served with all of his heart. He will be greatly missed.”

Battle was elected in 1978 to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school board, a position he held for 17 years, including four years as board chair.

Over their 54 years of marriage, Battle, 77, and his wife, Iris, had a son, George Battle III, a former CMS staff attorney, and a daughter, LaChandra. They also had five grandchildren, according to his obituary.



Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr, former head of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. (Photo courtesy of The A.M.E. Zion Church.)

Role in the church

Hailing from Edgecombe County, Battle graduated from Livingstone College in 1969. He earned several more degrees, including a master of divinity from Hood Theological Seminary in 1972 and a doctor of

ministry degree from the Howard University School of Divinity in 1990, according to his obituary.

Battle, who was an active bishop for 29 years, stands as one of the longest-serving active bishops in The A.M.E. Zion Church, according to the Board of Bishops.

Over his career, he pastored at several locations in the A.M.E. Zion Church. In 1992, he was elected the 84 bishop and led several North and South Carolina congregations, according to his obituary. He was assigned to the Northeastern Episcopal District in 2004 and served for eight years. In 2012, he was assigned as the Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church to the Piedmont Episcopal District, where he served until his retirement in 2021.

‘A lifelong advocate’

Battle served numerous roles throughout the Charlotte community over his lifetime, including “a great philanthropist, a community leader, a champion for education, and a social justice advocate,” the Board of Bishops said.

“A lifelong advocate for at-risk and those economically disadvantaged, Bishop Battle has received more than 100 awards and honors during his career, including the Long Leaf Pine Award, the highest award bestowed by the state of North Carolina,” Atrium Health said on its website.

