**ORDER OF SERVICE**

**Connectional LAY SUNDAY 2018**

**PRELUDE**

**PROCESSIONAL** – “We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise” (#529 *African American Heritage Hymnal*)

**CALL TO WORSHIP – PSALM 100**

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing? Know that the Lord, He is God! It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise! Be thankful unto Him and bless His name for the Lord is good. His steadfast love endures forever and His faithfulness to all generations.*

**INVOCATION** (*congregation in unison*)

Father, thank you that you have brought us safely to this place.  
We surrender our lives to you in worship and praise.  
As we gather we remember those who are not with us today -   
For those who are sick we ask for healing,  
And for those away from us we ask for your blessing to be on them.  
We invite Your Holy Spirit to move freely amongst us.  
Come dwell in each of our hearts.  
May we behold Your beauty and encounter your grace.  
We ask all this in the matchless name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

**CHORAL RESPONSE –** “Let It Breathe on Me” (#225 *AMEZ Bicentennial Hymnal*)

**THE HYMN –** “A Charge to Keep I Have”(#439 *AMEZ Bicentennial Hymnal*)

**THE RESPONSIVE READING – PSALM 37:2-8, 23-28, 39 NRSV**

*Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.***Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.**

*Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act.***He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday.**

*Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.*

**Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it leads only to evil.**

Our steps are made firm by the Lord, when he delights in our way;  
**though we stumble, we shall not fall headlong, for the Lord holds us by the hand.**

*I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging for bread.***They are ever giving liberally and lending, and their children become a blessing.** **Depart from evil, and do good; so you shall abide forever.**  
*For the Lord loves justice; he will not forsake his faithful ones.*

**The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; he is their refuge in the time of trouble.**

**THE APOSTLE’S CREED or AN AFFIRMATION FOR LAITY**

**SCRIPTURE LESSONS**

**OLD TESTAMENT – 1 Kings 8:54-64**

**GLORIA PATRI**

**NEW TESTAMENT – Romans 12:1-8**

**THE PRAYER**

**PRAYER HYMN** – “Have Thine Own Way, Lord” (#492 AME Bicentennial Hymnal)

**CHORAL SELECTION\***

**THE MINISTRY OF KINDNESS**

**NOTICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THE HYMN OF PREPARATION** – #681 “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

(Connectional Lay Council Theme Hymn)

**THE LAY SUNDAY MESSAGE**

**THE INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

**HYMN OF INVITATION\***

**THE REDEDICATION OF LAITY** *(Litany for Rededication of Laity)*

**THE OFFERING APPEAL *(including the Lay Sunday Offering)***

**THE TITHES & OFFERING**

**THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

**RECESSIONAL – #**680 Onward Christian Laity(Connectional Lay Council Theme Song)

**LAY COUNCIL CLOSING PRAYER –** Oh God, our Father, pour out your steadfast love upon us and keep us in your care, now and forever more. Amen.

**CHORAL BENEDICTORY –** “Lord, Make Me More Holy” (#632 *African American Heritage Hymnal*)

**\***All specified elements of worship are suggestions. See suggestions in the article “Elements of Worship” found on this website.

**Lay Sunday Offering Appeal**

Livingstone College in Salisbury, North Carolina will be the recipients of the 2018 Lay Sunday offerings. The Lay Sunday offering goal is to exceed $25,000. Our young people need our support. Let us sow some Lay Council seeds by investing in the future of these young people.

Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins, Sr., our twelfth president of Livingstone College, has provided this statement to encourage our giving: *“Livingstone College and the AME Zion Church, known as the “Freedom Church,” are intimately linked together. Knowledge is freedom, and education is knowledge; and we know that education is the surest vehicle for upward mobility in the world. As in the past, the AME Zion Church continues its tradition of forging ahead, along the freedom trail, reminiscent of the journey of Harriett Tubman. The support that the church has provided Livingstone over its 138 years of existence has been the backbone to the continued survival of the college. At Livingstone College, we are literally setting young men and women free! We are creating change agents and helping to break the vicious cycle of poverty and I dare say that without the support that we get from the AME Zion Church, our story would be far more different, in a negative way. On behalf of the entire Livingstone College family, I want to thank Dr. Mary J. Matthews, International President of the Lay Council of the AME Zion Church, for this fundraising initiative. The success of this initiative will allow the college to compete more effectively for academically talented students.”*

The Connectional Lay Council is devoted to making a difference in the lives of others. One way we continue to make a difference is through contributions received from the Connectional Lay Sunday offerings. Your financial support is greatly appreciated.

All churches are asked to support Connectional Lay Sunday with a special offering. Please make all checks payable to the Connectional Lay Council and mail to Connectional Lay Council PO Box 26770 Charlotte, NC 28221-6770.

**Litany for Rededication of Laity**

**The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**

**Lay Leader:** As Laity of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, we *Rededicate ourselves* to serve God, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and humanity.

***Laity:*** *By deepening our Spiritual Life.*

**Lay Leader:** As Laity of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, we *Rededicate ourselves* to disseminate information.

***Laity:*** *By gathering and sharing information about our heritage, traditions, and the mission of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church*.

**Lay Leader:** As Laity of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, we *Rededicate ourselves* to be true to God and our denomination.

**LAITY:** *By cultivating our loyalty to God and The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.*

**LAY LEADER:** As Laity of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, we *Rededicate ourselves* to expand our denomination.

**LAITY:** *We are committed to expanding our denomination through education of ourselves and others; by evangelizing to the unsaved and promoting any other interest of the Kingdom of God.*

**Lay Leader:** Today we *Rededicate ourselves to* the objectives and purpose of the Connectional Lay Council of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

**ALL:** *Today, we Rededicate ourselves to be faithful to God, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and to the mission of the Church of Christ universal to make disciples.*