



THE CONNECTION

**"MAXIMIZING OUR MISSION BY MANAGING OUR MINISTRY:
THROUGH EMPOWERMENT"**

NINTH QUADRENNIAL LAY CONVOCATION MARCH 29 – APRIL 1, 2012

**"FULFILLING THE MANDATE THROUGH
EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT AND
EMPOWERMENT"**

**SHERATON GREENSBORO AT FOUR SEASONS
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA**



YVONNE A. TRACEY
General President



MARY MATTHEWS
Convocation Chairperson



SANDRA WILLIAMS
Host Regional Director



CONVOCATION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY - March 28, 2012
Food, Fun, and Fellowship @ CLC Live

8:00 PM

THURSDAY

THURSDAY - March 29, 2012
Opening Session
Boot Camp
Rules Of The Church
Review Of Legislative Flow Chart
Free Time/Lunch (On Your Own)
State Of The AME Zion Church Panel
Free Time/Dinner (On Your Own)
Welcome Program (Trinity Church)
Worship Service (Trinity Church)
Welcome Reception (Trinity Church)

8:30 AM
9:00 AM

12:30 PM
2:30 PM
4:30 PM
7:00 PM
7:30 PM
10:00 PM

FRIDAY

FRIDAY - March 30, 2012
Empowerment Hour
Prayer Breakfast
Registration
Opening Session
PLENARY SESSION I
President's Opening Statement
General Conference Resolutions
General Conf. Resolutions (Cont.)
Challenge Luncheon with Candidates
Advance Parliamentary Procedures
Health Break
PLENARY SESSION II
CLC By-Laws And Legislation
PLENARY SESSION III
Introduction Of General Officer And Episcopacy Candidates
Dinner (On Your Own)
Episcopal Candidates Forum
Life Members "Candidates" Social

6:00 AM
7:00 AM
9:00 AM

9:00 AM
9:30 AM
10:45 AM
12:30 PM
2:00 PM
3:00 PM
3:15 PM
5:00 PM
6:00 PM
7:00 PM
11:00 PM

SATURDAY

SATURDAY - March 31, 2012
Empowerment Hour
Breakfast (Regional Clusters w/Candidates)
Opening Session
PLENARY SESSION IV - A
General Officer Candidates Forum
Health Break
General Officer Candidates Forum Cont.
PLENARY SESSION IV - B
Youth and Young Adult Forum
Lunch and Learn Church Music Academy (With Box Lunch)
PLENARY SESSION V - A
Evangelistic Thrust ("Who Stole My Church")
Break
Political Social Action Hour of Empowerment
PLENARY SESSION V - B
Youth and Young Adult Church Music Academy
Free Time
Bishop George J. Leake III Scholarship/
Black And Gold Benefit Concert & Banquet

6:15 AM
7:30 AM

9:00 AM
11:15 AM
11:30 AM
10:30 AM
1:00 PM
2:30 PM
4:00 PM
4:15 PM
4:00 PM
5:30 PM
7:00 PM

SUNDAY

SUNDAY - April 1, 2012
Worship at Host Church (Trinity AME Zion Church)

10:30 AM

9TH QUADRENNIAL LAY CONVOCATION

Young Adult/Youth Activities

SATURDAY MARCH 31, 2012 | **Time**

REGISTRATION - Sign-in (no registration fee) 8:00am - 8:45am
KNOW YOUR CHURCH At-A-Glance General Officer Candidates Forum 9:00am - 10:15am
Youth/Young Adult Forums 10:30 am - 12:00pm
Lunch and Learn (Lunch Box provided) 1:00pm - 2:30pm
Break 4:00pm - 4:15pm
Freetime 6:00pm - 7:00pm

7:30pm
R.C. ROCHON Church Music Academy
Sat Only
No Registration Fee
 We encourage all Participants, please bring your instruments

R.C. Rochon Church Music Academy

The purpose is to provide an opportunity for young adults and youth to learn and practice several genres of church music to enhance the worship experience. Everyone is encouraged to bring their instruments to heighten the participation. One or two selections will be rehearsed and presented at 7:00 PM during the Ninth Quadrennial Lay Convocation Black and Gold Benefit Concert & Banquet.

SATURDAY - March 31, 2012

8:00 AM	REGISTRATION - Sign-in (no registration fee)
	PLENARY SESSION A KNOW YOUR CHURCH At-A-Glance,
9:00 AM	SPECIAL SEATING : GENERAL OFFICER CANDIDATE FORUM
	PLENARY SESSION B YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT FORUMS,
1:00 PM	LUNCH and LEARN (With Box Lunch) R.C. ROCHON CHURCH MUSIC ACADEMY
	PLENARY SESSION C R.C. ROCHON CHURCH MUSIC ACADEMY
2:45 PM	BREAK
4:00 PM	R.C. ROCHON CHURCH MUSIC ACADEMY
4:15 PM	FREE TIME
6:00 PM	R.C. ROCHON CHURCH MUSIC ACADEMY
7:30 PM	Guest appearance at The BISHOP GEORGE J. LEAKE III SCHOLARSHIP/BLACK AND GOLD BENEFIT CONCERT

Bishop George Junis Leake III Black & Gold Banquet and Benefit Concert

North Carolina A&T State University
 Fellowship Gospel Choir
 Livingstone College Concert Choir
 R.C. Rochon Church Music Academy Choir
 and other featured Artists within
 The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Saturday March 31, 2012
7:00 pm
\$35.00 per ticket

Joanne Harrison
Benefit Concert Director

Othello Jefferson
Performer

Jonathan French
Performer

they can be purchased by going to the website www.connectionallaycouncil.org, click on the 9th Quadrennial Lay Convocation 'Register Here' box and scroll down to 'Conference Events', check box and select quantity)

Ninth Quadrennial Lay Convocation Black and Gold Benefit Concert & Banquet

Benefactor
 The Bishop George J. Leake III Scholarship Fund for qualifying A.M.E. Zion students attending Hood Theological Seminary located in Salisbury, NC and Greenville, AL.

Saturday, March 31, 2012 at 7:00 PM
 Sheraton Greensboro at Four Seasons, Greensboro, North Carolina

Performances by:
 Livingstone College Concert Choir
 Dr. DaVaughn Miller, Director
 Dr. Joanne K. Harrison, Accompanist

NC A&T State University Fellowship Gospel Choir
 Mr. Ronald Jones, Director

R. C. Rochon Church Music Academy
 Ms. Crystal Bailey, Detroit MI, Director
 Mr. Othello Jefferson, San Francisco, CA, Guest Musician
 Mr. Jonathan French, Salisbury, NC, Guest Musician

Other featured artists within the A.M.E. Zion Church

You can purchase tickets at \$35.00 per ticket by going to the website www.connectionallaycouncil.org click on the 9th Quadrennial Lay Convocation "Register Here" box and scroll down to 'Conference Events', check box and select quantity.

9TH QUADRENNIAL LAY CONVOCATION

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL
 The AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH
 Ninth Quadrennial Lay Convocation
 March 29 - April 1, 2012
 "Maximizing Our Mission by Managing Our Ministry Through: Education, Evangelism, Empowerment, and Expansion"

The Connectional Lay Council's Community Outreach is focusing on
Hannah's Haven Recovery Home
 "and the Lord remembered her..." 1 Samuel 1:19b

Hannah's Haven, A Teen Challenge Center helps women develop in spirit, mind, and body so they can become all they were created to be in Christ. In partnership with the community, Hannah's Haven provides a safe and stable environment for women who are in recovery from substance abuse.

Hannah's Haven Greensboro, NC

The Social and Political Action Committee of the Connectional Lay Council desires to promote this life changing facility with a request for \$10.00 Wal-mart gift cards or financial contributions to be collected on-site.

Post Office Box 26770 Charlotte, NC 28221-6770
 (704) 599-4630 ext: 2566
 "In All Thy Ways Acknowledge Him And He Shall Direct Thy Paths" - Proverbs 3:6

HANNAH'S HAVEN

A Safe Haven for Women in Recovery from Substance Abuse

Hannah's Haven,
 A Teen Challenge Center

Quick Facts:

Hannah's Haven is a 9-12 month program that provides a safe and stable environment for women who are in recovery from substance abuse.

Hannah's Haven helps women develop in spirit, mind, and body so they can become all they were created to be in Christ. Our unique model for recovery includes spiritual growth, affirmation, fellowship, and education.

Hannah's Haven is governed by a board of directors and submits to a CPA Annual Financial Review.

Hannah's Haven is an accredited Teen Challenge Center which provides an extra layer of accountability for the ministry.

Hannah's Haven was born out of the heart and spirit of Founder and Director Bonnie Harris. As Bonnie experienced freedom in Jesus Christ during her own recovery process, she knew that God was calling her to open a home for women in need.

Hannah's Haven opened its doors on August 14, 2006 and in the first four years has served 43 women.

Hannah's Haven has a 50% completion rate.

Hannah's Haven students are in class a minimum of five hours a day studying God's word and application as well as taking classes in nutrition, parenting, G.E.D., budgeting, healthy relationships, and the effects of drug use on the mind and body.

Special request for \$10.00 Wal-Mart gift cards or financial contributions to be collected on-site.

Connectional Lay Council BOOT CAMP ATTIRE

for the "Rise and Shine" Boot Camp
 held Thursday March 29th at 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Place and pay for your order in advance and it will be delivered to you on site. To place your order go to the CLC website www.connectionallaycouncil.org, click on the forms tab, scroll down to forms and documents and click on [Download Connectional Lay Council Special Merchandise Form](#). Send in the Special Projects form found on the website to the Connectional Lay Council Office. If you need further assistance you may call the CLC Office (704) 599-4630, x2556.

MEASUREMENTS FOR SWEATSUITS

Product Specifications for Pants
 Size Waist Relaxed Inseam
 M 33 32 1/2
 XL 35 33
 2XL 36 34
 3XL 38 35

Product Specifications for Jacket
 Size Width Length Sleeve Length
 M 42 1/2 27 33
 XL 46 1/2 28 33 1/2
 2XL 50 1/2 29 34
 3XL 54 1/2 30 34 1/2

CLC logo black & white ringer Tee Shirt, (zipper front hooded jacket with straight legs) sizes s, m, l, xl, 2x, 3x, 4x. \$10.00

CLC logo stitched Black, fleece sweatshirt, (zipper front hooded jacket with straight legs) sizes s, m, l, xl, 2x, 3x, 4x. \$37.00

Measurement Notes:
 Sleeves length is measured full from the center of the back.

Place and pay for your order in advance and it will be delivered to you on site. To place your order go to the CLC website www.connectionallaycouncil.org, click on the forms tab, scroll down to forms and documents and click on Download Connectional Lay Council Special Merchandise Form. Send in the Special Projects form found on the website to the Connectional Lay Council Office. If you need further assistance you may call the CLC Office (704) 599-4630, x2556.

CLC logo stitched Black fleece sweatshirt, (zipper front hooded jacket with straight legs) sizes s, m, l, xl, 2x, 3x, 4x, \$37.00

CLC logo black and white ringer Tee Shirt, sizes s, m, l, xl, 2x, 3x, 4x \$10.00

MEASUREMENTS FOR SWEATSUITS

Product Specifications for pants	Waist Relaxed	Inseam
Size		
S	33	32
M	35	32 1/2
L	36	33
XL	38	33 1/2
2XL	40	34
3XL	42	34 1/2

Product Specifications for jackets	Width	Length	Sleeve Length
Size			
S	38 1/2	26	33
M	42 1/2	27	34
L	46 1/2	28	35
XL	50 1/2	29	36
2XL	54 1/2	30	37
3XL	58 1/2	31	38

Measurement Notes:
 Sleeves length is measured full from the center of the back.

THE PURPOSE

The laity of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A.M.E. Zion) Church has provided effectual leadership for over sixty (63) years. Therefore, the Connectional Lay Council is proud to release this new publication entitled *Equipping the Laity: Chronological Endeavors of the Connectional Lay Council of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: 1948 – July 2011* to capture the essence of phenomenal leadership styles of past and present lay leaders across the breath of Zion Methodism.

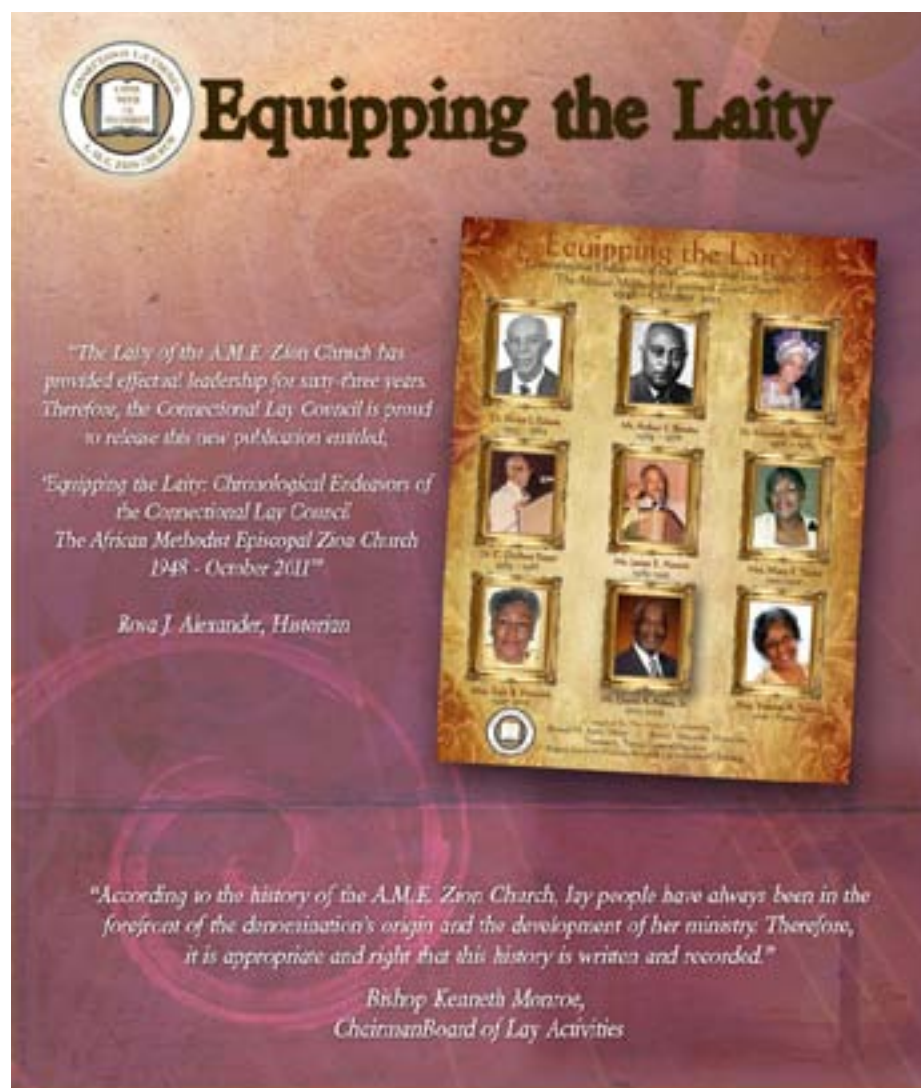
This publication documents the fact that lay persons have held significant and transformative positions on the connection, conference, district and local church levels. In addition, there are many lay persons who provided leadership for community organizations and committees in areas where the local church existed. It is important that members of our church know these leaders and what they did to benefit the church as a whole and the local communities. With this publication, we pause to recognize many of those persons.

It is also important that the laity know how important it is to keep records that reflect the roles and responsibilities of the laity who have contributed so much to the on-going history of the A.M.E. Zion Church. There is and continues to be a rich history of lay activities throughout the breath of the A.M.E. Zion Church. We, the laity of the church, are obligated to protect and preserve this rich heritage and to make it known to the lay persons in the church today.

We employ you, the laity to make others aware of the many lay leadership positions and events that highlight the sacrifices and accomplishments of lay people who made our denomination what it is today. With your continued contributions, we hope to keep members of our church aware of the A.M.E. Zion Church and the role we continue to perform to equip lay persons to lead our churches and our communities.

I am thankful to God for those members of the A.M.E. Zion Church on whose shoulders we now stand and for their hard and diligent work.

Rosa J. Alexander, Historian



Order Now for \$10.00 or Buy After April 1st for \$15.00

We heartily concur with Martin Luther who said, "Next to the Word of God Music Deserves the Highest Praise". We love the Hymns of Zion as many of them cut to the chase as to where we are or have been spiritually. The Hymns strengthen us, lay open our pages, offer testimonies we can relate, offer hope, peace and joy. To have Meditations that are wrapped around these heart-warming Hymns are a god-send. When the clouds are heavy with rain, when the sun is brighter across the street or when you just need to offer praise and thanksgiving, turn to your Bible, than pick up your Meditation/Hymnody and greet the cares of the day fortified.

In deference to the wonderful Meditation/Hymnody contributors, we conjoin with the Psalmist who penned these words . . . "My heart overflows with a pleasing theme; I address my verses to the King; my tongue is like the pen of a ready writer". Psalm 45:1 ESV

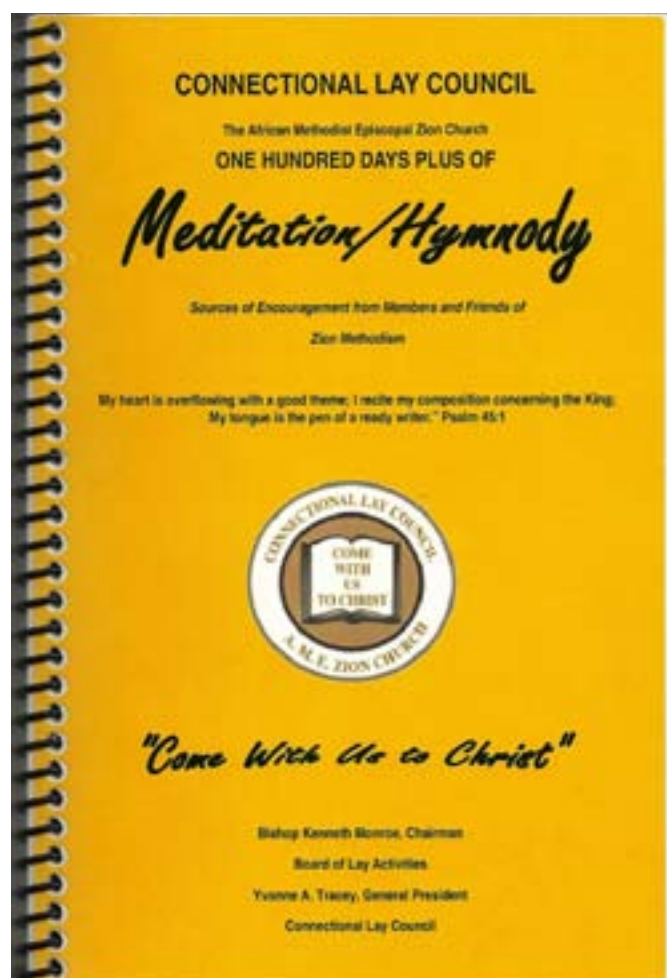
It is in this spirit and with deep appreciation that we share the names of the contributors from across Zion who shared in "ONE HUNDRED DAYS PLUS OF MEDITATION/HYMNODY".

Aaron Harris, Albert Moore, Ann Jones, Bobbie Floyd, T. Foster, Carolyn Dandridge, Dale "Skip" Van Rensalier, Darlene M. Bennett, Dema V. Napier, Dr. Charles L. Sharp, Dr. Dwayne A. Walker, Effie B. Woodard, Elaine J. Copeland, PhD., Forest Bonaparte, Fran Alexander, Gladys Felton, Hazel C. Kerr, H. Selina Nelson, J. Fairbanks Leach, Jacqueline Williams, Joan Thompson Miller, Joanne K. Harrison, Jonnie C. Johnson, Joyce Franklin, Joyce Perry Edwards, PhD., Leonard E. Wallace, Linda Cratic, Linda Henry-Johnson, Lula K. Howard, Lynda Byrd, Mack Brandon, Margaret E. Brown, Marie Baxter, Mary Marshall, Mireille Emanuel, Monica S. Reed, Mozella Ritter, Nell Lacy, O.W. Burrell, Olivia Christopher, Patricia Lewis, Rev. Barbara Rogers, Rev. Dr. Celestine T. Reid, Rev. David L. Knight, Rev. Diane Hicklin-Coleman, Rev. Dr. Denison D. Harrield, Jr., Rev. Dr. George W. Blackwell, Rev. Dr. Grant Harrison, Jr., Rev. Dr. James David Armstrong, Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Tribble, Sr., Rev. Dr. Lawton Nelson, Jr., Rev. Dr. Sondra Coleman, Rev. E.C. Dobson, Rev. Glenna G. Gunn, Rev. Harriet McElvaney, Rev. Kathryn Hughlett Wilson, Rev. Lisa T. McDow, Esq., Rev. Marilyn L. Turner, Rev. Ruby D. Miles, Ruby H. Shambray, Ruth S. Gough, Stephany C. Ricks Fields, Toni Terrell, Tracy Teagle, Vernita Perry, Virginia Douglas, Winifred K. Sharper, Yunorma Moore, Yvonne Tracey, Yvonne Baskerville.

Your contributions have offered a book that will not only be a daily blessing, but will be a blessing for posterity. We will be eternally gratefully for your sharing with Zion Methodism through this medium.

Margaret E. Brown, Editor, Yunorma Moore, Assistant Editor, J. Fairbanks Leach, Editor In Chief, Yvonne A. Tracey General President.

"ONE HUNDRED DAYS PLUS OF MEDITATION/HYMNODY" contains contributions on Hymns such as "I Love to Tell the Story", "Amazing Grace", "O Master Let Me Walk with Thee", "A Charge to Keep I Have" and more. This publication will make a marvelous gift and can be purchased for just for \$10.00, plus S & H (this price includes a CD of 6 organ and 6 vocal treatments). Call Joyce Zimmerman at (704) 599-4630 today and place your order. Your happiness and blessing is guaranteed by the publishers.



Published by the CLC EDUCATION COMMITTEE, J. Fairbanks Leach, Chairperson



Reflections: 2012 General Conference Legislative Summit

What a wonderful way to meet God every morning in the beautiful mountains of Dorothy Walls Retreat Center. Our Summit was a great success because of the warm hospitality of the entire Piedmont Episcopal District Family and of course the leadership of Senior Bishop George W.C. Walker, Sr. and Mrs. Geraldine J. Walker.

The setting was meant for meaningful discussion and serious pulling together of legislative issues that would best serve our beloved Zion. From the opening on Tuesday night with the profound word preached by Reverend Dr. William Milton White, Jr. to the closing prayer offered by Bishop Walker, God was present and in the midst of all that was done. A special thank you to Mrs. Yvonne A. Tracey and Reverend Dr. Medis N. Cheeks for their hard labor in pulling our Summit together. Every Co-Chair that led your respective areas and to the delegates and alternates in attendance "Thank you". We look forward the second part of our Summit in February at our Annual Meeting. Until then may the God of all peace continue to rule in your lives. Yours for a better Zion

Reverend Dr. Kevin W. McGill, Sr. President International Ministers and Lay Association

The dates of October 18 -20, 2011 will long be remembered by those who took the time to journey to the Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center, Black Mountain, NC (I adopted the name "Zion's Mountain" as a salute to the vision of Bishop W.J. Walls who gifted this spiritual retreat as a picturesque gathering place for all of Zion.)

For the laity who traveled far and near this was our opportunity for "impact" on the few major challenges confronting the A.M.E. Zion Church. And "impact" is what we did! We teamed together with members of the clergy and we shared ideas, learned, deliberated, and developed several major timely resolutions for the upcoming General Conference.

What a time, what a joy, what a relief to know that "these dry bones" (Ezekiel 37: 1-14) can live!

Thanks to Rev. Dr. Kevin McGill, President of the International Ministers and Lay Association for the vision. Thanks to our host and Senior Bishop George W.C. Walker, Sr. who extended a most cordial welcome and noted the historic gathering of this retreat for the development of resolutions for the upcoming General Conference and thanks to the Resolution Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs and all who supported the planning and logistics.

Now let us tarry on in His name promoting our efforts and building coalitions. Yes, laity, we had our time of "impact". To God Be the Glory! Yvonne A. Tracey, General President

Connectional Lay Council

As a participant at the Legislative Summit at Dorothy Walls Conference & Retreat Center, I offered my observations and a resolution that was submitted for consideration.

I found the Summit to be quite interesting and it was a wonderful time to work with Zionites from across the United States to develop new and/or revisit old resolutions. I served on the Restructuring Committee of which there were several subcommittees. I worked with the Technology Subcommittee who felt there was an urgent need for the creation of an Information Technology Department for The A.M.E. Zion Church.

My role on the Technology Subcommittee was to write the resolution based on the discussion our group had about how technology could help our church operate more efficiently. We focused on four key areas in which technology can make a difference: 1) build relationships with our members; 2) make effective decisions; 3) manage finances efficiently; and 4) managing our operations.

The Technology Subcommittee submitted for consideration the following resolution, entitled: "Resolution for the development of a department of information technology."

Jacqueline Anthony

The General Conference Legislative Summit was a great mountain top experience! The worship service got us into the right mind set for the task at hand. All of the committees worked hard and came up with sound recommendations for potential resolutions. I am glad I made the sacrifice to participate in the summit. I believe the M an L and CLC partnership laid a strong foundation for a more efficient General Conference. Can't wait to see the fruit of our labors!

Yvonne Baskerville

The Legislative Summit recently held in Black Mountain, North Carolina was rewarding. The resolutions presented engaged us in extensive Q&A dialogue. Relevant information, possible solutions to concerns, alternative methods and better use of technology were demonstrated in the resolutions submitted. What a wonderful opportunity for Zion to be proactive as we approach the 49th General Conference.

Tonya Cornelius

Just prior to attending this most informative summit, I was encouraged to run for a seat as a delegate - that it was my time. I hesitated because I did not feel competent to serve in such a strategic role for our Great Church. At the end of the summit, I shared with President Tracey that I had been

encouraged to run, and that my confidence level had been heightened due to the legislative summit. She felt that it had prepared me for this significant decision-making role in Zion. Subsequently, I chose not to run because I felt that I would be more effective in my current CLC role since the General Conference would be the last opportunity for Zion to significantly impact the 2012 Election. I really felt uplifted to have the confidence of both my President and leaders in the Central North Carolina Conference.

Queen E. Degraphenreid, CLC Social Political Action Committee Chairperson

The experience was amazing! Clergy and Laity worked well together while they closely examined proposals and came up with possible solutions. Everyone participated equally. I have recommended the experience to everyone. As a delegate to the General Conference, I am anxious to see how our work will end up.

Betty B. Evans

Piedmont Episcopal District, West Central North Carolina Conference, Concord District

McDonald Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Badin, North Carolina 28009

The Summit on the Mountaintop was an awesome experience. It was good and healthy to be in a gathering where ministers and laity worked together for the betterment of the A.M.E. Zion Church. It is my prayer that ministers and laity will continue to meet in these kinds of summits.

Michael A. Frencher

The summit was excellent. The atmosphere was thoughtful productive and possessed an air of love and care for Christ and our beloved Zion. We all worked hard and corporately struggling through the resolution process. In a way that could only benefit the whole church. It really was a wonderful experience. Most thrilling.

Ruth Gough

Greeting! We found the Legislative Summit a wonderful experience. It enabled us to be in on the ground floor of preparing potential resolutions, discussing issues relevant to the future of our church, and getting to know brothers and sisters in Christ better. I (Grant) had an interesting experience as our committee on the Educational Requirements for Ministers worked through our concerns. I (Joanne) appreciated the opportunity to discuss the issue of Sacred Music education of Livingstone College, and appreciated the support I received from my committee on Schools and Colleges.

Dr. Grant and Mrs. Joanne Harrison

Actually, my attendance at the 2012 Legislative Summit was enlightening

from two perspectives. First of all, it had been more than 40 years since I had been to Camp Dorothy Walls. As a growing lad at Marable Memorial A.M.E. Zion in Kannapolis, North Carolina, I had several occasions to attend the camp "back in the day." Wow! What a difference four decades have made! I am so pleased to see the physical makeover of this historical property of the A.M.E. Zion Church. Also, the summit itself was far from being routine and far from being disappointing. What a marvelous experience that was! The work was purposeful and challenging, the participants were enthusiastic and task-oriented, and the outcome remains beneficial and ground-breaking. Indeed, the 2012 Legislative Summit ushered in a new mark of excellence in thought and process in Zion.

Larry B. Johnson, Mid-Atlantic II, Pennsylvania Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church

The Legislative Summit was a wonderful example of "good stewardship." It provided an opportunity for lay and clergy to recommend discuss, debate and reach an agreement on legislation that will enhance the Church and its functioning. In addition, the Summit should increase the efficiency of the legislative process during the General Conference. I applaud the visionary and strategic leadership of the Minister's and Lay Association.

Stay blessed

Rev Dr. Douglass Maven

In my opinion, the Legislative Summit was a wonderful experience. It was enlightening as well as educational. Having an opportunity to look at legislation and revise and dissect such gave me a better understanding of how to get resolutions passed.

Marian P. McLean, Jacksonville, NC

The General Conference Legislative Summit was truly awesome. It not only gave us the opportunity to work on resolutions, it also provided us with the opportunity to network. We shared our views and answered questions that probably would not have been asked without this golden opportunity.

Anita Rankin, Akron District, Ohio Annual Conference, Mid Atlantic I Episcopal District

It was a very enlightening experience and one that was well needed. I was able to share the information with others at my first district lay council meeting by using the DVD's.

That was a great idea and the best way to bring back the information to the people.

Ann Stevens

Reaching the Present Age

By Rev. Vajaah E. Parker



Charles Wesley in the familiar hymn, "A Charge to Keep I Have," contextualizes "calling" as a commitment to "serve the present age." The church as an institution should always have relevant ministry at the helm of its agenda. Though the message of Christ is timeless and its implications eternal, generations are shaped by the circumstances of its time. The church has to continuously take the pulse of the culture, not for the sake of conformity, but to present the Gospel in a fashion that can be readily accepted and applied.

In an effort to truly reach the present age, churches can garner key principles from the business world to evaluate their relevance and reach more for Christ. Marketing, "is the process used to determine what customers value and the set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering that value to customers." Too often, congregations offer the same suite of services, in the same way, under the same name without regard for the very people whom these services should be strategically positioned to reach. Corporations, on the other hand, are intentional about understanding the mindsets and behaviors of consumers to whom they target products. Marketers determine product, price, placement and promotion according to

the consumer's valuation of cost, convenience and communication preference. In the same vein, the church must be deliberate about discovering the values and needs of individuals who would benefit from its message and ministries. The church must then package and present, accessible and relevant ministries to its potential beneficiaries.

Marketing, in terms of ministry, boils down to, you reaching them. With this mantra in mind, the church takes the recipients of its work into consideration as it prays and plans to serve. God, is truly the master marketer. In order to reconcile humanity unto himself he packaged his value into the form of Jesus and offered him as a free gift that the world might be loved.

In order to reach them, each ministry must be able to articulate its identity by delineating its core purpose and what it is positioned to offer. Each ministry should assess its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to gain a deeper understanding of the capabilities of its current team and the status of its present efficiencies. This S.W.O.T. analysis should empower the ministry to state its essence and create a brand. Essence is the intrinsic quality of something that determines its character. A brand is a mixture of attributes, which if managed properly, creates value and influence. The essence and brand of a ministry should be evident in every act of that ministry. The ministry should be known by its essence and recognized by its brand. However, everything, including the conduct of its workers and the standard of excellence of its services will affect how a ministry's brand is perceived.

As a whole, the local church is comprised of different ministries to meet a multitude of needs for a diversity of people who vary in composi-

tion and interest. Once a ministry has defined its identity it must accept the challenge to ascertain the demographics and disposition of its target audience. For example, a senior ministry would need to know the age range, location, degree of independence, financial stability and interests of the seasoned adults within its congregation and community. Reaching a senior that is living in a nursing home without transportation or companionship would be dissimilar to reaching a newly retired, 'on the go' couple, that cherishes moments with young grandchildren. By discovering the identity of its target audience, a clearly defined senior ministry can operate in its strengths to deliver value to its seniors. Learning more about people can be done formally through statistical research and surveys as well as informally by asking and listening. Ultimately, if what a target audience values and needs is not what a ministry is providing, in a way that is convenient and appealing, a ministry ought to evaluate if it is relevant to the present age.

Finally, reaching the present age will require communicating needs based services according to the resources of the ministry and the preferences of the target audience. Forms of promotion include but are not limited to advertisements, radio promos, postcards, newsletters, flyers, bookmarks, websites, e-blasts and social media -- ranging in budget from millions of dollars to free. The reality is that if the church doesn't position ministry to meet the needs of the world with the message of Christ and the transformative work of the Spirit, people will be persuaded to pursue other means to meet their needs. To reach the present age, determine the time, talent and treasure that each ministry of your church is willing to invest in making accessible, the value and service that each ministry has today, for today's congregation and community, in today's culture.

Being Haute Couture and Perspicacious II

by J. Fairbanks Leach



There is an interesting recording in Acts 3;1-12 – One day at three o'clock in the afternoon, Peter and John were on their way into the Temple for prayer meeting. At the same time there was a man crippled from birth being carried up. Every day he was set down at the Temple gate, the one name Beautiful to beg from those going into the Temple. When he saw Peter and John about to enter the Temple, he asked for a handout. Peter, with John at his side, looked him straight in the eye and said, "Look here." The Message. This account is interesting to me as Peter directs the lame man's attention by saying, "Look on us" NKJV

Peter and John were going to the Temple to pray. Have you ever wondered how they looked. Were they any different from all the other people going up to the Temple to pray? What was their attire? Did it matter? What was their demeanor? Did it matter? When we issue our motto, "Come with Us to Christ", do we also say, "Look on us". Can we honestly fix our eyes on erring men and women, boys and girls, they who sit in the gates of hunger, pain, disenfranchisement; they who reach out through jail bars, the elderly and ill; they who have sat in need from their mother's womb or...? Hold that thought.

What a privilege it is to put on our Black and Gold Connectional Lay Council Colors. My, do we ever look good? Ladies elegantly attired in black suits with gold blouses, black dresses with gold jewelry, handsome gentlemen in black suits with gold shirts and/or ties; all proudly sport-

ing our beloved CLC pin, and oftentimes the Medallion and ultimately the Life Members' Stole. We are so representative of the Lay Council, Zion Methodism and God. We stand proudly yet humbly as we are descendant representatives of the Lay Persons who founded the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, an organization through which we feel truly highly favored and blessed to serve God. When we don our colors we are looking good, 'dressed to the nine'. We are in fact Haute Couture and Perspicacious at the same time; just like Peter and John. Our appearance warrants someone sitting on the perimeter of the Temple to ask of us alms.

But... today, I had a flashback... I remembered Barney Fife of Mayberry fame with Andy Griffith. Well, once upon a time, Sheriff Andy Taylor thumbs through his mail and discovers a letter from the State Police Headquarters in Raleigh. He pulls out a pocket knife and meticulously opens the envelope then slowly reads the letter out loud to his trusted deputy Barney Fife. Barney is hanging onto every word trying to digest the contents. Andy finishes the letter. Barney sits thoughtfully mulling over what he has just heard. Suddenly he bangs the desk and blurts out, "But Ange, if we start wearing a uniform, it will make the public think we know what we are doing".

Download this possibility... President Tracey, from CLC Headquarters in Charlotte, NC, issues a mandate that all Lay Council leaders dress uniformly in Black and Gold each time they approach the Temple or any place where they represent the Connectional Lay Council, be it on the local, district, annual or connectional levels. The mandate subsequently filters down to where we are. We have gathered someplace at a Lay Academy or some such meeting. [Let me inject this thought... per-

sons sitting on the perimeter of the Temple and sometimes in it will ask for varied alms]. CLC leaders appear to be in sync with 'CLC haute couture-ness'. An 'inquiring mind' calls out... "Why do we need a Lay Council?" or, Why do some Churches say 'Holy Catholic Church?' or, How old is the A.M.E. Zion Church?, or, Who founded the denomination? or, What does the 'propitiation of our sins' mean? or, perhaps, When you say "Come With Us to Christ, precisely where is it you are taking me?" Inquiring minds May, at one time or another, put one or all of these questions to us. We look so good, we are in or approaching the Temple and they think we know what we are doing. Can we stop, look them in the eye and give them an answer? Will we extend a hand offering to lift them up into a new realm of spiritual welfare?

In almost every Bible translation Ephesians 4, falls under Unity. Look at verses 1-6. Having given those verses particularly attention, may we ingest verses 7-13? Can we think of ourselves, as CLC leaders edifying a group of diverse brothers and sisters into a Lay Council organized only for Kingdom building through Zion Methodism? What a choice responsibility and privilege you and I have.

Again, if we are haute couture in Black and Gold, 'somebody might think that we know what we are doing'. Well, we strongly contend that we can be dressed up Lay Council ambassadors and know what we are doing at the same time, perspicacious leaders, if you please. We don't have to be unaware of anything in Zion Methodism. There are lots of informed people and a plethora of resources are available.

In the year 2009, we elected a president who hit the ground running with a flag that read "Edify! Edify"! It was in this spirit that she issued a mandate to the Education Committee. President Tracey's reference conjoined with the Apostle Paul who said, "Brethren,

we would not have you be unaware" (jflv). So, embracing her vision to edify the Laity even more, the Education Committee has published four (4) documents that will fortify all Black and Gold wearing Connectional Lay Council leaders. It is the president's desire that we be informed representatives in Black and Gold and in a most productive way. She would have us be 'Haute Couture and Perspicacious II'.

First, we need to remind you that the primary pieces of literature we promote are the Holy Bible, secondarily, The A.M.E. Zion Discipline and thirdly, "The Reality of the Black Church", in that order. Literature that will further 'edify the saints' include... "The Theme Description", an in depth explanation of all that we seek to do and be through our Connectional Theme. Further, we invite you to become truly familiar with the "Study Resource Guide"; our Quadrennial "2009 Handbook", published by President Tracey. Both books are a must for all Lay leaders. Then there is the "General Conference Brochure" containing succinct information for all duly-elected General Conference delegates. The last publication is the "Meditation/Hymnody", a book designed to enhance the spiritual life of Zion's entire constituency.

We, CLC leaders in Black and Gold, who want people to think we know what we're talking about, have the right tools to confirm this. We can look the part while, have an in depth knowledge of God's Holy Word, Polity and doctrines of Zion Methodism, History of our beloved Zion along with all of our 'How-to' books. All of this knowledge properly entwined will give us Holy boldness to say, "Come with Us to Christ". Be a triple-edged layman, good looking, knowledgeable, and privileged to be a Connectional Lay Council Leader in the A.M.E. Zion Church. Be a CLC "Haute Couture and Perspicacious Leader II".

Connectional Lay Sunday Offerings

(This report reflects monies received by January 7, 2012. If you have not sent in your offering, please send it to the CLC Office immediately)

Episcopal District	Amount	Episcopal District	Amount
Piedmont		John Wesley A.M.E. Zion, Washington, DC	\$200.00
Lincolnton District	\$350.00	Clinton A.M.E. Zion, Rockville, MD	\$100.00
Salisbury District	\$200.00	First A.M.E. Zion, Lovington, VA	\$25.00
Sandy Ridge A.M.E. Zion, Landis, NC	\$127.00	Mid West	
Sills Creek A.M.E. Zion, Mooresville, NC	\$75.00	Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion, Kansas City, MO	\$196.71
New Hope A.M.E. Zion, Spencer, NC	\$100.00	St. Paul A.M.E. Zion, Kansas City, KS	\$96.76
New Zion A.M.E. Zion, Robbins, NC	\$20.25	Blackwell A.M.E. Zion, Webster Grove, MO	\$17.00
Rock Hill A.M.E. Zion, Concord, NC	\$50.00	Hilliard Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Grand Rapids, MI	\$25.00
Shiloh A.M.E. Zion, Statesville, NC	\$100.00	Martin Temple A.M.E. Zion, Chicago, IL	\$100.00
Southern City Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion, East Spencer, NC	\$83.44	Greater Walters A.M.E. Zion, Chicago, IL	\$100.00
White Rock A.M.E. Zion, Granite Quarry, NC	\$50.00	Kyles A.M.E. Zion, Des Moines, IA	\$65.00
Soldiers Memorial A.M.E. Zion, Salisbury, NC	\$130.00	Mid Atlantic I	
Northeastern		Simmons Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Lisbon, OH	\$100.00
Bell A.M.E. Zion, Center Moriches, NY	\$100.00	St. Mark A.M.E. Zion, Cincinnati, OH	\$50.00
Eastern District	\$100.00	South Atlantic	
Clinton A.M.E. Zion, Ansonia, CT	\$100.00	First Decatur A.M.E. Zion, Decatur, AL	\$68.00
Clinton Memorial A.M.E. Zion, Greenport, NY	\$125.00	Pee Dee Conference	\$245.00
Mt Olive A.M.E. Zion, Waterbury, CT	\$88.00	Alabama-Florida	
St. John A.M.E. Zion, Middletown, NY	\$32.00	McCalla Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Bessemer, AL	\$50.00
St. Mark A. M.E. Zion, Medford, NY	\$158.20	West Alabama Conference	\$500.00
Eastern North Carolina		South West Delta	
Mattock Memorial A.M.E. Zion, Fayetteville, NC	\$25.00	Outland Memorial A.M.E. Zion, Fort Worth, TX	\$163.71
Mt. Olive A.M.E. Zion, Durham, NC	\$118.00	Bakers A.M.E. Zion, Independence, LA	\$20.00
St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Durham, NC	\$20.00	Louisiana Conference	\$50.00
St. Mark A.M.E. Zion, Durham, NC	\$275.00	St. Mark's A.M.E. Zion, Dallas, TX	\$50.00
Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion, Durham, NC	\$15.00	Walls Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Houston, TX	\$35.00
Bridges Grove A.M.E. Zion, Shannon, NC	\$25.00	St. Mark Vineyard A.M.E. Zion, Desoto, TX	\$70.00
Norington A.M.E. Zion, Lillington, NC	\$68.00	Houston San Antonio District	\$50.00
Evans Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion, Fayetteville, NC	\$100.00	Caleb A.M.E. Zion, San Antonio, TX	\$55.00
Cedar Grove A.M.E. Zion, Aurora, NC	\$75.00	Western	
Franklin Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Laurinburg, NC	\$97.00	New Life A.M.E. Zion, Vancouver, WA	\$110.00
Hunter's Chapel A.M.E. Zion, Laurinburg, NC	\$50.00	Kyles Temple A.M.E. Zion, Sacramento, CA	\$180.00
Mid-Atlantic II		Leake Temple A.M.E. Zion, Anchorage, AK	\$20.00
Spottswood A.M.E. Zion, Landover, MD	\$36.50	First Church A.M.E. Zion, San Francisco, CA	\$100.00
Petersburg District	\$528.00		
Pennsylvania Avenue, Baltimore, MD	\$321.00	Total	\$6,584.57

Lay Academy in Houston is a Huge Success

By Mrs. Stephany C. Ricks Fields

Members of the Executive Board of the CLC of the AMEZ Church traveled to Houston, Texas to attend a 2-day event beginning with their annual board meeting on Friday, July 22, 2011, and peaking with a lay academy on Saturday, July 23, 2011 at the Houston Hilton-Americas Four Seasons Hotel & George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas in the host region, the Southwestern Delta Region.

The instructional academy began with devotion led by the host Regional Director, Mrs. Stephany C. Ricks Fields, followed by committee updates from the 1st Vice-President of the Connectional Lay Council, Mrs. Yvonne Baskerville.

The General President Mrs. Yvonne

Tracey energetically greeted the attendees, which included Bishop and Mrs. Darryl B. Starnes, Host Bishop and Missionary Supervisor of the Southwestern Delta Episcopal Area; Rev. and Mrs. John Morris, Host Presiding Elder Texas Conference; Mrs. Ava Swinton, Episcopal Director of Christian Education in the Southwestern Delta Episcopal Area; Dr. Kenneth James, 2012 candidate for the Episcopacy; and members of the Executive Board of the Connectional Lay Council as well as conference, district, and local officers of the Lay Council and their guests.

The presenter for Saturday's free lay academy was a familiar one to Zion's laity, Dr. Otis T. McMillan, Director of the Bureau of Evangelism. Dr. McMillan led the attend-

ees on a book walk and introduction to his well-received book, The Roman Road to Recovery, the current book of common reading for the Lay Council. Dr. McMillan urged the laity to understand the victory we have as Christians because Jesus Christ broke the power of sin and freed us. He further instructed us that we much reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God through Christ Jesus. "Our victory also gives us power to resist sin's control and refuse its temptation", Dr. McMillan continued. He instructed us that the way of salvation must be clearly understood. "The way of salvation is simple, easy and indispensable. It must be shared through your life which must show evidence of your relationship with God".

Dr. McMillan concluded the academy by sharing the 3 Kingdom Circles described in his book, and demonstrating how they are necessary for mutual acceptance to the Body of Christ.

The next event of the Lay Council will be the 2012 General Conference Legislation and Summit Meeting which is sponsored by the International Ministers and Lay Association in partnership with the Connectional Lay Council to be held at the Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center October 18 – 20, 2011. Please visit the website www.connectionallaycouncil.org for further information.

REGIONAL NEWS

North Eastern Episcopal District Mrs. Marie H. Baxter, Regional Director Bishop George E. Battle, Jr. Presiding Prelate

The Loving Long Island District Lay Academy

Submitted by
Dr. Mary McKnight, Past Lay Council President
Jackson Memorial AME Zion Church

The Loving Long Island District Lay Council convened its first Lay Academy for this conference year at Jackson Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church where Rev. Keith I. Harris is the Pastor and Eleanor Poole is the local lay council president. As part of the opening devotional, the Meditation by Loretta Goff, Long Island District President, lifted up John 14:12-13, that shows that noble leadership seeks to empower others to achieve results even greater than the leader has achieved. She closed by challenging us to be agents for empowerment.

The first workshop, conducted by Loretta Goff, reviewed Connectional Lay Council Key issues. This was followed by a scripture based skit (Luke 10:37) that allowed the viewers to put a plumb line on our true Christian inclinations toward Stewardship. The skit, put on by The Long Island District Players and directed by Willis Gibson Lake from St. Paul AME Zion Church entitled "Help Me", was written by JFairbanks-Leach, CLC Education Chairperson. It featured Jacqueline Edwards, from Clinton Memorial AME Zion Church as the unfortunate traveler who had fallen into a ditch. Her pleas for help were interspersed with varying responses to her predicament. Responses to her pleas included: chastisement for being in such a situation, preaching and prayers, tossing a too small and too thin rope in the ditch, scripture reading, snack sharing, advice about possible suing the property owner, expressions of sympathy, excuses for not staying to help and FINALLY, assistance in getting out of the ditch.

This dramatic presentation provided a humorous lesson about our serious responsibility to give help to those who are in trouble, both spiritual and tangible assistance. The Long Island District Players included laity from St. Mathews, Westbury, Jackson Memorial as well as Clinton Memorial and St. Paul Great Neck.

Past Connectional Lay Council President and current New York Conference Lay Council President David A. Aiken, Sr. was introduced by his wife Mary Aiken, who led the participants in a workshop entitled Planning for the General Conference, the role and responsibilities of the Delegate.

Willis Gibson Lake conducted a Connectional Lay Council Quiz that sent participants scrambling to find answers in their Handbook and Discipline.

The day ended with our Presiding Elder Isidoa Branch Sr., leading the Long Island District Lay Council officers in "The Commitment to God and Zion Methodism" and NYC Lay Council President Aiken leading all assembled in "The Litany for Rededication of Laity."

In a warm atmosphere of fellowship, the group

enjoyed a delicious luncheon prepared by host Lay Council President Eleanor Poole. Special Project items, ie. Educational/Evangelistic/Leadership Materials, Membership Merchandise, CLC apparel, Hymnody, We Care and Promotional items were also available for purchase.

This was truly a day of Rededication to serve God, the AME Zion Church and humanity.

Western New York Conference Laity Retreat

On Saturday October 15, 2011 the Western New York conference Laity Retreat was held at the St. Luke A.M.E. Zion Church, the Rev. Robert L. Graham, host pastor P.E. Bro. Reginald Ingram began the morning with devotions. Cynthia Barber, local president welcomed everyone. Joyce Harrington Co-President of the Western New York Lay council introduced the members of the panel. They were Rev. George Nicholas, Jr. who serves as pastor of Lincoln United Methodist Church and the Metropolitan United Methodist, Rev. Craig W. Douglass pastor of Centennial A. M. E. Zion Church and Xavier Hunter, local preacher from Durham Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church. Each panelist spoke on the theme focus "Empowerment"

Rev. Nicholas said that we were in a severe crisis, it is a spiritual crisis, and we have replaced a solid spiritual base with a consumer base theology. As lay people we need to push the clergy with the issues not of the bye and bye. We need to help them be a blessing to others. Clergy and Laity must work together our youth are feeling disconnected. We are not speaking the language they understand. We must adapt to the Culture without being a part of it.

Rev. Douglass stated that where we are as a people our faith put us there. After what the slave master finished, we understood that the Lord delivered Daniel surely he will me. We have a divide between minister and lay. We have to get back to what we all do. As laypersons we have a ministry with in us. The language in the church is a very unique language. Everyone does not understand our language. Empowerment the authority "from the Holy Spirit" (1st Timothy 1:14) we need each other.

Bro. Xavier Hunter stated how what we do influences the youth. He said that young people are much more a dialogue generation, we need to listen more give instant feedback. He spoke on bridging the gap; a young child losing a sucker can be just as hurt as young adults girl friend/boy friend concerns. Don't make assumptions based on their style.

On Sunday Mary H. Kargbo, President/CEO Sheehan Health Network was the lay speaker for St. Luke A. M. E. Zion Church. Her message on "Empowerment" was powerful. She shared how she had been empowered by God all of her life. She summed up her message by telling us that when we are empowered by God:

- Many possibilities are open to you
- Something changes to make us turn in a new direction which is better than where we were
- He is the guide as opposed to the worldly way of living
- Nothing is difficult because it is not about You but about God

- Even the unlovely become lovely because we love Him and love others as we love ourselves.
- Believers are equipped to act in His behalf and to represent Him in the world

William J. Wall's Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church held its Trustee and Lay luncheon on Sunday, October 23, 2011. Markeya Delk and Mark Delk, youth at Walls were honored and Sister Michelle Drummond, Laity Secretary received recognition awards. This year the Joseph D. Kerr Armour Bearer Awards were given to Sisters Clara Bush, Mary Daniels and Ollie Williams. Rev. G. Michael Tydus presented the awards.

Mid Atlantic II Episcopal District Mrs. Katherine S. Burrell, Regional Director Bishop Warren M. Brown Presiding Prelate

Petersburg District Lay Council Program Greater Faith A.M.E. Zion Church Petersburg, Virginia

By – Ralph Lewis

The Petersburg District Lay Council of the Virginia Conference came together in a near capacity crowd, Oct. 16, 2011 at Greater Faith to celebrate Connectional Lay Sunday.

The Guest Speaker, Dr. James Davenport, Professor Emeritus of the School of Physics, Virginia State University, address focused on the third component of the Quadrennial Theme, "Maximizing our Mission By Managing our Ministry Through: Empowerment".



Lay Sunday Speaker:
Dr. James Davenport



District President Mr. Ralph Lewis,
presents Life Members Credentials
to the new members

REGIONAL NEWS

Trinity AME Zion Church Washington District

Marilyn Quow
Lay President, Trinity A M E Zion Church
Washington, DC

However, we at Trinity had a spiritual filled Lay Sunday with our speaker Sis Yvonne Baskerville 2nd Vice President. She gave us food for thoughts. She explore Empowerment, encouraged us Laity to be spiritually empowered and win souls for Christ. We must study the word to be equipped and to have a personal relationship with God. Serve Him with boldness truly fall in love with Jesus, allow the holy spirit to live within us. We must have joy, love, faithfulness let us pray a direct line of communication to the Holy Father." Spirit of the living God fall fresh on us" we must win the world for Christ.

Scripture references: 1Timothy 2(1-4), James 5(15),Romans 13 (1) Matthew 28 (18) 11 Timothy 2 (15) Acts 1 (8) She was awesome we thank God for her message. The appeal offering was \$575.00 which was sent to CLC Charlotte, NC.

Annual Laity Day Weekend in Northern Virginia

The Northern Virginia District of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference, under the dynamic leadership of Presiding Elder Fredrick B. Massey, Sr., celebrated its annual Laity Day weekend highlighting the Connectional Laity Theme, "Maximizing Our Mission By Managing Our Ministries Through Empowerment".

The weekend began on Saturday, October 15, 2011, at Lomax A.M.E. Zion Church in Arlington, Virginia, with an empowerment luncheon. The luncheon was preceded by two outstanding presentations from members of the Northern Virginia District. The first presenter, Ms. Wilma Newby, a member of Lomax and 1st Vice President of Lomax's Lay Council, was superb as she focused the attention of the lay and clergy audience on the Church's(our) responsibility to empower our youth and young adults, because if we don't, no one else will. She reminded the adults that in many cases they talk and sing about living a holy life on Sunday, but live a totally different life Monday through Saturday. She reminded the adults that our youth and young adults see much of the hypocrisy of our lives. Referencing several scripture verses, she also encouraged the adults to stop talking negatively about our youth, but to see the potential that lie within them and to encourage them to stay grounded in the Lord. Her final remarks reminded us that the responsibility to empower our youth and young adults falls squarely on our shoulders and not our schools or government.

Following a short break, our second presenter, the Rev. Fredrick B. Massey, Sr. took us on a historical empowerment journey. He began by defining empowerment as the authority or power to do something after having received proper training and authorization. Being well grounded in and passionate about our Church's history, he led us on a brief journey from the first religious orders of the Roman Empire through the birth of our Wesleyan beliefs right up to our modern day Episcopacy.

He briefly outlined the authority (empowerment) clearly given us, as believers, throughout the Holy Scriptures. Using several scriptures, he then focused our attention on how we as Zionites derive our power and authority from the Scriptures and our Discipline. He reminded us that we often times don't realize the power we (laity and clergy) have because we simply fail to read and study the Scriptures and Discipline. As our empowerment journey came to a close, Rev. Massey thanked Ms. Newby for her insights and in agreement with her, reminded us that there is great untapped power in the pews.

The second part of our exciting Lay weekend found us at another Church in the Northern Virginia District, Alleyne A.M.E. Zion Church in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, where Rev. Dr. Paul S. Hoggard is the pastor. Although all of the District churches celebrate Lay Sunday with a lay person delivering the message at their morning services, they all come together for a joint District lay afternoon service at 4:00 p.m. Following the opening hymn of praise, scriptures, prayer, and ministry of giving, Mr. Gilbert Turner, District Lay Council President, introduced the speaker for the afternoon, Mrs. Katherine S. Burrell, CLC Regional Director of the Mid-Atlantic II Episcopal District. Mrs. Burrell is a member of the Clinton A.M.E. Zion Church in Rockville, Maryland, and the 1st Vice-President of the Baltimore Lay Council. Mrs. Burrell's message was aimed at stirring the consciousness of the laity to realize that they had been fully empowered by scripture and our Church's Discipline to maximize our mission and to manage our ministries. She reminded us that scripture commands us to, "go ye therefore", that in some cases our Pastors, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit is the "sender" and we are the "sent". She encouraged the Pastors, and lay leaders present, to take the time to train and teach the laity from the Scriptures and our Discipline. She reminded us that empowerment comes from education. Her powerful message drove home many of the same teaching points that we had heard the previous day from our Presiding Elder. Our afternoon ended with remarks from the District Lay Council President and Presiding Elder thanking Mrs. Burrell for an inspiring and challenging message and thanking the clergy and laity of the District for their consistent prayers and support.

Mid Atlantic I Episcopal District Bishop Louis Hunter, Sr., Presiding Prelate Mrs. Helene Zacharias, Regional Director

Ohio and New Jersey Conferences News

by Anita Rankin, Reporter

Empowerment has been the order of the day throughout the Ohio Annual Conference. From Lay Sunday activities to Lay Academies the themes have hinged on the concept of Empowerment.

The Lay Sunday speakers:
Patricia Lewis, Ohio Conference Lay Council

President - at Wesley Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, Akron; Judge Adele Riley, President Emeritus of the Judicial Council - at St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Church, Cincinnati; Anita Rankin, 2nd Vice President, Ohio Conference Lay Council - at St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Cleveland and at Simmons Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Lisbon; and Gloria Cook, 1st Vice President, Akron District Lay Council - who spoke to a combined congregation from St. Matthews A.M.E. Zion Church, Sewickley, PA; Greater Emmanuel A.M.E. Church, Aliquippa, PA and St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Coraopolis, PA all addressed some facet of empowerment in keeping with our quadrennial theme. In many instances the speakers used a common scriptural reference Acts 1:8, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (NIV)

The Cleveland District Lay Council hosted a Lay Academy on Empowerment Resources. The presenters were:

Rev. Dr. Curtis T. Walker, Sr., Pastor, Beth-El A.M.E. Zion Church, Cleveland "Empowerment: God the Father"; Rev. Emerald Hall, Assistant Pastor, Beth-el A.M.E. Zion Church (Cleveland) Empowerment: "God the Son" and Rev. Randy Reed, Pastor, Old Ship A.M.E. Zion Church (Sandusky) "Empowerment: God the Holy Spirit." The attendees were given reference scriptures and insights as to how they are to utilize the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as resources in their daily lives.

The Akron District hosted a Lay Academy with Ruthie King, District Director of Christian Education as the presenter.

The New Jersey Conference Lay Academy was held at St. Stephen's AME Zion Church In Asbury Park, NJ. Ms. J. Fairbanks Leach and Ms. Rosa Alexander were visitors to the Lay Academy. "You Are In The Army Now" a play written by Ms. Leach, which talks of many of roles and responsibilities as part of God's Army was performed by some of the Laity in attendance. H. Selina Nelson was the General and two other performers were Vera Calhoun and Doris Fisher. Ms. Leach was the Director.

The New Jersey Annual Conference elected the following lay delegates to the General Conference in 2012: Denise Miles, Patrice Counts, Doris Hollis, Leatha Collins, Cheryl Stone, Cora Mackey, H. Selina Nelson, Charles Wilson, Susan Braxton, and Sussanne Gerald. The alternates elected were: Julia Graham, James Davis, Juanita Cooper, William Carmichael, Cheryl Walters, Lily Fleming and Rosalyn Holland.

Those attending the Henry L. Walters Challenge Luncheon during the Ohio Annual Conference held at Price Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Youngstown, OH were privileged to hear the General President, Yvonne Tracey as the afternoon speaker. She challenged the Laity to Maximize the Mission by Stimulating a Paradigm Shift in the Lay Ministry of Evangelism. "It does not have to be what it is, it can be better!" The challenge was also given to:

1. Reposition your ministry for forerunner to runner - run with Jesus
2. Stretch your ministry from Ps. 84:10 to Acts 14:27 and
3. Hook up your ministry to a Spiritual Adventure.

REGIONAL NEWS



Life Membership stoles presented to Barbara Toney, St. Paul, Cleveland; Dr. Geraldine Carter, Wesley Temple, Akron; Patricia Wilson, Beth-el Lay Council President Janice Henley, St. Paul, Coraopolis; J. Fairbanks Leach (gifted by James Davis, NJ Conference President and H. Selina Nelson who were in attendance) St. Paul, Dayton; and Rev. William B. Rankin, pastor, Simmons Chapel, Lisbon, OH.



Patricia Wilson, Beth-el Lay Council President

The Mary E. Taylor Membership Improvement Award went to Beth-el in Cleveland with an improvement of 226% over 2010. Mid Atlantic I has 100% of its churches with active Lay Councils.

The Ohio Conference elected the following Lay Delegates to the 2012 General Conference: Pam Valentine, Judge Adele Riley, Gloria Simms, Dr. Monica Posey, Anita Rankin, Carrie McCall, Helene Zacharias, Patricia Wilson, Ruthie King and Patricia Lewis. The alternates elected were Marva Dotson, Lisa Taylor Jones, Lawrence Murray and Shannon Tyler.

The Allegheny Conference elected the following Lay Delegates to General Conference: Loretta Sutton, Michelle Betts, Ken Henderson and Wayne Phinisee. The alternates elected were Marsha Grayson and Sheila Johnson.

St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council Lay Academy

August 20, 2011 was a banner for the newly organized Lay Council of The St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Church, Cincinnati, OH. Our pastor, Rev. Jermaine Armour was both proud and humbled by the indefatigable work of the Lay president, Watseka Hill and the elected officers of the Board who literally pulled out the stops for their very first Lay Luncheon Academy.

The aura of this grand occasion was enhanced

with everything being Black and Gold including a three tier Black and Gold Cake which topped off a delicious Southern style lunch served to the eighty-five (85) plus persons in attendance. Special guests were the Sixth General President of the Connectional Lay Council, Mary E. Taylor, Judge Adele Riley, president emeritus of the Judicial Council, and Rosetta Carter, Columbus-Cincinnati District president.

Presenter for the Academy was J. Fairbanks Leach, Chairman of the Education Committee of the Connectional Lay Council. Her teaching was wrapped around our Connectional Lay Council theme, "MAXIMIZING OUR MISSION BY MANAGING OUR MINISTRY THROUGH: EMPOWERMENT". Leach directed our attention primarily to "Empowerment" and our being conduits of the Holy Spirit which enable us to responsibly issue the call, "Come With Us To Christ", thus fulfilling the Purpose and Objectives of the Lay Council.

It is felt by Pastor Armour and President Hill that the Lay Academy Luncheon activities inspired some seventy-six persons to become bona fide members of the Lay Council on the following Sunday. The St. Mark Lay Council says, "To God Be the Glory" as they look forward to Celebrating Lay Sunday, October 16.

South Atlantic Episcopal District Ms. Glenda Canteen Davis, Regional Director Bishop Kenneth Monroe Presiding Prelate

The Cape Fear Conference Holds Its First Black and Gold Banquet

By Posey Johnson



The Cape Fear Conference held its first Black and Gold Banquet on Friday, September 16, 2011 at 6:00 pm at the H.V.B. Dillard Alumni Center, Goldsboro, NC. Mr. Oliver Dobson, President Cape Fear Conference Lay Council; Rev. Alonzo Braggs, Chairman, Board of Lay Activities; Dr. Edwyn Baird, Regional Director; Mrs. Georgia Thompson, Missionary Supervisor; Bishop Richard Keith Thompson, Presiding Prelate.

This first Black and Gold Banquet was spectacular in every way. The Centre was tastefully decorated.

Over 200 persons were in attendance.

Excitement filled the air as the members and guests arrived, mingling together for this momentous event. The inclement weather did not deter his gathering.

The program was beautifully presided over Mrs. Hellen Beamon, Mistress of Ceremony and General Chairperson.

Mrs. D.L. Britt provided appropriate music for this celebration. The Dais, introduced by Mrs. Hazel McGlockton, Conference Secretary, was escorted by the Beacons of Light; Rev. Alonzo Braggs (invocation); Mr. William Evans (Welcome); Mr. Donald Allen (dramatization of "The Creation").

However, a very meaningful and moving memorial salute to our deceased laymen was prepared and presented by Mrs. Mary G. Foy, Conference Chairperson of the "We Care" Committee, who also gave the occasion. This service, not only memorialized the deceased of the Conference, but also service men and women who had given their lives in the service of our country. The Color Guards from the Southern Wayne High School, Dudley, NC, directed by Sgt. Janet Teasley, participated. Taps was played by Mrs. Cindy Grant, Band Director of Southern Wayne High School. The Flame of Eternal Remembrance (picture and plaque) – in Memory of Mr. D.D. Garrett, former outstanding officer of the Connectional Lay Council – was unveiled by Dr. W. Edwyn Baird and Mr. Oliver Dobson. The Memorial Tribute was relayed by Dr. Baird. Names of deceased Laymen from each district were read by "We Care" District Chairpersons. Wilson District (Mrs. Brenda Swain); Goldsboro District (Mrs. Zelda Melvin); Clarkton District (Mrs. Acquanetta Robinson); Wilmington District (Mrs. Anna Briggs Moore). This tribute closed with a solo by Mrs. Posey Johnson and closing prayer by Mrs. Anna Briggs Moore.



The keynote speaker, Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr., introduced by Mrs. Posey Johnson, is President of the Assembly of Christian Educators for the A.M.E. Zion Church. A few excerpts of the message are as follows:

The message delivered by Mr. Davis was indeed challenging. He first reminded us of the role of the Lay Council in the local church which is to assist or work along with other clubs and boards, not to duplicate, however at the same time, embrace their own reasons for who we are. He also emphasized that we must consider our purpose which is to promote the kingdom of God and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and serve Jesus Christ in all aspects of our lives. Other purposes were also discussed of which we should be aware. vote of thanks for this outstanding message.

REGIONAL NEWS

Western Episcopal District Ms. Rynette Nixon Regional Director Bishop Dennis V. Proctor Presiding Prelate

General President, Mrs. Yvonne Tracey Makes Annual Visit to the Western Episcopal District for the 2011 Annual Lay Academy & The R.C. Rochon Church Music Academy

Written & Submitted by: Rynette Nixon
Western Regional Director

and appreciated their being there gave a sense of empowerment. To see how they worshipped, and praised God you could almost feel the joy from their expressions. Although most of the people live in or below the poverty line as we know it, it is not evident, as you see the pure love and joy on their faces. This was truly a testament of our own strengths and weaknesses, to know that we have so much more than they do, but when it comes to gratefulness and gratitude they are the ones who are empowered. President Tracey made us realize how we can help to empower them as we all make an effort to do what we can to assist them financially and otherwise, and how we too become empowered as we help to lift them up.



Mr. Othello Jefferson

In addition we were blessed to have the Minister of Music at First Church, SF; Mr. Othello Jefferson to present the first Western Episcopal District R. C. Rochon "Church Music Academy". What an awesome job he did in teaching us what we sing, why we sing it, and how to sing, to help in empowering the worship experience with music. Othello gave us history and background on various songs and types of music, and he helped to encourage us in pursuing and expanding our interest and knowledge of music. We praise God for Othello Jefferson, and thank him from the bottom of our hearts. A job well done! The following day of her visit, Saturday, President Tracey attended the Bay Cities District WHOMS Annual life Members Tea also celebrated at First A.M.E. Zion Church, in San Francisco. She enjoyed the fellowship and brought greetings and words of encouragement. Othello Jefferson also gave a short version of his presentation from the previous evening. How can we say Thanks for the things you have done! We continued our week-end at Sunday morning worship at First A.M.E. Zion Church, San Francisco, Ca. where President Tracey was the morning speaker for the celebration of the Annual Lay Day, what an awesome word we received, and how wonderfully God used her as His vessel, we were truly fed food for the spirit. The Western Episcopal District is a much better place because of President Tracey. We continue to thank her for gracing us with her presence and for allowing God to use her in His service. To God Be the Glory! We are truly Empowered!!

Our Motto, "Come With Us To Christ," can best be exemplified by urging us to give more attention to our Youth who truly need us today. They are troubled, involved with drugs, dropping out of school, and teenage pregnancy is prevalent. A large number are in prison. There are only a few strong challenges presented to us as Lay Council members. We must be an integral part of the solution and not the problem. Mr. Davis was pleased to note the youth participation on this program. He was given a rising

A most delicious dinner was thoroughly enjoyed, catered by Mae's Catering Service, Kenansville, NC.

Mrs. Hellen Beamon thanked everyone who had a part in the success of this banquet, Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr., Lay Persons, Pastors, Presiding Elders and special guests.

We closed with the Lay Council Prayer. The Cape Fear Conference Lay Council would like to make this Black and Gold Banquet an annual affair.

Southwest Delta Episcopal District Ms. Stephany Ricks Fields Regional Director Bishop Daryl B. Starnes Presiding Prelate

Louisiana Lay Conference Christmas Banquet

Submitted by,
Margie Self

The Louisiana Lay Council Christmas Banquet was held on December 10, 2011 in the Bickham Fellowship Hall where Rev. Errick Baldwin is pastor. All ministers and their spouses were invited along with spouses or guest of Lay Council members. As part of the program for the night which included games, thoughts on the "Reason for the Season" were given by Rev., Dr. Francis Williams, Butlers' Pastor. An array of foods were served along with the traditional Christmas foods. Presents were given. Mrs. Dorothy Miller is the Louisiana Conference President.

Connectional Lay Council Office Extension Changes

The main number is still 704.599.4630,
Joyce Zimmerman (main) is 2566,
Yvonne Tracey is 2180.



Visit the Connectional Lay Council
Official Website for the latest
news & updates:
www.connectionallaycouncil.org

1st LAY CONVOCATION - Norfolk, Virginia March 7-8, 1980



PRAYING, PREACHING AND PLANNING—The Sheraton Inn at Military Circle in Norfolk was the scene for the Connection Lay Council AME Zion Church Convocation last weekend. Delegates from all over the country were present for the two-day conference. The conference was highlighted with services and workshops. The lens of the METRO photographer captured many of the scenes from the meeting.



PROGRAM
of the
FIRST CONNECTIONAL LAY CONVOCATION
of the
**AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
ZION CHURCH**

In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path. — Proverbs 3:6

March 7 - 8, 1980
**SHERATON INN — MILITARY CIRCLE
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA**



FRIDAY — MARCH 7		7:30 - 8:00	
8:00	REGISTRATION	EVENING WORSHIP	
8:30 - 11:40	OPENING SESSION	PRISONERS	C. W. Roper, Vice President
TESTIMONIES	James Tracy, James Smith	WISDOM	Secretary Chair First A.M.E. Zion Church Columbus, Ohio Dr. Clarence Johnson, Pastor
DEBATING	Dr. R. S. Powell Presiding Elder, South Pointe	DEVOTEES	
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	James M. White	WISDOM	Bishop Charles H. Figgitt, President Board of Bishops Presiding Bishop — Virginia Conference
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	Samuel Smith, President	WISDOM	Trinity Sister Choir — "Shades of Gospel" Washington, D.C. Rev. Richard Thompson, Pastor
A LOOK AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE	D. D. Carter, Vice President	INTRODUCTION OF PRAYERS	Bobby Robinson, President
1:00 - 1:30	LUNCH	STYMS OF MEDITATION	Chorus and Congregation
4:00 - 6:30	AFTERNOON SERVICE	MESSAGE	Bishop George J. Linder
PRESIDENT	President James White	OFFERING — INVENTORY	Secretary Chair Trinity Choir — "Shades of Gospel"
PRESENTATION OF THE BOARD OF BISHOPS		PRESENTATION OF WORKSHOP LEADERS	
MEET THE CANDIDATES FOR BISHOP'S AND GENERAL OFFICES		JUDICIAL COUNCIL AND REGISTRATION	Msgr. James Conroy Mary Taylor
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS		PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS	Atty. General Frank Albert Smith
CONCLUDING SERVICE		BUDGET	Mable Simpson D. D. Carter — President, Pastor
MANAGEMENT		LAY PARTICIPATION	Leslie Jean Lewis
		GENERAL CONFERENCE STRATEGY	W. S. Scales

