Lay Sunday Offering Appeal

The third Sunday in October, the anniversary of the denomination, is observed as Connectional Lay Sunday. We as laity are given special privileges by our pastors to fill leadership roles during the worship service. On October 15, 2017, we will see the remarkable gifts of the laity in action on Lay Sunday. If any church cannot observe Lay Sunday on this designated day, we ask that these churches select another Sunday, preferably close to the third Sunday in October, to celebrate in worship using talented, gifted lay people.

The HURRICANE HARVEY DISASTER RELIEF and Clinton College in Rock Hill, SC will be the recipients of the 2017 Lay Sunday offerings. Our young people need our support. Let us sow some Lay Council seeds by investing in the future of these young people. Dr. Lester A. McCorn, Acting President of Clinton College said this when asked about the needs of the school: “We would like to establish a scholarship fund to assist needy students, especially in emergency situations which might prohibit their ability to complete school. We were faced with many such situations this year, given the demographic of students we serve. Most of our students are first-generation college students who have very little family support. Funds from the Connectional Lay Council would tremendously assist us in meeting this need.”

My prayer is that the Lay Council will never cease to make a difference in the lives of others. Our contribution will ensure that Clinton College can assist in enhancing the school’s programs, and facilities. Additionally, God grants the increase, the contribution will be transformative and will benefit many young people for generations to come. But most importantly, we anticipate that this gift will be inspirational to the leadership of the college and in the lives of the young Clinton College scholars, our future leaders.

Please mail contributions to: Connectional Lay Council Office, Attention: 2017 Offering Appeal, Post Office Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221. All contributions will be published in the December issue of The Connection newsletter.

**Connectional Lay Council**

**The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**

**Connectional Lay Sunday**

**October 15, 2017**



**Connectional Lay Council Quadrennial Theme:**

***The Freedom Church:*** *Refocusing on our Purpose, Reviewing our Practices, Retooling our People, Reaching our Potential*

 Name of Church: A. M. E. Zion Church

 Name: , Local President

 Name: , Pastor

**Order of Worship**

**INSTRUMENTAL PRELUDE**

**\*The Processional** – #648 “We’re Marching to Zion”

**\*The 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.*

**The Invocation** (*congregation in unison*)

Here we are Lord! We come from the busy-ness of our daily lives, from the hubbub of our work and play, from the hue and cry of the world around us. We come to worship you. In this hour, we long to meet you, to feel your presence surrounding us, enveloping us, loving us. We long to settle into silence, laying aside our worries and cares, aware of your presence around us, before us, behind us, and within us. Come, Lord. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

**The Choral Response** **– “**Into My Heart”

**\*The Hymn of Praise –** #50“To God Be the Glory”

**\*The Responsive Reading**

**\*The Gloria Patri**

**\*The Apostles’ Creed or The Affirmation for Laity**

**The Scripture Lessons**

 **Old Testament – 1 Chronicles 29:1-9**

 **New Testament – 1 Thessalonians 5:4-23**

**The Morning Prayer**

**The Choral Response**

**The Choral Selection**

**The Ministry of Kindness**

**The Announcements**

**The Introduction of Speaker**

**The Hymn of Preparation** – #681 “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

**The Lay Sunday Message**

**\*The Invitation to Christ Discipleship/ Hymn of Invitation**

**Altar Prayer/Rededication of Laity** (Renewal of Church Membership/Baptism Vows)

**The Offering Appeal *(including the Lay Sunday Offering)***

**The Tithes & Offerings**

 **\*Recessional Hymn** “Onward Christian Laity”

 **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.

**The Choral Benedictory –** “Lord, Make Me More Holy”

***\*The Congregation Standing***

**The Affirmation for Laity**

We the Active Members of the Connectional Lay Council do solemnly believe, and firmly advocate, and admirably support the following affirmation of Lay Operation.

* We endorse and need an articulate Self Purpose
* We endorse and need open minds, a faith in Christian Religion
* We endorse and need people who understand all sides to questions, for herein is wisdom
* We endorse and need human decency, good manners, humor and compassion, for each must be considered as blessed as we
* We endorse and need openness, truthfulness and honesty
* We endorse and need courage to stand for each creedal, it is our rock of affirmation

Our mission thus remains as stated that of actively involving more people for Peace, Justice, Christian Teaching and Living for the Brotherhood of Man, Under the Fatherhood of God, and the Leadership of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

**GUIDE ME, O THOU GREAT JEHOVAH**

THEME HYMN

1. Guide me, O Thou great Je-ho-vah, Pil-grim thro’ this bar-ren land;

I am weak, but Thou art might-y, Hold me with Thy power-ful hand;

 Bread of heav-en, Feed me ‘til I want no more;

 Bread of heav-en, Feed me ‘til I want no more.

2. O-pen now the crys-tal foun-tain, Whence the heal-ing waters flow;

 Let the fi-rey, cloud-y pil-lar Lead me all my jour-ney through;

 Strong De-liv-erer, Be Thou still my Strength and Shield;

 Strong De-liv-erer, Be Thou still my Strength and Shield.

3. When I tread the verge of Jor-dan, Bid my anx-ious fears sub-side;

 Bear me through the swell-ing cur-rent, Land me safe on Ca-naan’s side;

 Songs of praises, I will ev-er give to Thee;

 Songs of praises, I will ev-er give to Thee.

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**Onward Christian Laity**

I.

 Onward Christian Laity; Working side by side,

Pray God’s blessings on us, And our feet to guide.

 Love our neighbor and forgive; Lend a helping hand,

 Never be too proud to serve God and our fellow-man.

II.

 Onward Christian Laity; Working hard for God,

We must tread the same path, that Our Savior trod.

We must bear our crosses, But continue on,

Knowing at the judgment, We’ll receive our crown.

REFRAIN

 Onward Christian Laity; Working side by side,

Pray God’s blessings on us, and our feet to guide.

 **\*** To the tune of “Onward Christian Soldiers”

Words by Charlotte Riggins, New Jersey Conference

**\*THE RESPONSIVE READING – PSALM 27**

*Leader: The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?*

**Congregation: The Lord *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**

*Leader*: *When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell*.

**Congregation: Though war may rise against me, in this I *will be* confident: one *thing* I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,**

*Leader: To behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple.*

**Congregation: For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me. He shall set me high upon a rock.**

*Leader: And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me.*

**Congregation: Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle. I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.**

*Leader: Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.*

**Congregation: When You said*,* “Seek My face,” my heart said to You, “Your face, Lord, I will seek.”**

*Leader****:*** *Do not hide Your face from me; Do not turn Your servant away in anger. You have been my help;*

**Congregation: Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.**

*Leader: Teach me Your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path because of my enemies.*

**Congregation:** **Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me and such as breathe out cruelty.**

*Leader: I would have lost heart had I not believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*

**All: Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord!**

**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.*

**Announcements**

(type announcement here)