



The Connection

Newsletter



CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL
THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

December 2018 Edition

Joseph King Davis, Jr., *Editor*

THE ADVENT SEASON

Advent is a season observed in many Christian churches as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas, as well as the return of Jesus at the second coming....

For Christians, the season of Advent anticipates the coming of Christ from three different perspectives. The term is a version of the Latin word meaning "coming." Are we truly prepared to invite Christ into our hearts and homes? The Advent Wreath is a circular symbol of the Trinity's spiritual unity.

As you relish the food, decorate every nook and corner of your home, share in gift-giving, and enjoy the get-togethers...

May the joy and festivities continue to radiate in your lives, long after Christmas is gone.

Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!



From the Connectional Lay Council,
Dr. Mary J. Matthews
Connectional Lay Council
International President

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Greetings from our International President

Dr. Mary J. Matthews



I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends, enjoying all of God's good blessings. Now that it's Advent season, we are all looking forward to the celebration of commemorating the birth of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

I appreciate all that you do on the local, district, conference and connectional levels to support the ministry of the Connectional Lay Council. Thank you for continuing to renew your membership in the Connectional Lay Council, our numbers are growing; and life memberships are at an all-time high. Wow! I am full of gratitude; your support of the Evangelistic Retreat was outstanding, many thanks to Ms. Leondras "Lele" Davis, chairperson, retreat steering committee members, CLC Executive Board

members, presenters, sponsors, vendors, attendees and all who helped in any way to make the retreat a success.

Please support Livingstone College, recipient of the Lay Sunday offerings. Observe Lay Sunday and send a financial donation to the CLC office before Livingstone's Founder's Day in February 2019. Our goal is to exceed \$25,000. Please make all checks payable to the Connectional Lay Council and mail to Connectional Lay Council PO Box 26770 Charlotte, NC 28221-6770. Thank you for your gifts of love for our beloved Livingstone College.

If you know of anyone who is not receiving the newsletter; send their email address to: clcoffice@amezhqtr.org and we will add them to the mailing list. Thanks for all you do in service to God through the Connectional Lay Council. Everyone, please have a safe and joyful holiday season.

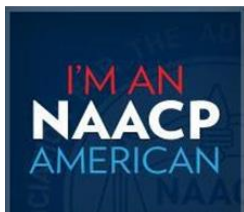


THE NAACP MISSION...to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination, and we've been doing it since 1909. ARE YOU WITH US?...Become a member today!

Last week, our country did something only a few of us saw coming—we elected a Congress that actually looks like America, thanks in no small part to voters of color turning out to vote in historic numbers.

Because we showed up to vote...

- Connecticut and Massachusetts are sending the first African-American women ever to represent their states in Congress;
- Texas elected two Latina congresswomen for the first time;
- The first Native American women were elected to Congress, and the first Muslim women were elected to Congress; and
- A conservative district in Illinois elected the youngest Black woman running for Congress this year, and a Latina from Queens became the youngest woman ever elected to Congress.



All of these historic wins are evidence that when people of color run for office and when we show our power at the ballot box, we can shift the entire trajectory of what America stands for. But merely having more diverse political representation is not enough.

We must hold those newly elected officials to the same standards we would any other politicians. We have to make it clear that they earned our votes because they promised to defend our communities and fight for our interests, and we expect them to stay true to their words.

So, as we celebrate the diversity of Congress's incoming freshman class, all of us must commit to holding these members of Congress accountable for following through on the promises they made on the campaign trail—chip in today to help NAACP keep the pressure on.

Let's make sure they know that we'll be paying attention and that our votes are not to be taken for granted.

In solidarity,
Derrick Johnson, President and CEO, NAACP

CLC Vision 2021 = 50,000 Members

Our goal is to be the church grounded in respect for our *mission, heritage* and be unwavering in *allegiance* to the founding **OBJECTIVES** and **PURPOSE** of the *Connectional Lay Council*. With every tool available inward and outward, and by personal contact, utilizing technology, social media and a direct marketing campaign, it will certainly give guidance to our goal to reach **50,000** active Lay Council members by 2021.

GOAL STRATEGY FOR 2018 AND BEYOND

Get Membership Renewals

Add New Memberships

Re-instate Inactive Local Church Lay Councils

Become a LIFE MEMBER This Year

Request Local Church Rosters by Text or Email Below

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

OCTOBER 2017 – OCTOBER 2018

40,213



*Season's Greetings and Thanks for Your Dedication to the
Connectional Lay Council*

Connie Bell-Wright, 2nd Vice President

704-724-2759

clc2vp.conniebellwright@gmail.com

Bishop George J. Leake, III Scholarship

By Mrs. Rose Stokes



As chair of the Bishop George J. Leake, III Scholarship committee, I appeal to all of Zion to make a financial contribution to the Bishop George J. Leake, III Endowed Scholarship, annually. The Scholarship Committee provides continuous financial support to A.M.E. Zion Church students who are attending Hood Theological Seminary. Some are just committing to entering the ordained ministry, while others are furthering their studies to better serve God in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bishop George J. Leake, III Scholarship committee is charged with raising \$40,000 this quadrennial. We are encouraging all churches, as well as, district and conference Lay Councils to support our effort to reach our goal. Make your checks payable to the **Connectional Lay Council; then mail the check to Connectional Lay Council, PO Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770.**

As of June 30, 2018, the balance showing in the Bishop George Leake, III Endowed Scholarship account was \$70,376.28. Hood Theological Seminary is deeply grateful for your steadfast support of the seminary and the students look forward to the exciting years and decades to come as we continue to illustrate the mission, vision and values of Hood in our local community and beyond.



FOR CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE LAY ACADEMIES 2018-2019

By Joyce Perry Edwards, M.Ch.Ed., Ph.D., *Chair, CLC Education Committee*

Four lay academies for 2018-2019 are included in *The Facilitator's Guide for Conducting Interactive Thematic Lay Academies 2017-2021*. * The lay academies for this year focus on our annual theme, "The Freedom Church: Reviewing Our Practices."

As with all times of workshops, the facilitator of the lay academy should be attentive to the opening of the lay academy. Devotions should be conducted with care. Suggestions for devotionals are included with each academy in the *Guide*. Second, the facilitator should conduct some type of ice-breaker to warm the group up. Third, the aim of the academy should be posted or projected and emphasized prior to beginning the devotional.

Academy 1. Biblical Instructions on Christian Practices

Activity 1 is a review of Biblical passages related to the theme. Before the academy, it is important that the facilitator identify an excellent reader to read the passages during this activity.

Activity 2 is an individual work activity. For engagement, the facilitator should walk about the room while the participants are working and begin to conduct the whole group review of the activity when most of the group has finished working. Activity 3 is a small group activity. It is important not to provide too much time so that the groups get off task. Announce that about 7 minutes will be provided for group discussion. Again, for this activity, the facilitator should walk around the room and stay aware of the need for more or less time for the discussions, terminating the small group discussions before the groups get off task.

Activity 4 provides closure for the session and participants are asked for their thoughts. The facilitator should accept each person's statement with thanks, accepting the contribution.

Academy 2. Lessons from a Historical Zionite: Frederick Douglass

To highlight the focus of this section, a large picture of Frederick Douglass should be posted in the room.

Activity 1 is an interview of Frederick Douglass. For this activity to be effective, it is imperative that excellent readers/actors be chosen to read the parts of Frederick Douglass and the interviewer. If possible, Frederick Douglas should wear a big grey wig and beard and be dressed in a black suit.

Activity 2 is an individual work activity. Limit the time for individuals to work. After the individual work time, review it quickly with the whole group giving the answers. The facilitator should write the answers on his/her sheet prior to the academy. The answers to the activity are found on the inside back cover of the *Facilitator's Guide*. Activity 3 is a crossword puzzle. The same tips for Activity 2 apply for Activity 3.

Academy 3. Encountering Our Theme

This academy provides an in depth look at the meaning of the theme for the year, "Reviewing Our Practices."

Activity 1 begins this academy with the puzzle used in Academy 2. Therefore, a copy of the *completed* puzzle should be provided to each participant. A reader is necessary for this activity, but prior preparation is not necessary. A volunteer reader will be fine.

Activity 2 is a small group activity. As in Academy 1, the facilitator should announce the time to be allowed (15 minutes) and then should walk around the room and stay aware of the need for more or less time for the discussions, terminating the small group discussion before the groups get off task.

Activity 3 asks for a report of the small group activity. Provide a microphone to the reporters so that everyone can hear. Activity 4 is the closure. Be sure to provide an opportunity for participants to share closing comments. However, as always, accept each contribution with a warm "thank you."

Academy 4. Using Effective Leadership Practices

Emphasize that this academy focuses on effective practices of lay leaders as they endeavor to solve problems that hinder effective functioning of a group. To open this academy, the facilitator may wish to read a poem about leadership, or deliver a short speech or story about leadership from the facilitator's personal experiences—challenges or victories.

Activity. There is only one activity for this academy, which asks the participants to think about ways to solve problems that leaders face. Before facilitating this academy, the facilitator should do the following:

- (1) Carefully study the content of this academy.
- (2) Decide if you want to conduct this academy as a whole group or divide into small groups. If you choose small groups, decided the procedure to be used to organize the small groups.
- (3) Think about how s/he would respond to the activity.
- (4) Choose a co-leader for this academy who will serve as Recorder/Summarizer.
- (5) Remember that challenges in groups can be met in several ways. Therefore, be prepared to accept participants' contributions without criticism or correction.

General Tips for Effective Facilitation

Planning and Preparation

Leadership of lay academies requires planning. The facilitator needs to be thoroughly familiar with the procedures s/he will use. Also, s/he needs to be sure that there is an ample supply of handouts. While the facilitator does not wish to inject his own opinions so much, the facilitator should practice responding to each activity prior to the session. This practice will enable the facilitator to know the content and thus be able to provide clues and cues for the participants if they do not respond immediately.

Basics of Adult Education

In adult education, it is important to be very accepting of participants' contributions. With adults, we usually are not teaching new material but helping the participants to organize and enhance what they already know. Therefore, effective facilitators of learning sessions for adults are accepting of diverse contributions and rarely if ever correct or criticize. Lay academy leaders are thus called facilitators, not teachers.

*Available from the CLC Office at the A.M.E. Zion Headquarters in Charlotte, NC. 3225 W Sugar Creek Rd, Charlotte, NC 28269, Phone: 704-599-4630 Ext. 2566 , Fax: 704-688-2551, Email: clc100@amezhqtr.org. Cost \$10.00. A PowerPoint presentation of this article is found on the Connectional Lay Council website: www.clcamezion.org

“May your heart be lifted in praise this Christmas for the wonderful gift of Jesus and the joy He brings to our lives. Have a wonderful Christmas and a Blessed New Year.”



Special Projects



Connectional Lay Council Office

PO Box 26770

3445 Sugar Creek Rd

Charlotte, NC 28221

704.599.4630

ext. 2556

Website:

connectionalLayCouncil.org

Facebook:

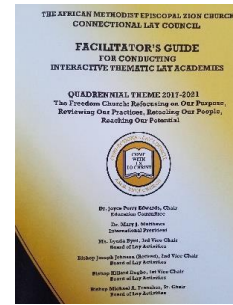
CLC/Special Projects

Office Hours:

Mon, Wed, Thurs.

9am-2pm

Facilitator's Guides are now available at \$10.00 + S/H. It includes Components 2, 3, and 4 of the Quadrennial Theme. Contact the CLC Office to place your order should you need to place an order

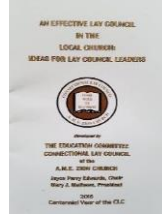


If you have not purchased an

Effective Lay

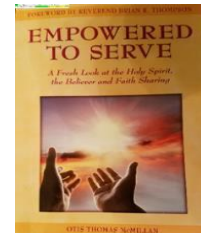
Council for the Local Church, they

are also available for \$3.00 each. The Education Committee has compiled this very useful tool for the Local Church Lay Council.



Do you have your copy of the CLC Common book of Reading: **Empowered to Serve**? Reading and discussing together is a great option for the local church, district or conference, so why not start your own book club?

Copies are available from the CLC Office or from the author, the Reverend Dr. Otis T. McMillan, Director of Church Growth and Development for the AME Zion Church. Only \$10.00.



Please remember to purchase stoles in a timely manner should you need them for an upcoming District Conference or Annual Conference. A new Life Member membership is \$125.00 and LM stoles are \$50.00. Please see the CLC Handbook or visit the CLC website for more information and order form.

Special Projects also has just the right apparel for your black and gold needs: **LM white shirts** \$35.00; **Freedom Church gold polo shirts** \$25.00; **Medallions** \$15.00; **African stoles** \$20.00. Order forms may be found on the CLC website: ConnectionalLayCouncil.org. Send orders with payment to the CLC Office.



Empower the students at Livingstone College through the support of the Connectional Lay Sunday Offerings and Donations. **GIVE!**



REGIONAL NEWS

PIEDMONT EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

LAY DAY OBSERVED AT LITTLE ROCK AME ZION CHURCH

Charlotte, North Carolina

Gloria Joyner Johnson - Reporter

Anika Robinson, Linda Kennedy - Photographers



CHARLOTTE, NC - On Sunday, October 21, 2018, Connectional Lay Day was celebrated during the morning worship service. This was a very special observance as the pastor, Dr. Dwayne A. Walker turned the pulpit over to the Little Rock Lay Council President, Mrs. Gloria Joyner Johnson. As per the Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the celebration of the birthday of the denomination is observed on the 3rd Sunday in October. The communication between pastor, the local Lay Council president and likewise with the members of the congregation led to a most successful day.

Proceeding in the sanctuary after the Acolytes were fourteen (two additional ones were unable to be present) Life Members to be stoled and other Local life members wearing their stoles, to reserved seating. The Invocation and Hymn of Praise, "Onward, Christian Laity," was led by Ms. Sandra J. Lee, the Responsive Reading by Dr. Angelia Fryer, the Scripture by Mr. Payton Colclough and the Affirmation of Faith by Ms. Hazeline Smith who serves as Little Rock's Lay Council 1st Vice President and the North Charlotte District's 2nd Vice President. Mrs. Narcissus Lowery prayed a powerful morning prayer at the altar. The Youth/Young Adult Choir (dressed in black in observance of Lay Day), led by Mr. Dennis Reed and Mrs. Deidre M. Lynch provided stirring musical selections throughout the worship service.

Dr. Walker, the six associate ministers and the three local preachers sat in the pews as local Lay Council officers and Liturgy participants along with our special guest speaker worshipped from the pulpit. This was a first in the history of the laity of Little Rock. The speaker for the morning, introduced to the congregation by the local president was Dr. Mary J. Matthews, International President of the Connectional Lay Council (CLC). The only other CLC President to have been the Lay Day speaker at Little Rock in recent history was the late Dr. C.D. Rippy, who was a member of Little Rock and the president of the local Lay Council as well at that time.



Being led by the Holy Spirit, Dr. Matthews spoke from the subject "Reviewing Our Practices: A Healthy Church Impacting A Sick World- A Spiritual Check-Up" using Ephesians 4:11-12. This coincided perfectly with Little Rock's theme for the 2018-2019 conference year, "A Healthy Church Impacting a Sick World" (Acts 8:4-8). She asked us to compare the similarities between our medical checkups with what a spiritual checkup might be. Little Rock AME Zion Church is our Spiritual Medical Center, Jesus is the Primary Care Physician, Dr. Walker is the spiritual director, the ordained elders are the spiritual

physician's assistants and the local preachers are the nurse practitioners. We the laity are to check our tongues, hearts, eyes and feet as they do the work we are commissioned to do by God. We are to rid ourselves of anxiety and fear and exercise our faith-be a living, growing, walking sermon to bring souls to Christ. Check to see if we have grown spiritually from year to year.



Dr. Walker opened the doors of the church and to the Glory of God; THREE souls joined Little Rock at that time. What a joyful time in the life of the church!

The service proceeded to the stoling ritual as Mrs. Ruby Tarver, the local Lay Council 2nd Vice President, called the names of sixteen members to be stoled. They proceeded to

line up in front of the altar and Dr. Walker made remarks about the meaning of the Life Member stoles and the significance of becoming a Life Member of the Lay Council. He then asked Dr. Matthews to proceed stoling with the assistance of Mrs. Joyce Zimmerman, North Charlotte District Lay Council President and Mrs. Priscilla Leeper, Administrative Assistant for the CLC. Additionally, Dr. J. Wardell Henderson, the Presiding Elder of the North Charlotte District was present for the service and offered the prayer at the conclusion of the stoling ritual. Currently, Little Rock has thirty-five Lay Council life members.

After the Worship Service a reception prepared by the Culinary Ministry was held in the fellowship hall.

The fellowship was very enjoyable.

We thank God for a successful Lay Day Worship Service to include the newly stoled life members and especially and most importantly the three souls who came with us to Christ. Praise God! HE did it!



Western North Carolina Conference

Gloria Joyner Johnson, *Reporter*

CHARLOTTE, NC - The Western North Carolina Conference Lay Council met on September 29, 2018 at East Stonewall AME Zion Church on the Charlotte District. Rev. Dr. Michael McLean is the pastor and the Presiding Elder is Rev. Dr. Benjamin Morrow and Mr. Willie Bratcher is the local president. Mr. Jerry McCombs is the WNCC Lay Council President, Mrs. Dorothy Gill Smith is the Regional Director, Mrs. Iris M. Battle is the Missionary Supervisor and Bishop George E. Battle, Jr., Senior Bishop of the AME Zion Church is the Presiding Prelate of the Piedmont Episcopal District.

After the uplifting devotion, led by Mr. Gerald Rush, the WNCC Chaplain and the inspirational praise by the East Stonewall Church choir, Mrs. Sarah Harris of the Big Pineville AME Zion Church and Mrs. Jennifer Lockhart of the Greater Gethsemane AME Zion Church led the assembly in the Affirmation for Laity and the welcome, respectively.

The business session was called to order by President McCombs and began with a motion to accept the minutes as presented by the secretary, Ms. Essie Crawford; standard reports for the treasurer, Mrs. Doris Griffin; the membership chairperson-2nd Vice President of the WNCC (7089 members currently) and the CLC, Mrs. Connie Bell Wright; the Albert Stout, Sr. Scholarship report from Mrs. Jamesine Ruff (\$5329.65 awarded to six Livingstone scholars) and the “We Care” committee report from Mrs. Sandra Pickens. Mr. William Manning, CLC Chaplain and member of the WNCC Lay Council executive board, presented the proposed budget for the 2018-2019 conference year. The “Each One, Give One”

Offering which usually goes to help dissolve the mortgage on the Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center was voted to go toward the Eastern North Carolina victims of Hurricane Florence.

Mrs. Leondras “Lele” Davis, 1st Vice President of the WNCC Lay Council and the Connectional Lay Council called for all young adults present to proceed to their Lay academy session. She then presented Dr. Yvonne Tracey, Immediate Past President of the CLC, as the Lay Academy facilitator. Dr. Tracey focused on the Board of Bishops Quadrennial Address “The Freedom Church: Refocusing on Our Purpose, Reviewing Our Practices, Retooling Our People, Reaching Our Potential.” We need to understand the principle associated with the practice and evaluate, love and teach the practices to foster a more meaningful worship, evangelism and result in church growth and development. Protocol, Polity and Petitions are the three “P’s” that we must consider to reach the goal of becoming disciples of Christ who make more disciples of Christ.

The *District Presidents* gave their glowing reports as follows:

The Winston-Salem District, *Mrs. Sharon Hargrave*

The Statesville District, *Mrs. Cheryl Gray*

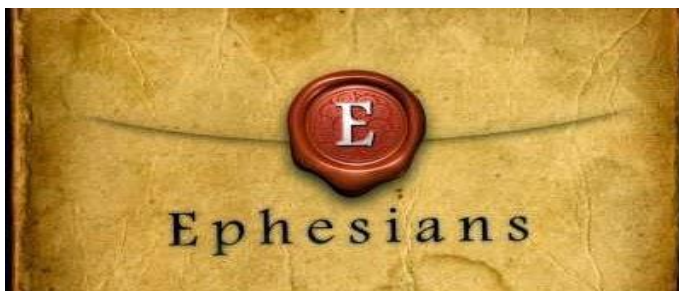
The Salisbury District, *Dr. Mary Ponds*

The Lincolnton District, *Mr. William F. Manning*

The North Charlotte District, *Ms. Joyce A. Zimmerman*

The Charlotte District, *Mr. Willie L. Bratch*

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT



Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District Regional Lay Council

*Respectfully Submitted,
by Hank Dobson*

Ephesians 4:16 – “From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supply, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” (NKJV)

I am thankful and blessed to be the regional director in such an anointed Episcopal District. The conferences and districts leadership are stellar. These leaders are working on kingdom building. They are reviewing their practices to achieve the motto “Come with us to Christ.” The lay council is all about reaching out to others. It was proven as people throughout the episcopal area reached out to those affected by hurricane Florence and Michael. God blesses us to be a blessing to others.

The “Mountain Top Experience”- It was my first time coming to Camp Dorothy Walls Retreat Center in Black Mountain, NC. This is an amazing place that belongs to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Does this place not make you realize that Zion is a great Church? The Eastern North Carolina Lay Council was represented from the Central, Cape Fear, North Carolina and Albemarle conferences. Many thanks to all the laity that came to support the lay ministry. They were not disappointed. We all were spiritually fed by all the outstanding presenters at the retreat. The sessions were all very intense. All local lay leaders should put in their budget for at least one annual Connectional Lay Council trip.

The Regional Lay Council is planning one more academy December 1, 2018 at York Memorial AMEZ Church in Greenville North Carolina. We will reflect on our past and look ahead for the future. A Regional Lay Person of the year will be announced. Good fellowship and food will all be a part of our yearend celebration.

I close with a quote from the old prophet *Jeremiah 29: 11 - “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”*

BECOMING A FAMILY WITH FELLOWSHIP

Excerpts from a message brought on Lay Sunday 2019 at St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Church, Durham by Jalia Donnell, an active member of St. Mark and an outstanding 11th grade student at Northern High School, Durham, NC.

...*Let us pray.* O Heavenly Father, I thank you for this opportunity this morning. Please allow me to convey the message I have written for everyone here as clearly as possible, Amen.

For this year, the Lay Council's theme is "The Freedom Church: Reviewing Our Practices." In Dr. Joyce Perry Edwards' article, inspired by the theme, she states that there are six areas of church life: worship, education for discipleship, outreach, evangelism, fellowship, and leadership or administration. The area I chose to talk about today is fellowship.

Fellowship means is to have a friendly association, especially with people who share one's interest. It is coming to share our time, our knowledge, and beliefs *together*. It's very easy to include fellowship in day to day life; for example, when we hang out with our friends or celebrate something like a birthday. But just as easy as fellowship is outside of church, it is as easy inside it too. A couple of my favorite activities we do at church are The Rainbow Tea, The Birthday Social, and Vacation Bible School, especially the last night. We all come together and have fun with each other. We come together to fellowship.

As Leah read earlier, Psalm 133 begins with, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" And that's really what our goal is: to please God and come together in unity and not only that but to come together as a united family.

It's important that we have fellowship because without it we wouldn't really have church. We wouldn't have the love, community and faith we have in each other. We wouldn't be coming here together to learn or to teach each other. We wouldn't really be involved in each other's lives. With fellowship we're here building our community instead of doing horrible things outside in the world to other people, creating a bad environment for everyone. And we want a peaceful and loving environment for everyone, especially for children to grow up in.

With fellowship we can create that. We make bonds and inspire people to unite and lead each other together to do great things with their life.

In Dr. Edwards's article, she states:

Churches often have many fellowship activities. These activities merit our review to determine if they help to create the village—the neighborhood---that is now missing in our society. We live in one place, our children—and often we as adults— go to school in another, our workplace is often far away from our homes, and our church may be located in still another place. We must even drive miles from home to shop. We often do not know the people who live near us. The challenge and opportunity for the church, therefore, is to create a village. The ministry of fellowship is a critical component in creating a village and should seek to involve *all* ages and *all* members of the family. It is such a critical aspect of church life that we should plan the ministry of fellowship as carefully as any other ministry of our church so that it is suitable to the characteristics and lifestyles of the members of our specific locale. Along with worship, and the ministries of evangelism, outreach, and education, and social advocacy, the ministry of fellowship can surely become a powerful method in saying to others, "Come with us to Christ."

When we plan events here and invite our friends and family to church and they get to hear the messages and do the fun activities, we create that neighborhood and make it bigger. And we do it with fellowship. And it's pretty easy because fellowship doesn't have a small limit to what we can do to have it. Something as simple as being here in church today listening can count as fellowship. Being in the choir can count as fellowship, and everyone in Sunday School would be participating in fellowship. Because people came together to learn and to teach each other about God's word and not only do we want to do this, but we want to include more ways to involve fellowship in church and make it enjoyable for everyone in it.

Bailey read earlier in Hebrews 10:22-25 from *The Message*. In the last sentence it says, "Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshipping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching." Asking us how we can be creative in our ways of fellowship. How we can have fellowship and make it enjoyable and fun for everyone--all ages included. Because while something in church might be such a great learning experience to you, a child might be itching to get out of his/her seat to run around and play. So, we want to include fun things for them to do in our events of fellowship.

For me personally, I enjoy performing, specifically acting and I like speaking.... Performances are a good way to have fellowship because everyone can be involved whether they're learning and watching or teaching and performing. Because whether the performance is a play, dance, music, poetry, or a speech you can send a message through any form of art....

[A]nother thing we really want to focus on is inviting others--making our neighborhood bigger. We want to have fellowship and invite others, so they can be involved and unite with us.... [T]hose are important goals we have in church, create our neighborhood, strengthen our love and bonds with unity, and invite others to our church.

I will finish by reading an article, "What Is The Meaning Of Fellowship in The Bible?" by Tom Smith. <http://holdingtotruth.com/2014/04/27/meaning-fellowship-bible/> When I was a young believer, I thought that Christian fellowship simply referred to a group of Christians coming together to share some common interests, possibly eating together and enjoying one another's company. Later, I had an additional thought that fellowship referred to conversations among believers in seeking to know God's will and understand spiritual matters. 1. Real fellowship is of God's eternal life.... 2. Real fellowship is the flow of the divine life within us as illustrated by the circulation of blood in our body.... 3. Real fellowship is both vertical and horizontal.... How can we experience this genuine divine fellowship? 1. Spend a personal time with the Lord each morning to strengthen your "vertical" fellowship with the Lord.... 2. Spend regular times each week with other believers to practice "horizontal" fellowship, the "fellowship of spirit"—your spirit touching their spirit.... 3. Care for the inner flowing of life in your spirit by going along with the sense of life and peace in all the details of your daily life.... [and] 4. Confess and deal with any sins or offenses so that neither your "vertical" fellowship with the Lord, nor your "horizontal" fellowship with your fellow believers is interrupted.



NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Marie H. Baxter Honored
Submitted by Marcella Shelton



The Westchester District Lay Council showered our President, Mrs. Marie H. Baxter with love and appreciation at a Special Honoree Luncheon on Saturday, September 15, 2018. Mrs. Baxter serves as our Lay Council President, a position she has held for the last 25 years (17 years as Westchester District President and 7+ years as President of the former Hudson River District). She's a member of Mount Hope AME Zion Church; White Plains, NY, Rev. Gregory R. Smith is her Pastor. She is also very active at her local church where she serves as a Steward, she sings on the Senior Choir, she's church clerk, a Life Matron and member of the Missionary Society, the Bereavement Ministry, Christian Education Department, and many other Ministries. She also serves as the North Eastern District Regional Director for the Connectional Lay Council. Mrs. Baxter

is a servant, willing to work wherever needed. She often testifies that she loves our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and all levels of this Connectional Church.



Ruby Figueroa, Eloise Homer, Marie H. Baxter & Presiding Elder Isidoa Branch, Sr. (Stewart Rhymer in background)

This celebration was held at Greater Centennial AME Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, NY; Rev. Stephen W. Pogue, Pastor. The large attendance bore witness to the respect we have for this Christian Lady. Toast Masters, Miss Linda Tyson and Mr. Stewart Rhymer, alternately praised Mrs. Baxter for her stalwart leadership and dedication to her duties and, then, roasted her for the strong influence she exerts to get the job done. She seldom takes 'no' for an answer and once you're committed, Mrs. Baxter makes sure you're doing your work as she directed and in a timely manner.

Representatives from many levels of our church spoke of Mrs. Baxter's accomplishments and presented her with flowers and gifts including but not limited to: Mrs. Dorothea



Mrs. Marie Baxter and local Presidents, North Eastern Region

Stevens, President, New Jersey Conference Lay Council; Mrs. Clarice Smith-Jarvis, President, Jersey City District Lay Council; Mrs. Carolyn Humphries, President, New England Conference Lay Council; Mr. John Williams, Chairman, Steward Board, Mt Hope AME Zion Church, Rev. Pogue greeted the Body and delivered a message from our Episcopal Leader, Bishop Vernon D. Proctor. The Rev. Moses Carter, recently retired

Minister in the Westchester District offered a solo and Presiding Elder Isidoa Branch, Sr., Westchester District made the final presentation followed by remarks from the Honoree, Mrs. Baxter. Presiding Elder Branch praised Mrs. Baxter for her diligence and commitment to her task. Mrs. Baxter thanked all who thought it not robbery to take time out to share this time with her. At the suggestion of Mr. Jarvis (Jersey City District Lay Council) who accompanied us on the piano, the occasion ended with the singing of Mrs. Baxter’s favorite song, “May the Work I’ve Done Speak for Me.”

Kudos to the Westchester District, the Luncheon Committee, the decorators and catering staff of Greater Centennial for a wonderful and uplifting afternoon.



SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
Bishop Mildred B. Hines, *Presiding Prelate*
Loranda Melton, *Regional Director*

Palmetto Conference - Columbia-Camden District
Article by Ernestine Alexander

Lay Sunday Celebration at Good Hope AME Zion Church located in Camden, SC where the Pastor is Reverend Tracy Ellis. Local Lay President: Ernestine Alexander, Vice President: Alvin Barnes



Lay Sunday was celebrated at Good Hope A.M.E. Zion Church as the members of the laity participated in the morning worship service. They used the Lay Bulletin as a resource for their bulletin. The local President, Ernestine Alexander spoke briefly on re-dedicating their lives and reminding everyone of their purpose. The local President took a brief moment to reflect on the awesome Lay Retreat that was held in Black Mountain, NC. While being led by the Holy Spirit, she asked three questions: If you are a Missionary please stand (be seated); If you are Laity, please stand (be seated); if you are a Disciple, please stand (be seated); needless to say she quickly reminded everyone that if you have been born again you should have stood for all three and if you did not you need to re-dedicated your life back to Christ because all three have one common goal: Making disciples for Christ!

Good Hope A.M.E. Zion Church, Pastor Rev. Tracy Ellis, Lay Sunday Observance

Lay Sunday Observed at Various Churches in the Columbia-Camden District

by Loranda Melton



Rossville A.M.E. Zion Church – Lay Sunday



Loranda Melton, Lay Sunday Speaker Paradise A.M.E Zion Church Rev. Sandra Flemming, Pastor



Jones Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Sunday Pastor, Rev. Dr. Terrence Jones



Ebenezer A.M.E. Zion Church, Pastor, Rev. George Rhodes, Jr.

On October 27, Cheraw Bennettsville held their Annual Lay Celebration at the First Baptist Family Life Center. What a wonderful celebration with lot of door prizes. A Lay Person from every church in the district was recognized with a certificate and 25.00. Great fellowship and an afternoon well spent.

Head Table: Mr. Robert Benton, Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Sandra Benton, Mrs. Sabrina Franks, Rev. Eric Franks, Loranda Melton, South Atlantic Regional Director



Clarence Malloy District President



Clarence Malloy with Mrs. Latta, winner of the 55-inch Screen TV

MID ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Lay Council Observance Weekend, Union Wesley AMEZ Church, Washington, DC

Respectfully submitted,
Sis. Brenda Ruffin



Recognition and observance of laity in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion denomination is held annually the third weekend in October. To commemorate the occasion a Lay Academy was held at Union Wesley AMEZ, Washington, D.C., Saturday, October 20 at 10:00 am. In furtherance of the quadrennial sub-theme of the denomination, Retooling Our People, the academy addressed stewardship. To the delight and surprise of Union Wesley Lay Council President Yvonne Baskerville attendance was better than expected. Close to forty saints pressed their way to the academy. In attendance was Regional Director/Annual Conference President Katherine Burrell as well as Dr. Larry Johnson, Education Committee member, Connectional Lay Council.

Dr. Johnson opened the session with an impassioned presentation of the workings of the lay council. He reiterated the previous quadrennial theme of Worship, Leadership, Discipleship and Stewardship and how it connects to our current quadrennial theme. Essentially each area is an extension of the prior theme. As we seek to retool, each area of the previous theme will need to be addressed. Dr. Johnson spoke about stewardship and shared hand-outs entitled: A Diet Plan for Stewardship, God's ownership and Our Stewardship Quotes and Reviewing our Practices. A wealth of wisdom and information was received from Dr. Johnson. A key nugget he imparted was we have to have a real experience with an issue and recognize our own inadequacy and insufficiency before we can try to help someone else. There must be understanding and empathy as we recognize the grace of God.

Dr. Johnson expressed his joy at the growth of Lay Academies in the field as well as the Lay Council's inclusion at Mid-Atlantic annual conference. Two luncheon academies were conducted at annual conference in May 2018. One covered Dementia, its forms and effects and the other were on human trafficking, a vicious crime operating in plain sight. Dr. Johnson and Sister Baskerville reminded the audience that laity formed the foundation of the AMEZ church. There is strength in laity. The question was posed, how do we make laity a power...again?

The next presenter was Rev. Dr. Alvin Durant, pastor of Union Wesley. Rev. Durant spoke on Improving Stewardship in the Church. He began with a definition of stewardship; stewardship is making the most responsible use of our gifts and resources. Stewardship is more than just money. Thinking of stewardship as only about money has given stewardship a bad rap. Rev. Durant asserts we are stewards of creation, stewards of vocation and stewards of the church. As stewards of creation we are to nurture and care for the earth and all its inhabitants. As stewards of vocation we are to continue in furthering God's Kingdom and practice good stewardship. As stewards of the church we are to nurture and encourage faith in our families and communities and support the church with tithes.

Pastor Durant maintains that it takes teaching and reteaching, intentionality and commitment. The goals of such a ministry are to have everyone engaged in tithing and help the congregation recognize that tithing is just the start. He continues to assert that tithing frees up the congregation to address and impact the needs in community that as we are not focusing on fundraising our focus can shift to meeting needs. Pastor Durant stresses it is a matter of the heart. Your love for God should prompt your obedience. As sanctification continues generous giving begins to manifest.

As part of our retooling efforts we were presented with a fresh look at stewardship. Stewardship is an integral part of being a Christian and a necessary component for sustainability. Recommit to being a good steward.

In addition to an informative Lay Academy Saturday, a powerful program was held Lay Sunday. The pulpit was yielded to laity for Sunday morning worship service. There was an intergenerational team that participated in the worship experience. Sis. Marlene Carter served as worship leader. Young adults read the scriptures as baby boomers led the responsive reading, the litany, greeting and corporate prayer. The speaker for the morning was a young adult as well; Union Wesley's own Clarence Cross III, son of Rev. Clarence Cross.

Brother Cross was a delight, a joy and a hope. Young adult participation may not abound as we would like but there is commitment and excellence there. Brother Cross is living proof. He presented a message that was timely, authentic and for all generations and ages.

Brother Cross definitely brought the young "flavor". He begins by talking about the Three Amigos, a rap group. He relayed how three friends had a dream, preserved and finally "made it". He used one of their songs as the basis for his message. The song is titled Walk It Like I Talk It. His message was entitled Do You Walk It Like You Talk It? They were talking about people singing about being gangsters. Of course, Brother Cross is talking about our spirituality, our Christian walk, what we profess we are and believe.

Each day is a gift. We should live every day in God's grace-walking it, talking it and staying in our lane. He talked about how Jesus was able to get the fishermen to leave their livelihood and do a new thing. He maintains people need inspiration. They are waiting for a whiff of inspiration to drop their plows. We don't find out our dreams because we are doing what others want us to do-not living our own dreams.

When we walk it, we live in faith. When we talk it, we share God. We share Jesus. Not necessarily our perspective but the knowing God. He shared a story of a student who was having problems. During a particularly distressful time, the student inquired if Bro. Cross believed that religious stuff he was teaching. Bro. Cross affirmed he believes in God. The student then inquired which God should he appeal to- instead of trying to convert or evangelize the student, Bro. Cross simply spoke the truth- there is only one God. Instructing the student to simply seek God, in that moment he gave that student the gift of God. Seek Him and He will respond. God did respond.

Staying in our lane. One body with many members each needing to play its part. We are to use our gifts to glorify God. Different gifts, different assignments. Walk within your gift. To stay in our lane, we must be willing to drop stuff. Bro. Cross shared another story. In this story, two monks were about to cross a river. A woman was there and needed assistance but was not a pleasant person. The younger monk ignored her and went on. The older monk helped her although she was rude. Once across she promptly berated him and left. The two monks continued on their way. A few miles down the road the younger monk began complaining, how could let that woman talk to you like that, etc. The older monk replied, "I put that woman down way back there. Why are you still carrying her?" Bro. Cross proffers that letting go keeps us from getting stuck. He urges laity to remember we have gifts don't be afraid to use them. He reminds laity we are instruments not ornaments.



First Agape A.M.E. Zion Church, Baltimore District, Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference celebrated Lay Sunday on October 21. As a first time Lay Sunday speaker, I brought greetings from the President of the Baltimore District Lay Council and shared with the congregation a handout *From the Desk of Sis. Katherine S. Burrell, Mid Atlantic Regional Director for the Connectional Lay Council*. The handout set forth the Lay theme and recognized the contributions of Lay Leaders as trailblazers of the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. Pastor Edgar Bankhead appealed for a special offering to be donated to Livingstone College via the Connectional Lay Council Office in Charlotte, NC.

I spoke about *Recognizing our Defining Moments and Reaching Our Potential*. This topic focused on stories of several prominent leaders in the country and the community. Later I shared some of my personal experiences that enabled me to build a successful career and experience a healthy outlook for retirement. As common threads in the stories, each person used their special talents to advance others, forever learning and contributing their best while centered on a higher calling. Effectively used was a quote from Oliver Wendell Holmes: "What lies behind us, and what lies before us, are small matters when compared to what lies within us." The closing quote was from a daily devotional book called Jesus Calling, by Sarah Young: "I have called each of my children to a different path, distinctly designed for that one. Do not let anyone convince you that his path is the only right way. And be careful not to extol your path as superior to another's way. What I require of you is to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with me-- wherever I lead." Micah 6:8

Submitted by Antonell Aikens-Thompson

Southwestern Delta Episcopal District, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

128th Session of the South Mississippi Annual Conference

The Lay Council Highlights



Pictured from center: Bishop Michael A. Frencher, and Missionary Supervisor Mrs. Gelenia Frencher. *To the Right:* Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Floyd E. Chambers, Canton District; and *To the Left:* Presiding Elder Rev. Dr. Moses E. Thompson, Jackson-Panola District.

Special recognition was given to Owens Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Pastor Rev. Terry White, Local President Ms. Lakeisha Barnes, for their quick response to the Lay Council Ministry.



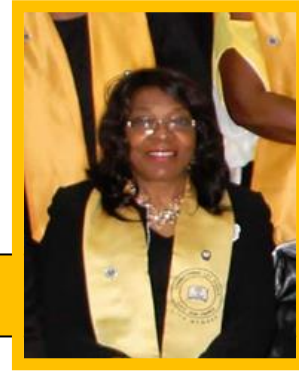
Board of Lay Activity: *From the Left:* Clara McGruder, Conference President; Emma Townsey, Local Lay Council President; Rev. Alfred L. Johnson, Board Member, and Melvin Bonds, District President for Canton District.



Lay Council Fitness Workout: Ebony Johnson-Bracy, I Just Came to Tell You!

May God continue to bless you in all you do in Lay Ministry!

WESTERN WEST AFRICA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT



*Dr. Mary J. Matthews
International President CLC*

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL

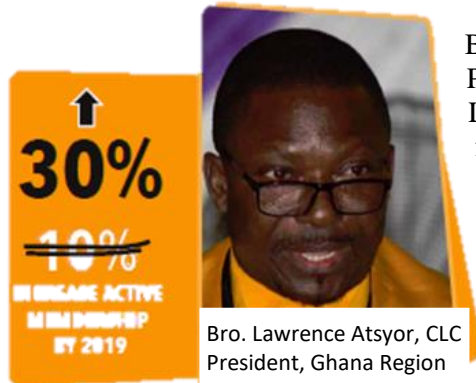
BY : GODFRIED NGORLI NYAKU

Welcome to the Lay Council of the Western West Africa Episcopal District. The Lay Council is a very important arm of the church. The Book of Discipline out-lines the objectives of the Lay Council as:

- Deepen the spiritual life of the Laity.**
- Disseminate information.**
- Cultivate the denominational loyalty.**
- Expand the denomination through education and evangelism.**
- Promote any other interest of the Kingdom of God.**

Over the past year, Bishop Dogbe has made an effort at revitalising the Lay Council. During the grand inaugural service of The Rt. Rev. Dr. Dogbe, the President of the Connectional Lay Council, Sis. Mary Matthews was present to educate interested Lay People on the work of the Lay Council. The interaction with Sis. Mary Matthews ignited interest in the Lay Council and set the tone for the formation of the same in the Western West Africa Episcopal Area.

To propagate the Lay Council movement within the region, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Hilliard Dela Dogbe during the 2017 International Pastors and Leaders Conference (IPALC) inaugurated a Lay Council Board for the Ghana Region under the chairmanship of Mr. Alex Bonney. The Board was charged with the responsibility of ensuring an active Lay Council in the Western West Africa District. In addition, the leadership of the Ghana Region (East, West, North and Mid Ghana Conferences) were inaugurated.



Bro. Lawrence Atsyor, CLC
President, Ghana Region

Bro. Lawrence Atsyor and Bro. Kafui Kuwornu who are President and Vice President respectively of the Ghana Region promised to work hard to make the Lay Council an active and relevant body within the A.M.E Zion Church. For the first time in the history of the Lay Council in the Western West Africa Episcopal District, Lay leaders attended the Lay Council Convention as official delegates. The Episcopal District was represented by Bro. Chris Yao Torkornoo and Bro. Lawrence Atsyor from the East Ghana Conference and Dr. Ben Lartey from the Liberia Conference. The convention which was held in Knoxville, Tennessee and themed “Refocusing our purpose, reviewing our practices, retooling our people and reaching our potential”, represented a wind of change for the Lay Council movement as well as the entire A.M.E Zion Church fraternity in the

W.W.A.E.D. At the end of the convention, Bro. Lawrence Atsyor and Dr. Benjamin Lartey were awarded the President’s Distinguished Laity Award and Lay Council Centennial Awards respectively.

The Lay Council during its Lay Academy in the East Ghana Conference revealed its intention to increase its active membership by 30% by 2019 and to institute the Zion Club 100. The aim of the club is to be able to get 100 people who would contribute to projects in the church. Currently, the leadership of the Lay Council in the Western West Africa Episcopal District continues to educate members and leaders at both district and local levels on how the Lay Council works and encourage members to subscribe to the various levels of membership of the council.

I am pleased to announce the first edition of *'The Zion Epistle'*, the official newsletter of the Western West Africa Episcopal District of the A.M.E Zion Church. This is intended be a quarterly publication and a medium through which the world could experience the unfolding story of God's move in the Western West Africa Episcopal District.

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

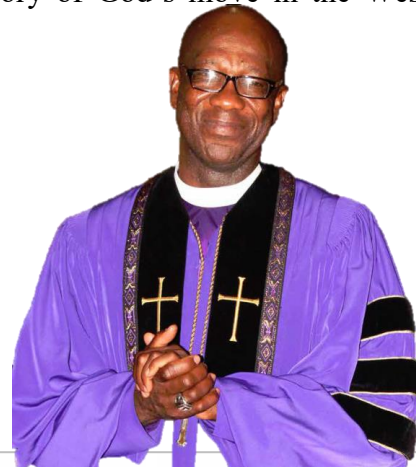
A NOTE FROM BISHOP HILLARD DOGBE TO YOU

Beloved In Christ,

There comes a time in life where starting something new, refreshing and out of the ordinary becomes necessary. I feel it is that time for the Western West Africa Episcopal District. However, it is not only a time to feel warm temperatures and make merry, but also, it's the perfect time to start (or finish) a project, build a church or that thing God has laid on your heart! If you're like me, you already have a list of projects you've been waiting to tackle or new opportunities you're excited to explore. Coming out with an official newsletter for the Western West Africa Episcopal District marks one of such new beginnings for the WWAED.

This maiden issue of the **Zion Epistle** is filled with how-to articles to help you take also this truly amazing life God has given you and do some great things with it! You can turn a bad day into a better one. You can partner with others to bring about needed change in this world. You can persevere through your trials and press on to the good things God has in store for you...

The Zion Epistle has a primary objective of serving as a vehicle for communicating and disseminating information on activities in the episcopal district as well as serving as the bridge that connects us (all conferences) together. The central message is the gospel and how it has persuaded us to be ambassadors of Christ, motivated us into missions and ministry for Christ and inspired us to use our talents, gifts and graces in helping to build the kingdom of God.



News From The CLC First Vice President



Greetings CLC Family,

The past quarter has been a very busy time for the Connectional Lay Council. We held the 6th Evangelistic Retreat; Connectional Lay Day was observed in many of our churches, their districts and their conferences and the culmination of the Move Across Zion Day were all held in the month of October.

Move Across Zion Day

We are excited to have heard from 4 Episcopal areas for the **Move Across Zion Day Challenge**. The original Challenge deadline was September 15th, but due to Hurricane Florence impacting and threatening at least 4 Episcopal areas, the deadline was moved to October 20th. Thanks to all who joined in to help create an awareness to our health. We want to congratulate and recognize the first 3 Episcopal Districts to respond to the Move Across Zion Fitness Challenge: **Southwestern Delta Episcopal District** (Stephany Ricks-Fields, Regional Director); **Piedmont Episcopal District** (Dorothy Gill Smith, Regional Director) and **Eastern**

North Carolina Episcopal District (Hank Dobson, Episcopal Director) and Honorable Mention goes to John Wesley AME Zion Church (**MidAtlantic Episcopal District**) for their pictures. The three Regional Directors responding will receive a voucher for CLC merchandise. Thanks to everyone for your effort in making strides to make healthy options a priority.



CLC Evangelistic Retreat

The Piedmont Episcopal District served as host to the 6th Evangelistic Retreat October 5th-6th at the Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center in Black Mountain, NC. The theme for the Retreat was “*Equipped and Empowered to Serve.*” We are most grateful to Bishop Michael A. Frencher, CLC Board Chair for his support and our International President, Dr. Mary Matthews for her leadership and directives in the planning and implementation of the retreat. Many thanks to Bishop George E. Battle, Jr. and Mrs. Iris M. Battle for hosting the Retreat. Kudos to the host episcopal district planning committee, Mrs. Dorothy Gill Smith, Host Regional Director, LC Conference Presidents, Ms. Beverly Workman, Host LC Conference President, (Blue Ridge Conference), Ms. Minnie McCrae (West Central NC Conference) and Mr. Jerry McCombs (Western North Carolina Conference WNCC), for the awesome job in hosting the Retreat. We are also thankful to the Registration Team (Ms. Martha Scudder, Mrs. Priscilla Leeper and Mrs. Effie Woodard) for their planning, organization and readiness for the arrival of the Retreat registrants.

The Evangelistic Retreat opened Friday at 1:00pm. The day began with greetings from the International President, Dr. Mary Matthews and Devotion was led by the 1st Vice President/Retreat Chair, Lele Davis. The Reverend Rodney Moore was the Retreat’s first presenter. He provided an exciting and engaging “Overview of Refocusing on our Purpose.” The Education Committee led by chairperson Dr. Joyce Edwards and team provided a skit to introduce and provide insight to the second component of the quadrennial theme, “Reviewing our Practices.” Ms. Queen DeGraphenreid, CLC Community Outreach and Social Political Chair came ready to share information to keep us abreast on the upcoming election and the importance of our votes in the (Nov. 2018) Election.

The Welcome Program and Dinner hour followed. Host Regional Director, Mrs. Dorothy Gill Smith presided for the evening. The opening selection was Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah. Mr. Alex Webster, Chaplain, Blue Ridge Conference Lay Council read the scripture and Mr. Gerald Rush, Chaplain, Western North Carolina Conference Lay

Council offered prayer. The Connectional Lay Council was greeted by Presiding Elder Herbert Grant on behalf of Bishop George E. Battle, Jr., Host Bishop and Presiding Prelate of the Piedmont Episcopal District. Greetings followed from the Piedmont Episcopal District Lay Council, Mrs. Dorothy Gill Smith, Host Regional Director and conference presidents, Ms. Beverly Workman, Host Conference President, Blue Ridge Conference; Ms. Minnie McRae, West Central Conference and Mr. Jerry McCombs, Western North Carolina Conference. The Reverend Dr. Dwayne A. Walker led everyone in the Jamaican Fellowship Song. Greetings were also extended from the Honorable Don Collins, Mayor of Black Mountain, NC and County Commissioner Alfred Whiteside, Buncombe County Commissioners. Ms. Johnetta Luther performed a Mime Presentation. Special presentations and remarks followed. Bishop Frencher, Board Chair of the CLC gave remarks and the closing prayer.

The Holy Communion Service followed at 7:00pm. The Reverend Dr. Calvin L. Miller (Presiding Elder of the Winston Salem District) presided. The Hymn of Praise was "At the Cross." The Reverend Dr. Grant Harrison (Presiding Elder of the Salisbury District) led the Responsive Reading; The Reverend Dr. Dwayne A. Walker (Pastor of the Little Rock AME Zion Church) led the Affirmation of Faith; The Reverend Dr. Andrew B. Smoke (Presiding Elder of the Hendersonville District PED) read the Scripture lesson from the Old Testament; The Reverend Dr. William Jordan (Presiding Elder of the Wadesboro-Monroe District) read the Scripture lesson from the New Testament; The Reverend Dr. C. Franklin Tillett, Jr. (Presiding Elder of the Lincolnton District) lead the congregants in prayer. Inspiration music was provided by the MVP (Melodious Voices of the Piedmont). The Reverend Dr. Herbert Grant (Presiding Elder of the Asheville District) presented the Communion Messenger. The MVP sung the selection, "Way Maker." The Right Reverend Michael A. Frencher, Sr. Chairman of the Board of Lay Activities and Presiding Prelate of the Southwestern Delta Episcopal District delivered the Message, "The Precious Blood of Jesus." Bishop Frencher, Chief Celebrant and The Reverends Miller, Harrison, Smoke, Walker, Jordan and Grant served as the Con-celebrants for the Communion Service.

Friday evening concluded with the Young Adult (YA) Café Hour, led by Mrs. Dottie Stevens, (YAI Chairperson). The YA's planned and prepared for a very successful evening. Shared topics included Breast Cancer Awareness and Domestic Violence. The attendees also participated in a question and answer sharing session. We are thankful to Mrs. Dottie Stevens for the leadership role provided to the YA's in planning the Café Hour. We are also thankful to the CLC-YA for the awesome job in planning, organizing and implementation of the Café Hour. Thanks for a very successful event! We thank and praise God for all He is doing and will do in the CLC-YA ministry!

The Morning Watch Team led by CLC Chaplain, Mr. William Manning opened with prayer at 6:30am, Saturday, October 6th. The CLC offered the option of attending the Morning Watch in the lobby of the lodge at DWCRC or participating on the new and first-time telephone conference call prayer line.

The Freedom Breakfast followed at 7:30am with Mrs. Loranda Melton, CLC South Atlantic Episcopal District Regional Director, presiding. A musical selection was provided by The Reverend Justin Barbour and a liturgical dance was performed by mother-daughter team, Ms. Ashley and Paige Melton. Mrs. Addie Lisby, Editor of the Star of Zion, was the impactful speaker for the breakfast hour. Her topic was entitled, "*Laity God Can Use.*" We are grateful to Mrs. Lisby for sharing with the Connectional Lay Council.

The Reverend Dr. Brian Thompson served as the presenter for the (Pastor of Simon Temple AME Zion Church), Lay Academy Session entitled, "Equipped to Serve." His session was also informative and engaging to the attendees. We appreciate all he does for the laity in Zion.

The Reverend Dr. Otis T. McMillan was the presenter of the (Director of Church Growth and Development for the AME Zion Church) Lay Academy session entitled, “Empowered to Serve”. He provided both factual and very pertinent information. The CLC is grateful to him for all the support he provides to the CLC. The CLC sponsored a book signing with Dr. McMillan. His book Empowered to Serve is the CLC Common Book of Reading.

The Empowerment Luncheon followed with Dr. Sheila Quintana, CLC Executive Board Member, presiding. Music was provided by Mr. Shipps Washington. Mr. Ervin Reid, CLC Executive Board led the opening prayer. Mrs. Rose Stokes, CLC Executive Board gave the occasion. A presentation in dance was provided by Reverend Damita Wilder (Blue Ridge Conference). Mrs. Rynette Nixon (CLC Regional Director, Western Episcopal District) introduced the speaker. “Great is Thy Faithfulness” was the solo selection by Reverend Patricia Gainer (Blue Ridge Conference). The Third Vice Chair of the Board of Lay Activities, Ms. Lynda Byrd served as the speaker for the Empowerment Luncheon. Her message to the attendees was very inspiring.

Dr. Sheila Quintana, Western Episcopal District Luncheon Sponsor Representative gave an overview of the Mental Health Awareness Initiative (MHAI).



A special thanks to Bishop Staccato Powell, Presiding Prelate of the Western Episcopal District, Ms. S. Nicole Powell, Missionary Supervisor and the Western Episcopal District for the sponsorship of the CLC Empowerment Luncheon. We are grateful to the W.E.D. WH&OMS for sharing the Mental Health Awareness Initiative (MHAI) with the CLC and thanks to Dr. Sheila Quintana for representing the MHAI on behalf of the Western Episcopal District.

Community Outreach Project – A HUGE SUCCESS! Thank You to all the Episcopal Districts for the outpouring of love shown in the way of the Blessing Bags. **370 Blessing Bags** were donated to the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry. Kudos to every individual, every church, district, and conference that supported the CLC Community Outreach Project. A special thanks to the Reverend M. Luther Hill for transporting the bags to the SVCM. Also, Big Thanks to Dorothy Gill Smith, Host Regional Director and Queen DeGraphenreid, CLC Community Outreach Coordinator for spearheading this ministry!

Ms. Queen DeGraphenreid, CLC International President, Dr. Mary Matthews, Mrs. Dorothy Gill Smith and Ms. Hazeline Smith, presented 370 (final count) Blessing Bags to Ms. Renee Weaver of the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry (Women’s Homeless Shelter). Thanks to everyone for your donation (\$120.00).

PED	215
SAED	22
NED	22
MWED	37
ENC ED	24
WED	38
EWA ED	12
TOTAL	370



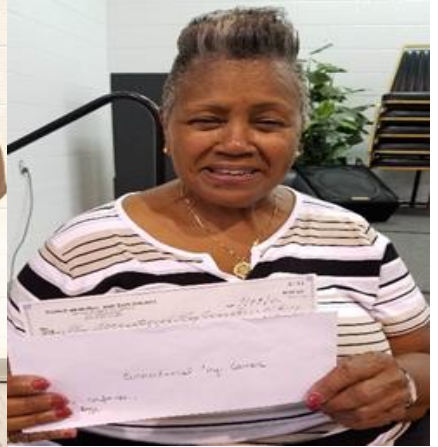
The Reverend Dr. Kenneth Q. James’ (Pastor, Walls Memorial AME Zion Church, PED) Lay Academy presentation was entitled “Laity and Clergy Serving Together.” Information provided enlightened the participants on what the New Testament church would look like from Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians and Hebrews.

Mr. Jon Rankin, CLC musician closed out the CLC Evangelistic Retreat. We thank God for His many blessings during the Retreat. We are grateful for all those who were blessed to come and pray you received a blessing at the Retreat. We are much appreciative to all the presenters and speakers for the wealth of information shared through the presentations and messages. The Evangelistic Retreat Presenter's information may be found on the CLC website: www.ConnectionalLayCouncil.org. Pictures may be viewed on FB/Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center.



Blessing Bags came from the North, South, East and West!





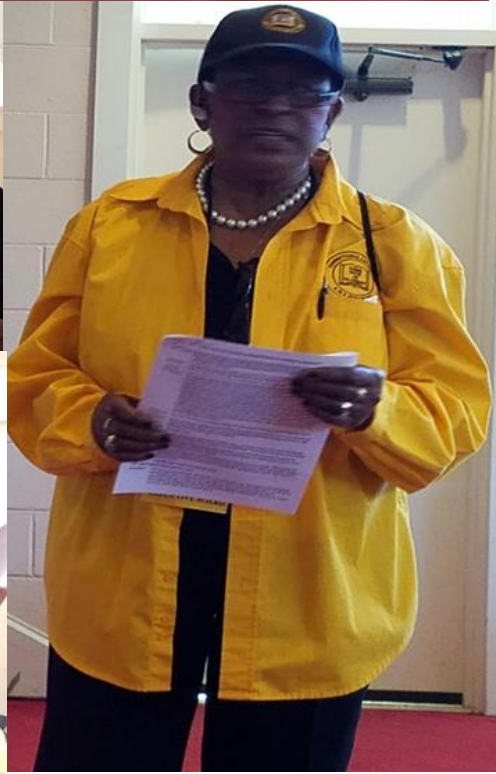
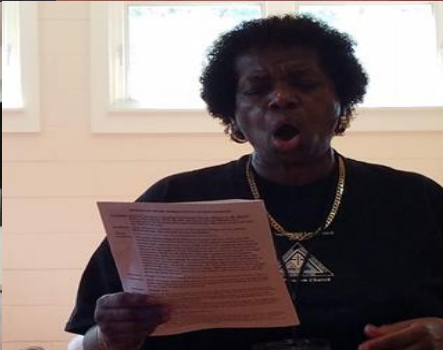






CLC/YA Café Hour
Kudos to the
Connectional Lay
Council/ Young Adults for
bringing us together for
an engaging hour as laity!
Thanks to Mrs. Dottie
Stevens and the Planning
Team!







Our presenters left us feeling
"Equipped and Empowered to Serve"



The Connectional Lay Council worshipped at Hopkins Chapel AME Zion Church, Asheville, NC, The Reverend Herbert Grant, Pastor and Presiding Elder of the Hendersonville District, Piedmont Episcopal District.



Connectional Lay Sunday Offerings

CHURCH	AMOUNT		EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
Ardis Chapel	\$ 100.00	1940 Old Mocksville Rd, Salisbury, NC 28144	Piedmont
Soldiers Memorial	\$ 326.00	306 N. Church Street, Salisbury, NC 28144	Piedmont
New Hope	\$ 64.00	P.O. Box 274, Spencer, NC 28159	Piedmont
Moores Chapel	\$ 225.00	P.O. Box 545, Salisbury, NC 28145	Piedmont
Winston-Salem District	\$ 400.00	3900 Bridal Crossing Ct, Winston-Salem, NC 27106	Piedmont
Hopkins Chapel	\$ 325.00	P. O. Box 7424, Asheville, NC 28802	Piedmont
St. Stephens	\$ 500.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Trinity/Unity	\$ 50.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
St. Peters	\$ 60.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Neely's Grove	\$ 25.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Vestibule	\$ 100.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Rudisill Chapel	\$ 25.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Oak Grove	\$ 15.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Greater Moore's Chapel	\$ 50.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Mt. Zion	\$ 20.00	Lincolnton District, P.O. Box 480416, Charlotte, NC	Piedmont
Marvin	\$ 800.00	1525 Crane Rd, Waxhaw, NC 28173	Piedmont
Little Rock	\$ 1,000.00	401 N McDowell St., Charlotte, NC 28204	Piedmont
	\$ 4,085.00		
Long Leaf	\$ 91.00	316 Dan Rd, Robbins, NC 27325	Eastern NC
St. Thomas	\$ 100.00	810 Bullard St, Roseboro, NC 28382	Eastern NC
Goldsboro District Lay Council	\$ 100.00	502 W Bay Street, Warsaw, NC 28398	Eastern NC
St. Mark	\$ 88.20	531 S Roxboro St., Durham, NC 27701	Eastern NC
Dr. W. E. Baird	\$ 15.00	531 S Roxboro St., Durham, NC 27701	Eastern NC
Sylvia Cotton	\$ 10.00	531 S Roxboro St., Durham, NC 27701	Eastern NC
Willoree Perry	\$ 20.00	531 S Roxboro St., Durham, NC 27701	Eastern NC
Phillip Washington	\$ 5.00	531 S Roxboro St., Durham, NC 27701	Eastern NC
John McNeil, Jr.	\$ 10.00	5 Rock Cottage Ct, Durham, NC 27707	Eastern NC
Thomascena L. LeGrand	\$ 100.00	5316 Partridge St., Durham, NC 27704	Eastern NC
Charles E. LeGrand	\$ 100.00	5316 Partridge St., Durham, NC 27704	Eastern NC
Jesse W. Wilcher	\$ 20.00	5 Rock Cottage Ct, Durham, NC 27707	Eastern NC
Dorann R. Turner	\$ 25.00	300 Meredith Dr, Durham, NC 27713	Eastern NC
Wallace Darden	\$ 10.00	2 Shelly Pl, Durham, NC 27707	Eastern NC
Alice H. Harrington	\$ 5.00	511 Orindo Dr, Durham, NC 27713	Eastern NC
Zion Temple	\$ 25.00	5505 Adams Creek Rd, Havelock, NC 28532	Eastern NC
Norrington	\$ 120.00	P. O. Box 1781, Lillington, NC 27546	Eastern NC
St. John	\$ 71.00	1204 Woodland Dr, Fayetteville, NC 28305	Eastern NC
Hoods Chapel	\$ 25.00	335 Bruton St, Biscoe, NC 27209	Eastern NC
St. Julia	\$ 250.00	112 Kerr St, Jacksonville, NC 28541	Eastern NC
The Kesler Temple	\$ 152.00	430 E Winder St, Henderson, NC 27536	Eastern NC
Union Grove	\$ 100.00	P. O. Box 1565, Pittsboro, NC 27312	Eastern NC
Pleasant Hill	\$ 102.00	951 Hwy 55W, New Bern, NC 28562	Eastern NC
Trinity Chapel	\$ 50.00	1208 Broad St., New Bern, NC 28560	Eastern NC
Mt. Zion - Clarkton District	\$ 100.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Mt. Olive - Clarkton District	\$ 100.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC

Mt. Pleasant (A) - Clarkton District	\$ 200.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Graham Chapel - Clarkton District	\$ 200.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Rehobeth - Clarkton District	\$ 75.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
St. Luke - Clarkton District	\$ 25.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Greater Chrysolite - Clarkton District	\$ 70.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Pierce Chapel - Clarkton District	\$ 25.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Bakers Creek - Clarkton District	\$ 200.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Carvers Creek - Clarkton District	\$ 50.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Browns Creek - Clarkton District	\$ 100.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Shady Grove - Clarkton District	\$ 100.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Trinity - Clarkton District	\$ 50.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
St. James - Clarkton District	\$ 30.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Rose Hill - Clarkton District	\$ 30.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Savannah Temple - Clarkton District	\$ 50.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Providence - Clarkton District	\$ 73.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Cromartie Hill - Clarkton District	\$ 50.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
New Zion - Clarkton District	\$ 25.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
Mt. Hebron - Clarkton District	\$ 25.00	P. O. Box 1256, Elizabethtown, NC 28337	Eastern NC
St. John	\$ 50.00	1101 Highway 158E, Sunbury, NC 27979	Eastern NC
Mt. Olive	\$ 25.00	1377 Asbury Church Rd, Washington, NC 27889	Eastern NC
Norrington	\$ 20.00	P. O. Box 1781, Lillington, NC 27546	Eastern NC
	\$ 3,267.20		
Mt. Zion	\$ 100.00	1746 S. 37th St., Kansas City, KS 66106	Mid-West
Martin Temple	\$ 400.00	6930 S. Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	Mid-West
Wallace Temple	\$ 50.00	1518 Forkner St, Anderson, IN 46016	Mid-West
Young's Memorial	\$ 125.00	1083 Old A.J. Hwy, New Market, TN 37820	Mid-West
Samuel Brown Temple	\$ 100.00	4400 Kennerly Ave, St. Louis, MO 63113	Mid-West
Hilliard Chapel	\$ 100.00	1900 Greenleaf Ct, SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508	Mid-West
Jones Memorial	\$ 100.00	258 Ealy Street, New Albany, IN 47150	Mid-West
St. Peters	\$ 26.00	5149 Elmwood Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130	Mid-West
St. Mark	\$ 50.00	1803 Shelby St, Indianapolis, IN 46203	Mid-West
Janet J. Evelyn	\$ 50.00	6448 Armstrong Dr, South Bend, IN 46614	Mid-West
First AME Zion - Livingston	\$ 100.00	1900 McCalla Ave, Knoxville, TN 37915	Mid-West
St. Paul	\$ 100.00	4000 S Minnie S., Kansas City, KS 66103	Mid-West
Memphis Pope District	\$ 25.00	917 Mississippi Blvd, Memphis, TN 38126	Mid-West
Warner Temple	\$ 116.00	917 Mississippi Blvd, Memphis, TN 38126	Mid-West
Greater Walters	\$ 300.00	8422 S Damen Ave, Chicago, IL 60620	Mid-West
	\$ 1,742.00		
Brownsville	\$ 103.00	1593 E New York Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11212	Northeastern
Price Memorial	\$ 87.00	525 Atlantic Ave, Atlantic City, NJ 08401	Northeastern
Shrewsbury Avenue	\$ 500.00	285 Shrewsbury Ave, Red Bank, NJ 07701	Northeastern
Sojourner Truth Memorial	\$ 50.00	199 09 116 Avenue, St. Albans, NY 11412	Northeastern
Shaw Temple	\$ 147.00	471 Albany Ave, Amityville, NY 11701	Northeastern
Adriane Gaines-Curry	\$ 25.00	57 Parkway Blvd, Wyandanch, NY 11798	Northeastern
Lakeville	\$ 50.00	467 Community Dr, Manhasset, NY 11030	Northeastern

Doris Goggans	\$ 20.00	168-20 127th Ave, Apt 13F, Jamaica, NY 11434	Northeastern
Evans Memorial	\$ 80.00	2 McKinley Ave, Norwich, CT 06360	Northeastern
Westbury	\$ 100.00	274 Grand Blvd, Westbury, NY 11590	Northeastern
St. Mary	\$ 108.00	537 Granny Rd, Medford, NY 11763	Northeastern
Judith F. Clark	\$ 10.00	49 Beach Ln, Goram, NY 11727	Northeastern
Yvonne M. Rivers	\$ 50.00	123 Seymour Ln, Medford, NY 11763	Northeastern
State Street	\$ 20.00	201 State St, Hudson, NY 12534	Northeastern
St. John	\$ 166.00	103 East Ave, Middletown, NY 10940	Northeastern
St. Luke	\$ 80.00	31 E Ferry St, Buffalo, NY 14208	Northeastern
Delores Chandler/St. Luke	\$ 20.00	106 Cambridge Ave, Buffalo, NY 14215	Northeastern
Foster Memorial	\$ 150.00	90 Wildey St., Tarrytown, NY 10591	Northeastern
Ruth	\$ 15.00	95 W Connelly Blvd, Sharon, PA 16146	Northeastern
NJ Annual Conf Lay Council	\$ 400.00	123 Apple St., Tinton Falls, NJ 07724	Northeastern
Clinton Memorial	\$ 100.00	614 Third Street, Greenport, NY 11944	Northeastern
	\$ 2,281.00		
Clinton Chapel	\$ 50.00	475 Cook St., Sumter, SC 29150	SAED
Good Hope	\$ 45.00	967 Gaomes Cjircj Rd. Camden. SC 29020	SAED
Paradise	\$ 50.00	106 Dearborn St, Great Falls, SC 29055	SAED
Pleasant Grove	\$ 42.00	P.O. Box 134, Great Falls, SC 29065	SAED
Jones Memorial	\$ 200.00	1819 Ivanhoe Dr, Columbia, SC 29210	SAED
New Life	\$ 174.00	3300 Roosevelt Hwy, College Pk, GA 30349	SAED
	\$ 561.00		
First AME Zion - Livingston	\$ 50.00	12809 James River Road, Lovingson, VA 22949	Mid-Atlantic
Zion Chester	\$ 200.00	12541 Branders Bridge Rd, Chester, VA 23831	Mid-Atlantic
Eastern Shore District	\$ 250.00	P. O. Box 4161, Salisbury, MD 21803	Mid-Atlantic
St. Mark	\$ 400.00	9208 Daly Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45231	Mid-Atlantic
Price Memorial	\$ 71.00	506 15st NW, Roanoke, VA 24017	Mid-Atlantic
St. Paul	\$ 100.00	958 Belmont Ave, Toledo, OH 43607	Mid-Atlantic
Metropolitan	\$ 350.00	140 Belmont Ave, Jersey City, NJ 07304	Mid-Atlantic
St. James	\$ 100.00	209 2nd St, SW, Massillon, OH 44646	Mid-Atlantic
Greater Faith	\$ 75.00	1301 Youngs Rd, Petersburg, VA 23803	Mid-Atlantic
Wesley Chapel	\$ 100.00	786 Doe Street, Danville, VA 24541	Mid-Atlantic
St. Stephens	\$ 233.15	P. O. Box 109, Asbury Park, NJ 07712	Mid-Atlantic
Union Wesley	\$ 500.00	1860 Michigan Ave, NE, Washington, DC 20018	Mid-Atlantic
First Agape	\$ 78.00	P. O. Box 1016, Burtonsville, MD 20866	Mid-Atlantic
	\$ 2,507.15		
Asbury Chapel	\$ 151.00	P.O. Box 44, Pascagoula, MS 38568	Alabama-Florida
Greater Mt. Olive	\$ 38.00	P.O. Box 521, Haynesville, AL 36040	Alabama-Florida
Poplar Springs	\$ 20.00	4675 Ridge Rd, Greenville, AL 36037	Alabama-Florida
Hood Temple	\$ 65.00	3608 N 26th St., Tampa, FL 33605	Alabama-Florida
Felicia L. Jones	\$ 5.00	9539 Newdale Way, Apt 201, Riverview, FL 33578	Alabama-Florida
St. Luke	\$ 113.00	3937 12th Ave, North, Birmingham, AL 35234	Alabama-Florida
Jefferson District Lay Council	\$ 250.00	402 S. Desounettes Ave, Demopolis, AL 36732	Alabama-Florida
	\$ 642.00		

Speaks Temple	\$ 45.75	P.O. Box 1599, Bellevue, NE 68005	SW Delta
Mt. Zion	\$ 25.00	2222 6th St., Clarksdale, MS 38614	SW Delta
Outland Memorial A. M.E. Zion	\$ 200.00	601 Kentucky Ave, Ft. Worth, TX 76104	SW Delta
New Beginnings	\$ 100.00	P. O. Box 925, Oklahoma City, OK 73101	SW Delta
Eureka	\$ 25.00	917 Mississippi Blvd, Memphis, TN 38126	SW Delta
	\$ 395.75		
Leake Temple	\$ 469.00	430 N Hoyt Street, Anchorage, AK 99508	Western
Kyles Temple	\$ 344.00	2940 42nd Street, Sacramento, CA 95817	Western
St. James Temple	\$ 34.70	965 Farmers Loop Rd, Fairbanks, AK 99712	Western
Kyles Temple - Vallejo, CA	\$ 250.00	912 Florida Street, Vallejo, CA 94590	Western
St. James	\$ 168.00	825 Mt. Diablo, San Mateo, CA 94401	Western
	\$ 1,265.70		
Dr. Mary J. Matthews	\$ 100.00		Central Southern Africa
Dr. Mary J. Matthews	\$ 100.00		Western West Africa
Dr. Mary J. Matthews	\$ 100.00		Eastern West Africa
As of 12/12/18	\$ 17,046.80		

**Let Everyone Give, No Offering is too small "God Multiplies" - Read John 6:1-14
Taking Livingstone Higher! How High can we go "Beyond \$25,000"?
The Answer is in Your Hands, GIVE!**



Be the Difference Maker - **GIVE**- Support Livingstone College Students

All churches are asked to be supportive 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.**



The Connection Newsletter Information

The main thrust of “The Connection” newsletter remains to help publicize and promote the Lay Council programs throughout the denomination. Many informative and exciting events are taking place and we want to share them with all of Zion.

The Connection would like to receive articles from you about what the local Church, Presiding Elder District, Annual Conference or Episcopal District Lay Councils are doing or plan to do. The newsletter is published during the month of **March, June, September** and **December**. Email all articles to Joseph King Davis, Jr., Editor at: clckdj1911@frontier.com.

Deadlines for submitting articles are:

February 15th

May 15th

August 15th

November 15th

If you are sending photos please make sure you identify the key persons (district, conference, regional officers, presiding elders, pastor etc.) in the photos.

“Come with us to Christ!”



“Rejoice, the Lord is King!

**May the Christ of Christmas bring joy to your heart and
peace to your souls.”**

***Wishing you the gift of faith, the blessing of hope and the peace of His joy at
Christmas and always.***

Joseph King Davis, Jr., *Editor*, THE CONNECTION