



THE CONNECTION



RHANDI M. STITH, EDITOR

"FORTIFYING OUR FAITH WHILE FOCUSING ON OUR FUTURE THROUGH: WORSHIP, LEADERSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND STEWARDSHIP"



2nd President
Mr. Arthur E. Brooks
Served 1964-1976



1st President
Dr. Victor J. Tulane
Served 1952-1964



3rd President
Dr. Betty V. Stith
Served 1976 - 1985



4th President
Dr. C. DuPont Rippy
Served 1985-1989



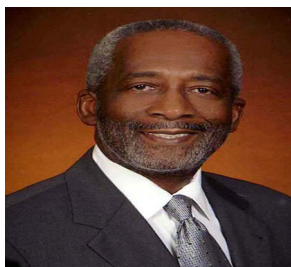
5th President
Mr. James E. Hewitt
Served 1989-1993



6th President
Mrs. Mary E. Taylor
Served 1993 - 1997



7th President
Mrs. Lula K. Howard
Served 1997 - 2001



8th President
Mr. David Aiken
Served 2001 - 2009

10th President
Ms.. Mary J. Matthews
Served 2013 - Present



9th President
Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey
Served 2009 - 2013

Name That President

1. I supervised the combining of the Constitution and Bylaws into the Bylaws.
2. I was born in Montgomery, Alabama.
3. I served the Connectional Lay Council as Secretary, Vice President and then President.
4. I served as Chairperson of the Trustee Board and Superintendent of Sunday School.
5. Established the R.C. Rochon Church Music Academy to engage Young Adults and Youth in CLC ministries
6. I administered the following initiatives publishing of "The Connection," a quarterly newsletter; a Book of Worship prepared by the Chaplain and published "The Handbook of Administrative Practices."
7. I served as Chairperson of the Legislation Committee for the Connectional Lay Council.
8. I am a Charter Member of the Judicial Council of the A. M. E. Zion Church.
9. I served as recording secretary for the Eastern North Carolina Regional Lay Council for 24 consecutive years.
10. I was elected by the Board of Bishops to represent the laity of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church at the meeting of the World Council of Churches in Upsala, Sweden.
11. I was born in Petersburg, Virginia.
12. I am a lifelong member of the Norrington AME Zion Church.
13. I received the E. Franklin Jackson Association Award from the International Ministers and Lay Association.
14. I was a member of St. Frances and St. Catherine AME Zion Churches.
15. During my administration legislation for Lay Council Reports to Annual and District Conferences was passed.
16. Published "Equipping the Laity" - Compiled by the Historian, Rosa Alexander, Edited by Rhandi M. Stith. A chronology of the history of the Connectional Lay Council focused on significant accomplishments of its General Presidents, members of the Executive Board, award recipients and time line of major events.
17. I served as the operating Field Officer of History and Literature for the Sesquicentennial of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.
18. I initiated the first \$25,000.00 gift towards establishment of Endowed Student Scholarships at Hood Theological Seminary.
19. I established Episcopal Vice Presidents
20. I wrote and published a handbook called "Seek Out, Recall, Reclaim" for Lay Councils to use.
21. I supervised the Lay Council "Bridged the Gap" by joining in partnerships with the Department of Brotherhood Pensions and Ministerial Relief to promote and seek subscriptions to the Vision Magazine.
22. I was a member of the Board of Trustees of Livingstone College
23. Initiated and published "The Program Guide to Equip Zion's Laity for Ministry through Lay Academies"
24. During my tenure a CLC Mission Statement was developed.
25. I was a Sunday School Superintendent for over 25 years.
26. During my tenure the CLC established and gave \$50,000.00 to The Harriet Tubman Grounds Beautification Project to celebrate the AME Zion Church's Bicentennial.
27. I was appointed to serve as assistant secretary of the Connectional Lay Council in 1997.
28. I was a member of Little Rock AME Zion Church for 48 years
29. I supported expansion of international organized Lay Councils in the Bahamas Islands and the South African Country of Angola.
30. I held the first Connectional meeting on a Zion property.
31. My ministry in working with the Lay Council started in the late 1970's when I was elected as the local Lay Council secretary
32. I was a member of Union Wesley AME Zion Church.
33. I have a Memorial Park at Varick's Renaissance Complex named after me.
34. During my administration the Young Adult Initiative (Y.A.I.) was implemented.
35. I established the Quadrennial Lay Convention, Lay Convocation and the position of Regional Directors.
36. I taught at Howard University.
37. I was a Regional Director and 2nd Vice President before I became President.
38. I implemented Common Books of Reading with evangelism themes and information to enhance the ministry and partnership with the Department of Evangelism
39. I acquired the central office for the CLC in The AME Zion Corporate Headquarters Building.
40. I established the first Lay Evangelistic Convocation.

A Word From Our President

From the President's Desk

Greetings:

I hope that you were blessed with new and improved leadership skills during the past year as we considered strategies for "Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on Our Future Through Leadership."

On August 1, 2015, our attention, focus and study moved to Discipleship, the third component of the Connectional Lay Council's quadrennial theme. During the next year as we take an in depth look at the discipleship component, I petition all persons serving as class leaders to enthusiastically embrace discipling the members in their class. Let us use the vehicle that the AME Zion Church has in place for fortifying the faith of our membership and thereby assuring the growth of the church.

The coming months hold much for us as lay leaders in Zion. Lay Sunday is right around the corner. In this edition of The Connection newsletter, I have included the suggested Lay Sunday Worship Service template, Responsive Reading, Laity Dedication Litany, scriptures, hymns, and the Lay Sunday Offering appeal.

The General Conference Legislation and Summit Meeting scheduled for November 18-20, 2015, is a work-session meeting and not a teaching-training seminar, so come prepared to help develop resolutions through serving on one of the committees. In order to honor your request for the Legislative Summit Committee of your choice, you need to sign up for the Convocation using both the Registration Form and Legislative Committee Sign-up sheet. Please complete them and follow the directions on each form as to where each should be sent.

Anticipating the Connectional Lay Convocation, excitement is in the air. We are moving full speed ahead to prepare a very informative forum for everyone, especially the General Conference clergy and lay delegates as well as all the alternate delegates. I am sure that the Convocation will be very beneficial to persons elected to serve during the 50th Quadrennial Session of the AME Zion Church. We are keeping the registration affordable by leaving it the same as it was during the last Quadrennium. With the help of Ms. Elvira Faulkner-McLwain, Convocation Chair, Regional Directors, Presiding Elders and our Bishops, we hope to get all of our delegates and alternates registered and ready to take advantage of all that will be offered during the Lay Convocation.

As always, I thank each of you for your support of the Lay Council ministry. God's blessings as you seek to do His will in ministry.

Sincerely,
Mary J. Matthews
Lay Council General President



President Matthews

Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on Our Future through Discipleship

by Joyce Marsh Perry Edwards, Ph.D., Chair
Education Committee, Connectional Lay Council

Our subtheme for the third year in the CLC's quadrennium urges us to meditate on the power of discipleship. That discipleship is central in the Christian faith is readily apparent from even the most cursory study of the Bible. Some of our earliest Biblical lessons in childhood focused on Jesus and his disciples.

The Elements of Christian Discipleship

We know that a disciple is "a convinced adherent of a school or an individual... [one] who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another." (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary) Thus when we say we are Christ's disciples, we are claiming to be convinced, committed, eager to learn, and willing to share the doctrines of Jesus the Christ. Remembering Jesus words in John 6: 29, we continually work on believing in the Christ whom Jesus sent for our salvation and the salvation of the whole world. ("This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.") In other words, are convinced that Jesus Christ is Lord and that Jesus was the manifestation of God in the flesh. Our conviction of this truth is prerequisite to commitment. Commitment connotes that our service is an everyday thing; it is consistent and does not waver.

When we are committed, we are intent on following God's commandments. We all know the Ten Commandments, but Jesus distilled them into two:

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Matthew 12:28-31 NRSV

A disciple is not only committed to following the leader's commandments, a disciple wants to learn as much as s/he can about the teacher's instructions. A Christian disciple is eager to learn what Jesus taught. We seek opportunities to learn and understand the Scriptures. A Christian disciple does not pass up the opportunity for Bible study, for Sunday School, or other opportunities to learn God's word. A disciple of Christ

is committed to personal study. A disciple consults Biblical commentaries and meditates regularly on the Scripture.

Lastly, a Christian disciple is willing to share with others, not just material wealth, but also time, talents, and spiritual gifts. Most importantly, we are willing to share the love of God and the gospel of Christ with others. When we commit to endeavors that are not thrust upon us and which do not enhance our own comfort, but in which we willingly engage in order to advance the kingdom of God, we are following Jesus' admonition to those who would be his disciples: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." Luke 9:23 NRSV [emphasis added]

Fortifying Our Faith through Discipleship

Our theme instructs discipleship has the effect of strengthening our faith. The relationship is this: if one is committed to following God's commandments and endeavors to do so consistently, then our faith will be strengthened. Endeavoring to follow the commandments helps our faith in Jesus to increase (fortify) as we become witnesses to God's saving grace. We experience the redemptive love of God more and more each day. Thus, faithful Christian discipleship fortifies our faith in Jesus.

Perhaps an easy way to remember this principle is to remember the words of Poet Laureate Robert Frost: "way leads on to way." In other words, the more one is committed to demonstrating discipleship, the more one's faith is fortified. Conversely, if one does not endeavor to follow the tenants of the Christian faith but goes on in his/her own way, then one's faith will weaken.

Focusing on Our Future through Discipleship

The disciples of Christ are required to share their faith. Jesus explicitly told his disciples to go into all the world to make disciples. This commandment found in Matthew 28:19 and again in Mark 16:15 provides us a definitive statement of very mission of the Christian Church. The Great Commission clearly requires all who claim to be Jesus' disciples to accept spreading the gospel of Jesus as one of his/her primary responsibility in life.

Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on Our Future Through: Discipleship

Helpful Hints: Topics, Scriptures, and Music

Make and extra effort to invite others to “Come with Us to Christ” on Connectional Lay Sunday.

12 MESSAGE TOPICS

As You Go, Make Disciples - The Cost of Discipleship - Christ-Centered Discipleship - True Discipleship - The Call of Discipleship - Becoming a Disciple of Jesus - Demands of Discipleship - The Making of a Disciple - Following In Jesus Footsteps - Disciple-Making - Attributes of Discipleship - Biblical Portrait of A True Disciple

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 28:18-20 – Matthew 5:14-16 – II Timothy 2:2 - Ephesians 4:11-17 – John 15:11-17 – Galatians 6:6 – John 13:34-35

HYMNS

Just As I am - Stand Up-, Stand Up for Jesus - Am I A Soldier Of The Cross - Abide With Me - Where He Leads Me I Will Follow - I Surrender All - Come, Ye Disconsolate – Praise Him Praise Him - Savior More Than Life To Me – What A Friend We Have In Jesus – Throw Out the Lifeline – O Master Let Me Walk With Thee – A Charge To Keep I Have – Near The Cross – Be Still My Soul

SPIRITUALS

Go Down Moses – I Want To Be Ready – Give Me Jesus – Jacob’s Ladder - Ain’t That Good News – Steal Away – Stand By Me – Give Me Jesus – Every time I Feel The Spirit – Lord I Want To Be A Christian - I Want Jesus to Walk With Me – I Couldn’t Hear Nobody Pray – Didn’t My Lord Deliver Daniel – Git On Board ‘Lil Children – Done Made My Vow – I Want To Be More Like Jesus

ANTHEMS

God So Loved the World – Give Me A Clean Heart – Total Praise - - On My Journey Home, Mt. Zion - God of Grace and God Of Glory – Gloria In Excelsis Deo – Worthy Is The Lamb – The Lord’s Prayer – No Greater Love

GOSPEL

Lord, Keep Me Day By Day – Come and Go With Me to that Land – Somebody Prayed For Me – Order My Steps – Precious Lord – Woke Up This Morning With My Mind Stayed On Jesus – I Really Love The Lord – There’s A Lily In The Valley - I’m On The Battlefield – Come and Go To That Land – Amen _Great Is Thy Faithfulness – Why Not Do It Today? – Jesus Is The Answer – Alleluia – Watch Ye Therefore – I am Not Afraid of the Gospel

CONTEMPORARY GOSPEL

He Saw The Best In Me – Lord Prepare Me To Be A Sanctuary - I Love The Lord – He Did It Just For Me –How Great Is Our God – I Can Only Imagine – My Joy – I’ve Been Redeemed – Jesus, You’re The Center Of My Joy – I Feel Like Going On – It’s Your Decision – Rivers of Joy – For God So Loved The World - Tomorrow

Celebrating Connectional Lay Sunday*

**AME Zion Church Founders' Day
(Suggested Order of Service for Connectional Lay Sunday)**

"Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on Our Future Through: Discipleship

CONNECTIONAL LAY SUNDAY *

October 18, 2015

"Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on Our Future Through: Leadership

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Organ Prelude

Procession Hymn

Call to Worship

"Marching To Zion"

Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD. May the LORD who made heaven and earth bless you from Zion.

Invocation

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires know, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Christ the Lord. O God, be present with us today, dwelling within our hearts. To you, O God, we lift up our souls. To you we offer our praise and prayer, our worship and thanksgiving, even our very lives. Make your ways known to us. Show us the path on which we should walk. Lead us in your truth and teach us. For you alone are the God who saves, the God in whom we trust; and the One on whom we wait. In Jesus name we pray! Amen.

Choral Response

Hymn of Praise

Responsive Reading

Gloria Patri

The Apostles' Creed or Affirmation for Laity

Scripture Lesson

Prayer

Choral Selection

Ministry of Kindness Offering/Offertory

Announcements

Introduction of Lay Sunday Speaker

Hymn or Gospel Song

Lay Sunday Message

Invitation to Christian Discipleship

Altar Prayer/Rededication of Laity

Appeal

Offerings/Offertory

Recessional Hymn

Benediction

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

(John 8:31-32)

(A Minister or an A.M.E. Zion Lay Person)

Litany for Rededication of Laity Lay Sunday Offering**

(Read the General Presidents Offering Appeal)

(Tithes & Regular Offering and Special Lay Sunday Offering)***

"Onward Christian Laity"

(Or the Lay Council Closing Prayer)

* According to the A.M.E. Zion Church Book of Discipline the third Sunday in October shall be known as Connectional Lay Sunday

** The entire congregation is asked to join in.

*** Each local Lay Council is asked to receive a congregational special offering and mail to:
Connectional Lay Council, Attention: 2014 Appeal, Post Office Box 26770 Charlotte, NC 28221

Responsive Reading

Jesus, the True Vine

John 15:1-14 NIV

Lay Leader: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

People: He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

Lay Leader: You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

People: Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

Lay Leader: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

People: If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Lay Leader: If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

People: This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Lay Leader: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

People: If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.

Lay Leader: I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

People: My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

All: Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.

Laity Rededication Litany

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.

People: By deepening our Spiritual Life.

Lay Leader: As Laity of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, we REDEDICATE OURSELVES to disseminate information.

People: 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.

People: 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.

People: 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.

People: 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.

2015 Connectional Lay Sunday

Offering Appeal

Let's get ready to celebrate Lay Sunday on October 18, 2015! Show your true colors on Lay Sunday by dressing in black and gold. This observance is so significant for all laity in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church for spiritual, historical, and financial reasons.

Lay Sunday reminds us that the heart of our Zion is the laity. We are led by our committed clergy, but the mission of our beloved Zion must be supported and sustained by the laity.

The third Sunday in October is the anniversary celebration of the AME Zion Church's Connectional Lay Council when we remember the contributions of those who actuated and continued the legacy of coordinated lay leadership in Zion. To highlight the role of laity, in many of our churches, youth, young adult, and adult laity are given the privilege of planning and leading worship. Although in some churches Lay Sunday is observed on another day, the celebration is nonetheless special.

Each year, The Connectional Lay Council looks forward to the financial blessings that are received after Lay Sunday. Because of the contributions we receive from the local churches, the Connectional Lay Council has been enabled to help fund many causes. This year, think "mountain-top experience." All offerings received will be donated to the Camp Dorothy Walls Conference & Retreat Center to help liquidate the mortgage on this property. Since 1958, the Camp Dorothy Walls Conference & Retreat Center has been developed, supported, and managed by the Piedmont Episcopal District. This state-of-the-art complex located in Black Mountain, North Carolina, has hosted many events, including many connectional wide gatherings.

Our financial goal for the 2015 Connectional Lay Sunday is not less than \$25,000 while reaching upward beyond \$50,000. To help reach the goal, we ask that all churches receive a special offering on Connectional Lay Sunday and send it to the Connectional Lay Council, PO Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221. Each church's contribution will be individually acknowledged in The Connection newsletter and in the Star of Zion.

Back Then

CAMP DOROTHY WALLS

Now



DISCIPLESHIP

[Following and Putting On Jesus]

by Patricia Lewis President, Cleveland District Lay Council

As Christian disciples we are to be
true followers of Jesus Christ.
He suffered and died on the cross for us—
our redemption—that can't be priced.

Accepting and spreading the Gospel truth
of Jesus—the Good News,
is what the Great Commission is
and as such we can't refuse.

The suffix 'ship' denotes condition,
character, and state.
Lifting up Jesus to the unsaved
is something that dares not wait.

Following our Savior comes with a price.
There is suffering along the way.
Disciplining is an action word;
cross-bearing each and every day.

Our discipleship, requires us to act;
and from our huddles we must break.
With knowledge and understanding of the Word—
We are to go and disciples make!

Discipleship is a continual process
of committed and dedicated growth.
Growing in following and putting on Christ—
for disciples and converts—for both.

Death to self—and reproduction—
are essentials of follow-ship.
They'll know we're Christians by our love—
acts of service go beyond the lip.

Jesus said to be His disciple
our life in this world must be lost.
Putting Christ first, abiding in Him;
Fruit-bearing, regardless of cost.

Love for our neighbor and each other;
sharing the Gospel in jubilation.
Going forth in the pow'r of Jesus' name—
we can spread it to every nation.

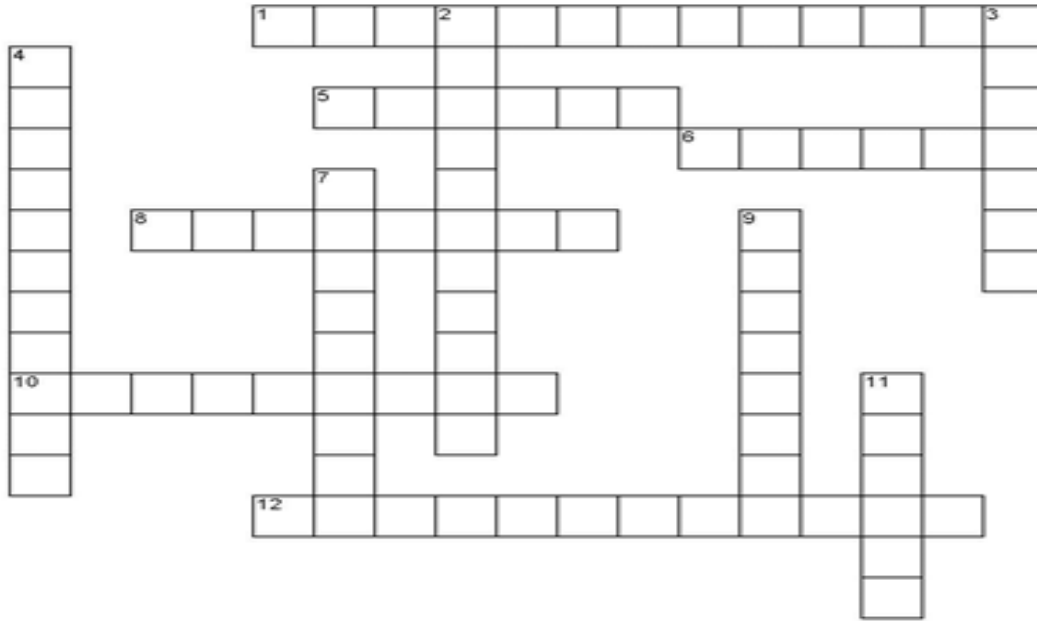
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Penned by Patricia Lewis
July 28, 2015

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The Connectional Lay Council of The A.M.E. Zion Church
The Connection

Discipleship



www.CrosswordWheeler.com

ACROSS

- 1** a model of 4 spiritual disciplines
- 5** the founder of Methodism
- 6** one of the means of grace
- 8** a follower of Jesus
- 10** one of the attributes of Christian disciples
- 12** practices that open the believer to accepting the will and blessings of God (Hint: 3 words)

DOWN

- 2** methods for learning to live holy
- 3** a basic disposition of a disciple of Christ (Hint: begins with the letter L)
- 4** churches that accept the essence of the gospel that is found in the doctrine of salvation by faith
- 7** the primary means by which Evangelicals believe we know the will of God
- 9** a synonym for disciple
- 11** the Latin root for both disciple and discipline

See *Discipleship Answers* pg 38

....Name That President *continued from page 1*

- 41. I was Conference Secretary for 33 years
- 42. I was a member of John Wesley and Moore's Chapel AME Zion Churches.
- 43. I initiated the first \$25,000.00 gift towards establishment of Endowed Student Scholarships at Hood Theological Seminary.
- 44. I have served as a member of the Connectional Lay Council Executive Board for the seven teen years.
- 45. I was a Regional Director of Christian Education.
- 46. I served as District and Conference Lay Council President.
- 47. I was a member of First AME Zion Church
- 48. I supervised the development of the website (www.clcamezion.org) with the extensive involvement of the Communications Committee.
- 49. During my administration I traveled to every Episcopal Area promoting the mission and objectives of the CLC.
- 50. I was Chair of the Social Science Department at Johnson C. Smith University.

See *Name That President Answers* pg 37

....Discipleship *continued from page 3*

When this responsibility is accepted, then our direction for focusing on our future is clear: our actions are directed toward making disciples and teaching them the gospel of Jesus the Christ. What a mandate for future-focused thinking! The condition of being a disciple of Christ is by definition a mandate for focusing on the future. If we are committed to focusing on this commission, a victorious future is assured: our churches will continually be replenished with disciples of Christ. For Jesus said, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." (John 12:32)

1. Sometimes people find it difficult to explain what the gospel is in a few words. Perhaps the insight given during a lecture on Christian education by the Chairman of the Board of Lay Activities, Bishop Kenneth Monroe would be instructive to many: the essential message of Jesus the Christ is the message of reconciliation with God (to be in right relationship with God) and reconciliation with all of humankind, reflected Jesus' focus on love. Practically speaking then, a great deal of the time of a disciple of Christ will be spent in worshipping God, to develop and maintain a right relationship with God, and actions that encourage reconciliation among humankind.

FROM THE EDITOR:

We would like to remind you that the main thrust of "The Connection" 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 you. We hope the articles in this Newsletter will inform, and inspire, instruct and guide, encourage and challenge. The Connection would like to receive articles from you about what your local, church, Presiding Elder District, Annual Conference or Episcopal District Lay Council is doing. Don't you want to share with the whole denomination what you are doing or plan to do. The newsletter is published the month of March, June, September and December. Please refer to list below to find the name and e-mail address of the Regional Reporter or Regional Director in your Episcopal area to send your article. Deadlines for articles are February 15th, May 15, August 15th and November 15th. If you are sending photos please make sure you identify the persons in the photos.

"The Connection" Regional Reporters or CLC Regional Director

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WESTERN WEST AFRICA

Regional Director - Martha Scudder marthascudder@gmail.com

EASTERN WEST AFRICA

Regional Director - Patricia Walton Walpat1@gmail.com

2016 Lay Convocation

by Elvira Faulkner-McLlwin, Chairperson



Under the Leadership of Madam President Mary J. Matthews, the Connectional Lay Council of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church has begun the process of developing the Lay Convocation program. The Convocation Steering committee has been meeting via teleconference and had a face to face meeting on July 25 in Orlando, Florida. We are planning Lay Academies, Legislation sessions, Candidates for Bishop forum, General Office Candidate forum, youth young adult sessions and much, much more. Our aim is to produce information for lay and clergy delegates relative to the upcoming General Conference. Our goal is to equip delegates with information that will prepare them for the work of the AME Zion Church General Conference.

The Connectional Lay Council of the AME Zion Church will be sharing important information on what it means to be a delegate to the General Conference. All academies will strengthen participants and provide awareness about the

General conference.

We look forward to all of Zion making the journey to the South Atlanta Episcopal District on March 17-19, 2016; which the Convocation will be held at the Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center, 745 Saluda Street, Rock Hill, SC., the Right Reverend Dr. Kenneth Monroe, is the Host Bishop and Mrs. Glenda Canteen Davis the Host Regional Director.

Mrs. Priscilla Leeper is serving as the registration chairperson. Please join us for the early bird registration which is \$125.00, by January 25, 2016; late (postmarked after January 25, 2016) and On site registration is \$150.00. See page 40 of this issue for the Registration Form. You get the form at the CLC website www.connectionallaycouncil.org

We have two hotels with blocks of rooms ready for you to reserve your room reservation for the Lay Convocation "Starting Now". The first hotel is the Holiday Inn Rock Hill, call 1-877-410-6667 or (803) 323-1900 -- Ask For: South Atlantic - Lay Convocation, Room rate \$92.00 plus 12% tax per night. The second hotel is the Towne Place Suites Rock Hill Marriott, call 1-803-327-0700 -- Ask For: AME Zion CLC Convocation -- Room rate \$114.00 plus tax per night. Transportation will be provided between the hotels and the Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center.

Connectional Lay Convocation The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
March 17-19, 2016
 To be held at the
Kenneth Monroe Transformation Conference Center - Rock Hill SC



Book your room for the Connectional Lay Convocation

Holiday Inn Rock Hill
 503 Galleria Boulevard
 Rock Hill, SC 29730
 Telephone: (803)323-1900 or 1-877-410-6667

Ask For: South Atlantic - Lay Convocation room block
Room rate: \$92.00 plus 12% tax per night
Rate available for: 03/16/16 to 03/20/16

Experience true Southern Hospitality
 Enjoy the Comforts at the Holiday Inn Full Service Hotel in Rock Hill, SC.
 All rooms feature upscale furnishings
 32" flat panel LCD HDTV
 Free Wireless Internet & Work desk
 Microwave & Mini-fridge
 And 100% Non-smoking

Don't Get Left Out!

Free auto Parking
 Hotel does not provide airport shuttle service
Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT)
 Distance: 19.0 MI/30.58 KM NORTH to Hotel
 Exit airport. Turn left on Old Dowd. Turn right at intersection. Turn left at traffic light on Little Rock. Turn left onto 1455 East. Then bear right onto I77 South. Exit 70/Dave Lyle Boulevard. Turn left off exit. Turn left at the second traffic light.

Accepting Reservations Now!
 Reserve Your Room Today.

Connectional Lay Convocation The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
March 17-19, 2016
 To be held at the
Kenneth Monroe Transformation Conference Center - Rock Hill SC



OVERFLOW HOTEL

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Book your room for the Connectional Lay Convocation

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Ask For Room Block: AME Zion CLC Convocation
Room Rate: \$114.00 plus Tax per night
Rate available for: 03/17/16 to 03/20/16
Book by: 02/17/16

Parking
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Airport
Charlotte Douglas International Airport - CLT
 • Hotel direction: 20 miles south of airport
 • This hotel does not provide shuttle service.

Don't Get Left Out!
 Ask for the room block today!



2016 General Conference Legislation and Summit Meeting



How much do you love the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church?
Real Love demands ACTION!

THE CHALLENGE

Yes, real love demands action. No one with sincere love for something or somebody will not allow whatever commands their love to die for lack of nourishment or other life sustaining resources. Let's put this hypothesis in the context of our beloved African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Many of us who are true Zionites profess our love in many tangible ways, through financial resources and service, and ministries, to name a few. But one way that is so often over looked involves the writing of resolutions that can help to enhance our administrative effectiveness; eliminate antiquated laws that place limits on church growth; or does not provide adequate resources, consideration and support for the clergy and the laity.

Many of us are not skilled in writing resolutions that might encompass some of the problems we have a tendency to complain about. As we survey the landscape of the various denominations, the results will show that there is no "perfect" denomination. All stand in need of improvements. Therefore, why not participate in a process that can change the landscape of the AME Zion Church for the better?

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

Let us invest some time and energy in the 2nd quadrennial effort of the International Ministers and Lay Association and the Connectional Lay Council in developing and building collaboration for resolutions that can change the landscape of our church for the positive.

The International Ministers and Lay Association, Rev. Dr. Kevin McGill, President in partnership with the Connectional Lay Council, Ms.. Mary Matthews, President, are planning a two day intensive work session of interested lay and clergy of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church to develop legislation for the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference in Raleigh, NC. The 2016 General Conference Legislation and Summit Meeting is chaired by Rev. Melvin Tate and Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey.

See *Summit Meeting* .pg 21

Save The Date



**2016 General Conference
Legislation and Summit Meeting**
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
November 18-20, 2015
Hilton North Raleigh / Midtown Hotel Raleigh, North Carolina





Rev. Dr. Kevin McGill





President, Mary Matthews

Sponsored by
*The International Ministers and Lay Association
&
The Connectional Lay Council*

Spotlights on CLC Executive Board Members William Manning and Lynda Byrd



William F. Manning, Sr., born November 7, 1950 to the late William Manning and Sarah Manning in Kings Mountain, NC, the third of eight children.

As the newly elected Chaplain for the Connectional Lay Council, I would like to take this time to introduce myself to

those of you who may not have had the opportunity to meet me.

I am a disciple for Christ and I look to the Lord for all guidance in matters of leading others to Christ. I have been tutored by two great men of Zion in the persons of Presiding Elder S.I. Clement and Mr. William Orr. Many lessons were truly learned from these great men who were truly led by God in their Christian lives.

I am a life-long member of The A.M.E. Zion Church. I attended Vestibule A.M.E. Zion Church in Kings Mountain as a child and was active in the Sunday School and Varick Christian Education. I attended school in Kings Mountain, NC at Davidson Elementary, Compact High and Kings Mountain High School.

After attending North Carolina Central University for 2 years, I was drafted in the US Army, having received my basic and advanced training at Fort Jackson, SC and served in Germany and Vietnam as an infantry soldier. Upon returning home I married and had 3 children. I have three grandchildren whom I spend as much time with as possible and vacation with every summer. I finished my education at Gardner-Webb University in May 1978 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. I worked for the US Postal Service for 17 years before I was forced to retire on disability from a car accident.

I serve in the Piedmont Episcopal District under the leadership of Bishop George E. Battle, Jr. and Missionary Supervisor Mrs. Iris Miller Battle; my Presiding Elder District is the Lincolnton District under the leadership of Reverend Dr. George H. McNeely of the Western North Carolina Conference.

.....
See *Manning* pg 16

Lynda Byrd was appointed Midwest Regional Director by former President David Aiken.

Lynda was educated in the public schools of Chicago, Illinois and

received a Bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and a Masters from the University of Wisconsin- Madison. She completed post graduate study at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Northern Illinois University, Chicago State University and others. She is a lifelong learner!

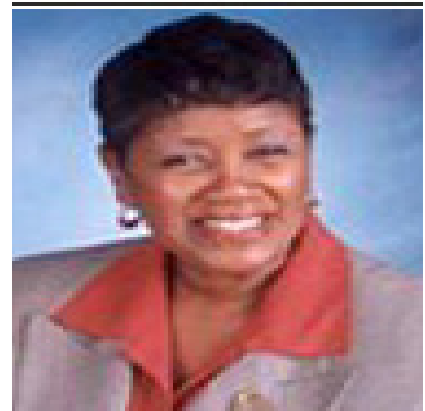
A member of Greater Walters A.M.E. Zion Church in Chicago since before birth, she has been privileged to serve at all levels of the church. She serves on the planning and budget committees for the Midwest Episcopal District, the Michigan Conference and the Chicago District. She was also on the planning Committee for the 2012 Mega Conference, the Midwest Vision Casting Retreat of the same year and currently serves on the Planning committee for the Bishop Enoch B. Rochester Midwest Leadership Training Institute.

At the Michigan Conference level she is the Conference Reporter, 1st Vice President of the Lay Council and co-authored the History of the Michigan Conference prepared for the centennial celebration in 2010.

She is the President of the Chicago District Lay Council, and in that position has been the coordinator of its annual Black History Seminars now in their 31st year.

At Greater Walters she is a member of the Trustee Board, serves on the Budget and Finance Committees, President of the Lay Council, and assistant announcements clerk. She has also chaired Women's Day and Relocation Sunday. A singular

.....
See *Byrd* pg 16



Laity Pursuit

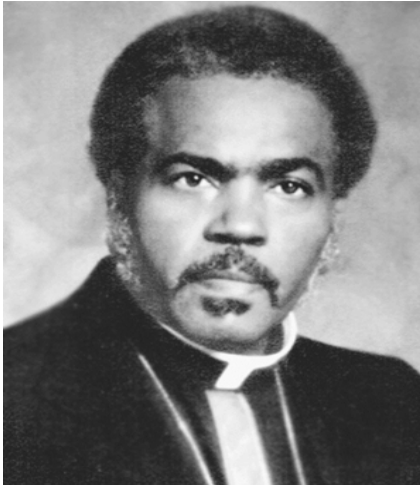
By Rhandi M. Stith, Editor of The Connection Newsletter

In celebration of Connectional Lay Sunday let's see how well you know the history of the Connectional Lay Council. Answers appear on page 39.

1. Name the present Connectional Lay Council Officers.
2. What was the year and place that the resolution was submitted for the rebirth of the Connectional Lay Council?
3. Where was the last General Conference held that elected the officers of the Connectional Lay Council?
4. Who were the officers that retired from their position at the last Quadrennial Lay Convention?
5. Name the legislation that the Lay Council co-authored.
6. What organization did they join with?
7. Who were the Presidents of the organizations when the legislation was passed?
8. What is the Scriptural Theme?
9. Who wrote "An Affirmation of Laity"?
10. Who wrote the "Lay Council Closing Prayer"?
11. Who wrote the words to the Connectional Lay Council theme song?
12. What is the theme song?
13. What is the theme hymn of the Connectional Lay Council?
14. How many Presidents have there been of the Connectional Lay Council?
15. Name all of the Presidents of the Connectional Lay Council.
16. Name the former Connectional Lay Council Presidents that are still alive.
17. Name the additional handbook that was written by Mr. James Hewitt.
18. Where was the first Lay Convocation held?
19. Who were the officers elected that were elected there?
20. Who received the first Dr. Victor J. Tulane Award?
21. What project did the Connectional Lay Council take on during the Bicentennial Celebration?
22. What lay person has a park named in their honor at Zion's Renaissance?
23. What is and who can be an honorary member?
24. What day is Connectional Lay Sunday?
25. What organization has the Connectional Lay Council gone into partnership with for this Quadrennial?
26. What is the name of the scholarship fund named for a former Board Chairman?
27. Who was the first recipient of this scholarship and when and where was it given?
28. Who is eligible for the scholarship?
29. Where and when did Bishop George J. Leake III give a charge to the Laity?
30. Who was the Bishop (at that time an Elder) that helped develop the resolution that was submitted in May 1948?
31. Where was the first Lay Convention held?
32. What was the theme?
33. What are the Objectives and Purpose
34. Where was the last Lay Convention held?
35. What was the theme?
36. What office was added to the elected officer position in 2001 and who was the first person elected?
37. How many persons constitute the Connectional Board of Lay Activities?
38. Who was the last recipient of the Dr. Victor J. Tulane Award?
39. Name all of the sites and years of the Quadrennial Lay Conventions.
40. How many Regional Directors were originally selected?
41. How many do we presently have?
42. Name them and the Regions (Episcopal Districts) they represent.
43. What are the Standing Committees?
44. How does a person get into the "Laity Hall of Fame"?
45. What are the Standing Committees of the Connectional Lay Council Executive Board?
46. Where and when was the Connectional Lay Council Handbook adopted?
47. Where and when was the Life Members Stole for the Connectional Lay Council adopted?
48. When is the stole to be worn?
49. What do the colors represent?
50. Who are the Board Chairmen for the Board of Lay Activities?

The Bishop George J. Leake III Endowed Scholarship

by Anita Pearson Royster, Esquire Scholarship Committee Chairman



Greetings In the Name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

According to the CLC Strategic Plan, the initiatives and goals of the Bishop Leake Scholarship are to grow the endowed scholarship fund so that continuous financial support can be provided to A.M.E. Zion students who are attending Hood Theological Seminary and to continue to promote giving to the scholarship through tiered pledges and contributions.

The committee has performed and will continue to perform its jobs and duties according to the initiatives, goals and objectives of the CLC Strategic Plan in the following manner:

Promotion of Scholarship Giving--

During the CLC Evangelistic Retreat, the Bishop Leake Scholarship Committee Chairman presented an appeal in the form of a multi-media presentation to increase scholarship awareness. Scholarship information cards were provided at the Retreat for distribution throughout the Connection to assist with scholarship appeals. The CLC Treasurer

provided a report of the scholarship donations that were sent to the CLC. The Scholarship Committee will continue to promote scholarship giving throughout the Connection for the remainder of the CLC quadrennium.

Hood Theological Seminary Scholarship Recipients

There have been two scholarship recipients since the scholarship's endowment. These recipients, Dr. Reginald Boyd and Rev. Warren Williams, graduated from the Seminary in 2014 and 2015 respectively. Recipients of the Bishop Leake Scholarship are designated by HTS as "Leake Scholars". The third "Leake Scholar" will be selected by the Seminary to receive the Bishop Leake Scholarship during the upcoming semester. HTS continues to express its deep appreciation to the CLC for making this scholarship possible.

HTS Earnings Report of the Scholarship Fund:

According to the Hood Theological Seminary March 31, 2015 Earnings Report, the initial \$50,000.00 donation from the CLC has grown to \$56,252.05. The endowed scholarship is designed to award only the income earned on the principal so that the principal amount can remain intact.

Scholarship Donations Directly to the CLC:

According to the financial statement presented in President Matthew's report to the Connectional Council, there is \$2800.64 in the CLC Bishop Leake Scholarship Fund as of June 30, 2015.

Remember to use the 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.

Written by Miss Mildred R. Faulkner New York Conference

....Manning
continued from page 13

I became affiliated with Pleasant Ridge A.M.E. Zion Church in 1974 where the pastor is Reverend David A. Williams after marrying and worked in several organizations. I served as Sunday School Superintendent, Adult teacher, Preacher Steward, Trustee, Senior Choir, Lay Council President. I served as the Chaplain for the Lincoln District Lay Council for 10 years (1999-2009); President for the Lincoln District Lay Council (2010-Presently) and Member of the Presiding Elder's Executive Board. Presently I am serving as the Budget Chairman for the Western North Carolina Conference Lay Council and a member of the Board of Lay Activities for the Western North Carolina Conference. I was elected as Chaplain for the Connectional Lay Council in 2013 at the 10th Quadrennial Lay Convention, Montgomery, Alabama. Most recently I have been elected to serve as a

delegate to the 50th session of the General Conference in 2016.

I thank God for what he has done for me and how he has kept me throughout the years. He has made ways out of no way and has allowed me to recover from Prostate Cancer as well as delivered me from a head-on collision without any broken bones. To God be the Glory for all the great things he has done.

I look to serve the denomination in better communicating information through the office of Chaplain and praying for the betterment of the Church as Christ is our guide in leading us to that eternal home in the sky.

I ask that we pray for one another as we all continue to engage in progressive strides to make this world in which we temporarily reside a better place.

....Byrd
continued from page 13

joy was the privilege of serving on the committee for the original writing of the church history for its centennial in 1975; she continues as the unofficial church historian.

She owes her involvement on the Lay Council to her mentor, the late Theodore E. Shaw. It was he who suggested that she become involved in Lay Council activities by attending the convention in Norfolk. That began her commitment to Lay Council activities, a ministry that she cherishes. She also credits Mrs. J. Fairbanks Leach, former chair of the CLC Education Committee, for guiding her and helping keep her on the right track!

Lynda was privileged to serve on the Steering Committee for the 10th Quadrennial Lay Council Convention in Montgomery in 2013. At that convention she chaired the Parade of Zionites that marched from the train depot to the State Capitol. That work and the cooperation from all involved was a tribute to the connectivity of the church. The stirring speeches at the capital made all the hard work and effort worth every minute! At the convention she also led an Academy on "Fortifying our Faith through The Articles of Religion."

Having served as an Alternate Delegate, she was privileged to be elected as a delegate to the 2012 General Conference and was re-elected for the 2016 session.

She is the retired Principal of Bloom High School in Chicago Heights, Illinois. Serving on the staff for 38 years (from student teaching to the classroom to administration) she was its first African-American teacher. The Performing Arts Wing of the Auditorium at Bloom was named in her honor upon retirement. She continues

her commitment to the school by serving on the Board of Directors of the Bloom Alumni Association and as a member of the Hall of Fame committee. She was elected to the school's Hall of Honor at its inception in 2007.

In retirement she works as an educational consultant for Governors State University mentoring and coaching the next generation of school Principals and administrators. She also conducts professional development workshops for teachers and administrators in a number of topics including "Framework for Understanding Poverty", "Teacher Effectiveness, "Leadership", "Team Building, "African-American History" and "Multiculturalism and Diversity in the Workplace."

She firmly believes in the Lay Council objective of "Disseminating Information." She enjoys presenting Lay Academies on the current theme(s) and helping educate members on church polity and governance. The Chicago District Lay Council motto "Know God; Know Your Church" is also her motto.

She is grateful for the opportunity to serve on the CLC Executive Board and share information with the Midwest Episcopal area and uplift the cause of the Laity. She appreciates the networking and sharing of ideas with other members of the Executive Board; they help her continue to learn and grow.

Her passions include her Family, History, Reading, Music (particularly Hymnology!), Speaking for Church programs and activities and Travel. She recognizes that God has blessed her and as her grandmother Dora would say, "He's been mighty good to me!" She believes that "...to whom much is given, much is required." God has given her so much more than she will ever be able to acknowledge. "To God be the Glory!"

Connectional Lay Council Membership Campaign

by Effie Woodard, 2nd Vice President and Membership Char

August 2015 - February, 2016



The call to all that will continue to keep the ministry of the Connectional Lay Council booming to its peak! We have reached nearly 40, 000 memberships. Won't you help us reach our 50,000 in this our membership campaign and goal? It is our hope that your affirmative answer will be **YES**. We are calling all to become an active member to this great body of believers. As one once stated memberships in the Lay Council is not a prerequisite to benefit from the council's ministries. However, all laity in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church are strongly encouraged to catch the vision for Christian Leadership, accountability, stewardship and Christian service so that we may be prepared and equip all laity for life discipleship in the Kingdom of God; **yes!** And by maintaining effective ministries that evangelize, encourage and edify laity. Calling us together

as a unit will encourage all laity to take an active part. Engage with your local church Lay Council, get the word Lay Council Memberships buzzing in your local church! Create a special place on your website, Facebook, bulletins, bull horns and the like that will create a noise that will keep them reminded that Lay Council is on its peak of 50,000 memberships. Let's keep the memberships rolling as we embark on this new Membership Campaign for the next 7 month. In order for us to boost our membership please keep in mind that it will take all of us working together to keep our goal in tack; 50,000 memberships. Yes, we can do it for we are well on our way! Again, Light up your Electronic devices, print your Sunday bulletins, public speak on Laity and its ministry is a good resource that Memberships can be lifted. With Lay Day around the corner, get a head start on a live campaign to boost memberships in your area. Perhaps some things we are engaged in may not need to be thrown out, but upgraded, redefined, adjusted to meet the needs of a new and difference people as you boost your memberships in your area. If there is a need, create new models that will bless the Lord as well as bless the church and encourage the Lay people in your local church to keep the ministry moving; because if we work together we will achieve much; both spiritually and financially. This ends the messenger now just sound the alarm! **MEMBERSHIPS, MEMBERSHIPS, MEMBERSHIPS** we need you as a card carrying member!!! Listed below we are asking that each Episcopal District to increase by the numbers listed. If you do so it will increase memberships by 11,000 Regular/Quad. Memberships and 400 Life Memberships

"Maintaining Memberships, While Gaining New Ones"

Episcopal Districts	New Memberships Goal	
• Piedmont Episcopal District	1200 Regular Memberships	55 Life Memberships
• Mid- Atlantic II Episcopal District	1000 Regular Memberships	50 Life Memberships
• Northeastern Episcopal District	1000 Regular Memberships	50 Life Memberships
• Mid-Atlantic I Episcopal District	500 Regular Memberships	40 Life Memberships
• Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District	2300 Regular Memberships	55 Life Memberships
• South Atlantic Episcopal District	1800 Regular Memberships	50 Life Memberships
• Midwest Episcopal District	500 Regular Memberships	30 Life Memberships
• Alabama/Florida Episcopal District	1500 Regular Memberships	50 Life Memberships
• Southwestern Delta Episcopal District	500 Regular Memberships	10 Life Memberships
• Western Episcopal District	700 Regular Memberships	10 Life Memberships
Total	11,000.00 Memberships	400 Life Memberships

Membership List by Episcopal Area*

*(Effective June 2015)

Connectional Lay Council
Consolidated Membership Report
June 30, 2015

CONSOLIDATED REPORT	Membership Totals by Type			Total No. Churches (*)	No. of Churches w/active Memberships	% of Churches w/active Memberships
	1 Year	4-Year	Life			
EPISCOPAL DISTRICTS						
Piedmont	10,168	52	377	229	222	97%
<i>Bishop George E. Battle, Jr.</i>						
Mid-Atlantic II	2,494	26	448	124	93	75%
<i>Bishop Richard K. Thompson</i>						
North Eastern	3,409	20	290	114	84	74%
<i>Bishop Roy A. Holmes (Deceased)</i>						
Mid-Atlantic I	1,676	6	214	74	61	82%
<i>Bishop Louis Hunter, Sr.</i>						
Eastern North Carolina	6,685	10	480	310	252	81%
<i>Bishop James E. McCoy (Deceased)</i>						
South Atlantic	5,510	8	318	161	125	78%
<i>Bishop Kenneth Monroe</i>						
Midwest	2,002	7	152	112	68	61%
<i>Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr.</i>						
Alabama-Florida	4,473	0	131	247	153	62%
<i>Bishop Dennis V. Proctor</i>						
Southwestern Delta	1,004	0	95	79	45	57%
<i>Bishop Mildred B. Hines</i>						
Western	366	7	104	37	17	46%
<i>Bishop W. Darin Moore</i>						
Sub Total	37,787	136	2,609	1,487	1,120	75%
Western West Africa						
<i>Bishop Seth O. Larley</i>						
Eastern West Africa						
<i>Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr.</i>						
Piedmont - Angola						
North Eastern-Bahamas Islands						
GRAND TOTAL:						

Half-way Home, and A Long Way To Go: Key Programs Celebrate 50 years!!

by Queen Degraphenreid, Social Political Action Committee Chairperson



I find it both challenging and disturbing to focus on celebrating the fact that we have achieved 50 years – one-half century – of impactful social and political action strides while 1 in every 5 children go hungry each day, and our young unarmed Black men die daily

come familiar to us as the following:



at the hands of the police. These achievements are not just TV documentaries or chapters in US History textbooks – they are actual life experiences resulting from the blood, sweat and tears of those involved in the civil rights and social justice struggles from the 1960's down to the present time.

Head Start- National programs serving low-income children from ages Birth to Five designed to increase school readiness. These services are delivered through both non-profit and public agencies to include public schools, and engage collaborative support from the community.



Educational Talent Search –The Talent Search program identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to complete their postsecondary education.

While the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is the landmark legislative triumph over the last 50 years as it became the vehicle by which we could exercise our constitutional right in making decisions by us and for us, it is the strategic vehicle with a voice heard at all levels – local, state and national. Since its passage, there has been over 11,500 Black Elected Officials (BEOs) elected in America, up from 1,500 in 1970. Yet, our work continues by necessity.

Upward Bound Project - Upward Bound, targeting low-income and first-generation college students, provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. The program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their pre-college performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits.

We've Come This Far By Faith....

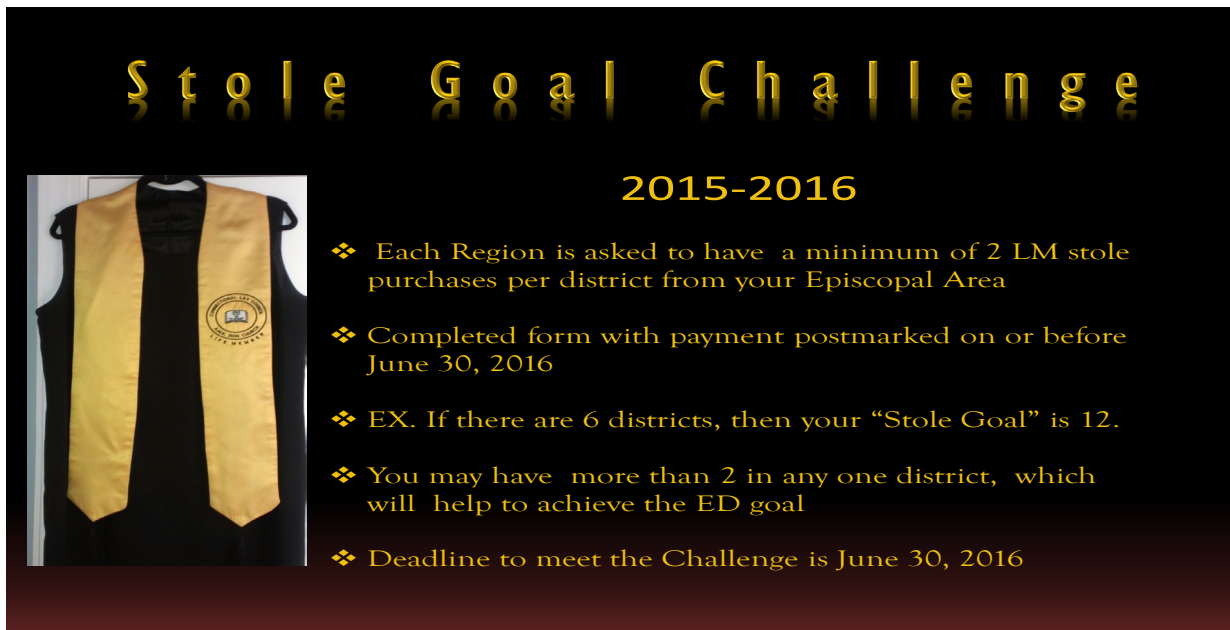
Other significant legislations celebrating 50 years of existence, primarily resulting from the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, include but not limited to, the following federally-sponsored initiatives that have be-

Medicare and Medicaid-Medicare is a federal health insurance program established by Congress in 1965. It provides health care benefits for people 65 or older, people younger than 65 who have certain disabilities. While it gives basic protection against health care costs, it won't cover all your medical expenses or the costs of most long-term care. Medicaid is one of the country's largest social welfare programs insuring more than 60 million people. It covers more people than Medicare and more people than any private health insurances.

New From Special Projects.....

by Leondras Davis, Special Project Chairperson

I'm happy to share with you our newest project... "The Stole Goal Challenge"... Each Regional Director is asked to have a minimum of 2 Life Member stoles purchased per Presiding Elder District by the June 30, 2016. Conference, District and Local Presidents are asked to support your region in promoting the Stole Goal Challenge.



Stole Goal Challenge

2015-2016

- ❖ Each Region is asked to have a minimum of 2 LM stole purchases per district from your Episcopal Area
- ❖ Completed form with payment postmarked on or before June 30, 2016
- ❖ EX. If there are 6 districts, then your "Stole Goal" is 12.
- ❖ You may have more than 2 in any one district, which will help to achieve the ED goal
- ❖ Deadline to meet the Challenge is June 30, 2016

I am also excited to tell you about the latest items Special Projects will offer....see photos



Black Garment Bag with outside pocket 600D polyester/PVC material.
50 inch \$30.00 (suit length shown)
55 inch \$40.00 (dress length) pockets slightly different)



Black Long Sleeve Oxford Shirt -(same style as the gold) \$35.00



Black Jogging Suit- 2 styles
Wind suit w/matching pants \$72.00 /Jogging suit with black pants 65.00. Both 100% polyester.



Black Lightweight Duffel Travel Bag- \$20.00 600D polyester/PVC material.

....Summit Meeting
continued from page 12

The meeting is meant to be a-political and proactive in its effort to collaborate and build consensus in the development of relevant legislation to strengthen our beloved ZION. It is also designed to be instructional as it pertains to understanding the legislative process.

We are encouraging all interested Zionites to attend this joint endeavor, especially General Conference Delegates. Participants must be a member of the International Ministers and Lay Association or the Connectional Lay Council. There is a modest registration fee to cover two meals and other expenses. At the last meeting, meals were included with the room rate and tickets were sold on site for those who did not stay at the Dorothy Walls Retreat Center. This time we are offering a more equitable means for covering the cost of meals.

Appropriate committees will be formed based on the need to develop relevant resolutions that impact major aspects of the denomination, with the exception of the areas which are under the authority and jurisdiction of the Board of Bishops.

We are resolute that the time spent will focus on improving the process of emerging legislation that will honor the following tenets:

1. All resolutions developed will be fashioned in the best interest of the denomination and not aligned with special interest groups.
2. Appropriate research will be performed and used to eliminate inconsistency with existing legislation.
3. Resolutions with budget implications will be interfaced with the proposed budget legislation committee.
4. The appropriate Legislation Committees will work collaboratively with the Restructuring Committee, chaired by Bishop W. Darin Moore.

Our goal is that the summit will affect a more thorough understanding of the legislative process and significantly reduce the number of resolutions generated. It is our prayer and desire that the Legislative Summit and Meeting will most importantly lend itself to a more efficient and productive 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference. We welcome and encourage your attendance and invaluable input.

EVENT DETAILS

Host Hotel
 Hilton North Raleigh/Midtown
 3415 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27609
 Telephone Number: 919-872-2323 or 1-800-445-8667
 Room Rates: \$105.00 plus 12.75% tax
 Reservation Code: AMZ
 Deadline for Reservations: 10/15/2015
 Complimentary transfers to and from RDU International Airport
 Complimentary wireless internet access in each guest room

Registration: \$100.00 (Cutoff date: October 30, 2015) & Current Membership with International Ministers and Lay Association or Connectional Lay Council

(Registration Includes: two meals -Thurs. lunch & dinner, program, committee materials and other amenities)

MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Connectional Lay Council

MAIL TO: Attention: Summit Meeting; Connectional Lay Council, P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221

PLAN FOR PARTICIPATION

Fill out and submit, if you have not already done so, the Registration Form and the Legislative Committee Sign-up Sheet included in this publication on pages 41, and 42.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

That we look forward to seeing you at the summit demonstrating your "LOVE in ACTION".

Regional News

Piedmont Episcopal District

**Bishop George E. Battle, Sr.
Presiding Prelate**

Ms. Sandra Williams, Regional Director

Western North Carolina Conference
Lay Council Academy
by Gloria Joyner Johnson

The annual Conference Lay Academy took place at the Joseph Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, NC under the leadership of the Conference President, Mr. Jerry McCombs. Mr. Julius Suiter, president of the Salisbury District Lay Council presided over the academy as the attendees were lead in worship by Mr. William Manning, (president of the Lincolnton, District and Chaplain of the Connectional Lay Council), Mrs. Joyce Zimmerman (president of the North Charlotte District), Mrs. Shirley Allen (president of the Winston-Salem District), Mrs. Cheryl Gray (president of the Statesville District), Mr. Harold Wilson, (WNCC Chaplain), Mr. Willie Bratcher (president of the Charlotte District and greetings from Mrs. Sandra William, Regional Director.

Using the theme: "Fortifying Our Faith by Focusing on our Future Through Leadership" Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis presented the six participants for the Joshua-Moses Presentation on "Leadership".

President McCombs presented the William Orr Award to Mrs. Dorothy Gill-Smith and the President's Service Award to Mrs. Joyce Zimmerman. Dr. Mary S. Ponds, Treasurer was awarded on her retirement for many years of service as the treasurer of the WNCC Lay Council. District Membership Awards were presented by Mrs. Connie Bell Wright. Of the six districts in the conference, the North Charlotte District led with a total of 1,770 members, followed by the Charlotte District with 1,413 members. With 115 churches in the conference, a total of 7,686 members were reported.

To benefit students at Livingstone College in need of financial assistance, the Albert S. Stout, Sr. Memorial Scholarship Fund Committee hosted the annual luncheon. Rev. Dr. Vergel L. Lattimore, President of Hood Theological Seminary gave the address entitled Leaders In Faith Friendship and Fellowship with the text from John 15. As laity we are to bear Good Fruit by picking, shaking and preparing. Dr. Lattimore, stated we must love each other and stay together exhibiting leadership by multiplication and rotational leadership. We are to also share leadership, encourage leadership, and care for each other. As laity we must be vigorous and vital leaders

in order to be victorious in Christ. When we invest in others and collaborate, we will have the graciousness and success of geese flying in the "V" formation.

The Salisbury District Choir rendered musical selections. Rev. Dr. Grant Harrison, Jr. presented Bishop George E. Battle, Jr. who gave encouraging remarks to the Lay Council and opened the floor to questions from the laity. He stated that included in his vision for the next four years is for the Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center to be debt free, the old dormitory refurbished and the grounds beautified and for every church to have an active feeding ministry.

Reports by each District President, the Treasurer and the President were presented and received and/or referred with thanks. Following the installation of officers and singing "Onward Christian Laity", Bishop Battle gave closing remarks and led in the Lay Council Closing Prayer.

Mid Atlantic II Episcopal District

**Bishop Richard Keith Thompson
Presiding Prelate**

Mrs. Katherine Burrell, Regional Director

East Tennessee and Virginia Conference
by Melvin Perrow East Tennessee and Virginia
Conference President

East Tennessee and Virginia Conference Lay Council held their annual Lay Academy recently. The Academy was opened by the president Mr. Melvin Perrow. Prayer was given by Mr. Richard Hicks, President Bristol District. Music was rendered by Mr. Perrow with everyone joining is on the familiar hymns.

Mr. Hick received his Life Member stole. The ceremony was led by Mrs. Katherine Burrell, Regional Director for Mid Atlantic II. Bishop Richard K. Thompson gave the prayer of dedication.

Mr. Perrow introduced Mrs. Katherine Burrell as the Lay Academy presenter. Mrs. Burrell's workshop was titled "Why Join Your Church Lay Council" Following our theme "Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on Our Future through Worship, Leadership, Discipleship, and Stewardship" and introducing the 2015-2016 Component Discipleship. In her workshop she talk of the Mission of the Lay Council is to prepare and equip the Laity for a life of Christian Discipleship in the Kingdom of God by maintaining effective ministries and

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in the Kingdom of God by maintaining effective ministries and teachings that evangelizes and encourages others to "Come with Us to Christ." Mrs. Burrell also, talked of the attribute of Discipleship, being a follower of Christ, we are to be convinced, committed, eager to learn and willing to share our Christian faith with others. The group was encouraged to catch the Vision to be a Christian Disciple and become active members of our local, district and conference Lay Council.

Mrs. Burrell's message was well received by both the Laity and Clergy who attended.

Virginia Conference
Submitted by Katherine Burrell for the
Virginia Conference Lay Council, William
English, President

Virginia Conference Lay Council held their Annual Lay Academy prior to the opening of the 149th Annual Session of their Annual Conference. The presiding officer was Ms. Carlee Cash, 1st Vice President. Devotions were led by Mr. Hurley Daye, Chaplain. Scripture reading was taken from Proverbs 3:1-10, followed by prayer and reciting of The Laity Creed. The welcome was done by Mr. William English and he introduced Mrs. Katherine Burrell, Regional Director.

Mrs. Burrell led the Stoling Ceremony. Four laity and one pastor were to be stoled. Rev. Dr. Kenneth W. Arrington, the chair of the Board of Laity Activities for the Virginia Conference was stoled at this time. Mrs. Burrell thanked those being stoled for their commitment and dedication to the Connectional Lay Council as Life members. Prayer was given by Bishop Richard K. Thompson, Presiding Prelate.

The Lay Academy Workshop "Laity and Ministers in Motion at the General Conference" was facilitated by Ms. Cash. The panelists were Mrs. Velia Glenn, Christian Education Director of the Petersburg District and The Rev. Dr. Kevin McGill, Pastor of Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church in Norfolk. Mrs. Glenn gave the Laity perspective of the General Conference, what you should expect and emphasized the importance of being prepared to serve. Dr. McGill, also spoke on behalf of the Laity and the clergy's expectations as General Conference Delegates. Many questions followed the individuals' presentation. The panel discussion was well received.

A special presentation was given by Ms. Cynthia White on the importance of looking toward the future

and planning for the financial support of our church. Ms. White talked of the importance of beginning an Endowment Plan at the local churches.

Elections were held for the Conference officers: 2015-2016 officers are: Mr. William English, President – Carlee Cash, 1st Vice president – Glenda Wright, 2nd Vice President – Florence Brown, Secretary – Cynthia White, Treasurer – Paula Dewberry, Financial Secretary and Mr. Hurley Daye, Chaplain.

Remarks were given by Mr. English and Mrs. Burrell. Bishop Thompson introduced the Rt. Rev. Michael A. Frencher, Sr. Presiding Prelate of the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District, First Vice Chairman, Board of Lay Activities and the Associating Bishop for the Conference. Bishop Frencher commended the Laity on their find program and the excellent show of leadership.

The Lay Academy was closed with the reciting of the Lay Council Closing Prayer.

**North Eastern
Episcopal District
Bishop Dennis V. Proctor
Presiding Prelate
New York, Western New York and
England
Bishop Mildred Hines
Presiding Prelate
New England and The Bahama Islands
Ms. Shelly Henry, Regional Director**

Cultivate Denominational Loyalty
Give This a Try
by Shelly Henry

A few months ago a lay person voiced her concern about not having an active lay council in her church. She made it clear that she had a lot on her plate but remembered Bishop Hines stating all churches are to have an active local lay council. She met with her pastor and the district lay president; they set up a date for a meeting to take place after Sunday worship service. Well wouldn't you know there was a changing of the guards. Pastors were relocated but this didn't stop the meeting from happening.

The agenda for the meeting was simple and to the point. We attached a short description of each officer's duties. The District Lay President, the Conference Lay President and the 2nd Vice President of the New England Conference were present to give an overview

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of laity and to answer any questions and concerns this congregation and pastor might have. It turned out there were many questions and concerns. Such as how to pay dues, life membership cost and purchasing laity stoles and what is the process of updating the Connectional Lay Council Membership Roster.

The pastor of this church wanted the congregation to be informed about lay duties and be given the chance to pray over the position before taking on the responsibility. Therefore election of officers will take place at a later date.

This turned out to be a very good meeting. The pastor was receptive and helped with the agenda. The young woman who requested the meeting saw the need, took a stand and acted. She was happy with what had transpired. Needless to say the district and conference officers were blessed to be given the chance to help the laity in this local church. Truly God was in this meeting, with the pastor and most of all His love touched this young woman's heart to help Cultivate Denominational Loyalty.

SAMPLE AGENDA

Scripture:

Opening Prayer: Pastor in charge or lay person present

Topic: Empowering and reorganizing (Name of the Church) local lay council.

Proposition: Provide (Name of the Church) laity with the basic knowledge of the AMEZ Lay Council.

I. The lay council is?

Three points given

II. Why organized lay council

Three points given

III. The benefits of a properly organized and functioning lay council

Three points given

Duties of the officers: Sheet Attached (President Give's overview)

Membership: Annual or District Membership Chairperson

Questions/Answers

Closing Laity Prayer

The New England Conference Lay Convocation by Shelly Henry

The 171st New England Annual Conference Lay Convocation began with the Gertrude Hood Scholarship Luncheon. Ms. Paula Blue was the lay speaker for the scholarship luncheon. Ms. Paula Blue is the lovely wife

of Reverend Darrell Blue who pastors The Mt. Olive AME Zion Church in Waterbury Connecticut.

Her text came from Matthew 28:20 and the title could not have been more fitting, "Come with Us to Christ". Ms. Blue pointed out we need to be in perfect submission to God. We need to find time to go into our personal prayer closet. It is also important to make the time to be in solitude with Christ. Not just in prayer but be alone with God so we can hear from him and we can truly hear what he wants from us. Ms. Blue went on to say we need to be willing to forgive others totally. Don't just say you forgive but forgive from the heart, not holding grudges and bring up the past which holds us back from going into the future with a loving heart. As Ms. Blue was coming to the end of the word which the Lord had given her she went on to say we need to look at scholarships and formal education differently. We are to be "Scholars of Disciples" and to let all know "Class is in Session". At the end of the luncheon we thanked God for His grace which allowed us to raise over \$9000.00 for deserving students in the New England Conference.

As we continue on with the Lay Convocation, Mr. James West, president of the New England Lay Council gave his report on the fruits of his labor this past year. Then we went forth with elections. The candidates offering themselves for annual conference lay president were Mr. James West member of Varick AME Zion Church, New Haven, CT, Ms. Ruth Gough member of Columbus Ave. AME Zion Church, Boston Massachusetts and Ms. Shelley Henry member of Walters AME Zion Church, Bridgeport Connecticut. Once all votes were cast Ms. Shelley Henry of Walters AME Zion church was announced the next New England Conference Lay Council President for the 2015-2016 conference year. Heartfelt thank you went out to Mr. West for his hard work and dedication to the New England Lay Council and we look forward to continue the work that has been set before us.

Election for lay delegates for the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference took place. Not as smoothly as the lay presidential election but nevertheless the election took place and was completed. Please remember the following lay delegates in your prayers as we continue to do the work of the Lord at the General Conference; Lillian Reason, Ruth Gough, Shelley Henry, Anita Schofield, Joseph Ottley and Sundae Black. Lay alternates are Karen Hanratty, Gloria Cothran, and Joyce Patton.

The New England Conference Laity would like to thank Bishop Mildred Hines for her love and support of the laity. We will continue to lift up Bishop Hines in prayer as she travels from city to city, state to state and country to country to do the work of the Lord. As she makes prayer-

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far away from family when she wants to near. We realize Bishop Hines will get tired and sometimes weary but we know her Love for the AMEZ Church and our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ is never ending. of laity and to answer any questions and concerns this

The New York Conference Lay Convocation and Augusta W. Printz Scholarship Luncheon by Rhandi M. Stith, Conference President

Lay Convocation

The theme for the Convocation was "Taking It To the Streets" it introduced the next component of the Connectional Lay Council Theme "Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing On Our Future Through: Discipleship". The presenters were: Reverend Malcolm Byrd, pastor of Jackson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Hempstead, New York spoke on the Theme Component and Reverend Monty Witherspoon Brown, pastor of Caldwell A.M.E. Zion Church, Bronx, New York spoke on "Thinking Outside the Box."

The election of officers was conducted by the Board Chairperson, Reverend Dr. Gregory R. Smith. The 2015-2016 Officers are: President – Rhandi M. Stith; 1st Vice President – Charlton Davenport; 2nd Vice President – Ruby Figueroa; Westchester District President – Marie H. Baxter; New York City District President – Virginia Montague; Long Island District President – Eleanor Poole; Secretary – Marcella Shelton; Financial Secretary – Lottie Tann; Treasurer – Ira Golden and Chaplain – Ruth Nixon.

A.W. Printz Scholarship Luncheon

It was in 1978, following death of Mr. Augustus W. Printz, Jr. on December 5, 1977, the late Bishop Herbert Bell Shaw who was Presiding Bishop of the New York Conference at the time named the Annual Lay Banquet the Augustus W. Printz Banquet. Mr. Printz served as President and Chairman of the Board of Lay Activities of the New York Conference Lay Council prior to his death. Since that time the banquet has changed to a luncheon and scholarships for students attending Livingstone College is the primary focus. This year Mr. DaQuan Bimbo a rising senior at Livingstone College and a scholarship recipient was the speaker. He gave the following speech:

Myself as well as so many other countless young people are appreciative to the Lay Council of the AME Zion Church but specifically to the New York Conference

Lay Council. Because of the New York Conference Lay Council I have been privileged and afforded the opportunity to study at our very own institution Livingstone College for 3 years now and I'm entering my senior year this August! Time has flown, but I'm grateful for the opportunity and help that the Lay Council has afforded me! College has taught me some valuable lessons and has made me even more appreciative! We take for granted so many things in life because many of us are or were very privileged! When Ms. Fagan asked me to be the speaker this year I was overtaken but also grateful because I enjoy encouraging people especially young people on how to be better leaders! The very fact that so many of you'll have graduated High School and are either working on a degree or are upcoming Freshmen is tremendous and remarkable! In the perilous time that we live in many of our youth have grown weary and lazy at their earliest and peak years! During this process of Leadership that I strongly believe God is calling you'll into requires integral and positive leaders! If I could tell you'll of a story of a young man named Gideon an insecure but so powerful man. He was given a task and assignment by God to lead and fight a war for a generation that had been enslaved and ruled over by the Midianities. Midianities being translated in the Greek to mean strife or controversial! And so this young man had to go through encouraging young people to stop idolizing Beyonce and Fetty Wap I mean false God's and goddesses excuse me! This young man had to find out the hard way that everyone that was on his team was not really on his team and when things looked rough his circle became smaller! But one of the most powerful pointers of this story is one of the older men having a dream that Gideon would win the war! It almost reminds me of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. because of his dream many of us are privileged and able to do so many things and go so many places because someone before us having a DREAM! It's Imperative that leaders DREAM! This isn't only for the youth but for many leaders in the room today, the Bible says "without a vision the people will perish!" Young people do not make the mistake of going off to college and not having dreams or a vision! It's the biggest mistake you'll make. In order to lead you have to first dream. I'm sure many of you'll before you even began High School had a dream of one day going off to College and dreaming of professions and careers and etc! We are living in times where our young black lives do not seem like they matter to too many other people but Blacks so our parents, teachers, mentors, clergy, laity, youth need to all come together and begin to dream. So I encourage you'll to be Leaders that first dream! Secondly I want you'll to be leaders that are driven! College can be really fun! I myself have been to a party or two or three... There's nothing wrong with having fun sometimes and enjoying other people's company but when you're DRIVEN you realize I'm not taking anything that will intoxicate me and paralyze me from moving or getting to where I need to be! You're not

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lame if you don't smoke weed, you're not lame if you don't get drunk but you become LAME meaning still or limited when you purposely indulge in things that will compromise your drive! We need more African American young people to become more driven and determined leaders! I commend you'll on being examples you may not even believe it but your peers are looking up to you'll! We need to first Dream and then become DRIVEN! But lastly God has already destined you! When you are a dreamer that's driven you are already in the right place to be destined by God!! Destiny is waiting for you'll! I'm going to leave you with this, the other day I was at work and I did something really unusual. I handed out the napkins and straws before the actual order! The lady looked at me and said these are pointless without my drinks and I looked back at her and said they actually are not, I'm just preparing you for what you're about to receive! Of course she missed it! But that's what God is doing in our lives! This time is a time to lead and it's only preparation! I'll be honest there will be sometimes that are hard that are rough that are discouraging and you say this is pointless and you would want to give up because your dream looks like it's distant and you feel like you're hindered and can't move but because of destiny God is saying I'm only preparing you for what is next ! So I encourage you'll to become even more motivated leaders! The body of Christ needs you, your churches, your pastors, your parents, your communities, the Lay Council and the Christian Education Departments and your generation are supporting you and need you'll to be the best leaders possible! God bless!



L-R Stephen Monroe, Eshe Aiken-Woodard, DaQuan Bimbo, Frances Abigail Brown and Xavier M. Austin)

Scholarships were given to two High School Graduates that will be attending Livingstone College in the Fall

Frances Abigail Brown, St. Marks A.M.E. Zion Church, Poughkeepsie, New York and Xavier M. Austin, Jackson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Hempstead, New York. Four returning Livingstone College students also received scholarships DaQuan Bimbo, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church; Stephen Monroe, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church; Eshe Aiken-Woodard, Jackson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church and Chaz Davenport, Bell A.M.E. Zion Church. Each awardee had to write an essay and financial support was determined based on the average essay scores. The total amount awarded was \$20,000.00.

Mid Atlantic I Episcopal District

**Bishop Louis Hunter, Sr.,
Presiding Prelate**

Mrs. Helene Zacharias and Mrs. Helene Nelson, Co-Regional Directors

**New Jersey Conference Lay Convocation
by Dororthea Stevens Council President**

The New Jersey Conference Lay Council began the 141st Session of The New Jersey Annual Conference on Tuesday, May 12, 2015, with The Lay Council Academy. The Annual Conference was held at Clinton Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church, Newark, NJ, Rev. Robert H. Taylor, Sr., Host Pastor. New Jersey's Laity were so proud and excited to have the General President of the Connectional Lay Council, Ms.. Mary Matthews and our Presiding Prelate of Mid Atlantic I, Bishop Louis Hunter, Sr. in attendance.

During the Academy, election of Conference officers were led by the Nominating Committee, Mrs. Delores Cowherd, Chairman. Layman elected into office to serve New Jersey Lay for the 2015-2016 Conference Year are:

Mrs. Dorothea Stevens, President
Ms.. Cheryl Y. Stone, First Vice President
Mrs. Hattie Frazier, Second Vice President
Mrs. Selina Nelson, Secretary
Ms.. Monique Wilkerson, Treasurer
Mrs. Lily Fleming, Chaplin

The Academy began with "Let Us Pray For Our Nation", Circle of Prayer. This joining of hands by all attendees and heartfelt prayer was led by the Presiding Elder of the Jersey City District, Rev. Dr. George W. Maize, III. The Lay Council has followed and continues to follow the senseless killings throughout our country, being the prayer focus this year.

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Information was disseminated about memberships and what the memberships are used for. Reports were read by District Presidents, Mrs. Doris Hollis, Camden District and Mrs. Clarice Smith-Jarvis, and the Conference President, Mrs. Dorothea Stevens. All informative and reporting that we are not just Lay but active Lay.



Mr. . Devon Horton



Minister Rashan Booker



President Matthews

The highlight of the Academy was The Y.A.I. We have been heading in the direction of an active Y.A.I. in New Jersey, and have throughout the past conference year let their voices be heard. The Academy was no exception. We had Mr. . Devon Horton to speak, representing Young Adult Lay, and Minister Rashan Booker speak to represent Young Adult Clergy. (Clergy and Lay Hand in Hand in New Jersey). Both brought powerful presentations. Some key points were; Listen to them. They may be younger but hold key positions in corporate America, are of the technology age, which is where we are right now and have a need to understand the questions and the answers; Teach & Guide them when positions are given. Some get positions in the church, hold them for some time, but never know exactly the meaning, the purpose, etc.; Please stop looking at them through our eyes, but as your eyes were God's eye. Just as older and seasoned adults, we all make mistakes, but if they stray, make mistakes, but then come back to the church, don't criticize them, love them.

The General President, Mary Matthews applauded these young men for their passion, devotion and honesty. As she put it, "Real Talk". Remarks from our Bishop always touch our hearts, our minds and encourages us to keep pressing on. Bishop also acknowledged the importance of the involvement of

our Young Adults.

The academy ended with the Laity charged up, and ready to go forth so others can "Follow Us To Christ".

South Atlantic Episcopal District

**Bishop Kenneth Monroe,
Presiding Prelate**

**Mrs. Glenda Davis Canteen
Regional Director**

**Columbia-Camden District Lay Council Host
Annual Lay Celebration
by Loranda Melton, District President**

The Columbia-Camden District Lay Council held its Annual Ozeir McBeth Lay Celebration July 18, 2015. This celebration is held annually to recognize outstanding lay persons of the district. This event is named in honor of Ozeir McBeth who had the vision of recognizing lay people for their contributions made toward kingdom building. The invocation and grace were offered by Reverend James Gordon.



The occasion was given by Dr. Robert Scott, 1st Vice President of the Columbia-Camden District Lay Council. An honoree from each church on the district was recognized. All honorees were introduced by their pastor. Loranda Melton, President of the Columbia-Camden District Lay Council along with the Presiding Elder of the Columbia-Camden District, Reverend Dr. Marion R. Wilson, presented the Ozeir McBeth Award to an Outstanding Lay Person who had gone the extra mile at the local and district level in promoting denominational loyalty. The recipient of this award for 2015 was Ernestine Alexander of Good Hope A.M.E Zion Church.

The 2015 honorees recognized the churches were: Jones Memorial – Geraldine Snipes-Goddard, Antioch - William Bostic, Ebenezer - Bessie Gaither, Good Hope - Lois Dais, Edward Chapel - Barbara Stewart, Rossville - Janie Walls, Mt. Nebo - Ernest Simpson; Paradise - Betty Brown, Pleasant Grove #1 - Laura Ann Maloney, Old Mt. Zion - Ella Mae Fulton, Fairview - Andresia Brown, New

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Vision - The Membership, Beaver Creek - Joseph James, Good News - Irma Pelzer, Clinton Chapel - Louise Washington, Pleasant Grove #2 - Darlene McQuiller, Camp Welfare - Emma Hobson, and Temple of God - Betty Brown.

Myrone Truesdale, Financial Secretary, presided over the program. A hilarious comedy skit "Hotel Heaven" was presented at the celebration. This skit proved to be very entertaining. It featured conferences and district lay officers and several members of the clergy. While the skit was very entertaining it also taught a valuable lesson which was - We all are imperfect but we can confess our imperfections and ask for forgiveness.



Numerous door prizes were given to attendees throughout the celebration. Closing remarks were given by Mrs. Loranda Melton, District President; Mrs., Annie Williams, Conference President; Mrs. Glenda Canteen - Davis, South Atlantic Episcopal District Regional Director; and Reverend Dr. Vincent Meekins, Chairman of the Board of Lay Activities.

Alabama/Florida Episcopal District

**Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, Sr.,
Presiding Prelate
Mr. Ben Bolton,
Regional Director**

The Alabama Florida Episcopal District held it's Ministers', Laity & Youth Institute on July 9-11, 2015 at Lomax-Hannon Institute in Greenville, Alabama.

Topic: "We are one in the Spirit Serving and Working Together"

On Thursday July 9, 2015 Dr. Sondra Coleman was the presenter for the Ministers.

On Friday July 10, 2015 presentations began with the following:

- Mr. Ben Bolton, Regional Director Ala/Fla Episcopal District was the Presenter for the Laity
- Ms.. Nadine Ivy was the Presenter for the Christian Education Department
- Ms.. Mary Crenshaw was the presenter for the Missionary Department

On Friday evening, our Missionary Supervisor Mrs. D. Diane Proctor was presented with a remarkable outpouring of love, respect, gratitude & admiration from every department of the Alabama/Florida Episcopal District. The procession included all Missionary District Officers. Mrs. Proctor was presented with numerous gifts by each Department.

On Saturday, July 11, 2015 our Regional Director, Mr. Ben Bolton held a very informative Lay Academy using our Thematic Guide. We are pleased to report that all eight (8) conferences and all twenty-one (21) Districts were represented.

In Alabama/Florida - Because of You We ARE!



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Mid West Episcopal District

**Bishop Darryl B. Starnes,
Presiding Prelate**

Ms.. Lynda Byrd, Regional Director

Midwest Episcopal Area Lay Council
Lynda Byrd President

Tennessee Annual Conference

At the Bishop Enoch B. Rochester Midwest Leadership Training Institute held July 14 – 17, 2015 at the Hilton Knoxville Airport Hotel, the laity had a prominent position. The Tennessee Conference Lay Council under the leadership of Conference President Roslyn Eskridge presented information on "The Laity in Action." Mr. Jimmie Robertson, Conference Lay Council Treasurer, presented the "Morning Story" segment on Friday and spoke passionately during his personal story of his love for God and the way in which God "brought him through." It brought down the house!

Two feedback sessions were led by the Regional Director. Both sessions were noteworthy as they provided an opportunity for those in attendance to share concerns and suggestions for solutions to challenges they face in their geographic areas.

Michigan Annual Conference

The Michigan Conference Lay Council held its 11th Annual Lay Academy on Tuesday afternoon of the Annual Conference. The program included a concluding academy on the theme of Leadership as well as recognition of Local and District Lay Council Presidents and others who made contributions to the cause of the Laity. Certificates of Appreciation for service to the Laity were presented to several persons including Mr. Joseph Taylor and Mrs. Vernita Perry of the Western Michigan District. Ms.. Cheryl Brewster, president of the Michigan Conference Lay Council also spoke passionately on the need to elect lay delegates to the General Conference who support lay activities on the local and conference levels.

The Chicago District held its planning meeting on July 11. Plans were made for four Super Saturdays with the Lay Council responsible for a presentation at each. The Chicago District, while pursuing the theme of Discipleship, will focus in its "Know Your Church" segment, on the upcoming General Conference. At each Super Saturday aspects of the General Conference will be presented – from its purpose and duties – to the obligations and duties of delegates and alternates.

The Detroit District welcomes a new president, Frank Westley Jackson III. Mr. Jackson "hit the ground running" with plans underway for district activities and events.

Western Michigan District under the leadership of District President Yunorma Moore continues in its work. The district Vacation Bible School was well attended with classes and opportunities for all age levels. Monthly "Know Your Church" workshops presented by Mr. Joseph Taylor are outstanding.

This district has the distinction of having 100% of its churches with active Lay Councils!

Indiana Conference

The Indianapolis District held its first Lay Academy on Saturday, August 8 at Jones Tabernacle in Indianapolis. The theme was "Faith in the Storm" and the keynote speaker was Rev. Claude Commodore.

In breakout sessions small groups discussed the topic focusing on storms in their own lives and how they dealt with these storms using Scripture and Hymns as examples. Later feedback groups reported out the highlights of their sessions through personal stories of how God brought them through. A common thread running through the sessions was that life is a storm and some storms are bigger than others but that God is with us and takes care of us regardless of the "severity" of the storm.

Conference President Dr. Janet Evelyn laid out the expectations for Conference year 2015 – 2016. Her expectations for the district centered around, membership, Lay Council Sunday and the importance of laity working with District officers especially at the local church level to 'bring others to Christ.' She also used the Quadrennial Theme to illustrate the way in which each of the four pillars of the theme are intertwined.

Information was shared on the membership process, starting with solidifying and reporting accurate memberships for each church.

The following persons were elected as the Indianapolis Lay Council District Officers: Monica Durrett, President; Joyce Miles, Vice President; Martha Commodore, Treasurer; Debra Bolder, Secretary and May Walker, Chaplain.

The annual district picnic followed the service.

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West Episcopal District

**Bishop W. Darin Moore,
Presiding Prelate**

Ms.. Rynette Nixon, Regional Director

Two Very Exciting First's In The Western Episcopal District

The General President Visits the SWRM Annual Conference

Presiding Prelate Bishop W. Darin Moore and Supervisor Devieta C. Moore Convened The South West Rocky Mountain Annual Conference, May 26-31, 2015, at First A.M.E. Zion Church in Los Angeles, Rev. Kelcy Steele the Host Pastor.

The Southwest Rocky Mountain Conference was honored to be chosen as the first of many anticipated visits to the Western Episcopal District by our Connectional Lay Council General President, Ms.. Mary J. Matthews. On May 27, 2015 she arrived and greeted us with words of expression and encouragement, as she prepared to get us ready for all of the wonderful information she was about to bring. President Matthews was accompanied by our current Regional Director, Mrs. Rynette Nixon and our past Regional Director, Dr. Shelia Quintana, both of whom assisted her during her presentation.

President Matthews gave a presentation which was personalized for those who were present at the Lay Council session. Her use of photos of members of the SWRM Conference within her Power Point helped us to focus on her message. The information she shared with us showed us ways to live up to our motto "Come With us To Christ". President Matthews detailed the benefits of a Local Lay Council. She outlined for us the methodology for reorganizing and revitalizing our local Lay Councils so that we can implement ministries that will transform peoples' lives, edify laity and glorify God. She also addressed the characteristics of an effective leader. She raised our expectations for growth and leadership.

What an awesome experience for everyone. This time presented the laity the opportunity to ask questions and see firsthand some of the work of the Connectional Lay Council and how it plays a part in the life of the A.M.E. Zion Church, from the top, down to the local church.

The newly elected officers of the SWRM Lay Council left this session committed to cooperate with the pastors and the local Lay councils to increase active membership and to assist in expanding knowledge of the AME ZION Church and its mission among the laity of this conference. A re-ignite has happened in the SWRM Lay Council.

California Conference Connectional Lay Council Host a Youth Lay Academy

Institutional memory is important and placed at great risk if there is no vehicle for transferring of information. Have you ever attended a succession of funerals and found yourself thinking that all the information that person carried with them from meeting to meeting seamlessly is going with them to heaven? A purposeful impact on the generation that follows is one way to resolve the issue of sustaining institutional knowledge of the church lives on.

Christian Education is the seat of teaching, training and learning in the AME Zion Church. The W.H. & O. M Society has an education structure built into their work so youth and young adult women can pass on the knowledge and traditions of that department. The Connectional Lay Council has a Young Adult and Youth Initiative that shall serve to mentor lay leaders for their department. On a recent survey, youth indicated wanting to know more about the Lay Department of the church. A Youth Lay Academy program was developed to demonstrate some structural components of the church combined with relevant workshops designed for the contemporary youth. The program aimed to conduct a simulation or mock general conference to give youth an interactive experience when participating as leaders. Two workshops were designed to emphasize youth related topics. The Girls! Girls! Girls! and the Man Cave Convenes are intergenerational workshops to facilitate topics important to youth.

Youth arrived at Kyles Temple, Vallejo and after registration headed over to a great pancake breakfast which was sponsored by the church. The youth mingled and interacted with one another all the while receiving instructions for the day. After praise and worship, the group gathered for their business session. Ms.. Angela DeShields, California Conference Lay Council President welcomed everyone. Ms.. Rynette Nixon, Western Episcopal District, Regional Director, Connectional Lay Council presented a wonderful tribute to past and present Lay leaders. Rev. Dr. Christopher Zacharias, Pastor, 1st AME Zion Church, San Francisco presided over the mock business session. Great fun, fellowship and learning took place during the session. Included in the registration packets were programs, resolutions and voting cards plus a brief overview of the Lay structure, lay theme hymn, lay theme song and a variety of resources suggested for future learning.

Dr.. Sheila Quintana provided the business session overview. The delegates gathered in the appropriate section marking their Districts, Central Valley and Bay Cities District. The Delegation leaders Lathan Hunter and Unzell Williams District Presidents confirmed their delegation. Non delegates were directed to their section.

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The secretariats and parliamentarians were seated. The Rules Committee convened and conferred with the Chair, Rev. Christopher Zacharias. They then shared the session rules. With voting on the rules completed, the first resolution was read. After a vibrant debate and on site teachable moments occurring the fabulous resolution passed! Youth were excited to know that the resolution was one that is going to the Bishop W. Darin Moore A report of the secretariat was done. Ms.. Desiree Whittaker, Bay Cities District Vice President, Lay Council was very supportive as she mentored the secretariat and parliamentarian team. Her counterpart, Central Valley District President, Lay Council, Mr. . Dwayne Underwood geared up to mentor young men in the Man Cave workshop. The closing remarks, gifts for active participation and prayer concluded the morning session of the Academy at Annual Conference.

A breakout session titled Girls! Girls! Girls! was led by Ms.. Marie Miller, Ms.. Angel Thomas, Ms.. Kim Zacharias all who are well educated, God fearing young women. The man cave was a special treat. Decorated with the contemporary man cave expressions, youth males and men had a fantastic intergenerational experience. Don't ask us what went on in the cave but presenters led by Mr. Jerry Quintana, Men of Zion, Mr. Jonathan Cable, Rev. Mark Thomas and Rev. David Miller.

It was awesome to have departments working well together. Ashley Crutison, Conference VICYC President, Ian Bell, Bay Cities Youth Director, and Unzell Williams, District President, VICYC, who shared that "it was great to know how the process worked, why people lined up at microphones and also to get a chance to actually make motions today." Other youth provided positive feedback for the experience. This is one of those occasions that will make an important impact on the Youth & Young Adults in the California Conference for years to come.

Eastern West Episcopal District

**Bishop Michael A. Frencher,
Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Pat Walton, Regional Director**

Lay Council Report for the Eastern West
Africa Episcopal District

Introduction

The Lay Councils of the Eastern West Africa Episcopal have been busy during the last several Months seeking

to find their identity and place in the life of the Church in Nigeria. The Lay Councils are organized in all of the 11 Annual Conferences and have been making steady progress toward making sure that both men and women are actively involved in supporting the Lay Council in the Conference, on the Districts and in the Local Churches. There are many challenges and problems to overcome before the Lay Councils in the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District are functioning as they should.

Here are some of the activities and challenges that the Lay Councils have been involved in and facing in their respective Annual Conferences.

Cross River Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 4 Districts, 12 Churches and 12 Lay Councils and a total of 702 Lay Council members

The Lay Council in this Conference help to undergird many of the other departments in this conference including the W.H.&O.M. Society and the Department of Christian Education. The laity in this Conference do an excellent job of promoting the work and ministry of this Conference. With their ties to the local and regional television networks, the A.M.E. Zion Church receives broad coverage across the nation. However the Bishop will continue to work with the leadership of the Lay Councils to make sure that they busy themselves carrying out the objections of the Connectional Lay Council in their Conference, District and Local Churches.

Akwa Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 5 Districts, 27 Churches, 22 Lay Councils and a total of 309 Lay Council members.

The Lay Council of this Conference also works very hard to support the ministries of this conference which include the work of the Varick's Mens Fellowship. The Bishop has been trying to organize the Lay Council in this Conference to also carry out the overall objectives of the Connectional Lay Council. The Bishop was able to share the Lay Council Handbook with this Conference. Hopefully going forward they will become more organized and functioning as a Lay Council.

Mainland Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 6 Districts, 26 Churches, 22 Lay Councils and a total of 770 Lay Council members.

In this Conference there appears to be a slight misunderstanding as to the involvement of both men and women in the lay council. Many of the youth and young adults expressed interest in becoming actively involved in the work of the Lay Council. The Bishop plans to work closer with those in leadership to help strengthen the Lay Council in this Conference.

Regional News

Southern Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 4 Districts, 19 Churches, 19 Lay Councils and a total of 349 Lay Council members.

There is a lot of work needed in this Conference with the laity and their involvement with the Lay Council. There were many challenges in this Conference that has made it difficult to get the laity together. Hopefully after dealing with some of these issues the Bishop will be able to organize an active Lay Council that should go a long way in strengthening this Conference.

Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 5 Districts, 24 Churches, 20 Lay Councils and a total of 532 Lay Council members.

This is the Mother Conference of Nigeria. This Conference also has many challenges that involve the laity and the ministers who are not working together as they should. The bishop is working hard to bring these two groups together. There is a lot of potential in this Conference, but they seem to be distracted by many things. The Conference president is in position to give good leadership to the Lay Council but it appears that he needs some help from those who are not as easily distracted by some of the problems that exist in this Conference.

Port Harcourt Nigeria

This Conference has 5 Districts, 23 Churches, 21 Lay Councils and a total of 794 Lay Council members.

This is one of the newly formed Conferences in the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District. They are still in the process of organizing their Lay Council. The bishop assigned a couple of new presiding elders and a new Administrative Assistant to this Conference. Hopefully with the new leadership in place the Lay Council will be functioning as they should.

Rivers Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 5 Districts, 28 Churches, 20 Lay Councils, and a total of 1,170 Lay Council members.

This is one of the better organized Annual Conferences. The leadership carries out their responsibilities very well. The Lay Council of this Conference works well with the ministers and other departments. The Bishop was able to share the Lay Council handbook with them. The Bishop believes that this will go a long way in helping them to function even better as a Lay Council.

Central Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 6 Districts, 31 Churches, 30 Lay Councils and a total of 2,173 Lay Council members.

This is another Conference that does not work too well

together. There is a lot of fighting among the ministers and this has weakened their relationship with the laity who are viewing them. The Bishop has spoken with the leadership of this Conference and has impressed upon them the need to work together and to help organize and strengthen the laity of the Conference.

South-Eastern Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 3 Districts, 11 Churches, 11 Lay Councils and a total of 335 Lay Council members.

This Conference also has some major challenges with issues that are adversely affecting the laity as well as the ministers. The bishop and Missionary Supervisor have been trying to address these concerns. Until these matters are properly dealt with, the Lay Council will be put on hold.

Northern Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 2 Districts, 5 Churches, 5 Lay Councils and a total of 15 Lay Council members.

This is a Mission Conference. There are not a whole lot of people to work with in this Conference, consequently the Lay Council is not as strong as it should be. However the Bishop did find some very strong, committed laity who are actively involved in many of the ministries and activities of the Lay Council. The Bishop shared the Lay Council Handbook with this Conference and feels that this will go a long way in helping them to organize an active Lay Council.

Lagos-West Nigeria Conference

This Conference has 2 Districts, 7 Churches, 7 Lay Councils and a total of 127 Lay Council members.

This Conference just recently celebrated their 25th Anniversary. The Laity were heavily involved in organizing the celebration. The laity and ministers work very well together in this conference. The Bishop left the Lay Council Handbook with the Conference and District Lay Leaders and the Presiding Elders. Hopefully this will help them organize better Lay Councils on the Districts and in the Local Churches.

Conclusion

The Total number of Districts, 189, total numbers of churches 207, total number of Lay Councils 189 and total number of members 7,276

The Lay Councils of the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District were able to hold a Regional meeting that involved all of the 11 Conferences in Nigeria. During this meeting many of the concerns that were lifted up by the Bishop were addressed and discussed. The biggest problem and challenge the Bishop found with the Lay Councils in the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District

Regional News

was the misunderstanding of the role of the laity in the ministries of the church and the fact that a good, well -functioning Lay Council involves both men and women working together with the ministers and others in leadership in the Conference, on the District and in the Local Churches.

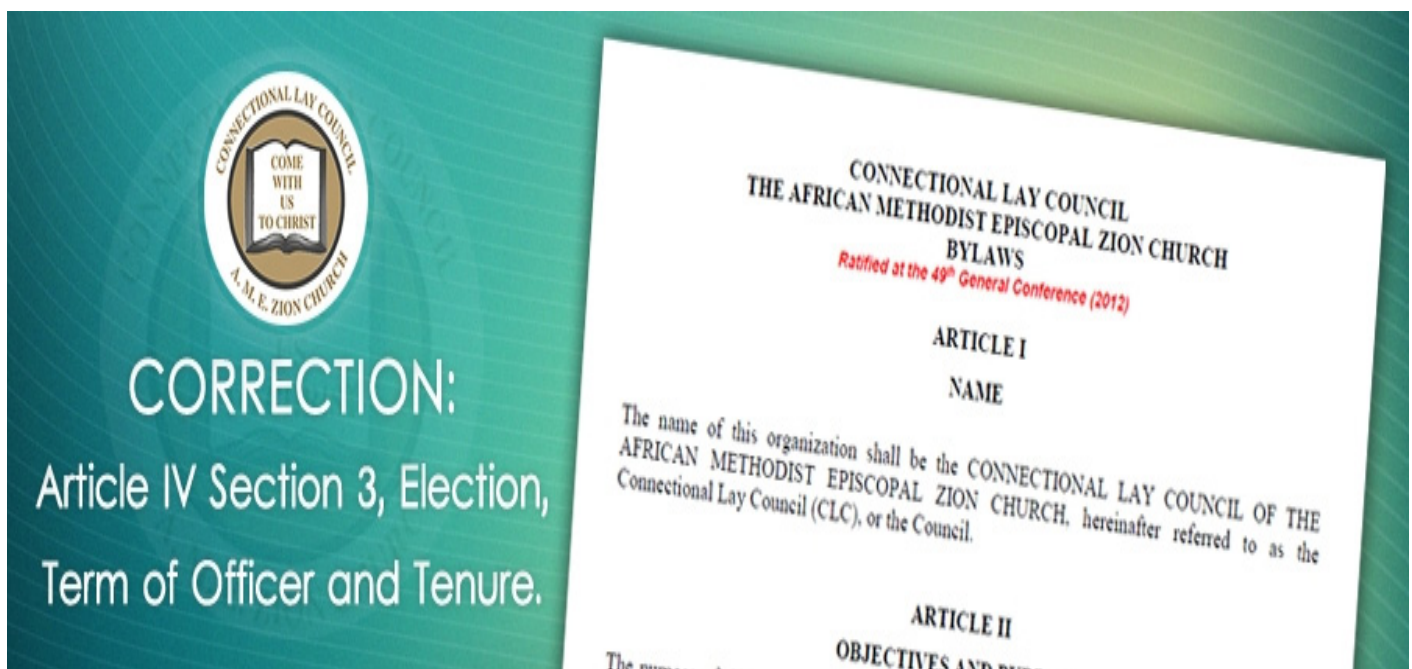
The Bishop believes that sharing the Lay Council Handbook will be helpful in organizing good Lay Councils in Nigeria. The bishop also believes that to have a Lay Convention in Nigeria that will involve teaching and training will also be most helpful in helping the Lay people of the Eastern West Africa Episcopal District.

Editorial Observation/Reminders

When using the Lay Council Theme Song "Onward Christian Laity", Affirmation for Laity or Lay Council Closing Prayer on anything that is to be distributed, please don't forget to give the author credit.

Please do not use the Lay Council logo with the lines going thru the Bible. That logo was replaced years ago. If you do not access to the correct logo, you can go to the CLC web site and cut and paste it from there. Click on the word Information and then General Information on the drop down menu.

To Obtain the Complete CLC By-Laws Articles 1 - 16
visit www.connectionallaycouncil.org



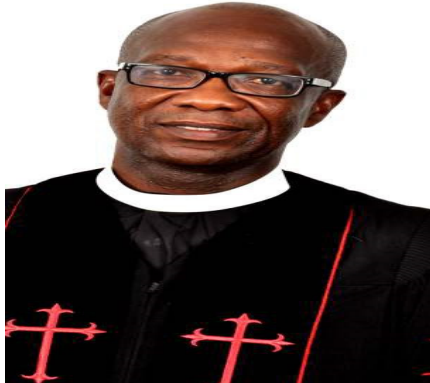
Meet the Candidates

Hilliard For Bishop

Hilliard for Zion

Hilliard for WWA

Hilliard for Kingdom Business



Dearlly
Beloved-In-Zion,

Greetings in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Christ. I trust that this finds you and your family in good health and spirits.

have represented the Church on ecumenical boards in Ghana, where one finds ample evidence of my ministry. Most of my service to the Church has been in the WWA Episcopal District, and in Ghana particularly, to which Bishops who have served in the area and others on the current Board of Bishops could attest. The emphasis of my ministry viewpoint has always been the "wholistic" development of the individual and the total well-being of all. In pursuit of this, in all the pastorates where I have labored, my focus has been on Building People, Building Ministries and Building a House for God even as we endeavor to "rescue the perishing and care for the dying."

A little less than a year ago, I made a decision to submit myself to the high calling of God to serve the A.M.E. Zion Church and our people in the Western West Africa Episcopal District in the high office of an Indigenous Bishop come 2016. This was a decision I came to after much prayers and reflections and in consultation with my Episcopal leaders, Bishop and Mrs. Lartey, my mentors on the Board of Bishops, my family and other significant persons within and without our beloved Zion.

Currently, I serve as the Chief of Staff and Protocol of the Western West Africa Episcopal District (WWAED) of the A.M.E. Zion Church, an area covering Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and Ghana. As Chief of Staff, I am responsible for the planning and coordination of all operations and activities within the episcopal area, together with the provision of leadership and effective management of all work emanating to and from the Bishop. I am also presently the Pastor-in-Charge of the Aggrey Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mamprobi.

Aside from the periods that I went out of the country for further studies, I have been living and working in the WWAED throughout my ministry. I have been deeply involved with the issues of the Church across the Annual Conferences and deal with them on a daily basis; thereby very much abreast of issues pertaining to the episcopal area. My itinerant ministry in the A.M.E. Zion Church started in 1990 when I was received into Conference as a Travelling Minister, having gone through the mill from the cradle in the AME Zion Church.

I have served the Church in many capacities in the episcopal area and at the connexional level, and

Having been given an opportunity to stay and continue with my Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree after graduating from Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ with a Master of Arts in Practical Theology (Christian Education) in 2004, I chose to return home immediately to serve God and my people in the WWAED. While pastoring in Ghana, I again enrolled in a Master of Theology degree program in Pastoral Care and Counseling at Trinity Theological Seminary, Accra, Ghana, where I graduated with excellence. I have been on the faculty of Trinity Seminary since then as an adjunct lecturer.

In 2008, while serving as Pastor at Bishop Speaks AME Zion Church, Accra New Town, where one finds abundant evidence of my proven ministry, I had the opportunity to go back to the United States for my PhD at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN from where I also graduated with distinction. At Luther, I was appointed an adjunct instructor in congregational and community care after my third semester, having completed my course work then.

Again, faced with an opportunity to stay on and teach, and with contracts staring in my face from two prestigious institutions of higher learning in the United States, my family and I took a very significant and emotionally challenging decision to return home immediately after graduation in 2012 to serve God and the AME Zion Church in WWA, a sacrifice we have never regretted. Within the Episcopal area, I have been involved in Conferences in the episcopal area enhancing the capacity of our ministers through teachings and leadership development programs.

This capacity of mine has also earned me the training and appointment as an International Supervisor of Field Education for Princeton Theological Seminary. Mine has been a ministry characterized by faith, service, sacrifice and stewardship as I continue to live among the people and serve our beloved Zion in the WWAED. I hereby solicit your prayerful support and humbly ask that you consider endorsing my election as Indigenous Bishop for WWAED. Should you not be elected a delegate to the 2016 General Conference, could you please share your conviction about my candidacy with others who might be

elected delegates to this historic General Conference. I am open to your counsel even as we proceed in this direction which I believe God is leading me.

You may also engage me at www.hilliarddogbe.com; on twitter: @hilliarddogbe; and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/hilliarddogbe Thank you very much and I look forward to further engagements with you. May the Lord bless and keep you.

Rev. Hilliard K. Dela Dogbe, Ph.D.

Leake for Bishop: Leading and Praying on Purpose



Dear Zionites,

I greet you with great hope that you are enjoying the love, grace, and blessings of God. I am offering myself as a candidate for Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church!

As an Episcopal Candidate, I offer The Balanced Ministry: Leading and Praying on Purpose. My desire is to lead God's people to execute the temporal affairs of the church without neglecting the spiritual affairs of the church. God ordains that both of them be done in excellence. There are four components that fortify The Balanced Ministry: 1) Renewed; 2) Revitalized Congregations; 3) Responsible Ministries and 4) Relational Impact. I have a heart for spiritual renewal through the appointed means of grace that will foster spiritual growth and transformation. Church revitalization is key, as congregations move from surviving to thriving. Responsibility and accountability are necessary to accomplish the ministry work on every level, and Relationships are important! As we seek to build our relationships with the Lord Jesus Christ, we are able to help cultivate strong family bonds within the home, church, and community. I have a passion for God and compassion for God's people, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, I lead through becoming more renewing, revitalizing, responsible, and relational.

As a fourth generation and lifelong Zionite, my journey began with my conversion at the Ingram's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Mount Gilead, NC. Soon

afterwards, I joined the McAuley Memorial A.M.E. Zion in Mount Gilead. As a youth, I served as Chaplain (1982-1986) and as President (1986-1990) of the National Christian Youth Council (now VICYC). I preached my trial sermon at the age of 21 on January 6, 1985.

This Church has afforded me rare and rewarding opportunities for leadership and service. My pastoral ministry began when the late Rev. R. E. Sharpe became ill, and the late Bishop Arthur Marshall, Jr. charged me to fulfill the pastoral duties at McAuley Memorial and Snow Hill A.M.E. Zion Churches for two years. In the years to come, I was appointed by the late Bishop Cecil Bishop to the Hudson Grove and Redding Springs A.M.E. Zion Churches in Indian Trail and Waxhaw, NC, and Troy Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Troy, NC.

In January of 1993, the late Bishop Enoch B. Rochester appointed me to the historic, yet troubled, Greater Warner Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church, Knoxville, TN. For more than 16 years, with God's direction, I led this congregation and community in revitalization and renewal. During that time, Bishop Warren M. Brown also appointed me to serve as a supply pastor of the Edgewood Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Knoxville, TN for three months. In 2006, Bishop Louis Hunter appointed me as the Presiding Elder of the Knoxville District. In October of 2009, the late Bishop Roy A. Holmes appointed me to the Martin Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, Chicago, IL, where I am presently serving. I also serve as President/CEO of the Martin Temple Community Foundation.

I earned the Doctor of Ministry Degree from United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, in 2004. As the first graduate sponsored in the "Adopt-a Minister" project by the Daughters of Conference at Trinity A.M.E. Zion Church in Greensboro, TN, I also earned the Masters

of Divinity degree from Hood Theological Seminary, Salisbury, NC. My educational journey includes achievements as a 1981 Graduate of West Montgomery High School, Mt. Gilead, NC; 1982 Graduate of Harris Barber College, Raleigh, NC; 1987 Graduate of Montgomery Community College, Troy, NC; and 1990 Graduate of Shaw University, Raleigh, NC. In addition, I completed one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Baptist Hospital of East Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, in 1993.

My wife of 22 years, Jean McMurray-Leake comes from several generations of Zionites. She has been my

strongest prayer warrior, my greatest supporter, and the stability for our family as I served the church in various capacities. Our four children have also been involved in the work of the ministry. On this journey we have served as a ministry team.

Finally, I desire your prayers for my family and me as well as your support and votes for the for office of Bishop!

Yours in Christ, Leading and Praying on Purpose,
Reverend Dr. Eric L. Leake

.....50 Years

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Food Stamps (now known as SNAP) -

Federal assistance program that provides low income individuals with a monthly stipend that can only be used to purchase food products. The funds are credited to a debit card at the beginning of each month and then that card can be used at stores that accept food stamps. Note: Yesterday, I was behind a family whose grocery bill was \$161.00. After swiping her EBT card, she was only charged \$12.00.

Equal Employment Opportunity - the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was originally established by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to assist in the protection of US employees from discrimination.[1] The law was the first federal law designed to protect most US employees from employment discrimination based upon that employee's (or applicant's) race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act - The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) em-

phasizes equal access to education, sets high standards for academic performance, and demands a rigorous level of accountability from schools and districts. ESEA authorizes an important group of education programs administered by the states. Also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. SPECIAL NOTE: The NCLB Act was named in honored of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, whose education philosophy was "Leave No Child Behind".

Community Action Agencies (CAAs) are local private and public non-profit organizations that carry out the Community Action Program (CAP), which was founded by the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act to fight poverty. CAAs are intended empower low-income persons and to promote self-sufficiency, and they depend heavily on volunteer work, especially from the low-income community. The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is the agencies' core federal funding. Agencies also operate a variety of grants that come from federal, state and local sources. CAAs best known programs are Head Start, Home Energy Assistance, and Employment Training.

TRIBUTES TO YOUNG BLACK MEN WHO DIE

Excerpts from "Kids Who Die" -

Poet Langston Hughes (1902 - 1967)

Listen, kids who die—
 Maybe, now, there will be no monument for you
 Except in our hearts
 Maybe your bodies'll be lost in a swamp
 Or a prison grave, or the potter's field,
 Or the rivers where you're drowned like Leibknecht
 But the day will come—
 You are sure yourselves that it is coming—
 When the marching feet of the masses
 Will raise for you a living monument of love,
 And joy, and laughter,
 And black hands and white hands clasped as one,
 And a song that reaches the sky—
 The song of the life triumphant
 Through the kids who die.

NAME THAT PRESIDENT ANSWERS

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. David Aiken | 26. Mary E. Taylor |
| 2. Dr. Victor J. Tulane | 27. Mary J. Matthews |
| 3. Dr. Betty V. Stith | 28. Dr. C. DuPont Rippy |
| 4. James Hewitt | 29. Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey |
| 5. Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey | 30. Lula K. Howard |
| 6. Lula K. Howard | 31. Mary J. Matthews |
| 7. Mary E. Taylor | 32. Arthur E. Brooks |
| 8. Dr. C. DuPont Rippy | 33. Dr. C. DuPont Rippy |
| 9. Mary J. Matthews | 34. David Aiken |
| 10. Arthur E. Brooks | 35. Dr. Betty V. Stith |
| 11. Dr. C. DuPont Rippy | 36. Dr. Victor J. Tulane |
| 12. Mary J. Matthews | 37. James Hewitt |
| 13. Mary E. Taylor | 38. Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey |
| 14. Dr. Betty V. Stith | 39. Lula K. Howard |
| 15. David Aiken | 40. Mary E. Taylor |
| 16. Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey | 41. Dr. Betty V. Stith |
| 17. Dr. Victor J. Tulane | 42. Dr. Victor J. Tulane |
| 18. Lula K. Howard | 43. Lula K. Howard |
| 19. Arthur E. Brooks | 44. Mary J. Matthews |
| 20. James Hewitt | 45. Arthur E. Brooks |
| 21. Lula K. Howard | 46. Mary E. Taylor |
| 22. Dr. Victor J. Tulane | 47. James Hewitt |
| 23. James Hewitt | 48. David Aiken |
| 24. David Aiken | 49. Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey |
| 25. Dr. Betty V. Stith | 50. Dr. C. DuPont Rippy |

.....Special Projects
continued from page 20

Pictures are also on our Facebook page: CLC/SP

Feel free to browse the page for items in stock. Share the FB page with others in your district, conference and region. Please do not place orders on the page.

Study Guides are ready and waiting for those of you that still need to order....only \$10.00.

Yes, we have a sale...

Books listed below are currently \$10.00 each - are now 3/\$25.00 or 4/\$35.00

1. Not Ashamed of the Gospel
2. Roman Road to Recovery
3. 21st Century Christians
4. Perfecting Kingdom Leadership

These would make a nice gift for anyone entering the ministry, a group read in your church or a Conference or District Lay Academy Workshop.

In order to help us maintain accurate records, we ask that you please use the correct forms when placing orders.

We have a new form for ordering your Life Member stoles.

We have an invoice form that should accompany each order. Please return a copy of your invoice when sending payments.

Remember to include shipping and handling so your order will not be delayed.

Please use the updated order forms on the website as it has the items are currently available for purchase.

Forms can be faxed or emailed to you from the office.

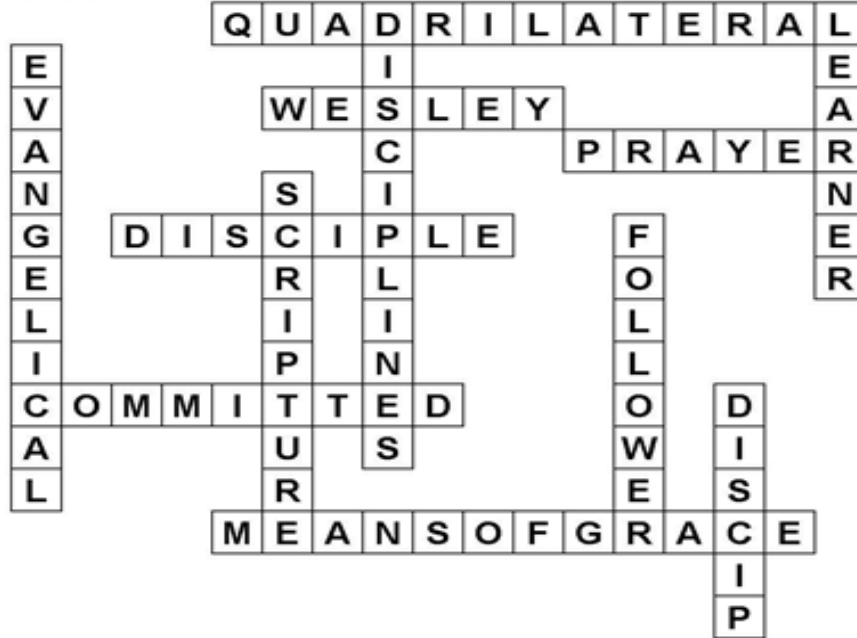
Conference, District and Local Presidents are asked to e-mail your name, Episcopal District, Conference, District and Local Church and your contact information to get on the CLC Special Projects mailing list to Lpsivad@gmail.com.

Special Projects orders, questions and concerns should be emailed to: Lpsivad@gmail.com

Thanks
 Lele Davis/SP
 704.562.0402 cell/text

Discipleship

Solution:



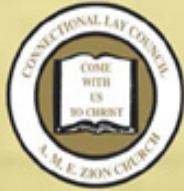
TRIBUTES TO YOUNG BLACK MEN WHO DIE

Excerpts from "Kids Who Die" –
Poet Langston Hughes (1902 – 1967)

Listen, kids who die—
 Maybe, now, there will be no monument for you
 Except in our hearts
 Maybe your bodies'll be lost in a swamp
 Or a prison grave, or the potter's field,
 Or the rivers where you're drowned like Leibknecht
 But the day will come—
 You are sure yourselves that it is coming—
 When the marching feet of the masses
 Will raise for you a living monument of love,
 And joy, and laughter,
 And black hands and white hands clasped as one,
 And a song that reaches the sky—
 The song of the life triumphant
 Through the kids who die.

LAITY PURSUIT ANSWERS

1. President – Ms. Mary Matthews.; 1st Vice President – Mrs. Yvonne Baskerville; 2nd Vice President – Mrs. Effie Woodard
Secretary – Mrs. Delores Lancaster Treasurer – Mr. Trubbie Leeper; Financial Secretary – Mr. Ira Golden; Chaplain – Mr
William F. Manning
2. May 20, 1948; General Conference, Louisville, Kentucky.
3. Chicago, Illinois.
4. Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey and Mr. Charles Montgomery
5. Judicial Council
6. Ministers and Lay Association
7. Dr. Betty V. Stith and the Reverend Frank E. Jones
8. Proverbs 3:6
9. Mrs. Alean Rush
10. Ms.. Mildred Faulkner
11. Mrs. Charlotte Riggins
12. "Onward Christian Laity"
13. "Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah"
14. Ten
15. Dr. Victor J. Tulane (1952-?); Mr. Arthur E. Brooks (1964-1976); Dr. Betty V. Stith (1976-1985); Dr. C. DuPont Rippey (1985-
-1988); Mr. James E. Hewitt (1989-1993); Mrs. Mary E. Taylor (1993-1997); Mrs. Lula K. Howard (1997-2001); Mr. David
Aiken (2001-2009), Dr. Yvonne Tracey (2009–2013) and Ms.. Mary Matthews (2013- present).
16. Mrs. Mary E. Taylor, Mrs. Lula K. Howard, Mr. David Aiken and Dr. Yvonne Tracey
17. "Seek Out, Recall and Reclaim"
18. Omni Hotel, Military Circle, Norfolk, Virginia.
19. President - Betty V. Stith; 1st Vice President - Dr. C. DuPont Rippey; 2nd Vice President – Denison D. Garrett; Secretary -
Lizzie M. Sykes; Treasurer - Robert H. Simms; and Chaplain - Jasper McCormick
20. Mr. Arthur E. Brooks
21. The Harriet Tubman Properties Grounds Beautification Project.
22. Dr. C. DuPont Rippey
23. Person with non voting privileges; Clergy and those under 18 years of age.
24. 3rd Sunday in October
25. International Ministers and Lay Association.
26. Bishop George Junis Leake III
27. The Reverend Carlton Mathis; 3rd Quadrennial Convention, Norfolk, Virginia.
28. Any African Methodist Episcopal Zion minister who is attending or plans to attend Hood Theological Seminary.
29. St. John African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, December 13, 1975.
30. Bishop J. Clinton Hoggard
31. Charlotte, North Carolina; July 14-17, 1977.
32. "Come With Us To Christ"
33. (a) Deepen the spiritual life of the laity; (b) Disseminate information; (c) Cultivate the denominational loyalty; (d)
Expand the denomination through education and evangelism; (e) Promote any other interest of the Kingdom of
God.
34. Montgomery, Alabama
35. "Fortifying Our Faith While Focusing on Our Future Through: Worship, Leadership, Discipleship and Stewardship."
36. Financial Secretary; Mr. Jerry McCombs.
37. Fifteen
38. Mr. Ervin Reid
39. Charlotte, North Carolina – 1977; Birmingham, Alabama – 1981; Norfolk, Virginia – 1985; Los Angeles, California
– 1989; Salisbury, North Carolina – 1993; Louisville, Kentucky – 1997; Akron, Ohio – 2001; New Orleans, Louisiana –
2005; Portsmouth, Virginia – 2009; 2013 – Montgomery, Alabama.
40. Four
41. Twelve
42. Sandra Williams – Piedmont; Katherine Burrell – Mid Atlantic II; Shelly Henry – Northeast; Helene Zacharias - Mid-
Atlantic II; Hank Dobson - Eastern North Carolina; Glenda Davis-Canteen – South Atlantic; Lynda Byrd – Midwest; Ben
Bolton – Alabama-Florida; Stephany Fields – Southwest Delta; Rynette Nixon – Western; Martha Scrudder – Western
West Africa; and Patricia Walton – Eastern West Africa.
43. Bishop George J. Leake III Scholarship; Bylaws/Legislation; Budget; Editor, Laity Speaks; Education; Social/Political
Action and Special Projects.
44. By recommendation, one person from each Episcopal District.
45. Constitution Revision/Legislation; Social/Political Concerns; Bishop George J. Leake III Scholarship; Education;
Budget/Finance and Convocation.
46. Birmingham, Alabama – 1981
44. New Orleans, Louisiana – 2005.
48. Annual Lay Sunday; District, Annual and Regional Meetings; Evangelistic Retreat, Quadrennial Convention and Lay
Council celebrations by Life Members only.
49. Black - representing pride of race and Gold – representing commitment to excellence.
50. Bishop Kenneth Monroe - Chairman; Bishop Michael Frencher - 1st Vice Chairman and Bishop Roy A. Holmes (de
ceased) 2nd Vice Chairman



CONNECTIONAL LAY CONVOCATION
THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH
 Tenth Quadrennial Lay Convocation Registration Form
 March 17 – 19, 2016



The Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center
 745 Saluda Street ~ Rock Hill, SC 29730

Theme: Effective Leadership for Zion: INTERACTING, INQUIRING, INFORMING

Name:		
<i>Last</i>	<i>First</i>	<i>Title: (Dr., Rev., etc)</i>
Address:		Apt/
City:	State/Zip:	
Telephone: (Home)	(Cell)	
eMail:		
Episcopal District:	Annual Conference:	
District:	Local Church:	

Age Group: 13 - 21 22 - 40 41 - 49 50 and up **First Time Attendee:** Yes NO

General Conference Delegate: Lay delegate Clergy Delegate **Alternate Delegate:** Lay Alternate Clergy Alternate

REGISTRATION FEE: Check Appropriate Box

- Early Registration by January 25, 2016 \$125.00
 Late (postmarked after January 25, 2016) \$150.00
 On-site Registration \$150.00

Registration includes: Welcome Reception, Prayer Breakfast, Challenge Luncheon, Candidates Journal, Registration packet with Convocation program, Plenary Session Materials, *Candidates for General Office Forum, Candidates for Bishop Forum, Young Adult Forum and Dialogue and much more.*

Bishop George J. Leake III Endowed Scholarship Luncheon - \$25.00 Number of Tickets x \$25.00 = \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Make all checks and money orders payable to Connectional Lay Council. Mail form, with payment to: Connectional Lay Council, Attn. Priscilla Leeper, Post Office Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221. For more information Contact Priscilla Leeper, Registration Chairperson (704)866-0742

Hotel Reservations: Holiday Inn Rock Hill - 1-877-410-6667 or (803) 323-1900 -- Ask For: South Atlantic – Lay Convocation, Room rate \$92.00 plus 12% tax per night. **Overflow Hotel:** TownPlace Suites Rock Hill Marriott - 1-803-327-0700 – Ask For: AME Zion CLC Convocation – Room rate \$114.00 plus tax per night. Transportation will be provided between the hotels and the Kenneth Monroe Transformation Center.

Special Dietary Requirements _____

Emergency Contact: Name _____ Telephone _____

Relationship _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Amount Received: \$ _____	Date Received: _____	Signature: _____
Payment Method: Online (credit/debit) <input type="checkbox"/> Check# _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Money Order# _____ <input type="checkbox"/>		
Cashier's Check <input type="checkbox"/>	Cash <input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Late Registration <input type="checkbox"/> On-site Registration <input type="checkbox"/>



2016 General Conference Legislation and Summit Meeting

Sponsored by

The International Ministers and Lay Association & The Connectional Lay Council

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Wednesday, November 18, 2015 – Friday, November 20, 2015

Host Hotel

*Hilton North Raleigh/Midtown
3415 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27609
Telephone Number: 919-872-2323 or 1-800-445-8667
Room Rates: \$105.00 plus 12.75% tax
Reservation Code: AMZ
Deadline for Reservations: 10/15/2015*

**Complimentary transfers to and from RDU International Airport
Complimentary wireless internet access in each guest room**

Registration: \$100.00

(Cutoff date: October 30, 2015)

&

**Current Membership with International Ministers and Lay Association or Connectional Lay Council
If you are not a member, you can send your membership dues in with your registration:**

Connectional Lay Council: \$5.00 International M&L Association: \$35.00

(Regist. Includes: two meals -Thurs. lunch & dinner, program, committee materials and other amenities)

MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Connectional Lay Council

MAIL TO: Attention: Summit Meeting; Connectional Lay Council, P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221

(Please print legibly)

Membership (check all that apply): CLC IM&L Both

Title (check all that apply): Dr. Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms. ___Clergy Lay

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Home Telephone _____ **Mobile Number** _____

Email Address _____

Episcopal Area _____ **Annual Conference** _____

Presiding Elder District _____ **Local Church** _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____



2016 General Conference Legislation and Summit Meeting

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Wednesday, November 18, 2015 –

Friday, November 20, 2015

Sponsored by

The International Ministers and Lay Association &

The Connectional Lay Council



Legislative Committee Sign-up Sheet

Membership (check all that apply): CLC IM&L Both

Title (check all that apply) Dr. ___ Rev. ___ Mr. ___ Mrs. ___ Miss ___ Ms. ___

Status: Clergy ___ Lay ___

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Telephone _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

Episcopal Area _____ Annual Conference _____

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: _____ (See suggested list below)

AREAS OF CONCERN:

1. Return Form via email to: ytracey@bellsouth.net
2. Return Form via fax to: Yvonne Tracey 704-636-4562
3. Mail to Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey 502 Ferndale Dr., Salisbury, NC 28147

Suggested list of Legislative Committees:

Clergy/Ministers	
	Ministerial Concerns
	Ministers Bill of Rights
Conferences	Conference Boundaries
Education	Schools, Colleges & Seminaries
Financial Admin	
	Budget
	Allocation
General Admin	
	Restructuring
Laity	
Local Church	

Preliminary Overview - Program/Activities

Wednesday – November 18 th	Thursday – November 19 th	Friday – November 20 th
Registration/Information 3:00 PM	Registration/Information 8:00 AM	
Official Opening 7:00 PM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Worship Service ○ Organization of Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:00 AM Committees at Work in break-out rooms ● 12 Noon Lunch ● 5:00 PM Dinner ● 7:00 PM General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Presentation/Discussion of Committee Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● General Session 9:00 AM –12:00 Noon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Final Committee Reports ○ Closing

The International Ministers and Lay Association, Rev. Dr. Kevin McGill, President in partnership with the Connectional Lay Council, Ms. Mary Matthews, President, are planning a two day intensive work session of interested lay and clergy of The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church to develop legislation for the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference in Raleigh, NC. The 2016 General Conference Legislation and Summit Meeting is chaired by Rev. Dr. Melvin Tate and Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey.

The meeting is meant to be a-political and proactive in its effort to collaborate and build consensus in the development of relevant legislation to strengthen our beloved ZION. It is also designed to be instructional as it pertains to understanding the legislative process.