



The

Connection
Connectional Lay Council
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

CLC Newsletter

Winter Edition

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

THE CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL

3225 W. SUGAR CREEK RD

CHARLOTTE, NC 28269

PHONE: 704-599-4630 EXT. 2566

FAX: 704-688-2552

EMAIL: CLCOFFICE@AMEZION.ORG



The Connection

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr. International President



By God's marvelous and miraculous grace, greetings to each of you in the majesty of His power as we enjoy the sacredness of the Advent Season, reflecting on how we can prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth in the world as it is today. Advent season is a very special time of year that sometimes gets lost in the bright lights of the Christmas season it precedes. It is a time for faith communities and families to remember, through prayer, reflections, special music, and good deeds what the true meaning of Jesus' birth is. The Advent Season, a time of preparation directs with care our hearts and minds, and the scripture readings during this time reminds us not to waste our time with predictions; Advent is not about speculations, but a time that we should not be weighted down and distracted by the cares of the world.

As a servant of God and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, I count it all joy for this pinnacle of privilege to serve as the International President of the Connectional Lay Council. God requires each of us to be workers in His vineyard providing passionate service, accomplished without the expectation of human honor or reward. Serving our God can be wonderful with satisfying experiences, if we perform our tasks for God, under His divine power, and not man. In Ephesians 6:6-7, we are informed to approach our work, *"not with eye service, as men pleasers, but as bond servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord and not to men."* We must not forget our mission to prepare, nurture, and equip laity for life discipleship in the Kingdom of God. Our ministries across our Zion boundaries must remain effective, affirming, and evangelistic with a transforming nature, to strengthening our fellowship as an organization. As we serve in these positions of trust, it is also imperative we are intentional, focused, faithful and fruitful in our actions. Without question, our future remains determined by the actions we take today, either rewarding and lasting, or relentless and limited. Let us continue to confront our opposition, confirm the opportunities God sends our way and celebrate the outcomes of our struggles with commitment and dedication.

As we continue to enjoy the Advent Season of the liturgical year, a time of expectant waiting and preparation of our hearts and minds for the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas, I will endeavor to devote myself to the work elected and assigned for supervision. My inexpressibly and inadequate thanks to Almighty God who continues to safeguard my leadership responsibilities with a mandate to effect change. May God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is love; the radiance of Christmas which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; the all of Christmas, which is Christ. Best wishes to all of Zion during this glorious season of the year. May the joyful spirit that permeates the air; remain with you well into the New Year with PEACE, POWER, and ABUNDANT BLESSINGS. Remember, stand firm, stay focused and serve faithfully.

Winter Edition

INSIDE THIS EDITION

An Inspiring Message From
Joseph King Davis, Jr.,
International President

CLC Updates – Mrs. Leondras Davis
Membership – Mrs. Connie Bell-Wright
Around the Region – Regional Articles

CLC Convocation Information



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MR. JOSEPH KING DAVIS, JR.,
CLC INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

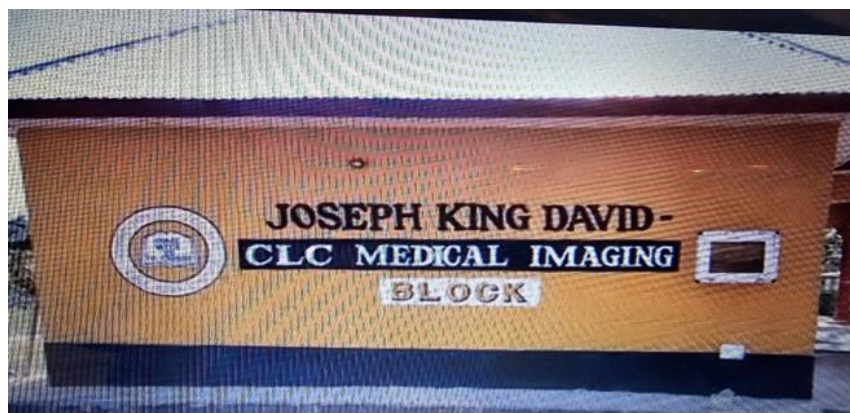
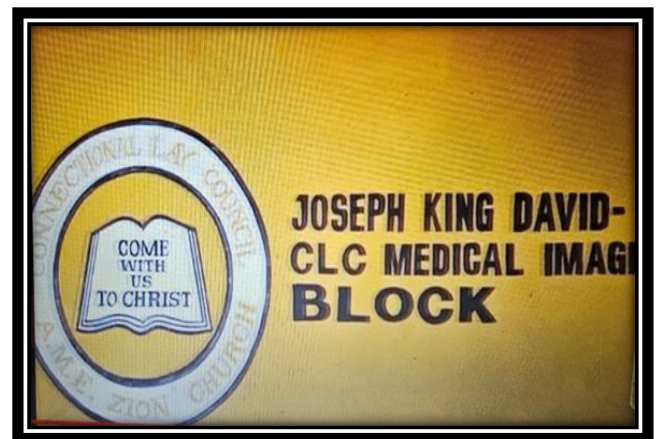
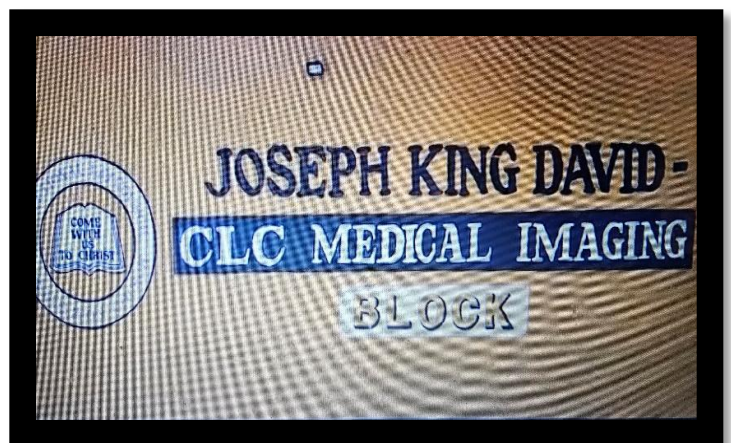
Congratulations!

***Congratulations to the CLC International President - Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr.,
and all of Zion's Laity!***

Because of your generous giving and support of Lay Day Offering (2022). The Connectional Lay Council was able to present a check in the amount of \$20,000 in support of the Janie B. Speaks Hospital located in Western West Africa Episcopal District to Bishop Hilliard Dogbe, Presiding Prelate and Mrs. Cynthia Dogbe, Missionary Supervisor. A new Imaging Block (X-ray wing) has been constructed and named in honor of the CLC International President for our generous giving to both the hospital and the transportation needs. The video of the dedication can be found on the CLC Facebook page. Bishop Dogbe is in the process of correcting the spelling of the president's last name.

X ray unit named in honor of our President Joseph King Davis, Jr. see the link attached...

<https://youtu.be/Dz6rVPa3mOE?si=bP1jEht1u-e8eyDT>





***Meet the new Director of Health Ministry for
the AME Zion Church –
Dr. IYABODE F. AKINSANYA-BEYSOLOW,
M.D., M.P.H.***



***MEET DR. LISA MOORE, APPOINTED
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY FOR THE
A.M.E. ZION CHURCH***





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CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
OFFICE OF THE 1ST VICE PRESIDENT
Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis



News from the First Vice President December 2023 ~ Winter Edition

Greetings Zion's Laity and Friends,

Advent Season

The Advent Season is celebrated this year Dec. 3rd -December 24th. Advent is a time of joyful Anticipation as we prepare our hearts for the Christmas season in the weeks leading up to the birth of Christ. Christians around the world pray, repent and reflect on the goodness and promises of God.

- 1. Hope -Scripture Reading - Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19*
 - 2. Peace -Scripture Reading - Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13*
 - 3. Joy - Scripture Reading - Psalm 126*
 - 4. Love - Scripture Reading -Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26*
- Devotional Bread.org*

CLC Convocation

Get registered and get ready to meet up in Louisville for the CLC 12th Quadrennial Convocation, March 14th - 17th, 2024 (Thursday - Sunday) Early registration (\$150.00) is open until February 23rd.

Lodging may be secured at the Louisville Marriott East, 1903 Embassy Square Drive, Louisville, KY. We have a great room rate at \$147.00 + taxes (\$163.00). You may contact the hotel directly by calling 503.491.1184 using the reservation code: AME Zion CLC Convocation Mar 2024 or use the link below.

[Book your group rate for AME Zion Church Connectional Lay Council Convocation](#)

~DEADLINE FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS- FEBRUARY 20, 2024~

~DEADLINE FOR CONVOCATION REGISTRATION- FEBRUARY 23, 2024~

~REMIND AND SHARE WITH OTHERS~



The Connection

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

OFFICE OF THE 1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis



March 14-17, 2024 Louisville, Kentucky

12th Quadrennial Connectional Lay Council Convocation

Save the Date

Leondras "Lele" Davis
CLC 1st VP, Convocation Chair

Joseph King Davis, Jr.
CLC International President

Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr.
Chairman, Board of Lay Activities

Convocation planning is at full speed to accommodate you. We are expecting as many of you as possible to be in attendance. If you are a General Conference Delegate or Alternate, clergy or laity, plan to be there! Our excellent presenters will have you equipped and prepared for the upcoming General Conference. We encourage you to invite others to attend and become informed delegates (that includes, the new, the young and the seasoned). The CLC Convocation will refresh and prepare you for the work ahead and Louisville is the place to be!

We are so very thankful to Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr., Presiding Prelate of the Midwest Episcopal District, Chairman of the Board of Lay Activities and President of the Board of Bishops, Mrs. Gelenia Frencher, Missionary Supervisor, Ms. Lynda Byrd, 3rd Vice Chair, BOLA, Presiding Elder O Lacy Evans and Mrs. Martha Scudder, Host Partners Co-chairs, along with an awesome Team who has supported us tremendously in our efforts as we plan for your arrival. We owe them a great deal of thanks! When you arrive in Louisville, be sure to say thanks!

Our Wellness Team will be in place to assist you in taking all precautionary measures to protect you and others during our time together at the Convocation. We are urging everyone to update your booster or get vaccinated. We ask that you complete and return the health waiver before arriving on-site. Each registrant will also receive a CLC Health and Wellness kit.



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OFFICE OF THE 1ST VICE PRESIDENT



Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis

Celebrate our theme with us: *"Cultivating Our Faith, Committed to Service: Generation to Generation."* We will be in Derby town, so men bring your Derby and Bowties and ladies bring your hats or fascinators!

In addition to the informative sessions, the Registration package will include Convocation materials, Welcome Program, The Opening Worship Service, Prayer Breakfast, CLC Legislation and By-laws, Leadership Luncheon, The Bishop George J. Leake, III Endowed Scholarship Breakfast, Community Outreach Project/Voting, Candidates' forum, YAI Chat Session and much more. All registered candidates for the Episcopacy and General Officers have been invited to attend and participate in the forum. We also invite you to worship with us Sunday, March 17th @10:00am, Broadway Temple AME Zion Church, 1301 W. Broadway, Louisville, KY.

Bishop George J. Leake III, Endowed Scholarship

Crystal Awards will be presented at the Bishop George J. Leake Scholarship Breakfast. (See flyer) Donations or contributions in the amount of \$1500.00 (Platinum), \$1,000.00 (Gold), or \$500.00 (Silver) will be recognized to receive a Crystal Award. Help us to disseminate this information and solicit donations for the GJL Scholarship fund. Donations may be given individually, as a Local Church, as a District, or a Conference, an Episcopal District or "in honor" or "in memory" of a loved one.

Vendor Opportunities

Individuals or businesses interested in securing a space as a vendor or exhibit during the Convocation are asked to contact Connie Bell Wright, CLC2VP.ConniebellWright@gmail.com). Connie will email the vendor's package to them. Deadline to sign up is March 1st, 2024.

YAI Chat Session

The YAI will present an interactive session on Gate Keepers. The YAI is chaired by Dottie Stephens. Be sure to be there to participate!

Community Outreach Project

The CLC Community Outreach Project is soliciting your support. We have a 2-fold project. You can decide to support one or both.



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OFFICE OF THE 1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis



"Literacy In Louisville"- We need your support to donate books for children and youth (Pre-K - 5th Grade). It would be most appreciative for the children to have books that identify with them. The children that attend the Newburg Community Center will enjoy an afternoon of having storybooks read to them, followed by choosing books to take home and a snack will be provided. If you are planning to be in Louisville, volunteer to help with set up, reading books, serving snacks, distributing books, and help with clean up.

"Safety for Seniors"- A senior community has been selected that needs additional lighting for security. We are asking for \$20.00 donations for the purchase of a pair of solar lights...1 set will be distributed to each household. The lights may be purchased at Amazon, Home Depot, or Lowes. We also will provide large print Devotionals to each senior.

If you are willing to support the Louisville Community Outreach Project, please contact Pat Hunter, CLC Outreach Coordinator Caliconlaypresident@gmail.com for more information on where to send books and/or lights if you are not able to bring/send them.

We thank you in advance for supporting the CLC Convocation Outreach Ministry in Louisville.

Get Vaccinated ~ Get Registered ~ Get your Room Reserved and head to Louisville in March 2024! We look forward to having you join us at the last Connectional stop before the General Conference!

Wishing you and your family a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Global Leadership



Luncheon

Louisville Marriott East, Louisville, KY

"Derby Style"



Ladies wear your finest hat or fascinator!

Men wear your most stylish bowtie!

Ticket included with your Registration.
Early Registration \$150.00 by Feb. 23rd
Late/Onsite Registration \$165.00.



THE 12th QUADRENNIAL LAY CONVOCATION

Theme: "Cultivating Our Faith, Committed to Service: Generation to Generation"

REGISTER... & RESERVE YOUR ROOM **NOW!**

Louisville Marriott East ~KY

- Hotel location: 1903 Embassy Square Blvd, Louisville, KY 40299
- Hotel Reservations: (502) 491-1184
- Rate: \$141.00 + taxes = \$165.66/day.
- Reservation Code: "AME Zion CLC Convocation Mar2024"
- Parking: FREE
- Hotel Reservation Deadline: **Feb. 20, 2024**

Louisville

MARCH 14-17, 2024 THURSDAY - SUNDAY

Pre-Register for Convocation by February 23, 2024-\$150.00
Late/On-site Registration-\$165.00



Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr.
CLC International President - #11



Bishop Michael A. Frencher
BOLA Board Chair
Presiding Prelate - Mid-West



Mrs. Leondras "Lele" Davis
CLC First Vice President
Convocation Chair

2024 LAY





CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL CONVOCATION

THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

12th Quadrennial Lay Convocation Registration Form



March 14 – 17, 2024

Louisville Marriott East ~ 1903 Embassy Square Blvd ~ Louisville, KY

Host Regional Director: Mrs. Martha Scudder

Host Presiding Bishop: The Right Reverend Michael A. Frencher, Sr., Chairman, Connectional Board of Lay Activities

Theme: "Cultivating Our Faith, Committed to Service: Generation to Generation"

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

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

Lay Council Officer: Connectional ☐ Conference ☐ District ☐ Local ☐ Position: _____

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

REGISTRATION FEE: Check Appropriate Box
Pre- Registration by February 23, 2024 ☐ \$150.00
Late/On-site Registration ☐ \$165.00

Registration includes: Meal Ticket for: Welcome Program/Dinner, Leadership Luncheon, Challenge Luncheon, Prayer Breakfast, Candidate Reception, and Convocation Materials.

Additional Tickets: Leake Scholarship Breakfast - \$40.00/ticket ~ # of tickets: _____ Total: \$ _____

Make all checks and money orders payable to CLC (Connectional Lay Council). Mail form, with payment to: Connectional Lay Council, Attn. Priscilla Leeper, Post Office Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221.

You can also email your form to: clcoffice@amezion.org and pay via Cash App (\$CLCAMEZ) or Givelify (Connectional Lay Council). **GIVELIFY USERS ARE TO INCLUDE THE \$5.00 PROCESSING FEE PER REGISTRATION.** Be sure to indicate your payment method on the registration form.

Hotel Reservations: Louisville Marriott East, 1903 Embassy Square Blvd, Louisville, KY 40299 – (502) 491-1184 - Rate: \$141.00 + taxes = \$163.66/day. Reservation Code: "AME Zion CLC Convocation Mar2024" - Parking: FREE

Hotel Reservation Deadline: Feb. 20, 2024 ~~~~ Reservation Link below – Ctrl + click to make your reservations:

[Book your group rate for AME Zion Church Connectional Lay Council Convocation](#)

For more information, Contact Priscilla Leeper, Registration Chairperson (704) 599-4630 x2566.

Special Dietary Requirements _____

Emergency Contact: Name _____ Telephone _____

Relationship _____

Amount: \$ _____

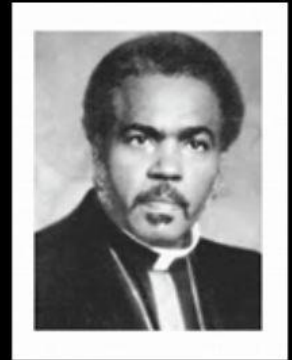
Payment Method: Cash App ☐ Givelify ☐ Check ☐ Cash ☐

The Connectional Lay Council

presents

The Bishop George J. Leake, III
Endowed Scholarship
Crystal Awards

The award exemplifies:
Vision – Integrity – Empowerment



Your commitment of giving will support the financial needs of divinity students enrolling
at
Hood Theological Seminary.



Crystal Award Donation Levels:

Gold - \$1,500.00

Silver - \$1,000.00

Bronze- \$500.00

Awards will be presented during the March 2024 Quadrennial Lay Convocation

In addition, a Silent Auction will be held at the Convocation.

Make your Tax-Deductible Donations by February 28, 2024

Payable via cash, check or online payment:

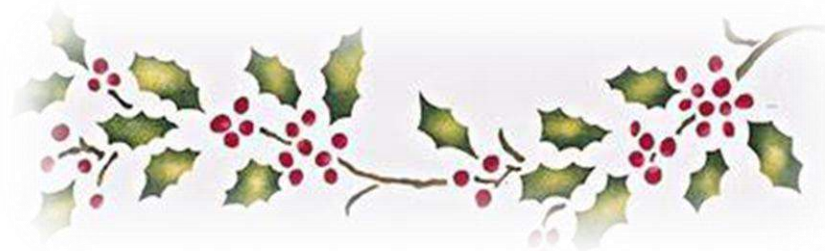
Connectional Lay Council, AME Zion Church

Mail to: P.O. Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

Cash app: \$CLCAMEZ or Givelify: Connectional Lay Council

Rose L. Stokes, Scholarship Committee Chair

Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr., CLC International President





The Connection

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Connie Bell-Wright



What a gift?

But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. (1 John 2:20)

How many times have you said to yourself, “I *knew* I should have done that,” but instead you allowed your head to override that little voice? That voice is called “spiritual intuition.” Listen, “Your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it’ (Isaiah 30:21 NIV). Listen again, “But ye have an unction from The Holy One, and ye *know* all things.’ (1 John 2:20)

Trusting your spiritual intuition means trusting what you hear, because it’ll tell you: (a) what you need to do. (b) which direction you need to take, (c) what needs to be changed in your life.

What a gift, yet we seldom use it. Why? Because we’re afraid we couldn’t possibly *know* anything without thinking it through, or because it just seems “too obvious.” We think to ourselves, “That *can’t* be right.” Or. “I couldn’t possibly do that.” *We argue for our limitations and behold-they become our limitations!*

You’ve got to learn to recognize and trust your spiritual intuition. It’s your connection to the greatest source of wisdom -God’s wisdom! Don’t be surprised if some of what you discern in your spirit sounds like what you’ve *thought a hundred times before*, and then disregarded.

Listen again, “It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose (Philippians 2:13 NIV).

The next time your spiritual intuition tells you something-trust it!

Connie Bell-Wright,

CLC 2nd Vice President



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African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Connie Bell-Wright



30-Nov-23	Membership Totals by Type			Total	Total	Number of Churches	% of Churches
	1 Year	4-Year	Life	Memberships	Number of Churches	w/active	w/active
					(*)	Memberships	Memberships
Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District <i>Bishop Kenneth Monroe</i>	10,560	148	797	11,505	304	267	88%
Piedmont Episcopal District <i>Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr.</i>	9,271	51	565	9,887	224	217	97%
North Eastern Episcopal District <i>Bishop Dennis V. Proctor</i>	3,126	223	531	3,880	147	106	72%
South Atlantic Episcopal District <i>Bishop Mildred B. Hines</i>	4,066	156	527	4,749	146	124	85%
Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District <i>Bishop W. Darin Moore</i>	1,675	56	652	2,403	150	89	59%
Midwest Episcopal District <i>Bishop Michael A. Frencher, Sr.</i>	813	71	153	1,596	100	52	52%
Alabama-Florida Episcopal District <i>Bishop George D. Crenshaw</i>	3,516	126	237	3,879	227	143	63%
Western Episcopal District <i>Bishop Brian R. Thompson</i>	304	22	96	422	36	26	72%
Southwestern Delta Episcopal District <i>Bishop Eric L. Leake</i>	756	266	159	1,181	74	39	53%
Sub Total	34,087	1,119	3,717	39,502	1408	1063	75%
Central Southern Africa Episcopal District <i>Bishop Seth O. Larney</i>							
Western West Africa Episcopal District <i>Bishop Hilliard K. Dogbe</i>				12,609			
Eastern West Africa Episcopal District <i>Bishop Uduak Effiong</i>				7,276			
Angola Annual Conference				16,000			
Bahamas Islands Annual Conference				16			
Grand Total				75,403			

GOALS FOR 2025



- 1 50,000**
ACTIVE LAY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIPS
- 2 100%**
ACTIVE LOCAL CHURCH LAY COUNCIL MINISTRIES
- 3 4,000**
LIFE MEMBERS

Connie Bell-Wright, 2nd. Vice President/Membership Chairperson
clc2vp.conniebellwright@gmail.com
704-724-2759

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Piedmont	11,000
Eastern North Carolina	12,500
Midwest	3,000
North Eastern	5,500
South Atlantic	5,000
Mid Atlantic	4,500
Alabama Florida	5,500
Southwestern Delta	2,000
Western	1,000

Joseph King Davis, Jr., International President
jkdjr1911@frontier.com





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mr. Hank Dobson – Regional Director

Mr. Jerry L. McCombs



WE CARE PRAYER CALL

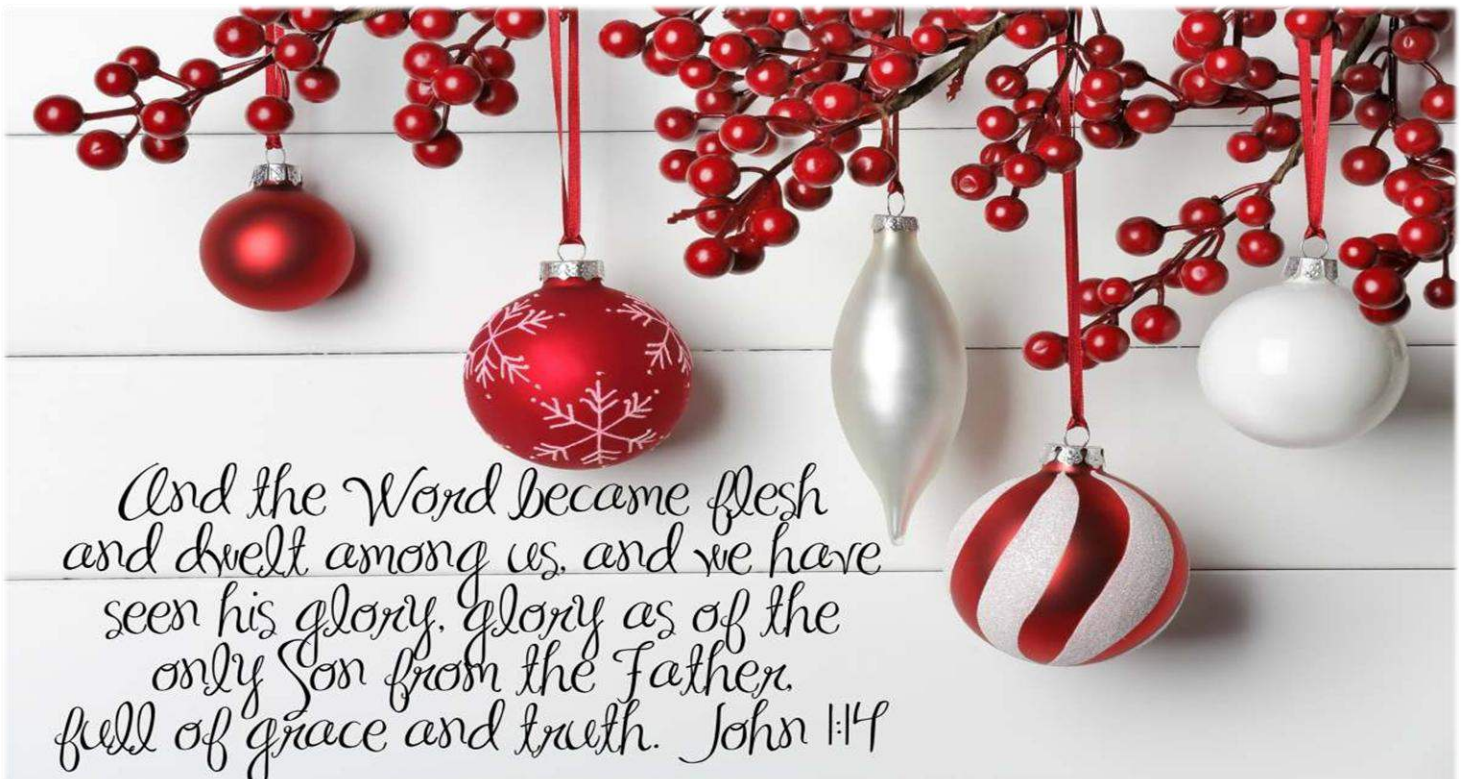
605-313-6058

CODE:773910#

Email Prayer Requests to: clcchaplain21@charter.net

2ND TUESDAYS @ 8:30 P.M. - EST

Jerry McCombs, Chaplain





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mr. Hank Dobson – Regional Director



“A Black and Gold Affair” Goldsboro District Black and Gold Banquet

Sonya M. Powell, contributor

The members of the Goldsboro District (Cape Fear Conference) Lay Council re-established the celebration of its laity with its first Black and Gold Banquet held in over seven years, on the evening of October 28, 2023. We chose the spacious fellowship hall located at Mount Zion A. M. E. Zion Church in Delway, NC for the event. Because of the foresight and dedication of the Goldsboro District Lay Council President, Mr. Monte Forte (who is also the recently elected President of the Cape Fear Conference Lay Council), there were lay members present from every church in our district, as well as ministers of every rank including the eminent Presiding Elder of the Goldsboro District, the Reverend Dr. Andrew Dixon (A. D.) Brown.

Distinguished guests included the International President of the Connectional Lay Council, Mr. Joseph King Davis Jr., our illustrious guest speaker; Dr. Mary Matthews, the immediate Past International President of the Connectional Lay Council, who provided an informative and knowledgeable introduction of our guest speaker; the immediate Past President of the Cape Fear Conference Lay Council, Mr. Oliver Dobson; the President of the Wilmington District Lay Council, Mr. William Evans; and the President of the Lumberton District Lay Council, Mr. Norris Ebron.



Seated at the dais: Mr. Monte Forte, District President; Mr. Oliver Dobson, immediate past President of the Cape Fear Conference Lay Council; Dr. Mary Matthews, immediate past International President of the Connectional Lay Council, Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr., International President of the Connectional Lay Council; Mrs. Ella brown, wife of Presiding Elder A.D. Brown; Rev. Dr. Andrew Dixon Brown, Presiding Elder of the Goldsboro District

The entertainment for the evening featured the vocals of Mrs. Marla Suggs (St. James, Goldsboro) and the keyboard expertise of Mr. Michale Marable (St. Thomas, Roseboro, minister of music). Not only did Mrs. Suggs inspire all present with her renditions of several familiar songs, but Mr. Marable also allowed his fingers to set and keep the spirit of the occasion ever before those in attendance.

Program participants were Presider, Mrs. Bridgette Henry (St. Thomas, Roseboro); Scripture, Mrs. Viah Oates (St. Thomas, Roseboro); Prayer, Mr. Horace Jessup (Harrison Creek); Greetings/Occasion, Mrs. Barbara Peterson (St. Stephen, Garland); Introduction of Special Guests, Mrs. Sonya Powell (St. Thomas, Roseboro); Grace, Mr. Sydney Gray (Union Chapel); Special Presentations by Rev. Dr. Hugh Miller and Mr. Monte Forte; Introduction of Speaker, Dr. Mary Matthews; Remarks, Rev. Dr. A. D. Brown.

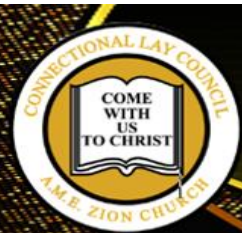
Recognition was given to the Goldsboro District Lay Person of the Year, Mrs. Barbara Peterson. She was presented a plaque by her former pastor, the Rev. Dr. Hugh Miller, which congratulated her on her accomplishments in her local church – St. Stephen, Garland, NC – and recognized her leadership. In addition, Mr. Monte Forte, Cape Fear Conference and Goldsboro District Lay President, acknowledged Mr. Oliver Dobson for his 18 years of service as the Cape Fear Conference Lay Council President.



Goldsboro District Lay Person of the Year
presented by Rev. Dr. Hugh Miller to
Mrs. Barbara Peterson, member,
St. Stephen, Garland

New Cape Fear Conference Lay Council President, Monte Forte, acknowledging and presenting token of appreciation to former Cape Fear Conference President, Oliver Dobson, who served for 18 years.





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mr. Hank Dobson – Regional Director



The speaker for the occasion, Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr. the 12th International President of the Connectional Lay Council, is a member of the St. Mark A. M. E. Zion Church, Durham, NC, and a retired educator who remains active in education even after retirement. He has been affectionately referred to as “an undercover preacher” and he certainly exhibited that quality as he spoke eloquently and passionately to the Goldsboro District during their banquet.



With the Connectional Lay Council’s Third Quadrennial Component, Sharing Our Faith, in mind, President Davis began: “The freedom church, a movement empowered by the holy spirit, from strengthening our fellowship, and now by to sharing our faith, reflects our mission. The black church is now confronted with rising issues that impinge on race and identity. Social concerns such as poverty, gang violence, prison concerns, drug use, unemployment, homelessness, and blatant racism. There are still serious challenges on the African continent where the AME Zion church has the highest growth, such as financial challenges and health care. All these challenges affect us. Our next level of service requires laity right here in this room to increase our commitment, redouble your efforts, retool, and restore with a strong focus for the task ahead in this quadrennial, as we share our faith. How will the Lay Council share our faith and respond to the pandemic of gun violence that has terrorized many of our communities where our children and adults are being slaughtered right in the street, devastating the families of all impacted by these tragic murders and robbing us of the potential greatness deposited in young men and women? How will the Lay Council secure our future and respond in serving the flock calling for greater accountability from the police department?”

He continued: “We cannot sit silently on the sidelines while our communities are destroyed. We must find ways to restore order and peace and tranquility to our neighborhoods. Our churches should be sacred spaces offering help for families, safe places for youth, and hubs for tutoring and mentoring and character education. To strengthen our fellowship, serve our flock, and share our faith the freedom church much be at forefront of the continuing struggle to eliminate value gaps.”

Further, he stated: “Any success and credit in this work belongs first to God and then to the people who have prayed for it. We must be about praying, praising, and promoting the kingdom of our God. The work of lay ministry is not about me or about you, it is about giving God the glory and the honor.”





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mr. Hank Dobson – Regional Director



“We must keep disciple making and kingdom building at the heart of the church. Even amidst changing events, conditions, and circumstances, God has remained unchanged. God knows God cares, God can, God has, and God will again! God blesses by looking beyond our human faults in order to use us for His glory. His grace has no measure, His power knows no bounds.”

“We must continue to embrace ministry opportunities God has sent our way to lead His people. However, there are some things we must leave behind to secure our future. Leave behind our tears, our tragedies, our tempers, our terrible attitudes, our thoughtlessness, our trials, our tribulations, our trash, and our turmoil to arrive at a place of productivity. Change is not our enemy; change is indeed our friend.”

President Davis emphasized that “The Lay Council must continue to evaluate our position, expand our presence, equip our people, explore our possibilities by communicating a transforming message. We must deliver a message not a mess, we must give people hope rather than a hindrance, we must communicate to convert, change, and convince rather than be conniving or controlling. We must be unified in barriers to build new bridges. It is part of our responsibility to become fishers of men. To help others be productive spiritually, fish for souls and change lives forever. What kind of organization does it take for all of this? It takes a “need conscious” lay council, a gift oriented lay council, a ministry balanced lay council,

a biblical lay council, a motivated and mobilized lay council, and a failure resistant lay council. In order to share our faith, we must be strong advocates and witnesses of the litanies and statements we recite. Are we living our words? Do you really believe what you stand and recite as the Lay Council Affirmation of Laity? Do you believe the Lay Council scripture, Proverbs 3:5-6? Do you believe the Lay Council Closing Prayer, the Lay Council Mission, and the Lay Council theme song? Yes, we have accomplished much as a Lay Council, but our work is still undone!”

President Davis closed with: “Our work is still undone, the poor and oppressed still need a refuge, hope, help, and healing. We still have fight for freedom and human dignity and do it with a spirit of love, faith in God and hope for the future as you serve the AME Zion Church.”

“I pray that God will look upon what I have done here this evening as your lay speaker and accept it as my offering of praise. As International President, I know I have “A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify, a never dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky; To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill, oh may it all my powers engage, to do my Master’s will; Arm me with jealous care, as in thy sight to live, and O thy servant Lord prepare, a strict account to give.”





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mr. Hank Dobson – Regional Director



“I’ve shown up, the deed is done, but the struggle continues. It is in the name of Him who is to know is to love, and to love is to serve, Jesus who by faith we call the Christ, Amen.”

The service ended with the Lay Council closing prayer. All who were in attendance enjoyed a delicious catered meal that included pork tenderloin with gravy, baked chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, fresh corn, yeast rolls, assorted desserts, tea, and lemonade.

A special note of thanks is extended to Mr. Monte Forte and the Goldsboro District Lay Council officers who had a vision and worked to make that vision a reality. To God be the glory for his divine guidance and presence for this event. It was a blessed event because He was present from start to finish!



Members of the Goldsboro District enjoying food and fellowship at Black and Gold Lay Council Banquet

Attendees enjoying the festivities during the Goldsboro District Lay Council Black & Gold Banquet





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NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**NORTH EAST REGION CELEBRATES
CONNECTIONAL LAY SUNDAY
NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE
Clinton A.M.E. Zion Church
Ansonia, Connecticut
The Reverend Drian Riley, Pastor**

Rev. Brian Riley, pastor of Clinton, Ansonia, CT. Shelley Henry, Hartford District President spoke at Clinton on Connectional Sunday. Title was "All That We Share". Scripture from the Gospel of John 14:25-27.



**Walls Clarke Temple AME Zion Church
New London, CT
Sis Luanna Pina President Lay Council
Reverend Isaiah McCorkle, Pastor**

Our speaker was Bro DiAngelo Romney Supt of Sunday School.
What a powerful message on how we must work together as a TEAM, and we must be on one accord for the church to move forward under the leadership of our Pastor Isaiah McCorkle.
Respectfully submitted,
Sis Luanna Pina President
Lay Council





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Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



NEW JERSEY CONFERENCE

New Jersey Conference Lay Council

Mrs. Doretha Stevens, President

Mr. Lawrence Johnson, Board Chairman

Sunday, October 15, 2023, the New Jersey Conference Lay Council gathered for our Annual Lay Sunday observance at Varick Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Hackensack, New Jersey. The host pastor, Rev. Rashaun Booker, the First Lady Mrs. Larissa Booker, and the Varick Memorial family warmly welcomed us into the beautiful edifice of God. The afternoon service opened with praise, worship and testimonies that set the atmosphere and ushered in the Holy Spirit. Our president, Mrs. Dottie Stevens welcomed all present and those who were with us virtually. She also recognized our Regional Director, Ms. Rhandi Stith and Mr. Louis Romaine, who surprised us with their presence. Rev. Devon Horton blessed the afternoon with spirit filled selections with Rev. Mack Brandon on the keys.

Ms. Sandra “Muffin” Newman was the Lay Speaker and chose to stand and give us a challenge message entitled “It’s Not Enough”. The message based on the portion of scripture, Luke 22: 20-34, was previously read by our conference president in the order of service. Muffin opened up by reading an excerpt of a poem she wrote entitled “Clarity”. She continued by going through the current theme, “Sharing Our Faith”, and explaining the mission of the Connectional Lay Council of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The three main focal points of the CLC, Evangelism, Encouragement and Edification, were defined and the importance of membership was reinforced. Then the question was asked, “Is your local lay council evangelizing, encouraging and edifying the people of God?”. After the question was posed Muffin broke down the scripture with the focus being that Jesus has already prayed for us that our faith will not fail, and we can be confident we will return to the work that the Lay Council has been called to do by God and our founders.

The message continued with three main points. 1.) “Those who are leaders must be great servants.” 2.) “Like Peter we may have fallen short in our lay council duties and back slid to being simple Simon, but Jesus has already prayed and paid for it all.” 3.) “EVEN JESUS HAD A TEAM. If you think you can do everything on your own, you can, but just know it will only go as far as your capabilities and IT’S NOT ENOUGH”. Next, Muffin reiterated the theme “Sharing Our Faith” by making the statement “It is not imposing our faith, it is not watering down our faith,



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and it is not dressing up our faith. It is simply sharing our faith and sometimes we must share who we are for others to understand our faith. The message was closed by Muffin speaking about who she was and part of her testimony and then giving this challenge: “I charge you today to first evaluate your Lay Council. Do a full audit of its functionality and effectiveness as well as its potential. Then I want you to **Evangelize**: Use the word of God in your actions and interactions. Go outside the four walls of the church. Be relevant. **Encourage**: Give the lay people as well as clergy some hope. Create Jobs, start businesses, really rally the people of God to serve and use the power that is in the lay council. From INFORMED voting to starting Christian OWNED community programs, schools, buying hotels and event venues and serving GOD’S people for real.

Edify: by educating YOURSELF first then the people of God. Start to gather minds for useful dialogue and effective service. MAKE EACH OTHER BETTER. IRON SHARPENS IRON. BUILD YOUR TEAMS and network.

Finally, she challenged all to share their faith, tell their stories. Get creative, write a song or a book, Tell the truth about your failed or successful marriage and the part you played. Expose those sensitive parts of you when you were at your weakest. Demonstrate your faith by the work you do in the Lay Council. **Do a new thing, like working together**. Share your faith by preventing more black bodies from dropping at the hand of law enforcement and negligent health care professionals. Share your faith by actually knowing who and what you are voting for, not just because they claim a certain denomination or because they look like you or the same sex as you or if they represent a certain political party. Share your faith by educating yourself about other cultures and learning to be more open minded. Share your faith by showing love to all people.

Whatever we are doing now, Is Not enough but Jesus has already petitioned for us that our faith will not fail so when you leave here, GO EVANGELIZE, GO ENCOURAGE, GO EDIFY. MAKE IT ENOUGH



Pictured: Rev. Devon Horton, Ms. Rhandi Stith, Ms. Sandra “Muffin” Newman, Presiding Elder of the Jersey City District, Rev. Dr. Odinga L. Maddox, II





Pictured: Mr. Louis Romaine, Ms. Sandra Newman, Ms. Rhandi Stith, Mrs. Dottie Stevens, Mr. Lawrence Johnson III



Ms. Rhandi Stith, Mrs. Dottie Stevens, Mr. Lawrence Johnson III



Jersey Conference Clergy and Laity Celebrating the Laity together.



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**1st A.M.E. Zion Church
Paterson, New Jersey
Doris Fisher. Local President
The Reverend Dr. Douglas Maven**

On OCTOBER 15th 1st Church Paterson celebrate our Lay Council Day. Our speaker was Dale Skip Vanresiler on Sharing Our Faith. The 5 W's, who, what, where, why, and when. Have a blessed day.

CENTENNIAL AFICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

Closter, New Jersey

**Jamie Graham, Local President
The Reverend Charles E. Wilson III, Pastor**

Centennial thanks Sis. Clarice Jarvis, the Jersey City District Lay Council President for bringing a powerful and timely word the Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church in Closter, NJ for Connectional Lay Sunday. Pastor, Rev. Charles E. Wilson, III, Local Lay Council President, Jamie Graham and the Laity of were truly energized. The Connectional Theme: Sharing Our Faith.





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Clinton Chapel A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Middletown, New Jersey

Monique Whitehead, Local President

The Reverend Danika Frink, Pastor

Clinton Chapel AME Zion Church, Rev. Danika Frink, Pastor, located in Middletown, NJ, observed and celebrated Lay Sunday on October 29, 2023. The Local Lay President, Sis. Monique Whitehead presided over her maiden Lay Sunday, and members participated in the worship service. The Lay Speaker was one of Clinton Chapel's new member and drummer, Bro. Rashad Jackson. He delivered a powerful message and asked a thought-provoking question, "Do you really think you're in control?" His message was timely and inspirational as he reminded us that we are in the hands of our creator and that our life is truly not our own.

Three new laity members received their membership cards and the entire laity congregated around the altar as they were led in the rededication to the Laity. We continue to strive to reach out to our laity members and local community as we invite all to "Come with us to Christ."



Sis. Monique Whitehead,
Clinton Chapel Lay Council President





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MOUNT ZION A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Eatontown, New Jersey

Rebecca Frazier, Local President

The Reverend Catherine Solomon, Pastor

Mount Zion A.M.E. Zion Church, Eatontown, NJ where the Rev. Catherine Solomon is the Pastor and Sis. Rebecca Frazier is the Local Lay Council President. They had their Lay Sunday Observance on Sunday, October 15, 2023. Brother Franklin White was the Lay Council Sunday Speaker. The meditation was, "Our Faith, Share It". Not only did Bro. White deliver a strong message, but he also provided his musical talents through song.

Rev. Catherine Solomon was very active in the Lay Council before becoming a pastor and continues remain faithful to the Lay Council. Her first meditation was at a Conference Lay Council Prayer Breakfast. She supports and knows of the "Power in the Pews".



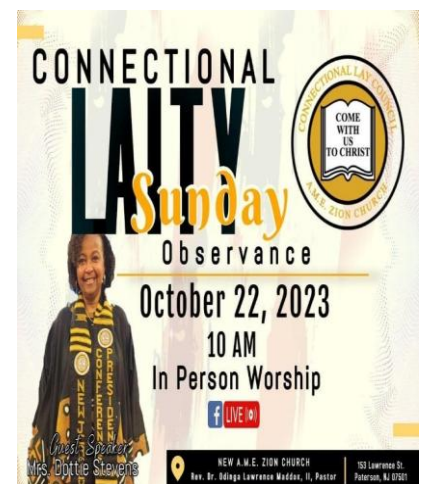
NEW A. M. E. ZION CHURCH
Patterson, New Jersey
Mrs. Teresa Callaway, Local Lay Council President
Rev. Dr. Odinga L Maddox II
Jersey City District Presiding Elder and Church Pastor



Laity Sunday Observance at New Church! Mrs. Dottie Stevens, President of the New Jersey Conference Lay Council gave a powerful message, "Keep the Faith; Hold On, He's Coming." The scripture came from the book of First Samuel, the 1st chapter, verses 1-11.

Mrs. Stevens shared how faith kept her in a time that some may have given up. She said especially in hard times, we must hold on to our faith and believe that He's coming. When you hold on to your faith, and trust in Him, he WILL, I said he WILL answer and can even give you more than you even prayed for.

She challenged us to recognize, and to spread the good news about His grace and mercy. Be his disciples and tell everyone how He keeps His promises. Share our testimonies and how you Held on until He showed up.





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**Price Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church
Atlantic City, New Jersey
Gloria Parks Local President
The Rev. Lakesha Mobley Pastor**



Sunday, October 15, 2023, **Price Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church, Atlantic City NJ** Celebrated **Lay Sunday!**

Our Pastor, **Rev. Lakiesha Mobley**, and **Local Lay Council President, Sis. Gloria Parks** had **Sis. Rosalind Agurs, from Charlotte, NC** as the **Lay Speaker**. Rev. Lakeisha, new to Price Memorial, the Camden District, and the New Jersey Conference joined right in with planning a great celebration.

To God we give the praises.



**Shrewsbury Avenue AME Zion Church
Red Bank, New Jersey
Mr. Lawrence Johnson, Local President
The Reverend Janet Jones, Pastor**

Shrewsbury Ave AME Zion Church celebrated Lay Sunday. Mr. Terrell K. Jones from Clinton Memorial AME Zion Church, Newark was the guest speaker. His pastor, Rev George Maize IV accompanied him and provided a musical. Our local president is Mr. Lawrence Johnson. Mr. Johnson is also the chaplain of the NEED Lay Council and the chairman of the Board of Lay Activities for the New Jersey conference.

Our guest speaker was Mr. Terrell K Jones. Terrell is a member of Clinton Memorial an AME Zion Church in Newark New Jersey where he is also the Pastor's Steward. His message, "Trust Him" was based on Proverbs 3:5-6. Rev. Maize, Terrell's pastor traveled with him. He played and sang a musical tribute to Terrell. He also assisted with the music for the worship service. Terrell was also accompanied by his mother, Herlene Jones, president of the Lay council at Clinton Memorial and his twin sister, Tamika Jones. Shrewsbury Avenue Lay Council members also participated in the various aspects of the service.





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**St James A.M.E. Zion Church
Perth Amboy, New Jersey
Toni Terrell, Local President
The Reverend Amos Dickerson Jr, Pastor**

This is pictures from ST James Perth Amboy. Local president Toni Terrell Speaker was Andrea Rivera First Lady Kathy Dickerson and Pastor Amos Dickerson Jr





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ST. JOHN A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

LAKEWOOD, NJ

Monique Wilkerson

The Rev. Percy Smith, Pastor

Our very own Cherisse Dew was the speaker of the hour. She spoke from Romans 8:12 "Sharing Our Faith." She said we must share our stories, our life issues.

If we don't share our Faith, then people won't understand the goodness of God.

She showed an example by passing out bracelets that said Faith for the women and A Cross for the men and said she shared her Faith just by giving a bracelet.

She also made the church accountable to "Do the Work" and "Share Our Faith."

Submitted by,
Monique Wilkerson, Local Lay President





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**St Paul A.M.E. Zion Church
Ewing, New Jersey,
Linda McRae, Lay Council President
Reverend Dr. Melanie Miller, Pastor**

Local Lay Council celebrated Connectional Lay Sunday, with speaker, Linda McRae, Lay President. The message titled "A Closer Look at Psalm 23", Psalm 23 is one of the most well-known passages in the bible, and arguably the most famous. I talked about how David reflects on how God cared for him, by pulling images from his life and writing this incredible Psalm.

"Sharing Our Faith" was the foundation of this message, Come with us to Christ!

I have enclosed a few pictures taken during service from the pulpit, unfortunately, no group pictures were taken. The dais included Sis Jane Jenkins- Worship Leader, Rev. Dr. Melanie Miller, Pastor, Sis Doris Hollis- Appeal (Camden District Lay President) Linda McRae-Speaker, Bro, Benjamin Jenkins-Morning Prayer, participants in (Pulpit) pictures, There were other members who participated in the program. Barbara Johnson, Leroy Whetstone and Davina Thompson.

Please forward the mailing address for the appeal. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,

Linda McRae
Local Lay President



**St. Stephen A.M.E. Zion Church
Asbury Park, New Jersey
Hattie Frazier, Local President
The Reverend Quavon Newton, Pastor**

Our celebration started out by inviting our oldest life member (98 years old) to come for service. She resides in her apartment along and make her own meals. Non others than Sis Ella Ford of Neptune NJ. Laity blessed her with a plaque and fresh fall flowers.

Pastor Quavon Newton allowed, 1st Lady Ashley Newton, to be our speaker who did a marvelous job. Topic:" Everything I'm Not Made Me Everything I Am" Congregations hung on to every word that was spoken.

Our Presiding Elder Latricia Godette & 1st Gentleman Dante Godette were in attendance. One of the highlights that came from the service was a young lady join church. Another blessing was that we gain another life Lay member and a regular member.

Quavon Newton, Pastor
Sis Hattie Frazier, local President





Galaxy S22



Galaxy S22



Galaxy S22





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ST. THOMAS A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Sommerville, New Jersey

Reverend Donna Stewart, Pastor



TODAY was a good day! St. Thomas A.M.E. Zion Church, Somerville, N.J. Observed Connectional Laity Day. ❤️💛

Pastor: Rev. Donna Stewart; Local Lay Council President: None at the present time. Lay presenter: Patricia Milligan - Sharing OUR Faith ❤️💛

One came to re-dedicate her life to Christ!

One youth came to support her mom and then gave her life to Christ!

Her younger brother gave his life to Christ several months ago.

We had guests, two who were on the sick and shut-in list were in the building!

20 people were "in the house" today! I'm so glad that Jesus lifted

me 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷

Submitted by Rev. Donna Stewart





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Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church

Burlington, New Jersey

Sharon Anderson Green – Local Lay Council President

The Rev. Larry D. Davis, Jr. – Pastor

Lay Connectional Day-Theme "Sharing Our Faith"

Wesley A.M.E. Zion church of Burlington celebrated Connectional Lay Sunday on October 15, 2023, during the morning service. We were privileged and honored to have a special greeting virtually by our Regional Lay Council Director, Rhandi M. Stith who not only gave us a warm greeting but also, a brief history of Lay Day. The official Lay Day, held annually the third Sunday of October, was initiated by Dr. Elizabeth Betty Virginia Stith, the 3rd Connectional President, and the first woman President, who stated that the Denomination was founded by Lay People.



Sister Dorothea Stevens
Conference Lay Council Director

The Worship service was beautifully led by the local V.P. of Lay, Sylvia Cooper. Wesley had the youth involved for the first time this year, starting with the Welcome, History of Lay, and the Reading of the Appeal given by Emme Pitt, Rachel Lawrence, and Reginald Lawrence Jr, respectively. Deaconess Melvene Jamison, Lay Secretary, led the Affirmation of Laity and Sister Cheryl Green, Lay Chaplain, gave a riveting prayer.



Bro. Jerome Stevens

Members enjoyed the Worship, Congregational, and Musical Selections sung by the choir and led by Directors, Rosalyn Lawrence and Sharon Green, accompanied by musicians, Maurice Eubanks and David Lizaire. It was beautiful to see our newly stoled members, Deaconess Allie Bryant, Joyce Payne, Cheryl Green, and Deaconess Diane Palmer.

Wesley's speaker was our own Conference Lay Council Director, Dorothea Stevens accompanied by her husband, Jerome Stevens, who is also our District Vice-President.



Sister Stevens had one challenging Question which led into her message "Are You Hanging" or "Standing on the Rock" (of Jesus). Throughout her message, Sister Stevens let you know that Jesus "hung" on the cross for us, so we should now be "Standing on the Rock (of Faith.)" Sister Stevens quoted several scriptures, Isaiah 33v3-6, Psalm 121v. 7-8, 1 Peter 2 v24, among the few regarding having a sure foundation, standing on the solid rock, freeing us, and Jesus taking on our wounds and illnesses on the Cross. Sister Stevens challenged us to make a list of our unsaved friends and relatives and Offer up Prayers that they will be saved and be freed from the clutches of the Devil. Trust in the Lord, Stand Firm, get rid of the guilty conscience of the past.



Wesley A.M.E. Zion (Burlington) Lay Council Members

Seated (L to R) La Tasha Middlebrook, Evelyn Johnson, Joann Berkeley, Allie Bryant, Cheryl Green, Jerome Stevens, Dorothea Stevens, Sharon Green, and Joyce Payne.

Standing (L to R) Geneva Green, Rosalyn Cummings, Melvene Jamison, Betty James, Pastor Larry D. Davis, First Lady Jonetta Davis, Sylvia Cooper, Ron Hill, Diane Palmer, E. Delores Cowherd, Elizabeth Richardson, Alonda Hill, and Talibah Washington





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Pastor Larry D. Davis added a touch to the service by adding an anointing portion for those who wanted to do the work of the Lord, assisted by Minister Lady Jonetta Davis, Reverend Frederick James, and visiting Pastor, Danica Frink.

The Litany to rededication was led by Sharon Green, President and cited; a Spiritual high time was had by all. Kudos to those who took part in the program, in person and on-line (not pictured) were Tony Jamison who designed the program and took pictures, as well as Saidah Johnson, and Rafael Victor for their Tech assistance.

Submitted by Sharon Green

President of the Wesley A.M.E. Zion Burlington Lay Council

WESLEY MEMORIAL A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Rosenhayn, New Jersey

Vanessa Logan, Local President

The Rev. Wayne DeShields II, Pastor

Pictures From Wesley Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church Laity Day. Our Speaker Brother Kai Kellam, Sister Vanessa Logan, Local President of the Lay Council, Sis. Belinda Holloway & Sis. Teresa Cadogan (not pictured), Lay Persons of the Year. Wesley Loves Our Laity!!





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NEW YORK CONFERENCE

Long Island District Lay Council

The program was presided by Sis. Jacqueline Edwards
The Call to Worship Sis. Jacqueline Edwards,
The Invocation: Sis. Jacqueline Edwards
Responsive Reading: Sis. Sandra Green and Sis. Edna Lee
Affirmation of Laity: Sis. Phyllis Norman
Scripture: Leisa Mitchell
Hymn prerecorded
Prayer: Bro Darryl Wright
Offering Appeal: Rev. Leonard Edwards
Announcements
Song

A Special ZOOM service was held on Sunday October 15th sponsored by the Long Island District Lay Council.

Program opened with singing. Followed by The Order of Worship. Sis. Jacqueline introduced the guest speaker, Bro. Simon Rutledge Historian. Bro. Rutledge traced our history and heritage. The Title of his speech was "Sharing Our Faith by learning one's history and heritage from the beginning of times." He spoke about our history the early days in the bible and the journey of slavery up to present time. Including Juneteenth. At the end of the presentation time was allotted for Q & A.

**Followed by The Litany of Rededication
Remarks
Program ended with the: Lay Council Closing Prayer**



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Calvary/Smith Thompson A.M.E. Zion Churches

Jamaica, New York

Israel Singleton Local President - Calvary

Richard Loudermilk Local President - Smith-Thompson

The Reverend A, Alfred Carson, Pastor

Deaconess Dorian Carson delivered a dynamic message, Her message was about our faith in our daily lives. The message was from Romans 12th Chapter Verses 1 - 21. Steward Ariana Witcher was our Worship Leader, who did a fantastic job. Call to Worship, Lay Leader Israel Singleton. Scripture was read by Richard Loudermilk. Affirmation of Faith, Georgia Birthright. Welcome address Sister Audrey Scott, Announcements Deaconess Sister Rita Williams. Deaconess Carson was introduced by Sister Lorraine Singleton after reading her Biography. Offering was lifted by Lay Leader Israel Singleton and Lay Leader Richard Loudermilk. The service was sincerely enjoyed by everyone in attendance.

Deaconess Dorian Carson delivered a dynamic message, Her message was about our faith in our daily lives. The message was from Romans 12th Chapter Verses 1 - 21. Steward Ariana Witcher was our Worship Leader, who did a fantastic job. Call to Worship, Lay Leader Israel Singleton. Scripture was read by Richard Loudermilk. Affirmation of Faith, Georgia Birthright. Welcome address Sister Audrey Scott, Announcements Deaconess Sister Rita Williams. Deaconess Carson was introduced by Sister Lorraine Singleton after reading her Biography. Offering was lifted by Lay Leader Israel Singleton and Lay Leader Richard Loudermilk. The service was sincerely enjoyed by everyone in attendance.
God Bless





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Clinton Memorial AME Zion Church

Greenport, New York

Jacqueline A. Edwards, Lay Council President

The Reverend Natalie R. Wimberly, Pastor

Clinton Memorial celebrated Lay Sunday on October 15th, 2023. The Local Lay President Jacqueline A. Edwards presided, as officers and members participated in the worship service, Sister Violet Reed lead us in a Responsive Reading that was adapted and composed by our president, Brother C. Allen Edwards read the scripture following Brother Wendell Mealy lead us to the throne of grace. Brother Russell Smith Jr. Introduced our speaker and Sister Julia English blessed our hearts with a solo selection of "Guide me O, Thou Great Jehovah". The Lay Speaker Sister Grace Brown, a former Greenport resident delivered the message. The Biblical text was Romans 10:13-17, Message Title "We Must Share Our Faith" She reminded us that we must share our faith even in difficult times, even to those that may have known us in times when we faltered. How can others believe if we don't tell them and let other SEE the Jesus in us, it may be the only Jesus they see.

We were blessed to receive an offering of \$100.00 to support the CLC's initiative supporting our colleges.

Members joined the LI District Lay Council for an afternoon virtual celebration of the Connectional Lay Sunday Observance where were blessed and graced to have local historian Brother Simon Rutledge.

We are thankful to our pastor Reverend Natalie R. Wimberly who is always supportive and encouraging of the laity as we continue to strive to share our faith and to be of service to others, our churches, our community and above all to God as we live out our motto "Come with us to Christ."

Jacqueline A. Edwards
Local Lay President
Clinton Memorial AME Zion Church





Jacqueline Edwards & Grace Brown



Russell Smith, Grace Brown, Violet Reed,
Hattie McKnight, Jacqueline Edwards, Janie
Monique, Melanie Knuts, Eli Murphy, Leon
Creighton





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Durham Lay Day Celebration
Bay Shore, New York
Sandra Green, Local Lay Council President
The Rev. Leonard A. Edwards, Pastor

The Durham A.M.E. Church, Bay Shore, NY where the Rev. Leonard A. Edwards is the pastor held their annual Lay Sunday observance on Sunday, October 29, 2023. The theme for the morning was The Freedom Church: A Movement Empowered by the Holy Spirit - Sharing Our Faith, the special guest speaker for the morning was Sis. Sharnisha O'Garro of the St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, Quogue, NY, her topic was Representation Matter coming from II Corinthians 5:16-20.

Sis. O'Garro challenged the laity on how we were representing Christ and being a church like no other by asking the following: Are we true ambassadors for Christ? What do we represent and how? Does our behavior, thoughts, or actions represent Christ or the Kingdom? Asked us what is our goal? This message blessed and was well received by all her heard it both in person and online via Zoom. Rev. Leonard A. Edwards had to profess that she was stepping on his toes and charged him to do more to ensure that Durham was a church like no other!

We were thankful to have the support of the membership in making sure the observance was successful with the participation of the following individuals: Bro. James Kelty, Sis. Oilyski Williams, Sis. Helen Jones, Sis. Anita Turner, Sis. Donna Hensley, and Sis. Kim Rohadfox. To God be the Glory for the great things He continues do, we continue to be blessed as we are blessed!

Submitted by,
Sis. Sandra Green, Durham Lay Council President
Rev. Leonard A. Edwards, Pastor





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Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church
Mount Vernon, New York
Wendy Bratcher, Local President
The Reverend Dr. Stephen Pogue, Local President**

Lay Sunday Observance
Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church
Wendy Bratcher, President,
Sunday, October 22, 2023

It was a great and wonderful day! On Sunday, October 22nd Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church celebrated the anniversary of the denomination. God was truly edified and gloried as our very own, Reverend Dr. Stephen W. Pogue, preached an awesome sermon.

“Sharing Our Faith” was highlighted with the Stoling celebration of 14 New Lay Council members, whereby Pastor Pogue presided over the reading of the Litany Commitment and the Dedication of the Life Member Stole.



In addition, the Lay Council Mildred R. Faulkner Scholarship awarded (5) college freshman, with \$500 checks to use for college expenses.

Submitted by Wendy Bratcher,
President, Lay Council



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**Greater Hood A.M.E. Zion Church
New York, New York
Virginia Montague, Local President
The Reverend Wendell Lancaster, Local President**

LAY SUNDAY CELEBRATION AT GREATER HOOD MEMORIAL AME Zion CHURCH

Sunday, October 15, 2023

The Lay Council Day celebration at Greater Hood Memorial AME Zion Church in Harlem, was led by Sis. Virginia Montague, President. The special guest speaker was Gail Wright-Sirmans, noted civil rights attorney, a Certified Mediator, She is a Distinguished Fellow with the International Academy of Mediators and on the Council of the International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution. and former Counsel to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

Ms. Wright- Sirmans chose the 6th Chapter, verses 8-13 of Isaiah as her inspiration for her commitment to civil rights for justice. In the Scripture, she paraphrased, the quote, "send me" in her decision to offer herself in the civil rights issue.

Ms. Wright-Sirmans spoke on "the role of the church in the civil rights struggle, then and now" and asked the question, if called, will we go?

She shared some of her experiences as an attorney working to address the unjust situations impacting and affecting the lives of African Americans in this society.

Her presentation was well received by the visitors and congregation.

Pastor Lancaster most graciously surrendered his pulpit to the Lay Council President who led the Service with his able assistance in navigating the Order of Service. Pastor Lancaster set the spiritual atmosphere with the Invocation.

The persons in the photo are, left to right:

The pastor, Rev. Wendell Lancaster; Sis. Jasmine Taylor read The History and Mission of the Connectional Lay Council, Sis. Chrystal Langley read the Scripture; Sis. Madison Langley, the Affirmation of Faith; and Sis. Betty Butler, a member. Although not pictured, Sis. Patricia Waller offered the alter prayer.

The Service concluded with acknowledgement and recognition of the presence of the NYC District President, Sis. Joan Capel by President Montague and Rev. Lancaster.





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

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Ms. Rhandi Sithi – Regional Director





Connectional Lay Council

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Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



INSTITUTIONAL A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Yonkers, New York

Linda Tyson, Local President

The Rev. Simon Ajose, Pastor

Institutional celebrated Connectional Lay Council Lay Sunday on October 29, 2023. Our choir small, but mighty in their commitment ushered in the worship service singing to the Glory of God. The choir dressed in Lay Council colors Black and Gold began our worship experience by singing "How Great Thou Art."

Our Pastor, The Reverend Simon Ajose brought a message of our Quadrennial Theme "Sharing our Faith." The bible text was from Luke 18:35-42. Rev. Ajose's message topic was "I came to see Jesus." Rev. Ajose preached a powerful message about the blind man who was steadfast in his faith, that ONLY JESUS could heal him. The blind man would not let anyone stop him from receiving his blessing of sight from Jesus. Once Jesus healed him, the man praised GOD and followed Jesus.

The local President, Linda Tyson, brought greetings and shared information on the purpose and objectives of the Connectional Lay Council. I used the bible text Matthew 28:18-20 in this passage God is clear in His Word and He wants to command us to make disciples. This means sharing our faith with others. As we continue to disciple others, we must encourage them in their spiritual walk and teach them to observe God's commands.

We concluded our worship service with the Lay Council closing prayer.

Humbly submitted,
Linda Tyson, Local President
Institutional AME Zion Church





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African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**Jackson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church
Hempstead, New York
Eleanor Poole, Local President
The Reverend Isidoa Branch, Jr. Pastor
LAY COUNCIL OBSERVANCE SUNDAY**

Welcome to Jackson Memorial AME Zion Worship experience, observed on Laity Sunday, October 15, 2023, during the Sunday morning worship.

Sis. Mamie Ashley presided over the service; Responsive Reading by Mr. Bobi Buck; scripture was read by Sis. Sylvia McNair, Prayer by Sis. Diedre Davis.

The music was provided by the Jackson Memorial Chorale under the leadership of Mr. Leonard Carter, Music Director.

Mrs. Calandra Branch, First Lady of Jackson Memorial AME Zion introduced the Guest Speake, Sis. Ternisia Lynn Calhoun from Varick Memorial AME Zion Church in Brooklyn, NY. she will speak after a selection by the chorale choir.

Sis. Calhoun thanked the pastor Rev. Isidoa Branch, Jr. for the opportunity to present the Lay Day message. She greeted the congregation, said a prayer, and presented a powerful message titled "Sharing Our Faith: Are You Ready?"

Bro. George Ashley Led us in the Affirmation of Laity.

Following the message, Reverend Branch made an appeal for a special offering to be donated to Hood Seminary, in Salisbury, NC., Livingstone College, Salisbury, NC and Clinton College, Rock Hill, SC.

Rev. Branch gave remarks, thanking Sis. Calhoun for her inspiring message He also gave thanks to all who participated in the service.

The Lay Council Closing Prayer was prayed by all.

Submitted by: Eleanor Poole,
Long Island District Lay Council President

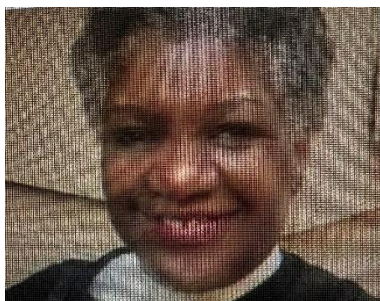


Mother A.M.E. Zion Church
New York, New York
Lovell C. Jackson, President
The Reverend Malcom Byrd, Pastor

The North Eastern Episcopal District
Connectional Lay Sunday

The Mother A.M.E. Zion Church Celebrates Connectional Lay Sunday
The Lay Council Theme for 2023-2024: The Freedom Church – “Sharing Our Faith”

On Sunday October 15, 2023, members and friends gathered in the house of God for Connectional Lay Sunday celebrating the Laity during morning worship service. The Reverend Audrey Williamson, Th. M, The Rev. Nina M. Neeley Minister for Christian Education, opened the service with the Call to Worship thanking and praising God for the life he has so richly given us. Rev. Audrey Williamson offered the Prayer of Invocation, thanking the almighty and gracious God for the privilege of worshipping together on this day, among the community of saints. **The Hymn of Praise was - #433 “I Am Thine O Lord”** ^{[[1]]}_{SEP} The Affirmation of Faith was led by Sis. Debra Chappelle-Polk, Mother A.M.E. Zion Lay Council Financial Secretary, followed by Sis. Chloe Jones, who read the scripture lesson, Mathew 28:16-19. Sis. Lovell Jackson, Mother A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council President, begin her welcome address with the history of the Lay Members Association of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church leading into as Christians we share our faith in the relationships that we have with God in many ways. For example, we can share our testimony about what God has done for us with ours. Our testimonies are among the most powerful tools we have. Another tool is simply listening. Being a good and quiet listener to someone who needs to be heard is faith sharing. Don't pretend to have all the answers. Simply listen. Other Faith Sharing tools include being a friend by showing love and concern to our neighbors. Be good to your word, speak kindly, and be a good example for other people who are watching whether you know it or not. The prayer selection was **“All Night, All Day (Angels Watching Over Me)**. Sis. Doris Rhem gave the Morning Prayer. Following the Tithes and Offering, the Mother Zion Music Ministry sang the Lay Council theme song **“Onward Christian Laity.”** The sermonic selection, **“Take Me To The King”** was song by Sis Natasha Cooper prepared the church for the morning message.



Reverend Audrey Williamson message taken from 2 Kings 20 Topic .”**When God changes god’s mind, subtext prayer changes things”** Her message was very informative and moving letting us knows that we need to go to the King because prayer changes things. We need to be grateful and thankful of our God given gifts. After the service, members of the Mother A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council took a group picture in front of the altar.

Our Connectional Lay Sunday worship service celebrating the Laity was spiritually moving. It was a joyous occasion, and we thank all who made it possible.



Submitted by Lovell C. Jackson, President Mother A.M.E. Zion Church Lay Council





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**Mount Hope A.M.E. Zion Church
White Plains, New York
Gwen Rymer Local Lay Council President
The Reverend Dr, Gregory R Smith, Sr. Pastor**

Mt. Hope AMEZ Church in White Plains, NY celebrated a glorious Connectional Lay Sunday on October 15, at our morning worship service. Using our program cover, Onward Christian Laity - Walking by Faith, our congregation continued our faith walk with joyful praise and worship songs. Following our walk, we observed a black history tribute to Simone Biles. However, in keeping our theme intact "Sharing Our Faith", we were delighted to introduce our guest speaker, Sis. Rhandi Stith, NY Conference President of Lay Council. Sis. Stith rendered a thorough, spiritual, enlightening, and remarkable rendition of how to share our faith. We thank God for you Rhandi and we Appreciate you. Our service closed with the rededication of laity and our Lay Council closing prayer. Rhandi Stith brought our attention to

The Significance of Our Faith. We come Today as a Voice speaking to and for Lay people

Our Theme Study for this season is SHARING OUR FAITH

I Peter 1:3-12 gives us our thought and challenge for you Today

My scripture reference is [1 Peter 1:3-12](#). I will be reading it from the English Standard Version That anchor is our faith. What have you put your faith in? How important is it to have faith? Where do we find a faith strong enough to make it through the storms of life? Peter knows how important faith is and he gives us a great picture of faith, a faith that we can anchor deep with, and a faith which will hold us during the storms of life.

If WE are going to be effective Lay leaders, we must learn to lead because you can't lead where you aren't going. We must lead by example. If our motto is Come With Us To Christ therefore in order for me to share Christ, I must share him possess and have a relationship with him myself Then help somebody as my telling you is helping me.

Here are five simple steps anyone can use to help those who've never met Christ understand what it really means to have a relationship with Jesus: BECOME THE DIFFERENCE THAT MAKES A/DIFFERENCE. To share our faith, we should

1. Start with your testimony.

People can debate a lot of things but there is one thing that is not debatable and that is your personal story. If you look in the New Testament, you'll see many examples of people with no theological degrees or biblical training who were the most effective witnesses for Christ. One of the most successful tools you have to reach people for the gospel is your own story.



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Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



2. Avoid debates.

When speaking about your [faith](#), stay single-mindedly focused on [Jesus](#), not religion. Jesus –not some religious system – is who changes lives. Don't get sidelined by peripheral issues or secondary things. Instead, focus on who Christ is, what He has done and how Jesus can put all the broken pieces of one's life back together if he or she will trust in Him.

3. Keep it simple and rely on God.

The gospel, in and of itself, is simple. It is about the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. While it's important to have a basic understanding of God's Word to be an effective witness for Christ, this doesn't mean you must know the entire Roman Road or have a theology degree. Memorizing a few verses such as [Romans 10:13](#), [Romans 10:9](#) or [John 1:12](#), is all you need for a reference point to communicate God's promise that if an individual is willing to turn to Him, He will give forgiveness.

4. Be transparent.

If there is anything that's a turnoff in today's society, it's people that come across as disingenuous or unauthentic. Don't shy away from your own struggles, seasons of doubt and uncertainties about God.

5. Ask for God's help.

Are you willing to inconvenience yourself and step out of your comfort zone to reach out to someone who is going through a tough time? Ask God to use you and give you the right words, at the right times. Ask for wisdom on who to talk to and how you should talk to them. Let God lead you and ask Him to fill you with His spirit.

At the end of the day...

...the greatest thing you can do in this life is point someone else to Christ. You can't make a person say "yes" to [Jesus](#) – that's not your responsibility – but you can be a catalyst to help someone understand that his or her whole purpose in this life is to have a relationship with Christ.

God wants to use you. God can use you. You may feel ill equipped, but remember, it's not based on your personality, how well you articulate or how many [Bible](#) verses you know. Rather, it's about your willingness to say, "Lord, here I am. Send me."



Ms. Rhandi M. Stith
North Eastern Regional Director and New York Conference President
Morning Speaker



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**Park Street A. M. E. Zion Church
Peekskill, New York
Shirley R. Thompson, Lay Council President
The Rev. Robert Kilpatrick II, Pastor**

On Sunday Park Street AME Zion celebrated connectional lay Sunday. Our speaker for the morning was brother Paul Edwards who is a member of our congregation. Following is an excerpt from his message to us on Faith:

"What's my inspiration to share my faith"

Philippians 4:6-7

Worry about nothing but pray about everything.

Faith is the building blocks of success, to be successful people need faith in not just the possible but the impossible.

Our Pastor Rev. Kilpatrick introduced me to the acronym PUSH Pray Until Something Happens and that reminded me of the Lesson I learned about the Native American Rain Dance... The fact that the Raindance is proven to be 100% Effective how can this be? Because they don't stop dancing until it rains... That's faith that there is something larger than you and you are simply here to play your part in it.

Why do I share my faith? I think about how my faith will serve me and others

Hebrews 6:10 New King James Version (NKJV) For God is not unjust to forget **your work and labor of love** which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Sometimes the only thing left to do is say Hallelujah.

Thank You to my Wife Jennifer and our daughter Natasha, Kiah and Kylie for motivating my faith...And my Late Mother Annie P. Lowe Edwards for inspiring and molding my Faith.

The message was very encouraging and uplifting and enjoyed by all.

Yours In Christ

Shirley R. Thompson
Lay Council President

Rev. Robert Kilpatrick II
Pastor Park Street A. M. E. Zion Church





Rush Temple AM.E. Zion Church
Jamaica, New York
Gail Carlisle, Local President
The Reverend Xavier Hunter, Pastor
 Order of Worship
 Rush Temple AMEZ Church
 Laity Day Oct. 15, 2023

Call to Worship – Rev. Xaver Hunter
 Invocation – Sis. Gail Carlisle
 Introduction of Sis. Kathryn Warren Presiding
 Scripture – 3: 3-9 Deaconess Lucy Salley for Laity
 Apostles' Creed
 Affirmation for Laity
 Altar Call Rev. Xavier Hunter
 Musical Selection – “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”
 Morning Prayer- Sis. Addie Moss
 Church Announcements – Rev. Xavier Hunter
 Laity for Rededication – Deaconess Betty Johnson
 Musical Selection Choir
 Sermon – “You Couldn’t Wait” Exodus 32:1-12 Rev. Xavier Hunter
 Christian Invitation
 Morning Offering
 Benediction





Connectional Lay Council

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NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



REV. DR. CHARLES W. YOUNG, PASTOR
SHAW A.M.E. ZION CHURCH, Corona, NY

Shaw A.M.E. Zion Church
Corona, New York
Jennifer Joy, Local President
The Reverend Dr Charles W. Young, Pastor



REV. DAVID A. AIKEN, JR.

On the Eighth Sunday in Kingdomtide, the Zion Methodist Church as a whole celebrated CONNECTIONAL LAY SUNDAY 2023 focusing on the **Theme: The Freedom Church: A Movement Empowered by the Holy Spirit.** The Shaw A.M.E. Zion Church under the pastorate of Rev. Dr. Charles w. Young, observed Connectional Lay Sunday on October 15, 2023, at its 11 AM Worship. Shaw was blessed to have members and friends wear the Laity colors, Black and Gold. Following the 2023 denominational program, lay members also served as worship participants leading in the Call to Worship (Bro. Earl Young), Invocation (Sis. Mona Baptiste), Affirmation of Laity (Sis. Viola Brandenburg), Laity Appeal (Sis. Jennifer Joy, Local President, Lay Council) and The Litany for Rededication of Laity (Sis. Bessie Hicks). The Shaw Church was blessed with a powerful message for the laity from its member, Bro. David A. Aiken, Jr. (who recently thereafter received his Deacon Orders to become Rev. David A. Aiken, Jr.). Elucidating from Matthew 25:31-46, Rev. Aiken, Jr. preached on the topic, "Is The Evidence On Your Side". The sermon pointed how Jesus talks about His coming again and how He will judge us, separating the sheep from the goats. The theme highlights the similarities between sheep and goats, and how there are many people who try to blend into the outward Christian lifestyle but fail to live according to the righteousness of God. How they blend into the church but continue in wickedness. However, in Matthew we are cautioned about the day of judgment. Jesus defines the actions of the ones counted as sheep, feeding the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, aid to the oppressed. So, the sermon is presented for a self-examination, fueled by the question, "Is the evidence on our side" to be counted as a sheep or a goat. This spiritual service closed with The Lay Council Closing Prayer voiced by the speaker: *Oh God, our Father, pour out Your steadfast love upon us and keep us in Your care, now and forevermore.* Amen.





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African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

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Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion Church
New Rochelle, New York
Karen Krieger, Local President
The Reverend Dr. Wallace Nobel Pastor**

St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion Church had a beautiful day on which to celebrate our Lay Council Day, this past October 15, 2023. Under the guidance of our Pastor, Rev. Dr. Wallace L. Noble, many of our Lay Council members who have been inactive during the COVID period returned with enthusiasm and participated willingly in our Worship Service. Sis. Inga Watkins, our Worship Leader along with our Music Ministry Leader for the morning, Elder John Harris roused our service with Praise and Worship and testimony of God's faithfulness to all present.

The responsive reading for Lay Council Day was conducted by Sis. Jennifer Pauling. She began by reminding us all what it means to be in the Lay Council. Whether you sweep, cook, are a class leader, Trustee, Steward, choir member or take part in any other capacity you are a member of the Lay Council. This was read and responded to with fervor by all. St. Catherine had the distinct pleasure to have as our speaker for the morning a young man who is involved in every aspect of Zion, Bro. Louis Romain. He spoke with fervor, love, and compassion on the theme "Sharing our Faith". Mr. Romain, a member of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, presented with power and we are so grateful for his participation.

At the end of the service there was the opportunity to meet and greet our speaker and fellowship with cake in our Library and as we were all enjoying the fellowship. Our Lay Council Day was blessed with the Spirit of God and a lovely participation by all who attended.

To God be the Glory,
Karen Krieger
Lay Council President

**St John A.M. E. Zion Church
Highland Falls, New York
Tina Graham, Co-President
The Reverend Lelita Singleton, Pastor**



St. John had a spirit-filled Connectional Lay Council Day. We opened with worship with the Lay Council Call to Worship and Innovation. The Opening Hymn, The Church's One Foundation. Our Lay Council Co-President, Sis. Tina Graham led the Litany and made the appeal. Bro. Dwayne McQueen, Chairman of the Trustee Board, offered the morning prayer and led a song. I preached the morning message, How to Pass On Generational Blessings from 2 Timothy 1: 1-13.



Connectional Lay Council

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Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



**St John A.M. E. Zion Church
Middletown, New York
Toni Mangualt, Local President
The Reverend Nicole Rushing, Pastor**

LAITY DAY 2023.

“SHARING OUR FAITH”

The Scriptural Theme

*“IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AND HE SHALL DIRECT THY PATHS
PROVERBS 3:6”*

The mission of the connection of Lay Council of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church is to prepare and equip Laity for life disciples in the kingdom of God by maintaining effective ministries that evangelize encourage and edify Laity

Sharing our Faith is the theme for this year

What is faith?

Belief, in God, or in the doctrine or teachings of religion.

THE VISION

As servants of the most high God and disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, that are, guided by the Holy Spirit, the vision of the connectional Lay Council of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church is to prepare lay members of our denomination for life of service in the kingdom of God, we will do this by:

1. Developing ourselves and others as Christian disciples
2. Helping others to know, worship, and follow Christ in spirit, and in truth,
3. Collaborating and cooperating across organizational institutional and denominational boundaries to minister to the masses

Motto: “Come With Us to Christ”

The clergy is comprised of any individual who is placed in an official ministerial position within the church. On the other hand, the laity represents anyone who is directly receiving ministry from the clergy.

Lay people are active in liturgical and pastoral ministries for building up the Church. They perform leadership and management functions for the Church. They are particularly involved in education.

The gift of "lay persons who have prepared for professional ministry in the Church." Such people serve as **directors** pastoral associates, directors of religious education, youth ministry, and music, school principals, and in numerous other roles.

FIVE GOOD REASONS TO BE A MEMBER OF THE LAY COUNCIL

4. To deepen the spiritual life of the Laity
5. to cultivate denominational loyalty,
6. to expand the denomination to education and evangelism
7. to disseminate information
8. to promote any other interest of the kingdom of God

Last month we celebrated Christian education day this month we celebrate Laity some new members ask what is Laity the definition is the people of religious faith as distinguished from his clergy, either you're a minister, or lay person. Without Laity, there is no church, who will the ministers minister to?

The Christian education department is one of the most important organizations in the church, but if you have no Laity to be in the organization, the organization cannot function.

Laity and clergy should work together. This is a joint effort if we want our church to move forward, we have to work together.

We have to treat this work as a partnership. The pastor is the one in charge, and we are there to help him or her.

We have to make a connection with the pastor bridge the gap we have to avoid conflict. This could tear the Church apart.

As we take on leadership roles, we must be faithful and have the love of God. We must learn to communicate and listen to each other just because you have a title does that mean you're a leader

A leader serves others

A good leader anticipates needs

A godly leader takes initiative

A leader-models character

A-godly leader seeks to bring out the best in others.

A leader is a problem solver not a highlighter of them

This walk we are on it's not an easy one. We must continue to study the word to become closer to God and he will order our steps.

Leadership is suffering. Both pastors and Laity are becoming lazy, but if we are truly committed our church will survive.

Don't be a benchwarmer that bench will never elevate you.

ST JOHN WE GOT THIS!!!



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

NORTH EASTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



St. Paul's A.M.E. Zion Church

Spring Valley, New York

President

The Reverend Melvin Mungin, Pastor

St. Paul's is having a two-day celebration. Saturday, October 21st, NW Tap Connection, Director Melba Ayco, will perform. Melba Ayco is a storyteller. She has lots of stories about the Geechee and exhibits. They are from Seattle Washington. On Sunday, October 22nd, Kelvin, Brian, Owens, who gave his first sermonette at St. Paul's will give our morning message. After we will fellowship over a meal and hear more from Melba and the tap group

Varick Memorial AME Church, Brooklyn, NY

Yolanda Montgomery, Local Lay Council President

Reverend Monica H. Marshall, Pastor

Lay Sunday, October 15th, 2023

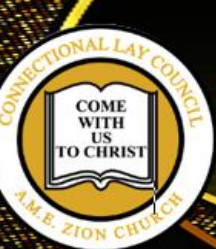
On Sunday, October 15th, 2023, I was privileged to be the Guest Speaker for the Varick Memorial AME Zion Church Virtual Lay Council Sunday Service.

In keeping with our Theme for this year "Sharing Our Faith", I chose as my topic, "What Does it Mean to Have Mustard Seed Faith."

The Scripture reference was Matthew 17:14-20. In this scripture, Jesus is approached by a man, who knelt before him and said "Lord, have mercy on my son. He has seizures and is suffering greatly. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him. Jesus said, "bring the boy to me. He rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy. The disciples were unable to remove the demon from the boy even though Jesus had given them authority to do this very thing, Matthew 10:1" And when he had called unto him his 12 disciples, he gave them power to go against unclean spirits and drive them out". So, when they came to Jesus to ask why they were not able to drive the demon out of the boy, Jesus replied, "Because you have little faith."

The reference to mustard seed faith is seen in Matthew 17 verse 20 when the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "why couldn't we drive it out?"

Verse 20 says: He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."



Connectional Lay Council

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Ms. Rhandi Stith – Regional Director



Faith is so important to the Christian that scripture tells us that without it, it is impossible to please God- Hebrews 11:6 “But without Faith it is impossible to please him: for he that commits to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

We know that the statement about moving mountains is not to be taken literally, it is just part of the lesson of genuine faith. The Church is being challenged today as we struggle to “Share Our Faith” and bring souls to Christ.

By using the small mustard seed as an example, Jesus is speaking figuratively about the power of God when unleashed in the lives of those with true faith.

As we Share Our Faith, let’s take that tiny mustard seed, plant it and watch it grow.

Program

Brother Peter Simpson led the Affirmation of Faith
Sister Madicyn Chung provided the Welcome
Scripture was read by Sister Delaney Brown Matthew 17:14-20

Mother Delma Marshall led us in Prayer
Offertory Call was given by Brother Andrew Simpson
Introduction of Speaker- Sister Sandra Thompson- Reid
Speaker-Sister Joan Capel- New York City District Lay Council President
Altar Call-Reverend David Green

Reverend Marshall provided closing remarks as well as an update on the roof renovation. Sister Yolanda Montgomery, Local Lay Council President provided pictures of the work in progress.

Thank you to Reverend Marshall for the invitation to speak and a thank you to the Varick family for the support.

Submitted by

Ms. Joan Capel- New York City District Lay Council President





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

PIEDMONT EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Dorothy Gill-Smith – Regional Director



The Salisbury District Lay Council “The Bishop James Varick Historical Celebration”

The Salisbury District Lay Council, under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Yvonne A. Tracey, District President, and Dorothy Gill-Smith, First Vice President, held its Annual Celebration of Bishop James Varick on Sunday, October 1, 2023, at Soldiers Memorial AME Zion Church, Rev. Dr. Derrick Anderson, Host Pastor, Rev. Dr. Grant Harrison, Jr., Presiding Elder. The program focused on “Sharing Our Faith” through History. Ms. Andrea Frontis (Liberty AMEZ), Presided and gave the **Call to Gather from Psalm 103:1-5**, followed by the Invocation. The congregational opening selection was “Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah”. Little Miss Selena Royce (New Hope AME Zion Church) led the “Affirmation of Laity”. An inspirational selection was sung by the Cedar Grove AME Zion Church gospel choir “He Knows My Name”. Historical Reflections – “The Children Remember James Varick” was presented by the children of Soldiers Memorial; Historical Highlights of the Salisbury District and the Western North Carolina Conference was shared by Mrs. Valerie Goodlett Gaither, Local Lay Council President – New Hope AMEZ, followed by our Youth who gave Historical Reflections: Ms. Selena Goodlett – New Hope, Ms. Sacred Nelson – New Hope; Little Miss Kadence Brown – Moore’s Chapel.

A **Memorial Tribute** to our Past District Lay Council Presidents with the lighting of candles: Dr. Samuel Hopkins (1952); Mr. John Bennie Long (Unk); Mr. Earle J. Willie (late 1980’s); Mr. John Black (1991-2001); Mr. Julius Suiter (2010-2016).

To inspire the interest of our history, “**Hot Topics**” with questions were shared with three (3) \$25.00 gift cards given to those who responded with correct answers. The participation from the audience was tremendous. Gift Card winners were: Mrs. Barbara Fortson (Cedar Grove); Dr. Mary Ponds (White Rock); Rev. Tamica Robinson (Marable Memorial).

Our Keynote Speaker – Rev. Dr. Grant Harrison, Jr., Presiding Elder of the Salisbury District brought the message which focused on “Sharing Our Faith” through History, text – Hebrews 11:1. “We must appreciate our history”.

Closing remarks were given by Dr. Yvonne Tracey, District President, Dr. Mary S. Ponds, President – WNCC Lay Council, Rev. Mary Hardin (Designee for Dr. Derrick Anderson), and Dr. Grant Harrison, Jr. We closed our program with the Lay Council Closing Prayer.

Submitted,

Dorothy M. Gill-Smith







Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

PIEDMONT EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Dorothy Gill-Smith – Regional Director



LITTLE ROCK

A.M.E. Zion Church

Excellence in Ministry - Together, We Can

G. Joyner Johnson, Reporter

In the observance of the annual Connectional Lay Day, Rev. Dr. Dwayne A. Walker, Pastor of Little Rock AME Zion Church in Charlotte, NC allowed Ms. Gloria Joyner Johnson, President of the local Lay Council to preside over the morning worship service as he and the ministerial staff worshipped from the pews along with the members in the congregation in their black and gold.

The responsive reading and affirmation of faith were led by Ms. Hazeline Smith and Ms. Jennifer Mitchell who serve as the local Lay Council First Vice-President and Secretary, respectively.

Dr. Mary S. Ponds, President of the Western North Carolina Conference was the speaker for the morning. A graduate of Livingstone College, Dr. Ponds was an educator in the public schools of Rowan County, North Carolina and in Virginia. In 1999 she was elected the first woman and the first African American to be elected Mayor of Granite Quarry, NC. She has served in many leadership roles in her community, her county, her state and her church, the White Rock AME Zion Church where Rev. Thomas Lee is the Pastor. She is the recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the highest award given to civilians in the state of North Carolina. In 2020, she was elected the President of the WNCC Lay Council an office she currently holds.

Using the current Connectional Theme quadrant, "Sharing Our Faith," Dr. Pond's spoke on "What's Your Excuse?" The scriptural reference was Philemon 1:4-6. The Lay Council has many resources that may be used to share our faith, including but not limited to the Holy Bible, the Lay Affirmation, the Lay Logo (Come with Us to Christ), the scriptural reference (Proverbs 3:6), as well as the Lay Hymn and Song. We don't share our personal testimonies/experiences which are powerful. We must be more responsible to make disciples by being optimistic and sharing our faith and not be in violation of God's commandment to make disciples. Together we can be the change we want to see. Share our faith with others we encounter which may not be comfortable, but we really have no excuse not to share.

After the worship service, an abbreviated stoling ceremony was held at the altar. Mrs. Ruby Tarver, the local Second Vice President began this ceremony and called Ms. Jackie Abraham to the altar to be stoled by Dr. Ponds.

Many thanks to Dr. Ponds for her thought-provoking meditation as we go forward to obey God's great command! Share Your Faith!!!!





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

PIEDMONT EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Dorothy Gill-Smith – Regional Director



North Charlotte District 2023 Lay Day Observance Service

G. Joyner Johnson, Reporter

The North Charlotte District Lay Day service was held at Union Bethel AME Zion Church in Cornelius, NC. Dr. Anthony Davis is the Pastor. Ms. V. Carolyn Hubbard from Rockwell AME Zion Church is the District President. Ms. Hazeline Smith from Little Rock AME Zion Church was the presiding officer for the service.

Ms. Cindy Saunders from Torrence Chapel AME Zion Church, the District Chaplain started the service with a spirited Praise and Worship session. The scripture was read by Master Caleb Robinson of Clement Memorial AME Zion Church followed with prayer by Mr. Bill Jones of Huntersville AME Zion Church. Mr. Ernest McClain from Little Rock led the assembly in the Affirmation for Laity. The music was provided by Columbus Chapel AME Zion Church.



The message was brought to those assembled by Sis. Nakisha DeShields of Columbus Chapel. She had the undivided attention of those present as she spoke from the Quadrennial Theme “Sharing Our Faith” using her title “Lessons of Faith” using Matthew 17:14-21 as the reference text. She taught on all the characteristics of the mustard seed. It was evident from the start that she had done her research on the mustard seed such as it’s strong root system and its ability to fix soil among other things.

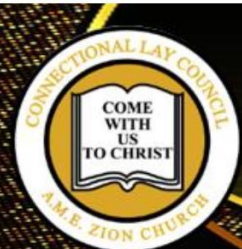
If we have the faith of a mustard, nothing is impossible. There is great potential in small things. Working without faith is fruitless and results in missed opportunities to show God’s Power. To grow closer to God we must study His word more, fast, pray and sacrifice.

The presiding Elder gave remarks led by the Laity Rededication Litany. The observance closed with the Lay Council Closing Prayer.

The Presiding Elder of the North Charlotte District is Dr. Wardell Henderson, and the First Lady is his wife, Mrs. Myrtle Henderson.







Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Loranda Melton – Regional Director



PALMETTO CONFERENCE COLUMBIA CAMDEN DISTRICT SERVING THE COMMUNITY Good Hope A.M.E. Zion Church Serving the Community

Good Hope AME Zion Church Lay Council celebrated Lay Sunday on the 5th Sunday in October with the Pastor Tracey Ellis speaking from Romans 8:31-39 “Let Nothing Separate You from the Love of God.”

Key Points: Remain Faithful- Being Persistent and Consistent and keeping your Trust In God.

Also, the church continues to minister to the community with Bible Study and prayer. The annual shoe size fundraiser, which was a huge success.



Jones Memorial A.M.E. Zion Observes Lay Day

The Jones Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church in Columbia, S.C. observed its Lay Day on Sunday, October 15, 2023. The worship leader for this service was the pastor of the church, Reverend Thelma Gordon. The service was centered on this year's Connectional Lay theme, “Sharing Our Faith-Securing Our Future”.



The speaker for this service was Mrs. Megan Thomas who was presented by Mrs. Loranda Melton, Regional Director for the South Atlantic Episcopal District, and a member of Jones Memorial. Mrs. Thomas is a product of Jones Memorial where her parents Mr. and Mrs. Robert Goddard are



Photo Credit: Christopher Gordon

members. She is currently a member of Journey United Methodist Church. Megan is a graduate of Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C. with a BA in mass communication. She is employed with the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of South Carolina as Director of Member Services. Mrs. Thomas also volunteers with several organizations in Columbia. Mrs. Thomas is married to Julius L. Thomas, Jr. They are the parents of three lovely daughters, Kylie, Lynden, and Nora. Mrs. Thomas 's subject was" The Freedom Church: A movement, empowered by the Holy Spirit."

Her message so vividly tied her subject to the founding of the A.M. E. Zion Church by James Varick and others. She demonstrated the power of the Holy Spirit as a teacher, a Comforter, an Interceder finally, the Holy Spirit identifies us to God as one of His children. "All of this moves us forward. We are moving forward, and we are sharing our faith."

The service concluded with the Litany for Rededication of the Laity was led by Mrs. Annie M. Williams, president of the Jones Memorial Lay Council and a former Connectional Lay Council Chaplain.

Columbia-Camden District Loranda Melton, District President

The President of the Columbia-Camden District's Laymen's Council, Loranda Melton welcomed the attendees for the Annual Ozeir McBeth Lay Council Awards Celebration on Saturday August 21, 2023. After two years on ZOOM, this event was held in person at Antioch A.M.E. Zion Church, Rev. Robert T. Benton, Pastor during the District Conference. The occasion, eloquently stated by Dr. Robert Scott is to recognize an outstanding lay member from each church within the Columbia-Camden District it was followed by a beautiful selection by the Kingdom Praisers. The speaker for the occasion, Exhorter Katie McFadden offered words of encouragement to the Honorees.

The celebration of the occasion continued with a wonderful meal and fellowship. Mrs. Melton intentionally planned a wonderful program that included a poem by one of the senior members of the District, Exhorter Nadine Anderson, who was such a delight. Ashley Melton announced the lay members and recipients of the Ozeir McBeth Awards who represented the churches of the district. She noted that these members give so unselfishly of their time and talents to their respective churches: Maurice Simmons-Jones Memorial, Alvin McBeth-Antioch, Annie Gustus-Pleasant Grove #2, Susan Junious-Clinton Chapel, Exhorter Katie McFadden- Old Mt. Zion, Ann Belton- Good Hope, Christian Education Department-Paradise, Ashley Davis-Rossville, Deanna Grant-New Vision, Florine Sutton-Temple of God, Sammy Belk-Fairview, Sarah Moore-Ebenezer, Mother Virginia Rosemond-Baum Temple, Burnadatt Canty-Pleasant Grove #1.



All of the recipients received beautiful plaques, words of appreciation and \$25.00 from the District President, Loranda Melton and the Conference President, Annie Williams. The Ozeir McBeth Lay Person of the Year was awarded to Ms. Dequitta Kennedy for overall service to the Columbia Camden District.



Exhorter Katie McFadden



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Loranda Melton – Regional Director



SPARTANBURG DISTRICT

Ms. Angel Underwood, President

Rev. Recordo Holmes and Beatty's Chapel AMEZ Church celebrated Lay Sunday on October 15, 2023. The Speaker was their very own, Sister Betty Means! Sister Means serves in many capacities including, Sunday School Teacher, Christian Education President, and Usher. She brought a very encouraging message very encouraging message.





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Loranda Melton – Regional Director



On October 21, 2023. The Spartanburg District Lay Council supported the “Walk with the Mayor” event. First Vice President Lenora Moore and District Lay Chaplin, Elaine Brackett attended this event in Spartanburg, SC. This event allowed for time to be spent in the local neighborhoods, providing history about the neighborhoods, and addressing any needs of the people we are all charged to serve.





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Loranda Melton – Regional Director



The Spartanburg District Lay Council participated in Williams Chapel A.M.E Zion Lay Sunday on October 22, 2023. District President, Angel Underwood was in attendance and gave a presentation on the “Five Good Reasons to Be a Member of the Lay Council”. Rev. Samantra Carter brought the Lay Message of “Do you want to be healed”. Scripture Reading John 5: 13-16.





The Spartanburg District Lay Council was invited to participate in Steven Grove A.M.E. Zion Lay Sunday on November 12, 2023. District President, Angel Underwood was in attendance and gave a presentation on “What is the Lay

Council; Why Organize a Lay Council and the Benefits” Rev Cynthia Mackey brought the Lay Message of “We need each other; The Body of the Church is one unit but with many moving parts”. Scripture Reading-1 Corinthians 12: 12-13



The Spartanburg District Lay Council was invited to participate in Chestnut Ridge AMEZ Lay Sunday on October 15, 2023. District First Vice President, Lenora Moore was in attendance. Rev Tammy Wheeler brought the Lay Message of “When Jesus is in the building, he will turn things around”. Scripture Reading- Mark 2:2-1





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Loranda Melton – Regional Director



PEE DEE CONFERENCE

Youth Panel Discussion



presented by...
Pee Dee Conference
Lay Council & Christian Education
September 30, 2023 9:30am
Mt. Zion A.M.E. Zion

Save the Date!

September 30, 2023- “School Bells are Ringing: Are You Ready?” was a thought-provoking and insightful panel discussion provided by youth Jasmine Guitierrez, Jasmine Simmons, Zari White, Zion White and facilitated by Jordan Felder, youth. The panelists discussed academic challenges, balancing their time, bullying in their schools, and availability of supportive school staff. Data was shared from the Lancaster School District, also, on the achievement of students in the Lancaster High School Feeder Area. Suggestions to address areas of concern will be shared with the Lancaster and Cheraw-Bennettsville Districts for discussion of effective programs by the church memberships. The panel was a 5th Saturday Academy/Assembly presented by the Lay Council and Christian Education Departments. October 15, 2023.

The Connectional Lay Sunday Worship was celebrated at Mt. Tabor AME Zion Church; the pastor is Rev. Dr. Michael Peay. The speaker was Lancaster City Councilwoman Jackie Harris who addressed the Topic, “Sustaining and Sharing Our Faith.” Lay Person of the Year Awards were presented to a recipient from each Pee Dee Conference District and two recipients from the Conference. The Lay Sunday Worship was a spiritually energizing fellowship which was replicated throughout the Conference at individual churches, also. The last quarter of this conference year was completed by attending the 104th Pee Dee Annual Conference, and a report of accomplishments was presented. This Conference year also concluded the tenure of the President, Pee Dee Conference Lay Council.





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

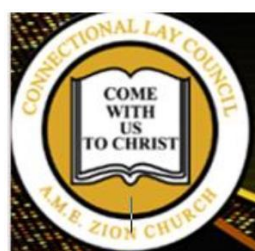
SOUTH ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Loranda Melton - Regional Director



Lancaster District Lay Recognition





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

MID ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Dr. Larry B. Johnson, Regional Director



PRESIDENT - DOROTHY L. MINTER-SAUNDERS
PRESIDING ELDER - REV. T. KENNETH VENABLE
VIRGINIA CONFERENCE, MID-ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT - BISHOP W. DARIN MOORE

Greetings in Jesus' Name from the Petersburg District Lay Council. We pray all is well with you and yours and that you are continuing to enjoy the goodness of God. What follows are some of our activities.

All the Churches in the Petersburg Eleven observed Lay Sunday; some are highlighted below.



HOOD TEMPLE, Richmond, VA. Rev. Dr. Lorenza R. Meekins, Pastor; Ms. Glenda Wright, Lay President, It gave us great pleasure to have **Mr. William L. English, Virginia Conference Lay President** as our speaker for Lay Sunday. The message came from our Quadrennial Theme: SECURING OUR FUTURE. We were blessed with a powerful message. We can accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and this would be us securing our future. This was food for thought.

ZION CHESTER, Chester, VA. Rev. Dexter Feely, Pastor, Mrs. Karen Spence, Lay President. Thanks to Mr. Ricky Daniels, Lay Speaker for a job well done and the participants on the program, Lady Lynette Feely, Shasmee Boisseau, Stevie Webster, Tara Gore, Sherell Barbour, and Debbie Bell. Thanks to all the members for their support & representing Lay Council in their black & gold.





Connectional Lay Council

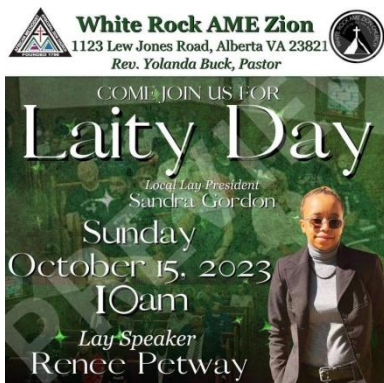
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

MID ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Dr. Larry B. Johnson, Regional Director



PARADISE, Lawrenceville, VA. Rev. Cecelia White, Pastor, Mrs. Gracie Hardy Lay President. **Speaker was Ms. Dorothy L. Minter-Saunders, President Petersburg District Lay Council.** She spoke about Sharing Our Faith and how important it is that we do so. The question was how would we have known if someone had not shared with us that God loves us so much, He sent His only son to bring us salvation. Other guests were Mr. George Rivera, 2nd Vice President Petersburg District Lay Council and Mrs. Regina Rivera, Petersburg District Lay Council Consultant.



WHITE ROCK, Alberta, VA. Rev. Yolanda W. Buck, Pastor, Ms. Sandra Gordon, Lay President. **The speaker was Mrs. Renee Petway.** Her subject was "Don't Lose Hope"; Scripture reference Job 7:4-27. Points made: 1. Can't listen to the outside noise 2. Think before you speak 3. Stay focused.



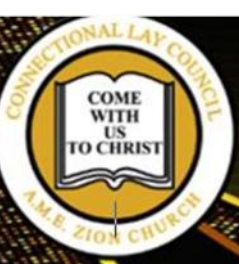
GREATER FAITH, Petersburg, VA. Rev. Randy Kiah, Pastor, Mrs. Mary Rodwell Dickens, Lay President. **Speaker: William T. Evans, III,** Topic: A Blessing in Disguise. Scriptural Reference: Philippians 4:13 I Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Strengthens Me.

President Saunders was privileged to attend Lay Day services at four of the six churches in what we call the "Foundation" of the District. She attended White Rock, her home church, and then got on the road to:

MT. ZION, Dundas, VA. Pastor Rev. Vanessa Hicks, Lay President and Speaker Mrs. Martha Wilson. Her subject was Faith. She pointed out we should Keep the faith in the good times and the bad times.

ST. PAUL, Meredithville, VA. Pastor Rev. Alma Coles Charles, Lay President Mrs. Mattie Walker Bates. **Speaker, Mr. Eray Charles.** He invited everyone to come and see what the Lord is doing.

TAYLOR'S CHAPEL, Brodnax, VA. Pastor Presiding Elder T. Kenneth Venable, Lay President and Speaker Ms. Alicent Lewis. She spoke about Sharing Our Faith and how to go about it.



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

MID ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Dr. Larry B. Johnson, Regional Director



BEYOND THE PETERSBURG DISTRICT WALLS TO Hood Chapel in the Norfolk District. Rev Samuel Warren Pastor. We celebrated our Lay Day with **Mrs. Regina Rivera** as our **Speaker**. She is past 2nd Vice President of the CLC and past President of the Petersburg District Lay Council, currently Consultant of the Petersburg District Lay Council. Her topic was "Strengthening Our Fellowship Through Evangelism and Discipleship." She reminded us that Jesus wants us to be evangelists and to be prayerful towards others. Her message blessed our souls.

OUR VIRGINIA CONFERENCE LAY SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

MS. ANIYAH C. HICKS

Receiving Scholarship at Annual Conference



Pictured from left to right: Mr. William English, Mr. Brandon T. Ross, Ms. Aniyah C. Hicks, & Bishop W. Darin Moore

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MR. FALANDIUS PASS

OUR PETERSBURG DISTRICT LAY HELPING HAND AWARD RECIPIENT



MS. KENNEDY V. ZIGLAR

Petersburg District Lay Council

Lay Academy

"Serving Our Flock"

Presenter



SAT
MAY
20

START
10AM

Mrs. Darlene Kiah
First Lady, Greater Faith AME Zion Church

Greater Faith AME Zion Church
Rev. Randy Kiah, Pastor
1301 Youngs Road | Petersburg, VA | 23803

Mrs. Dorothy L. Minter-Saunders, Petersburg Lay President
Rev. T.K. Venable, Presiding Elder





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

MID ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Dr. Larry B. Johnson, Regional Director



OUR 2023-2024 PDLC TEAM



Dorothy Saunders
President



Mary Dickens
First Vice



George Rivera
Second Vice



Sandra Gordon
Secretary



Shirlene Williams
Financial Secretary



Shermaeyne Webster
Treasurer



Thomas Moseley
Chaplain



Regina Rivera
Consultant

PRESIDENT SAUNDERS IN THE COMMUNITY
INSTALLED AS SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
VCU HEALTH/COMMUNITY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER HOSPITAL



1,300 - 2,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS OF SERVICE - Left to right: Dorothy Minter-Saunders, 1,300; Ruth Griggs, 1,500; Dick Smith, 1,700; Tom Watters, 1,500; Darleen Ferguson, 1,500; Linda Gage, 2,000; Willis Woodall, 2,000.

We pray for you a happy Thanksgiving, a blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with joy in Jesus.



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Connectional Lay Council

Western Episcopal District - Regional Director – Rynette Nixon

Missionary Supervisor- Rev. Felica R. Thompson

Bishop Brian R. Thompson, Presiding Prelate
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

*¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever! **1Peter 4: 10 -11***

What an awesome time we have been experiencing in The Western Episcopal District, this past quarter. We are continuing to see the fruits of our labors being manifested within the Lay Council. Blessings, upon blessings upon blessings, thanks be to God! The month of October all over the denomination we celebrated Annual Lay Day as well as in the Western Episcopal District. We continue to press toward the mark, while trusting God and believe His word! The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, we consider it a blessing to be counted among the few, as we know God has great rewards for the few! As always, we continue to thank God for the Connectional Lay Council leadership, our International President, Mr. Joseph King Davis, Jr. & his amazing, elected officers, appointed chairpersons, and committees that make up the Executive Board, who work so diligently side by side with him. The legacy of the Laity of our great Freedom Church is yet alive!

As always, kudos and thank you's to each of the Conference Presidents, for your commitment to the ministry of the Lay Council. Each Conference President is committed to the Lay work, and the fruits of their Labors is shown in all they do. The Conference Presidents are continuing to attend the Regional Directors meetings, where we plan, pray, encourage, support, and learn from each other, as well as a time to come together and fellowship, and keep each other accountable.



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Our WED Membership Chair & California Conference President Sis Pat Hunter is continuing to work on reaching the 100% membership goal. The SWRM Conference President, Sis Luvenia Newman-Stroupe, who is also the Secretary, are having much outreach work in their area. The Alaska Conference President, Bro. Clarence Mercer, & Oregon/Washington Conference President & Chaplain, Sis Gail Thomas are all partnering with the Missionary Departments in their Conferences to continue their outreach Ministries, and Colorado Conference President, Bro. Jim Hughley, has passed the baton, as he will be leaving the Colorado area, so we are in the process of establishing a new Conference President in that area. Also, Bro. Charles Montgomery is our WED YAI Chairperson, & the Young Adults of the Western Episcopal District are planning virtual sessions in the fall. And lastly Sis. Ian Jefferson, Our Health & Wellness Champion is involved in several events.

Below are the written & pictorial reports of some of the work being done in some of the Conferences:

California Conference:

PATRICIA HUNTER – CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

NAACP Vallejo Branch #1081 President Patricia Hunter (California Conference Lay President), Pastor Zaniel

T. Young invitees to the NAACP National Board of Directors reception with A.M.E. Zion Church Bishop Dennis V. Proctor and National NAACP President/CEO Derrick Johnson.



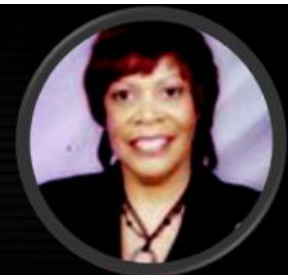


Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



The California Conference Mini Lay Academy, October 11, 2023 was well attended by Lay and Clergy. We welcomed two Connectional Lay Council officers 2nd Vice President Connie Bell Wright, Chaplain Jerry L. McCombs and our AME Zion Church Judicial Councilmember Dr. Yvonne Tracey. The conference welcomes our new officers and on the agenda was roles and responsibilities, how we would together in unison with an overview of the Lay protocol and expectations. A brief history was shared along with Question and Answer time. The Part II of the Mini Lay Academy, November 8, 2023 was well attended and focused on Membership. The materials and training of our CLC 2nd Vice President Connie Bell Wright left no stone unturned.





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Lay Sunday Kyles Temple AME Zion Church Vallejo

CA Lay Moment: President Patricia Hunter

Sermon: Pastor, Rev. Gail A. Jack

Total 82 Lay Members

55 Annual members

21 Quadrennial members

6 Life Members

The Lay continue to serve side by side with Pastor Gail Jack - we are the Church Where Love is Shared.







Lay Sunday First AME Zion Church San Francisco
 WED Regional Director: Rynette Nixon
 Co-Presidents: Angela Morrison and Venise Nelson
 Pastor: Rev. Zaniel T. Young







Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Lay Sunday Hilliard Chapel
Lay President: Dr. Sandra Davis
Pastor, Rev. William DeArmond
Sunday School started with
Jeopardy



Lay Sunday St. James AME Zion Church San Mateo
Presenter: Teresa Williams
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Marlyn Bussey, Presiding Elder Central Valley District



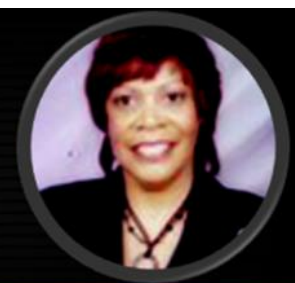


Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Lay Sunday at Mount Pisgah AME Zion Church. Merced
CAPastor, Rev. Matthew Morgan Pegues
Lay Presenter - Central Valley Lay President Wanda Lax

HAPPY
Holidays





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

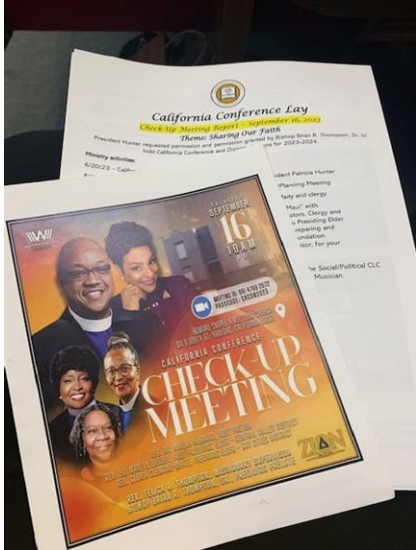
WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



The California Conference Lay Officers arrived boots on the ground ready for the opening of the 1st Check Up Meeting at Howard AME Zion Church, Hanford, CA. The California Conference Lay Report shared the combined local church, district and conference report card with exceptional achievements! Hanford is located closer to Southern California however we the Lay team made with energy and expectations and Missionary Supervisor Felica R. Thompson and Bishop Brian R. Thompson, Sr. led the Check Up meeting in fine fashion. Stay tuned the California Conference is serving in His Excellence





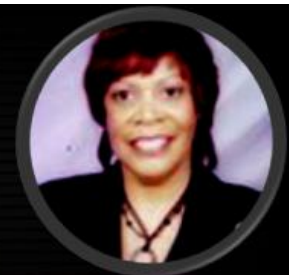


Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



The California Conference Lay sounded the alarm for donations for the Maui Crisis with a “We Care Prayer Call” and Zion answered. The 35 minute “We Care Prayer” Call with the Maui Telethon immediately following within the hour \$2,000.00 was raised. We thank Pastor Zaniel Young, First AME Zion Church San Francisco, Telethon MC and we are grateful for the Zion-wide support and donations. Lay and Clergy serving together.

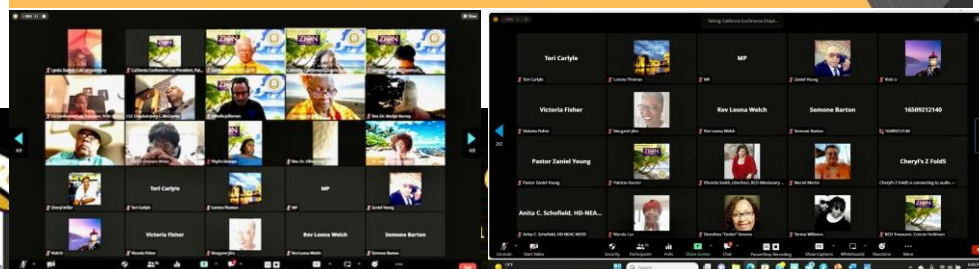
CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE LAY
We Care Prayer Call
and
Telethon for Maui
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023
6:30 PM - 7:30 PM PST
ZOOM MEETING ID: 899 6456 6012
DIAL-IN: 1 669-444-9171

MAUI FIRE

They will know we are Christians by our LOVE.

Lay and Clergy interested in volunteering or may have a Prayer Request
email: calconlayinfo@gmail.com

IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM, AND HE SHALL DIRECT THY PATHS. PROVERBS 3:6



THE A. M. E. ZION CHURCH
WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
2940 42ND STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95817

1005
11-4209/1210 4211

DATE 9/1/2027

PAY TO THE ORDER OF HAWAIIAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

\$ 2,000.00

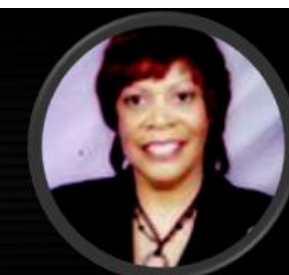
TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS 00/100

FOR: MAM STENG

WELLS FARGO

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
California
wellsfargo.com

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]



MAUI STRONG
Hawaiian Community Foundation
827 Fort Mall Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
(808) 242-6184





Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Oregon Washington Conference:

GAIL THOMAS – CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Ms. GAIL THOMAS ~ CONFERENCE Lay PRESIDENT

Celebrating Lay Sunday Services & Sharing information

Spotlighting two Cascade District young Adults: Ms. Latice Harris & Ms.

Kelsie Waters who share the following. We live with the disability of blindness. As laity and clergy of our church we are called to work together in harmony to fulfill the work that God entrusted to us. Part of this divine calling is to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all including those living with disabilities. Lay Sunday shares special significance with blind and visually impaired people as it is White Cane Day. White Cane Day is a national observance celebrated in the US every year on Oct. 15th since 1964.



Lay President Ms. Gail Thomas to inform, inspire and encourage laity to “share Their Faith~ inviting those outside the doors to come in the door with them to Christ. Desert and fellowship followed the Lay Service observance.

Congress pass the law that allowed then Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson to proclaim October 15th of every year as “White Cane Safety Day”

White Cane Day was also named Blind Americans Equality Day by pres. Barack Obama. White canes and guide dogs share a similar purpose of keeping visually impaired safe; they are just different tools. Used to make visually impaired persons feel confident and less vulnerable in the presence of others. As laity, let us find ways to uplift the achievements, safety and resilience of people with disabilities and anyone facing marginalization each day of the year.



First A.M.E, Zion Church, Portland, OR., Rev. Dr. Dennis G. Payne, II Bought an inspiring lay message: Do you know the Time? Romans 13:8'14, Opportunity was given to the Oregon Washington Conference

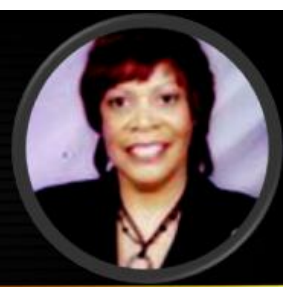


Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Community A. M. E. Z Church, Vancouver WA.,

Rev. Dr. Joyce M. Smith, pastor, Observed Lay Sunday with the newly appointed Cascade District Lay President Mrs. Chesa Willis as worship leader.

Ms. Willis bought a drama skit-based John 8:5 the story of the woman caught in adultery~ challenged us all to reflect on our issues and not be so judgmental of others sin.

Bro. Derek Thompson, a laymen bought a powerful lay message entitled: “The Problem & The Promise” 2nd Chronicles 7:14 laity must do their part to submit to Gods will and way. Laity were inspired. This was Bro. Derek’s trail Exalter sermon.



Ebenezer A.M.E. Zion Church, Seattle,WA.

Rev. Dr. Lamont Brown Pastor delivered a stirring Lay Sunday message entitled: “**Living My Best Life Embracing My God-Given Uniqueness**” Ephesians 2:10. Laity were touched and several recommitted themselves to the uplifting of God’s church. Ms. Gail Thomas, the Oregon Washington Lay president shared a mini academy entitled: “**Lay Council is all about you.**” Lay were reminded about the purpose of Lay Council the role they play and how to serve and share their faith outside the walls of the church.



Special recognition to Mrs. Ophelia Ealy the past Cascade District Lay president who continues to be a strong voice for the laity in the A.M. E Zion Church. She serves as the local Lay council president at Ebenezer A.M.E. Zion Church, Seattle, WA.



Connectional Lay Council

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

WESTERN EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

Mrs. Rynette Nixon – Regional Director



Dr. Ian Jefferson

Western Regional Health & Wellness Champion

Young Adult Initiative Member

The Western Lay Council has been busy this season doing the work of the Lord. During the month of October, in celebration of our Lay observance, we participated in a number of wellness interventions to promote healthy lifestyle habits in the life of our church. Various local churches gathered to #WalkforWellness as a church community. In addition, on Lay Sunday, First AME Zion Church, San Francisco, hosted a *So Fresh, So Clean* Salad Bar where the laity feasted on a healthy and nutritious salad buffet style. The salad bar consisted of fresh spinach mix, bell peppers, onions, pecans, walnuts, garbanzo beans, roasted chicken, dates, croutons, cranberries, cherry tomatoes, pasta salad, and an assortment of fresh salad dressings. (See pictures on the following page).

On Thursday, October 26th, the Young Adult Initiative of the California Conference hosted our very first Health & Wellness Empowerment Nite to promote exercise and nutrition. First Lady Victoria Fisher of Kyles Temple, Sacramento presented on *Nutrition In The Kitchen* and provided an informative powerpoint on the importance of eating a rainbow-based diet for optimal nutritional benefits. In addition, Lady Victoria also presented several delicious homecooked recipes including roasted bell peppers, white chili, and rainbow Chinese fried rice. For the second presentation, we were privileged to learn healthy stretching exercises by Fitness Coach, EnJunaya Canton. The laity received psychoeducation on the importance of stretching for blood circulation and muscular flexibility. We ended the night with movement and dance by following an online workout video using the Kirk Franklin song, *Stomp*.

I have been active in attending the monthly meetings of the Young Adult Initiative led by our connectional chair Sis. Dottie Stevens. I currently serve as the YAI secretary. We look forward to presenting during the upcoming CLC Convocation scheduled for March 2024. The Young Adults plan to present on the theme of the convocation, “**Cultivating Our Faith, Committed to Service: Generation to Generation**” highlighting the importance of mentoring young adults for leadership opportunities within our churches. In addition, the Young Adults are seeking pledges from their respected conferences to help alleviate some of the travel cost to ensure that we have a YAI representative from each episcopal district.

Last but not least, I am excited to be in completion of my coursework as a doctoral candidate in Clinical Psychology. To God be the Glory!

 **CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE**
**LAY HEALTH & WELLNESS
 EMPOWERMENT NITE!**
 Thursday, October 26, 2023
 6:00 pm PST

 **nutrition
in the
kitchen**

**WORSHIP
'n'
WORKOUT** 

Zoom ID: 867 5035 7002

JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF FUN EXERCISE AND HEALTHY EATING
 LED BY YOUNG ADULT INITIATIVE
 IAN JEFFERSON & VICTORIA FISHER



Happy Holidays



CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

EASTERN WEST AFRICA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT



Mr. Emmanuel U. Moro

Mr. Thomas (Chuck) Williams

The Eastern West Africa Episcopal District is made up of eleven conferences with a Presiding Prelate the RT. RV, DR, U. U. Effiong Presiding as the Bishop. During this my tenure as the Regional Director of the Lay Council (2021-2023) we have achieved a lot of breakthroughs in term of membership growth, spiritual growth, training and retraining of the laity in knowing our church discipline as is in the book of discipline 2011 edition. The laity are the chief custodian of the church administration and planning at the local, district and conference which has brought positive changes to the episcopal district. We have lectures during the 2nd biennial session connectional lay council retreat with the theme; SHARING FAITH TO SECURE OUR FUTURE which centred on the following.

- LECTURE 1. LEADERSHIP/ CHURCH GROWTH:** By REV, DR. UMOR OLU
(Emphasis on leadership development and competencies as it influences the church growth).
- LECTURE 2. HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE LAITY:** BY PASTOR DR. DANIEL UMOREN (Emphasis on prostate and breast cancer including home and public safety).
- LECTURE 3. BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY:** BY BRO ESSIEN W. ESSIEN
(Emphasis on business development and entrepreneurial skills including application of technology to business development).

STATE OF THE CHURCH:

Three organs of the church the Local, District and Conferences are all doing extremely well to meetup with the connectional lay council motto which says "COME WITH US TO CHRIST" by reaching out to all the episcopal district and its surrounding to bring more members to the body of Christ. The table below shows the conferences and their respectively Bishops Administrative Assistance of the EWAED.

S/NO	NAMES OF CONFERENCES	NO. OF DISTRICTS	BAA
1.	NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV. DR. IFREKE E. EKPENYONG
2.	CENTRAL NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV. DR. SAMUEL IBEMEBE
3.	RIVERS NIGERIA CONFERENCE	6	REV. DR. UMOR OLU
4.	LAGOS NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV. DR. MICHAEL UDO
5.	MIDLAND NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV.DR.SAMUEL.H. ASUAMION
6.	NORTHERN NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV.DR. ENKEMA
7.	CROSS RIVER NIGERIA CONFERENCE		DR, DR.T. CAIAFAS
8.	SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV.DR. NDUBUIS ELIJAH
9.	SOUTHERN NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV, DR. DONALD. J. EKPO
10.	AKWA NIGERIA CONFERENCE		REV.PROF. IMO. E. UMOINYANG
11.	PORTHARCOURT NIGERIA CONFERENCE	8	REV. EGHUANOYE.G. CLEMENT



CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

EASTERN WEST AFRICA EPISCOPAL DISTRICT



Mr. Emmanuel U. Moro



Mr. Thomas (Chuck) Williams

We the entire connectional members of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church hereby call for more delegates representation come 2024 General Conference to learn and know the church methodism. Pictures above shows happening of the Lay Council activities in the district.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me. My profound gratitude goes to the Almighty God for safeguarding me and mind family throughout the year.

To the International Connectional Lay Council President, I say thank you for believing in me as a servant who can serve the Lord in this capacity. I still rely on you for directives and corrections when duties of God's work calls.

To the Chairman, Board of Lay Activities, Bishop's, Presiding Elders, Elders, Deacons, and Travelling Ministers of this Episcopal District, thank you for giving this Council the opportunities and supports whenever we call from EWAED.

To my Episcopal Prelate the RT Rev. U.U. Effiong and Missionary Supervisor Mrs C. Effiong, the Executive of the CLC, Conference Presidents, BAAs, Presiding Elders, Pastors, and Laities, who have worked with me to get to where we are today, I appreciate you all for your support, commitments, sacrifices and most importantly your sincerity in your actions. May God continue to increase you in strength and your labour shall never be in vain.

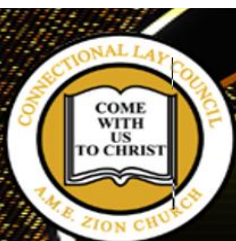
To My Wife, the Field Worker of Port Harcourt Nigeria Conference, Deaconess Ingonimi E. Moro, thanks for your prayers, and sleepless nights in supporting me to achieve my tasks and targets for God's work; and my children; thank you for your individual supportive roles you have played. God Bless you all in Jesus Name.

Humbly Submitted,

Bro. Emmanuel Umor Moro,

EWAED REGIONAL DIRECTOR





The Connection

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

SOCIAL/POLITICAL ACTION CHAIR

Ms. Patricia (Pat) Hunter



State of The Church

The A.M.E. Zion Church in America Post-COVID: A Landscape of Transformation and Adaptation

Introduction

In a world emerging from the shadows of a global pandemic, the A.M.E. Zion Church stands at the forefront of a transformative era. This historic institution, deeply rooted in the African American community, faces a landscape reshaped not just by the pandemic but also by powerful social movements and a revolutionary shift in work culture. As we turn the pages of this pivotal chapter in the Church's story, we explore how the A.M.E. Zion Church is navigating these uncharted waters. From the echoes of the Black Lives Matter movement to the seismic societal shift towards remote work and the ongoing saga of significant demographic changes, this is a story of resilience, adaptation, and unwavering faith. Join us as we delve into the profound impacts of these factors on the A.M.E. Zion Church, both this year and in the years to come, and discover how an institution steeped in history is embracing an era of unprecedented change.

Adapting to Decreased Senior Volunteerism Post-COVID



Reverend Kaloma Smith
Pastor, University A.M. E. Zion Church
Palo Alto, CA

The COVID-19 pandemic has notably impacted the dynamics of volunteerism within the Church, especially among senior members. Traditionally, senior members have been the backbone of volunteer efforts, contributing to various church activities, from administrative tasks to community outreach. The pandemic, however, brought about a heightened sense of vulnerability among this demographic, leading to a decrease in their active participation. The impact of this decline is multifaceted. Seniors provide valuable services and act as mentors and role models for younger members. Their wisdom and experience are vital in guiding the Church's direction and maintaining its traditions. The absence of their involvement has left a gap that is not easily filled. To address this challenge, the Church can initiate programs designed to re-engage senior volunteers. These programs could focus on creating less

physically demanding roles and more flexible in terms of commitment. For instance, seniors could be involved in mentoring programs, providing guidance and support to younger members via phone calls or virtual meetings. Additionally, offering training sessions to help seniors become more comfortable with technology can open up new avenues for their participation. Virtual volunteering opportunities, where seniors can contribute from the safety of their homes, can also be a viable solution. Furthermore, enhancing safety protocols in physical church spaces is crucial. By implementing rigorous health and safety measures, the Church can reassure seniors that their well-being is a priority, encouraging their return to more active roles.



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African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

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Ms. Patricia (Pat) Hunter



Elevating Voices: The A.M.E. Zion Church in the Black Lives Matter Era

The Black Lives Matter movement has underscored the Church's longstanding commitment to social justice and civil rights. The killing of George Floyd and subsequent events acted as a catalyst, reigniting the Church's activist spirit. This section examines how congregations within the A.M.E. Zion Church have responded to the call for racial justice and equality. Churches have become centers for organizing protests, providing resources, and offering spiritual support. The role of the Church in these activities goes beyond mere participation; it is about leadership and guidance in the fight against systemic racism. The movement has also prompted reevaluating how racial issues are addressed within the fabric of the Church's teachings and activities. However, this increased focus on activism has not been without its challenges. Some congregants have expressed concerns about the Church becoming too immersed in political matters, potentially detracting from its spiritual mission. This has led to discussions about the balance between spiritual guidance and social activism. To navigate these challenges, the Church could consider creating forums for open dialogue where members can express their views and concerns. Additionally, integrating the principles of social justice into religious teachings in a way that emphasizes their compatibility with spiritual values can help bridge any perceived divides. The Church can also highlight historical instances where religious leaders played key roles in social movements, underscoring that activism and faith are not mutually exclusive.

Navigating the New Normal: Remote Work and Church Dynamics

The widespread adoption of remote work due to the pandemic has significantly altered the traditional congregation model. Many members, no longer tethered to their offices, have moved from urban to suburban or rural areas, changing the demographic landscape of many congregations. This shift presents both challenges and opportunities for the Church. On the one hand, churches in urban areas may face decreased physical attendance, affecting their traditional community engagement methods. On the other hand, this dispersion offers a chance to extend the Church's reach, connecting with relocated members and engaging with new communities. To adapt, the Church has embraced digital technology. Once a temporary solution, online worship services have become a cornerstone of the Church's operation. These services offer flexibility and accessibility, allowing members to participate regardless of location. Beyond services, the Church has also leveraged digital platforms for bible studies, youth programs, and fellowship activities, ensuring a strong sense of community. However, the transition to digital is not without its challenges. The digital divide – the gap between those with effective access to digital and information technology and those with limited or no access – is a significant concern. Addressing this involves providing the technological means and ensuring members have the necessary skills to engage with these platforms. This might include offering training sessions and technical support to less tech-savvy members.



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African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

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Economic Repercussions of Remote Work in the Church Community

The economic implications of the shift to remote work are multifaceted. For churches in growing suburban and rural areas, this could mean an influx of new members and increased financial resources. These churches have the opportunity to expand their outreach programs and enhance their facilities. However, they must also be mindful of efficiently managing these additional resources to meet the changing needs of their congregation. Conversely, churches in areas experiencing depopulation face financial challenges. A decline in regular attendees can lead to reduced tithes and offerings, impacting the Church's ability to maintain its programs and services. To navigate these financial headwinds, some churches have considered innovative approaches such as merging with other congregations, restructuring their ministries, or increasing their reliance on digital giving platforms. Moreover, the economic shift highlights the need for the Church to support members facing job transitions or financial instability due to the evolving work landscape. Resources such as job training workshops, financial planning seminars, or networking events can be invaluable in helping congregants adapt to these economic changes.

Embracing a New Era: The A.M.E. Zion Church's Multicultural Congregations

The Church's move towards multicultural congregations reflects the broader societal shift towards diversity and inclusivity. This section delves into the strategies and initiatives implemented to foster a more inclusive environment that celebrates its members, diverse backgrounds, and experiences. Incorporating elements of different cultural traditions into worship services is one way the Church has begun to embrace this diversity. This could include a variety of music styles, languages, and liturgical practices, reflecting the rich tapestry of cultures within the congregation. Another critical step is facilitating open dialogues about race, identity, and culture. These discussions can help break down barriers, foster understanding, and build a sense of belonging among members from different backgrounds. Educational programs that explore the history and contributions of various cultures within the Church can also be instrumental in promoting inclusivity. Leadership diversity is essential in this transition. By ensuring that the Church's leadership reflects the diversity of its congregation, the Church not only sets a powerful example but also benefits from a wider range of perspectives and experiences, enhancing its decision-making and community engagement.

Strategies for Future Growth and Adaptation

In response to the challenges outlined, the Church must develop and implement strategies that ensure its growth and relevance in the modern world. These strategies should be multifaceted, addressing its congregations, diverse needs, and dynamics.



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1. Engagement with Senior Members: Developing a comprehensive plan to re-engage senior volunteers is crucial. This plan could include creating roles tailored to their capabilities and interests, offering flexible schedules, and ensuring their safety and comfort. Additionally, establishing mentorship programs where seniors can share their wisdom and experience with younger members could be highly beneficial.

2. Integrating Technology: Embracing technology is no longer optional but a necessity. The Church must continue to enhance its digital infrastructure, ensuring that services, meetings, and community activities are accessible to all members, regardless of their location. This also involves investing in training programs to help members, particularly seniors and those less familiar with technology, become more comfortable using these digital tools.

3. Addressing the Economic Impact of Population Shifts: The Church must proactively address the financial implications of demographic changes. This could involve developing new fundraising strategies, exploring partnerships with other organizations, and diversifying its income sources. Financial stewardship and transparency will be key in managing these resources effectively.

4. Supporting Members in Transition: The Church can play a supportive role as members navigate the challenges brought about by remote work and economic changes. This might include offering career counseling, financial planning advice, or simply providing a space for members to share their experiences and support each other.

5. Promoting Multiculturalism and Inclusivity: Continuing to foster an environment of inclusivity and multiculturalism is essential. This involves diversifying worship practices and ensuring that all church activities and leadership roles reflect the congregation's diversity. Workshops, seminars, and social events celebrating different cultures can help promote understanding and unity among members.

Conclusion

The post-COVID era presents both challenges and opportunities for the A.M.E. Zion Church. As it navigates this new landscape, the Church's ability to adapt and evolve will be critical to its continued relevance and impact. By addressing the challenges of decreased senior volunteerism, embracing the shift to digital, responding to economic changes, and fostering an inclusive and multicultural community, the Church can strengthen its role as a spiritual haven and community leader. The strategies outlined in this report provide a roadmap for navigating these changes, ensuring that the Church remains a vibrant and vital force in the lives of its members and the broader community.

#YOURVOTEMATTERS2024

Make your voice heard in the upcoming election!

**Zion and beyond join us on Election Day
let's make a difference.**



SOME REMINDERS:

- **Make sure you're registered to vote before Election Day.**
- **Don't forget to bring your ID with you to the polling station.**
- **Stay informed about the election and the issues that matter to you.**
- **#zionvotes**





The Connection

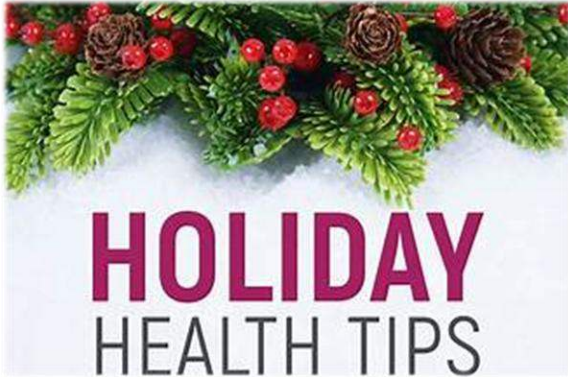
CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

CLC Health, Wellness & Empowerment Initiative

Tanaya Henry, Chairperson ~ Shelley Henry, Co-Chairperson



Healthy Holiday Safety Tip



As you plan your holiday gatherings and the meals that go along with them, don't forget to sanitize and disinfect as you clean. To stay as healthy and germ and bacteria free as possible we must do more than clean the surfaces of the things we use and in most contact with. When we see dirt and debris, we know how to clean. But we can't stop there. We should do our best to sanitize and disinfect also.

We need to combat what we can't see.

Cold germs can live on surfaces for up to one week, but they lose effectiveness after the first 24 hours. Cold germs on your hands can live for up to one hour. The influenza (flu) virus can live for up to 24 to 48 hours on hard surfaces. The coronavirus can live from a few hours to a few days.

Bacteria can live up to two hours on surfaces like doorknobs, keyboards, and tables. Bacteria doubles every 20 minutes.

There is a lot more to say about germs and bacteria, but we will not address that at this time. Our focus is holiday season is being mindful that a clean surface doesn't mean it is germ or bacteria free. We must also realize that we may not get ALL germs and bacteria, but we can do our best to reduce its life span.

Special Note: Read all labels, follow directions and use the correct product for the task you are addressing.

Thank you, *Traveler On A Mission* for supplying this easy to read "Cleaning Hit List".



The Connection

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

CLC Health, Wellness & Empowerment Initiative

Tanaya Henry, Chairperson ~ Shelley Henry, Co-Chairperson



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLEANING, SANITIZING & DISINFECTING



CLEANING

Removes dirt, dust, crumbs & germs from surfaces or objects



SANITIZING

Reduces the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a level considered safe



DISINFECTING

Uses chemicals (disinfectants) to kill germs on surfaces and objects

@traveleronamission

www.toamission.org

CLEANING HIT LIST

www.toamission.org

@traveleronamission



CLEANING

- Hard surfaces (counters, toys, light switches, etc)
- Soft surfaces (carpet, rugs, drapes, etc)
- Laundry items
- Electronics



SANITIZING

- Infant feeding items, toys, play surfaces
- Food contact surfaces after a natural disaster
- Inside of refrigerator



DISINFECTING

- Items you touch a lot!
- Phone
 - Remote control
 - The bathroom
 - Tables
 - Computers
 - Stuffed Animals
 - Bed sheets



The Connection

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

CLC Health, Wellness & Empowerment Initiative

Tanaya Henry, Chairperson ~ Shelley Henry, Co-Chairperson



Let Us Not Forget

The holiday season is a joyful time for many of us. Some of us can't wait to visit family and friends, have large gathers with food, games, and memories of the past and the planning for the future. We can't wait to see the grandson who we remembered as a baby is now a father. How the niece who went off to college has graduated and now opening her own medical practice. How time flies. We remember and enjoy what was and is now.

But there are those who dread the holidays. Can't wait for the holidays to come and go. The days can't go by fast enough. There is depression, sadness, loneliness, isolation, self-worth is low, no sense of purpose. Maybe the loss of a loved one or sickness has taken priority for self or others. Coping with everyday life has been a downward spiral. It doesn't matter the age or the social economic background of a person. It doesn't matter how much education or how big or small a house may be. It doesn't matter how often a person goes to church or attends bible study. It doesn't matter how many people you know and associate with. It doesn't matter how rich or poor a person may be, depression, loneliness, the sense of purpose, self-worth, grief, sadness, heartache, and sorrow can affect many of us at any time.

Therefore, as we approach this holiday season let us not forget **to visit** family who are living home alone or in a nursing home. Let us not forget **to invite** someone to dinner. Let us not forget **to give** our time. Let us not forget **to knock** on the teenager's door. Let us not forget **to listen** when someone needs to speak. Let us not forget **to call**, hearing a voice is almost like getting a hug. We will not forget to PRAY!

Hebrews 13:16: "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Romans 12:13: "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

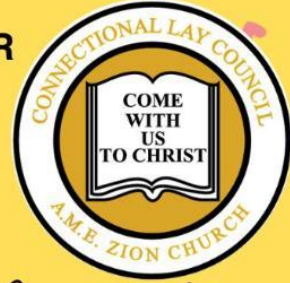
Galatians 6:2: "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ."

1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."





NEWBURG COMMUNITY CENTER
4810 EXETER AVENUE
LOUISVILLE, KY 40218



Connectional Lay Council **OUTREACH**

March 16, 2024 at 1:00 PM

*Literacy Day
in
Louisville, Kentucky*



**Let us remember: One book, one
pen, one child, and one teacher
can change the world.**

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL

**to donate:
Pre-K to 5th Grade BOOKS
or**

**volunteer contact:
Patricia Hunter, Outreach Coordinator
Email: caliconlaypresident@gmail.com**

CLC International President Joseph King Davis. Jr.

**Book donations may be mailed to:
Andrea Henderson
3424 River Park Drive, Louisville KY 40211**

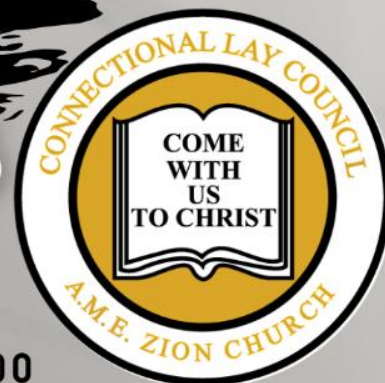
More information to follow.

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

SPECIAL PROJECTS

SALE

ORDER YOUR MERCHANDISE TODAY!



FACILITATOR GUIDES - \$10.00

EXCELLENT RESOURCE FOR LAY ACADEMIES ON
LOCAL, DISTRICT AND CONFERENCE LEVELS

GOLD OXFORD SHIRT - \$35.00

GOLF UMBRELLA - \$25.00

**SPECIAL
OFFER**

AFRICAN PRINT STOLE - \$25.00

A 10% DISCOUNT WILL BE OFFERED ON
ORDERS OF 10 OR MORE

SHOP NOW

CLC T- SHIRT - \$20.00

GOLD POLO SHIRT - \$25.00



Lay Council Apparel

STAY TUNED FOR NEW ITEMS!!!

COMING AVAILABLE AT THE 2024 CLC CONVOCATION

CONTACT MRS. PRISCILLA LEEPER
(704) 599-4630 X2566 OR EMAIL
CLCOFFICE@AMEZION.ORG

MARCH 14 - 17, 2024
LOUISVILLE, KY

CONTACT MRS. KAREN SCOTT
(803) 603-9751 OR EMAIL
SCOTTKAREN0426@GMAIL.COM



ATTENTION VENDORS

RESERVE YOUR SPACE!!!

**At our 12th Quadrennial Connectional Lay Council
Convocation in Louisville, KY, March 14-17, 2024**

**Reserve Vendor Booth/Hanging Banner Space
(Fees vary per desired space)**

**To request a VENDOR FORM,
contact Connie Bell-Wright
clc2vp.conniebellwright@gmail.com**

704-724-2759

DEADLINE: March 1, 2024

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Cash App- \$CLCAMEZ

GIVELIFY- Connectional Lay Council

US Mail- Connectional Lay Council, PO Box 26770, Charlotte, NC 28221-6770

***** (must be received in the office on or before March 1, 2024) *****

**Space Set up: Thursday, March 14, 2024-9:00 a.m.
Breakdown: Saturday, March 16, 2024, by 7:00 p.m.**

GET READY PROTECTED VACCINATED BOOSTED



**Get Vaccinated
or Boosted a
month before
Convocation**



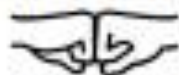
**Wash
hands
often**



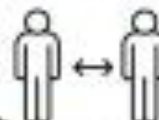
**Bring and
wear your
masks**



**Exchange
hugs for fist or
elbow bumps**



**Remain
socially
distant.**



*Let's Gather Safely in Louisville,
ACC Convocation*