

COST: \$1.00



We Speak

Global Connectional Lay Executive Board Meeting

Article By: Dianne H. Battle - Director of Public Relations (9th Episcopal District)

The 34th Biennial Session of the Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church will be convening on August 2—6, 2015 at the Charleston Area Convention Center – North Charleston, SC.

The Executive Board Meeting was called to Order by President Dr. Willie C. Glover, followed by a song, Blessed Assurance, and prayer by James C. Bonner, Jr. 9th Episcopal District Lay President.

President Dr. Glover thanked all present for their attendance as well as the 7th Episcopal District for their welcoming committee and hosting the 34th Biennial Session. Accolades were also given to the Host Bishop The Right Reverend Richard Franklin Norris.

The business session opened with discussion regarding the following topics:

Housing - Some of the overseas delegation experience problems at check in. Those problems were addressed and resolved with housing accommodations. The Assistant Meeting Planner, Rev. Lisa Hammond assisted with this resolution.

Historiographer's Class - Pam Tilley presented a beautiful presentation of utilizing the Daniel Payne Community Plaza located in Birmingham, AL under the leadership of Bishop James L. Davis, who supports the housing of the CLO Archives at this site.

The 9th Episcopal District Lay President James C. Bonner, Jr. echoed the presentation by saying

“The Mayor of Birmingham was on board with this great endeavor because of what Bishop James L. Davis has done for the state of Alabama. President Bonner also stated that there would be a total of 2400 square feet of space that will be provided for the Connectional Lay Archives on the site of Daniel Payne Community Plaza in Birmingham, AL.



Everyone present understood that Daniel Payne's roots emulate in Charleston, SC and he was the First Historiographer of the AME Church and he carried that legacy to Alabama.

There were no discussions, a motion was put on the floor by Richard Bowden, Connectional Financial Secretary for the executive board to consent to utilization of the Connectional Lay to Archive its historical data/documents and documentations. It was seconded by Pamela Tilley without any unreadiness or discussions. Motion Carried.

Black Tie Soiree - A motion was made that if the Black Tie does not meet the expected \$50,000.00 donation amount for Edward Waters College, that the remaining balance be paid from the general fund of the CLO to make up the difference.

With no other discussion, the Executive Board Meeting ended to allow for the CLEDC meeting to begin.



By- Virginia Henderson Harris, RP Parliamentarian Connectional Lay Organization

Join the Movement!!!

Do not bring these 3 to the meeting.

1. "So move."
2. "I move."
3. "Question."

When making a motion, a member must obtain the floor during the time that no other business is pending and when business of this kind is in order. The member then makes his motion, announcing what he proposes in a complete sentence that is to become the assembly's official statement of action to be taken which is recorded in the minutes. An example would be "I move to have a picnic."

Remember the goal of the maker of the motion is to have other members agree with his proposal therefore the wording of the motion should be precise. Items 1 and 2 above do not meet this requirement and should never be used. Please see RONR page 33 lines 4-7.

Once a motion has been made the presiding officer states the question so everyone is aware of the proposal, then turns to the maker of the motion, since the maker of the motion has the first option to speak. If the maker does not speak, and after a pause, no one else does, the presiding officer will ask one of the following: 1. "Are you ready for the question?" 2. "Is there any debate?" **This means:** "Is everyone ready to vote immediately or does anyone wish to speak about it, offer amendments, other motions or continue debate before voting?" Members please do not respond to this by saying Question but rather proceed as outlined above. If there is still no attempt to get the floor to express that they are unready to vote the presiding officer puts the question to a vote as follows:

1. Chair: Those in favor of the motion, say aye.
2. Chair: Those opposed, say no.
3. Chair: Announces the results of the vote.

Please see RONR 11th Edition page 37 lines 27 through page 38 line 1.

RONR- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition

Virginia Henderson Harris is a Registered Parliamentarian Certified by the National Association of Parliamentarians®

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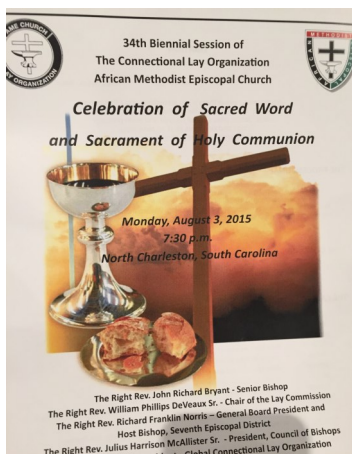
by Ethel Wooten, 11th Episcopal District

The 34th Biennial Session of The Connectional Lay Organization African Methodist Episcopal Church open with choir singing a libation song of “Unity.” With processional “We Are Marching” especially in the Light of God. Bishop McKinley Young of the 3rd District presided over the program outline for the night. With a few program changes Bishop Richard Franklin Norris quoted “You have been nowhere until you come to South Carolina” and led us into the call to worship followed with hymn of praise #62 “God of Grace” by Bishop David R. Daniels, Jr. and Bishop Jeffery N. Leath leading the prayer for our traveling mercy in our safe arrival to North Charleston, South Carolina and choir responding with “Hear Our Prayer.”

The 7th Episcopal District Choir sang from the voices that could be heard on high like Angels with The Anthem titled “Let Mount Zion Rejoice” and The Bishops, congregation and choir was in awe. The song continued to bless everyone’s soul. The scriptures were read from Old Testament- Psalm 122:1- read by Mrs. Mary Mootoo; Epistle-1 Thessalonians 2:13-17 read by Mr. Michael Brown and Gospel-Matthew 28:16-20 read by Bishop Gregory G.M. Ingram. The continuation of the program with Bishop Julius H. McAlister leading the Decalogue and Gloria Patri followed with the Lay Litany by Mr. Malungisa Diamini.

The choir then came forth with another musical selection “I Gotta Robe” where they rocked the church one more time before Bishop McKinley Young introduced the host of the Seventh District, Mr. Roger Cleckley who greeted us heartily and informed us that there are over 500 churches, 6 conferences, 17 presiding Elders and over 1000 AME’s and then quoted one verse of Maya Angelou “I Rise” and let us know that it’s good to be in South Carolina. Our own Connectional President Dr. Willie C. Glover shared that South Carolina is called the “Holy City” because of its warm churches and hospitality and we need to thank our God the “Flag” is down.

Bishop Paul J.M. Kawimbe called for the offering of missions followed with Ministry in Music from the 7th Episcopal District Choir as they lifted us again with Low country Medley “There Is Going to Be a Meeting tonight” and “The Old Ship of Zion.” Bishop McKinley Young introduced the speaker of the hour, then Bishop William P. DeVeaux and outlined the Hymn of Preparation “Hold to God’s Unchanging Hands. The speaker of the hour Bishop William Phillips DeVeaux came forth with scripture Acts 15:1, 3, 7, 9 with his sermon title “We Need Only the Best When Serving God.” Bishop DeVeaux preached his testimony of life ups and downs and letting us know that we do get tested and need to remove the burdens of others, but not let other People put stumbling blocks in our path. We must tell others about what God has done and give the best that we can. We should not let personal problems make a mess of the mission. Jesus did send His very best to teach. Remember you will be tested.



Morning Business Session

Sister J. Furness Reeder - 2nd Episcopal District

WE Remember

The Thirty-fourth Session of the Global Lay Organization began with a spiritual aura that reminded the delegates and observers of the sanctity of the moment, and the glory of God. Mr. Simeon Rhoden, Fifth District Lay President, introduced a video to honor the Emanuel Nine. This video allowed the audience to remember the beautiful souls that were taken by violence and hate recently in this lovely city called Charleston. The smiling faces of the victims reminded us of the fragility of life. Mr. Rhoden reminded the assembly to continue to pray for the AME church, the city of Charleston, and the family of the nine victims of this tragedy.



The organization “Flags for the Flagless” of Tucson, Arizona, presented a flag to Dr. Glover to honor the Emanuel Nine.

A Family Remembers

The family of Mr. Walter Lamar Scott was introduced to the Lay Delegation. Mr. Scott lost his life earlier this spring as a result of police brutality. Mr. Scott’s brother accompanied by his mother and father, spoke on behalf of the family, and asked for the continued prayers of the church for peace in the world and unity among all peoples. Mr. Scott thanked the Seventh Episcopal District and the Connectional Lay Organization for their support during this time of bereavement. Prayer is a way to pay tribute to a brother who was loved and appreciated by a family and a community who cared.

#IamAME

Mrs. Jackie Dupont Walker presented a Resolution enumerating the many social action issues that the AME Church and the Lay Organization need to address as we seek change in these turbulent times.

Mrs. Walker admonished the members of the Lay to return to their houses of worship and work to mobilize the Get-Out-the-Vote Initiative for the upcoming National election cycle.

An invitation was extended to the delegation to travel to Washington, DC on September 2, 2015, to support the AME Church as it launches the Get-Out-the –Vote program with bishops, pastors, laity and other registered citizens in this country. Without the support of an informed citizenry, the platform of President Barack Obama will not be realized. Without the support of the laity and informed citizens of these United States affordable healthcare, housing, and education will not be realized for our children, and our elderly will continue to languish in poverty.

#IamAME is the Connectional thrust to keep our Zion informed and active during the 2016 election cycle. This next voter campaign cannot be taken for granted.

Representative James Clyburn

Democratic National Representative James Clyburn, who represents South Carolina’s 6th District in the United States Congress brought greeting to the assembly, and spoke passionately about how the forces of this nation are working hard every day to forget the tenets of the Great Commission. As he referenced the book of James, chapter 5, Mr. Clyburn reminded the assembly that as Christians, we are required to follow James who taught us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and care for the infirmed.

It is the desire of President Barack Obama, Mr. Clyburn continued, to make sure that this nation has affordable health care; that our children everywhere, have access to proper education, and that all citizens are able to pursue happiness through jobs and affordable housing.

Rep. Clyburn advised the group to go back to their communities and work toward supporting the elderly, the young and the infirmed to take advantage of the promises of the Great Commission.

HISTORIOGRAPHER CLASS

Dianne Stevens-Battle ~ 9th District

Keynote Address

Sister Amanda Johnson - 13th Episcopal District

Presenters:

Pam Tilley & Dr. Cheryl La Roche



The class was very informative as well as well attended by representation from each District's Historiographer.

The 9th Episcopal District showed up with 17 Lay Delegates present to show their dedication and support of the Daniel Payne Community Plaza being the utilization area for this Historical Data of the Connectional Lay Organization Archives.



In attendance from the 9th were: Gussie Boyd, Historiographer, Dianne H. Battle, Susie Bonner, Bernella K. Rose, Veronica Wiley, Loreathia Reeves, Sarah Butler, Gary Hart, Rev. Angie Cox, Cassandra Hughley, Linda Simpson, Mary Turner, Mary Walker, Mrs. Saffold, Wileen Jones, Claudia Anderson and Helen Hillard,

HONORABLE F. RENEE GATHERS

The 34th Session of the Connectional Lay Biennial was exceedingly blessed as the Honorable F. Renee Gathers, a dynamic speaker, philanthropist, and native of South Carolina, challenged us with the Keynote Address.

After being reminded of the Bridges Petition and now she was part of the appreciative product, we could only acknowledged that we must go home differently.

1. **We must do what's best for the good of community not individuals.**
2. **We must use our acquired technology to enhance and power the church for the betterment of people.**
3. **We must make Church School stronger and mandatory, pouring ourselves in the lives of our Youth and Young Adult.**
4. **We must hear thecal of the Laity and answer, participation – not sitting by, getting pour praise on Sundays and leaving our power harnessed and under-utilized.**
5. **We must increase intergenerational mixing. Every senior Christian member must have a Joshua, and likewise every, Joshua needs a Moses. So, take some time and teach and train the Youth.**
6. **We are a part of a past that loved the people. Are we still that church? We can't really and truly love God unless we love His people!**
7. **Finally, we must leave South Carolina with an assignment to take home, so as to help our people, our churches, our communities. Serve the Kingdom! Enter to worship; Depart to Serve!**

CALL TO ACTION: REMEMBERING AS WE ACT

Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker - Social Action Commission

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” a truism attributed to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Our very own sainted AME - Mother Rosa Parks reminded us, “I have learned over the years that when one’s mind is made up, this diminishes fear; Knowing what must be done does away with fear”. And more importantly, in Amos 5:24, the prophet Amos, decreed, “Behaving justly is much more important than ritual. I want justice – oceans of it. I want fairness – rivers of it. That’s what I want. That’s all that I want”. So today we, who have been called to the witness and work of African Methodism must FACE HEAD ON the injustices that continue to plague the African Diaspora. We must answer the CALL ANEW.

Here at the Connectional Lay Organization’s 34th biennial convention, each one of us must honestly declare that , WE KNOW THAT WE KNOW. As we proudly declare #IAMAME, let’s make it real by FACING all forms of discrimination like – ignoring circumstances that force groups of people to live in poverty, enslaving any person for sexual abuse or economic gain, using Blacks randomly as human targets of gun violence, underfunding education of generations of the children of African descent, tolerating mass incarceration, allowing persecution of Christians and any people because of their faith, shortening human lives because of poor healthcare, denying one’s rights to vote and unfortunately the list continues.

For as much as the Connectional Lay Organization (CLO) of the African Methodist Episcopal Church recognized the need for a visible movement to fulfill the church’s commitment to social gospel and human justice work, it is fitting and proper that this 34th biennial session issues a call for responsible social action and civic engagement by way of the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Connectional Lay Organization, during the administration of Bro James L. Williams, accepted the urging of four of its members who answered God’s “call” to step out on faith, imitating a voter empowerment movement that has come to be known as AME V-Alert, and,

WHEREAS, over the past sixteen (16) years, under the administrations of CLO presidents Arthur Brown, Jesse L. Burns and Willie C. Glover, that faith walk has continued, and,

Whereas, the 33rd biennial session of the Connectional Lay Organization voted to establish a Special Committee to be named the AME V-Alert/Social Action Committee who would partner with other AME Church components in ways that would keep the issues, and challenges before the CLO, urging solution oriented action and education, that in this 34th biennial session are highlighted for your prayerful consideration, and,

Whereas, “Save our Girls” has moved from media attention but must remain a priority for African Methodism. We need global eyes on finding and returning the remaining 219+ students who were kidnapped and possibly enslaved in Nigeria, and

Whereas, we join in grief with Mother Emanuel Church in the loss of her pastor, the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, the Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr., Mrs. Cynthia Hurd, the Rev. Sharonda Singleton, Ms. Myra Thompson, Mr. Tywanza Sanders, the Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor, Ms. Susie Jackson, and Ms. Ethel Lance, members of that church family. We pray and ask for the God of love, mercy and grace to comfort; restore and give peace to family members and all of us who have been shaken and saddened by this massacre. May our faith be strengthened and our hope restored, and

Whereas, the tragically growing list of death from police action - Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri; Eric Garner in Staten Island; Akil Gurly in New York; Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio; Ezell Ford in Los Angeles, Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Walter Scott in North Charleston, Samuel DuBose in Cincinnati, Sandra Bland in Waller County, Texas, and others whose circumstances have not come under the scrutiny of national media and public eyes, and

Whereas the President of the United States, who we claim as a member of the global African family has distinguished himself solving problems that eluded his predecessors yet has been called “a monkey and a liar”, openly disrespected and had his citizenship questioned, which are all indicative of a systemic race problem, and

Whereas, AMEs are in leadership in national and international bodies fighting injustice including the Honorable Judge President Monica Leeuw, AME laywoman in South Africa, the Rev. Cornell Brooks, Esquire, National NAACP President, an Itinerant Elder in the AME Church, Dr. Paulette Walker, a laywoman who is president of Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority and Dr Dorothy Buchanan Wilson, AME laywoman who is the president of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority need to be lifted in prayer as they provide leadership in global movements of change, then

Be It Resolved that, we continue to be in prayer and urge every effort be made to rescue and return to their homes and families the remaining 219 Chibok girls kidnapped in Nigeria and reaffirm our opposition to exploitation and human trafficking anywhere, and

Be it Unapologetically Resolved that, each local lay organization partner “back home” in a major GET OUT THE VOTE drive for all elections that will bring sensitive elected officials to every elected position, and

Be It Also Resolved that, in light of increased gun violence and deaths, reaffirm our opposition to “Stand Your Ground” laws, and continue efforts to have them repealed and/or amended. We also call upon the US Congress to pass legislation requiring background checks before gun purchases, and oppose laws in Georgia, Texas, and Tennessee approving guns to be carried in public places, including churches, and

Be It Resolved that, we applaud courts in Wisconsin and Ohio, which have ruled unconstitutional, legislation which seeks to suppress votes of minorities, and urge courts in other states which have passed voter suppression measures to likewise rule them unconstitutional. While we call upon Congress to restore the provisions of section 5 of the 50 year old Voting Rights Act of 1965, we urge each of our pastors and local churches to make September, the kick-off of a campaign to increase voter turnout in our congregations and communities in the upcoming elections in the US over the next biennial, and

Be It Definitively Resolved that, we as a multi-cultural church, recognize the need to become multi-lingual by developing materials and literature in key languages reflecting where AMEs are. We must also commit to provide translations in at least three languages at next General Conference – Spanish, Portuguese, and French and where we have an AME footprint, and

Be It Finally Resolved that , we support President Glover in responding to the Call from the AME Church to work in partnership to continue mitigating the damage resulting from hundreds of years of injustice against humanity, especially people of color. That action “goes live” on September 2nd as our church gathers in Washington, DC with other churches, denominations, civil rights groups, human rights groups, and people of good will to address the issues of race and re-commit our work to justice. #IAMAME means that ... We must continue with greater urgency and vibrancy. We have been called and prepared for such a time as this. With God and together, we cannot fail!

Presented 8/3/2015 at the 34th biennial session of the Connectional Lay Organization, during a Ceremony to honor the memories of the Emmanuel 9 and reflect on other recent gun violence incidents.

34th Biennial Session The Jesse L. Burns Black Tie Soiree Benefit for Edward Waters College

**Location: Ballroom A
Tuesday, August 4, 2015
7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.**



Contribution: \$100.00

(Please See Mrs. Doris Bell, CLO Asst. Recording Secretary for Ticket Information, if available)

Preparing for the 34th Biennial Session

