

COST: \$1.00



34TH BIENNIAL SESSION - SPECIAL BIENNIAL EDITION

We SPEAK

## NAACP America's Journey For Justice #JUSTICESUMMER

Walter C. Jeffers - Director of Public Relations



On yesterday, Dr. Cornell William Brooks and A.M.E. Church leaders gathered for a News Conference at the North Charleston Convention Center as part of the 34th Biennial Session. He called for AME members to join America's Journey for Justice, an 860-mile march from Selma, Alabama, to Washington, D.C., which began Saturday August 1<sup>st</sup> and aims to educate people about legislative issues such as voting rights, education, and job and gun reform. Following the mass shooting at Emanuel A.M.E. Church, the question on the minds of many has been, "what shall we do next," according to NAACP President Cornell William Brooks.

Dr. Brooks stated, "The year in which we find ourselves is a pivotal year; it's an extraordinary year; it is a year that is rare, I believe, in current contemporary civil rights history" said Brooks. "It is a year in which the nation's character has been tested." Dr. Brooks said the Emanuel shooting, which left nine parishioners dead on June 17<sup>th</sup> during a Bible study, came on the heels of building racial animosity across America stemming from crimes. They include the police-involved deaths of Michael Brown and Walter Scott, who was fatally shot in the back by a North Charleston police officer as he ran from a traffic stop.

Brooks added that the last time he was in Charleston it was to mourn the lives of the

nine killed; and while everyone was struggling with sadness and grief, many wondered how to keep moving forward. The question of what's next, Brooks said, is not posed to all of America, but rather the A.M.E. Church. "We lost nine of our own; we were targeted in an act of racialized terrorism," he said. "We understand that unless we demonstrate, we will be unable to educate; and unless we educate, we will be unable to legislate."

Dr. Willie C. Glover said he looks forward to working with the NAACP and thought it was fitting that they gathered together soon after the Confederate battle flag, which he referred to as "a symbol of hatred," was removed from public view. "We pledge anew to continue our efforts to bring healing and wholeness in this nation and around the globe as we encourage voting, stand against gun violence, protest mass incarceration and find ways to ensure every person who wants to learn has access to education and affordable care act."

"Today, we pause to make it very clear that The Doors of the Church are still open," Dr. Glover said. "The massacre of the Emanuel Nine served to demonstrate the power of faith. It took an act of hate to bring lessons of Love from the families of those who lost their lives. For us — their Brothers and Sisters — we are reminded that God calls us to be our best in the face of adversity and hatred."



By Virginia Henderson Harris, RP  
**Parliamentarian**  
**Connectional Lay Organization**

**Parliamentary Term**

**Definition**

Assembly:	A body of people assembled for the transaction of business.
Division of the Assembly:	A motion requiring that a vote taken by voice or by show of hands must be taken by rising.
Germane:	Closely related. The same subject matter. Example: An amendment must be germane to the motion to which it is applied.
Immediately Pending Question:	The latest question {motion} stated by the chair when more than one question is pending.
Plurality Vote:	The largest number of votes received by a candidate or proposition when three or more choices are possible. A plurality vote that is not a majority does not decide a question of election except by specific rules of the organization.
Precedence, Takes, outranks:	Used in reference to the order in which motions can be introduced and considered by the assembly.
Putting the Question:	Putting the motion to a vote.
Revision of the Bylaws:	A complete set of bylaws submitted as a substitute for existing bylaws.
Session:	A meeting or a series of meetings with a single order of business, agenda, or program.
Seconding a Motion:	A second merely means that the member agrees that the motion should come before the meeting and not necessarily that he or she favors the motion.

**RONR- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11<sup>th</sup> Edition**

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

# “We Should Not Have Any Room Left” - Rev. Dr. Jamal Harrison Bryant

by Janie Reeder - 2nd Episcopal District

The Black Church, like other Churches of Faith in America, is experiencing a vast decline in church attendance. The cause for this is that the church has lost, and continues to lose, its relevance to a population of citizens that should be poised to assume the roles of leadership in the near future.

Rev. Dr. Jamaal Harrison Bryant held the audience spell bound as he shared an erudite message directed to the present leadership of our church and the lay organization in particular. The churches relevance is based on how inclusive its programs are. Somehow the population that is not filling the pews or participating in church programs, is the millennials. When this group was asked to stand, it quickly became evident to the vast assembly of Lay people present, that millennials were missing from this important conference.

The guiding question presented to the Conventioneers was, “How can the church address church growth, when a whole generation of young people are seeking other avenues to develop a moral compass for their lives?” Dr. Bryant stated unlike the Civil Rights Movement, young people today are not being led by the church. This generation has grown up with the threat of world war, crime, government inefficiency, racial bias, and poor educational delivery in public schools. It has seen a breakdown of the family, because of mass incarcerations of black men in America. Mothers are often too busy to be totally invested in their children, while churches have not taken the lead in civil and civic issues facing our communities.

Black children are really seeking answers to the moral and spiritual questions that face them every day. The great task becomes how to attract millennials to the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and get them involved in the Lay Organization. The young people who are missing from our congregations were born between 1982 and 2004, these are our millennials. Dr. Bryant suggested the following principles to attract these young people to the church.

## **We must embrace change.**

Dr. Bryant believes that some traditions may keep millennials from coming to church, and that there is a broad disconnect between young tech savvy millennials and older adults who lack the skills to fully comprehend all of the technological advances of this society. A shared interest would be to ask the young people to assume some roles of teaching technical skills to the elderly. One big

**THREAT** to a community is the church doing what its empowered to do, and that is to **TEACH**. Dr. Bryant observed that a wonderful change would come over the black community if our children were just taught to **READ**. Church School should not be a place where children only draw and color, but a place where students are allowed to read aloud so progress easily could be assessed.

## **We must enlarge our vision.**

A church without the vision of inclusion will not attract millennials, or allow those who are already there to grow. Dr. Bryant warned that without an agenda and some assignments to keep millennials engaged, churches will not experience the growth they are seeking. Without engagement, training does not occur. Another primary problem is that the church loses vision when global issues are ignored. Millennials are very much aware of the issues involving Israel, Iran, and Africa. They know the issues surrounding healthcare, jobs, voter education, and STEM education. However, the church fails to include these topics in the discussion of how to do God’s Will when the world seems to be advancing too rapidly. When the young people of our society admire entertainers and reality television stars, more than they do parents, preachers, teachers or community leaders, we have lost the vision as the church.

## **We must envelope expectation.**

Dr. Bryant announced that if there is no expectation in our churches, we are fighting a losing cause. He challenged our churches, if no one has been healed, or received a job, or became a better person, then there is nothing to brag about. There comes a time when church members must become offensive. Don’t accept every program without sound perceived outcome. Press the envelope to attract millennials.

## **We must engage the community.**

Dr. Bryant’s final challenge was that millennials want to serve the church; but, Pastors, as well as Lay people, must collaborate about how to seek ways to attract their service. He promised that our church’s will grow when room is made for millennials; when members seriously pray with and for young people; and when outdated traditions that do not inspire millennials are eliminated.

The session ended with two assignments. The Lay Delegation was assigned the task of returning to their communities and finding some millennials who are experiencing some life problems and help them. Second, we must find a way to fill our churches with young people, and invite a millennial to worship with you on Sunday for the remainder of 2015.

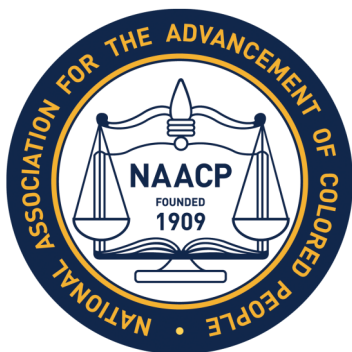




## Our Lives, Our Votes, Our Jobs, and Our Schools Matter

From August 1 to September 16, America's Journey for Justice—an historic 860-mile march from Selma, Alabama, to Washington, D.C.—will mobilize activists and advance a focused national advocacy agenda that protects the right of every American to a fair criminal justice system, uncorrupted and unfettered access to the ballot box, sustainable jobs with a living wage, and equitable public education.

Follow the journey on social media using #JusticeSummer. Visit <http://www.naacp.org/ajfj>



### Issue Focus by State:

- Alabama - Economic Inequality
- Georgia - Education Reform
- South Carolina - Criminal Justice Reform
- North Carolina - Voting Rights
- Virginia - Youth Rally
- Washington, D.C. - Full advocacy agenda

**PATRICIA MAYBERRY**  
**OUTSTANDING LAY PERSON**  
**OF THE YEAR AWARD**



Patricia Mayberry, who hails from the Fifth Episcopal District, is a member of Price Chapel AME Church in Los Angeles, California. Attorney Mayberry is a very active member of the Lay Organization, serving at every level of our Zion. At the Connectional level Patricia served as the Chairperson of the election commission for the past two Connectional Lay organization elections.

She also serves as the President of Judicial Council of the AME Church. For the last six years Patricia has served as the Fifth Episcopal District Director of Lay Activities. On the Annual Conference level, she worked tirelessly as the Chairperson of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. She created a training opportunity enabling the Conference Lay to thoroughly dissect the 2012 Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church.

At the local level, Patricia serves as the Steward Pro Tem, chairperson of the Benevolent Committee and as an active instructor of the new members' class.

She holds membership in the NAACP and Blacks in Government (BIG). Her significant honors include being named the 2014 Honoree for Service for the Fifth Episcopal District and the Southern California Council Lay Organization 2014 Layperson of the Year.

**MELINDA ROBINSON**  
**CONNECTIONAL LAY TED HARRIS**  
**YOUNG ADULT AWARD**



Melinda Robinson is a member of Embry Chapel AME Church in Elizabethtown, KY. She has served as a delegate to three Connectional Lay Biennials. She coordinated Youth for the 13<sup>th</sup> District Lay Organization delegation, and is active in her Local Church, Conference and Episcopal Districts. Serving as Vice President for the Lay Organization, YAR representative, and working in the WKY Conference and 13<sup>th</sup> District Lay Organization keeps her very busy.

She has held offices in her local church and Conference Lay Organization and she has been a workshop presenter and participant for the Conference Lay Witness Night Program. A member of the Trustee Board, Usher Board, Youth Choir, and a church school teacher, she also assists the YPD Director with youth activities and events.

Her community involvement includes working with the Elizabethtown Education Foundation, Ringing Bells for the Salvation Army, volunteering at Morningside Elementary School, and doing mission work. Her awards include OLP Certificate at Awards Luncheon, Certificate of Appreciation, Embry Chapel AMEC, Louisville-Padican District Church School Leadership Commendation State Rally; Student Engagement Symposium, Western Kentucky University, and United Way Certificate of Completion.



# SCENES FROM THE AWARDS BANQUET





# 34th Biennial Session - Awards Banquet

*Ethel Wooten - 11th Episcopal District*

The Awards Banquet opened doors at 7pm for the anticipation of who will be the next Scholarship Winner and Outstanding Layperson. The seating and prelude was led by Ms. Florine Herron. Mr. Keith Britton was the Master of Ceremony for such a special event. Mr. Britton gave greeting and acknowledged the Bishops and Guests.

As the honorees took their seats on the dais the Laity was still coming to find out who the winner will be. Do you have any idea of who this person will? We will find out together. The program continued with the audience lifting the voices to "Lift Every Voice and Sing", followed with the invocation and blessing of the dinner by Mr. James Bonner, 9<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District Lay President. The Young Adult Representative from the 7<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District, Ms. Jamesha Williams, gave the occasion. Mrs. Veronica Wiley did the presentation of the Scholarship Recipients, congratulations to recipients of the Joseph C. McKinney and the Jayme Coleman Williams Scholarships from the 6<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> District.

Our African and Caribbean Sisters and Brothers gave a beautiful selection in their native language. Dr. Willie C. Glover presented the Lay Commission Chair, Bishop William P. DeVeaux who presented the speaker, Dr. Cornell William Brooks, President/CEO, NAACP. Our African and Caribbean Sisters and Brothers serenaded our hearts with a final selection. Dr. Brooks then presented a speech "Who God Is Proves Who We Can Be" and using the scripture from Genesis 18:1-15. Our God always has a way of showing up. Therefore it is not too late for the Laity to operate in the church no matter how hard things are. We need to take a stand for justice

Sister Patricia Wright presented the honorees along with the Awards Committee Chairperson, and those persons were: Ms. Marie Butler; Ms. Myrtle T. Mayo; Ms. Mary Banks Wright; Ms. Patricia Mayberry; Mr. Morris Hannah; Mr. Donald Ray Clemons; Ms. Ethel Bayley Scruggs; Mr. Valene Croskey, Jr.; Ms. Martha F. Simpson; Ms. Amanda Johnson; Mr. Kubedi Patrick Mokhobo. These persons have done outstanding work in the community and church. Mr. Kubedi Patrick Mokhobo gave the response on behalf of the honorees and thanked the committee for choosing him to do so.

Andre Jefferson, Jr.; Derrick Stinne; Cassandra Marshall; Jeremy B. Joseph; Jequetta M. Rogers and Melinda Robinson. These are all the young persons who applied for the Ted Harris Young Adult Award with the winner being from the 13<sup>th</sup> District, Ms. Melinda Robinson.

President Glover presented The Outstanding Lay Person of the Year Award to the Honorable Patricia Mayberry. She thanked the committee for giving her this honor and stated that there was more work for her to do. Mrs. Edith Bartley Cartledge thanked the committee for all the hard work that they did in making this event a success. Dr. Glover acknowledged Dr. Brooks and presented him with a check for \$5,000. Dr. Glover also presented the Inaugural Living Legend Award to Dr. Jayme Coleman Williams for the accomplishments and hard work she has given over many years. President Glover thanked the committee for planning such an extravagant affair, and he thanked the Laity for coming out in great numbers especially our overseas delegations.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT - 34<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL SESSION**  
**WALTER C. JEFFERS, 1<sup>ST</sup> - CHAIR/AMANDA JOHNSON, 13<sup>TH</sup> – CO-CHAIR**  
**DIANNE H. BATTLE, 9<sup>TH</sup> – DIRECTOR OF SALES OF THE “WE SPEAK NEWSLETTER”**

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- During the 34<sup>th</sup> Biennial Session we provided Copies/Print & Computer services to various Committee Chairs, Episcopal Presidents, Executive Board Members, and Marshals.
- Provided Daily “We Speak” to each District
- Committee Members worked tirelessly, coming as early as 7:00 AM daily and staying as late as the next day.
- As a result of which information became available hot off the Press, as the Office of Public Relations “Speaks”
- Reporters, photographers and sales persons hit the floor running with the sales of the “We Speak”
- There were 15 volunteers from the 1 – 12<sup>th</sup> Districts to assist with the sales and for this the Public Relations Office is truly grateful.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- IMPORTANT: ENSURE THAT THE PUBLIC RELATIONS ROOM, has all necessary equipment for quick and efficient reproduction requests in a timely manner.
- Each district provide contact information for each Director of Public Relations person as well as a member of the Public Relations Committee at each Biennial.
- Requests need to be made at least five hours in advance to ensure requests are met.

**THANK YOU!**

CO-CHAIR, AMANDA JOHNSON 13<sup>th</sup> FOR COORDINATING THE COPIES FOR EACH DISTRICT, COMMITTEE CHAIRS, VARIOUS OTHER COPIES NEEDED IN A PROFESSIONAL AND TIMELY MANNER AS WELL AS EDITING ARTICLES FOR SUBMISSION. DIRECTOR OF SALES OF “WE SPEAK”, 34<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL SESSION, DIANNE H. BATTLE 9<sup>th</sup>, FOR COORDINATING THE SALES, AS WELL AS WRITING AND TYPING ARTICLES FOR SUBMISSION.

IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE TO MEET AND GREET ALL THAT ENTERED THE OFFICE OF PUBLICATIONS AND FOR THE OFFICE TO BE ABLE TO MEET ALL REQUESTS. THANK YOU!

BISHOP WILLIAM P. DEVEAUX LAY COMMISSIONER, DR. WILLIE C. GLOVER, PRESIDENT CONNECTIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION. ALL ELECTED CONNECTIONAL LAY OFFICERS AND THE MEMBERS OF THE 34<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL SESSION.

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# ***EVALUATIONS***

**Please take the opportunity to  
complete the Evaluation Form for  
the 34th Biennial Session of the  
Connectional Lay Organization  
by visiting:**

**[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/34th\\_CLO\\_Biennial\\_Session](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/34th_CLO_Biennial_Session)**