The Western North Carolina Conference held its first Lay Institute on November 14, 2015, at Bethel AME Church, Greensboro, NC, Reverend Alphonso McGlen, pastor. Local Lay President Dale Wragg and layman’s welcome the layman from across the Conference. The presenters were; Presiding Elder Reverend J. Bernard Wilder, Presenting Elder Reverend Dr. Conrad K. Pridgen, Reverend Marion Robinson, Reverend Morris Reddon, President Penny Oliver, Reverend Kim Moss, Brother Dwight Patterson, Sister Renee White, and Brother Wilbur Hooker.

The topics were as followed: Dialogue with the Presiding Elders, Church Administration, God Loves a Cheerful Giver, Christian Leadership in the Church, and From Membership to Discipleship.

Presiding Elders Discussion: Responsibilities and Duties of a Presiding Elder; Have good writing and people skills; Interpret the law; Laity must be open minded and trust God to whoever is sent to a church and have a heart to receive them; Be involved with the NAACP; Protect civil and voting rights, Education for everyone; Transparency in our church and Promote evangelism and church growth; Work with Stewards on complaints and conciliation and Support service men and women; Making sure that buildings, real estate are insured and loans are current to keep from foreclosure; Officers are confirmed; We have to learn to be committed and dedicated to our Christian responsible in the house of the Lord; Delegates to the Annual Conference by the 1st Quarterly Conference; 3rd Quarterly, one can report members (missing in action) that haven’t been attending but this will not change church budget; Ways and Means budgets make sure it is adequate; Help may be needed to help smaller churches; Presenting Elder Wilder past sermon “Termites in the Church”; In the book of 25 Articles of Religion, we defend our doctrine against an erroneous Doctrine.

Question and Answer for Presiding Elders
Q. Is it required that District conference delegates to hold any particular office? A. Must be a Steward, Delegate to Annual Conference does not have to be a Steward. Q. Some member may have individual Quarters or Cluster Quarters which is hard to discuss your church issues. A. Presiding Elders should hear all individuals. Q. Do you have to wait for General Conference to make a change to assessments? A. Pray about it and ask God to give you a church growth program. If we don’t make plans to grow, we won’t grow. Don’t just leave it on the preacher. Q. Membership number vs Budget, can some churches be combined? A. Evaluate and make recommendation to the conference. Laity has to learn how to grow the church. Q. What if the Pastor is the issue? A. There is a process. Q. What is the responsibility of the Conference and Local Finance Committee? A. Collectors and Depositors of the funds and distributed accordingly.

Church Administration: Spirituality; Are they Christ like? How many of you love your church? All churches are losing people. Do we tell our young people to go to church?

God Loves a Cheerful Giver: Stewards are keepers. Some people put their money where their heart is; Be able to give God is portion

Funeral and Protocol: Pastor should know from members about their member, No one can occupy another pastor pulpit unless invited by the pastor Pastor receives an honorarium for funerals or weddings, when the family take it among themselves, Electoral College: 2 weeks prior to election and the person must be elected, Annual Conference Delegate is elected and not appointed, Conference committee: who obligation is it to contact for meetings the chair, Church Administration: What’s the value of transparency of Stewards and Trustee working together? Steward: Responsible for all funds and leaders. Trustees: Responsible for real estate and properties Transparency: transparent with finances

Christian Leadership in the Church: No finer example than Jesus Christ, Going above and beyond the actual service and sacrifice, Follow the Word, Follow the Pastor (his/her vision), Follow the Discipline of the AME Church; Some characteristics-salvation, leader, pray, praise, bible study, tither, vision, leadership, risk taker, positive people; Do everything to the glory of God; Characteristics of a Godly and Good Leader/Leadership: Bible references –Moses and Joshua; Leaders of the church call by God, A bully is a leader, Amit that you don’t know Everybody that cry Lord, Lord, leaders should attend Bible Study, Show commitment to the Word, Where the Pastor is you should be also New Members Class, Church roll, Tell the truth and young people will follow, Young people are very teachable, Good preaching draw people to church; Sunday School is a vehicle to help you grow; Your spiritual gift will help you mind your own business; find out your spiritual gift at spiritual gift assessment; Salvation is a process; Some members give God a tip and not tithes; Expectation: Prayer still works Know your gift…everyone has one…work it!; Stay in your lane, Visit the sick, rest home and pray always.

Sister Renee White did a presentation of a drunker coming to church and how she was received. Handouts were available. If you didn't know, you KNOW NOW! Stay tuned for future workshops.
Daniel Payne Community Plaza

The Daniel Payne Community Plaza (the former Daniel Payne Middle School) is the largest property owned by an African American institution in the state of Alabama. A 60,000 sq. ft. building located on 19 acres of land. The property was purchased by the Daniel Payne Foundation of the Ninth Episcopal District in August 2014 as a $2.5 million cash-sale. The AME Church boasts a 200-year history of self-help and the empowerment of people of African descent by serving the church and the community through a variety of ministries. The Plaza represents a commitment to that mission and the realization of the vision of Bishop James L. Davis, who serves as the Presiding Prelate of the Ninth Episcopal District. The Daniel Payne Community Plaza is named for the sixth Bishop of the AME Church. Daniel Alexander Payne was one of the founders and former presidents of Wilberforce University in Ohio as well.

The Daniel Payne Community Plaza will be home to the headquarters of the Ninth Episcopal District, and become a thriving space catering to the needs of the immediate Birmingham community and the state of Alabama. Conferences, corporate retreats, weddings, banquets, sports tournaments, educational programs, college satellite classes, arts programs, and activities for senior citizens are just some of the ways the Plaza will be used. The possibilities are endless.

“Through God’s provision and favor, we were able to acquire the Daniel Payne Community Plaza for the use of God’s people. It is more than a building, it is a tool for ministry,” says Bishop Davis. “I am thankful to the thousands of members of the AME Church in Alabama and throughout the AME connectional church who gave sacrificially to the vision. The Daniel Payne Community Plaza belongs to them,” Bishop Davis continued. In 2010, members of the Ninth Episcopal District, along with the Daniel Payne Board of Trustees began raising funds to develop 140 acres of the former Daniel Payne College campus for the purpose of economic growth and development. With enthusiastic support of local church members, pastors, and many additional supporters, the vision of the Daniel Payne College Legacy Village began to take hold and propel the church forward. By 2014, the fundraising plan had raised almost three million dollars toward the $9.6 million goal to begin developing the land.

Then something happened. One day, while visiting the site, Bishop Davis was led to take a short trek just across the street to Daniel Payne Middle School. He noticed that the building was empty. That moment was the genesis of the Daniel Payne Community Plaza.

Now, the Ninth Episcopal District and the Daniel Payne Foundation own the Daniel Payne Community Plaza and the 140 acres of the original land that will be developed still. Such an amount of land ownership by one African American institution or church in the state of Alabama is unprecedented. The historic proportion of the property acquisition and the high level of economic development that is expected to occur positions the AME Church for longevity in Alabama.

Presiding Elder Dwight Dillard serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Daniel Payne Foundation. “The new plaza is a grand and beautiful sight! I am most proud to usher in this new era for our church. We have created something for the next generation. This is holy ground,” offered Elder Dillard, who leads the Birmingham-Florence-Tuscaloosa District of the Northwest Alabama Conference.

For some supporters, the new Daniel Payne Community Plaza offers a way to honor their ancestors and the legacy of the former Daniel Payne College. Mrs. Ernestine Barnes-Ivery, the only Deaconess in the AME Church in Alabama, recalls the past, “I used to play on Daniel Payne’s picnic area as a little girl. Now, to see 60 plus years later that someone is trying to carry on that memory is a good feeling.” Mrs. Barnes-Ivery has donated $6,000 to the fundraising project. “I have given in memory of my parents. I see something tangible. That is a blessing,” adds Mrs. Barnes-Ivery.

For more information about the Daniel Payne Community Plaza, call (205) 326-4499 or visit www.ninthamec.org.
St. James A.M.E. Church grew out of door-to-door class meetings which started in 1877 by laymen who sought an expression of the burning zeal within. The church was formally organized under the leadership of the Reverend D. Caldwell. The church was located on Chestnut Street between First and Second Streets, where it remained for a short period of time. It was moved to Patterson Avenue and Fourth Street where it remained until 1886.

In 1888, under the leadership of the Reverend John Tate, a building was erected on Third Street between Maple Avenue and Ridge Avenue. In 1892, the congregation purchased the property on Seventh and Ogburn Streets, and in 1904, under the leadership of the Reverend K. C. Holt, a weatherboard building was constructed. Records reveal that the first parsonage was constructed on the Seventh Street property under the leadership of the Reverend F. W. Sowell.

In 1904, under the leadership of the Reverend J. W. Walker, plans were made to move the old building and construct the magnificent Gothic edifice on Seventh and Ogburn Streets. The cornerstone was laid in 1904. Some of the devoted and dedicated pioneers during this construction were: Giles Bason, Luther Walls, William Mendenhall, Louise Yarborough, Andrew Forsyth, Amos Yancy, Mrs. Melisha Bohannon, Mrs. Edith Miller and Mrs. Hannah Harrell. Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Harrell remained devoted members for more than 60 years.

Services were held in this location until 1963. The spirit of devotion, love for one another and appreciation for a beautiful center of worship was dominant and the Founding Fathers infused this into the next generation of faithful sons and daughters of St. James. Some of the noble sons and daughters bearing the torch were: Ed Penn, William Jarrett, C. G. Russell, J. C. McKnight, C. W. Revels, Nelson Lyons, G. Hamilton Willis, Crawford Jones, W. H. Brown, W. I. Banner, Edward Smith, John Vestal, W. S. Scales, Walter Payne, Ambrose Wheeler, John Hodges, Louis Cobb, Shad Walker, Frank Robinson and J. F. Thompson. Early in this period, the Reverend D. Ormonde Walker was appointed pastor. Under his administration, the parsonage site on Woodland Avenue was purchased.

In 1962, the Reverend J. T. McMillan was appointed pastor. The congregation was faced with the task of finding a new church home due to Urban Renewal and the North-South Expressway (requested by the Winston-Salem Redevelopment). The opportunity arose to purchase the Lee Memorial Presbyterian Church property in North Patterson Avenue and 15th Street. The purchase included an acre of land, Edifice, Education Building, Fellowship Hall and a five bedroom Parsonage.

On August 16, 1964, Dr. Sherman L. Green Jr. delivered the first sermon at the new location. On September 12, 1964, the Right Reverend George W. Baber formally dedicated the new church home. The Cornerstone Ritual was led by the 15th District of Prince Hall Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina, James H. Young Memorial Lodge #3670 in charge.

Notes

The Reverend D. Ormonde, after serving as Pastor of St. James, became the President of Wilberforce University and a Bishop of the AME Church. The Reverend L. L. Berry became Secretary of Missions of the AME Church. Six ministers who served as Pastor of St. James became Presiding Elders of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference. They were the Reverends K. C. Holt, A. D. Avery, H. B. Barkley, J. T. McMillan (all deceased), Tyson L. Coble (retired), and J. Bernard Wilder, currently serving in the Eastern District. A total of 29 Bishops have served this congregation, with the Right Reverend William Phillips DeVeaux Sr. now serving. A total of 22 Presiding Elders have served St. James, with the Reverend Dr. Conrad K. Pridgen now serving. A total of 48 Pastors have served St. James, with the Reverend Steven L. Lyons now serving.

Byron L. Barbre—Lay President
Western North Carolina Conference

It is Election Year for the WNCCLO!

The Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization election will take place Saturday April 16, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. All offices are open.

Host Church: Clapps Chapel
1301 Piney Grove Church Road
Whitsett, NC 27377

If you are seeking an office in the WNCCLO complete the Letter of Intent. The Letter of Intent a copy of Article VI NOMINATION and ELECTION PROCEDURES, sections 1-8 and Article IV Membership are on the website http://www.wncclay.org/.

Mail the Letter of Intent with the signature of the WNCCLO president to the nominating committee chair. The certified letter must be postmarked or received by the chair of the Nominating Committee no later than March 16, 2016 (1 month) prior to the convening of the Conference Annual Meeting, April 16, 2016.

2016 Nominating Committee:
Sis. Gertrude Upperman
Sis. Mary Dasher-McAdams
Sis. Marjorie Ervin
Bro. Adam Johnston

Bro. Kenneth Woods, Chairperson - Chairperson of 2016 Nominating Committee
1017 Frazier Road Mebane, NC 27302–Email: kwoods6@centurytel.net

Daniel Payne Legacy Village Project-AME Conference and Retreat Center

To God Be the Glory