

THE SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT LAY ORGANIZATION
SIXTEEN LAY CONVENTION
“LAITY FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION”



WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE
DELEGATES REPORT



“PREPARE TO ELEVATE”

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

JOHN 14:12 NKJV

INTRODUCTION

This report is a combined effort of the Western North Carolina Conference Delegates of the 2nd District Lay Organization Meeting that was held in Portsmouth, Virginia on November 2-3, 2016 at the Renaissance Waterfront Hotel.

Our District Lay President stated the theme "Prepare to Elevate", which reassures that we are confident of moving upward to new levels of service, commitment and dedication, as we continue our focus on Evangelism and Discipleship, establish by the Connectional Lay Organization Biennial theme: "Laity Fulfilling the Great Commission". We prepare to embrace the lineage of our Social Justice DNA, following the 2016-2020 Quadrennial theme: "The African Methodist Episcopal Church: A Social Justice and Liberating Faith".

We the delegates, Sonia Barbre, Betty Duell, Wilbert Hooker, Jr., Kathleen Lightfoot, and Betty Parker are submitting this report.

THANK YOU!



Honorable James E. Clyburn

The meeting opened on Wednesday, November 2, 2016, with devotion by Chaplain Pamela Watford. Keynote speaker for the noon day was Congressman James E. Clyburn, presiding, Western North Conference President Penny Oliver.

Representative James “Jim” E. Clyburn has served in the United States House of Representatives for the State of South Carolina since 1993. He is the Assistant Democratic leader in the 114th Congress. President Barack Obama stated that Clyburn is, “one of the handful of people who, when they speak, the entire Congress listens.” Representative Clyburn is noted as the third-ranking Democrat in the House and serves as liaison to the House Appropriation Committee. He was named Chair of the recently formed House Democrats’ Democratic Outreach & Engagement Task Force. Representative Clyburn is married to Emily Clyburn and they have three daughters and four grandchildren.

Representative Clyburn encouraged the laity to get out and vote. Not only should individuals personally vote, we should work hard to get others to vote, and meet the goals. The laity must teach and train people the value of voting and work to help others. He reminded us that “it is better to see a sermon than to hear one.” The Book of James tells us about works in *James 2*. We all have talents/gifts and roles to play. We need to love, teach and train. Clyburn reiterated that it is like joining the church and not doing anything in the church. One should not come to church and sit down without desiring proper training and teaching about God and the church. He encouraged the laity to hold on to God’s hands. Keep the faith, no matter the outcome because *Great is Thy Faithfulness*.

MEET THE BISHOP

An open forum with our Bishop, The Rt. Rev. James Levert Davis was informative to all in attendance.

Registrations Committee Report:

Baltimore – 12

Washington - 26

Virginia - 33

North Carolina - 23

Western North Carolina – 32

Total: 126



Presidents Report –Valerie Gray Bell

Each conference reports was included or distributed at the workshop.

District President Valerie Bell thanked each Conference President's for their effort in collecting the eye glasses. Special thanks to Sister Edna Watson and friends for their \$1,000 contribution for the shipping of these glasses.

Eye Glasses Report - Rev. Jonathan Weaver

Reverend Jonathan Weaver gave a PRAISE REPORT on the collection of eye glasses. The 2nd District collected 3200 pairs of glasses to be distributed in Rwanda, along with 13 pastors who travel to help in distributing them. A donation of \$1800 for medical supplies was given by a donor.

Each day at 9:00am-5:00pm., people were in line. The medical team addressed HIV, blood test, and ring worms. As the glasses were being distributed, each person was asked to read the bible in their own language. Within 8 days, 500 people had been fitted for glasses and in 9 days, 1752 people were served for medical care. The delegation also trained others to continue this work of mission. It was amazing to see how a pair of glasses could change someone's life, stated Rev. Weaver. One of the persons, who received her glasses, declared "she felt that Jesus gave her sight".

BUSINESS SESSION – OFFICERS REPORTS

Finance Report –Delaphine Green

Balance Brought Forward May 31, 2016 - \$41,094.11

Balance as of September 20, 2016 - \$26,128.58

Director of Public Relations Report-Janie Reeder

Revamp the 2nd District website. (www.sedlay.org)

Thanks to WNC Conference President Penny Oliver for assisting with the website.

Sister Bobbi Hague paid for the domain so that the Lay could keep its URL. Thanks to Penny and Bobbi.

Articles are needed for the "We Speaks".

Historiographer Report –Clara Neal

Ms. Neal is asking each conference to submit any history of the Lay prior to 1996, i.e. photos, programs.....

The information is needed to house the history of the Laity of the 2nd District and also have it place on a digital record.

Scholarship Report-Davis/McKinney – V. Susie Oliphant

Baltimore: 4

Washington: 26

Virginia: 6

North Carolina: 5

Western North Carolina: 3

Total Scholarships Received - 44

Each conference received \$2,500.00

LAY AWARD GALA

The Award Gala was awesome. The Gala was well attended which made it extra special. Everyone was dressed in their after five attire. The music for the evening was provided by Rev. Andre Jefferson and Brother Eric Taylor.

Rev. Jefferson, an accomplished saxophonist, played three songs on his saxophone in the beginning of the program.

One of the songs he played was "I Won't Complain". Rev Jefferson plays "Hymns in the Key of Glory".

Brother Eric Taylor studied at Virginia Commonwealth University and transitioned from cello to his true passion and God given gift...violin performance. Mr. Taylor is world travelled and is establishing new plateaus in violin performance and in gospel music. Mr. Taylor has received numerous prestigious awards during his musical career and has performed all across the country and aboard.

Our Honoree, Brother Kenneth Woods, was dressed to the nine yard and as usually represented us well. Each year it is very rewarding to be present to hear the service the Honorees rendered and see them as they receive their recognition.

The meal was scrumptious and was totally enjoyed. It was an evening of relaxation and fellowship with friends in conversation and laughter. It was also a time to share and meet other Lay Persons from the different Conferences.

After the Honorees received their recognitions, we were enchanted by Brother Eric Taylor.

Brother Eric Taylor has violins in many colors that match his attire. He played a melody of songs. One he played was "Lord, How Excellence". His music took the evening to a higher plateau.

Oh, what a night. We left the Gala, *"Prepared to Elevate as Laity Fulfilling the Great Commission"*.

WORKSHOP I- EDNA WATSON, FACILITATOR

Presenters

2016 General Conference Impact on the Local Church

***Selerya O. Moore –Revisions Committee-Legislation**

***Starr Battle, CLO 3rd VP-Connectional Lay Constitution
and By Laws**

***Valerie Gary Bell- Statistics and Finance– General
Budget/Assessment**



LEGISLATION –IMPACT ON THE LOCAL CHURCH

- 140 Bills given to Revisions Committee
- 14 Constitution and Bylaws
- 3 Annual Conference Boundaries
- 2 Corrections
- 69 Bills approved by Revision for General Conference Consideration
- 41 Bills presented on General Conference Floor
- 8 Bills rejected by the General Conference
- 33 Bills passed by the General Conference
- New Publisher – Rev. Roderick Belin, Jr. and John Thomas III

Part I – Introduction

Proposal to Remember the Emanuel Nine Martyrs and Survivors

Impact: Each local church will plan its remembrance; annually observed on the same Sunday.

Part III – Incorporation and Church Property

Local Church Property Transfer of Property

Part V – The Ministry ED, Training and Procedure for Candidates

Background Checks Revealing Criminal History

Change in Terminology from Handicap to Differently Abled in Preachers Admitted on Trial

Part VI - General Government Divisions and Authority

Authority of Active Bishops

Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer) of the AME Church (CLO bill)

Filling of Vacancies of Connectional Officers

Guiding Principle to Consider When Transferring Minister and Creation of Uniform Assessment Procedures

Part VII – The General Board Connectional Departments and Commissions

CONVO (submitted by Bell and Moore SED) [Will be reference under the Council of Bishops and General Board; responsibility of the General Secretary.]

HALT-1 (HIV-AIDS Legislative Team) Annual Report
HALT-2 Leader Training on HIV-AIDS
Revised Commission on Health Department Statement
The Bishop Sara Frances Davis Covenant Keepers and Intercessors
The General Board
Young Adult Age Redefinition (CLO bill)

Part VIII – Conferences and Conventions

Effective Date of Adopted Legislation
Maintain Accurate Records of Churches with Societies
Quarterly Conference
Young Ages 13-17 as Preparatory Members

Part X – Global Witness and Development, in Africa, the Europe, South America, and India

The HB Senatle AME Church Center
Mandatory Reconfiguration of DISTs 14-20 by 2020

Part XI – Judicial Administration

Amendment of Charges
Composition of the Judicial Council
Sexual Misconduct Reporting Clarification

Part XII – Connectional Societies and Organizations (Amended Constitution and Bylaws)

Bylaws of the African Methodist Episcopal Women in Ministry
CON-M-SWAWO Plus PKs Revision – Structure
MCAM Constitution and Bylaws 2016-2020
Part 2 – MCAM Constitution and Bylaws 2016-2020
Presiding Elder District RAYAC
Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the International Health Commission
The Connectional Lay Organization of the AME Constitution and Bylaws
WMS Constitution and Bylaws – Amended
Connectional Presiding Elders Council

TYPO –page 219, 2012 Discipline- Second DIST – Change to Western North Carolina instead of Eastern North Carolina

The Connectional Lay Organization Constitution and By-Laws Committee Report

Proposed amendments were as follows:

Article IV – Membership

Article VI – Nomination and Election Procedures

Article VII – Election of Officers

Article VIII Qualification

Article XIV- Committees

Article XV – Subordinate Bodies

Article XVI – Amendments and Committee Concerns

Issues covered under each proposed amendments:

Membership - Section 2a, Section 2e and Section 2d & f

Nomination and Election Procedures - Section 5, Section 7b

Election of officers - Section 6 Vacancy of Office of President and
Section 7 Vacancy of Elected Officers other than President.

Qualifications – Section 15 Young adult Representative

Committees – Section 2 Standing Committees

Section 9 The Constitution and By-Laws Committee

Subordinate Bodies – Section 1c, e & g, Section 2c & d

Amendments- Section 1 Amendment of By-Laws,

Section 1 The Constitution and By-Laws Committee

Concerns- Committee Concerns

Living Legend Membership

Youth Lay Organization

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

ARTICLE IV-MEMBERSHIP

Selection 2a - All persons the designation and/or office of President Emeritus. Amendment will read all persons holding the designation and /or office of President Emeritus, all Chairpersons of Standing Committees. Selection 2e. All Conference Lay Organization Presidents. Amendment will read All Conference Lay Organization Presidents, Directors of Lay Activities and Young Adult Representative. Selection 2d&f. All sections dealing specifically with young adults ages 18-30 Amendment will read young adult ages 18-35.

ARTICLE VI-NOMINATION and ELECTION PROCEDUES

Selection 5- No elected officer shall hold more than one (1) additional office beyond the Local Organization. Amendment will read no elected officer shall hold more than two (2) elected offices. Selection 7b- Selection dealing specifically with young adults 18-30. Amendment will read young adult ages 18-35.

ARTICLE VII – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Selection 6- Vacancy in Office of President. Amendment will read Vacancy in Office of President and/or Vice Presidents. Selection 7. Vacancy of Elected of Officer other than President. Amendment will read Vacancy of Elected of Officer other than President and/or Vice Presidents.

ARTICLE VIII -QUALIFICATIONS

Selection 15 - Young Adult Representative. Amendment will read be between the ages 18-30 at the time of election.

ARTICLE XIV-COMMITTEES

Selection 2- Standing Committees are appointed to implement specific goals, objectives, and programs that advance and are vital to the functioning of Connectional Lay Organization. Each standing committee shall have no more seven (7) members appointed by the president, and approved by the Executive Board. Appointments shall be globally inclusive and age sensitive. The President in appointing Committee members shall follow these guidelines, at least one (1) person from Districts 14-20, one (1) person between the ages of 18-30 and all persons must have demonstrated diversity of experiences in the guidelines that govern committee's duties and reporting time lines. Amendment will read Standing Committee shall be the following: Proposed Legislation, Constitution and By-Laws and AME V- Alert... (1) Person between the ages of 18-35, Selection 9. The

Constitution and By- Laws Committee defines the primary characteristics of the organization, prescribes how the organization functions including all rules that the organization considers so important that they cannot be changed without previous notice to the membership and a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Biennial Convention. Amendment will read The Constitution and By-Laws Committee is the official constitution and by law interpretation body for the Connectional Lay Organization. The members will serve for four (4) biennials with membership being staggered (2) are replaced each biennial which will consist of (2) new members and (5) experienced members every biennial. The Constitution and by-Laws Committee will meet at every biennial and at one (1) CLO executive board meeting on a non-biennial year with the purpose of reviewing constitutional interpretation requests. Interpretation request will be field prior to the Executive Board Meeting and presented at said meeting. The Committee will deliberate and issue a majority opinion that is to be announced as a report at the end of the Biennial or CLO executive board meeting. Majority opinions (and dissenting opinions if need be) will be written and distributed within (90) days of the end of the Biennial or CLO Executive board meeting.

ARTICE XV-SUBORDINATE BOBIES

Selection 1c, e& g- at least one of whom shall be a young adult, ages 18-30.

Amendment will read at least one who whom shall be young adult ages 18-35.

Selection 2c & d- at least one of whom shall be young adult, ages 18-30.

Amendment will read at least one whom shall be young adult ages 18-35.

ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS

Selection 1 Amendment of By-Laws. Amendment to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Connectional Lay Organization may be made by filing a copy of proposed amendment with the Connectional President and Secretary. The Secretary shall send an official copy of the proposed amendments to the Constitution and By- Laws Committee at least six (6) months or (180) days prior to the meeting of Biennial Session. The Constitution and By- Laws Committee shall send copies of proposed amendments, by certified mail to each of Episcopal Districts Presidents. Two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and eligible to vote at Biennial Session shall be required to effect an amendment. Amendments will take effect at the close of the General Conference ratifying the Amendment. Proposed amendments:

ARTICE XVI – AMENDMENTS

Selection 1 The Constitution and By-Laws Committee shall send copies of proposed amendments by certified mail to each of the Episcopal District Presidents.

Amendments will read send by certified mail and /or electronic communication.

COMMITTEE CONCERNS

Living Legend Membership- We have the documents titled "Living Legend Membership Guidelines." At this time the Living Legend membership cannot be submitted as an amendment because there is nothing in the Constitution relating to any special form and /or type of membership. There are also some monetary considerations that must be dealt with. Based on the fact that approved Amendments will not take effect until the close of the General Conference ratifying the Amendments it was strongly suggest that Living Legend membership be presented as a revision.

Youth Lay Organization – We were in receipt of a document dealing with youth organization. The document could not be presented as an amendment to the CLO Constitution, First (1st) because there is nothing in the Constitution dealing with youth organization and /or membership under the age of eighteen (18) years of age. Second (2nd) the document was not received within the six (6) month or one hundred eighty (180) day time line. It was not receive until the month of April.

Statistics and Finance- General Budget/ Assessments

President Valerie Bell gave a presentation of the Connectional Budget Assessments- The Impact on The Local Church. She emphasized the statistics and financials in relation to the General Budget and Assessments. The presentation included information on the history of the Connectional Budget, and what is funded by the Connectional Budget, Assessments, and how the local church is assessed.

Assessments are used to fund The Connectional, The Episcopal District, and The Presiding Elder District. Funds are collected through the Annual conferences, and scheduled interval/meetings (Mid-Year, Founder's Day). President Bell explained how much each Episcopal District is assessed for the Annual Budget. The distribution of funds within the budget was also explained.

President Bell outlines the details in relation to the 2nd District Assessments to the Connectional Church. In a perfect world, each of the five conferences would contribute equally to our assessment to the church. However, because of the diversity of the 2nd, the assessments are proportional. The breakdowns are as follows:

CONFERENCE	IDEAL	ACTUAL
BALTIMORE	20%	23.32%
WASHINGTON	20%	36.16%
VIRGINIA	20%	14.31%
NORTH CAROLINA	20%	11.19%
WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA	20%	15.2%

In the handout distributed a pie charts that outline and supporting details 4 years allocations by Districts for 2016-2020. The 2nd District, allocation is 13% or \$7,494,800 of the entire 4-year Budget. That breaks down to \$1,873,700 per year.

Also, included in President Bell's package was a pie chart of the AME Church's Expenses for 2016-2020.

WORKSHOP II- JEAN RICHIE, FACILITATOR

Accountability and Transparency in the Local Church
*Cynthia Gordon Floyd-Presenter



Accountability and Transparency in the Local Church

Goal: Teach, Train and Empower

1. Church should have special accounting policies and procedures and accounting systems
2. Transparent and accurate financial reporting
3. Leadership and congregation reporting that is easy to understand. Should be given at least once a month.

Objective of the Connectional Lay Organization: Page 383 of Discipline - (g) to encourage development. What are the most appropriate operational policies and modern technology?

1. Understand IRS rules that govern our church (church is not audited-people get audited) Pastors get audited more than anyone. That is why you must know the rules.
2. Pastor compensation rules, opportunities and proper reporting
3. EE/Contractor rules and proper reporting
4. The role of audits, reviews and balance sheets
5. Membership and accounting management systems for churches. All Pastors are employees and should get W2 reported in block 7. Housing goes on a W-2
6. Membership to use modern technology for giving, etc. online giving, text, etc.
7. Online statements, self-data management and social media
8. Church specific mobile apps/online church banking, etc.

IRS Requirements: W-2, W-9 Forms and 1099 Reporting

1. EE vs Independent Contractor
2. Contractors (typical for churches)
 - A. Guest Ministers
 - B. Guest Musicians
 - C. Janitors
 - D. Lawn services and landscape
 - E. Maintenance and repair companies, etc.

1099's should be issued annually to these individuals, but you must gather the W-9 form first.

Pastor Compensation Issues:

1. Incorrect financial reporting of salary, love offerings, anniversary gifts, etc.
2. Undocumented housing allowance and incorrect reporting
3. Pastor's salary package improperly documented
4. Accountable reimbursement plan not implemented (life insurance)
5. Housing allowance worksheet: turn in each year. You don't determine the Pastor's housing allowance.

Role of the Lay:

1. To provide training in stewardship this avoids focusing on money.
2. Encourage volunteerism - get folks off the pews
3. Teach biblical principles about stewardship to increase understanding - Parable of the talents (Matt 25:14-30); Parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:13-21); Parable of the complaining workers (Matt 20:1-16); etc.

WORKSHOP III – JOAN WILSON, FACILITATOR

**Simple Evangelism - Discipleship Training - What We Believe AS
AME's**

***Rev. Dr. Darlene James -Presenter**



Simple Evangelism - Discipleship Training - What We Believe As AME's

What we believe about Jesus determines if you are a Christian.

Mission Statement: to minister to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and environmental needs of all people by spreading Christ's liberating gospel through word and deed.

Doctrine of Salvation: set of ideas or beliefs that are taught or believed to be true. Free gift of a Holy God (Ephesians 2:8-9).

1. ABC'S of Salvation

- A. Admit - you are a sinner (Romans 3:23)
 - B. Believe - God loves you, Jesus suffered and died for you (John 3:16)
 - C. Confess - you want Jesus to come into your life (Romans 10:9-10)
2. Know how to lead others to Christ

What is a Christian?

1. One who has accepted Christ as his/her personal savior
Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven (John 3:5)
2. Followers were first called Christians at Antioch. (Acts 11:25-26)

The Christian Church

1. People who have accepted Jesus Christ as the Son of God (1st Corinthians 3:16)
2. The Church Triumphant - members of the church who have died and are regarded as enjoying eternal happiness through union with God
3. The Church Militant - the church on earth, still struggling with sin and temptation, and therefore engaged in warfare (Latin, militia) with the world, the flesh and the devil
4. Church Catholic or Universal (Acts 10:34-35, 44,48)
5. Unity (Galatians 3:26-28; 1st Corinthians 12:12-13,20)
 - A. One church, different denominations
 - B. Source is God, Jesus in the Head and nourished by the Holy Spirit
 - C. Reason or existence
 1. Worship God (Matt 4:10)(Mark 12:30)
 2. Demonstrate Christ's love (Mark 12:31)
 3. Communicate God's word (Mark 16:15)
 4. Baptize and make disciples (Ephesians 2:19)

Three Symbols of the Church:

1. Body: (1st Corinthians 12:12-13) Many members - Christ is the Head
2. Building: Foundation of the Word of God. Jesus is the cornerstone (Ephesian 2:19-22)
3. Bride: Ephesians 5:31-32
<http://www.sbclife.net/Articles/2011/02/sla14>

Spiritual Growth:

1. Can you tell the difference between a correct use of scripture and a mistaken one? Our capacity to feast on deeper knowledge of God (solid food) is determined by our spiritual growth.
2. As you grow in the Lord and put into practice what you have learned, your capacity to understand will also grow.

What AME's Believe about Jesus:

1. The Son of God
2. Divine with a human nature
3. He was sinless
4. Jesus Birth, life, death, resurrection are true
5. Three temptations in the wilderness (Matt 4:1-11)

What AME's Believe:

1. God is an uncreated Spirit
2. God is creator and preserver of the universe: Genesis 1, Acts 4:24
3. Omnipresent - always everywhere
4. Omniscient - all knowing (John 2:24-25)
5. Omnipotent - all powerful (Job 42:2)
6. God's love is unconditional (1st John 4:19-21)
7. There are many names for God

What AME's Believe about the Holy Spirit:

1. Third person of the Holy Trinity
2. Present everywhere and is all powerful
3. Symbols are fire, wind, water, dove (Matthew 3:16, Luke 3:16, John 3:8)
4. Sin against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:30-33)

The 25 Articles of Religion

1. Established by Richard Allen
2. 24 Articles from the Methodist Church
3. Additional Article concerning the government and the church
4. The Apostles' Creed

5. Two Sacraments ordain by Jesus: Article 17 - Baptism, Article 18 - The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper:

1. Two fold purpose
 - A. Sign of the love Christians should have for one another - Remembrance of Christ's sacrifice (Luke 22:14-20)
 - B. Invitation to the table - open to all who have accepted Christ - The General Confession - opportunity to start anew

The Sacrament of Baptism:

1. Methods of baptism (immersion, sprinkling, pouring)
2. To make disciples (Matt 28:19-20)
3. Symbolize spiritual cleansing and new birth
4. Belief in infant baptism
5. Repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38-39)

Worship in the AME Church:

1. Pay great honor and respect to God
2. To adore and praise God
3. An innate desire to draw close to God
4. An encounter with the Living and Holy God
5. Worship as rehearsal
6. Worship as celebration
7. Orders of Worship: Traditional or Contemporary
8. Essential Ingredients of Worship: preaching, singing, praying, praising, scripture, giving, love, and teaching

Resources:

1. AME Book of Discipline
2. AME Hymnal
3. Unger's Bible Dictionary
4. The S.A.T. Manual on African Methodism
5. The Holy Bible
6. The Purpose Driven Church
7. Bible Gateway
8. Reid Temple - "From Membership to Discipleship Manual"
9. Rev. Edith Robinson - Instructor AME Teacher Certification

Workshop closed with playing a game: Ministry in a Bag (awesome game to play)

LAITY WORKING TOGETHER



May God bless us with the true spirit of Christianity, That we may live together, not as man over man, but as Lay persons working with God
Amen

