

**Penny Oliver –President**  
**Eastern District Coordinator— Betty Duell**  
**Western District Coordinator— Renee White**  
**Young Adult Representative—Mary Harris**  
**Lay Activities Director—Jackie Kanipe**

## Western North Carolina Annual Conference

**The Annual Lay Witness Service Theme:**  
***“Effective Christian Leadership” Empowered by Prayer, Praise, and Proclamation***  
***“Laity Fulfilling the Great Commission”***  
***Matthew 28:16-20***  
***Reported by WNCC Lay Historiographer – Sonia P. Barbre***

The Western North Carolina Conference celebrated its 122<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham, North Carolina with the Reverend Dr. Ronald L. Owens, Joseph AME Church serving as the Western North Carolina Conference Coordinating Pastor.

Conference Lay Night was held on June 4, 2015, beginning at 7:00pm with the processional led by President Penny Oliver, program participants and local lay presidents with their pastors.

The evening was highlighted by introducing the Jack and Jill participants, chaired by Sister Mary R. Harris, Young Adult Representative. The Queen and King of the Jack and Jill were Peyton Onyeberechi and Isaiah Alston. Participants of the Jack and Jill were; Malachi Bennett- Bethel AME Church – Rev. Alphonso McGlen.

Rayelle Pflueger-St. James AME Church – Rev. Steven Lyons.

Peyton Onyeberechi – St. Paul-Lenoir AME Church – Rev. Byron Grayson.

Shertonia Daniels – Living Waters AME Church – Rev. Allonia Holmes.

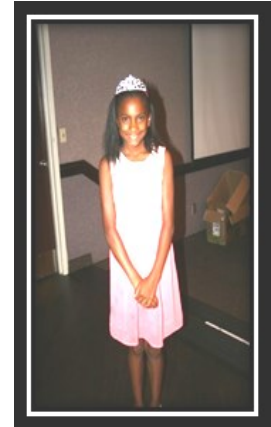
Kelis Richmond – Emmanuel AME Church- Rev. Anita Thompson.

Ashanti Lovett- St. James AME Church – Rev. Steven Lyons.

Isaiah Alston – Dickerson Chapel AME Church – Rev. Donald Holman, Sr.

Oratorical Presentations from participants Kelis Richmond, six years old, reciting *“A Black Child”* followed by an original writing from sixteen year old Rayelle Pflueger entitled, *“Last Summer”*.

The amazement and thrill these young people left in the room with their talent were breathtaking.



*Queen Peyton Onyeberechi*



*Kelis Richmond*



*Rayelle Pflueger*



*Mary R. Harris, YAR*

## Annual Lay Night

The evening spotlighted the play, "THE GLORY TRAIN", which witness the goodness and faithfulness of Christ. As the cast approached the stage in singing those old familiar hymns of the church, the audiences participate as well, lifting their voices. The play showcase the following characters; Sista High Class, Sista Chance, Sista Cash-Talk, Sista Nosey, Sista Goody-Good, Sista Parsons, Sista Sneaky-Round, Sista Taint-So, Sista Living Right, and the Conductor. You can only image the scene as Sista Living Right was moved from the first seat on the train, to the last seat on the train, only to move back after the Sista's were asked by the Conductor to get off at the different stations. What an eye opening in how we treat each other and hold dear to things, name sake, do you know who I'm am, I know something on all of you all, my money brought this and that and I can't do that. Yes, it gave meaning to what we are called to do "SERVE, LOVE, and PRAISE GOD".



evening with praises to God and thanking the lay for a great program.

As always;

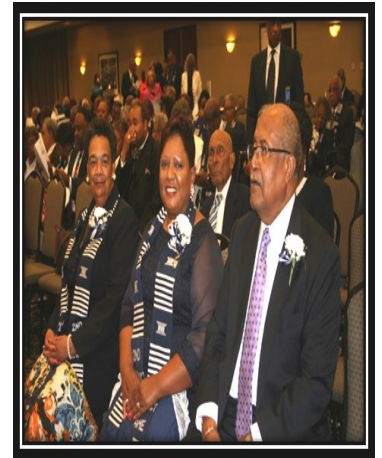
*"May God bless us with the true spirit of Christianity;*

*That we may live together not as man over man, But as Lay person working with God". AMEN.*

**WNCC ANNUAL LAY NIGHT**  
**JUNE 4, 2015**

President Penny Oliver gave remarks and introduced the Seconded Episcopal District Lay President, Valerie Bell. President Bell wrapped up all the Conferences Lay night as full circle on one accord of the mission of the Laity.

President Bell introduced The Right Reverend William Phillips DeVeaux, Sr., Presiding Prelate, 2<sup>nd</sup> Episcopal District who closed out the



## LAY ANNUAL NIGHT—HIGHLIGHTS- “THE GLORY TRAIN”

The FirstFruits Drama Ministry of Saint Matthews United Methodist Church was officially established in 1997 under the leadership of Gwendolyn T. Poole. There had been earlier drama presentations, but it was determined to be referred to as a “ministry” in 1997.

The name First Fruits, taken from the Scriptures, was given later as a directive to the performers to give back to God the gift He had given them and to only give God and any congregation (audience) their best, their first fruits.

“The Glory Train” was first performed by the FirstFruits Drama Ministry in 2004 at Saint Matthews. Since that time, it has been performed for numerous churches and organizations throughout Greensboro and surrounding cities as well as in Roanoke, VA.

Some popular titles performed by the Ministry are: *Women of the Bible-Telling Their Stories*, *Come, Go With Me to Calvary*, *A Rose for Comelia*, *Men of the Bible*, *In Search of Christmas*, *Walk Into Your Season*, *God Bless the Child*, *What Color is Your*

*Praise and Excess Baggage*. These and other works are all written and directed by Gwendolyn T. Poole.



Laymen now  
have thus  
assembled,  
In Thy blessed  
name O God

### DELGATIONS TO THE 34th Biennial Session

The Western North Carolina Conference will be represented by the following layman at the Connectional Lay Biennial in Charleston, South Carolina.

Laymen:

President—Penny Oliver

Director of Lay Activities—  
Jackie Kanipes, Young Adult

Representative—Mary R. Harris,  
Sonia Barbre, Dwight Patterson,  
Kenneth Woods, Barbara Smith, and  
Gertrude Upperman.

Alternate: Wilbert Hooker, Jr. and  
District Delegate: Betty Duell



### CONNECTIONAL LAY OFFICES

#### **Bishop William P. DeVeaux-Commission Chairperson**

President- Dr. Willie c. Glover

1st Vice President—Gloria Byrd

2nd Vice President—Matikane Makiti

3rd Vice-President—Starr Battle

Recording Secretary—Gloria DeVeaux-Cobb

Assistant Recording Secretary—Doris Bell

Corresponding Secretary- Ada Groff

Financial Secretary—Richard Bowden

Treasurer—Darwin Eldridge

Chaplain—Alice Belden

Parliamentarian—Virginia Harris

Directory of Lay Activities—Edith Cartledge

Director of Public Relations—Walter Jeffers

Historiographer—Pamela Tilley

Young Adult Representative—Felecia Commodore

## Council of Bishops

African Methodist Episcopal church leaders meeting was held in New Orleans on June 29, 2015 urging pastors to put faith and safety first. There are unexplained church burnings around the South more than a week after the massacre at Mother Emanuel AME in Charleston.

"We do good to those who hate us," said Bishop Julius McAllister of the 8th Episcopal District.

He and other church leaders stood behind president Obama as he gave the Eulogy at Clementa Pinckney's funeral last week. A few days later, McAllister and the leaders of the AME church world-wide are in New Orleans for their Bishops Council. The group charts the church's next steps in volatile times. Senior Bishop John Bryant of the Chicago area says they must never back away from their primary job to minister to people and speak truth to power.

A church burned to the ground in Warrenville, S.C. hours before the president delivered the in Charleston. Five other black churches in the South burned as well in following days.

Bishop Reginald Jackson serves as Bishop in Africa and is Chairman of Social Action in the AME church.

"Cameras, security guards. It's a matter of making sure people feel comfortable. If you can't feel comfortable in church, where can you feel comfortable?" he said.

The reality of today is staring the church leadership squarely in the face.

"Racism is still a problem in this country," Bishop Jackson said.

## CONNECTIONAL LAY BIENNIAL 2015

### 34th Biennial Session of the Connectional Lay Organization

**Date:** August 2 - 6, 2015

**Location:** Charleston Area  
Convention Center Complex  
5001 Coliseum Drive - North  
Charleston, SC 29418

### **Bishop William P. DeVeaux, Commission Chair**

Dr. Willie C. Glover,  
*Global President*  
Bishop Richard F. Norris,  
*Host Bishop*  
Mother Mary A. Norris,  
*Host Episcopal Supervisor*

*Our hearts and prayers  
goes out to our sisters  
and brothers of  
Emmanuel AME  
Church  
Charleston, SC*

