

African Methodist Episcopal Church  
**Fifth Episcopal District Lay Organization**

July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

**Simeon Rhoden**

*President, 5<sup>th</sup> District Lay organization*



**FIFTY-SEVENTH (57TH) ANNUAL SESSION**  
**FIFTH DISTRICT LAY CONVENTION**

*Daily Fulfilling the Great Commission*

*Hosted by The California Conference Lay Organization*



# Introduction



## Lay Fulfilling the Great Commission

July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

TO: Bishop T. Larry Kirkland, Presiding Prelate; Mrs. Mary Kirkland, Episcopal supervisor; General Officers, Connectional Leadership, Fifth Episcopal District Officers, Conference Presidents, Delegates, Advisory Board, Members of Clergy, and visitors among us!

**I GREET YOU WITH THE JOY OF JESUS CHRIST IN MY HEART, MIND, BODY, and SOUL!**

I once heard an affirming quote by an entrepreneur named Jim Rohn. He mentioned that, *"the challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not a bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly."* That message carried me through my young adult years up until now and still resonates with me today. What I got from it then and now is that through my journeys as your President, there will be good times and awkward moments, but through it all, you can count on me that I will always put my best foot forward in representing you, the 5<sup>th</sup> District Lay Organization, and The AME Church.



# Major Activities & Initiatives

## *Laity Fulfilling the Great Commission*



July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

Since elected, this year's major activities included, but were not limited to:

- Teaming up with the Third Vice President to develop an effective plan to implement Evangelism, while focusing on these basic principles:
  - **ENLIGHTENING LAITY** on what it means to assist in soul winning, and sharing the AME Church's doctrine and beliefs
  - **ENLISTING LAITY** to spend time praying for the church and the community
  - **EQUIPING LAITY** in developing meaningful relationships with those who are lost through acts of hospitality and grace
  - **ENGAGING LAITY** to go out into the community and sharing our faith with everyone who is in their personal circle of influence
- Vesting in the redefinition of the Second Vice President's role by first embracing the Connectional Lay's intent for this position and honing in on the concept of Strategic Planning and what it means for the Lay Organization. In concert with every role of the 5<sup>th</sup> District's Executive Body, the Second Vice President will be developing a base line approach that will help determine the future direction of the Lay organization. It is necessary to understand the Lay's current position and the possible avenues through which it can pursue particular courses of action for future planning.
- Streamlining and collaborating with the Historiographer to capture the historical elements of the 5th Episcopal District Lay Organization. This information will be properly archived for the purposes of informing those today as well as the future generations to come



# Major Activities & Initiatives

## *Laitly Fulfilling the Great Commission*



July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

- After 20 years of missed opportunities, we revised our Constitution and By-Laws for proper Connectional approval and adoptions
  - **For the first time, in a long time, our Constitution & By-Laws have been accepted at the Connectional Level**
- Established new guidelines to our Awards Program and made significant, yet relevant changes to our Life Members qualifications
- Continuous efforts in supporting and implementing unity and harmony throughout the District
  - Conducted the Midwest Conference Elections
  - Lay Day Speaker for the Bethel AME Church, San Diego, CA
  - Phoenix/Albuquerque District Conference Speaker
  - Workshop Presenter to the Bethel AME Church, Yakima, WA
  - Lay Day Speaker for Avery Chapel AME Church, Oklahoma City, OK
  - Leadership Retreat (Connectional & District), 5<sup>th</sup> District Planning Meeting
- Successful Mid Year Convocation of March 2013
  - Over 80 to 100 Lay People stood with the President during the official reporting to the convocation
- Successful Evening of Elegance where before expenses: **Over \$11K in ticket sales and \$6K in scholarships**
- Financial Accountability where the organization has maintained the following:
  - **Operations In the Black - \$39K.** This is a significant increase in our budgeting and almost a 25% increase from 2013
  - **Scholarship in the Black - \$9K.** This increase and successful operations forge the Scholarship Committee Chair to seek the approval to add two new scholarships

# Major Meetings

*Laitty Fulfilling the Great Commission*



July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

- Mid Year Convocation of March 2013
- Connectional Executive Board Meetings & Conference Calls
  - San Antonio, TX
  - Atlanta, GA
  - Columbus, SC
  - Future Board Meetings to come
- Call to the Wall Steering Committee of July 2013 & Participant



# Future Plans

## *Laitiy Fulfilling the Great Commission*



July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

Under this Administration, the future of the Lay Organization is contingent upon ALL OF US. Just how willing are we to work together as Laity working with God? 2Timothy 1: 6 & 7 reminds us of our strength and power:

*6 That is why I would remind you to stir up (rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning) the [gracious] gift of God, [the inner fire] that is in you by means of the laying on of my hands.*

*7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.*

Remaining true to his word, I offer this basic plan as our future growth process:

- **Team Building**
  - Presidents to work side by side with each other and the Director of Lay Activities in developing training for all Laity to become “change agent leaders”. The kind of leaders that have the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others in order to grow the Lay Organization.
- **Understanding the Organization’s immediate needs**
  - Indeed, without a clear vision of the organization’s future, it will be all but impossible to identify appropriate concerns and design and implement the activities that will develop the activities the organization will require for success.

# Future Plans

## *Lay Fulfilling the Great Commission*



July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

- **Monitoring and Improving Practices**

- Monitoring, and improving practices is the one thing we tend to forget and find most difficult to consistently implement. It's important to remember that the organization as a whole is accountable for meeting those goals. In addition to holding people accountable for implementing the actions required to achieve, collecting data (What worked/What did not) on a continuous basis allows us to learn and make course corrections..

- **Mapping out a vision of the Future Leadership Team**

- A systematic development effort starts with an understanding of the future leadership capabilities required to achieve the organization's strategy and goals

- **Developing Future Leaders**

- Conducting research and surveys to better understand each individual lay person of the District and how he or she might be the next leader of this organization

- **Strengthening the Lay Organization**

- A PURPOSE DRIVEN LAY ORGANIZATION is vital and key to our existence.
  - Collaborating with the First Vice President in these areas:
    - Focusing on Growth
    - Continued Financial Stability



# Recommendations

## *Laitty Fulfilling the Great Commission*



July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

- That the 5th Episcopal District Lay Organization submit to the Connectional Lay Organization the concept of “Life Members”, and that a steering committee be created, with the intent to incorporate Life Members on all levels, obtaining the same privileges as elected delegates to Lay Conventions.
- That a steering Committee be created to bring back to the Lay Organization ideas for establishing a flagship location for the 5<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District Lay Organization and that it also serves a facility for archival.



# Charge to the Lay Organization

## *Laitiy Fulfilling the Great Commission*



July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

### **I Close With a Charge:**

**PREFACE:** In order to embrace the ideals of what you've just heard, we must have an intergenerational approach valuing the tolerance for differences. Not only the younger generation taking part to bring about change, but all generations must have a greater presence in stimulating growth and transformation in this process. As a whole, the Lay Organization must be **RADICAL** and continue to serve as a compound for positive change through constructive law, creative/innovative training strategies and enlightened discussions about current issues confronting the Christian community. It is my firm belief that we are equipped, energized and empowered to serve God's children...all inclusive of people like you and me!

### **CHARGE:**

- Laity, tear down the walls that separate us from unconditionally loving each other
- Laity, tear down the walls of complacency and be transformed into greatness
- Laity, tear down the walls of negativity and be empowered
- Laity tear down the walls of confusion and continue to seek wisdom and understanding
- Laity, tear down the walls of internal destruction and continue to build firm and positive foundations

Implicit in these five charges is that as laypersons, we become greatly invested to bring about change for the betterment of the Church, the communities, and the Lay Organization.

**May God continue to bless you, the Lay Organization and the AME Church...**

**I love you, and there's nothing you can do about it!**



African Methodist Episcopal Church  
**Fifth Episcopal District Lay Organization**

July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 | Marriott Oakland City Center | Oakland, CA

# Questions

**FIFTY-SEVENTH (57TH) ANNUAL SESSION**  
**FIFTH DISTRICT LAY CONVENTION**

*Lately Fulfilling the Great Commission*

*Hosted by The California Conference Lay Organization*

