

WE SPEAK

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2021

**OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2021 THEME:
"A CALL TO ACTION AND A TIME TO SERVE."**

**MATIKANE A. MAKITI
CLO LAY PRESIDENT**

**JAMESHA WILLIAMS
CLO YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVE**

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**PATRICIA WRIGHT
CLO DIRECTOR OF LAY ACTIVITIES**

**DIANNE H. BATTLE
CLO DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

f LAYORGANIZATION

"Faith walking Humbly with God, To do Justice and to love kindness."

MICAH 6:8

PHOTO: VIEW OF THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

**AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
OF THE CONNECTIONAL
LAY ORGANIZATION**

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**THE CONNECTIONAL
LAY OFFICERS**

**Lay Commission Chairman
Bishop Stafford J. N. Wicker (8)**

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We Speak is a Quarterly Publication of the Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and is designed as a source of information to the constituency of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The Subscription rate is \$25.00 per annum. Please make all checks and money orders payable to the Connectional Lay Organization. Inquiries about articles in this publication or information for submission should be sent to the Office of the: The Connectional Director of Public Relations.



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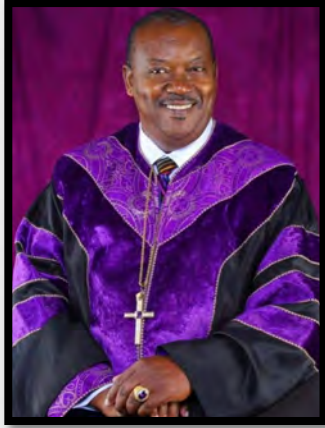
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Lay Commission Chairman Bishop Stafford J.N. Wicker

Greetings to President Matikane “Abe” Makiti, newly elected officers of the CLO, and laity throughout the Connection. I am honored by the invitation to serve as the Lay Commissioner for this Biennial.

The role of the Lay Organization is to teach, train and empower the membership for lay ministry, global leadership and service is essential for the health and vitality of our great Zion.

The climate is conducive for growth, and the opportunities are abundant to capitalize on the momentum, and expand the work of past commissioner, Bishop E. Earl McCloud, Jr., and the dedicated previous administration of the CLO. Without a doubt, we are living in unprecedented times. Nevertheless, we maintain hope and remain optimistic because of our unwavering faith in those we are and who we are called to be.

The mantra, Onward to Greater, remains powerful and energizing even today. Let us remember and internalize the words of the late CLO President Valerie Gary Bell, who challenged us to press Onward to Greater Worship, Greater Works, and Greater Witness. The time is now, and the call is urgent for us to utilize our God-given abilities and skills to improve and extend the kingdom and to reflect the tenets of Jesus Christ.

The challenge to leadership at all levels is to maximize our effectiveness and our global impact by expanding our circles of inclusion and mobilizing all laity in evangelism and service. While the process is not always easy, the benefits are immeasurable for community empowerment and kingdom building. Therefore, let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

I am delighted to partner with the CLO as Commission Chair. Please join Supervisor Constance Belin Wicker and our daughters, Valencia and Lauren, as we remain in earnest, constant prayer for the work of the laity. The words are not original, but the sentiment is authentic: We Are Greater Together! Let us embrace the work ahead with compassion, competence, and commitment to excellence.

Yours in His Service,

Bishop Stafford J.N. Wicker
Presiding Prelate
Eighth Episcopal District





FOREWORD AND GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Laymen Soldiers! Allow me once again to greet you all in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Christ. It is indeed my pleasure to welcome you to yet another edition of our flagship magazine – **“We Speak.”**

At the sitting of the 1st Executive Board that was held in August 2021, the Vision of the Connectional Lay Organization for the quadrennial 2021 – 2025 was unveiled. The vision is aligned with our mission and is a **“Call to Action”** for the Connectional Lay Organization (CLO) to continue embarking on programs that are aimed at ensuring that teaching, training and empowering becomes the core and at the center of our business. I therefore invite you all to familiarize yourselves with the contents of the vision, which will be available on CLO Website and other CLO communication platforms.

As part of my vision, I have requested the Director of Public Relations, Mrs. Dianne Battle on behalf of the CLO Executive Board to run a competition using all the communication platforms at our disposal for the most befitting and aligned slogan to be used throughout the 2021 – 2025 Quadrennial. The aim of the competition is to allow for maximum participation and inputs from the members around the connection on the slogan.

In this publication, we bring you all the up to date and brilliant news from the Connectional Lay Organization - news that acknowledges and celebrates excellence by fellow laypeople in the various Episcopal Districts. Over and above, the edition brings us vital civic information, which includes the importance of voting, as well as the importance of understanding the George Floyd Act and the John Lewis Act.

October 10 has been set aside by the Connectional Lay Organization to celebrate the **“Lay Witness Sunday.”** I am appealing to members of this esteem organization across the connection to celebrate this important day by embarking on programs and activities to the glory of God and send articles of these celebrations to be featured in the upcoming **“We Speak”** magazine.

An important reminder is that our Historical Journal is still up for sale --- Please support this marvelous project by ordering your copy online.

To all the laypersons across the connection, the **“We Speak”** magazine would not have grown to leaps and bounds, available in both printed and electronic version, had it not been through your support as readers and your contribution. Please continue sending articles and relevant material for the betterment of the Lay Organization.

Lastly, we are still not out of the woods – until **COVID-19** is declared a thing of the past, I urge all members of the Lay Organization to comply and adhere with all the health protocols in our various countries and seize the opportunity to get vaccinated to ensure that we slow down the spread of **COVID-19**, reduce the strain on our healthcare services and prevent more deaths.

Until next time, enjoy your read and stay safe. Ebenezer and God bless!!!

**Your Servant Leader Matikane Abe Makiti
PRESIDENT CONNECTIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION**

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Bishop

Stafford J.N. Wicker

President
Matikane Abednego Makiti

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Chaplain
Charlie Nichols

Historiographer
William E. Ayers, Jr.

Director of Lay Activities
Patricia Wright

Director of Public Relations
Dianne H. Battle

Young Adult Representative
Jamesha Williams



CLO-DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS DIANNE H. BATTLE

**Congratulations Public Relations - Team Globally!
Together We Did It...**

A Call to Action and A Time to Serve"

I greet you in Jesus' Joy:

When God Calls us to action, and we respond, we can turn any situation around if we work as an inclusive team. The magnitude of the work needed requires Holy Spirit-filled men and women committed to building the Kingdom of God.

Therefore, teamwork is effective communication, collaboration, and combined efforts in making for a better outcome.

Every individual Public Relations person from districts 1-20 brought their skills, talents and experiences together for a common goal, the publication of the October 2021 Magazine. The different styles of each person made creativity and innovation together, and we were able to combine our talents to reach the masses.

Thank You! CLO Commissioner, Bishop Stafford J.N. Wicker for your encouragement to us, the laity. The CLO President, Brother Matikane Abednego Makiti shared his vision with us for the CLO. It has proven to be a benefactor to us as we plan and create the "Newsletters and We Speak Magazines" going forward. As we continue to hold monthly meetings, sharing new ideas and strategically planning a "We Speak" Magazine that is the success of the team and the spoken words of the CLO globally.

"Thank You Team" for the "Productivity Boost" – because we shared the workload equally with members of the team and tasks were allocated according to the strengths and skills of each team member. Together we were able to work on individual tasks and complete a faster and more readable newsletter which are the results of the pages flipped as we worked together as a team.

Episcopal District President's: Thank You!

The importance of teamwork between the Episcopal District Presidents and the CLO Director of Public Relations is not a dictatorship role, instead it is an inclusive role always working together, and never taking teamwork for granted. We continue asking for your support by sharing with us what's happening in your districts.

Because of you I Can Continue to Serve!!!

Thank You...



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WE SPEAK



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**DIANNE H. BATTLE CLO-DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS CLODOPR16@GMAIL.COM
"LAITY WALKING HUMBLY WITH GOD, TO DO JUSTICE AND TO LOVE KINDNESS." MICAH 6:8**

DIRECTOR OF LAY ACTIVITIES

PATRICIA WRIGHT



From Your Director of Lay Activities' Pen...



We are gearing up for our Winter Executive Board meeting which is scheduled virtually for December 3-4, 2021. You won't want to miss this inspirational, informative virtual experience!

Please plan now to attend the Executive Board meeting which will include the President's vision, the work of the officers that has already begun, reports from committees and the newly proposed quadrennial theme, as well as the opportunity to participate in a learning lab that will center around anointed leadership. The theme of the executive board is "Come ALIVE -- Anointed Leaders Intentionally Validating Excellence."

Registration is \$35 for Districts 1-13 and \$20 for Districts 14-20. Registration information is available now.

It is both reassuring and exciting to know of all the opportunities for training that are available across our Connectional Church. I get invitations to and notifications of the many learning labs with which you are engaged. Though I cannot attend them all, I find myself going to your web-sites or social media sites to watch the available recorded versions. What I have seen so far speaks to a high level of planning and preparation on the part of your leadership. Bravo to each of you!

I have been able to meet with the Episcopal Directors of Lay Activities, and we have begun a plan to tackle the scope of the work that is before us. As we review and restructure committees such as Scholarship, Lay Person and Young Adult of the Biennial, Banquet, and Study Guide, I invite you to bring your skills, experience and sense of volunteerism to the table. Reach out to your Episcopal Director or when they reach out to you and ask you to step up, PLEASE do not hesitate.

Together we will elevate teaching and the activities of the Lay Organization to an even greater level.

I am grateful for the work of the Directors who have preceded me. Ametta Reaves, Edith Bartley-Cartledge, Florence Warren, Ethel M. Wallace-Jenkins, and the many who have gone before, it is upon your shoulders and the established framework you have laid that I mount the next rung of the ladder to excellence. Thank you!



AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH THE CONNECTIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION



Bishop Stafford Wicker

Connectional Lay Organization
Commission Chair



Matikane Makiti

Connectional Lay Organization
President



Patricia H. Wright

Connectional Lay Organization
Dir. of Lay Activities



Jamesha Williams

Connectional Lay Organization
Young Adult Representative

COME ALIVE

Anointed Leaders Intentionally Validating Excellence

VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

REGISTRATION ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 16

Districts 1-13	Districts 14-20
\$35.00	\$20.00

LATE REGISTRATION - NOVEMBER 17-23

Districts 1-13	Districts 14-20
\$50.00	\$35.00

No registration after November 23, 2021
11:59 P.M. EST

3rd - 4th
DECEMBER
2021

NO REFUNDS



SCAN ME

WWW.AMECLAY.ORG

CONNECTIONAL-LAY-ORGANIZATION.BRUSHFIRE.COM/ONLINE-EVENT/517257



Register TODAY!

Go to:

<https://connectional-lay-organization.brushfire.com/online-event/517257>



**First Vice President
Dr. Dorothy Henderson, Ph.D.**

TOGETHER LET'S Develop Effective Recruitment Strategies:

The Duties and Responsibilities of the First Vice President shall: 1. Be responsible for Membership Recruitment, Retention/and Coordinate such duties as assigned by the President and 2. Assume the complete duties of the President during an absence or when it has been determined by the Executive Board that the President can no longer perform the duties.

Lay Organization

The First Vice President Position and Responsibilities are Alive and well. Thank God for the Opportunity to serve the CLO as First Vice President, and thank you for Stepping on Board the Henderson Train.

*The Engineer
Christ*

*The Superintendent
God the Father*

*The Conductor
Dr. Dorothy C. Henderson*



With our Destination..... A Membership Explosion Goal of 20,000+



Accomplishments:

Represented President Matikane Abednego Makiti and the

CLO at the Funeral of Former Supervisor McKenzie

Represented President Matikane Abednego Makiti and the

CLO at the Funeral of Mr. Joseph Fugh

Represented President Matikane Abednego Makiti and the

CLO at the Funeral of Asst. Sec. Brenda Curry

I attended the funeral of Former Supervisor Lucinda Belin-

However; Mr. William Ayers, Jr. was asked to

Represent the CLO by the CLO President Matikane Abednego Makiti

Held a Stakeholder Meeting with Chief Information Officer,

Dr. Jeffery Cooper-Relating Database sharing

Held a Stakeholder Meeting with Christian Recorder Editor,

Mr. John Thomas-Relating Database sharing

Represented President Matikane Abednego Makiti and the

CLO, held the Election in the 6th District

At the request of President Matikane Abednego Makiti,

I held the Election in the 19th District

Held Various Productive meetings with the

Episcopal District Frist Vice Presidents as well as First Vice Presidents on all levels!



CLO - SECOND VICE PRESIDENT SIMON R. LETSOKO

VISION 2021 - 2023

“Where there is no **vision**, the people perish,” **Proverbs 29: 18.**

Vision is the cornerstone of **effectiveness**.

Visions are **scripted** efforts to **change**. **Visions** are **directives**.

The duties of the 2nd Vice President shall be:

Strategic Planning

Organizational Effectiveness and Evaluation

Coordinate such duties as assigned by the President and the Executive Board

At the 1st sitting of the CLO Executive Board Meeting for the **2021 – 2025 Quadrennium**, CLO President Makiti identified **9** priority areas for implementation. He further assigned the task of ensuring successful **implementation**, **monitoring** and **evaluation** to the **CLO 2nd Vice President**.

In order to achieve the above, the following will be put in place.

Establish Strategic Planning Committee comprising of the Episcopal District Second Vice Presidents.

Develop performance and evaluation tools.

Monitor implementation of the Operational and Year Plans.

Scrutinize the 37th CLO Biennial Convention Reports by Elected Officers, Episcopal District Presidents, Committees and Boards, extract the **challenges** and **recommendations** made in their reports, refer them to the relevant offices for remedial actions. Ensure that the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee and resolutions of the Resolutions Committee are implemented.

In order to grow the Lay Organization, we must be brutally honest and introspective about the following;

What do we do?

Why do we do it?

Can it be done better way, which is cost effective?

Similarly, utilize modern tools of communication to strengthen and grow the Lay Organization and the **AME Church**.

Congratulations to Madam CLO Director of Public Relations, Mrs. Dianne H. Battle for using her creativity and excellent imaginary skills in developing a “We Speak Newsletter on the horizon of an electronic version to capture the very essence of thought provoking minds.

In conclusion. Let us work together to grow the Lay Organization and the Lay Ministry in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Peace



CLO - THIRD VICE PRESIDENT LOVIE AARON

LAY WITNESS SUNDAY

Officially, the Connectional Lay Witness Day was designated for observance throughout the AME Church on the 2nd Sunday during the month of October, at the Eleventh Biennial Session, in 1969.

Lay Witness Sunday provides laypersons with the opportunity to witness about their faith in Jesus Christ and their commitment to fulfilling His mission in the world.

The CLO will continue to compile a list of the various Lay Organizations who observe Lay Witness Sunday.

Please forward the name of the church/ lay organization, location of the church/organization, and the time and name of the speaker for the event to: Lovie Aaron at the email address lovie-aaron123@gmail.com by November 15, 2021.

This event was established for laypersons to carry out morning worship services at their respective local churches globally.

Traditionally, Lay Witness Sunday recognizes the work and mission of all laity which takes place within and outside the walls of the AME Church.

The Quadrennial theme approved by the Connectional Lay Organization (2017-2021) is, "Laity Walking Humbly with God to Do Justice and to Love Kindness."

The scripture reference is "And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8 NASB).

As we continue to witness for the Lord, let us remember to Love one another as Christ Loves us. Let us remember to Pray for one another as well as the Connectional Lay Organization on all levels.



CONNECTIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION
OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**FAITH, HOPE
AND CHARITY
THEY MAKE ALL THINGS WORK**

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

LAY WITNESS
Sunday
OCTOBER 10, 2021

BISHOP STAFFORD J. N. WICKER, COMMISSION CHAIR
MR. MATIKANE ABEDNEGO MAKITI, PRESIDENT
MS. LOVIE AARON, 3RD VICE PRESIDENT

MRS. PATRICIA H. WRIGHT, DIRECTOR OF LAY ACTIVITIES
MS. JAMESHA J. WILLIAMS, YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVE



CLO - ASSISTANT RECORDING SECRETARY EDNA S. WATSON

A Note of Appreciation!!!

To the Connectional Executive Board,

First, let me thank God for the opportunity to be elected and serve in the office of Assistant Recording Secretary for the Connectional Lay Organization after the 37th Biennial Convention held in Orlando, Florida. The special election that was held provided me the opportunity to be a part of this great Connectional organization.

It is beyond an honor to serve the Connectional African Methodist Episcopal (AME) denomination. I thank each of you for your vote and faith in my ability to serve the church in this manner and help meet the goals and objectives of this position.

I am excited to work with the Connectional Recording Secretary and all the Board members. I aspire to stay connected to the vision and the mission of the organization by assisting the Executive Board and the other members in whatever capacity deemed necessary. Please continue to pray for me and with me as I undertake this position.

Humbly submitted,

Edna Watson





CLO - CORRESPONDING SECRETARY CHERYL HAMMOND-HOPEWELL

**Congratulations to the “New”
Episcopal District Presidents elected in the last couple of months.**

We welcome them to the CLO Executive Board.

President Alfreda Brooks,
6th Episcopal District President

President Patricia Campbell,
8th Episcopal District President

President Christopher M. Wilson,
13th Episcopal District President

President Philip Tlhage,
18th Episcopal District President

President Nomthimba N. Khoza,
19th Episcopal District President

Congratulations to the newly elected Assistant Recording Secretary: Sister Edna Watson from the 2nd Episcopal District

The following Executive Board members have had birthdays in the past few months:
Happy Birthday To You!

Dr. Rodrick Moore – July 17

Mr. Simon Letsoko – July 27

Mrs. Lyndia Mayo I – August 19

Ms. Patricia Campbell – October 1

The following Executive Board members have upcoming birthdays before our next edition:

Mr. Qedindaba Khumalo – October 9

Mrs. Shirlane Hendrickson Thomas – October 29

Mrs. Cheryl Hammond Hopewell – November 17



CLO - TREASURER KATHY DRAYTON

Dear Laity,

Let me officially thank you for electing me to the office of treasurer during 37th Biennial Convention of the Connectional Lay Organization (CLO).

I am excited to continue the work I began on October 31, 2021, when I was appointed treasurer. Advancing in this critical work, I hope to earn and maintain your trust, confidence, and respect.

As we enter this quadrennial, I look forward to working with the Executive Board to engage in fiscal oversight of the CLO. More specifically, I will work with the Board to ensure transparency and clarity in our reporting; solvency of the CLO; maintaining adequate cashflow; and exploring ways to set aside funds for future growth. I also look forward to working with treasurers throughout the Connection as we develop best practices in growing, safeguarding, and reporting our monies.

To my fellow elected officers: Congratulations! I welcome the opportunities afforded to us as a team to advance the mission, purpose, and objectives of the Lay Organization. By engaging in this work, we will prayerfully advance the kingdom of God.

Best regards,





CLO - Treasurer Kathy Drayton

“A Drop in the Bucket” THIRD EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

The 37th Biennial Lay Convention is one for the record books. It was our first hybrid convention with in-person attendance in Orlando, Florida, and virtual attendance in Canada and Africa. It was a time of unexpected generosity demonstrated by members of the Third Episcopal District Lay Organization.

In a desire to assist in reducing the debt of the Connectional Lay Organization, President Lenora Brogdon-Wyatt, Ph.D., and members of the Third Episcopal District presented the CLO with a restricted gift of \$1,200. The funds were to be used exclusively to help pay the CLO's debt to the general church.

President Brogdon-Wyatt stated, "We realized the debt reduction had to start somewhere. We didn't have a lot of money and, like other districts, have been under pressure and unable to have regular fundraising events and activities. We shared what we could because every drop in the bucket helps."

Financial Secretary Lyndia Mayo received the gift on behalf of the CLO from the stage of the convention center in Orlando.

The CLO used the gift as directed by making a special payment on the debt to the AME Church Finance Department on August 25, 2021. With this gift to reduce the organization's debt, it frees up monies to use for ministries of the CLO. We certainly agree that a 'drop in the bucket' has tremendous ramifications for the organization.

On behalf of President Matikane "Abe" Makiti and members of the Executive Board, thank you, Third District Lay members, for your kind act of generosity.





CLO - HISTORIOGRAPHER WILLIAM AYERS, JR.

A note of thanks and appreciation...

First, I thank God for the opportunity to run, and in turn, be elected to the Office of Historiographer for the Connectional Lay Organization at the 37th Biennial Convention held in Orlando, FL.

I am honored to serve the Connectional African Methodist Episcopal (AME) denomination in this capacity.

Secondly, I thank each of you for your prayers, advice and counsel. Your trust in my ability to serve the church in this manner helps to create the catalyst for me to meet the goals and objectives of this important position.

Again, I simply ask that you continue to pray for me as I assume this new role and responsibility. I am honored to serve and will earnestly do my best with your ongoing support."

William E. Ayers Jr.
Connectional Lay Organization

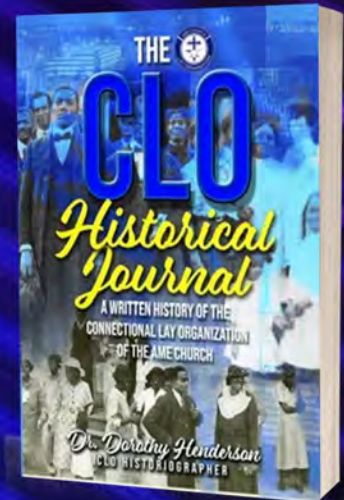




The Connectional Lay Organization of the A.M.E. Church presents:

THE CLO

Historical Journal



This invaluable historical Lay Journal highlights some of our major struggles and outstanding achievements. This book will also serve as an inspirational resource tool of our shared history and values to the AME Church denomination now and for generations to come.

Our Former CLO Historiographer, Dr. Dorothy Henderson of the 12th Episcopal District, lovingly compiled this Journal with the help, input and support of the Episcopal District Historiographers from all AME Church Districts.

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Sister Wanda Sims
President
National Association of Parliamentarians

President of the National Association of Parliamentarians

September 13, 2021

Dear Sister Wanda,

The Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church congratulates you on your election as President of the National Association of Parliamentarians. We know without a doubt, that you will do an excellent job. Please know that we are willing to support you in any way we can, and you can feel free to call on us because we are here for you. Thank you for all the expertise you have and will continue to provide to the Connectional Lay Organization.

Once again, congratulations and may God lead you in this new endeavor.

Your servant leader,

Matikane A Makiti

Matikane Abednego Makiti
PRESIDENT,
CONNECTIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION



The Episcopal Districts





FIRST EPISCOPAL DISTRICT CHERYL HAMMOND HOPEWELL - PRESIDENT

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHT Sister Sharon Carmichael - PR - Reporting

On the heels of our 51st Quadrennial and 37th CLO Biennial, our most efficient President Cheryl Hammond Hopewell did not miss a step in spite of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and Delta variant. President Hopewell and Director of Lay Activities (DOLA) Thomas Davis convened what was traditionally a 2.5-day Lay Annual Meeting as a well-organized 4-hour meeting on a Zoom platform from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. EST. Attending Laity, Clergy, District and Connectional Officers were blessed with a fulfilling meeting experience of devotion, bible study, business and accountability, training, and worship.

Utilizing the theme “Don’t Get Overwhelmed, Get Wisdom”, based on the scripture “Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who get understanding”, Proverbs 3:13 (NRSV), the attendees were enlightened by a panel discussion, “A Conversation on Best Practices for Newly Elected and Appointed Officers”. Panelists Mr. Thomas Davis (1st District Lay DOLA), Mrs. Cheryl Hammond Hopewell (1st District Lay President), Mrs. Mary Mootoo (1st District Lay President Emeritus), Mrs. Sharon Drew (1st District Lay Recording Secretary), and Mrs. Emma Lee (Former Financial Officer) all provided their experiences, insights, recommendations, a toolkit, and references for officers and those seeking to become officers.

The Worship Service Guest Preacher, Reverend James C. Simmons, Pastor of Baber AME Church in Rochester, New York delivered a thought-provoking, soul-stirring sermon, “I’m Still Here”, taken from Genesis 22:1-13. The sermon intent was to help us, in spite of adverse experiences, have life, and have it more abundantly.

The meeting adjourned with closing prayer and the Lay benediction. To God be the glory!



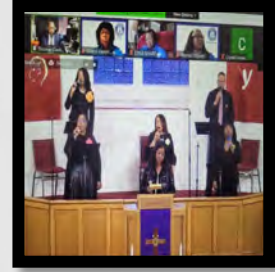
Mrs. Cheryl Hammond Hopewell - President



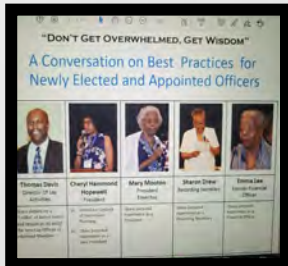
Mr. Thomas Davis



Reverend James C. Simmons,
Pastor of Baber AME Church in
Rochester, New York



Baber Praise Team
(Baber AME Church
Rochester, New York)



Panelists: Mr. Thomas Davis (1st District Lay DOLA), Mrs. Cheryl Hammond Hopewell (1st District Lay President), Mrs. Mary Mootoo (1st District Lay President Emeritus), Mrs. Sharon Drew (1st District Lay Recording Secretary), and Mrs. Emma Lee (Former Financial Officer)





SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT MATTHEW DOUGLAS, PRESIDENT

Second District Lay Organization By: Dontae Foote

The Second Episcopal District Lay Organization (SEDLO) has recently resumed our Master Class monthly training series. The training series takes place on the third Thursday of every month. Our September training was entitled “Effective Leadership and Organizational Training” and it was facilitated by the Seventh Episcopal District President, Keith Britton. President Matthew Douglas encourages our district to attend the training classes and to invite others to attend. Our Master Class series will focus on a wide range of topics from health awareness, politics, social action, and important issues in the Church. As we move forward, we are developing more virtual programming and hybrid training in the upcoming year. We are striving to involve all individuals in the Lay organization to help and move us forward on all levels.

As we are developing members within the entire 2nd District on all levels, local, conference, district and connectional we are always opening to mentoring and training other to fill in positions. We strive to continue to move onward and elevate all members. Although it has been challenging, we are continuing to move forward are remember why we do what we do.

We are continuing to work to shape new and upcoming members into other leaders, rather than just good followers. With this process the guidance and wisdom now may not be felt for some years to come. As was taught to us by leaders that have gone on, we will continue the legacy.

We are excited for the next phase of the Training as we strive to Mentor, Motivate and Mobilize effective Leadership.

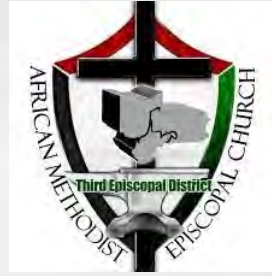
I would like to acknowledge the members who have been elected or appointed to serve the connectional level of the Connectional Lay Organization:

- Brother William Ayers, Historiographer**
- Sister Edna Watson, Assistant Recording Secretary**
- Sister Cynthia Gordon-Floyd, Chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee**
- Sister D. Faye Conley, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee**
- Sister Selerya Moore, Chairperson of the Legislation Committee**
- Sister Cheney Saunders, Chairperson of the Technology Committee**
- Sister Patricia Matthews, Chairperson of the Program Booklet Committee**
- Brother Brian Glover, Vice-Chair of the Music Committee.**



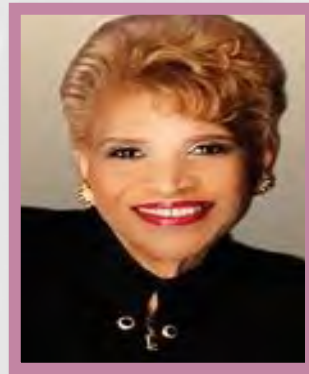


THIRD EPISCOPAL DISTRICT DR. LENORA BROGDON-WYATT, PRESIDENT



Members of The Third Episcopal District Lay Organization (TEDLO) actively participated in the 52nd Quadrennial General Conference and the 37th Connectional Lay Organization Biennial in Orlando, Florida, July 5-12, 2021. Two CLO Officers (Reaves and Mayo), fifteen members of the Executive Board and approximately 30 others served as delegates, committee members and observers.

A major highlight for the district was the election of Rev. Dr. Fred Wright as the 142nd elected and consecrated bishop of our Zion. Following the Episcopal Appointments, the delegation warmly welcomed Errenous E. McCloud, Bishop for the Third District. Bishop McCloud thanked the delegation for his reception and promised he and Supervisor Patricia Russell McCloud would live and work side-by-side with the district.



District Lay President, Dr. Lenora Brogdon-Wyatt was a member of the official welcoming party awaiting the arrival of the McCloud Team in Columbus on July 27, 2021. TEDLO was honored that Bishop McCloud made his first official presentation as he preached the Annual Lay Meeting Worship Service on Friday, August 6, 2021.

More than 150 persons tuned into the virtual service and received the official mantra: ***“We Are Better Together.”*** Acts 2

**FOURTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
JERRY TURNER, JR., PRESIDENT**

FOURTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT LAY ORGANIZATION OFFICERS 2020-2024



Jerry Turner, Jr., President

Betty Tuggle, First Vice-President

Eddie Brown, Second Vice-President

Annie Robinson, Third Vice-President

Sonja Griffin, Recording Secretary

Leontyne Golden, Assistant Recording Secretary

Trace Wade, Corresponding Secretary

Carolyn James, Treasurer

Myron Ford, Financial Secretary

Carol Bowie, Parliamentarian

Alanna McCullough, Historiographer

Edwin Harris Jr., Director of Public Relations

Michael A. Cousin Jr., Director of Lay Activities

Derrick Stinnett, Young Adult Representative

Geraldine Robinson, Chaplain



 [4thEpiscopalDistrictLay](https://www.facebook.com/4thEpiscopalDistrictLay)



FIFTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT LAMAR ROSE, PRESIDENT

Sis. Pamela Williams, Director of Public Relations

The Fifth District Lay Organization held our annual convention on June 3-4, 2021, hosted by the Missouri Conference, Sis. Pamela Williams, Lay President. We used a hybrid format.

In person delegates were hosted by Christ Our Redeemer A.M.E. Church, Black Jack, MO, Sis. Sharrilyn Rose, Lay President, the Rev. Dr. Roger Richardson, Host Pastor. There were about 25 persons in person and the remainder of the delegates participated via the Zoom platform. There were very informative workshops held:

This is How We Do It - Good and Regular Standing in the AME Church (Dr. Jeffrey B. Cooper Sr., General Secretary/CIO)

Building Inter-Generational Partnerships: The Value of an Age-Diverse Lay Organization (Dallas Richardson, 5th District YAR; Shakeia Snider Hampton, Central Conference Lay Pres., 7th District; Dante Buckson, Suwannee-North District YAR, 11th District) Laity, We've Got to Break Lose (Judge Patricia Mayberry, 1st VP 5th District Lay) Upon completion of the election, here are the officers for the Fifth District Lay for 2021-2025:

Position	Officer	Conference
President	Lamar Rose	Missouri
1st Vice President	Judge Patricia Mayberry	Southern California
2nd Vice President	tbd	
3rd Vice President	tbd	
Recording Secretary	Jackie Payton	Missouri
Assistant Recording Secretary	tbd	
Corresponding Secretary	Frances Settles	Southern California
Financial Secretary	Florette Hampton	Missouri
Treasurer	Judith Bradley	Southern California
Chaplain	tbd	
Historiographer	tbd	
Parliamentarian	Monice Crawford	Midwest
Director of Lay Activities	Faye Brown	Pacific Northwest
Director of Public Relations	Pamela Williams	Missouri
Young Adult Representative	Dallas Richardson	Pacific Northwest

The Fifth Episcopal District series of Annual Conferences are in full swing. The Fifth District Lay President, Bro. Lamar Rose, proposed that the six Conference Lay Organizations have a common overall theme, with subthemes based on their Lay Night programs. Our overall theme is "A Time to Soar: Soaring to Bigger and Better." The Conference Presidents agreed that all sub-themes would center around social justice.



FIFTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT Simeon P. Rhoden, Past President

Laity Empowered While on the Trail for 2022

I was approached to share my opinion on the 2021 Biennial held in Orlando, Florida this past July. My Mom always said, “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” In essence, there’s no losing in my life, just winning and lessons learned. So, there you have it...my 2021 Biennial reflection.

F But seriously Laity, have you been watching the news lately? Republican Governor of Texas made some outrageous comments about the extreme anti-abortion ban just enacted in his state. When asked by a reporter why a woman who is raped should be forced to carry a pregnancy to term, he said, “Texas will eliminate rape.” ...sad and stupid response. Look Governor Abbott, if you must lie this badly to try to make your anti-abortion law sound less scary and dystopian, you should be repealing the law...not defending it.

H To say that times have been difficult for our country is an understatement. From Texas’ ban on abortion, Florida’s setting new records for CV19 deaths within one week, the devastating effects of the climate crisis hitting communities from coast to coast, to the voter suppression bills happening throughout our districts...it is clear we need to be laser focused on bold steps that move us forward Laity. Helping our communities within our district understand that Black and Brown votes matter – these are the kind of issues worth discussing at our Biennials.

E I asked earlier, “have you been watching the news lately?” That was no rhetorical question - in case you had not heard...that same Texas Governor intentionally signed away democracy for so many and we as members of the Lay Organization should be concerned, if not disgusted...I am. This voter suppression bill is undemocratic, unamerican and even violates core conservative principles. While Greg Abbott and many other Governors have confirmed over and over how far they are willing to go to attack Black and Brown voters, we must continue to fight twice as hard to defend the right to vote.

S Dear Reader, I don’t know your political affiliation, but as members of the Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, I’m safe to conclude in my statement that you care about losing the Democratic majority in the Senate. There’s only a 50-50 Senate balance, which is why we absolutely can’t afford to give an inch. We should be planning to support the reelection of every single Senator seat who best represents our values.

P Don’t be fooled Laity, we went to sleep after President Obama’s first election and simply did not vote. Are we to blame? ...Partly, because we have two of the best committees within our organization. One titled, AME V-Alert which focuses on mobilizing the church and our communities to register to vote and to get out to vote. The second is our Social Action Committee which are Laity coming together to tackle an issue, support other people, or improve community initiatives. It involves Laity giving their time and other resources for the common good, in a range of forms – from volunteering to community-owned services, and peer networks to community organizing. These two committees are at EVERY LEVEL, and we should be more involved now to impact your local elections and the Senate elections coming up in 2022.

I've got this terrible feeling that those who do not serve our best interest are ramping up their attacks on the Black and Brown communities' rights to vote. We absolutely cannot afford to lose in the Senate. We need to defend -- and expand -- it in 2022.

Years after the establishment of the Commission on Social Action of Reform in the Lay Organization, there remains a significant number of our Lay Organizations without Social Action or AME V-Alert community affairs committees. I find this incongruous, particularly at a time when the religious aspect of our society is being challenged to bring more relevantly its great prophetic message on the problems of our world – not just here in the United States, but Globally.

So, my reflection of the 2021 Biennial is more of a statement to encourage us for the future. To urge the establishment of a social action committee at every level. Where such committees already exist, I call upon them to intensify and expand their activities and to take a more serious interest in the upcoming 2022 Senate elections and make a greater commitment to the work of social action and AME V-Alert committees so that the unfortunate gap which presently exists between the two can be quickly closed.

In closing, I want to thank Dianne H. Battle, our Director of Public Relations, for this opportunity to share with all of you; and I look forward to writing many more articles that will forge the Laity forward. That has always been my intention, Working Together to be Better Together.

Let us Laity make an approach to community empowerment and development that focuses on one-to-one relationship building, community capacity and mobilizing people to take-action and address social inequality for Black and Brown people everywhere.

Mr. Simeon P. Rhoden, Past President
Fifth Episcopal District Lay Organization



SIXTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT ALFREDA BROOKS



The Sixth Episcopal District Lay Organization held our elections on Saturday, September 18, 2021. The elections was held at the New Greater Allen Temple A. M. E. Church in Byron, Georgia where Rev. Charlie Hicks II is the pastor and Bro. George Gordon II is the Local and Host Conference President. We were enthused to have our Presiding Prelate, Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, several Presiding Elders and pastors in attendance.

The First Vice President of the Connectional Lay Organization, Dr. Dorothy Henderson, was present and conducted the elections on that morning.

After the completion of the election, these are the officers of the Sixth Episcopal District Lay Organization for the 2021-2025 Quadrennium:

Position	Officer
President	Alfreda Brooks
First Vice President	Christopher Floyd Jr.
Second Vice President	Jacqueline Jennings
Third Vice President	Waynefield Leonard
Recording Secretary	Esteller Phillips
Assistant Recording Secretary	Jacqueline Jordan
Corresponding Secretary	Samuel Humphrey
Treasurer	Annabella Wright
Financial Secretary	Rosemary Street Nixon
Chaplin	Charles Murphy
Historiographer	Sherald Thomas
Parliamentarian	Emanuel Larkin, Jr.
Director of Lay Activities	Martinique Mix
Director of Public Relations	George M. Gordon, II
Young Adult Representative	Lester Foster, Jr.





SEVENTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT KEITH E. BRITTON, PRESIDENT

37th Biennial Session of the Connectional Lay Organization

Greetings to the Bishops of the Church, the Executive Board of the Connectional Lay Organization, and the members of the 37th Biennial Session of the CLO:

We thank God for the opportunity to serve the members of the Seventh Episcopal District Lay Organization. This biennium was filled with opportunities to trust God and follow His direction as we continued our mission to draw others to Him while fostering a love and appreciation for African Methodism. The cooperative spirit of the laity and clergy throughout the Seventh District creates a positive atmosphere for training, productivity, and purpose.

The Coronavirus Pandemic has forever changed our lives. While the focus for many was on what we lost, we decided to focus on the new opportunities God provided. We were forced to do things differently and we are better because of it. As we conclude this biennium, we look back on the accomplishments and the lessons learned. We reflect on not just what was done, but also on what we still need to do, to ensure the church and unchurched see people with a spirit of love. We want to make the church and world a better place.

- With the Lord's help, from July of 2019 until now, we have completed the following activities:
- Provided dynamic teaching and training via in-person and virtual formats, successfully making the shift to electronic platforms for the programmatic delivery of lay ministry
- Sponsored two Episcopal District Lay Retreats and two Episcopal Lay Conventions
- Donated \$130,000 to Allen University to assist students in earning their college degrees
- Awarded \$12,500 in scholarships to members of the clergy pursuing the Master of Divinity Degree
- Awarded \$10,000 in scholarships to high school seniors pursuing post-secondary education
- Committed \$10,000 to support the Compassion Project over a five-year period. Currently sponsoring children in the Dominican Republic and Haiti
- Provided \$9,000 to the Annual Conferences for Mission Projects
- Worked with our Episcopal Leader, Bishop Samuel Lawrence Green, Sr., to implement the Lay Electoral College Electronic Voting System, increasing efficiency, morale, and participation
- Partnered with the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education to obtain funding to assist students with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Assisted with the organization and execution of the Seventh Episcopal District's Faith for Black Lives March and Rally in Columbia, SC
- Supported Evangelism and Annual Lay Recognition efforts of the Connectional Lay Organization
- Decreased the budgets of the Annual Conferences by 15 percent

God blesses us each day and we have been successful, but He also reveals the work that must be done. We will continue to assess the needs of the churches offering encouragement, assistance, and training. As we move forward, plans are in place to update our website and increase the number of online training modules. We will also intensify our efforts to form component partnerships to accomplish common goals. "Together We Will" is more than motto for us. It solidifies the foundation of our existence, reminding us we achieve more when we are unified on one accord.

Since the Biennial Session, we lost the epitome of dedicated service to God and the Lay Organization in the form of Sister Brenda Holland Curry, Assistant Recording Secretary for the CLO. We thank all of you for your love and support during her transition. Her legacy of service will forever live in our hearts as we remain committed laypersons working with God.

Thank you for my Re-election

Dear Connectional Lay Organization -

Please know how thankful I am that you voted for my re-election as your CLO Asst. Recording Secretary. I will continue to faithfully assist in the recording of the CLO minutes. I look forward to working with the Executive Board, especially our President and our newly -elected Recording Secretary. Your prayers and your support have blessed me beyond measure. I am ready to serve God by serving you! In this new quadrennium, may we continue to be "Lay soldiers, strong in unity and love!"

Brenda L. Holland Curry

MY THANKS



Brenda Holland Curry

SEVENTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT LAY ORGANIZATION

A M E C H U R C H

CONFERENCES

- PALMETTO
- NORTHEAST
- COLUMBIA
- SOUTH CAROLINA
- PIEDMONT
- CENTRAL



Together We Will



**NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
BERNELLA KNIGHT ROSE, PRESIDENT**

**By Cherroyle D. Webb
Director of Public Relations**

Greetings from the Ninth Episcopal District Lay Organization.

During this season of our lives, God is still blessing. We have remained focused with the mission of the Lay Organization: “to teach, train, and empower.”

Our DOLA, Mrs. Dorothy Sconiers Bevel has provided quarterly training via zoom that has been used in some conferences and local churches. Training#1 Prayer, #2 Using the AMEC Hymnal as a Resource. The topic for the next training will be, Church Etiquette to include Zoom Etiquette.

We are still providing supplies to those who are in need. Our contributions of empty medicine bottles to charity for Aids patients and used eyeglasses to Walmart continue to increase.

Because we believe in education and the improvement of the pulpit, the T. D. Peters’ Theological Seminary recipients have received \$5,000.

We were 56 strong for the 37th Biennial held in Orlando, FL.

Congratulations to Mrs. Dianne H. Battle on being re-elected the Director of Public Relations for the Connectional Lay Organization!

We were delighted to welcome back, Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Supervisor the Reverend Sherita Moon Seawright and family!





TENTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT DR. RODERICK MOORE

Submitted by Ava Knapp Parker
Director of Public Relations

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT FOR BROWN CHAPEL A.M.E. CHURCH LAY ORGANIZATION

An objective of the Lay Organization is to encourage the laity to support the total program of the church in the local congregation, in the community, and throughout the Connection. Volunteering, donating and helping others are some of the most fulfilling activities one can do to help in the community, especially in times of need that we are currently experiencing. Giving back is a part of everyday life and strengthens our communities as we walk this Christian journey to help others.

The members of Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church Lay Organization in Houston, TX are whole heartily meeting this objective. Among other community endeavors that they have engaged themselves, the Lay Organization has set as their goal to provide assistance to men in need throughout the Houston community. They selected *Career Gear Greater Houston* to exert their energy. *Career Gear Greater Houston* empowers men, male youth, and veterans who are striving to overcome economic disadvantage, offering professional attire and career coaching necessary to gain employment and become the providers their families need. Lay members provided new and used clean clothes that they would be proud to wear themselves for this most pressing cause.

Career Gear's website indicates it is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization providing career counseling, interview-appropriate clothing, and follow-up job support to men actively seeking employment. "Career Gear's philosophy is simple but powerful: Successful employment is a catalyst towards men emerging as fathers and leaders within their communities." They further state "Career Gear serves the least served in our community, our men. By offering the resources, soft and life-skills necessary to gain employment, we empower men and male youth to overcome employment barriers and economic disadvantages. Our impact allows them to live productive lives, becoming the role models their families deserve and our communities need."

Diane Tarver, Local Lay President of Brown Chapel, led the members to "do the most good for the least served." Under her leadership, she attempts to do at least one community outreach project per quarter. During her annual planning meeting, she presents ideas for community outreach along with regular training goals for the members. The chairpersons for this community outreach were Helen Rutland and Linda Scott for Dress for Success (for women) and Kenneth Rutland for Career Gear (for men). They attempted to provide donations to Dress for Success, however, due to COVID-19, they were no longer accepting donations. They were pleased that Career Gear accepted the donations for both the women and the men.

To Helen Rutland, she found this effort very satisfying and rewarding. She had been invited to the local lay meeting and was so impressed with the meeting, she joined immediately. She was named one of the co-chairs of this community outreach and was captivated with the giving spirit of the Lay Organization.

Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church Lay Organization is to be commended for selecting such a worthy cause to provide assistance. We are proud that the Lay Organization includes community work in its arsenal of good work as they attempt to meet the objectives of the Lay Organization. Training and community work is testament of Roman's 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."



ELEVENTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT PATRICIA WRIGHT

Two EEDLO officers elected to serve the Connection Lay Organization

By Robbyn Hopewell, EEDLO Director of Public Relations

ORLANDO -- The big screen in the Orange County Convention Center lit up with the vote totals during the 37th Biennial Session of the A.M.E.C. Connectional Lay Organization (CLO) in July and a whoop went up from the rear right corner of the room. Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization (EEDLO) President Patricia H. Wright had been elected as the new Director of Lay Activities for the CLO, the second officer elected from her district that day.

She turned to her campaign manager, EEDLO DOLA Teresa White, and smiled brightly, pausing to bask for just a moment before the work would begin.

Immediate EEDLO Past President Charlie Nichols was also elected as chaplain of the CLO on Sunday, July 11 during the Biennial.

“I continue to be amazed and awed at the level of devotion you have shown as we took on this journey together,” CLO DOLA Wright wrote in heartfelt thanks to her district. “It makes me more certain than ever that we are united as one big Family, and I am glad. It is my prayer that we will continue to bring Glory to God through our service to and love for each other.”

The 11th Episcopal District was tasked with the tall order of serving as one of the host cities for both the Biennial and 51st Quadrennial General Conference of the A.M.E. Church. Volunteers from across the state of Florida and Bahamas were called on to make this hybrid experience a pleasant one for all members of the church who were able to travel to Orlando, Florida over the summer. That meant that many of the volunteers for CLO DOLA Wright’s campaign pulled double duty serving on host committees before tagging in for months of campaign strategy meetings. Still, they did not grow weary in well doing. The EEDLO boasted the largest registered Biennial delegation of all episcopal districts with 166 people from across the state making the journey to the Convention Center on the Sunday morning of the election. Dressed in crisp white for worship accented with yellow ties and custom-made, bejeweled yellow silk flowers, the delegation was large and unified. Just before the voting for CLO Officers began, CLO DOLA Wright’s Presiding Elder Rev. Patricia Wallace of the Sizzling St. Petersburg District offered a prayer of thanksgiving for being able to gather corporately, safely to support CLO Chaplain Nichols and CLO DOLA Wright in their journeys. Chaplain Nichols ran uncontested and was elected by unanimous ballot. DOLA Wright appeared alongside Sis. Paulette Coleman of the 13th Episcopal District on the ballot.

CLO DOLA Wright will continue to serve as EEDLO president during her tenure with the CLO. CLO Chaplain Nichols will also remain as an EEDLO president emeritus. Serving alongside our connectional leaders are EEDLO First Vice President John Love, Second Vice President Lotter Cherry, Third Vice President Johnnie Hill, Recording Secretary Ethel Wooten, Assistant Recording Secretary Evelyn Odom, Corresponding Secretary Esther Ferguson, Treasurer Sharon Causey, Financial Secretary Priscilla Salter, Director of Lay Activities Teresa White, Director of Public Relations Robbyn Hopewell, Historiographer Debra Gilliard, Parliamentarian Rebecca Williams, Chaplain Deborah Langston, Young Adult Representative Ashley Blakely, Registrar Anne McCelvey, Assistant Registrar Juanita Hagans, and Assistant Registrar Sharon White.



**Patricia
Wright**
Director of Lay Activities - Elect
Connectional Lay Organization



**TWELTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
DR. DOROTHY L. HENDERSON Ph.D., PRESIDENT**



The 12th Episcopal District of African Methodist Episcopal District where Bishop Michael L Mitchell is the Presiding Bishop gives all Praises and Glory to our God for allowing was all to aboard the Henderson & Aaron Train to attend the 37th Biennial Convention of the Connectional Lay Organization.

We aboard by train, highway, and airway to support Dr. Dorothy C. Henderson for the First Vice President candidate for the Connectional Lay Organization and Lovie Aaron candidate for the third Vice President of the Connectional Lay Organization.

Our God did not fail us, we were able to elect with other supports across the Connection Lay Organization.

Our 12th Episcopal District Lay President Dorothy C. Henderson as the First Vice President of the Connectional Lay Organization and elected Sis. Lovie Aaron as the 3rd Vice President to GOD TO BE GLORY for the great things he has done.



Dr. Dorothy Henderson

Mrs. Lovie Aaron





CLO - TWENTIETH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT QEKHUMALO KHUMALO

20th Episcopal District Lay Executive – Planning for a Convention

Having been elected into office on the 28th of April 2018 during the Mid-year Educational Congress held in Harare, Zimbabwe, the current executive is considering options on how to hold the Episcopal District lay convention given the constraints on travel and gathering imposed by the global Covid-19 pandemic.

The Episcopal District spans across 5 sovereign nations with different national languages, currencies and geo-political boundaries and systems thus presenting challenges in terms of communication, literacy, data & electricity costs as well as means of public travel. The option to hold an online edition of the convention is heavily unfavored as it is unlikely to yield the desired quorum to conduct the church’s business. The executive team is made up of officers from Zimbabwe and Malawi. A lot of training is required to bring the remaining countries of Tanzania, Uganda and southern Mozambique on board.

The executive’s plan is to organize the district convention through the pillars of Love, Unity, Duty and Harmony as per 1Peter 3: 8 – “be ye all of one mind.”

We pray for God’s favor and guidance to meet the challenges head-on to achieve a resounding victory. Our episcopal district spans across 5 countries with different national languages, currencies and geo-political boundaries thus presenting challenges in terms of communication and travel. The executive team is made up of officers from Zimbabwe and Malawi. A lot of training is required to bring the remaining countries of Tanzania, Uganda and southern Mozambique on board.

Below is a summary of the current executive members:
The 20th Episcopal District Lay Executive

Id	Office	Name	Surname	Annual Conference
1	President	Qedindaba	Khumalo	Central Zimbabwe
2	1st Vice President	Akimu	Katawa	Central Malawi
3	2nd Vice President	Sithembiso	Ndlovu	South West Zimbabwe
4	3rd Vic President	Evelyn	Zawanda	South Malawi
5	Recording Secretary	Hilda	Mjuweni	South West Zimbabwe
6	Assistant Rec Secretary	Fungai	Mutambirwa	North East Zimbabwe
7	Corresponding Secretary	Emelia	Jose	North East Zimbabwe
8	Financial Secretary	Gibson	Mambaira	North East Zimbabwe
9	Treasurer	Sivuyisiwe	Dube	South West Zimbabwe
10	Parliamentarian	Thokozile	Sibanda	South West Zimbabwe
11	Historiographer	Edith	Chombo	South Malawi
12	Director of Lay Activities	Charles	Sithole	South West Zimbabwe
13	Director of Public Relations	Anna	Vengesayi	North East Zimbabwe
14	Chaplin	Stanford	Maradzamunda	North East Zimbabwe
15	Young Adult Representative	Elijah	Kadzalaufa	Central Malawi



AME V-ALERT JACQUELYN DUPONT-WALKER

To: Connectional AME Church
From: AME V-Alert Committee
Re: AME V- Alert Initiative – 2022 on the Horizon

CALL TO ACTION: THE TIME IS NOW!

As you are aware Election Day 2022 in the United States of America is a day that our participation can make a difference in the quality of life for all people, your rights as citizens, life and death of Black Americans, and your access to services and resources for future generations. What you and I do in election season will make a difference, if we remain convicted to speak out, act now, and are committed to pay forward our inheritance of faithful activism – for all the people.

It makes a difference who is elected to serve in the US Senate – look at the George Floyd Policing Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act of 2021. Progress cannot be made unless the US House of Representatives is empowered to keep vital issues at the table – mass incarceration, reparation, and immigration reform. Nothing is more troubling than heinous actions resulting in voter suppression in the state houses and governors who either led or signed into law practices that would keep us from voting.

As we look into the local county governments, the cities and towns across the nation, servant leaders are desperately needed. Yes, we must be a part of the formation vs investing in the reaction only movement. It has become obvious that having a good presidential and vice presidential team can only reap results if there is a base of like-minded elected and appointed officials. What we do know is that doing the same thing will NOT give us a different outcome, so we bring for your prayer and engagement, the plan God is laying out for this faith body – the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In the end, we seek 100% voter turnout of Black Americans. That can only happen when we VOTE.

In 2020, voter turnout surged in so many places. 67% of all citizens age 18 and older reported voting. In addition, 74% of all voting age citizens were registered to vote. 62.6% of Black Americans reported voting vs 70.9% of white voters, 53.7% of Latinx American voters, and 59.7% of Asian American voters.

Take note that there were more voting options because of the pandemic with extended voting periods, mailed ballots, curbside and designated ballot boxes in neighborhoods and voter engagement by individuals, groups and faith bodies like the AME Church. Yet, as we celebrate we are reminded that in 48 states, voter suppression laws have been passed or are being considered. These proposals/laws, being introduced under the guise of removing voter fraud and insuring honest elections are actually barriers that can disproportionately reduce turnout for people of color.

The Call to Action is clear for us and for AMEV-Alert. It's our time! It's our watch! The Council of Bishops declared that we would mobilize at least 1.5 million voters to the polls in 2020. That commitment was corporate and personal, leading each active bishop in the 13 USA based episcopal districts to mobilize where (s) he was shepherding. What say ye for 2022? Stay tuned!

The Connectional components, organizations and ministries signed on with goals, messaging, boots on the ground, and resources. In 2022, all are ready to “keep on keepin’ on.” See the logo collage, and if any are missing, let us know. It takes all of us.

Partners are vital. In 2022, we are already planning with some interfaith and community allies, and seeking new advocates and game changers with whom we can create collaborations. If you know any who are not listed on our website, “hook us up”. Together, we will be victorious!

As a church founded to insure the moral fiber of this nation’s treatment of its residents, we are obligated to preach about civic engagement, take leadership in insuring voter turnout, and educate the community about the issues “set before them”. The General Conference has affirmed the role of AMEV-Alert. The Connectional Lay Organization can and should be proud that it birthed and nurtured this advocacy initiative some 21 years ago in leading this organizing effort. The Connectional Lay Organization has reached out to every component/ministry in the AME Church and interfaith/civic partners to get the job done.

We are grateful to the Connectional Lay Organization for AME V-Alert, which has been a tool for voter education, mobilization, and registration since 1999 and that 22 years later it is poised to reach its full potential of voter education, registration and mobilization.

We urge each of you, to make mobilization for Election Day 2022 a priority. Most importantly, VOTE and urge others to vote!!

AME V-ALERT – 2022 (The AME Church Voter Mobilization Initiative Kick-Off)

Campaign Objective

- The AME church will touch voters through education, mobilization, and registration. We will mobilize at least 1,500,000 voters from the communities that we provide ministry and service to actively participate in the election process of the 2022 elections.
- Each church will be asked to commit to registering and educating at least 200 voters and mobilizing 100 voters to the polls to accomplish this goal. Each component and ministry of the AME Church is deemed to be a partner in achieving these goals. We will continue to work with both legacy and new external partners.

Campaign Strategies

- Disseminate the AME VALERT toolkit, a national civic engagement toolkit throughout our U.S. networks.
- Support and partner with initiatives of AME Episcopal Districts, Components/organizations & key local efforts.

Develop national and local partnerships with key civic engagement stakeholders to widen our reach.

Launch national advocacy campaign around key issues that most deeply impact our communities such as: George Floyd Justice and Policing Act, John Lewis Voting Rights Extension Act, Criminal Justice/ Law Enforcement Reform, Voting Rights Gun Violence, Access to Public Education, Access to Quality Health Care, Environmental Justice, Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act, Haitian Immigration Equity, and Pay Equity to drive civic engagement efforts.

- Develop and implement a civic engagement-training program that deepens knowledge of the electoral process, issue advocacy, voter mobilization and capacity building strategies for our members.

- Utilize a national database of voters we have engaged to track our outreach.
- Coordinate with Episcopal District Coordinators to facilitate data tracking and materials dissemination. (Insert ED Coordinator Structure and role)
- Develop new AME-SAC website.
- Update VALERT with issue flyers and web materials
- Schedule State Calls
- Schedule Webinars
- Launch at General Board

Launch webinar series that cover the Electoral College Process, voter registration/mobilization tactics and building a localized campaign operation, Criminal Justice System 101 (Federal/State), State/Local Government Structure and Legislative Process, Media 101 training.

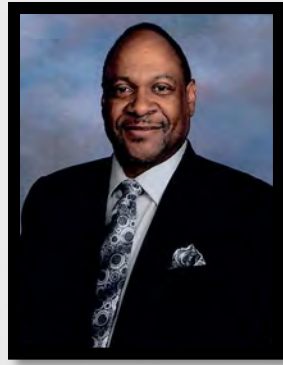
Campaign Launch

- Launch webinar series that cover the Electoral College Process, voter registration/mobilization tactics and building a localized campaign operation, Criminal Justice System 101 (Federal/State), State/Local Government Structure and Legislative Process, Media 101 training.
- Host a National Kick-Off Call with AME SAC, AME components, and community stakeholders to launch the campaign and discuss their involvement.
- Host Monthly Episcopal District Leadership check-in calls to educate on key issues, share praise reports on progress towards goals, and share new materials/resources.
- Launch civic education and voter registration campaigns. Toolkits will be disseminated to churches to begin Voter registration planning and Issue Education 1 pagers to be used in study circles, sermons and ministry teams. These materials are designed to provide historical context for key issues, direct correlation between voting and community power and concrete assistance in planning Voter Registration efforts.
- **Launch #Ask the Candidate social media and Op-ed Campaign** to push issues of voting rights, civil rights, Criminal Justice/Police Reform, public education, racism, and poverty to the forefront of 2022 debates.

We are reminded that, "God is in charge!". Pray with me as we are inspired from Paul's guidance in Ephesians 3:20 – 21 (The Message), "God can do anything you know - far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams. God does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, God's spirit deeply and gently within us."

Mrs. Jacquelyn Sistah "Jackie" Dupont-Walker MSW LCSW – Social Action Coordinator





The Power of Gratitude

By Dr. Darryl R. Williams St. Stephen A. M. E. Church Detroit, Michigan

Neuroplasticity is the discovery that we can restructure our brains by using our minds to create better brain cell connections. This restructuring of the brain can take place by practicing gratitude. Neural scientists believe that our prefrontal cortex- that part of the brain that contributes to personality development, is very permeable up to about 20 years of age. And, because it is impressionable, many of our limiting beliefs have been stored there from our youth. Neuroplasticity shows these negative beliefs become hardwired in the brain by our continual dwelling upon them. Therefore, no matter how much we try to do better, we cannot change unless we think better.

**"As a man thinketh in his heart (soul),
so is he." (Proverbs 23:7)**

Neuroplasticity allows us to think better. When we practice gratitude, we literally change the chemistry of the brain. These hard-wired connections are performed into new connections which not only transforms us chemically, but at a soul level as well. Our minds, or what we focus on changes our brain. When we spend time daily thinking of what we are grateful for, it spreads into the unconscious mind, becoming deep beliefs, and our faith teaches us whatever we deeply believe, we will attract. So, if we focus on what we are grateful for, we will attract more for which we can be grateful. This is probably why the Apostle Paul tells us:

**"Whatever is true, Whatever is noble, Whatever is right Whatever is pure,
Whatever is lovely, Whatever is admirable-If anything is excellent or
Praiseworthy-think on these things." (Philippians 4:8).**

That, my friends is the recipe for the peace of God that transcends all understanding which Paul mentions in the preceding verse.

How do I practice gratitude? I have begun a practice first thing in the morning (You can do it at night if you prefer) to look back over the day before and write down three (3) things in my gratitude journal for which I am grateful. It is important to do this everyday as the daily practice will imprint the joy you feel upon your unconscious mind due to the change in your brain connections. After you have written down your three (3) things, take some time to feel the emotion of joy they bring. This fires up the hippocampus, that part of the brain that is responsible for memory. Just as we tend to remember how a person made us feel, we also will more likely remember that joyful event, if we think about how it made us feel. The regular practice of writing down what we are grateful for, along with taking the time to feel it, will make us healthier and happier.

I'll end my writing by doing the exercise myself. I am thankful to be pastoring such a giving and selfless people like St. Stephen A. M. E. Church in Detroit, Michigan. I am also thankful for all those persons across the connection with whom I shared a meal, who had kind words for me, and I for them. And lastly, I am thankful that each day I see new dimensions of God's grace shown to my family, friends, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. That makes me smile; it makes me feel pretty good!

TOGETHER WE CAN
DEFEAT COVID-19

CORONA VIRUS

AWARENESS

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from cold to serious illnesses such as SARS and MERS.

COMMON SIGNS

Common signs of infection include fever, cough and shortness of breath.

PRECAUTIONS

Common measures to protect yourself are frequent hand wash, avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands and avoid close contact with sick people.





Guidelines: Submitting Articles to “We Speak”
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The Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is commissioned to teach, train, and empower its members for Lay Ministry, Global Leadership, and service following the tenets of Jesus Christ.

We Speak:

The process for submitting articles for inclusion in We Speak:

Articles should include the name of the author, date of event, and identification of district, conference, or local levels.

Articles must be two months (current) related to events of the AMEC. The “Episcopal District Director of Public Relations” is your Clergy articles will be sent to the Connectional Director of Public Relations for print. Articles MUST adhere to submission deadline date. Failure to adhere to guidelines may result in articles not being printed.

Articles must not be duplicated from previous Lay submission or any other component of the AME Church.

Articles will be subject to edits. The Director of Public Relations reserves the right to determine the layout and placement of articles within the magazine.

Articles must be no more than one page in length. A Microsoft Word compatible document (ONLY) singled spaced, font style “Times New Roman,” 12-point font size. The format to submit photos is in a JPEG, TIF, or PNG file. Photos must be credited to the photographer with approval from pictured person to publish his or her photo. Printed Photos or Hard copies is not acceptable.

Electronic Versions of We Speak Publication and Due Dates.

Publication 2021: December 2021.
 Submission Deadlines: November 20, 2021

Publication Months 2022: January 2022, March 2022, May 2022, July 2022, September 2022, and November 2022.

Publications Deadline: All articles are due on or before the 15th of the prior month of the publication month.

Upload Articles and photos via drop box: Click link below
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/sfh36kpw5ukyp2w/AAChuV6fn5NWsjMIXSIDlxmla?dl=0>

Share questions and concerns to: clodopr16@gmail.com, Dianne H. Battle, Connectional Lay Organization, Director of Public Relations.

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