



**THE CONNECTIONAL LAY
ORGANIZATION
AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**JUNE 26-27, 2018
THE HILTON ATLANTA
255 COURTLAND STREET NE
ATLANTA, GA. 30303**

**BISHOP CLEMENT W. FUGH, PRESIDENT, COUNCIL OF BISHOPS
BISHOP MCKINLEY YOUNG, SENIOR BISHOP
BISHOP VASHTI MURPHY MCKENZIE, PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL BOARD
BISHOP REGINALD T. JACKSON, HOST BISHOP
BISHOP E. EARL MCCLOUD, JR., CHAIRPERSON OF THE LAY COMMISSION
MRS. VALERIE GARY BELL, PRESIDENT, CONNECTIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION
MS. AMETTA LORENE REAVES, CONNECTIONAL DIRECTOR OF LAY ACTIVITIES
MS. JAMESHA WILLIAMS, CONNECTIONAL YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVE
MR. MICHAEL BROWN, HOST EPISCOPAL DISTRICT PRESIDENT
MRS. JANICE STEWART, HOST EPISCOPAL DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF LAY ACTIVITIES
MS. MARTINIQUE MIX, HOST YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVE**



CONNECTIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION

Bishop E. Earl McCloud, Jr.	Chairman, Lay Commission
Valerie Gary Bell	President
Matikane Abednego Makiti	1 st Vice President
Simon Letsoko	2 nd Vice President
Starr L. Battle	3 rd Vice President
Doris M. Bell	Recording Secretary
Brenda Holland Curry	Assistant Recording Secretary
Ada Groff	Corresponding Secretary
Lyndia M. Mayo, I	Financial Secretary
Richard L. Bowden	Treasurer
Alice W. Belden	Chaplain
Ametta Loren Reaves	Director of Lay Activities
Dianne H. Battle	Director of Public Relations
Dr. Dorothy Henderson	Historiographer
Jamesha Williams	Young Adult Representative

Past Presidents

Dr. Willie C. Glover Jesse L. Burns James L. Williams

Advisors

Thelma Kennedy-Malveaux Dr. Richard Allen Lewis
Edith Bartley Cartledge Alfred Goliath John Thomas, III



To: Bishop Clement W. Fugh, President, Council of Bishops
Bishop McKinley Young, Senior Bishop
Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President, General Board
Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, Host Bishop
Bishop E. Earl McCloud, Jr., Chairperson, Lay Commission
The Bishops of the Church, General and Connectional Officers
Connectional Lay Organization Executive Board, Clergy and fellow Laith

“If you believe in me and the things I have been doing, then you will be able to do greater works, because I am on my way to my father”

- John 14:12

It is with a deep sense of joy and humility I present my first report as President of the Connectional Lay Organization. A peaceful election process presented the opportunity to serve this great organization. We emerged as a unified and engaged team.

I am grateful to Dr. Willie C. Glover and the members of the cabinet who served during his tenure from 2009 to 2017. Their efforts left an organization poised to soar to greater heights.

The Mission Statement of the Connectional Lay Organization states:

“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.”

This administration has adopted **“Onward to Greater Works”**, as our focus as we seek to implement the Lay Biennial Theme:

“Laity walking humbly with God to do justice and love kindness” Micah 6:8

During this past year we targeted key areas of focus to meet the organizational goals:

GREATER COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM

The 3rd Vice President is tasked to coordinate personal evangelism and coordinate those efforts with appropriate departments of the church. An Evangelism Sunday has been established, and this training is being done in the Episcopal Districts, with the support of designated funding of the budget.

GREATER RECRUITMENT, ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION OF YOUNG ADULTS

The Young Adult Representative has connected with other Connectional entities to ensure our welcome message to the targeted age group, 18-35. Reduced registration



and scheduling on weekends has been offered and increased young adult participation has been realized.

GREATER EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY, USING TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHING, TRAINING AND ADMINISTRATION.

We have transitioned to one meeting for 2018, at the site of the General Board meeting. The Lay Certification Training as prescribed by the 2012 Discipline is now ready and will launch in September 2018, through Payne Seminary. Initial course offerings of AME Polity, Stewards and Trustees in the AME Church will be available on-line, and regionally, upon request. The CLO has a newly designed website, begun publication of "We Speak" magazine, and we have secured an office for the Connectional President in the Joseph C. McKinney AME Finance Building.

GREATER COMMUNICATION TO STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONSHIPS OF CLERGY AND LAITY.

The Lay Organization Agenda was presented to the Council of Bishops by the President and Director of Lay Activities. Our presence was well received, our efforts to express support in the ministry of the Episcopal District, utilizing the solidarity of the Bishop and the Episcopal District President. The Council pledged their support and thanked us for the presentation. It was noted that this was the first time that the Lay agenda was presented, successfully communicated, and shared. It was noted that this type of communication and collaboration should be continued in the future.

GREATER SUPPORT AND CONNECTION TO ALL EPISCOPAL DISTRICT PRESIDENTS TO MAXIMIZE GROWTH.

Donations of \$2,500.00 to the Women's Health Clinic and a donation of \$2,500.00 was made to the 17th Episcopal District for necessary repairs of churches in jeopardy of closing. A donation of \$50,000.00 was made to the AME University in Liberia.

To successfully meet these objectives, we have worked collaboratively as officers, utilizing current Connectional seminars and meetings, to connect with our connection.

The patience and support of the elected officers and Episcopal District Presidents have been a blessing to me as we together grow, stretch and embrace new ideas in technology, organization and leadership. The cabinet of vice presidents has provided guidance and counsel as we begin the work of this administration.

As stated in my campaign, our focus must be first and foremost, Evangelism and Discipleship, and a return to our mandate of Teaching and Training. To accomplish this, we must build a solid team with the support of the Episcopal District Presidents. I have asked that they come together to exchange, share and collaborate on best practices in the work of their respective Districts and to communicate the vision to the local church levels, and to assess how they are being implemented.



I salute the efforts of the Historiographer, Dr. Dorothy Henderson, traveling to Texas to assess, secure and transport items necessary to begin our permanent archival presence in Birmingham, Alabama at the Daniel Payne Plaza.

Effective communication is essential to the success of any organization. The newly elected Director of Public Relations, Dianne Battle has successfully reactivated "We Speak" magazine and the design of our new website is underway. Special thanks to Reneicia Frazier for her assistance with the new website.

The successful transition to the new administration has been a collaborative effort between the Director of Lay Activities, Ametta Reaves and our Young Adult Representative, Jamesha Williams. When the President, Director of Lay Activities and Young Adult Representative work harmoniously, from the beginning of the administration, we give God a tremendous opportunity from which successful ministry can flourish. As we press, "Onward to Greater Works", we need the vision, energy, wisdom, vigor and prayers from everyone.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Elevate Evangelism and Discipleship as a priority in each Episcopal District
2. Engage Lay Leadership in the vision and implementation of Episcopal District Goals
3. Encourage each Bishop and Episcopal District to support the Lay Leadership Training Program
4. Encourage each Pastor to ensure the presence of an active Lay Organization in each local Church
5. Promote the election of Informed, Committed Delegates to the 2020 General Conference



FOOTPRINTS OF THE PRESIDENT

August 2017

- Philadelphia, PA - Lovingly we celebrated the Life and Legacy of Brother Walter Jeffers, who served as the Connectional Director of Public Relations from 2013-2017.

September 2017

- Durban, South Africa - Conducted the election of officers for the 19th Episcopal District.
- Byron, GA - Conducted the election of officers for the 6th Episcopal District.

October 2017

- Birmingham, AL - Conducted final site visit, with Director of Lay Activities, Ametta Reaves, Meeting Planner, Sandra Bonner Hadley, and Treasurer, Richard Bowden, at the Sheraton Birmingham Hotel.
- Washington, DC - Represented the Connectional Lay Organization at the gathering of Black Methodist United.
- Washington, DC - Represented the Connectional Lay Organization on Capitol Hill, Prayer gathering. Hope on the Hill petitioned Congress for more equitable funding of Public Education.
- New York, NY - Attended Celebration for Edith Bartley Cartledge, Immediate Past Connectional Director of Lay Activities.
- Delice, Haiti - Represented the Connectional Lay Organization at the Dedication of the Bishop Sarah Frances Davis Health Clinic.

November 2017

- Birmingham, AL - Convened the Connectional Lay Organization Executive Board meeting, Sheraton Birmingham. 115 registered attendees.



- Washington, DC - First Opening Lay Speaker, Capital District Conference, Washington Annual Conference, Presiding Elder Louis-Charles Harvey.

January 2018

- Jacksonville, FL - Connectional Church Growth and Development Evangelism Seminar. Dialogue with President Emeritus Mr. J. L. Williams
- New Orleans, LA - Presentation of the Lay Agenda to Council of Bishops.
- Atlanta, GA - Celebration of Life for Retired Bishop John Hurst Adams.
- Columbia, SC - Conducted Leadership Training/Workshop, 7th District.
- Baltimore, MD - Attended Executive Board Meeting, Connectional WMS.

February 2018

- Wilberforce, OH - Initiated Strategic Plan to Implement Connectional Lay Leadership Certification, Dr. Michael Brown, Payne Seminary.
- Philadelphia, PA - Attended Celebration of Life, Retired Supervisor Mary Ann Norris.

March 2018

- Dallas TX - Recruitment of Young Adults, YPD-Leadership Training Institute

April 2018

- Washington, DC - Rally to End Racism, Connectional Point Person for AME Church, sponsored by National Council of Churches.
- Florence, SC - Conducted Workshops/Panelist - God First Holy Convocation.
- Fairburn, GA - Lay Annual Day, Speaker, St. John AME. 6th Episcopal District.

May 2018



- Atlanta, GA - Lay Witness Night Speaker - Atlanta North Annual Conference,
- Los Angeles, CA - Celebration of Life, Retired Bishop C. Garnett Henning, former Chairman of the Lay Commission.
- Oakland, CA - Lay Annual Day Speaker, FAME Oakland CA

June 2018

- Little Rock, AR - Workshop presenter, 12th District Lay Convention

Your Servant Leader

Valerie Gary Bell, President

Connectional Lay Organization



Episcopal District Presidents

1st Cheryl Hammond-Hopewell**

2nd Dwight Patterson

3rd Mark Mayo

4th Jerry Turner**

5th Simeon Rhoden, Jr.

6th Michael Brown**

7th Roger Cleckley

8th Melvin Davis**

9th Bernella Knight-Rose

10th Larry Hollie*

11th Patricia Wright

12th Dr. Dorothy Henderson*

13th Dr. Dorothy Ealy

14th Garfield Mason*

15th Chris Qwane

16th Dr. Isabel Medina-Dishmey

17th Martin Lombe*

18th Edwin Lehasa

19th L. A. Sekoala

20th Qedindala Khumalo**

* General Board member

** General Conference Commission member

“Onward to Greater Works!”

