

# THE LAY COMMUNIQUE



The Official Convention Newsletter of the  
Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization

June 14, 2012

## The State of the Eleventh Episcopal District

Greetings members of the Electrifying Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization it is with the joy of Our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ that I greet you. The Leadership of the Episcopal District Lay Organization has aligned our activities, actions and plans with the purpose and objectives. We can truly say that we have addressed and observed all of the objectives as outlined in our Constitution. I have chosen to highlight the following:

1. To create a love and appreciation of the History and Principles of African Methodism.
  2. Keep the memory of Richard Allen alive.
  3. Respect Constituted Authority.
  4. Stimulate and Educate the Laity in the Total Program of the Church.
  5. Study the Discipline and learn the laws of the Church.
  6. Encourage Financial Support of the Church's Program.
  7. Teach and Practice Stewardship and work with the Youth to teach them Methodism.
1. What is working well?
    - The Eleventh in collaboration with the Director of Lay Activities has joined together to provide Geographical training for its members. This training requires two conferences to agree on a date and time when a selected course of instruction is presented.
    - The webmaster continues to provide leadership while incorporating Lay Activities videos, blogs, calendar, commission reports, bible study, and a host of other informational opportunities. The organization continues to move toward technology and less paper.
    - We continued the format whereby the goals are specific, measurable, attainable, and realistic and target driven. These goals are presented by both the conference presidents and directors of the various commissions as a result we are able to provide a higher level of accountability to you the membership.
  2. Are there any areas that might need to be refined, improved upon?
    - Institute the Brown/Williams academy an opportunity for prospective leaders to become trained in areas such as the Constitution, Parliamentary Procedures, conflict resolution and other curricular pertinent to the job of President on the

Episcopal and Conference level.

- Network with other Episcopal Districts throughout the Connection in an effort to move an agenda that propels the Connectional Lay Organization forward.
- Empower the Commission on Organization and Structure to identify the low hanging fruit as found in our Episcopal Constitution and bring about an awareness and possible solutions to the constitutional challenges
- Explore the need to develop an organizational structure under the Commission Directors to balance the work load within the commissions.

\*For example: Sub Committee Chairs under the Commission on Personnel and Procedures will identify a committee chair to facilitate items one, Secure the names of all deceased members and prepare a proper and sufficient memorial ceremony to be conducted during the Annual Convention.

\*Leader for Sub Committee two will be formed for the sole purpose of planning and facilitating programs and activities of the young people associate with the Lay Organization. The program developed and presented to the Annual Convention shall be portable to conference, district and church lay organizations.

3. What goals did you set for this Episcopal Year that you have already accomplished?

- In May, we celebrated throughout the Eleventh District the Connectional Lay Organization's 100 year birthday. You as an Episcopal District, Conference, and Districts of the Annual Conference, local churches and members engaged in activities such as 100 person pray line, Men of Distinction banquet and activities honoring past presidents.

- The Award ceremony now have language that encourages those who receive the Selmo Bradley Scholarship an opportunity to give you the membership a better return on your investment.

- The goal was to establish a process to recognize the unsung men and women of the Eleventh Episcopal District. As a result, the EEDLO will highlight for the first time the unsung heroes and sheroes of the Eleventh District Lay Organization during the Awards Night ceremony.

This year we have experienced both loss and gain. As we all know Nancy Johnson transitioned from labor to reward. We have suffered the loss of both clergy and laity in our various Conferences.

We thank God for allowing those who have gone to embrace our lives with their presence. The gain is that we have continued to provide quality instruction to our members. Through it all we have remained a Christ centered people.

Overwhelmingly the delegates of the General Conference are those who now sit among you and are members of the Lay Organization. We will play a very active role in the 2012 General Conference as we make decision make critical that will help to propel our Zion.

As we come to a close, we must continue the momentum as we embark upon the next century of service. Finally, I congratulate the West Coast Conference under the efficient leadership of Bro. Hugh Yancy for leaving no stone unturned as they prepared for our stay here in Sarasota, Florida. I pray for a mountaintop experience while we conduct the business of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization and for your commitment to excellence in achieving the varying task at hand. May we all remain prayerful and purposeful as we maneuver through convention year.



## Devotion



The devotion was led by Sister Katherine Gillis, Episcopal Chaplain. Opening song was an old favorite, Sit down Servant, followed by prayer.

Sis. Peggy Rice Johnson from St. Andrews of Jacksonville Beach was introduced as the Bible Study presenter.

The lesson was taken from Psalm 27:4 using the topic: Seeking God. Some points covered were:

- The revelation of God is a lifelong process.
- True revelation of God cannot take place from the Word of God
- Jesus is the living Word.

Seven steps that will help in receiving the Word of God are:

1. Information
2. Illumination
3. Inspiration
4. New Revelation
5. Realization
6. Transformation
7. Manifestation

Bible Study ended with a quiz and prizes were given to three people for their participation.

Reported by  
Vickie Edwards

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## Living and Serving in Times of Uncertainty, Presented by Linnell Baker

The facilitator for this training session is Ms. Linnell Baker of the St Petersburg District.

Ms Baker opened the session with a question. What do you do when trouble enters our lives?

Five strategies were introduced for overcoming uncertainty.

- Don't get paralyzed
- Focus on what is in your control
- Prepare and plan
- Evaluate your life

Find the opportunities within the crisis.

When you realize that you are dealing with a life uncertainty, realize that you are going to be at war with it within your own mind. For the direction, your mind thinks so your emotions will follow. If you have faith, focus on what is in your control. Prepare and plan—Jesus tells us the special gifts, we will adjust to the uncertainty of life and we will endure. Evaluating one's life is not a bad thing as long as it doesn't move a person into a "victim" role. Find the opportunities within the crisis. Whatever the opportunity, find it, take it, seize it and use it. Things to remember: In uncertain times remember God's promises. In conclusion, each of us will face uncertain times but we can be

encouraged because God is with us and for us.

Reported by  
Shirley Thomas &  
Alfonso Simpson

## People of the Anvil: Living, Leading, Loving, Serving Presented by Lionell Merritt

Bro. Merritt presentation the members with a rich history on the background of the People of the Anvil. He gave us the perspective of the Africans who started the AME Church... They were poor, and most could not read. Yet, under the leadership of Richard Allen, they purchased an old blacksmith shop and moved it to the corner of Sixth and Lombard Streets in Philadelphia, where they organized Bethel AME Church. Bethel means "House of God." Today Mother Bethel stands as one of Philadelphia's historic shrines. He explained that the AME Church was the answer to a cry for social recognition as human beings and a means through which African people could develop a sense of dignity and self-respect. We learned how we can improve the love within the AME Church and that was by utilizing the "Thin Skull" Principle, where we learn to take

people as we find them. Also we learned that by loving "needy" people who worship with you around the altar, it gives you an opportunity to look good in the eyes of God. Also discussed were these 12 topics:

1. As AME's, we see the Anvil as the 1<sup>st</sup> pulpit in God's house.
2. Probably the first message of love from the Anvil is "I Need You."
3. Jesus commanded this type of love in Matthew 22: 37-40.
4. We need people in order to practice our religion.
5. The people around the Anvil weren't different from the people we meet around the altar today.
6. We should seek to love because our survival may depend of our mutual love bonding.
7. Loving is easier if we are committed to a higher greater common good.
8. Accepting people as we find them is called the Thin Skull Principle.
9. God/Jesus practiced this principle.
10. We can improve Anvil love if we promote a sense of community.
11. We can promote a sense of community by making people feel welcome among us.

Reported by  
Alfonso Simpson &  
Shirley Thomas

## Critical Keys of Leading...We Are Banded One In Union Presented by Rev. Bryant Fayson

Rev. Fayson discussed the differences in secular leadership and Christian leadership. Secular leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective, to achieve preferred goals and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent.

Effective Christian leadership in the process of helping a congregation embody in its corporate life the practices that shape vital Christian life, community, and witness in ways that are faithful to Jesus Christ and the gospel and appropriate to the particular congregation's setting,

resources, and purpose. Rev. Bryant also discussed the "contextualization" in leadership by explaining that every congregation is unique. The concept of reciprocal leadership is that reciprocal leadership does not focus upon personality traits in the leader, but upon the relationship between the leader and those being led.

Rev. Bryant also discussed the four C's of effective leadership—four factors present in situations where effective leadership is taking place:

1. Character in the leader: Generates trust on part of the followers
2. Conviction in the leader: Helps the congregation discern its purpose and vision.

3. Competencies in the leader: Helps a congregation function as a healthy system—i.e. deal with the normal anxieties and conflicts of communal life in healthy and productive ways.
4. Confluence of the leader: Congregation, time, place, ministry opportunity, and resources that is a gift of God's Spirit, and that enables a leader and congregation to work joyfully together in realizing God's purposes.

Reported by  
Wallace Dasher, III.

## 2012 Awards Banquet

Outstanding Community  
Service Award:

Rev. Ronnie L. Clark,  
Hurst Chapel, Winter Haven

Hall of Fame Awards:

Florida Conference:  
Colleen James  
James Sawyer

Central Conference:  
Eloise Adams Walker  
Valene Croskey

South Conference:  
Evelyn Furlow

West Coast Conference:  
Rogers Humphries  
Rosa Powell

East Conference:  
Martha Harris

Anvil Award:  
Summer Herring

Soldier of the Cross Award:  
Lionell Merritt