
JUNE 14, 2023, ISSUE 1

The Lay Communiqué

The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization Convention E-Newsletter



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EEDLO OFFICERS

Bishop Frank Madison Reid III, Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Marlaa Hall Reid, Episcopal Supervisor
Patricia H. Wright, President
Teresa White, Director of Lay Activities
Ashley Blakely, Young Adult Representative
Robbyn Hopewell, Director of Public Relations
Valderine Evans, Bahamas Conference President

Welcome to the Bahamas!

The 79th Annual Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization convened on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, at the Atlantis Paradise Island Resort in the beautiful Nassau, Bahamas. The Bahamas Conference Lay Organization, led by President Valderine Evans, welcomed their guests to "the place where God lives" for three days of faith-filled worship, witness and work! Vilda Chipman was charged with bringing greetings on behalf of her conference at the Opening Worship held in the Poseidon Room. "God has truly been good to the [EEDLO] as we are celebrating 79 years of unwavering dedication, commitment and devotion to this awesome ministry," Chipman shared. "What better place is there to celebrate than right here in the Bahamas where there is an abundance of sun, sand and sea--not to mention the must try conch salad."

Bishop Reid offers key to joy in sermon

"If you know Jesus, you should be happy," said Eleventh Episcopal District Presiding Prelate Bishop Frank Madison Reid III in his fiery—and brief—sermon at the opening worship of the 79th Annual Convention of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization.

The meeting's theme is "Rejoice and Be Glad For This Day," so the Right Reverend leaned on the scriptures of Nehemiah 8:1-6 and 9-12. He said the keys to joy are found in the passages he uplifted. Joyful people need to learn how to pray, confess, and turn to the scriptures for guidance.

"Once you have done the work and stand on the word, you have a testimony," Bishop Reid concluded. He also implored all present to remember to carry their Bibles and for clergy to carry oil to events because "everybody needs anointing." Making room for the Holy Spirit at ministry meetings is essential to the work, he said.

Worship Leader Lolita D. Brown, West Coast Conference Lay Organization President, set the tone for the evening as the Bahamas Conference Choir lifted up selections



including "God is My Everything," "Pass Me Not O Gentle Savior," and "Praise." Presidents from across the 11th District and Connection found it not robbery to attend the convention including Connectional Lay Organization Corresponding Secretary and First Episcopal District Lay President Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, former Fifth Episcopal District Lay President Simeon Rhoden, Eleventh Episcopal District Women in Ministry President Rev. Marcia Owens, Eleventh Episcopal District Women's Missionary Society President Laurestine Lemon, and Eleventh Episcopal District YPD Director Timika Fountain Coney. The gathering of friends of family was praised by Connectional Lay Organization Director of Lay Activities and EEDLO President Patricia H. Wright, who also penned a new litany for the occasion.

***Because when the joy of the Lord
is your strength, you may get
tired but you won't get depressed.
-Bishop Frank Madison Reid III***



EEDLO Executive Board meeting kicks off convention business

A lively group of Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization officers, advisers and observers gathered in the Eros I room of the Atlantic Paradise Island Resort at 2 p.m. Tuesday to begin their work. Following a brief devotion by Chaplain Deborah Langston, Connectional DOLA and EEDLO President Patricia H. Wright informed the board about the upcoming convention, the current convention's finances and the CLO Biennial on June 26-30 in Chicago. She also engaged the group in a spirited discussion of the Lay Electoral College. The two-hour meeting was attended by Presiding Prelate Bishop Frank Madison Reid III—a first for the organization from any episcopal leader. Young Adult Representative Ashley Blakely led a workshop titled "What's on Your Plate?" which tasked attendees with examining, prioritizing and selecting the most important responsibilities they have. Her question to the board was simple, "Are the things on your plate nourishing you?"



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Junkanoo Band keeps EEDLO in step at banquet

The Imperial Ballroom of the Atlantis Paradise Island Resort was enveloped in sound as the brightly plumed Junkanoo band, Colors, marched through the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization awards banquet on Wednesday, June 14, 2023. Led by Christian Justilien, the 22-year-old musical group burst through the ballroom doors with drums, whistles and cowbells ringing to the tune of "Amen" as the dancing girls whipped their headdresses and broke a sweat. The spectacle was accompanied by a brief history of Junkanoo by Justilien. He then encouraged the more than 200 banquet attendees to feel the music and get into the groove. "If you don't dance listening to Junkanoo, you're already dead," he joked.

EEDLO honors scholarship and award recipients at annual convention

in a night of surprises, lay soldiers and hard working high school seniors received their due at the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization annual awards banquet. Program and Activities Chair Loretta Coppock presented six high school seniors with the Selmo Bradley Scholarship including: McKenzie D. Smith of Bethel A.M.E. Church, Tallahassee; William A. Mills III of St. Paul A.M.E. Church, Fort Pierce; Zachary Tobe of Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church, Orlando; McKenzie L. Grey of Historic Bethel A.M.E. Church, St. Petersburg; Joseph L. Dorsey II of St. Paul A.M.E. Church, Jacksonville; and Keziah McPhee of Cousin McPhee Cathedral, Nassau.

Connectional Lay Organization Director of Lay Activities and EEDLO President Patricia H. Wright was inducted into the Hall of Fame before she awarded the Soldier of the Cross to EEDLO Second Vice President Lother Cherry.

Program and Activities Co-Chair and West Coast Conference Lay Organization President Lolita D. Brown presented the Clergy of the Year award to Rev. Dr. Randolph Patterson of the Bahamas Conference and Outstanding Community Service to the wife of recipient Dr. Delton D. Ellis.

East Conference Lay Young Adult Representative Dante Buckson and EEDLO Third Vice President Johnnie Hill were recognized as nominees for awards at the upcoming Connectional Lay Biennial.



Supervisor Reid provides principles of leadership, faith

By Shrin Bryant , South Conference Lay

In a captivating conversation between Supervisor Marlaa Hall Reid and East Conference Young Adult Representative Dante Buckson, the essence of leadership, stewardship, and faith unfolds. With an open and insightful discussion, they shed light on the importance of growth, adaptability, intentionality, and personal development in leadership roles. They also delved into the significance of being good stewards, aligning with God's purpose, and the constant pursuit of evolution.

Leadership: Embracing Growth and Adaptability

One of the fundamental aspects of effective leadership is recognizing that leaders do not possess all the answers. Instead, they are committed to the growth and development of their organization or the people they lead. Supervisor Reid explained the need for flexibility in leadership, especially when faced with unexpected challenges such as the pandemic. She encouraged leaders to focus not on how to fix a situation but rather on how they can contribute to its resolution, fostering a growth-oriented mindset.

Being a Good Steward: Embracing Purpose and Details

Supervisor Reid emphasized the importance of being a good steward, recognizing the resources at hand and understanding that God provides for the journey ahead. She encouraged leaders to pay attention to the details and understand that no task is too small. She dismissed the allure of titles and reminded us that with greater responsibility comes a greater requirement for accountability.

Principles of Leadership: Intentionality, Relationships, and Personal Development

Supervisor Reid urged leaders to create intentional moments and be fully present in their leadership endeavors. By rejoicing in the Lord, leaders can approach their roles with joy and authenticity, fostering meaningful connections with their teams. She emphasized the significance of intentional relationships, recognizing that growth and personal development are nurtured through



genuine connections and the support of others. Prayer is also highlighted as a powerful tool for leaders, providing guidance and clarity in decision-making.

Learning about God: Faithfulness, Bringing Glory, and Authenticity

Supervisor Reid emphasized the importance of faithfulness in fulfilling one's purpose. Leaders are encouraged to bring glory to God through their actions, remaining true to their authentic selves. By fostering clarity in conversations and interactions, leaders can align their intentions with God's plan, creating a positive impact in their spheres of influence.

Constantly Evolving: Listening, Learning, and Growing

Supervisor Reid and Buckson explored the concept of constant evolution in leadership. Leaders are called to listen to God, remaining open to His guidance and wisdom.

Supervisor Reid and Buckson shared that leadership is an ever-evolving journey that requires humility, faith, and a constant pursuit of growth.

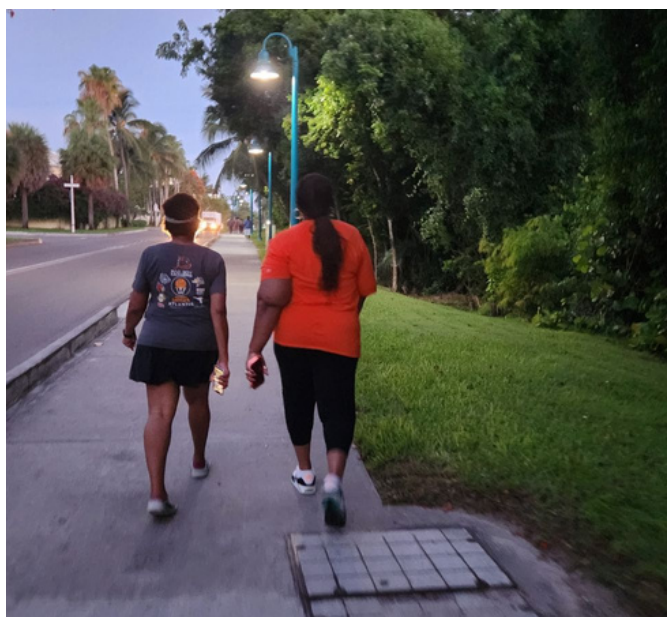
Health walk in humid, sunny Nassau

By **Connie E. Jenkins-Pye**, Florida Conference Lay

"On Wednesday, June 14, 2023, 12 energetic walkers from the Philadelphia, Florida, South, East, West Coast and Bahamas Annual Conferences walked two miles coordinated by the host conference and chair of the health walk activities.

First Episcopal District Lay Organization President Cheryl Hammond Hopewell delivered the prayer to ensure God's protecting hand was all around us. The walkers engaged in conversations about family life and the Lay Organization. After the health walk, the walkers ate healthy snacks like bananas, oranges, water, health bars and toast cheese crackers.

The health walk activities committee coordinated an early morning walk on Thursday and Friday. Personnel and Procedures Chair LuCretia McBride provided gift cards to the three walkers who completed the two mile walk the fastest. The health walk activities committee is looking to take the church at the next level at the 80th Annual EEDLO Convention in Orlando.



Members model effective communication through games with Shrin Bryant

Eleventh Episcopal District Young Adult Representative Ashley Blakely received permission from her leadership team to reimagine young adult involvement in the convention because of time constraints. Blakely created a three activity series called "In Another Way" featuring young adult presenters. Former South Conference Lay Organization Young Adult Representative Shrin Bryant asked the laity to move their feet and seats for a team exercise on communication. She had six teams designate speakers, illustrators and listeners and assigned them each a picture to communicate without being able to ask questions. The wild variation in or stunning similarities in the final drawings demonstrated the effectiveness of the leader's communication style. Bryant highlighted that effective communication is detailed and considerate of its audience.

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Final plenary workshop teaches effective teamwork

For the final training of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization 79th Annual Convention, Sis. Rhoshonda Herring brought some creative English to illustrate four components to effective planning and teamwork. Titled "There is No I in Team... But There is A Me," Herring's workshop took inspiration from Kobe Bryant's own philosophy about never forgetting yourself in the preparation for collaboration. Herring challenged groups to create a plan for their goal in the organization at any level by defining the meat (problem), mate (best team for the work), meta (detailed plan) and at'em (marketing and follow up plan). The groups walked away with a framework for future project planning.

A.M.E. Privilege Walk displays distance between ideals and practice

Connectional Lay Organization Director of Lay Activities and Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization President Patricia H. Wright referenced the work of social justice scholar Glen Singleton when she asked the room of 96 laymen to form a line. Next she made a statement and asked them to step forward or backward if they agreed. "If when I get up to go to church on Sunday someone in my household is left behind, take a step back," she said and the crowd began to shuffle. Privilege walks were designed to let people see physical representation of the distance between the lived experiences of those around them. The practice usually yields non-Black participants standing far in front of their Black counterparts at the end of the exercise. Wright's A.M.E. Walk showed inequalities exist in our Zion that we don't address before planning programs and activities. In order to meet people where they are, you need to know where they are first.



Dr. Judy Johnson Celebrates 80th Birthday on final convention day

Dr. Judy Johnson of the South Conference was all smiles as former Fifth Episcopal District Lay Organization President and son of the Eleventh Episcopal District Simeon Rhoden and Health Walk Activity Chair Connie E. Jenkins-Pye serenaded her with Stevie Wonder's version of "Happy Birthday" to celebrate her 80 years of life. Johnson, born on June 15, 1943, celebrated her big day in style at the final session of the EEDLO Convention at the Atlantis Paradise Island in Nassau, Bahamas. She also received well wishes and a monetary gift from Eleventh Episcopal District Presiding Prelate Bishop Frank Madison Reid III.

