

**THE ELEVENTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT LAY  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE  
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE I - NAME AND AUTHORITY**

**SECTION 1** The name of this organization shall be the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

**SECTION 2** This organization shall be subject to and governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

**ARTICLE II - PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

**SECTION 1** The purpose of this organization shall be to organize and train the laity of the African Methodist Episcopal Church so that each lay person may utilize to the maximum the abilities and skills granted by God, in assisting with the improvement and extension of God's Kingdom, and creating happiness, peace and harmony among its members.

**SECTION 2** To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives are adopted:

- a. To instill in the membership of the church a love for and an appreciation of, the history, traditions, principles and development of African Methodism by encouraging, motivating, and educating all lay persons.
- b. To keep forever alive the sacred memory of Richard Allen, our illustrious founder.
- c. To advocate respect and loyalty at all times to constituted authority and leadership.
- d. To encourage the laity to support the total program of the church in the local congregation, in the community, and throughout the Connection.
- e. To foster a systematic and regular study of *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* and of parliamentary procedure, to the end that greater knowledge and information may be disseminated among the laity, and with the further purpose of encouraging lay members to participate more largely in the general functioning and Supervision of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- f. To foster, influence, and support all constructive and progressive

legislation for the church that promotes the teachings of Jesus Christ.

- g. To encourage development, recognition, and utilization of the most appropriate operational practices and modern technology in conducting the activities of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- h. To promote the spread of personal evangelism through activities designed to prepare lay members for appropriately conveying God's Word.
- i. To provide training in Christian stewardship which causes lay members to recognize that the connotation of stewardship addresses more than giving money.
- j. To increase the circulation of church papers.
- k. To provide for the orderly and systematic training of lay persons, especially officers, in order that they might more effectively perform their service assignments.
- l. To promote activities which will result in harmonious fellowship, for lay persons throughout the Connection.
- m. To help in the support of the A.M.E. educational institutions.
- n. To give financial assistance to the Connectional and Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Economic Development Corporation (CLEDC/EEDLEDC) in support of Connectional and Episcopal District programs.

### **ARTICLE III - DIVISIONS**

**SECTION 1** The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be composed of the Conference Lay Organizations, District Lay Organization, and the Local Church Lay Organizations of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

### **ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1** The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization membership to the Episcopal District's sessions shall be as follows:

- a. all elected officers of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization.
- b. all presidents and Directors of Lay Activities of the Conference Lay Organization.
- c. six (6) elected delegates from each Conference Lay Organization, one of which shall be a young adult (ages 18-30).

- d. all presidents of the District Lay Organizations.
- e. Six (6) elected delegates from each District Lay Organizations, one of which shall be a young adult (ages 18-30).
- f. each president or a duly elected representative of each duly organized District Lay Organization of an Annual Conference.
- g. each president or duly elected representative of each organized Station or Circuit Organization. A duly organized Lay Organization of a Station, Circuit, or Districts of the Annual Conference, shall be an organization reporting to the Conference Lay Organization's Annual Meeting, or which is recognized by the Conference as an organization.

## **ARTICLE V - OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1** The elected Officers of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization and its Divisions (see Article III, this Constitution) shall be:  
 (\*Elected at discretion of Divisions)

- a. President
- b. First Vice President
- c. Second Vice President\*
- d. Third Vice President\*
- e. Recording Secretary
- f. Assistant Recording Secretary\*
- g. Corresponding Secretary\*
- h. Treasurer
- i. Financial Secretary\*
- j. Chaplain
- k. Historiographer\*
- l. Parliamentarian\*
- m. Director of Lay Activities
- n. Director of Public Relations\*
- o. Director of Youth and Young Adults Activities\*
- p. Director of Lay Benevolent Auxiliary\*
- q. Director of Commission on Statistics and Finance\*
- r. Director of Commission on Organization and Structure\*
- s. Director of Commission on Personnel and Procedures\*
- t. Director of Commission on Program and Activities\*

**SECTION 2** The records of all officers handling finances of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization and its Divisions shall be audited in compliance with the guidelines as set forth by the Commission on Statistics and Finance and shall report its finding at the Eleventh Episcopal District Annual meeting.

## ARTICLE VI - QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

- SECTION 1** All officers and members of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be members in good and regular standing in their Station or Circuit Organization. The President of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall possess such qualifications and fitness as shall entitle and qualify the President to sit as a member of the Connectional Lay Organization Executive Board.
- SECTION 2** The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall have the right at all times to pass upon the qualifications of its own members and may reject or accept the membership of any person.
- SECTION 3** *All candidates seeking an office in the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization must be registered and must have attended at least three Annual Sessions within the four (4) year period immediately preceding the election year.*
- SECTION 4.** All persons seeking an elected office must submit a “Letter of Intent” with qualifications signed by the Conference President with the approval of the Executive Board, to the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee. Letter must be sent by certified mail, fax or presented in person and postmarked or delivered on or before 60 (60) days of the election year. This deadline date will constitute the close of all nominations submitted to the Nominating Committee. All qualifications are subject to verification. All verifications must be received prior to placing an individual’s name on the voting ballot.
- SECTION 5.** All candidates seeking an office must have demonstrated active participation on the Annual Conference, and district levels within the four (4) year period preceding the election year.
- SECTION 6.** Any candidate for the office of Recording Secretary, Assistant Recording Secretary, and/or Corresponding Secretary must be literate in basic computer technology and a working knowledge in current word processing application is essential.
- SECTION 7.** Any candidate seeking the office of Treasurer or Financial Secretary must have experience in financial management, including but not limited to, the areas of accounting, bookkeeping, finance or economics.
- SECTION 8.** Any candidate seeking the office of Public Relations Director must have a working knowledge of journalism, marketing, sales or media technology. The individual must also possess strong interpersonal and communication skills.

## ARTICLE VII - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

**SECTION 1** All elections of officers shall be by ballot and a majority vote shall elect. Any method of election in any division, other than by ballot shall be declared null and void by the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization.

**SECTION 2** The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization Officers shall be elected to a four year term beginning with the 1985 Annual Session.

**SECTION 3** The elected officers of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization and each of its Divisions shall serve no more than eight (8) consecutive years in the same office, and the newly elected officers shall assume duties of the office after the close of the Annual Session. The transitional period reconcile files, records, and check inventories before transferring them to the incoming officers shall not exceed a period of sixty (60) calendar days.

**SECTION 4** The Conference Lay Organization officers shall be elected biennially.

**SECTION 5** District Lay Organization Officers of the Annual Conference shall be elected biennially.

**SECTION 6** Station or Circuit Organization Officers shall be elected annually.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1** ***THE PRESIDENT*** of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall preside over the sessions of its regular, special, or emergency meetings and shall also be Chairperson of the Executive Board. The President shall be the active head of the organization and shall be responsible for seeing that the Constitution and Bylaws of this organization, as well as the orders and policies of the Annual Session and the Executive Board are fully carried out. The President shall be responsible for expanding and developing the lay work throughout the Eleventh Episcopal District through channels of the Conference Lay Organizations. The President shall also be responsible for such other duties as may be usual and customary to the position and which may be assigned from time to time by the Executive Board and the directives approved by the Annual Session.

**SECTION 2.** The President shall represent the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization at the Biennial Session of the Connectional Lay Organization.

**SECTION 3.** The President shall appoint chairpersons of all Commissions and Committees.

**SECTION 4.** ***THE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT*** shall 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. The First Vice President shall coordinate such programs and perform such functions as are assigned by the President.

**SECTION 5.** ***THE SECOND VICE PRESIDENT***, in the absence of the President and the First Vice President, shall preside at all meetings and assume all duties of the office of

President. The Second Vice President shall coordinate such programs as are assigned by the President.

**SECTION 6. THE THIRD VICE PRESIDENT** in the absence of the President, the First Vice President and Second Vice President, shall preside at the meetings and assume all duties of the office of President. The Third Vice President shall coordinate such programs and perform such duties as are assigned by the President.

**SECTION 7 THE RECORDING SECRETARY** shall be responsible for recording of attendance and accurate minutes of all business transacted during meetings and shall read the minutes of any previous meetings, when called upon to do so by the President. In the absence of the President and Vice Presidents, the recording Secretary shall preside, until a chairperson “pro tem” is elected. The Recording Secretary shall prepare, for the presiding officer, a statement of unfinished business to come before the meeting and a report of the Executive Board meetings to be presented at the Biennial Session. The Recording Secretary shall hold the bond of the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary.

**SECTION 8 THE ASSISTANT RECORDING SECRETARY** shall assist the Recording Secretary in keeping accurate records and, in the absence of the Secretary, shall perform the duties of the Secretary.

**SECTION 9 THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY** shall review all correspondence, report pertinent information to the Executive Board, and reply to correspondence as directed by the President and/or the Executive Board

**SECTION 10 THE TREASURER** shall receive all monies and disburse same upon authorization of the President, as approved by the body. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records and give an itemized report at each Board meeting and Annual Session. The Treasurer shall be bonded and said bond be held by the Recording Secretary.

**SECTION 11 THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY** shall assist the Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall write vouchers countersigned by the President that authorize expenditures which are to be paid by the treasurer, Monies received by the Financial Secretary shall be turned over to the Treasurer within thirty (30) days. The Financial Secretary shall be bonded and said bond held by the Recording Secretary.

**SECTION 12 THE CHAPLAIN** shall make adequate preparation for each Bible Study and Devotional Service. The Chaplain shall provide spiritual leadership to this organization.

**SECTION 13 THE HISTORIOGRAPHER** shall keep a written and pictorial record of the activities and achievements of the organization and make it available upon request. The Historiographer shall also act as custodian for all photographs, citations, awards, trophies, and other mementos.

**SECTION 14 THE PARLIAMENTARIAN** shall advise the President or presiding officer, when necessary, concerning questions of parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian shall follow *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, at all meetings. The Parliamentarian shall be the recognized authority on this Constitution, and standing Rules Committees, and shall serve on the Commission on Organization and Structure and shall serve as a consultant to other commission as needed.

**SECTION 15 THE DIRECTOR OF LAY ACTIVITIES** shall be responsible for planning and implementing a training program and course of study designed to accomplish the Purpose and Objectives of the organization. The Director of Lay Activities will coordinate the training program provided by the Connectional Lay Organizations and assume responsibility for seeing that appropriate information reference to the course of study is transmitted to our Divisions in a timely manner (within 30 days). The Director of Lay Activities will perform other functions assigned by the President.

**SECTION 16 THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS** shall seek to discard doubt and inaccurate understanding about the church's activities by the public through the channeling of appropriate information to the various entities of the Media. The Director shall disseminate news items of interest from the conferences and shall perform other functions assigned by the President.

**SECTION 17 THE DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS ACTIVITIES** shall plan and facilitate the programs and activities of the youth and young adults associated with the Lay Organization. They shall plan the training activities that will be employed by the organization in fulfilling the commitment to training the youth and young adults. The program developed and presented to the Annual Convention shall be portable to conference, district, and church lay organizations. A report will be presented to the Annual Convention detailing the specific topics and or activities to be covered, material resources needed or available, and personnel resources that may be employed in a timely manner (within 90 days). An assessment device will be designed as a part of the program. These programs and activities must be approved by the Eleventh Episcopal District President prior to the opening of the Annual Convention.

**SECTION 18 THE DIRECTOR OF LAY BENEVOLENT AUXILIARY** shall be responsible for planning a training program and course of study in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the Lay Organization. The proposed training program and course of study shall be presented to the Executive Board for approval at the first meeting following the close of the Annual Session. The approved program shall be forwarded from the Episcopal District Director to the Conference Directors of Lay Activities. If there is no organized District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference, Conference Directors of Lay Activities. The training program and course of study shall reach the Directors of Lay Activities within thirty (30) days after the Connectional Director of Lay Activities has forwarded same. A full report of progress made in the implementation of the course of study shall be

given at each Annual Session.

**SECTION 19** ***DIRECTORS OF COMMISSIONS*** shall perform those functions (Duties and Responsibilities) set out in ARTICLE XIV of this Constitution and shall perform other functions assigned by the President or Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE IX - EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**SECTION 1** There shall be an Executive Board of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization, composed of the elected officers of the organization and the Presidents of each Conference Lay Organization of the Eleventh Episcopal District and one at-large member elected from the young adult delegates, ages 18-30.

**SECTION 2** The Executive Board shall meet, at least annually at the time and place designated by the President and members of the Executive Board.

**SECTION 3** The President of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall preside over the meetings of the Executive Board, and Secretary of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall serve as secretary of the Executive Board.

**SECTION 4** The Executive Board shall have authority to carry on the work of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization during the interim of Annual Sessions.

**SECTION 5** The Executive Board shall establish the rules and regulations by which it shall be governed. The Board's shall have power over the supervision and direction of all affairs if the Organization during the interim of the Annual Session of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization, except that it shall infringe upon any of the expressed constitutional provisions herein set forth and provided, Further, the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization, in its Annual Session, may nullify, abrogate, or rescind any action of the Executive Board.

**SECTION 6** The Executive Board shall have the authority to make recommendations as to the official conduct of any elected officer, provided however, that any decision to suspend, expel, or remove from office shall rest exclusively with the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization.

**SECTION 7** The Executive Board shall pass upon the Constitution and Bylaws of Conference Lay Organization to determine their compliance with or conformity to Constitution and Bylaws of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization

**SECTION 8** The Executive Board shall have such other authority as may be necessary to carryout the general purposes, and intent of this Constitution.

**SECTION 9** The Executive Board, in its discretion, may establish an Advisory Council to act in a purely advisory capacity. The Advisory Council may consist of past



presidents of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization and such other distinguished lay members as the President may designate. The Advisory Council shall not exceed five (5) persons.

**SECTION 10** If a vacancy occurs among the elected officers other than the office of president, this vacancy shall be filled by the Executive Board upon the recommendation of the President.

## **ARTICLE X - MEETINGS**

**SECTION 1** The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall meet annually in its regular session. The Annual Conference Lay Organizations shall entertain the regular sessions in this sequence:

- |    |            |      |    |         |      |
|----|------------|------|----|---------|------|
| 1. | Florida    | 2006 | 5. | South   | 2010 |
| 2. | West Coast | 2007 | 6. | Florida | 2011 |
| 3. | East       | 2008 | 7. | East    | 2012 |
| 4. | Central    | 2009 | 8. | South   | 2013 |

**SECTION 2** The Annual Session of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be held during the month of June with the first business session to begin on Wednesday of the week. The site of the Annual Session shall be determined at least two (2) years in advance.

**SECTION 3** The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization and/or the Executive Board may call an emergency or a special meeting of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization when it is deemed necessary.

**SECTION 4** The time, place, and objective of such Special or Emergency meeting shall be clearly set forth in the official call or notice. Only those matters expressly set out in the notice or call shall be deliberated upon, provided however, that no election of officers shall take place at a special or emergency meeting.

**SECTION 5** All delegates to the Annual Session must be elected at a regular or properly convened meeting. The names and addresses of all delegates must be submitted to the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization Registrar by the Conference Lay Organization Secretary two months before the meeting.

## **ARTICLE XI - VOTING PRIVILEGE**

**SECTION 1** Voting privilege in the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be confined and restricted to persons set out under Article IV, this Constitution.

**SECTION 2** No person shall be entitled to more than one (1) vote, on an issue, in the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization, and must be personally present to exercise such privilege. No proxy or absentee voting shall be permitted.

**SECTION 3** Unless otherwise indicate, the majority vote shall prevail in determining all matters.

#### **ARTICLE XII - POWER AND JURISDICTION**

**SECTION 1** The Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall exercise prudent and appropriate authority, power, and supervision over all Conference Lay Organizations established under the provisions of this Constitution.

#### **ARTICLE XIII - RESERVED AND IMPLIED POWERS**

**SECTION 1** Each Conference Organization shall be vested with the full authority to make its own Constitution, Bylaws, rules and regulations as may be necessary for proper and orderly conduct of its affairs and for the governing of its officers and members. Each of these organizations shall have the authority to establish its own activities and program, raise funds, and in general perform all functions incident to its existence as an autonomous body; except however, the organization shall not make constitutional or by-law provisions or rules and regulations which shall conflict with or abridge the Constitution and Bylaws of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization. A copy of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Conference Lay Organization must be filed with the Executive Board of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization for examination and response.

**SECTION 2** A copy of the Constitution and Bylaws of each conference lay organization must be filed with the Executive Board of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization.

**SECTION 3** Each Conference Lay Organization, District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference, and each Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall have the following inserted in its Constitution and Bylaws: "This Organization shall be subject to and governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Connectional Lay Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

**SECTION 4** This organization and each of its Divisions shall at all times be subject to and governed by the Discipline, Laws, Doctrine, and Tenets of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

#### **ARTICLE XIV - COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS**

**SECTION 1** All committees and commissions shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board.

**SECTION 2** The President, Executive Board, or the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization may appoint Ad Hoc Committees; however, when such committees are appointed, their functions and specified procedures must be established for their operation.

**SECTION 3** The records of all officers handling finances of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be audited by and auditing committee, which shall report its findings to the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization in regular session.

**SECTION 4.** The Finance Committee of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall submit its final report to the Regular Session of the Organization not later than the second day of the annual meeting.

**SECTION 5** The duties and responsibilities of the Commissions shall be as follows with the added provision that other tasks may be assigned by the President, Executive Board, or the Annual Convention.

**a. Commission on Statistics and Finance**

1. Plan course of action that will be pursued by the Lay Organization in raising or accumulating funds needed for complete operations.
2. Construct the Budget according to this general format - PART I - INCOME, PART II - EXPENDITURES, PART III - CONTINGENCY, and PART IV - RECAPITULATION. The various causes and account categories will be specifically defined in these indicated parts. The Commission will receive funds and will implement a system that creates “audit trail” procedures of sufficient magnitude to trace all collections from the original source to placement in the authorized depository and the purchase of goods and contracted services from authorization to payment.  
  
Conduct an internal audit which checks the accuracy, fairness, general acceptability of accounting records and statements, determine if expenditures were made in accordance with proper authorization, and insure that all funds collected from all sources were posted to the proper depository. The Commission will employ no fewer than eight test items in PART I and PART II of the budget in executing the financial study.
4. The records of all officers handling finances of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall be audited by an auditing committee, which shall report its findings to the Episcopal District Lay Organization in its regular session.
5. The Finance Committee of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall submit its final report to the Regular Session of the Organization not later than the second day of the annual meeting.

**b. Commission on Organization and Structure**

1. Provide the President, Executive Committee, other officers, and the Annual Convention with ideas designed to assist with a more effective operation.

2. Perform a continuing study of the Connectional, Episcopal District and Conference Constitutions and Bylaws for the express purpose of highlighting violations and proposing changes designed to facilitate a more accurate synchronization of law and practice.
3. See Annual Convention Standing Rule: I - C
4. Shall publish/distribute official organ of District
5. Review the President's Message to the Annual Convention for purpose of "lifting-up" announced suggestions and recommendations and report findings and conclusions to the Convention. This report should reflect the appropriateness of the suggestions /recommendations for consideration by the organization, a proposed timetable for implementing the suggestions/recommendations, and a cursory set of plans for the implementing process.
6. Study and analyze particulars associated with providing the best possible music programs/activities in our organizational activities. Attention should be directed to the program at the local church (services) level.
7. Develop Resolutions that express the position of the Lay Organization on pertinent social issues, community problems, and organizational or other concerns.
8. Review the existing Standing Rules for the Annual Convention and make suggestions for changes to the Annual Convention, when it is determined that changes are necessary. Prepare printed copies of the Standing Rules and have them ready for distribution to the Annual Convention membership upon request by the President.

**c. Commission on Personnel and Procedures**

1. Secure the names of all deceased members and prepare a proper and sufficient memorial ceremony to be conducted during the Annual Convention. This ceremony should be of the quality that will be portable to the other levels.
2. Plan and facilitate the programs and activities of the young people associated with the Lay Organization. The program developed and presented to the Annual Convention shall be portable to conference, district, and church lay organizations.
3. Investigate and identify special skills and abilities of members of the organization and determine how these special abilities and skills may best be employed in fostering the activities, services, and processes of the organization. A report shall be presented to the Annual Convention that identifies the individual, specifies special

skills and abilities and provides information with reference to how the person may be employed at the state, conference, district, and local levels.

4. Plan the training activities that will be employed by the organization in fulfilling the commitment to training the lay. A report will be presented to the Annual Convention detailing the specific topics and or activities to be covered, material resources needed or available, and personnel resources that may be employed. An assessment devise will be designed as a part of the program.
5. The Commission will entertain and review the ideas of dissent; aggrieved or unsatisfied members who feel that the organization's mode of operation did them or some others a disservice or mistreatment. Findings from these reviews are to be reported to the Annual Convention.
6. See Annual Convention Standing Rules I - A (Credentials)

**d. Commission on Program and Activities**

1. Develop and implement a program for paying tribute to those lay members who deserve to be recognized by the Organization for outstanding or unusual contributions. The system should detail how selection is to be made at the local church, presiding elder district, and conference levels.
2. Plan the course of action that will be taken by the organization in extending courtesies to those members who become ill or die.
3. Plan an assessment program designed to determine the effectiveness of the Annual Convention and other programs/activities sponsored or conducted by the organization.
4. Review methods, procedures, and activities that will enhance the effective functioning of men and women in the local church program.
5. Identify, review, and propose techniques and procedures which may be employed at the local church, presiding elder district, and annual conference levels in encouraging laymen to become involved in lay organization programs and activities.
6. Solicit, receive, and select invitations to entertain Annual Conventions and other meetings of the organization.
7. Review and analyze proposed legislation from the Conference Lay Organization or other sources and make recommendations of

support or non-support to the body. The Commission will propose legislation for consideration by the body and ultimate filing with the Episcopal District or Connectional body.

8. The program of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization will consist of a series of activities designed to help achieve the purpose and objectives set forth in the Constitution. The Commission will review the programs transmitted from the Connectional level and plan activities and procedures which are designed to achieve specific portions of the objectives that relate to this organization. The Commission's proposed plan, which is presented to the Annual Convention, will contain a series of functional activities, identified resources necessary to foster the activity, and time frames specified for initiation and/or completion of the activity.

## **SECTION 6 Commission Structure and Operation**

Each commission will be made up of two (2) members from each Conference Lay Organization, appointed by the President. These may be nominated by Conference Presidents.

All Commission meetings shall be open to the members of the convention who may take part in deliberations but will not be able to vote on issues before the Commission. Directors of Commissions may appoint committees to execute any of its functions using any members of the organization. Committees, when appointed by Directors of Commissions, will make their reports to the appointing Commission, unless a request is approved to have the report presented before another group.

## **ARTICLE XV – SUBORDINATE BODIES**

**SECTION 1.** CONFERENCE LAY ORGANIZATION - The Conference Lay Organization shall be composed of:

- a. all elected officers;
- b. each President and Director of Lay Activities of each duly organized District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference.
- c. six (6) elected delegates, of which one shall be a young adult, ages 18-30, from each duly organized District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference; and

- d. each President and six (6) elected delegates, of which one shall be a young adult, ages 18-30, from each Station or Circuit.

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Conference Lay Organization must conform to and harmonize with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Connectional Lay Organization, and with Constitution and Bylaws of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization.

**SECTION 2.** District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference—The District Lay Organization of the Annual Conference shall be composed of:

- a. all elected officers; and
- b. the President and six (6) elected delegates from each Station or Circuit where there is a duly organized Lay Organization.

This organization is amenable to the Conference Lay Organization and must report to the Conference Lay Organization at least annually.

**SECTION 3.** Station or Circuit Lay Organization—The pastor of each Station or Circuit shall, within thirty (30) days after the Annual Conference, call a meeting of the members of the Charge for the purpose of organizing a Lay Organization where none exists. The Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall be composed of all members of said Station or Circuit who desire to enroll. The officers of the organization shall be elected from those enrolled in said organization. The President of the Lay Organization, or duly elected representative of the local church, becomes a member of the Official Board by virtue of office.

The officers of a Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall be those specified in Article 5, Section 1 of this Constitution. The Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall fix the time for regular meetings, which should not be fewer than eleven (11) times per year.

The officers of the Local Church Lay Organization shall be those specified in ARTICLE V, SECTION of the Constitution. The Station or Circuit Lay Organization shall fix the time for regular meetings, which should not be fewer than eleven (11) times per year.

**SECTION 4** There shall be a Youth component of the Lay Organization composed of youth between the ages of 13-17 established on all levels.

## **ARTICLE XVI - AMENDMENTS**

**SECTION 1** Amendments, to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization may be made by filing a copy of the proposed amendment with the President and Secretary at least sixty (60) days prior to the meeting of the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization. The Secretary shall send a copy of the proposed amendment(s) by “certified mail—return receipt requested” to each

of the Conference and District President so that they will be in possession of the information least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting in which action will be taken on the proposed amendment. A two-thirds vote shall be required to effect an amendment.

The following shall constitute the Bylaws of this organization.

**SECTION 1** The Order of Business shall be:

- a. Devotion
- b. Bible Study
- c. Roll Call of Officers
- d. Report of Credentials Committee
- e. Registration of Delegates
- f. Reading Report of the Executive Board
- g. Reading of Communications
- h. Appointment of Commissions
- i. President's Message
- j. Reports of Officers
- k. Reports of Conference Presidents
- l. Unfinished Business
- m. New Business
- n. Reports of Committees
- o. Adjournment

**SECTION 2** Representation from a majority of those Conferences located in the Eleventh Episcopal District Lay Organization shall constitute a quorum for the transacting the business.

**SECTION 3** The members shall conform to all rules and regulations of this organization. Any member(s) guilty of an infraction or violation of the rule or for conduct or decorum unbecoming a member, may be removed from membership.

**SECTION 4** The order of business outlined above may be changed by a majority vote of the members present.

**SECTION 5** All reports of Presidents and other officers shall be in writing and submitted, at least, in triplicate copies: one for the President, one for the Secretary, and one to be retained by the officer making the report.

**SECTION 6** Any officer failing to perform the official duties of the office to which elected or assigned shall be accountable to the Executive Board.

**SECTION 7** No officer, member, nor standing or special committee shall incur any obligation, which shall be binding on the organization, unless such action was authorized in its inception, or subsequently ratified and approved by the organization.

**SECTION 8** The President shall be authorized to appoint and deputize, with sufficient power and authority, as many Marshals as may be deemed necessary to maintain order



and decorum in meetings.

- a. It shall be the duty of the Marshals to maintain order and see that only members are seated in the established bounds of the meetings.
- b. The Marshals shall distribute materials and perform such other duties as may be assigned to them by the President in keeping with duties of their office.

**SECTION 9** Any provision or condition not expressly covered in either the Constitution or Bylaws of the organization shall be interpreted and construed in keeping with the long established policy, custom, tenet, and tradition of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the AME Discipline, and Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

SAH 12/18/02  
CN 01/20/06