



African Methodist Episcopal Church  
Second Episcopal District  
Lay Organization



*Summer Component Meeting*  
*Monday July 14, 2025 - 9:30am*

# REPORTS BOOK

Embassy Suites by Hilton  
Hampton Convention Center  
1700 Coliseum Drive  
Hampton, VA 23666

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, *Presiding Prelate*  
Rev. Billy Ray Hunter, *Host Presiding Elder*  
Rev. Chester Morris, *Presiding Elder*  
Rev. Andre P. Jefferson, *Host Pastor*  
Sister Penny Oliver, *Episcopal District President*  
Sister D. Faye Conley, *Episcopal District Director of Lay Activities*  
Brother Adam Johnston, *Episcopal District Young Adult Representative*  
Brother W. Germain Favor, *Conference President*  
Brother Marquibus Brooks, *Conference Director of Lay Activities*

*Connectional Theme:*  
*"Living a Global Witness Ministry that  
 Transforms, Transcends and Liberates"*

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## ***Agenda***

Call to Order	President Penny Oliver
Prayer	Brother Kenneth Woods, Chaplain
Welcome	Brother W. Germain Favor
	Host Church President
Minutes	Sister Jackie C. Kanipe
	Assistant Recording Secretary
Financial Report	Dr. Edna Watson/Sister Azzie Y. Conley

### **REPORTS**

#### **DISTRICT OFFICERS**

President Penny Oliver  
First Vice President Jean Richie - Membership  
Third Vice President Rose Brabble - Evangelism

#### **CONFERENCE PRESIDENTS** (one highlight)

BCLO – President Alvin White  
WCLO – President Glen White  
VCLO – President W. Germain Favor  
NCCLO – President Elbert Davis  
WNCCLO – President Barbara R. Myers

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Christian Recorder Subscriptions – Chair Barbara Myers & Co-Chair Rose Brabble  
SEDLO Scholarship Ways & Means Committee – Chair Alvin White

#### **2025 Virtual SED Lay Convention**

Membership to Discipleship- August 23, 2025– 10am - 2pm, Registration \$36

#### **2026 SED Lay Convention**

Host Proposals

**LAY LESSON** - Director of Lay Activities D. Faye Conley

**Lay Benediction**



Second Episcopal District Lay Organization  
Mid-Winter Component Meeting  
February 20, 2025

The component meeting of the Second Episcopal District Lay Organization convened in Charlotte, North Carolina at the Second Episcopal District's mid-winter meeting. Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church served as host, Pastor Rev. Dr. Abdue Knox.

President Penny Oliver called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. Brother Kenneth Woods, Chaplain gave the opening prayer.

On behalf of Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church's Lay Organization, President, Sister Bobbi Hague extended greetings and welcome. Sister Hague presented a welcome gift to President Oliver and stated this same type of gift is given to welcome attendees to Greater Bethel on Sundays. The agenda was accepted for us to follow to conduct the business.

Minutes of the September 4 meeting, taken by Recording Secretary Monica Davis, were read by the Assistant Recording Secretary, Jackie Kanipe. Accepted for information. First timers were recognized.

Financial Report was given by Treasurer Dr. Edna Watson and Financial Secretary Azzie Conley. They asked that as we report funds by Givelify or Zelle that we be sure to list the giver's name and the Conference we are in for proper verification. The SEDLO has a Certificate of Deposit not earning a lot of money will be up for renewal in July. Deposits should always be accompanied by vouchers to determine the fund designation. Dr. Watson concluded the report by stating how much she appreciated working with immediate past President Matthew Douglas. The report was accepted for information.

First Vice President Jean Richie reported that the goal of our Second Episcopal District Lay Organization is to have 100% participation among the local churches. Ninety-two percent of the membership of the District consists of lay people. Each local church is required to have a lay organization. One hundred percent (100%) of the North Carolina Conference churches have a Lay Organization. The First Vice President will have strategies suggested to make this happen for us. First Vice-Presidents on all levels meet with the Connectional Lay First Vice to develop ways and means to make it happen for all of our churches to have a Lay Organization.

Director of Lay Activities D. Faye Conley reported that the Conference Presidents need to submit delegate registration for the 39<sup>th</sup> Biennial...registration fee increases March 1. The attire

committee has selected a Navy and white cardigan with the SEDLO logo. Cost could possibly be between \$50 and \$60. More details will be provided.

Scholarship Chair Alvin White reported that scholarship applications need to be submitted to him by April 15. Scholarships available include the Jamye C. Williams; Joseph McKinney, J.D. Williams and Davis/McKinney...link is available on the SEDLO website.

A Ways and Means committee has been created to fund the SED Scholarships. Brother White is chair and committee members: D. Faye Conley, Dr Edna Watson, Adam Johnston, Germain Favor, Janice Murray, Yvonne Davis.

Conference Presidents met and agreed that the SEDLO should be responsible for funding the scholarship being granted rather than the Conferences providing the funding.

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson visited our meeting with greetings and thankfulness for our support in all efforts. The Lay Organization should be a strong force in leadership to move the church forward. The organization should push to develop strong stewards, trustees, and finances to provide good leadership. A problem that may result as a weakness in the church is not being transparent. Good business practice requires that we have integrity. People give better when there is transparency. The most important entity in the A.M.E. Church is the local church. Bishop Jackson stated how grateful he is for the prayers and the encouragement since the passing of his wife, Supervisor Jackson.

Brother White continued to report for the Ways and Means Committee:

Dollars for Scholars – this fundraiser is a means of collecting dollars from our lay members, church members and friends to help fund the Scholarship program. This will be the “kickoff” fundraiser. Other activities that will be considered include an upscale Sneaker Ball for next year.

Brother Kenneth Woods, WNCCLC moved that the report be accepted, seconded by Sister Ruby Greer, VCLO. Motion carried.

Sister Maria Wallace moved that we accept the recommendation to start Dollars for Scholars; seconded; motion carried. Information will be forthcoming.

Fourth Episcopal District President Michael A. Cousin, Jr., of St. Stephen A.M.E. Church, Detroit, Michigan, visited with us. He spoke, commending and congratulating President Oliver. In closing, the Lay Benediction was sung as we adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

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Jacqueline C. Kanipe  
Assistant Recording Secretary

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Date approved

Balance Brought Forward February 1, 2025	32,849.15	
Plus Receipts	75,329.64	
<b>Total Funds</b>	108,178.79	
Less Expenditures	(65,536.88)	
<b>Balance June 30, 2025 (per bank statement)</b>	42,641.91	
Less Outstanding Check	(14,251.95)	
<b>Adjusted Balance</b>	<u>28,389.96</u>	

**Funds Held**

Davis/McKinney Scholarship (formerly Foundation)	-	-
AME Incentive Shelter	-	
<b>Total Funds Held</b>	-	-

<b>Total Funds Available for Operating Expenses</b>	<u>28,389.96</u>	
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<b>Other Account - Certificate of Deposit (June 30, 2025)</b>	\$5,177.48	
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**Itemized Receipts**

<b>Annual Assessment</b>		
BCLO	750.00	
WCLO	750.00	
VCLO	750.00	
NCCLO	750.00	
WNCCLO	750.00	
<b>Total Annual Assessment</b>		<b>3,750.00</b>

<b>Executive Board Assessment</b>		
Executive Board	500.00	
<b>Total Executive Board Assessment</b>		<b>500.00</b>

<b>Mid-Winter Mtg - Greensboro</b>		
BCLO	140.00	
WCLO	160.00	
VCLO	70.00	
NCCLO	90.00	
WNCCLO	360.00	
<b>Total Mid-Winter Registration</b>		<b>820.00</b>

<b>Membership</b>		
BCLO		
WCLO		
VCLO		
NCCLO		
WNCCLO	2,536.00	
<b>Total Membership</b>		<b>2,536.00</b>

<b>Ways and Means Activities</b>		
<b>Lay Stoles</b>		
BCLO		
WCLO		
NCCLO		
WNCCLO		
<b>Total Lay Stoles</b>	700.00	<b>700.00</b>

<b>Total Ways and Means Activities</b>	<b>700.00</b>	
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<b>CLO Biennial Registration</b>		
BCLO	5,035.00	
WCLO	7,525.00	
VCLO	3,650.00	
NCCLO	5,460.00	
WNCCLO	3,450.00	
<b>CLO Biennial Registration</b>	7,977.00	
<b>Total CLO Biennial Registration</b>		<b>33,097.00</b>

<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
<b>Other Miscellaneous</b>		
Christian Recorder	1,908.00	
Biennial Attaire	7,655.00	
Mid-Winter Breakfast	3,180.00	
SEDLO Breakfast	6,183.64	
Support of SED - Bishop Office	15,000.00	
<b>Total Miscellaneous</b>	<b>36,859.72</b>	<b>36,859.72</b>

<b>Total Itemized Receipts</b>	75,329.64	<b>75,329.64</b>	75,329.64
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**Itemized Expenditures**

**SEDLO President's Expenses**

<b>Hotel</b>		
Charlotte Hilton	638.39	
Marriott Norfolk	208.85	
Hilton Garden - BWI	271.32	
Crowne Plaza - MD	252.61	
Ballast Wilmington	538.94	

Marriott Norfolk	278.81	
Sheraton Greensboro	670.95	
<b>Total Hotel Expenses</b>		<b>2,859.87</b>
<b>Offerings</b>		
Middle Winter Offering	175.00	
Western NC Conference Offering	250.00	
<b>Total Offerings</b>		<b>425.00</b>
<b>Gas / Food Expenses</b>		
American Air line	396.37	
5 Month Gas/Food Expenses	491.02	
<b>Total Gas/Food Expenses</b>		<b>887.39</b>
<b>Treasurer - Stipend (Edna Watson)</b>		
Jan thru Feb	200.00	
	300.00	
<b>Total Treasurer - Stipend (Edna Watson)</b>		<b>500.00</b>
<b>Financial Secretary - Stipend (Azzie Conley)</b>		
Oct thru Feb + \$2 test for Zelle	502.00	
<b>Total Financial Secretary - Stipend</b>		<b>502.00</b>
<b>Director of Lay Activities Expenses</b>		
Mid-Winter	308.89	
Mid-Winter Outstanding Lay -refund	493.14	
<b>Total Director of Lay Expenses</b>		<b>802.03</b>
<b>Ways and Means - Lay Stoles</b>	2,500.00	
Harold Hughes - Lay Stoles		<b>2,500.00</b>
<b>Total Ways and Means - Lay Stoles</b>		
<b>2025 Connectional Lay Organization Expenses</b>		
Registration	33,097.00	
<b>Total Biennial Registration Expenses</b>		<b>33,097.00</b>
<b>CLEF - Breakfast</b>		
CLEF Breakfast	1,040.00	
<b>Total CLEF Breakfast</b>		<b>1,040.00</b>
<b>2025 District Delegate Biennial Stipend</b>		
Penny Oliver	880.00	
Janice Murray	1,490.24	
D. Faye Conley	1,690.24	
Arlene Lawson	1,490.24	
Adam Johnston	1,490.24	
Thomas Gross	1,490.24	
<b>Total District Delegate Biennial Expenses</b>		<b>8,531.20</b>
<b>Book Scholarships</b>		
Baltimore	500.00	
Washington	500.00	
Virginia	500.00	
North Carolina	500.00	
Western North Carolina	500.00	
<b>Total Book Scholarships</b>		<b>2,500.00</b>
<b>Refunds</b>		
Penny Oliver - offerings	150.00	
Penny Oliver - VA Conference	140.33	
Gerald Logan	28.83	
Washington Conference - givelify error	240.95	
Penny Oliver - offerings	290.56	
<b>Total Refunds</b>		<b>850.67</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Items</b>		
Matthew Douglas - gift	1,225.00	
Bishop Jackson - reception gift	250.00	
6th District Ad	250.00	
10th Episcopal District - offering	200.00	
SEDLO Breakfast	9,116.72	
<b>Total Miscellaneous Items</b>		<b>11,041.72</b>
<b>Itemized Expenditures</b>	65,536.88	<b>65,536.88</b>
<b>Less Outstanding Checks</b>		
<b><u>Total Itemized Expenditures</u></b>		

*Dr. Edna S. Watson*  
Treasurer

*Azzie Conley*  
Financial Secretary

2025 BIENNIAL REPORT FOR 2<sup>nd</sup> District Lay Organization 2023-2025

Number of local lay 220

Number of active members 4050

Number of training session – 8

Average attendance - 100

### **SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND COLLABORATIONS\***

Building on the strong leadership foundation of Immediate Past President **Matthew Douglas**, the Second Episcopal District Lay Organization (SEDLO) continued to emphasize training, development, and collaboration throughout the year.

#### **Leadership and Lay Training**

A primary focus was equipping local churches with the tools and knowledge needed to function effectively. Training sessions included:

- **“How to Conduct a Local and Conference Lay Election”**
- **“We Formed a Lay Organization—Now What?”**
- **“Leading from the Second Chair”** – A powerful leadership module written by President Matthew Douglas, designed to empower individuals to lead effectively regardless of their formal title or position.

#### **General Conference Preparation**

Recognizing the importance of readiness for the upcoming General Conference, SEDLO hosted a series of targeted trainings for both clergy and laity. These sessions included:

- **“The Legislation Process and What You Need to Know”** – Led by Brother Dante Buckson and Sister Penny Oliver, a member of the CLO Legislation Committee.
- **“Deconstructing the General Conference”** – Facilitated by Rev. Dr. Michael Cousin, Sr., pastor of St. Paul AME Church, Chapel Hill, NC.
- **“What Is Required of the Lay Delegates”** – A vital overview for those serving as lay representatives.

## Winter Institute 2024 Highlights

The 2024 Winter Institute offered impactful training sessions, including:

- An **Economic Development Corporation update** from the Connectional Lay Organization, presented by Brother Jerry Turner (4th District).
- **“Preparing for a Hybrid Meeting”** and **“Budget Planning”** sessions led by Brother Michael Cousin (4th District).
- **“Trustee 101”** workshop conducted by Judge Derek Anderson (3rd District), providing foundational governance knowledge for local trustees.

## Collaborative Initiatives

SEDLO continued its commitment to social justice and community empowerment through meaningful partnerships:

- Collaborated with clergy in the **NAACP Membership Recruitment Campaign**.
- Conducted and participated in **Voter Registration Drives** and **“Souls to the Polls”** initiatives in partnership with RAYAC, Christian Education, and the Women’s Missionary Society (WMS).
- Partnered with the District and Conference-level WMS to host **joint human trafficking awareness and focus group sessions**.

## Achievements, Milestones, and Initiatives

### Celebrating Leadership

- Honored the impactful presidency of **Mr. Matthew Douglas** during the **annual Advent Service**, recognizing his visionary leadership and contributions to the SED Lay Organization.

### Post-Pandemic Milestones

- Successfully hosted the **first District Prayer Breakfast since COVID-19**, featuring our new Bishop, **Reginald T. Jackson**, along with Presiding Elders and Clergy. This gathering marked the kickoff of the **Mid-Winter/Founders’ Day Meeting** and the announcement of the **Outstanding District Layperson and Young Adult Layperson**.
- Held the **first in-person District Meeting since COVID-19** during the Mid-Winter/Founders’ Day celebration, marking a significant return to fellowship and face-to-face engagement.

### Conference-Wide Organization

- With great honor and gratitude, it is reported that **all seventy-nine (79) churches in the North Carolina Conference** now have an **organized Lay Organization**, a major milestone in strengthening our local presence and structure.

### Celebrating Women’s History Month

- Highlighted the achievements and legacies of remarkable women through published profiles, including:

- **Dr. Paulette Coleman**
- **Gertrude Judd Upperman**
- **Marcie Watson White**
- **Dr. Cellestine Cheeks**
- **Valerie Faith Gary Bell**
- **Penny S. Oliver**
- **Glen White**
- **Barbara Roseboro Myers**

#### **National Engagement and Partnerships**

- Maintained **active participation in the CLO First Vice President meetings**, contributing to the development of a **Membership Recruitment and Retention Strategy Plan**.
- Collaborated with the **Ministerial Alliance of DC & Vicinity** for a fellowship-based **Bowling Tournament**, strengthening relationships across ministries.

#### **New and Ongoing Initiatives**

- **Monthly DOLA Reading List** – Promoting continuous learning and engagement.
- **Monthly Chaplain Prayer** – Providing spiritual nourishment and connection.
- **Christian Recorder Subscription Drive** – Encouraging connection with the wider AME community through church media.
- **Dollars for Scholarship Initiative** – Raising funds to support the District Scholarship program and invest in the future of our youth.

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#### **Challenges**

- **Engagement in Training:** A significant challenge remains in motivating local laity to participate in training. Many members view training as optional or disconnected from their personal faith journey. There is a need to **reframe training as spiritual development and empowerment**.
- **Perceived Relevance and Impact:** Another ongoing challenge is the **perception that the Lay Organization is not making a tangible difference** in the church or broader community. This results in low enthusiasm and limited participation. Members are seeking **visible results, clear impact, and meaningful purpose** in the work of the Lay Organization.

## SEDLO-AMEC - A BRIEF SURVEY OF NEEDS

Thank you in advance for completing this survey no later than July 31, 2025.

dfcgift@gmail.com [Switch account](#)



\* Indicates required question

Email \*

Your email

Why did you join the Lay Organization?

Your answer



**The purpose of the Lay Organization is to organize and “train the laity of the AME Church so that they can maximally utilize their skills and abilities to improve and extend the kingdom to create happiness, peace, and harmony among its members”.**

***What are your greatest needs, as a member/disciple, to help you become more effective towards accomplishing the above cited purpose as a layperson?***

- ☐ A) Church History and Infrastructure
- ☐ B) AME Protocol
- ☐ C) Duties and responsibilities of Officers at each level of service

**Please list your active participation in the Lay Organization at each level that applies to you:**

- A. Local
- B. Conference
- C. Episcopal District
- D. Connectional

Your answer

**What do you know about the Lay Organization that might deter you from active membership?**

Your answer

**How can the Lay Organization better serve your local church?**

Your answer

**How might the Lay Organization improve the image of your local church in the community?**

Your answer

**How can the Lay Organization better empower your church?**

Your answer

**How might the Lay Organization improve relationships between laity and clergy?**

Your answer

**If you had a choice of ministries to join in the church, how would you rank their importance to your personal and spiritual growth? *(on a scale of 1-5)***

Your answer

**What have you personally done to grow your local Lay Organization?**

Your answer



Send me a copy of my responses.

# **African Methodist Episcopal Church**

## ***Second District Episcopal District Lay Organization***

### **Report for 3rd Vice President**

***Rose M. Brabble***

On Friday, January 17, 2025, the Connectional Lay Organization held a Prayer Vigil Webinar for the 5th, 8th and 18th Episcopal Districts. Prayer requests for Support, Unrest and Financial Restoration.

Panelist who participated were from the 1st, 2nd, 6th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 16th, 17th and 19th Districts. The theme was "In The Name of Jesus, Lord Let It Rain".

Evangelism Sunday was held on June 8, 2025. To prepare for Evangelism Sunday, Connectional 3rd Vice President, Aaron held workshops with Dr. Mark Crutcher, Pastor of Greater Bethel AME Church, Florida as the presenter. The theme for Evangelism Sunday was, "God's Presence Is a Continuing Reminder Of His Grace and Mercy For Us." Presidents please send your Evangelism Sunday reports to me so I can make my report to Connectional 3rd Vice President, Lovie Aaron.

President Myers from Western North Carolina Conference and I co-chaired securing subscriptions to The Christian Recorder. We were to secure 100 subscriptions at \$36.00 each. We decided to have each Conference in the Second District to secure at least 20 subscriptions.

### **Final Report:**

Baltimore - 22

Washington - 12

Virginia - 13

North Carolina - 26

Western North Carolina - 27

Total - 100

At the Lay Biennial, The 2nd District was recognized for being the first District to report 100 subscriptions and received a reward.

Lay Witness Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, October 12, 2025. More information to come.

***"To God Be The Glory For The Great Things He Has Done"***

## **LAY WITNESS AT ITS BEST...PROVISIONS OF GOD'S MERCY**

**Written by Alvin R. White, President Baltimore Conference Lay Organization**

The historic Baltimore Conference Lay Organization, established in 1954, held its Annual Lay Witness Service at one of the oldest continuously operating African Methodist churches in Maryland, Bethel A.M.E. Church. This service took place during the 209<sup>th</sup> Session of the Baltimore Annual Conference, the oldest conference in African Methodism. Under the effectual Episcopal Leadership of Bishop Reginald T. Jackson for the Second Episcopal District leading under the premise of “the Church at Its Best,” and the outstanding administrative guidance of both Presiding Elders Johnny Calhoun and Wanda London, Rev. Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D. was the host vision-driven Pastor at Bethel who extended a warm and heartfelt welcome to the laity of the Baltimore Annual Conference for the Lay Witness service experience.

The theme was “EQUIPPING GOD’S PEOPLE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES,” Scripture - 1 CHRONICLES 12:32. Bishop Jackson, at the request of the planning team, secured the Honorable Angela Alsobrooks, United States Senator for the state of Maryland, as the speaker. However, due to the historical filibusterer by Senator Cory Booker, the first African American U.S. Senator from New Jersey, which took place on the same evening that Senator Alsobrooks was to bring encouragement as the Lay Witness Service speaker, Senator Alsobrooks was not able to attend. Even though she was unable to leave her civic duty, she made certain a representative from her staff was present.

The spiritual and social awareness tone planned for the evening became apparent when the sermonic selection, “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘round” was sung with a chorale response led by a stellar duet of brothers, noted Bass Baritone Charles Jones and Tenor Ronald Jones. Then, on the spot, the Reverend Melech E. M. Thomas brought forth a powerful word that brought the entire church to its feet, entitled “Messy Mercy.” The essence of his message evolved from the fact that each of his siblings were named after religious members of the Bible, most notably his Sister, Mercii captured the message. It appeared that the shadowing of his Sister Mercii appeared at a time in his life when he needed coverage while being attacked by a bully after school, and what needed shadow would appear but that of his Sister Mercii, who rescued her younger brother, who in other times would be considered her nuisance little brother. To the congregation the message was clear that today’s situation may bring many disappointments, challenges and some hardships, but just as in the past of “Black’s Experiences” ... God’s mercy will prevail. Sister Terenda Thomas presented the Memorial Service, remembering deceased members of the BCLO since last year. President White recognized the guests in attendance to the great relief brought forth at the last minute by Rev. Melech Thomas taking the mantle and leading

the congregation forward in how to move in these “uncertain times” as a “body of Christ.” In attendance were Second Episcopal District Lay Organization (SEDLO) President Penny Oliver; Brother Elbert Davis, North Carolina Lay Organization President; Washington Conference Lay Organization President, Sister Glen White; Sister Edna Watson, Connectional Lay Organization Assistant Recording Secretary and SEDLO Treasurer; and Sister D. Faye Conley, SEDLO Director of Lay Activities. Other guests included several officers and members of the Washington Conference as well as former officers of the Baltimore Annual Conference.





## Washington Conference Lay Organization (WCLO) Report of Accomplishments – February to June 2025

### 1. Consistent Communication, Training, and Collaboration

Virtual and in person monthly meetings were consistently held to ensure transparent communication, collaborative decision-making, and organizational unity. Sister Kimberly Mitchell, our Director of Lay Activities, facilitated targeted and engaging training sessions during monthly meetings. These trainings equipped lay members with practical tools and knowledge to support leadership growth and spiritual service.

### 2. Expansion and Growth

Under the leadership of First Vice President Chenay Saunders and through active outreach and engagement, three new local lay organizations were launched within the Washington Conference. These additions reflect our mission to strengthen lay ministry and promote connectional growth.

### 3. Celebration and Reflection

The Washington Conference Annual Lay Night was well attended with members of various conferences to celebrate a year in review. The event provided an opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year and uplift the work of the laity through fellowship, worship, and shared vision. During our Lay Night, a comprehensive historical review was presented to commemorate 75 years of lay and clergy ministry within the Washington Annual Conference. This effort honors the legacy of past leaders and documents the evolution of our Annual Conference for future generations.

### 4. Strengthening Fellowship and Engagement

The Washington Conference Lay Organization hosted a successful and well-attended Lay Brunch, bringing together members from across the conference for fellowship, inspiration, and recognition of outstanding local lay members. The event featured dynamic speakers, strong attendance, and meaningful connections.

## 5. District and Connectional Participation

Members of the WCLO attended the Second Episcopal District Founder's Day celebration in Charlotte, North Carolina, uniting with others to honor the Church's rich legacy and the contributions of its founding leaders. Sister Glen White, President of the WCLO attended Annual Lay Nights for each of the four other conferences within the Second Episcopal District, demonstrating unity and support across our connectional family. We are proud to report that twenty-seven delegates from the Washington Conference Lay Organization will attend the Connectional Lay Organization Biennial Convention in Atlanta, reflecting strong engagement and leadership representation on a connectional level.

As we reflect on the progress and impact made from February through June, we give God the glory for guiding our efforts and strengthening our fellowship. The Washington Conference Lay Organization remains committed to equipping the laity for greater service, nurturing new leaders, and expanding our spiritual and civic influence across the connection. With faith, vision, and unity, we look forward to the months ahead as we continue to serve, lead, and grow in excellence.

To Bishop Jackson, Presiding Elder Morris, President Elder Hunter, Virginia Conference Clergy, and Virginia Conference Lay. Good morning.

The 2024-2025 conference year for the Virginia Conference Lay Organization mirrored the conference as a year of new. The Lay elected several new officers with my office, the office of the President being one of them. While I am not new to the Lay, I am new to the office of the President. With every new endeavor comes a bit of a learning curve. From learning to balance my day job at the Museum and my community work with my Lay work, I had my fair share of hiccups during this first year. Despite my hiccups, the Virginia Conference Lay has rolled along. The officers were always there to help ensure the meetings were successful, and the work of the Lay was completed. Our 2025 annual meeting was in Roanoke for the first time since the pandemic. Although I could not attend the annual meeting on the weekend due to a death in my family, the very capable 1<sup>st</sup> VP Valerie Terry led things very well. We had a great service that Friday where Rev. John I. Swann, Jr. delivered a great message which set the tone for the weekend. Saturday we had our meeting where we introduced the delegates to the upcoming Lay Biennial in Atlanta and had a workshop where we were education about current fraud trends by the City of Roanoke Police Department and Roanoke County Fraud division. Afterwards we had the Awards Luncheon where we honored Sis. Mandalina Giddens, Sis. Nancy Vander, and Bro. Geoffrey Starkie as the Lay Person of the year from each region. I want to thank western region chairperson Mrs. Mary Terry, Host Lay President Judith Muse and Conference Recording Secretary Rita Beane-Turner for helping to organize the event, Sis. Terry for leading and Sis Velda Gullap for write up about the weekend. Locally, the Lay Organizations was very active this conference year. The Lay Organization of St. John's, where Ms. Yvonne Davis is president, was instrumental in conducting voter registration and assisting with the voting forms, mailing materials, and the voting process. St. Mark's Lay Organization where Mrs. Valerie Terry is president coordinated their annual recognition of all graduates regardless of levels and all youths. St. Mark's Lay Organization has also sought to decrease barriers by offering to pay the Conference Lay Organization membership fees for young adults who wish to join the Lay Organization. Speaking of membership...

The Virginia Conference Lay membership is 473 strong, hailing from 26 churches. That means that 32 churches either do not have a lay organization or have a dormant lay organization. This leads me to my goals for the 2025-2026 conference year. My first goal is to increase membership and begin to plant new Lay Organizations and revive dormant ones. One idea of achieving this is having non-clergy members identify that they are a lay person. I remember being at a Lay service and I asked all the Lay to stand. Only about three

fourths of the congregation stood up. So there were lay people there who did not identify as La people. Once they identify as a Lay person, we, the Lay organization, have to let them know there is a community of Lay people in the Lay Organization that they can join. Once they identify as a Lay person, and join the Lay Organization, then we in the Lay Organization can build social capital within the Lay Organization and the AME church.

In addition to increasing membership, the second goal is to tap into the talent of the Lay members. The Virginia conference members are very talented. We have doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, psychologists, sociologists, historians, security professionals, accountants, you name it, we have it. As the Lay, we have to tap into that untapped resource by offering ways for them to be involved through various committees, such as the membership committee, program committee, ways and means committee, and public relations committee. I believe that by allowing the members to do more than attend a meeting, Lay members will feel like an integral part of the organization. Additionally, those who participate will learn how the Lay works and how the various levels interact as preparation for leadership in the Lay and the church.

Last, my third goal is to improve Lay operations. I heard that when the late Secretary of State Colin Powell first visited the State Department building, he became lost trying to find his way around. This experience led him to place guides on the walls to help people find the various offices in Main State. While I cannot confirm if this story is true (I looked it up and cannot find any mention of it), it does illustrate the gap I have seen with the Virginia Conference Lay. I have noticed in my year that how we operate is not written down anywhere. I am not talking about the constitution and bylaws. What I am talking about is Standard Operating Procedures. For instance, when a new president, on the conference level or the local level, is elected, there are many questions regarding membership, such as when membership is due, and whether the membership calendar year or conference year, etc. That information is not in the constitution and bylaws. It is communicated by word of mouth. When a new president is elected, he or she is asking for that information. So having it written down and in a guide will help ease the transition between presidents. I also want to explore more ways to utilize technology. For the annual meeting, we used Google to capture the registration for attendance records and for us to analyze attendance numbers for future meetings. It is my hope and prayer this will help improve the Lay to make things a little easier for those to come. I thank you, Bishop Jackson for allowing me to give my report on behalf of the Lay. Good afternoon.

## **Annual One Day with the Lay**

**Written By Elbert N. Davis, NCCLO President, Second Episcopal District**

On the fourth Sunday in March, the North Carolina Conference Lay Organization (NCCLO) held its “Annual One Day with the Lay” fundraising event. Representation from all 79 churches of the conference were present. This is a significant fundraising event for the NCCLO. Each participating church appointed a King or Queen to represent them, encouraging local support through various fundraising initiatives. During the event, their achievements were celebrated by crowning the winners of first, second, and third place from the participating churches. Additionally, scholarships totaling \$2,000, alongside \$300 book scholarships were awarded.

The North Carolina Conference Lay Organization encompasses approximately 1,200 members, with each of the 79 churches having active Lay Organizations and are actively engaged in NCCLO initiatives. The leadership team, consisting of the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Third Vice President, is tasked with fostering open communication among the churches. The NCCLO conducts monthly Lay Organization meetings, each featuring a relevant training session.

The NCCLO maintains strong collaborative relationships with its members, pastors, and presiding elders. We are enthusiastic about the opportunities that lie ahead as we embark on this new year and the opportunity to serve God!





**African Methodist Episcopal Church - Second Episcopal District Lay Organization**  
**Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization**  
**Conference Report - February 2025 – June 2025**  
**June 30, 2025**

We greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ,

What a busy year this has been and the last several months were no different yet through it all we have moved across the conference and the district with speed and purpose. We have attended trainings, webinars, meetings and events that sometimes challenged us to do more and we moved forward with commitment and determination to do the work of the church. We are pleased to report 1268 lay organization members from 57 (81) churches across the conference. We are increasing our outreach efforts to meet churches where they are and to provide assistance as needed to support them in fulfilling the mission, vision and objectives of the Lay ministry. Our District Coordinators are working hands on with our local churches to discuss, organize and provide training. In our March Conference meeting our discussions and training centered around our work as laity, the commitment to do the work and the availability of the tools to support the work. Several churches shared their membership recruitment efforts and Mt. Zion AMEC in Hillsborough reported 115 members in their local lay organization. We celebrate the Goodness of God as we continue to work to be “The Church at Its Best”.

We celebrate Mrs. Sonia Barbre and Mr. Brandon Lindsay, who were selected as the Outstanding Adult Layperson and the Outstanding Young Adult Layperson respectively to represent the SEDLO at the CLO Biennial in Atlanta Georgia and they are scheduled to be featured in an article in The Christian Recorder. Pray for their success as they continue their work in the church. Additionally, we have 14 delegates who will join them at the Biennial: 3 District, 5 Conference, and 6 local delegates. We are thankful to all the churches who celebrated their laity and their work in kingdom building during their Lay Witness/Evangelism Sunday program.

We participated with the SEDLO in the campaign for subscriptions to The Christian Recorder and with the help of our Presiding Elders, Dr. Alim and Dr. Lyons, our clergy and laity we were able to exceed our goal of 20 with 27 subscriptions. You see, when we work together clergy and laity we can move mountains. President Myers along with SEDLO 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Rose Brabble coordinated the effort which totaled 101 subscriptions thus meeting our goal of 100 subscriptions from the District.

We were excited as we had over 70 pastors and laity register for and attend our SEDLO Prayer and Awards Breakfast in Charlotte during the Mid-Winter Meeting and what a joyous time we had as we praised and celebrated the goodness of God. We continue to disseminate information throughout the conference as we encourage the laity to become active, knowledgeable and committed participants in the church and community.

Our Annual Lay Night Program Committee under the stellar leadership of Sis. Azzie Y. Conley, Conference DOLA, honored our Episcopal leadership with a spirit filled creative and expressive worship experience under the theme: “Dancing in the Spirit: A Celebration of God’s Faithfulness and Joyful Worship”. We celebrated with our deep tradition of singing hymns performed by Persimmons Grove choir and a Sacred Music Litany, oh how they brought back memories. The mosaic of spoken word and poem by Bro. Douglas McCollum and Bro. Jacob Barrow showcased our youth and young adults as they serve and the divinely inspired liturgical dancing by Forever a Dancer Dance Academy in tribute to our Bishop Reginald T. Jackson and honoring the memory of our Supervisor Mrs. Christy Davis Jackson, Esq. Let us not forget the opera trained, melodious voice of Sis. Anna Mackey, Lay President at Pearson Memorial who led us with the Lay Hymn and Lay Benediction. The laity expressed our appreciation to our five retiring pastors: Rev. William V. Alston, Sr., Rev. Dr. Shirley Hines, Rev. Willie R. Sellers, Rev. Rachel McCaden, and Rev. Brenda Payton even though we did not have several of the names at the time of the program we are mailing them our gift. The conference lay recognized Sis. Dorothy Jeffreys for her outstanding service as our treasurer.

In an effort to support our graduates through the Davis-McKinney Scholarship, the SEDLO has initiated a “Dollars for Scholars” Campaign of which the WNCC is a participant. We have and will continue to contact each church in the conference to solicit their financial support and prayers.

The WNCCLC met on Saturday, June 28 and elected our SEDLO delegates to the virtual convention on August 23, 2025. Those elected were: Bro. Brandon Owens, Sis. Regenia Melvin, Sis. Bettie Duell, Sis. Jacqueline Kanipe, Sis. Chaynel Nichols and Sis. Gerald Logan. Our alternate delegates are Sis. Patrica Holloway and Dr. Shirley Hicks.

As with most things there were challenges and we made every effort to manage them as they arose. We believe the lack of understanding and misinformation seemed to be at the center of these situations. But Praise be to God we have been able to continue the work knowing that what we do is important to the growth of the church and those seeking solace and comfort in His care. Yes, We are thankful to all who continue to walk with us and give God all the praise as He leads us toward the mark of the high calling.

And, as we in the west continue to return to some form of normalcy, after Hurricane Helene, we solicit your continued prayers, what ever you did to lighten the load is appreciated.

We are thankful for the opportunity to serve and pray we are making a difference as we join together in fellowship, service and love.

Submitted on behalf of the the

Western North Carolina Conference  
Barbara R. Myers, Conference President



Second Episcopal District Lay Organization  
Subscriptions

Baltimore: 22

Washington: 12

Virginia: 13

North Carolina: 26

Western North Carolina: 27

**TOTAL: 100**



## SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIP WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE REPORT

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Brother Alvin R. White, Chair \* D. Faye Conley  
\*Janice Murray \* Adam Johnston \* Yvonne Davis  
\*W. Germain Favor \*Dr. Edna Watson**

**Bishop Reginald T. Jackson**

*Presiding Prelate*

**Ms. Penny Oliver**

*President*

**Ms. D. Faye Conley**

*Director of Lay Activities*

**Mr. Adam Johnston**

*Young Adult Representative*

### Conference Presidents

#### Baltimore

**Mr. Alvin White**

#### Washington

**Ms. Glen White**

#### Virginia

**Mr. Germaine Favor**

#### North Carolina

**Mr. Elbert Davis**

#### Western North Carolina

**Mrs. Barbara R. Myers**

**1134 11<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20001**

**202-842- 3788  
202-289-1942 - fax**

The Committee's initial meeting was held on Monday, January 27, 2025 to share Ideas:

1. Davis/McKinney Scholarship Ball
2. Dollars for Scholars Campaign

Committee's second meeting was held on Monday, February 2, 2025

1. Davis/McKinney Scholarship Market Place (added option)

Committee's third meeting was held on June 17, 2025

1. Summer Summit Reporting

Summary: After discussion and vote, members of the SEDLO Ways and Means Scholarship Committee agreed to make the following recommendations to the SEDLO Executive Board:

Prepare and launch the "Dollars for Scholars Campaign" initiative to culminate with collection of funds during the Summer Meeting 2025. This would provide seed funds at least to work towards a larger fundraiser to be held during the Mid-Year Meeting 2026.

Effectively plan for the "Davis/McKinney Scholarship Sneaker-Ball" to be scheduled during the Mid-Year Meeting 2026. The event would be an off-site event from the Host Hotel to better control pay-out cost factors to present the ball (caterers, venue, entertainment, etc.) The conference area hosting Mid-Year would explore best suited needs for the event. Ticket cost \$100+ based on cost factor determined.

During the meeting on February 12, 2025 discussion included an on-going "Market Place" established to capture funds throughout the year. Also funds from "Dollars for Scholars Campaign" can support establishing the Market Place.

A fact sheet with background information on Mrs. Maude Blow Davis and Dr. Joseph Columbus McKinney (scholarship honorees) was provided to support the efforts of the Committee to answer questions members might have regarding "who and why" the Davis/McKinney Scholarship.

It was decided during the June 17, 2025 meeting that local church funds would be reported and collected in support of the "Dollars for Scholars initiative". Also, plans for the "Sneaker's Ball" could begin once the location for Mid-Year 2026 was announced from the planning meeting.

Submitted by,  
Brother Alvin R. White, Chair

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- From CLO President Matikane Abednego Makiti

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# Mission Trip

To Help Those In Need

- SEPTEMBER 27TH TO OCTOBER 4TH 2025 -

This Mission Team is sharing God's love with those in need. Dental and medical clinics, evangelism, and service projects will be conducted. The Pastor of White Cross AME Church in Efland, NC, Rev. Myraette McGibboney, is traveling with the team and will be collecting reading glasses (all strengths); old prescription glasses in good condition; toothbrushes; toothpaste; and floss.

## TO SEND CHECKS:

Mail: Mercy Mission Teams, PO Box 39054, Greensboro, NC 27438  
OR

Givelify.com: Search for Second Episcopal District Lay Organization. Put "SEDLO AMEC" in the memo.  
OR

Zelle: Search for zellesed2@gmail.com. Put "SEDLO AMEC" in the memo.

## TO DONATE ITEMS:

Mail eyeglasses, toothbrushes, tooth paste, and floss to  
2117 Pear St.  
Greensboro, NC 27401

**DEADLINE TO RECEIVE FUNDS AND ITEMS IS AUGUST 28, 2025**

**REV. MYRAETTE MCGIBBONEY**

**White Cross A.M.E. Church  
Efland, NC**

*Thank You For Your Support*

# SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT LAY ORGANIZATION

REGINALD T. JACKSON, PRESIDING PRELATE, SECOND EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

SEDLO PRESIDENT  
SIS. PENNY  
**OLIVER**

MORNING GLORY SPEAKER  
SIS. JORDAN  
**DEVEAUX**



# SEDLO



DUE ON OR BEFORE  
AUGUST 18TH

## VIRTUAL Convention

THEME: MEMBERSHIP TO DISCIPLESHIP  
SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 4:1-8

**AUGUST 23, 2025**

**10:00 A.M. TO  
2:00 P.M.**

SIS. D. FAYE CONLEY  
SEDLO DIRECTOR OF LAY ACTIVITIES

BRO. ADAM JOHNSTON  
YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVE

### LEARNING LABS

1. Member or Disciple
2. AME Protocol
3. Officers' Roles  
& Responsibilities

2ND DISTRICT LAY  
MEMBERS: REGISTER WITH  
YOUR CONFERENCE  
PRESIDENTS

GUESTS, [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

**39<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL CONNECTIONAL LAY  
CONVENTION  
MONDAY, JULY 7, 2025**

The opening worship service was the beginning of the Connectional Lay Convention. The processional was an awesome sight with our Bishops, General Officers, Judicial Council, and Connectional Lay Officers.

The opening hymn was the “Lay Hymn,” sung by all. The prayer was done by Bishop Seawright followed by the Prayer response, “Let the Name of the Lord be Praised.”

Prior to the preached word, Episcopal Supervisor Carolyn Brailsford led the Sixth Episcopal District Choir in singing “I Trust in God.” This song truly prepared hearts and mind for the word.

Bishop Jackson introduced Bishop Ronnie E. Brailsford as the speaker, prior to the choir singing the two beautiful and soul stirring sermon selections.

Bishop Brailsford’s sermon title was “In Times Like These.” His three points were:

1. We must be on our guard...to stay actively engaged, must not be complacent. The USA is on fire and burning. There is spiritual wickedness in High places. Wake Up!!!!
2. We must stand firm in the faith. Trust in God. God is Big – Be close!!!
3. We must be courageous and strong!!! The witnesses in the Bible who were courageous and strong: Joseph, Joshua, Esther, David, Ruth, Mordecai, Peter, Saul, and Richard Allen.

Bishop Brailsford asked a question, “are we going to be thermometers that only measure the temperature or thermostats that set the temperature?”

He concluded his sermon with “Another season is coming.” There is a savior, Jesus Christ!!

The communion service was led by Retired Bishop Adam J. Richardson, and we all took the communion together as family.

The opening worship service set the tone for the rest of the week.

To God Be the Glory!!!!

Submitted by:

Cheryl Shannon

2<sup>nd</sup> District Delegate

Virginia Conference

## Report for Wednesday, July 9, 2025

### Janice Murray, Washington Conference

#### OPENING

The meeting was opened by President Makiti. Several reports were moved around in order to accommodate the schedule of the Plenary speaker, Ms. Stacey Abrams, American politician, lawyer, and voting rights activist who was introduced by Bishop Reginald T. Davis.

#### PLENARY SPEAKER

Beginning with an introduction that described how the United States is a living dichotomy, that is, we believe in liberty, yet embraced slavery; we're supposed to be a democracy, but we're falling into an autocracy. Ms. Abrams gave a profound message which warned of the 10 Steps to Autocracy, stating, "Autocracy doesn't just happen elsewhere. It can happen here." The 10 steps are:

1. **Win the Election** – "The pathway to autocracy starts at the ballot box," Abrams said. Authoritarians often rise to power legitimately—at first.
2. **Expansion of Executive Power** – After taking office, power begins to centralize. Checks and balances get overridden or ignored.
3. **Weaken the Legislature and Neuter the Judiciary** – Abrams warned of leaders who undercut oversight bodies and judicial independence to eliminate opposition.
4. **Fire Those Who Know How It Works** – Bureaucrats, civil servants, and institutional veterans are pushed out—those who might uphold the rules.
5. **Replace Them with Loyalists** – Competence is sidelined in favor of allegiance. Systems are reshaped to serve power, not people.
6. **Change How We Communicate** – This includes "attacking the media and spreading propaganda." The goal is to distort reality, confuse the public, and suppress dissent.

7. **Blame Someone** – Autocrats deflect responsibility by targeting scapegoats—immigrants, minorities, or political opponents. “It’s easy to fall for a flim-flam artist when you’re scared and someone gives you an enemy,” Abrams said.
8. **Eliminate Those Who Help Others** – From civil rights groups to legal aid programs, institutions that empower marginalized communities are cut off or discredited.
9. **Promote Private Violence** – Vigilante groups, political intimidation, and the passive tolerance of hate-fueled violence help suppress opposition without direct government action.
10. **No New Elections** – Finally, when all dissent is crushed, the system that brought them to power is discarded. Abrams warned: “That’s when it’s too late.”

Her ultimate message: This is not the time to retreat. It is the time to resist. Democracy is not self-sustaining. It must be defended—deliberately, actively, and urgently.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Following Ms. Abrams, Sis. Marie Johns and Sis. Robbyn Hopewell gave an overview of the Strategic Planning initiative, culminating in advise on how to create a strategic plan for a Lay Organization for successful succession planning.

## TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Sis. Chenay Saunders gave a report from the Technology Committee. In summary:

The Technology Committee played a critical role in enhancing the digital infrastructure of the Connectional Lay Organization (CLO) during the 2023–2025 term. The committee supported all Executive Board meetings (virtual and hybrid), streamlined communication, standardized data/report formats, and introduced a mobile app for the 2025 Biennial Session to improve attendee access to schedules, reports, and updates.

## **Key Achievements:**

- Provided consistent tech support for biannual Executive Board meetings.
- Introduced digital tools like polling, document sharing, and Q&A to improve engagement.
- Standardized data/reporting processes for clarity and accessibility.
- Launched and maintained a mobile app for the 2025 Biennial Session.
- Offered technical advising across CLO committees and leadership.

## **Challenges & Recommendations:**

- Addressed digital literacy gaps with a need for more training and onboarding.
- Faced issues with inconsistent internet access and limited technical resources.
- Recommended future improvements including enhanced digital training, greater collaboration with district tech leads, and stronger promotion of digital tools.

We were soon adjourned, after voting for other reports to be given the next day.

## **GALA**

**The Gala – A Night on Auburn Street Hosted by Mr. Palmer Williams of Tyler Perry’s “Meet the Browns” – Scholarship Winners**

## **Biennial Awards Gala**

### **Award Winners:**

#### **Outstanding Layperson**

Thelma Kennedy Malveaux – 10th District

#### **Outstanding Young Adult**

Raven Gainous – 11th District

## **Exemplary District Award**

Seventh Episcopal District

**1st Runner Up** – 19th District

**2nd Runner Up** – 6th District

## **Scholarship Winners:**

### **Jayme Coleman Williams Scholarship**

Jayla Nunnery – 6th District

### **Joseph C McKinney Scholarship**

Jada Camille Dyer – 3rd District

### **J. D. Williams Scholarship**

Tremaine Julian Marshall – 5th District

## **\*\*ISSUES FACING THE CHURCH AND NATION**

\*\*This report was given the next day. However, since I was on the “Issues Facing the Church and Nation” Committee, the report from that committee is as follows:

### **Key Issues and Recommendations**

#### **Church-Focused Issues**

##### **1. Youth and Young Adults\***

Identified Challenges:

- Generational gaps in communication and technology usage
- Inadequate succession planning for leadership positions
- Limited mentorship opportunities and training programs
- Poor retention rates among youth and young adults
- Lack of empathy for youth and young adults with regards to the unique pressures of today’s society.
- Gatekeeping resources that limit young adult engagement

#### **Recommendations:**

- Implement comprehensive technology integration in worship and communication

- Develop structured succession planning protocols
- Establish formal mentorship programs pairing experienced leaders with young adults
- Create retention strategies that acknowledge young adults' diverse life commitments
- Eliminate gatekeeping practices and promote resource sharing (Make room or make excuses)

## **2. Silence of the Lay**

### Identified Challenges:

- Pervasive fear of speaking out on sensitive church issues
- Limited empowerment of laity to voice concerns
- Insufficient understanding of church doctrine and discipline
- Culture where voluntary silence enables problematic behaviors

### **Recommendations:**

- Implement “Doctrine and Discipline 101” education programs
- Create safe channels for laity to express concerns without fear of retaliation
- Establish clear accountability mechanisms for leadership
- Promote the principle that “volunteered silence equals giving consent”—

### Strengthen the voice of the Laity

## **3. Accountability\***

### Identified Challenges:

- Erosion of trust due to lack of transparency
- Inadequate checks and balances in financial management
- Budget allocations not aligned with actual membership or geographical needs creating financial strain affecting church operations

### Recommendations:

- Conduct comprehensive budget analysis to align with membership and location
- Develop legislation to support research-based budget decisions
- Establish robust checks and balances for fiscal oversight
- Polity Compliance Training (learning to utilize established checks and balances as outlined in the Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church)

## **Nation(s)-Focused Issues**

## **4. Intentional Global Development\***

### Identified Challenges:

- Significant disparities in income, employment, and cost of living
- Limited awareness of global economic trends affecting congregations
- Insufficient resources for skill development and technical training

Recommendations:

- Develop “Brother and Sisters Keeper” initiatives addressing economic disparities (i.e. health care, gainful employment, establish partnerships for economic empowerment etc.)
- Monitor and respond to global economic trends affecting church communities
- Create programs providing resources and technical skills training

## **5. Political Distrust**

Identified Challenges:

- Widespread political distrust affecting community engagement
- Disconnection between internal church components and external civic participation
- Limited civic education and voter engagement
- Insufficient dialogue on current social issues

Recommendations:

- Strengthen connections between all AME Church components regarding civic engagement (WMS, LAY, RAYAC, YPD etc.)
- Implement “Civics Training 101” and voter education programs and initiatives
- Encourage local churches to become polling precincts to increase civic participation and community engagement
- Facilitate relevant conversations on current social issues, both global and local

## **6. Behavioral and Ethical Standards**

Identified Challenges:

- Incidents of abuse and violence requiring systematic response
- Lack of universal conduct standards for online and in-person interactions
- Need for inclusive language and sensitivity to diverse needs
- Gender-based violence concerns

Recommendations:

- Adopt universal code of conduct covering both online and in-person interactions
- Encourage usage of gender-neutral language
- Adopt comprehensive policies addressing gender-based violence

## **Final Recommendation**

The committee recommends establishing this group as an ad-hoc committee to continue the vital work of informing the Church about various issues affecting all members of the Lay Organization. This ongoing committee structure will ensure sustained attention to these critical issues and provide regular updates to church leadership.

## **Conclusion**

The issues identified in this report require prayerful and sustained attention from church leadership at all levels. The recommendations presented provide a pathway to begin addressing these challenges while strengthening the AME Church's mission and effectiveness in serving both its members and the broader community.

The committee stands ready to continue the work of identifying and addressing emerging issues facing the Church and the nation(s).

This report represents the collective work and recommendations of the Committee on Issues Facing the Church and the Nation(s), as presented at the 39<sup>th</sup> Biennial of the Connectional Lay Organization. (the asterisk "\*" denotes the three most significant issues per the objective of the committee).



TO: President Penny Oliver, Director of Lay Activities D. Faye Conley, Young Adult Representative Adam Johnston, Conference Presidents, Officers and Members Of the Second Episcopal District Lay Organization

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as a District Delegate for the 39<sup>th</sup> Connectional Lay Biennial of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Thank you also to the Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization, President Barbara Myers, for electing me to serve in this position. In addition, I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with the registration process at the site of the convention as I was allowed to do so.

On **Thursday, July 10**, personal devotion, wellness preparation for the day began at 6:00 a.m. The plan was to meet six new people. How many of us did?

The morning devotional message was done by the Reverend Dontavius Sanders, of St. James A.M.E. Church, Bartow, Florida. Rev. Sanders has been within our Western North Carolina Conference area attending Duke University.

Plenary session 4, was called to order by President Makiti. The agenda had been corrected at the first business session to include a report from the Credentials Committee; however, that was not needed.

Sister D. Faye Conley, the SEDLO Director of Lay Activities, a member of the Washington Conference, was appointed and served as the Connectional Lay Organization Credentials Committee chairperson. Many times, we take these things for granted and we fail to fully realize the work that is involved, and we do not even say thank you. Yes, she is my sister and we thank her and commend her for the work she did and how well she represented the Second Episcopal District Lay Organization. Thank you, President Penny Oliver for recommending the appointment and all other appointments made to persons who served for the Connectional Lay Organization.

An offering of more than \$20,000.00 was taken for candidate, who is running for the House of Representatives in Florida. Thank you, AME V-Alert, Sister Jacqueline Dupont Walker, chairperson.

## **Emanuel 9 – Ten Years and Beyond – Keith Britton, Darlene Ravenel and the Seventh District**

The Seventh Episcopal District presented a memorial for the Emanuel 9. Though there is still grief we must gather to show God and the world how to move forward. Allen University created space for nine bronze bust monuments of the Emanuel 9. This was done as a commitment to remember their lives and their legacy for years to come.

Mother Emanuel AME Church, located downtown Charleston, South Carolina was the scene of a tragic shooting ten years ago, June 17, 2015. Nine brothers and sisters were shot in cold blood while attending Bible study. The perpetrator sought to start a race war; however, it has been racial reconciliation...a place to unite our Country.

The nine included: Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney; Rev. Sharonda Coleman Singleton; Cynthia Hurd; Susie Jackson; Ethel Lance; Rev. DePayne Middleton; Tywanza Sanders; Rev. Daniel Simmons, Sr. and Myra Thompson.

Ms. Rose Simmons has produced a movie about the life of the Rev. Daniel Simmons, Sr., “One Last Breath” – The Daniel Simmons Story.

### **Know Your Church**

Dr. John Thomas, III, General Officer elected by the General Conference to serve. In 1984, Dr. Jayme Coleman Williams was the first female to be elected as general officer. Dr. Paulette Coleman was elected and served 1992-2000.

Dr. Thomas, Editor of the Christian Recorder stated that the Disciplines will be ready for distribution by the end of the month. The Christian Recorder is the oldest newspaper published about our Church.

Dr. Thomas recognized the Second Episcopal District for the 100 subscriptions were solicited for the Christian Recorder, which is an investment in the legacy of the A.M.E. Church. The third vice presidents on all levels were a part of the committee, SEDLO Third Vice-President, Rose Brabble, and General Chair, Western North Carolina Conference Lay Organization President Barbara Myers are to be commended for the work that was done to achieve this accomplishment. The only District to participate so far was awarded \$500.00, presented to President Oliver.

Rev. Dr. Jamal Bryant, Pastor, New Birth Missionary Baptist Church was the plenary speaker for this day. Dr. Bryant used Psalm 23:5 as his text. “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies, You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”

The son of Bishop John Bryant and the grandson of Bishop Harrison Bryant, Dr. Bryant talked about the accomplishments of the Target boycott or Target fast. They have lost 12

billion dollars in revenue; shares have dropped from \$145 to \$93 per share; 42% salary decrease in salary for CEO.

Recognition was made again for the 99 year-old lady who, was a candidate for Lay Person of the Year and attended the Banquet on last evening. She still lives by herself and also drives.

The Learning Labs were conducted after the lunch break.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to serve.

Jacqueline C. Kanipe, District Delegate, WNCC Lay Organization

**Friday, July 11, 2025**

Conclusion of the 39th Biennial Convention of the Connectional Lay Organization:

The AME V-Alert Resolution was adopted unanimously.

The Resolution Committee presented the Resolution for the 39<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention, and it was accepted without objection.

The Committee for the 40th Biennial, representing the 19th District, announced that the next convention will be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from August 8–11, 2027, at the Sandton Sun Hotel. Attendees were shown an informative video regarding the event.

A Memorial Service was conducted, during which the names of Bishops, Supervisors, and registered laity who have passed since the last Biennial Convention were read aloud. In his closing remarks, President Makiti recognized Sis. Mary Mootoo from the 1st Episcopal District, presenting her with a certificate for eight years of exemplary service as Chair of the Time and Place Committee. Additionally, President Makiti honored Clara Fultz of the 8th Episcopal District, who is 99 years old. He extended his gratitude to all officers, committee chairs, and attendees whose efforts contributed to a successful Biennial Convention.

It was recommended that “We Speak Magazine” become a regular periodical. After discussion, this matter was referred to the Executive Board for further consideration. Commission Chair Bishop Ronnie Brailsford officiated the installation of new officers. Following the ceremony, Bishop Brailsford introduced Bishop Gregory Eason of the 20th Episcopal District, who delivered an inspiring closing meditation entitled “Arise, let us go hence,” based on St. John chapter 31.

Respectfully submitted,  
Arlene Lawson  
District Delegate  
North Carolina Conference Lay Organization

