

Volume 7 - #2 September 2015 This newsletter and additional pictures can also be viewed at www.philadelphiaconferencelay.org

Anita Hanna Matthews, Editor - Director of Public Relations

### **Greetings from the Philadelphia Conference Lay President**

Sister Cheryl Hammond Hopewell



We have come out of a great conference year. In 2014-2015 we had meaningful meetings, informative workshops, a wonderful Awards Luncheon, a dynamic Retreat, a great Christmas fellowship, a successful Education Service, and an exciting and spiritfilled lay night with our own, Brother Walter C. Jeffers as our speaker.

At the annual meeting, we also awarded four young persons with the Cheryl Hammond Hopewell Lay Scholarship in the amount of \$500 each. In February, many of us traveled to the First District Lay Mid-Year Meeting in Newark, NJ, in July to the Annual Meeting in Wilmington, DE and in August, to the Connectional Lay Biennial in Charleston, SC. What an exciting year!

As I begin my last conference year as Philadelphia Conference Lay President, we look forward to another superb year. As I have done for seven years now, I promise that I will continue to represent you in every way possible. In doing this I will travel across the conference, district and connection to attend lay days, lay night services,

meetings, luncheons, programs, and speaking engagements, to represent you in every way that will continue to uphold this organization to the highest possible standards.

The Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization is alive and well and has done great and exciting things, but we're not done yet. We continue to be committed to teaching, training, and evangelizing so we can have informed laity who will be better Christians, better leaders, and in turn, better lay who work in all areas of their local churches and beyond. We are laity serving in various positions of leadership as committed workers putting God first in all we do. It is a privilege and honor to represent the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization.

Also, I continue to serve as Finance Chairperson for the First District Lay Organization, on the Scholarship Committee for the First District Lay, on the First Episcopal District Self-Help Board, as a Philadelphia Conference Trustee and on the Payne Theological Seminary Board. I am honored to serve in all of these capacities. For the General Conference, I am serving on the Commemorative Journal Committee and co-chairing the Connectional Lay Breakfast at the General Conference. The work continues and it's all divine.

We thank Bishop Gregory G. M. Ingram and the Reverend Dr. Jessica Kendall Ingram for their leadership and vision. We thank Dr. Willie C. Glover for the way he leads the Connectional Lay Organization and we thank Mrs. Mary Mootoo for her leadership of the First District Lay Organization. We truly believe that to be successful, lay and clergy must work together. I have stood on this since becoming president seven years ago and that has not and will not change for me. "We can do all things through Christ who gives us strength" as we continue to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus". God has been good, and it does not yet appear as to the great things that lie ahead. With God all things are possible. I thank all of you for your love and support.

#### PHILADELPHIA CONFERENCE LAY ORGANIZATION OFFICERS **Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, President**

Gilroy Reid, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Marion G. Bolton, Recording Secretary Fern Wesley, Treasurer Cynthia Douse, Historiographer

Hosea Jackson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Valerie O. Ward, Asst. Recording Secretary Wanda Ringgold, Corresponding Secretary

Andree Turner, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President

Anna M. Cobb, Financial Secretary Henry Murray, Parliamentarian

Mamie Price, Chaplain Shirley Moore-Harris, Director of Lay Activities

Anita Hanna Matthews, Director of Public Relations

Earl Knight, III, Young Adult Representative

**Walter Jeffers, Connectional Director of Public Relations** 

The Right Reverend Gregory G. M. Ingram, Presiding Prelate - The Reverend Dr. Jessica K. Ingram, Episcopal Supervisor The First Episcopal District - African Methodist Episcopal Church

(1)

# ST. JAMES AME CHURCH CHAMBERSBURG, PA (Harrisburg District)

HOSTS "CLUSTER" LAY AWARENESS WORKSHOP

Reverend Roger Wilmer, Jr. Pastor

by: Anita Hanna Matthews Harrisburg District Lay Liaison Photos: Courtesy of Pastor Roger Wilmer, Jr.

#### SISTER MARGARET MILLER, WORKSHOP PRESENTER



#### Saturday, July 11, 2015

Neither distance nor Saturday morning traffic, neither unfamiliar towns nor the cost of gasoline could keep Sister Margaret Miller (Mt. Pisgah AMEC Philadelphia) of the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization(PCLO) Membership Committee from keeping her commitment of coming to the Harrisburg District. She was accompanied by Sis. Shirley Moore-Harris, (Mt. Pisgah AMEC, Phila.) PCLO Director of Lay Activities, and Bro. James Lake, (Jones Tabernacle AMEC, Phila.) PCLO Advisor.

These three loyal laymen soldiers

traveled the 350+mile-rountrip to present an awe-inspiring Lay Workshop to the members of **St. James AME**, **Chambersburg**; (Rev. Roger Wilmer, Jr.,

Front: Bro. James Lake
Back: Sis. Shirley Moore-Harris

Pastor); St. Paul AME, Waynesboro (Rev. Gwendolyn Bell, Pastor); Bethel AME, McConnellsburg (Rev. Dr. Diane Jefferson, Pastor); Bethel AME, Mercersburg (Rev. Cheryl Wilmer, Pastor); and St. Peters AME, Shippensburg (Rev. Walter Reed, Pastor).

These five churches are "clustered" in the South Central region of the Harrisburg District close to the Maryland border --- consisting of a unique region of towns and boroughs which I call "the beautiful valley" because this area provides a plethora of historic A.M.E. legacies and landmarks; prestigious colleges; fertile farmland; Civil War and French & Indian War histories; beautiful country side, a panoramic view of Mother Nature at her best, and is inhabited by some of the most friendiest people and quaint communities in the state of Pennsylvania -- where the North meets the South.

And, thanks be to God, it was a beautiful day to travel, because you can just imagine how early the journey began in order to arrive in Chambersburg by 11:00 a.m. The journey began in Sicklerville, N.J. – onward to Philadelphia -traveling on highways, through rural areas and in between -- and then traveling safely back home again—giving all honor and glory to God each mile of the way.

The Workshop presented by Sister Margaret Miller was great and was designed to give a deeper insight into organizing local lay organizations in this region. She provided the benefits, objectives, and purposes of having a local Lay Organization, stressing that informed laity is a great asset in local churches and will most certainly promote unity and harmony among clergy and laity. Also, once your local lay organization is established, she stressed the importance of the connection between local lay organizations and the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization.

Although I have been an active member of the organized Lay at my local church (Monumental AME, Steelton) having participated with the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization for 28 years, I was nevertheless also impressed and very pleased by the way Sister Margaret presented and disseminated so much essential information. She was well prepared. To add to her presentation, Sister Shirley Moore-Harris and Brother James Lake also interjected information that was fundamental and enlightening as well. Between the three of them, they "left no stones unturned".

At least 25 lay persons attended, as well as the Harrisburg District Presiding Elder Lawrence C. Henryhand who remarked that he was grateful for those who traveled so far to encourage the churches in his district to organize and to interact with the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization. The Reverend Wilmer Rogers, Jr., host pastor, also extended his gratitude and thanks for this superb workshop and for the information that was provided to the laity. (2)

# Continued: ST. JAMES AME CHURCH CHAMBERSBURG, PA (Harrisburg District) "Cluster" Lay Awareness Workhop- July 11, 2015 By: Anita Hanna Matthews, Harrisburg District Lay Liaison Photos: Courtesy of Pastor Roger Wilmer, Jr.

Reverend Gwendolyn Bell and Reverend Dr. Diane Jefferson were in attendance as well and were very pleased that the members of their churches had the opportunity to hear what it takes to "join in the march" with the Lay Organizations of the Harrisburg District and the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization.

Following the informative workshop we were invited into the Social Hall to dine on a delicious meal which included delicious pasta shells stuffed with either cheese or hamburger (layered with a cheese/tomato sauce); a crispy leafly-green salad; rolls, ice tea, and a refreshing fruit cup of watermellon & blueberries. It was most certainly a delicious summer lunch. **KUDOS** to the "Kulinary Krew" led by Evangelist Joanne Anderson (St. James AME, Chambersburg) for their generous hospitality of delicious food and wonderful accommodations.

I, too, was especially grateful for the workshop, the Presenter Sister Margaret, along with Sis. Shirley Moore-Harris and Bro. James Lake, who each gave an optimistic boost to the laity of the "beautiful valley" in the Harrisburg District.

My driver for the day was one of my daughters, Mrs. Candy DeJesus-Valera, accompanied by her son, Alejandro "Tico" Valera, who quickly bonded with Sis. Tammy Tuck's grandson of St. Peters AME, Shippensburg. These two little guys entertained themselves with action figures while we attended the workshop. They, too, enjoyed the fellowship.

Also, I extend my **THANKS** to host Presiding Elder Lawrence C. Henryhand, to host Pastor Rev. Roger Wilmer, Jr. and to the pastors who attended or sent members to participate;.....and, .....an informative and great time was had by all.

#### **Harrisburg District Presiding Elder**

#### The Reverend Lawrence C. Henryhand



**Workshop Attendees** 





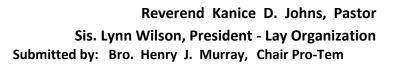
**Workshop Attendees** 

Fellowship in the Social Hall



### MT. ZION AME CHURCH

Norristown, Pennsylvania





**Sat., June 6, 2015** The officers and members of Mt. Zion AME Church, Norristown were blessed to have a beautiful morning to celebrate their **45**<sup>th</sup> **Annual Lay Day** and Fellowship Breakfast. It was a pleasant site to see every local member involved to ensure a successful event.

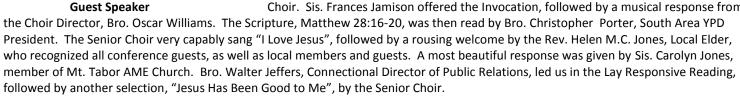
The service began with the introduction of our Worship Leader, Sis.

Shirley Moore-Harris, PCLO Director of Lay Activities and President of the

Mt. Pisgah Lay Organization by Bro. Henry Murray. Sis. Harris began with a spirit-filled greeting and proceeded beautifully throughout the program.

Sis. Harris lined the appearing Hymn, "Come, Wo That Love The Lord", lod by the Serier.

Sis. Harris lined the opening Hymn, "Come, We That Love The Lord", led by the Senior Choir. Sis. Frances Jamison offered the Invocation, followed by a musical response from



After a delicious breakfast served by the kitchen staff and servers, the Rev. Stephen Michael Lewis, pastor of Bethel AME Church, Freeport, NY, introduced the speaker of the hour. Rev. Lewis began his introduction by stating that he has known our guest speaker since conception, and proceeded to describe a little premature baby who has grown into an outstanding young man. Rev. Lewis proudly presented his son, Bro. Sean Michael Lewis, as our "preacher", not speaker of the hour. Rev. Lewis further stated that Bro. Sean will be preaching his trial sermon in a few months.

Following another rousing song "Be Blessed" by the Senior Choir, Bro. Lewis used the scriptures of our Connectional Lay Theme and 'preached' on the subject "It's Time to Work". He made three points from the Scripture and, emphasizing on Verse 20, he challenged everyone to work as God commanded and He will be with us. It was truly an outstanding and inspiring message.

In the absence of our pastor, the Rev. Kanice D. Johns, the Invitation to Christian Discipleship and Prayer of Rededication was extended by the Rev. Wilberta C. Jackson, Local Elder. Following the Offering, Bro. Andree Turner, PCLO 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, extended the Invitation to join the Local Lay Organization and we received two new members, Sis. Zina Mack-Porter and Sis. Christina Williams.

Remarks were given by Bro. Henry Murray, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Mt. Zion Lay Organization, on behalf of Mt. Zion's Lay President Sis. Lynn Wilson; Remarks were also given by Sis. Cheryl Hammond-Hopewell, PCLO President and by Rev. Jackson. The singing of the Lay Benediction was led by Sis. Juanita Bryant, President of Mt. Tabor Lay Organization.



**Bro. Sean Michael Lewis** 

L.-R.: Sis. Shirley Moore-Harris, PCLO Director of Lay Activities; Bro. Henry Murray, Mt. Zion AMEC Lay Organization; Guest Speaker Bro. Sean Michael Lewis, St. Matthew AMEC; the father of Guest Speaker the Rev. Stephen Michael Lewis, the Pastor of Bethel AME., Freeport, N.Y; and Sis. Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, President-Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization.

(4)

# BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH

330 W. WINDSOR STREET - READING, PA

REV. ALBERTA JONES, PASTOR

### ANNUAL LAY DAY

Submitted by: Mildred E. Gilyard, Local Lay President

The Bethel AME Church Lay Organization, Reading, PA, is grateful to God for allowing us to observe another Annual Lay Day that was held on Sunday July 12, 2015.

We appreciated all of our conference guests who shared this special day with our Bethel Church family.

Our pastor, Rev. Alberta Jones, is to be commended for all she did to help make the day successful.

The worship Leader was Bro. Andree Turner, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President of PCLO and a member of Campbell AMEC, Frankfort, PA. After the singing of the Lay Hymn, Bro. Ed Lovelace, Lay President of Bethel, Bristol, offered a very fervent prayer. We were then blessed with the melodious voices of Bethel's Youth/ Young Adult Choir who ministered in music throughout the High Worship Service.



**L.R.** Lay Presidents Anita Hanna Matthews, Monumental AME, Steelton; Anna M. Cobb, Bethel AME, Hbg.; Mildred Gilyard, Bethel AME, Reading; Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization President; the Rev. Alberta Jones, host Pastor; guest Lay Organization members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Episcopal District Lay Org.; and members of the Phila. Conference Lay Organization

Sis. Anita Hanna Matthews, Monumental, Steelton, read the scripture which was taken from Matthew 28: 16-20. The service continued with the Summary of the Decalogue led by Sis. Alice Johnson, Bethel, Reading. Bro. Andrew Moore, Bethel Reading's Lay Vice President, proudly welcomed our visitors and Bro. Calvin Cobb, Bethel, Harrisburg, responded profoundly. Everyone participated in the offerings which were collected by our officers and Sisters Dolores Booker, Volda Liggs, Marjorie Klee and Eileen Haynes. Our own Bro. Van Gilyard (Bethel, Reading) led the congregation in the Lay Litany.

Pastor Jones encouraged everyone to bring their concerns to the altar and then she blessed them with a powerful prayer.

The Divine Inspirations Liturgical Dancers of Bethel, led by Taylor Golden, assisted by Jhiani Gilyard and Eileen Haynes, Haynes blessed us through their liturgical dance ministry.

Sister Gloristiene Neal-Nick, Local Lay President, Ebenezer AME Church, Galesville, MD, proudly introduced the



Bro. Justin Nick, Licentiate, Guest Speaker

Speaker, her son, Bro. Justin Nick, Licentiate who is also a member of Ebenezer, Galesville, MD. Bro. Nick worships with Bethel while attending Albright College, Reading, PA.

Bro. Justin preached from the Lay Theme "Laity Fulfilling the Great Commission." We were elated that laity of the Second Episcopal District celebrated with us.

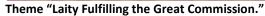
Bro. Justin stated; "If laity are to fulfill the Great Commission, they must spread the good news about Jesus. Do not accept any bribery that would cause you to shut up. God gave the assignment to go and make disciples therefore, there must be a connection with the worshippers. God can use you even when you think you are not worthy. God saved "you" because somebody needs "you".

He reminded us "to make sure that we call on the right name ("Jesus"). We must walk with Him and talk with Him constantly. Calling on the name of Jesus will calm all fear and doubt. The name of Jesus comes as a comfort, because Jesus said, "I will be with you always even 'till the end of time."

# Bethel A.M.E. Church - 330 W. Windsor Street, Reading, PA ANNUAL LAY DAY

Submitted by: Mildred E. Gilyard, Local Lay President







Center: Bro. Justin Nick and his mother, Sis. Geraldine Neal-Nick; Far left-Sis. Mildred Gilyard; family members of Bro. Nick from the 2nd Episcopal District

After Bro. Justin preached the Word with power, non-church members were encouraged to join the church. Bro. Gilroy Reid, First Vice President of the PCLO and a member of Waters Memorial AME Church, extended an invitation for others to join the Lay Organization. Bro. Isaiah Gilyard, youth member, led the congregation in the Apostle's Creed. We concluded our service with the singing of the Lay Benediction that was played by our pianist, Bro. Jermaine Edwards.

The members of Bethel's Lay Organization thank God for His goodness and blessings. We are truly grateful to Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization President and other guests from the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization who worshipped with us during our Annual Lay Day/Homecoming 2015.

#### ALL GLORY BELONGS TO GOD.

The Bethel AME Church Lay Organization, Reading, PA,

is grateful to God for allowing us to observe another Annual Lay Day that was held on Sunday, July 12, 2015.

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#### **HEADLINES AND DEADLINES**

The next publication of "OUR VOICES" newsetter will be published in December 2015.

Please e-mail all news articles and pictures to: <u>anitamatt@verizon.net</u>

All information you wish to be published must be received by the editor by November 15, 2015.

PLEASE NOTE: The editor reserves the right to publish and/or edit articles when deemed necessary.

Anita Hanna Matthews, Editor - Director of Public Relations - PCLO

## Philadelphia Conference Lay President Speaks at ASBURY A.M.E. CHURCH, CHESTER, PA

#### ANNUAL LAY DAY

Submitted by: **Gwendolyn Burnett** Mt. Pisgah AME Church

**Guest Speaker** Philadelphia Conference Lay President Cheryl Hammond Hopewell

On Sunday, July 19, 2015, Philadelphia Conference Lay President, Sister Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, was the speaker for the Lay Day at Asbury AME Church in Chester, PA. where the Reverend Dr. Stanley G. Smith is the pastor and Mrs. Wanda Smith is the First Lady. Sister Cheryl truly blessed us as she delivered the lay message Connectional Lay Theme,



"Laity Fulfilling the Great Commission". The scripture text used was St. Matthew 28:16-20 and St. Matthew 9:37-38. Her subject used was "There Is Still More Work To Be Done". She expressed the key importance of being positive about the work and how we must train others to use their abilities which are granted by God. Sister Cheryl pointed out that Lay ministry should include our efforts, such as,:

- 1. We need to pray that God will send some true willing workers. If God didn't send them, you may not want them.
- 2. We must be positive about the work. Teach and train others to use their abilities granted by God.
- 3. Keep alive the vision of Richard Allen. Encourage others to participate in the general operations of the church.
- 4. Do the work well and God will lead you into a better place. Be faithful with a little and God will grant you a lot. Work continually in unity and harmony.

The message she delivered gave much insight and directions for empowering the laity of the church. We can use this empowerment as guidance while we strive to fulfill the Great Commission given by Jesus.



L-R. Bro. Irvin Hopewell and Guest Speaker Sis. Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, President Phila. Conference Lay Org.;

**Center:** First Lady Mrs. Wanda & the Reverend Dr. Stanley Smith, Host Pastor-Asbury AME; the Reverend Jay Broadnax, Pastor-Mt. Pisgah AME Church, Phila.; Bro. Martin Drew, President of the Delaware Conference Lay Organization





Front Row: Mrs. Claudie Hammond, mother of Guest Speaker L.R. Sis. Gwendolyn Burnett, and Mr. & Mrs. Irvin Hopewell

L.R. Mr. & Mrs. Irvin Hopewell (Mt. Pisgah AME, Phila.); the Reverend Jay Broadnax (Pastor, Mt. Pishah AME, Phila); Bro. Martin Drew (Bethel AME, Wilmington, Dela)

## DISNEY-RUFFIN NICHOLS AME CHURCH

2838 Tulip Street - Philadelphia, PA 19134

Rev. Jacqueline Capers, Pastor Brother Elwood Clark, Lay President

#### **DISNEY-NICHOLS HOLDS ITS INAUGURAL LAY DAY**

Submitted by Walter C. Jeffers Director of Public Relations, CLO

On Sunday, April 19, 2015, the recently combined new church congregation of Disney-Nichols held its inaugural lay day. The pastor is the Rev. Jacqueline Capers, the lay president is Brother Elwood Clark, and the speaker for the hour was the Philadelphia Conference Lay President, Sister Cheryl Hammond Hopewell. Other visitors that day included Connectional Lay Director of Public Relations, Brother Walter C. Jeffers, Philadelphia Conference Lay Third Vice President, Brother Andree



Phila. Conference Lay Organization President, Cheryl Hammond Hopewell

Turner as well as the family of the speaker; inclusive of her husband, Brother Irvin Hopewell; her mother, Mrs. Claudie C. Hammond, her sister, Ms. Pamela Hammond. The Holy Spirit was truly in that place. The music was wonderful, the congregants were

The Holy Spirit was truly in that place. The music was wonderful, the congregants were excited and worshipped with enthusiasm, and Sister Cheryl brought a powerful message.

Sister Cheryl was introduced by Rev. Capers first and then by her sister, and spoke on the subject, "YOU HAVE THE GREEN LIGHT, NOW GO"! She began by illustrating that "When we are driving and have a green light, the green light means go. Some may hesitate at the green light and take their time going, yet others may rush the green light. Either way, the green means go, but at the right time".

We were informed that "when God gives us the green light, it is time to Go. In St. Matthew the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter, which is our connectional lay scripture, we are given the Great Commission, which tells us that we are to go and make disciples of all nations. In doing that, we are to teach them to obey everything He has commanded. It then

tells us that if we do this, surely he is with us always, to the very end of the age. If we are to do God's will, we have to allow God to use us. We can't think that God can't use us. He often uses ordinary people to accomplish his purposes".

Sister Cheryl informed us that "If we are going to be ready to go when we get the green light from God, it takes all of us working together, clergy and lay". "Go" may mean one thing for you and another thing for me, but however God tell us to Go, we need to be obedient and ready to move. To make sure we have the green light, we need to take time to get closer to God. We do that through prayer, bible study, and attending church regularly. God challenges us to change our hearts, change our minds and to change our way of doing things, so we can lead a life devoted to fulfilling the Great Commission"

We all were blessed by the message and Disney-Nichols increased in church membership that day as well as lay membership. After the service, we were served a delicious lunch, so, we were fed spiritual food and physical food and Disney-Nichols were great hosts.

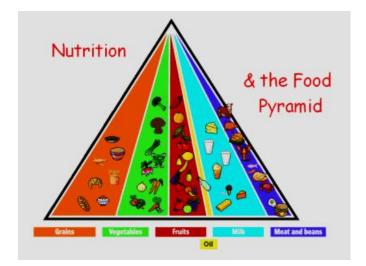
It was a wonderful day and we thank the Rev. Jacqueline Capers, Brother Elwood Clark, the Disney-Nichols family, and last but not least, the speaker, Sister Cheryl Hammond Hopewell.





## ST MATTHEW AME CHURCH

215 N. 57TH STREET - PHILADELPHIA, PA 19139 PHONE # 215.472.4784 REV. ROLAND C. MCCALL, PASTOR



Submitted by: Lillie Gorham

# Do You Want To Learn More About Living A Healthier Lifestyle?

Are you interesting in learning how you can havefun and learn how to keep your body healthy?

# You Are Welcome to Come & Join Our Nutrition Ministry









# Registration will be on September 29, at 1:30 pm

All Classes Will Be Held at: ST. MATTHEW A.M.E. CHURCH 215 N. 57th ST., PHILADELPHIA, PA

All classes held on the 2nd Tuesdays will be presented by the: Health Education Director from Lankenau Hospital

#### Listed below are the additional dates.

2015	2015	2015	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016
Oct. 13	Nov. 10	Dec. 8	Jan. 12	Feb. 9	March 8	April 12	May 10
Oct. 27	XXX	XXX	Jan 26	Feb. 23	March 22	April 26	XXX

Classes held on other dates will consist of: reading recipes, reading labels, planning menus for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, doing taste testing and preparing some recipes.

## A Light Lunch Will Be Served

**THE NUTRITION MINISTRY** strives to promote healthy and nutritious living by encouraging participants to change destructive eating habits to good eating habits since we are the Temple of God; and "in order for us to do God's work, our bodies must be healthy".

If you are interested, please call: REV. ROLAND MCCALL, PASTOR - CHURCH TELE. # 215.472.4784 YOU MAY ALSO CONTACT ME (Lillie Gorham) AT: 215.879.3790

ALL OTHER INFOROMATION WILL BE GIVEN WHEN YOU REGISTER

(9)