

- 2005 Inaugurated the Black Tie Gala, the Connectional Lay Organization's premier fundraiser, in support of the AME colleges and universities with a \$53,000 donation to Morris Brown College
- 2006 Convened Connectional Lay Empowerment Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa March 2 - 7, 2006
- 2007 Donated \$23,000 in proceeds from the Black Tie Gala to Shorter College
- 2009 Donated \$38,000 in proceeds from the Black Tie Gala to Allen University. Renamed the Black Tie Gala, the Jessie L. Burns, Jr., Black Tie Affair, in honor of its organizer. Organized India Conference Lay Organization in Chennai, India during mission and evangelization trip led by the Fourth Episcopal District. Changed from appointment to election of the Young Adult Representative (YAR) of the Connectional Lay Organization. John Thomas, III became the first elected YAR
- 2010 Rededicated and renamed the building housing the Financial Department of the AME Church, The Joseph Columbus McKinney Office Building of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

This listing of selected highlights of the accomplishments of the Connectional Lay Organization is by no means comprehensive or exhaustive. It is a work in progress by Dr. Paulette Coleman. The CLO 100 Steering Committee solicits input and further documentation to update these highlights. Special thanks to Toby and David Ward, Frank Gilyard, Pam Tilley, Tyrone Presley, J. L. Williams, Bernetta Ghist, Norman Deas, Leona Butler, David Fielding, William (Bill) Ayers, Madge White, and Dr. Dennis Dickerson for their contributions to these selected highlights of accomplishments of the Connectional Lay Organization.

Mr. Raymond R. Davis' 1977 publication, A History of the Connectional Laymen's Organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was an invaluable information source in compiling this listing of selected highlights of accomplishments.



The Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization Celebrates

The African Methodist Episcopal Church
Connectional Lay Organizational Centennial
(1912 - 2012)

Saturday, February 18, 2012

Bethel Bryn Mawr AME Church
50 South Merion Avenue
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
Reverend Carlos Bounds, Pastor

Bishop Richard F. Norris, Presiding Prelate, 1st Episcopal District
Reverend Charles H. Lett, Sr., Presiding Elder, West District

Dr. Willie C. Glover, President, Connectional Lay Organization
Sister Mary Mootoo, 1st Episcopal District President
Sister Peggy Pinder, 1st District Director of Lay Activities
Sister Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, Conference Lay President
Sister Juanita Bryant, Conference Director of Lay Activities
Brother Hosea Jackson, Local Lay President
Sister Joann Newman, Local Director of Lay Activities

African Methodist Episcopal Church Connectional Lay Organization

100 Years Timeline

- 1908 Elected Plummer Austin Richardson, a layman who became North Carolina's first black millionaire, the chief recording secretary of the general conference
- 1909 Publication by the AME Book Concern of a small eight page booklet entitled, Constitution and By-Laws of the Lay Members' Association of the AME Church, which suggests the existence of a developing lay organization
- 1912 Merger of the Laymen's Missionary League and the Laymen's Organization into the Laymen's League legislatively established the lay movement of the AME Church. Elected John R. Hawkins, the first layman to become Financial Secretary of the AME (General) Church. Re-elected Plummer Austin Richardson chief recording secretary of the general conference
- 1916 The new Laymen's League reorganized as the Connectional Lay College Laymen
- 1928 Secured equal representation of laypeople in the General Conference
- 1932 Granted the right for laypeople to serve on the Episcopal Committee
- 1936 Permanently re-established the right of laypeople to serve in equal numbers on the Episcopal Committee
- 1939 Elected a layman, Professor A. S. Jackson, Financial Secretary, AME Church
- 1940 Achieved equal representation of the laity in the Annual Conference
- 1944 Won equal representation of the laity on all departmental boards and commissions of the AME Church. Advocated successfully for the creation of the Pension Department, through the power of the increased representation of the laity
- 1946 Abolished the Lay College and organized the Connectional Laymen's Organization because it was determined that, "an organization that meets only every 4 years, composed of a constant changing membership could not do a good job of mobilizing the laity for efficient service in the Church"
- 1948 Secured the right of the laity to organize in the local churches. Enacted legislation that permitted the President of the Connectional Laymen's Organization to be a member of the General Conference by virtue of his or her official position. Integrated the Lay Organization at all levels (local churches, Annual Conferences, Episcopal Districts, and Connection) into the organic law and structure of the AME Church. Replaced the quadrennial meeting schedule with a biennial meeting schedule.
- 1949 Convened the first biennial lay convention in Chicago, IL
- 1954 Elected a layman, R. W. Mance, Financial Secretary, AME Church
- 1968 Elected a layman, Dr. A. G. Gaston, Treasurer, AME Church
Advocated successfully for the use of voting machines in elections at the General Conference
- 1969 Approved at the Eleventh Biennial Session that the second Sunday in October is the officially designated Connectional Lay Day to v be observed by all AME Churches. Sponsored the "Seminar at Sea" following the Eleventh Biennial Session that included a cruise to Bermuda.
- 1971 Sponsored the first Connectional meeting outside the continental US in Kingston, Jamaica, Sixteenth Episcopal District
- 1972 Elected a layman, Dr. Joseph C. McKinney, Treasurer, AME Church
- 1975 Elected Mrs. Leona Hubbard Butler Secretary of the Laymen's Organization, for the first time in over 30 years in keeping with the 1970s thrust toward greater women's rights
- 1983 Convened meeting of those "interested in money and finance at 18th Biennial Convention that led to the organization of the first connectional economic development program in the AME Church, the Connectional Lay Economic Development Corporation (CLEDC). Approved legislation for submission to the General Conference that designated all Episcopal District Presidents and selected officers of the Connectional Lay Organization as members of the General Conference
- 1984 Elected Dr. Jamye C. Williams, editor of the AME Church Review, the first woman elected to a major General Officer
- 1985 Adopted in the Biennial Convention rules the policy of holding the election of officers on the first business day following the organization of the Connectional Lay Biennial Convention
- 1987 Convened the first AME Church Connectional Day of Prayer in Philadelphia at the First Episcopal District headquarters
- 1982 Elected Dr. Paulette Coleman, a laywoman, editor of the AME Church Review
- 1995 Donated \$18,000 to the General Church for debt retirement. Established the J. D. Williams (late CLO President) and Jamye C. Williams (first female major General Officer) Scholarship Program. Appointed the first young adult as a member of the Connectional Lay Organization's Executive Board and provided financial support for travel to the meetings.
- 1996 Elected Mr. Richard A. Lewis, a layman, Treasurer AME Church
- 1999 Authorized AME-V Alert as an ongoing voter registration, education, and GOTV (get out the vote) initiative of the Connectional Lay Organization in preparation for the 2000 US Census Presidential elections
- 2000 Initiated Connectional HIV/AIDS Awareness Day as a special emphasis of the Connectional Lay Organization to promote education, awareness, and testing in African and African-American communities about HN/AIDS and its world-wide devastation