



Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization

OUR VOICES



February 2010
Volume 1 No 4

Quarterly Newsletter

Anita Hanna Matthews, Editor – Director of Public Relations

** Greetings from the President **

Lay Members,

On January 30, Bethel AME in Lancaster, PA held an informative meeting for pastors, component heads and other interested members of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, so we could get an update on how things are going with the Annual Conference, tour the hotel, and ask questions. The meeting was well attended with representation as follows: Host Pastor, Rev. Edward Bailey and members of Bethel, Lancaster; Presiding Elder Rev. Lawrence C. Henryhand of the Harrisburg District; pastors and ministers from the Harrisburg District, and components heads and/or their representatives from throughout the Philadelphia Conference for the Church School, YPD, Missionaries, Christian Education, and yours truly representing the Philadelphia Conference Lay Organization. Anita Hanna Matthews, Co-liasion for the Harrisburg District Lay Organizations was also in attendance.

We met at the church and then car-pooled to the Marriott Lancaster at Penn Square. We toured the Marriott, which is a beautiful hotel offering an indoor heated pool and a full fitness center. We also got to see where the worship services will be held, and the guest rooms. The accommodations are really nice. The hotel has only one restaurant but there are many eating places in walking distance of the hotel. It seems as though the rooms are booking quickly at the Marriott, so shortly Bethel, Lancaster will be giving a list of other hotels they are recommending in the area. When I get that information, I will pass on to you. The hotel group rate at the Marriott is \$120 per night and parking which is normally \$14 per day will be \$5 per day. *For reservations, you can contact the Marriott at 717-239-1600. The group rate is under the name of Bethel AME Church.* You can also contact Sister Mary Cottrell at Bethel at 717-393-8379 or bameclancaster@aol.com.

The hotel is connected to the Convention Center and today they were having a carnival/zoo with live animals, a merry-go-round, a large slide and many other activities. Looked like a lot of fun.

After touring the hotel, we went back to Bethel where they served everyone a full hot lunch "for free." We then heard from the Annual Conference chairpersons and they are soliciting our support in making this Annual Conference a success. They need help with hospitality, communication, logistics, transportation, etc. They also want as many ads as possible from churches, components, individuals and businesses. They confessed that this is the first time they have entertained an Annual Conference and solicit any support that anyone are willing to give. If you can help in any area, please let them know. This is the first time that a church in the Philadelphia Conference is hosting an Annual Conference at a hotel, so it is a new experience for our Conference. We know that NJ has done this several times.

Bethel is also planning activities other than meetings and worship. On Saturday night, they are planning a concert with CeCe Winans. This is a big undertaking for them but they are going out on faith. All who can, please support this effort.

As for Lay Night, the accommodations are fine. I asked about feeding the out-of-town guests and we are working on that. It appears that we will possibly be feeding at a United Methodist Church that is close to the Marriott. If that is the case, we will still need to figure out how we will do the food. As of now, the host church has not agreed to do the cooking. This will need to be worked out. Either way, we will be ready on Lay Night and are hoping that as many of you as possible will be in attendance for not only the opening and the closing, but on Lay Night and all week, if possible, to support the other components as well.

I have tried to sum up the day as much as possible. If you have any questions, please let me know. *Also, if you would like to be on my email distribution list, please give me your email address at your earliest opportunity.* God bless you,

Cheryl Hammond Hopewell

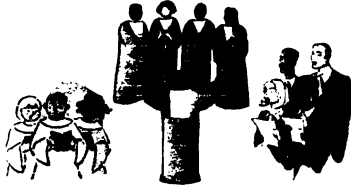
Cheryl Hammond Hopewell, President

BETHEL AMEC - BRYN MAWR

Celebrates Annual Lay Day

Featuring

"Musical Praise & Worship"



By: Anita Hanna Matthews
- Director of Public Relations

The processional consisted of the awesome Male Chorus, the versatile Church Choir, and the "angelic voices" of the talented Youth Choir who were featured in Concert as Bethel Bryn Mawr celebrated their Annual Lay Day.

The choristers were directed and accompanied by the teamwork of "*maestros prestigious*" musician and director of Bethel, who each knew the worth of synchronized, coordinated, and appropriate music for the heralded voices that sang anthems, spirit-filled spirituals, hymns and contemporary gospel.

The **Male Chorus** and **Senior Choir** rendered wonderful presentations featuring soloists with unique and distinctive voices, along with the blended voices of the choir consisting of soprano, alto, tenor and baritone voices that would be most certainly welcomed and appreciated at all churches.

The "angelic voices" of the **Youth Choir** rendered electrifying contemporary gospel with the type of energy that only the youth would possess.

Bethel AMEC Bryn Mawr is shepherded by the placid and scholarly Reverend Carlos D. Bounds; their Lay President is Bro. Hosea Jackson, who promotes the basic essentials of lay awareness. Bro. Jackson was recently awarded the recognition as Layperson of the Year for the Philadelphia Conference.

One cannot help but notice the harmony that existed throughout this fellowship as clergy and lay worked together to promote spiritual growth and fellowship from the pulpit to the door and beyond.

Conference President Cheryl Hammond Hopewell was in attendance and extended cordial greetings.

Several lay members throughout the Philadelphia Conference from near and far participated during the worship service.

Before the Concert, we all dined on a delicious meal prepared and served by the cordial chefs and hospitality committee of Bethel. This day was indeed full of blessings and presented a flexible possibility in celebrating an Annual Lay Day.

ST. JOHN AMEC - LEBANON 18th Annual Lay Day

By: Anita Hanna Matthews
- Director of Public Relations
November 8, 2009

St. John celebrated their 18th Annual Lay Day. **Guest Messenger Minister Tanya P. Parker**, of the Greater Zion Baptist Church, Hbg. brought an empowering message centered on "*Refocusing Our Ministry to Serve the Present Age*". Associate Minister Rev. Charley Mae Thomas introduced the Messenger.

Sis. Carolene White of St. John Lebanon, served as Worship Leader. Worship participants also included Sis. Patsy White, Sabrina Lampkin, Deborah Williams, Charlotte Bishop and Bros. Charles White, Sr. and Jerry Lampkin. Sis. Marla Simmons and Carol Hayes favored us with a piano and organ duet followed by a "Window Washer Mime" presentation by youth members Sarah Bishop and Leah Brockman.

January 17, 2010: *by Carol J. Hayes*
Lay President, St. John AMEC, Lebanon

St. John Lebanon strives to continue to promote lay awareness through our **ANNUAL LAY AWARENESS BRUNCH**.

Before proceeding to the lower level for the Brunch, "**Christian Symbols, Signs, and Colors**" from the Journal of Christian Education was presented and discussed. Because many in the congregation are not familiar with the sacredness and definitions of the pulpit, lectern, narthex, etc., this information was given as part of the mini workshop. Additionally, the use of the **Lay Organization "Tool Kit" (*the Bible, AME Hymnal, and Discipline*)** and the importance of prayer was emphasized.

In order to encourage/insure attendance, the occasion was purposely scheduled immediately after the morning service. Eight persons received gifts indicated by a matching number on the handout.

MONUMENTAL AMEC – STEELTON

Celebrates 23rd Annual Lay Day

By: Anita Hanna Matthews



"Rivers Of Living Water"

Conference President Cheryl Hammond Hopewell was the Guest Speaker at Monumental's Annual Lay Day, where the "not-too-long-ago-appointed-shepherd" Rev. Ronald L. Sparks, is our *spirit-filled, energetic, amenable, powerful-preaching pastor*. His lovely wife, 1st Lady Candace and children Cameron, Simone and Braeden have also enhanced our Church Family.

Although it was mid-November, the weather was perfect for our Guest Speaker to travel the 200-mile round-trip journey (from Philadelphia) to fellowship with us. She was accompanied by her supportive husband Bro. Irv Hopewell, her mother Mrs. Claudie Hammond, and a dear friend of the Hammond-Hopewell Family."

President Hopewell's profound message, entitled "**Rivers of Living Waters / Text 7:37-38** enlightened us of the multi-functions of "water" by communicating to us the following: (PARAPHRASED) *"Water is beneficial and vital for human and plant life; however, water can also be destructive by causing floods, personal injuries and damage, and spreading impurities. The average person has no idea where our source of water begins, where it's been, nor where it will end."* "However, (she went on to say) *God's Rivers of Living Waters begins and continuously flow as a pure source of blessings that can save, restore, heal, encourage peace, promote love and has the power to reach everyone. God's Rivers of Water can overcome all obstacles and we should never allow anyone to keep us separated from this sovereign source."* "It is God's intentions, for us as Lay folk, to bless others with the blessings that God provides thru His Rivers of Living Waters by giving Christ-centered service to all humankind; and in doing so, we must be ever so mindful to give God the praise."

Following this empowering message, PCLO Parliamentarian Reverdy Garrett of St. Paul AMEC, Elmwood (who also made the 200-mile round-trip on I-76 from Phila) extended the invitation to join the Lay

at which time Bro. D. Jackie Robinson and one youth, Bro. Jonathan Branch, united with our Lay

Worship Leader, Sis. Mildred Gilyard of Bethel, Reading guided us through our Service; her husband, Bro. Frank Gilyard, 1st Vice President of the PCLO extended greetings. Other guest participants included: Prayer by Sisters Anna Cobb, Bethel, Hbg; Old Testament by Patricia Awotwi, Mt. Sinai, Edgemont; New Testament by Alfreda Graves, Hbg.; the Lay Litany was led by Bro. Carl Bell, Bethel, Carlisle and Sis. Marty Stafford of Kingdom Embassy assisted with the offering. Also participating were members of Monumental; Sis. Marcie Carter, Mary Jane Davis, Audrey Clowe, Annabelle Curtis, Joyce Roach-Bradshaw, Stephanie Jackson, Brenda Barrett and Bros. James Archie and Adam Elliott.

The praiseful and versatile Super Choir members and Male Chorus, who were under the direction of "*maestros extraordinaire*" Sis. Alda Hanna-Epps, keyboard accompanist, Sis. Maxine Snow, percussionists Bros. Val Snow and Nile Howard, rendered selections that were soul stirring and set the pace for a very worshipful service.

Following the worship service guests and members dined on an abundant and delicious meal prepared by the very accommodating Culinary Committee.

Local Lay President Anita Hanna Matthews expressed her thanks to all and praised God for once again blessing us with such a **BEAUTIFUL SABBATH**, a "**GREAT MESSENGER**", a "**GREAT MESSAGE**" and for our two additional Lay members.

PLEASE FORWARD NEWS FOR "OUR VOICES"

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"GOT NEWS?"

DEADLINE: Please submit your news for the next publication by June 1, 2010

The editor reserves the right to edit all materials received and to use editorial discretion regarding printing of all materials received.

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BETHEL AMEC – ARDMORE

Presents Local Lay Member

Mr. Quinton N. Robinson, Esquire

Annual Lay Day Speaker

By: Anita Hanna Matthews

Director of Public Relations



"When Lay People Find Themselves In The Potters' House"

When you first step into the House of Worship of Bethel AMEC Ardmore, one will sense an atmosphere of spiritual reverence, expectation, and fellowship. This same type of atmosphere was prevailing in high gear when I, along with my husband Larry, arrived to join in on the celebration at Bethel's Annual Lay Day.

Under the perceptive and astute pastoral leadership of Reverend Albert Johnson and Lay President Sis. Louse Coursey, one could not help but to know that we were in for a traditional and long-established customary Annual Lay Day— one that was well planned with precision, pride, pomp and pleasure; and one that could very well continue to set a precedent for a Sunday Morning Lay Day in the Connectional AME Church.

Guest Speaker, Bro. Quinton N. Robinson, Esquire is a member of Bethel, Ardmore and serves on the Bethel's Board of Trustees. He brought a very timely and challenging Morning Message, entitled "*When Lay People Find Themselves In The Potters' House*". His texts were *Jeremiah 18:1-6* and *Galatians 6:8-10*.

In essence Bro. Robinson reminded us: (PARAPHRASED) "*Our Christian journey has steps in it that will cause us to faint. However, if the LAY faint, who's going to carry on the work of the Lord. Some of the things that will cause us to faint will be sin and disobedience. We are all like CLAY needing to be put back together again. We also faint when we fail to forgive one another. Fainting and being broken is a part of life, however, if we must faint, just remember the "POTTER" is still in*

control. He made all us for a unique purpose. Regardless of what situation we find ourselves in, we must remember, that God is still in charge of all that goes on around us and sometimes when we faint, we come back stronger and more knowledgeable. And this is all because GOD wants to use us for His purpose – which is, giving service to others."

Bro. Robinson's message invoked a deep sense of thought regarding our relationship with God as the lay of the church, as well as "*the purpose*" of a functioning Lay Organization, and the depth of our sincerity as we strive to be "*meaningful vessels*" for God and for all of God's people.

Our PCLO Conference President Cheryl Hammond Hopewell was in attendance and extended cordial greetings to Pastor Johnson, the officers of members of Bethel, the PCLO members and complimented Bro. Robinson on his significant and insightful message

During the worship service the **Bethel Jewels Youth Choir**, accompanied by "*maestro extraordinaire*" Sis. Donna Dingle presented inspiring songs that cheered our hearts, in a way that only "*cherub voices of children*" can. Our favorite was "*Father Abraham*" which included energetic and spirited animations.

The **Memorial Service Tribute**, through the Celebration of Flowers, was rendered by Guest Sis. Marian Spivey. Special recognition was directed to dearly beloved **Sis. Harriet Duckett Truman**, of the Philadelphia Conference. Sis. Truman's longevity of outstanding service to her local church and to our Conference, and to the Connectional Church was noteworthy, significant, and awe-inspiring. She served numerous times as a delegate to the General Conference and served as an elected officer of the Connectional Lay Organization of the A.M.E. Church.

Participants also included Worship Leader Heywood Vance, Peggy Pinder (*1st District Dir. of Lay Activities*), Cleo J. Gibson, Marcia Brown, Vermona L. Vance, Nichole White, Anita Coble, Shalita Hale, Janine Baggett, Estelle Summers, Pauline Jordan, Carrie Foster, Carolyn T. Kamara; and Brothers John Gadson (*3rd Vice President of PCLO*), Hosea Jackson, Reverdy Garrett (*PCLO Parliamentarian*), Robert Sudler, who introduced the Guest Speaker and Joshua Cary. After the Worship Service, we dined on a sufficient meal and delectable desserts prepared by the Culinary Staff.

1ST DISTRICT LAY MID-YEAR MEETING

Friday: Feb. 26 – Saturday: Feb. 27, 2010

Crown Plaza – Laguardia, New York

“Building on Our Global Legacy of Christ-Centered Leadership and Training”

Ephesians 4:11-13

Mark 16.15

PCLO Annual Lay Days:

Please See Local Presidents to confirm dates & times.

02/21	3:00 PM	LaMott	1501 Cheltenham Ave.	LaMott
03/13	9:00 AM	St. Matthew	57 th & Summer Sts.	Phila.
03/14	10:30 AM	Ward:	43 rd & Aspen Sts.	Phila.
03/21	11:00 AM	Mt. Zion,	1008 Center St,	Darby
03/21	3: 00 PM	Hickman Temple	5001 Baltimore Ave.	Phila
03/28	11:00 AM	St. Paul (Elmwood)	8398 Lindbergh Blvd.	Phila
03/28	3:30 PM	St. John	203 Highland Ave,	Wayne
04/11	3:30 PM	Grimes	338 Morris St.	Phoenixville
04/11	3:30 PM	Waters Memorial	609 S. Clifton St.	Phila
04/18	11:00 AM & 3:30 PM	Bethel	301 East Linden St.	Kennett Square
04.25	AM & PM	Morris Brown	25 th & Montgomery Ave.,	Phila.
05/16	10:45 AM	Jones Tabernacle	2021 W. Diamond St,	Phila.

194th Session of the Philadelphia Annual Conference

MAY 24 THROUGH MAY 30, 2010

At: THE MARRIOTT LANCASTER AT PENN SQUARE LANCASTER, PA

Hosted by: Bethel A.M.E. Church, Lancaster, PA

Reverend Edward Bailey, Host Pastor

Contact: Reverend Edward Bailey or Mary Cottrell: 1-800-510-5899

e-mail: bameclancaster@aol.com or hoskinsmaryl@aol.com

OFFICERS OF THE PHILADELPHIA CONFERENCE LAY ORGANIZATION

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