

**AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> EPISCOPAL DISTRICT**  
**LAY ORGANIZATION**  
**MID-YEAR MEETING**  
**3:00 P.M.**  
**BONNER-CAMPBELL, EDWARDS, MS**  
**March 11, 2016**

President Melvin Davis (LA Conference) called the meeting to order at about 3:20 p.m., March 11, 2016, and asked Sis. Delphine Bridgewater (CNLA Conference) to lead the devotion.

**Devotion**

Song: “Lead Me to Calvary”

Prayer in Unison

Old Testament Scripture: II Samuel 7:7-10

New Testament Scripture: Luke 24:7-11

Song: “Because He Lives”

Before official business, President Davis presented Rev. Dr. Moses Simms, candidate for Bishop 2016, and Rev. Joseph Parker, candidate for AME Publisher, to speak about their campaigns.

After greeting the members, President Melvin Davis (LA Conference) presented the agenda for adoption: Second VP Darlene Gordon (LA Conference) moved to adopt the agenda. Brother William Brown (South MS Conference) seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Recording Secretary, Shirley H. Davis (South MS Conference) called the roll.

**ROLL CALL:**

President Davis asked for the roll call of officers.

Dr. Melvin Evans, President Emeritus	A
President Melvin Davis, President	P
William M. Brown, First Vice President	P
Darlene Gordon, Second Vice President	P
Connie Brothers, Third Vice President	A
Shirley Hopkins Davis, Recording Secretary	P
Betty Holland Stephen, Asst. Rec. Secretary	A
Elna Huel, Corresponding Secretary	P
Maria Gauthier, Treasurer	P
JoEtta McClain, Financial Secretary	P
Delphine Bridgewater, Chaplain	P
Christine McGilberry, Historiographer	P
Stephanie Burks, Dir. Of Lay Activities	P
Eddie Pitts, Parliamentarian	P
Ruby W. Smith, Public Relations	A
Bobbie Hollins, Young Adult Rep.	P
<b><u>Lay Conference Presidents</u></b>	

Lydia Lacey, South MS Conference	P
Johnny M. Dumas, Jr., North MS Conference	A
Raymond Morrison, Central North LA Conference	P
<b>*Patricia W. Campbell, LA Conference</b>	<b>A</b>

*\*Maria Gauthier is new Lay President of LA Conference.*

Recording Secretary Shirley Davis (South MS Conference) read the minutes of the last Mid-year Lay meeting. President Davis reminded the group that everyone had been instructed to get the minutes from the website. Brother Eddie Pitts (North MS Conference) moved that the minutes be adopted. Sister Laurene McMillan (LA Conference) seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

President Davis summarized the year as follows:

- Lay Org. provided training
- President visited churches
- There are 158 officially organized Lay orgs. across the District.
- Question: What are we doing to improve the growth in the churches?
- There’s a need to address the departing membership across generational lines.  
A committee has addressed the issue of departing membership but will need clarity on a couple of things, and we can move forward. We will finalize the plans after our conversation with the Bishop.
- President Davis encouraged all to be a part of the upcoming convention.

The report was followed by discussion on how to engage the millennials:

- Use the Young Adult Representative.
- We need to start teaching the young people about the church.
- We have to work with the younger generation...allow them to tell you how it looks to their generation.

### **Financial Report**

Treasurer Maria Gauthier (LA Conference) presented the report of the treasury: **Balance Brought Forward - \$16,640.32; Total Deposits - \$3,591; Amount Disbursed - \$1,632.48; Balance in Treasure - \$18,598.48.** Sister JoEtta McClain (North MS Conference) moved to receive the Treasurer’s report. Sister Elna Huel (Central North LA Conference) seconded the motion. Motion carried. Financial Secretary JoEtta McClain presented the financial statement, which coincided with the balance in the Treasurer’s report. **Sister Latah Holloway (North MS Conference) questioned the fact that the Treasurer’s report and Financial report did not reflect the Balance in Treasure shown in the minutes. President Davis explained that the minutes are of the 2015 Mid-year meeting, not the previous meeting. He indicated that this was *something we might look into...presenting minutes of immediate previous meeting.***

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Membership Drive: Brother William Brown reported on the membership drive:  
CNLA – 12; Alexandria-Thib. – 8; Shreveport – 4

LA – 22: CNOB – 12; GNOG – 6; WNOBR – 4  
NO MS – 8: Clarksdale – 4; Greenville-Greenwood – 1; Grenada – 3  
SO MS – 27: B-H – 7; J-M – 3; J-V – 10; N-PG – 7

Total in Database: 136  
Total Current Renewals: 69  
Total Not Renewed: 67

Latah Holloway questioned: Why is it that people without membership cards are allowed to vote? President Davis – good question. Discussion followed. Indications are that training is needed.

Requests were made for contributions to the campaigns of Rev. Dr. Moses Simms (Turner Chapel, Greensburg, LA) and Rev. Joseph Parker, (St. James AME Church, NO MS Conference).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

President Davis presented the draft of the proposed budget in the absence of Brother Edwards (caught up on bad weather). Copies were printed for the Budget Committee:

Earline Blackmore  
Allen Williams, Sr.  
Elna Huel  
JoEtta McClain  
Maria Gauthier

Total Proposed Budget – 46,150 (2016-17); \$34,750 (2017-18)

Members will be voting on the budget at the Convention, June 2016.

...Asking Conferences for more money (fewer memberships contributing – not meeting membership goal, which would allow decreased contributions from Conferences)

One member requested to have a budget showing the actual against the proposed.

Motion: Bro. William Brown asked that changes be made to the budget (\$800 EB travel be raised to \$900). Sister F. Tinsley (CNLA Conference) seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bro. Allen Williams, Sr. (LA Conference) moved that the Budget Committee prepare, at least once a year, the actual spending against the budgeted line items. Sister Laurene McMillan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **DISCUSSION ON UPCOMING CONVENTION...**

Brother William Brown presented information on the process of selecting the venue for the Lay Convention scheduled June 2-4, 2016. Venue: The Wesley Retreat Center, Woodworth, LA

Currently Renewed Members - \$40 registration fee

Members without Cards - \$65

Registration fee is to be paid to the 8<sup>th</sup> District Lay Organization; Lay will pay Wesley Center.

The venue is located 10 miles outside of Alexandria, LA; WIFI on property.

With final remarks, the meeting was adjourned with the Lay Benediction.

Shirley Hopkins Davis, Recording Secretary

Melvin Davis, President