



Northwest Texas Conference Lay Organization

NWTC Lay Organization Newsletter

2018-2020 NWTCLC Executive Board

Special points of interest:

- 2018-2020 Executive Board NWTC
- Lay Organization Service Project

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10th District Planning Meeting

The Tenth District Planning Meeting will be at the Hyatt Regency North Richardson, Texas
November 15 - 17, 2018

Not Ordinary Times

October 28, 2018

In ordinary times, it would seem appropriate to say last week was a difficult time in the life of our nation. However, these are not ordinary times. Unfortunately, ordinary times are becoming rare in our nation. Last week the nation was startled by an individual who sent 14 pipe bombs to two of our former presidents, a former vice-president, former secretary of state, two former national intelligence officials, two US Senators, a Congresswoman, and other citizens. On yesterday, eleven people were killed and a number of people, including four police officers, were killed by a gunman who went on a shooting spree at a Jewish synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA. Yet, while our minds were riveted by these evil acts, another incident received less attention when Gregory Bush, killed two Blacks at a Kroger in Louisville, Kentucky after he went to First Baptist Church in Jeffersontown, a Black congregation, with the intention of shooting those in the church. Fortunately, the doors were locked, and a member in their car in the parking lot called the police. Mr. Bush was later arrested.

These incidents have become common place in our country. We are no longer in shock or stunned by these kinds of incidents. While they are becoming common place, we should be alarmed by what is the impetus for them. The rhetoric and tone of our political leadership is not only polarizing the nation, it is also encouraging and motivating people to do these evil and despicable acts. Cesar Sayoc, arrested in Florida, claims Donald Trump is like a "father to him", and sent these pipe bombs to anyone who Donald Trump has criticized or verbally attacked. Robert Bowers, arrested for the shooting in Pittsburgh, is anti-Semitic and was charged with a hate crime. He stated that he wanted to kill Jews. It is clear Gregory Bush intentionally was looking for Blacks to shoot. The impetus for these acts is that these sick people are being encouraged by what they see and hear coming from our leadership. In the current environment our political leaders are encouraging bias and violence on the basis of race and religion. Be clear, it is not from one party, or one leader, it is a bipartisan problem.

While it is a bipartisan

problem, it must be acknowledged that Mr. Trump during his campaign and now as president, has had the loudest microphone, and been the biggest instigator. He does this to rally and motivate his base, many of who share his "nationalistic" thinking, and are opposed to immigrants entering the country. His and their view is that this is "our" country, with "our" meaning white Europeans. Most will not come out and say it, but they clearly think it.

The Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church extends our sympathy and prayers to the families of those killed in the Jewish Synagogue in Pittsburgh, and at the Kroger in Louisville, Kentucky, and for the policeman and others who were shot and hospitalized. We also call upon our political leaders, beginning with Donald Trump, and including leaders of both parties to exercise leadership and tone down their rhetoric and vitriol. Donald Trump despite his protestations is not a victim. He must lead in unifying the nation. We must however, express our doubt that he has it in him, or the desire to unite the nation. He feels it is in his best interest to have a divided nation.

We also call upon our ministers and congregants to be aware of the environment and mindset in which we live. Therefore, the Council of Bishops calls upon our churches and congregants not to take our safety and security for granted. Churches must take security precautions, especially for worship and other events where crowds will gather. We also encourage our congregants to be careful and observant wherever we are. No longer can we assume that when we leave home, we are assured of returning home. Public places can no longer be assured to be safe. Let us also be in fervent prayer for our nation and its people, as we pray for the world in which we live.

The Council of Bishops
African Methodist Episcopal Church
Peace,
Jeffery Cooper
General Secretary/CIO
African Methodist Episcopal Church

A Moral Revolution During the Summer—A Call to Conscience: Forward to Action?

By Quardricos Bernard Driskell

It's the summertime. As Ella Fitzgerald as 'Bess' sung, "Summertime, and the livin is easy." For some of us, we are taking it easy. Others are busy with life—job, family, health. However, if the alt-right, extreme conservative partisans and ideologues triumph in November—it jeopardizes the well-being of you, your families, your congregants, and friends and indeed our democracy will rise dramatically.

The extreme political right and left are inflamed and will vote. They represent, at best, about 30% of registered voters. It is that other 70% that irregularly or never votes in off-year elections. Why? They see that career "politicians" who kowtow to the rich and powerful and do little but get re-elected mostly inhabit Washington.

Many non-voters are ages 18-35. Most are completely turned off by voting, sometimes to the tune of "the h- with it; we'll fix it after it self-destructs." That disgust needs to be channeled into voting, as if their personal futures depended on it, as they do.

This is why I am glad the AME Church issued a day of action to speak truth to power in Washington DC to black pastors. Bishop Reginald Jackson, during the press conference, was spot on when he observed that telling Millennials and post-millennials that voting is good for them, folks died, yada, blah blah is a non-starter. He said, "you have to give them a reason." I would add that you have to talk with them rather than at them. Campaigns don't talk to the 'hood.' Good campaigns and candidates bridge that gap. This is where our churches could bridge the gap as well. Many may feel powerless; we are if we accept slander of our views and hopes as "identity politics" and allow the other side to vote while we stay home. Indeed, voting will—as we have already seen evidence of—only get harder if our present political climate continues to degenerate. It begs the question, however, of what took the Black church so long to finally speak and counter the Black pastors that met with Trump at the White House?

As one older Millennial Neosho Ponder, a member of Reid Temple AME Church said, "I am just

glad the church is out there. They have never been out here like this, not on this level. Plus, it was also good to see a lot of young adults involved too." Bishop Jackson addressed this directly and very candidly admitted that the Black Church hasn't lived up to its social justice and freedom ethic in years. "The church has left the building and the church has to go where the people are... We forget that 96% of Jesus' ministry was outside the church," he said.

Watching CNN or MSNBC doesn't connect the dots between what matters to Generational Z and what their vote gets them. Campaigns and Democratic campaigns need to talk to people who they know, by greater likelihood, will not vote. Likewise, this is who your churches and Get-out-the-vote engagements need to be targeting. It is not enough to hold voter registration drives. You've got to also take them to the polls.

Most of the poor and marginalized don't care about Russia, Nancy Pelosi, the Russia Investigation, Paul Manafort, congressional gridlock, Donald Trump, Jr's consorting with Russians, or even his tweets. It's not that these things don't matter; they just don't register to the extent Democrats (and some Republicans). Moreover, the reality is we will need this demographic of non-voters to win elections.

Dare I say, our role is to identify and support servant leaders. Bishop Jackson gets it. I wonder if the rest of the denomination gets it and will follow.

This is a "moral revolution"—a call to conscience. It's time to stand up for the many and not just the privileged few as Washington is doing right now. It's time to show people the fallacy of what "Christian conservatism" is and espouses. The AME's church leaders have done so by their activism in Washington. What will you do?

Summertime! Enjoy it because in three months we got some work to do if a change is to come. Wait, we got work to do now.

The Rev. Quardricos Bernard Driskell is a federal lobbyist, an adjunct professor of religion and politics at The George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management, and the pastor of the historic Beulah Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

At-Will or God's Will?

By
Rev. Tashara S. Void, 2nd Episcopal District,
October 2018 Edition of The Christian Recorder

The federal and state government have certain laws which protect employees as it pertains to their employment security. There are laws that govern when they should get paid and how often. In some states, there are laws that determine the number of hours to be worked and how to handle overtime. There are even laws that dictate when they can be terminated and how pay should be handled.

In some states, however, they don't have such laws and are able to operate their place of employment "at-will." They are not required to hold on to an employee. They do not have to provide a rationale for termination nor are they ordered to provide remediation. Whenever they decide they no longer want someone employed, they are free to let them go and there is no protection for the employee. That is unless it is in breach of the federal laws of discrimination, retaliation, or sexual harassment. This means that a person can work and work and work; and if an employer wakes up with a vengeful spirit, they can terminate you and there is nothing you can do about it.

This is seen particularly in settings where the staff count is low and the office manager is also the human resource director, financier, and gatekeeper for the head supervisor and there are no employment policies or operational procedures. There are no checks and balances and one person is the judge and executioner. Though the law says this type of governance is "lawful," is it the way the church is supposed to conduct business? Should someone who is employed by the church be subject solely to the state and federal laws? Or, is there another governing body that determines how we are to handle our affairs?

My mind takes me to Matthew 18 where we are instructed how to handle someone who is in the

wrong. We are told to take the person aside and talk to him or her privately. If that does not work, bring in two to three witnesses to make the case. If that still doesn't work, take the person before the larger body. In other words, make their faults known to them and not to their co-workers or lawyers.

Give them the opportunity to take in what was said and make it right. Don't talk to them with the intent to fire. Speak with the end goal being growth and restoration and offer guidance on how to improve. This is how the believers' handbook says we are to govern ourselves.

It gives instructions contrary to the laws of the land. It offers a plan of reconciliation and grace. It is not guaranteed to make things better; and in the end, it still may not work out but at least due diligence was done on the part of the supervisor professing Christ and a stumbling block was not placed in the path of the person's faith in the church.

So, I ask the question, "As the church who serves as an employer, whose 'will' do we follow? At-will or God's will?"

When Broken Pieces are Sufficient: The Providential Hand of God

By Rev. Dr. Jason Curry, Columnist,
The Christian Recorder

One would naturally assume that there would be benefits, as opposed to consequences, associated with improving our human condition. When we show love toward God, our neighbors, and ourselves, our thoughts and actions are in account with God's will for our lives (see Mark 12:30-31). However, it is important to note that everyone will not be pleased with the good that we attempt to do.

The Apostle Paul, one of the greatest preachers, authors, and ministers to walk the face of this earth, was imprisoned for the life-changing ministry that he conducted throughout Asia and in additional parts of the world. An angel told Paul that he would stand before Caesar (see Acts 27:24) so that he could talk about the value of Christianity and make his case as to why he should be free.

While being transported to Rome with other prisoners so that he could make his appeal to Caesar, Paul was involved in a shipwreck (see Acts 27:41-44). The ship that was to transport Paul to his destiny to meet the highest official in Rome was destroyed; however, many of the prisoners floated to shore on the broken pieces of wood. After the shipwreck, the guards of the ship thought about killing all of the prisoners who reached the shore; however, they did not kill them. Paul was neither killed by the guards nor the sea. The providential hand of God protected Paul so that he might fulfill his divine destiny.

We, as a Christian people, are like Paul inasmuch as we are attempting to live a life that is in accord with God's will. As we can see in the life of Paul, God may be pleased with our actions of spreading the words about God's love through the Gospel or "Good News" of Jesus Christ; however, that message may not be well received by everyone that we encounter.

We will encounter misfortune (e.g., the loss of a loved one) as we attempt to realize the plan that God

has placed within us. Like Paul, we may even be persecuted for our actions. Even vehicles which lead us to success (e.g., a

fulfilling job, loyal friends, seemingly endless opportunities) may begin to crumble and "break" before our very eyes. Indeed, we have encountered a shipwreck.



However, the scriptures teach us that it is possible to float to our divine destiny on broken pieces. Paul's testimony to the early church reveals to us in the contemporary church that we serve a providential God, which means that God still provides. Historical scholars inform us that Paul reached his destiny in Rome and we shall reach our divine destiny even if our mode of transportation is "broken pieces."

The Rev. Dr. Jason Curry currently serves as the dean of the Fisk Memorial Chapel, an Assistant Professor of Psychology, and the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditations at Fisk University. He is an ordained itinerant elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and has written various academic articles; a book, The Star Book on Pastoral Counseling; and is a columnist for The Tennessee Tribune.

SOMEBODY OUGHT TO SAY SOMETHING—PART 5

By Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, President of the Council of Bishops

There is outrage and uproar in the Black Community, particularly among Black ministers about a meeting held earlier this week between Donald Trump and a group of Black Pastors. The meeting was allegedly held regarding prison reform. Many, if not most Blacks, believe these Black ministers should not have gone to the White House to meet with Mr. Trump. They take this position because of the policies and statements of Mr. Trump. For example, he has said that there were “some good people” among the white supremacists, nationalist and members of the Ku Klux Klan who rioted in Charlottesville, Virginia last August. Mr. Trump has referred to Mexicans and other immigrants of color as rapists and murderers and questioned why the United States accepted so many immigrants from Haiti and African “shit hole countries.” Mr. Trump has called NFL football players, 75% of who are Black, who knelt in peaceful protest against unjust police treatment of Blacks, “sons of bitches”, and has not uttered one word of concern or done anything to address the problem. Mr. Trump’s leadership style is to pit people against each other, to keep the country divided along race and class. Given the tenure of Mr. Trump Blacks are angry and wonder why these Black pastors would meet with him.

Let me be very clear, I am not upset and do not criticize these Black pastors for meeting with Donald Trump at the White House. The issue is not meeting with Trump, the issue is that these Black pastors did not use this meeting as an opportunity to speak truth to power, to be prophetic. This meeting was like all of the other meetings. He only meets with those who will agree with him, sing his praises, and tell him how great he is.

I looked at the transcripts from the meeting. It was like one of his cabinet meetings, where they gather in the Cabinet Room, one by one, each of them tells Mr. Trump how great he is, and how blessed they are to be able to serve in his cabinet. In the transcript from this Pastor’s meeting, each of the pastors went one by one, to praise and thank the President. No one questioned Mr. Trump about the comments and policies which have denigrated and harmed Blacks, many members of their congregations.

What disappoints and greatly saddens me, is that these pastors, some of who I know, are like the professional prophets of the Old Testament, whose responsibility it was to tell the king, not what he needed to hear, but what he wanted to hear. They pleased Trump and satisfied his narcissistic need.

How greatly, do we need some classical prophets, faithful

to God, who courageously and truthfully speak for Him. Who are not afraid to tell the king, the Trumps of this world, “thus saith the Lord.” Who in the Cabinet Room would have said, Mr. Trump, thank you for inviting us to this house, which our slave ancestors built. We thank you for your interest in prison reform, but let’s also put on the table some of the policies that have caused many of our people to be in prison. And since we are talking about reform, we support NFL players who want to deal with how law enforcement is treating our brothers and sisters, shot and killed unarmed, profiled because of the color of their skin, the disparity in sentencing between Blacks and whites. Yet, you called these professional athletes “sons of bitches”, while you called white supremacists, nationalists and Ku Klux Klan “some good people.” Mr. Trump please explain this to us. We also thank you, for your interest in workforce development, but we’ve got a problem with your effort to end affirmative action, it presumes that the playing field is level, and that there is no negative action trying to close doors to minorities. They did none of this, they were just happy to be at the White House to sing Trump’s praises.

So much so that one of the pastors said he was the best president for Blacks in the history of the country, and that Barack Obama just got a pass. They don’t know what they are talking about. Barack Obama came into office with the nation in the worst recession since the 1940’s. The banking, automobile and housing industries were about to collapse, and the nation was losing 75,000 jobs a month. But the Obama Administration produced 75 consecutive months of job growth, averaging 199,000 jobs a month. The banking, housing and automobile industries were strong, and wages while slow and small, began to increase. Obama left Trump an economy that was growing, including Black unemployment in decline. I do not join with those who are upset and criticize these Black pastors for meeting with Trump, I am disappointed and frustrated that my colleagues did not speak truth to power. **That is not prophetic, but pathetic!**

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson

NWTC LAY ORGANIZATION 200 CLUB

The Northwest Texas Lay Organization organized a committee named The 200 Club with Mrs. Donnie Thomas-Davis as it's chairperson.

The purpose of the 200 Club is to raise funds for The Paul Quinn College on behalf of the Northwest Texas Conference Lay Organization. The funds raised will be presented at The Annual Conference each year to help Paul Quinn College's Gap Fund established by Bishop Vashti Murphy-McKenzy to help students. So often, we take for granite that our Paul Quinn College can exist without our help. On the contrary, every small contribution of whatever size helps tremendously. Because we as African American people have yet to arrive at the age where we bequeath our final possessions to our church and our colleges, those institutions survive purely by contributions they obtain from wherever they may.

Please, don't forget to fulfill your pledge of \$50, \$100, \$150, or \$200. Your contribution will be very much appreciated.

Please turn checks/money orders in today or mail to:

Mrs. Donnie T. Davis
109 W. Robin Lane
Harker Heights, TX 76548



PAUL QUINN HIGHLIGHTS

- Community Service Higher Education Honor Roll,
- ◆ 2013 HBCU Best Business Program,
- ◆ Listed as one of 2012's 50 "Most Powerful People, Groups in HBCU Culture,"
- ◆ Named one of the 2012 top liberal arts HBCUs in America,
- ◆ "2012 HBCU Male President of the Year,"
- ◆ "2012 HBCU Student Government Association of the Year,"
- ◆ 2012 HBCU Male Student of the Year Nominee,
- ◆ "2012 Distinguished Campus Leader" Award,
- ◆ Fourth Best Success of the "Top Ten HBCU Successes of 2011,"
- ◆ "2011 HBCU of the Year"

- ◆ Third Best HBCU Accomplishment of 2014
- ◆ 2013 Finalist for the President's National

We're on the web at <http://www.nwtclo.org>

Black Women hold court: 19 vie for Harris County judicial spots



Political history is being made in Harris County as a record 19 Black women are running for judge in the upcoming Nov. 6 election. It also marks the first time in history that 19 Black women are running for judicial seats in one county, which happens to be the third largest county in the United States.

“These are 19 qualified and intelligent African-American women running for various judicial seats in this November’s election,” said Odus Evbagaru with the Harris County Democratic Party.

“To celebrate this historical moment and to bring awareness to the candidates, the...party created the Black Girl Magic Texas campaign. It’s imperative for our community to vote straight Democratic ticket to ensure that these women are elected.”

Evbagaru says the Party is 110 percent behind these candidates.

“We understand that it’s the year of the woman, especially women of color,” he added. “Women of color have been the base of the party for generations now. It’s important to promote that and we are behind them in every way possible.”

The Party has stepped up efforts, distributing posters, mailers, door hangers and utilizing social media. They have even developed a text messaging program where voters can text BGMagic to 25827 to join and get updated information on different events throughout the county.

The Black Women’s PAC, a group of 100 women leaders in the area, is also working to support the candidates. “It’s been said over and over that Black women have been the backbone of the Democratic Party,” said Audrie Lawton, Campaign Director with the Black Women’s PAC. “It’s our vote that has made the difference in most elections. The time is now to reinvest that energy into our own. Not only on the local level, but the state and national as well.”