



Northwest Texas Conference Lay Organization Northwest Texas Conference Lay Organization Newsletter

Words from our President, Roosevelt Ellis, Jr.

Special points of interest:

- Message from Bishop Preston Williams concerning Morris Brown College
- Show people the money raised in churches and tell them what it is being used for.
- Biennial News
- The 200 Club
- The State Convention

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am very pleased with how well our organization is moving this Conference Year. As we prepare for the Biennial and Annual Conference, I urge each church that has not already paid their budget to

do so immediately. Although we have come a long way, we still have a long we to go. God bless each of you collectively and individually as in unity we strive to move forward.
R. Ellis, Jr.
President



Roosevelt Ellis, Jr.

The 200 Club

One of the new initiative formed within the Northwest Texas Lay Organization is the 200 Club. The purpose of this auxiliary is to help raise money for Paul Quinn College. The

money will be placed in the Endowment Fund to help Paul Quinn College where needed. Individuals who have received pledge cards need to turn the pledge cards in to Mrs.

Donnie Thomas Davis. Pledges need to be paid in full by August 20, 2015. All contributions will be highly appreciated.

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The State Convention Hotel Lodging

The 10th District Lay Organization has secured rooms at the Four Points by Sheraton Houston Greenway Plaza, 2828 Southwest Freeway, Houston, Texas 77098.

713-942-2111 ext. 7106
The room rate is \$67 per night.
The deadline to receive this rate is May 6, 2015.





*“Morris Brown
is officially
emerging from
bankruptcy.”*



A MESSAGE TO THE CONNECTIONAL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH FROM BISHOP PRESTON W. WILLIAMS II:

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A., it is with great joy and thankfulness to Almighty God that I announce to you that Morris Brown College is officially emerging from bankruptcy. Morris Brown College's Chapter 11 Plan of Reorganization has been approved by the Bankruptcy Court. This action, approved at a confirmation hearing yesterday, and confirmed by a signed order of Judge Barbara Ellis-Monro today, will allow the college to exit bankruptcy and move forward to regain its accreditation.

This is a bittersweet ending to a long and complex process. It was bitter, because we had to sell property that had historical significance to many people; sweet, because we emerge from bankruptcy fully functional and current with all of our debt obligations. Thus, as is the case with much of life, we must accept the bitter with the

sweet and keep pressing forward.

The college has been represented in the bankruptcy court by Anne Aaronson with the law firm of Dilworth Paxson, LLP and has utilized the services of Renardo L. Hicks, from the law firm of R. L. Hicks & Associates, as its General Counsel. The filing of the Chapter 11 Reorganization was initiated in August of 2012 and has enabled the college to settle more than 30 million dollars of indebtedness with secured and unsecured creditors.

As a part of the bankruptcy proceedings, the college sold assets through the 363 sale process, in a transaction with InVest Atlanta and Friendship Baptist Church, selling approximately 26 acres of properties and buildings to receive \$14,700,000. The college retains ownership of the Administration Building, the Griffin Hightower Classroom building and the historic Fountain Hall, on six acres of land.

Morris Brown College has remained in operation

throughout the Chapter 11 Reorganization process and continues to receive significant financial support from alumni, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Sixth Episcopal District of the AME Church, trustees, faculty, staff and administration. Twenty-One (21) students are scheduled for graduation on May 16, 2015 in the annual commencement program.

I would like to thank each and every person who supported Morris Brown College by providing their professional expertise, financial support, and prayers as we have tirelessly worked our way through this challenging process.

Now our focus is to grow Morris Brown College into the proud and productive institution of higher learning that God would have her to be. Therefore, please continue to support Morris Brown College both spiritually and financially so that together we may continue educating our youth, who are tomorrow's leaders, to the glory of God.

The Rt. Reverend
Dr. Preston W. Williams II

CHURCH FINANCE: SHOW MEMBERS THE MONEY

Rev. Mark E. Whitlock, Jr.

The Church is required to be transparent, fiscally accountable, and work together to manage God's money. Too many churches fail to show members the money. But when money is funny, then the begging starts. If you don't want money to stop flowing to church then church leaders need to show members where the money is being spent in the church. The pastor, stewards, trustees, ministry leaders, and pew warmers have a fiduciary responsibility of being transparent, accountable and work together to manage the church's money. It's time to show members the money...

Where is the money going? The IRS Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations requires churches and religious organizations, like many other charitable organizations, to qualify for exemption from federal income tax under IRC section 501(c)(3) and are generally eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. One method of to qualify for tax-exempt status is net earnings may not inure to the benefit of any private individuals and the organi-

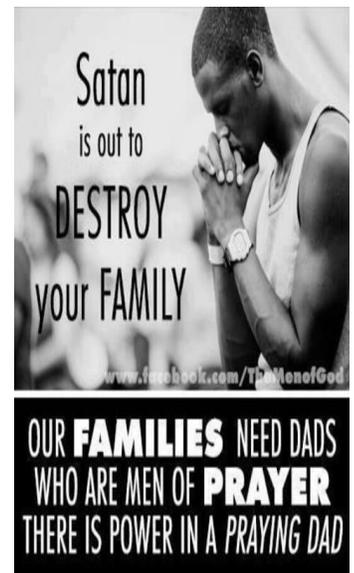
zation's purposes and activities may not be illegal or violate fundamental public policy. The Federal Government is one of the churches greatest contributors. Churches don't pay income taxes on tithes and offerings! Therefore, the church benefits from not paying taxes. Does your church have an open book policy to show members the money?

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) was signed on September 26, 2006. The intent is to empower every American with the ability to hold the government accountable for each spending decision. The end result is to reduce wasteful spending in the government.

President Barack Obama's administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government. President Obama works daily to ensure the public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation, and collaboration. Openness will strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in Government.

Yet, some church fails to practice openness in church finance. The church should have nothing to hide. All members are welcome to see the record of fiscal contributions, expenses, properties and equipment owned by the church, and top church leaders' compensation packages. The church should have regularly scheduled meetings reporting on all incomes, expenses, and church properties. This would help end unnecessary spending and poor money management. What does the church have to hide? God will hold us all accountable at the end...

Over next the two weeks, we will articulate methods of church budgeting, financial reporting to the board and membership, and how to develop a plan to raise money from non-members. Remember, every member has a right to see the church books. Every member has a right to expect financial transparency, accountability, and the opportunity to see the money. The bible says in Roman 8:28 *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*



"God will hold us all accountable in the end"



Remember mothers on Mother's Day 5/10/15

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

Scholarships Available through Connectional Lay Organization

Dear Lay Members of the Northwest Texas Conference, The Connectional Lay Organization has established 3 three different scholarships to assist young men and women to obtain a college education. The individuals

who are selected will be awarded a scholarship in the amount of \$ 5,000.00. Please make the young people in your church aware of these scholarships.

The application can be found on the Northwest

Texas Conference Lay Organization website at: <http://www.nwtclo.org>



10th District Lay Organization Biennial Representation

The 10th District Lay Organization will wear the following throughout the Biennial in Charleston, South Carolina

Monday morning:

Navy jackets, khakis slacks/skirts
Red/white shirt

Monday night Worship service:

Women: white
Men: dark suits

Tuesday:

White/beige slacks/pants/skirt
Navy blue polo

Wednesday:

White shirt and denim bottoms
with red or blue bandanas

Thursday:

Local church lay shirt and jeans/
slacks

Note:

Please don't forget to bring formal
wear for the gala that will be held.

