



Northwest Texas Conference Lay Organization

NWTC Lay Organization Newsletter

The NWTC Lay Organization 200 Club

Special points of interest:

- NWTC Lay Organization 200 Club
- Council of Bishops Statement on Emanuel AME Church
- Mother Emanuel: A Defining Moment in American Life

The Northwest Texas Lay Organization organized a committee named The 200 Club with Mrs. Donnie Thomas-Davis as its 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 wherever she may need help. 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

Highlights of PQ



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

ica,
"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"



“This will make us stronger and more determined to advance God’s kingdom on earth.”



THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS COUNCIL STATEMENT CONCERNING EMANUEL AME CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA:

June 18, 2015

The Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church joins with our components and worldwide membership in expressing our grief and sympathy on the senseless and tragic attack which took the lives of The Rev. Clementa Pinckney, pastor, and eight other congregants of Mother Emanuel AME Church, Charleston, South Carolina. Mother Emanuel is the oldest black church in the south and one of the most historic churches in the nation. The senseless and evil action which took the lives of those who gathered at Mother Emanuel to study and pray is indicative of a major crisis facing our nation and its people. While we are pleased that Dylann Storm Roof, the assailant and alleged murderer has been arrested, we do not believe this matter has been concluded.

First, we join in grief with Mother Emanuel Church in the loss of her pastor, the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, and the Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr., Cynthia Hurd, the Rev. Sharonda Singleton, Myra Thompson, Tywanza Sanders, the Rev. DePayne Mid-

dleton-Doctor, Susie Jackson, and Ethel Lance, members of that church family. We also grieve with the State of South Carolina, which also lost an outstanding state senator and leader in the person of the Rev. Pinckney. Second, we pray and ask for the God of love, mercy and grace to comfort; restore and give peace to family members and of all of us who have been shaken and saddened by this tragedy. May our faith be strengthened and our hope restored.

Finally, we call upon the nation’s political leadership, faith institutions and other organizations in this country to face the reality that race remains a problem in this nation. “The arrest of Dylann Storm Roof, the assailant and alleged murderer does not end this matter. In fact this matter makes even clearer that race is a major problem in our nation that must be dealt with,” said Bishop Julius McAllister, President of the Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. “The nation can no longer live in denial and act as if it does not exist. Every week there is some incident, which involves

the negative consequences of race,” he added. “The AME Church will join with other faith communities to stress the need for the United States to face, discuss and meet head-on the problem of race in this country,” said Bishop John R. Bryant, Senior Bishop of the AME Church.

“African Methodists in South Carolina are strong and faithful, we will not shy away or lessen our commitment to equality and social justice,” said Bishop Richard Franklin Norris, Presiding Bishop of South Carolina. “This will make us stronger and more determined to advance God’s kingdom on earth. This tragedy will not weaken, but strengthen us. African Methodism will become stronger because of this tragedy,” he said.

The problem of race has not decreased but increased over the last several years. Listen to what has been said, “We want our country back.” The question is from whom? Mr. Roof stated that he had to kill blacks because of what blacks are doing to “his country.”

The recent Charleston, South Carolina tragedy; the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri; Eric Garner in Staten Island; Akil Gurly in New York; Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio; and Freddie Gray in Baltimore, our nation's president has been called "a monkey," disrespected and had his citizenship questioned, are all indicative of a systemic race problem.

In September the African Methodist Episcopal Church will be joining with our sister communions and other partners to constrain this nation to address the issue of race in this nation. Details will be announced next month.

The Council of Bishops calls on

all of our churches, and other communions and congregations to join together this week, and in particular this weekend wherever we worship to pray for those who lost their lives, their families, Mother Emanuel Church, and our nation.

Contribution to assist with the burial and expenses related to those who lost their lives can be sent to:

"Mother Emanuel Hope Fund"
Seventh Episcopal District,
110 Pisgah Church Road
Columbia, SC 29203





MOTHER EMANUEL AME CHURCH TERROR EVENT A DEFINING MOMENT IN AMERICAN LIFE:

Dr. Calvin H. Sydnor III
The 20th Editor of *The Christian Recorder*

I am writing this editorial with a heavy heart and I am sure there are many heavy hearts here in America and around the world. The senseless murder of innocent people brutally killed in their church studying the Bible, minding their own business and not bothering anyone just boggles the mind and discombobulates normal people.

They were doing what they loved to do. They were a small intimate core of people who enjoyed Bible study and no doubt, loved each other's company. I am sure they were excited that their pastor was a part of the Bible study and taking part in the discussions.

Some of the parishioners probably already had dinner and others may have been planning to eat dinner after finishing Bible study. It was just going to be a routine Wednesday as any other Wednesday.

This Bible study had an air of excitement because a visitor, young man had joined them for Bible study.

Like churches across America, the pastor, congregation and the members of the Bible study probably had many discussions about how to attract more people to the church and more people to Bible study. And, I suspect that they were

excited about the young visitor who joined their ranks. They would not have been concerned about his color. The African Methodist Episcopal Church has "African" in its name, but the denomination does not discriminate against any race nor does it address race in its book of *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*.

The young visitor was received with open arms and unconditional love and was probably extended an invitation to attend Sunday worship. The 13 people who attended Bible study on Wednesday, June 17 had a welcoming spirit and Christlike intentions of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Bible study was a "vehicle" for sharpening their knowledge of the Bible, coping with the intricacies of life and sharing the "Good News." Bible study at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina got off to a good start.

As a clergy person who has attended and participated in many Bible studies, I can attest to fact that pastors and parishioners who regularly attend Bible study are excited when guests attend Bible study. The energy level of Bible study is heightened with the presence of guests and I am sure that the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, the Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr., Cynthia Hurd, the Rev. Sharonda Singleton, Myra Thompson, Tywanza Sanders, the Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor, Susie Jackson, and Ethel

Lance were excited and happy when Dylann Storm Roof joined them for Bible study. They were not concerned about the color of his skin; he was welcomed as a brother in Christ.

They had no way of knowing the allegedly dastardly intentions of Roof, a 21-year-old man who happened to be white with a disturbed personal life and a history of racist views and obviously not too bright.

The pastor and parishioners who attended Bible study extended hands of welcome and allegedly he responded with violence and nine church members were dead – murdered in cold blood for no reason.

It was a hate crime, not because the victims were black and the shooter was white, but because of the killing of innocent people in cold blood with the expression of hatred on the part of the alleged killer. His intention was indicative of hate.

It would have been a hate crime if the victims had been white and the shooter had been black. It would have been a hate crime if the victims and the perpetrator were of the same color. Hate transcends race. In this instance it was a hate crime motivated by racism. We need to redefine hate crimes from the narrow focus of the race of the victims and the person(s) who commit crimes.

In the case of the murders at Emanuel AME Church the senseless act of violence was a hate crime and an act of terror.

The media coverage of the terrorist

“They were doing what they loved to do.”



attack at Mother Emanuel AME Church has been extensive. The emotions of the event have been devastating. People feel the pain of the parishioners of Emanuel, the city of Charleston, the state of South Carolina and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Vigils and worship services have been held. People of goodwill of all races are coming together to share their emotions and provide support.

People around the United States are talking about the state of race relations and ways to address all the aspects of violence in this country.

The city of Charleston, the state of South Carolina, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and other religious denominations and organizations are making their "voices" heard. The AME Council of Bishops has published its statement and the members of the denomination are rallying as one to fight injustice, racism, and terrorism.

But more importantly, the AME Church leadership has set up a mechanism for assisting the Mother Emanuel victim families. The act of violence perpetrated by Roof, who allegedly has confessed to the murders, has caused emotional, psychological and even spiritual stress; not to mention the financial stress of the survivors' families.

The senseless terror such as happened at Mother Emanuel AME Church should not have happened in an industrialized nation. Apparently, there is something that

we are not doing right in America. The nation must deal with the issues that precipitate violence. Other industrialized nations do not experience the instances of random violence, police brutality and of their citizens being killed by guns.

Citizens in other industrialized nations must be shaking their heads at the senseless violence we experience in the United States. They must be flabbergasted about our gun laws, lack of gun control, ignorance and intolerance.

Where do we go from here?

The terror in Charleston brings us to a decision point. I remember when churches remained unlocked and we took pride in saying "the church doors are always open." Unfortunately, we are living in a "different world" and have been living in a different world for a number of years. Church doors have been locked for many years. And, it is not unusual for churches to have security persons present during worship services.

Will churches have to provide security for worship services and Bible study? Will churches set up security checkpoints or metal detectors before letting worshipers enter the sanctuary? Should churches eliminate evening Bible study? Eliminate prayer meetings? Do parishioners look at guests with a suspicious and jaundiced eye, especially guests of a different race or culture?

I am afraid that we have moved away from any semblance of "business as usual."

We, the church, will have to come to grips with the catastrophic event that happened at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina on Wednesday evening, June 17, 2015.

That terror event caused by a not too bright young man has exposed the flaws of our society where someone can go into a church and kill innocent people.

Thinking people around the country and the world know something must be done lest the very moral, spiritual and religious fabric of our nation, the United States, unravels.

Remainder of this article can be found in the *Christian Recorder*.

THE AME CHURCH SPEAKS OUT AND CALLS FOR ACTION CONCERNING THE DEATH OF SANDRA BLAND JULY 18, 2015



Sandra Bland

“There are questions which must be answered about the arrest and treatment of Ms. Bland.”



Again the African Methodist Episcopal Church grieves the death of one its members in a manner that sounds more alarms and raises more questions. The Council of Bishops and our connec-tional church extend our sympa-thy to the family of Sandra Bland, and lift them in prayer in their very great and painful loss. We also assure them of our support and commitment to seeking truth and justice in the loss of their loved one.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church demands an inde-pendent and thorough investi-gation into the arrest and death of Sandra Bland. To begin with there are questions which must be answered about the arrest and treatment of Ms. Bland. Second, there are many questions and few answers about how Ms. Bland died. Let us be clear, we are not satisfied with the ex-planation that she commit- ted suicide. A young woman having just received a job at her alma mater, Prairie View Universi- ty, something she was excited about and looked forward to, is not the attitude that would sug- gest suicide. Waller County, Tex- as has a questionable history

when it comes to matters of race. This incident only increases that questionable history.

While the AME Church continues to mourn the loss of the Emanuel Nine in Charleston, South Caroli- na, we remain committed to ensuring that all Americans, regardless of race, are treated fairly and that justice prevails. Additionally, we remain deter- mined to end the prejudicial man- ner in which many Blacks are treated by some in law enforcement. We wholeheartedly support good and unbiased law enforcement, but vehemently and determinedly oppose and seek to end biased law enforcement and all forms of discrimination.

The death of Sandra Bland, 28 years old, with a new job and promising future demands and requires that her treatment by police and the cause of her death be made known. We will remain vigilant and supportive of her family as they seek the same.

For further inquiries and Call to Action, contact “Jackie” Dupont- Walker, Director of Social Action

Commission at
[\(213\) 494-9493](tel:(213)494-9493);

email:

jdupontw@aol.com .

RACISM: STUCK IN THE CRAW:

By Dr. Wayman B. Shiver, Jr.

How does racism start and what conditions fuel it are questions that have been pondered for centuries. In the fourth century the Roman Empire had instances of racism related to religion. (Columbia History of Western Philosophy pp 508 – 509)

As questions about race persisted over the centuries, skin color began to be viewed as the dividing line between superiority and inferiority. The darker skin people became the inferior race and the lighter skin (white) race became the superior race. This ideology was the belief of the majority race.

Attempts to answer questions about the origin and formation of negative racial attitudes often come to a dead end. However, the defining characteristics of race appear to be skin color and other observable physical characteristics. While climatic conditions affect skin color dramatically, perceptions of mental and spiritual capacities come into place as notions about race are formulated and articulated by researchers. Regardless, consciousness of race affects attitudes and behavior of human beings. Yet, the origin and formulation of negative racial thinking are less important than the overt demonstration of behavior that has detrimental consequences based solely on perceptions of racial inferiority. Provocative discussions on the nature of race are presented by Count Buffon Voltaire, Karl Linneaus, Henri Gregoir and Thomas Jefferson.

Frequently, in desperation to help their children understand when they encounter racism, many minority parents tell their children that negative racial attitudes are “stuck in the craw” of those who harbor such hatred. This probably means that such attitudes are deeply rooted and are learned early in subliminal ways.

While “stuck in the craw” is an archaic phrase used to describe the stomach contents of slaughtered fowls, the phrase is analogous to deep rooted attitudes lodged in the psychic of avowed racists. To combat this type of racism, verbal interaction about “stuck in the craw” attitudes is critical.

Consequently, it is necessary to have direct verbal engagement between the verbose avowed racists and feisty minority representatives who are able to smoke out the fallacies in negative thinking commonly espoused in the media, especially talk radio and television. Tempers flare and finger pointing generally occur when the subject of racism emerges. Whatever forum and whatever the definition, racism is an undisputable part of the American landscape. It is the driving force of culture and politics.

Progress has been made in the quest to quell racist behavior in America. However, within the last decade there has been a tendency for the nation’s most vocal racists to state openly their contempt and hatred for certain non-white

groups. Fear and the perceived loss of power appear to be the basis of the current surge of racism.

Blatant racists boldly express their irrational opinions in the media. Often their hurtful comments go unchallenged in the same media outlets that they use to convey their ideas. This is probably the main reason that racists’ opinions are formed and thrive.

While the tendency to openly express racial hatred and biased feelings has been evident in the latter half of the 20th Century, it has become more pronounced since the election of President Barak Obama in 2008. Open expressions of negative racial attitudes began to be more frequent at high levels of government. This was evident when some republican politicians openly stated that their goal was to make sure that President Obama was a one term president. When this goal was not met, the negative attitude toward the President hardened. Subsequently, biased media commentators became highly audible in the general public. In many instances they referred to the President of the United States as simply “Obama” instead of the customary President Obama or the President.

The remainder of this article will be in the next issue of The Northwest Texas Conference Lay Organization Newsletter.



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

THE AME CHURCH SPEAKS OUT AND CALLS FOR ACTION CONCERNING THE DEATH OF SANDRA BLAND JULY 18, 2015

"The death of Sandra Bland, 28 years old, with a new job and promising future demands and requires that her treatment by Waller County Police and the cause of her death be made known. We will remain vigilant and supportive of her family as they seek the same", declares the Council of Bishops.

On behalf of the AME Church, the Social Action Commission offers the following possibilities as we mobilize and take action to insure that Sandra Bland's incarceration and death while in custody is thoroughly re-viewed. Please see below:

Right Now - We have received word of a group

holding a prayerful vigil outside the Waller County Jail. It includes the Rev. Hannah Adair Bonner of St John United Methodist Church in Houston; Dr. Taylor from Prairie View, and others who want to be in solidarity and honor Sandra Bland's life.

Call by Bishop Vashti McKenzie, Presiding Bishop of 10th Episcopal District of the AME Church for AME Church and all who will support "Call for Justice"

To join the group in the Houston area, contact the Texas Organizing Project, Dara Silverman at Dsilvermanus@gmail.com.

Wherever you are – stop to pray and invite others to join with us.

Pray for:

- 1) Independent Investigation to learn the truth;
- 2) Generous donations to assist the family with the costs of obtaining an independent autopsy;
- 3) Witness to come forward;
- 4) The Bland family and her church family – Du-Page AME Church.

12th District Lay Organization Biennial Representation

The 12th District Lay Organization will wear the following throughout the Biennial in 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.

SEPTEMBER 6TH
CONFESSION, REPENTANCE AND COMMITMENT TO END RACISM SUNDAY:

-- *“Liberty and Justice for All”*

Please join in solidarity on Sunday, September 6th as we worship worldwide recognizing: *“Confession, Repentance and Commitment to End Racism Sunday”*

Racism will not end with the passage of legislation alone; it will also require a change of heart and thinking. This is an effort which the faith community must lead, and be the conscience of the nation. We will call upon every church, temple, mosque and faith communion to make their worship service on this Sunday a time to confess and repent for the sin and evil of racism, this includes ignoring, tolerating and accepting racism and to make a commitment to end racism by the example of our lives and actions.

What:

- Every faith leader is asked to preach about racism and our responsibility as people of faith to end racism.

- Bishop Adam J. Richardson has prepared a powerful and moving litany for this Sunday (See the Litany below).

- “The Male Investment Plan”, a toolkit developed by the Rev. Staccato Powell will be available as a guide. It is designed to effectively position African American males ages 5-25 through a rigorous and dedicated Saturday Academy mentoring program with tools to equip them academically, while also teaching them civil responsibility and spiritual enlightenment. The Male Investment Plan is a ready-made tool to be implemented in churches and organizations everywhere. The only requirement is committed leadership of implementation through to successful effectiveness

- Photos and personal stories are encouraged.

Historically, the Black church has been the conscience of the nation; and we shrink not from that conscience-stirring role for the nation once again.

This is a joint effort spearheaded by the AME, AME Zion, and CME Churches. Joining in partnership are the United Methodist and UAME Churches, the National Council of Churches (and representatives from communions which comprise the NCC), and the Conference of National Black Churches.

Please be in prayer as we begin this effort, asking God to guide and empower us for this effort.

If you have any questions contact Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, chair – Social Action Commission or Sister Jackie DuPont Walker, Connectional Director of Social Action.

LITANY FOR USE BY LOCAL CONGREGATIONS ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2015:

After the Vigils, Vigilance!

**(A Litany by Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr., 2015)*

Leader: "Prayers can't be answered unless they are prayed," so the poet reminds us, and so we have honored the dead in vigils of remembrance, emotional prayers, heartfelt tributes, scripture-based homilies, fervent eulogies, thoughtful soliloquy, and appropriate words spoken by public officials, but something must follow the prayer meeting -- ACTION.

People: Vigilance follows the Vigil!

Leader: "Tragedies are common place," so writes the composer - and the choirs sing, and following the tragedies, vigils were called in New Town, Aurora, New York, Sanford, Jacksonville, North Charleston, Charleston, St. Louis, Ferguson, Baltimore, Los Angeles, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Washington, DC and in sympathizing cities, villages and hamlets around the world, for the senseless deaths of mostly young victims ---unarmed. That's why something must follow the prayer meeting -- ACTION.

People: Vigilance follows the Vigil!

Leader: "Shall we pray?" some sincere soul will rhetorically ask for very good reasons. Prayer centers the spirit, calms the mind, sharpens the thought, makes the vision keen, quickens the will, and throws a laser beam on a problem. At the end of the Vigil, when the "Amen" has been said and sung, something must follow the prayer meeting -- ACTION.

People: Vigilance follows the Vigil!

Leader: "Pray as if everything depended on God; act as if everything depended on us," so says the thoughtful theologian. It is putting feet to our faith, power to our prayers, urgency to the present concern, momentum to the Movement. "I received no answer" says Frederick Douglass, "until I prayed with my legs." Something must follow the prayer meeting -- ACTION.

People: Vigilance follows the Vigil!

Leader: Vigil is the starting place, not only to feel God's Grace, but to do God's Will -- taking action against injustice. The sequence begins in theological reflection, the upward glance, deference to the Creator; marching orders for a parade route out of bondage to a Promised Land. Next steps include consensus-building for political, social, economic solutions. Something must follow the prayer meeting -- ACTION.

People: Vigilance follows the Vigil!

Leader: After the Vigil, Vigilance, to be daily examples of love, peace, faith, hope, maturity, responsibility and excellence, so that succeeding generations will be motivated to become what they see in us -- after we have prayed, not merely inspired by what we say. Something follows the prayer meeting -- ACTION.

People: Vigilance follows the Vigil!

Leader: After the Vigil, Vigilance, for legislative cures, legal remedies, exercising the franchise to vote in every election, to hold lawmakers and public officials accountable. Something must follow the prayer meeting -- ACTION.

People: Vigilance follows the Vigil!

Leader: After the Vigil, Vigilance, against racism. Race is unavoidable; racism is a decision and optional. Hate is a horrible heritage; injustice is a terrible legacy, intolerance is a hindrance to freedom; indifference is the precursor to decay, apathy is the door to destruction; hopelessness is a path to collective misery.

People: Prophetic ministry beckons us -- again -- to the Press, to the Polls, to the Precincts, to the Markets, to the School Boards, to the Statehouse, to the Capitol, to the White House -- to express our Pain, to have our voices heard, our ideas considered, our demands met. Vigilance follows the Vigil!

*Bishop Adam J. Richardson is the Presiding Prelate of the 11th Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

TRINITY AMEC LAY ORGANIZATION, WACO, TEXAS WOMEN'S BIBLE FELLOWSHIP



The ladies who attended the Women's Bible Fellowship

The Lay Organization of Trinity AME Church, Waco, Texas sponsors the Women's Bible Fellowship. The meeting is all inclusive (meaning people from Trinity and neighboring churches and within the community are invited) Bible study of the women of the Bible. The meeting features a monthly study of the Bible. Good food is shared with good fellowship in studying the Word of God.

The ministry was prompted by the Ten Percent Challenge presented by Bishop McKenzie. The group meets the third Fridays of each month from 6:00 P.M. to 7:15 P.M. Whenever you are in the Waco area, you are welcome to drop in on the ladies and share.

