

Editorials

Lay Delegates Responsibility

Taxpayers are always interested in how the government spends their money. To be sure, the taxpayer seldom cares what it was spent for as long as the needs of the community have been met and they are satisfied that it is not being indirectly channeled into the pockets of administrators and office holders. The only way that the citizen can rest assured that he will get the best government and administration is to elect to office those people whose integrity will stand open cross-examination.

The government of the general church and that of our national government are parallel in many respects. While church and state are definitely separate institutions, they are made up of the same people. Just as in government, we know that there are hundreds of people of high character and honest purpose making our laws, but at the same time, there is constant effort by special interests and individuals to get into responsible positions for personal gain. Such people are usually swept out as "rascals" at the following elections, but in the meantime they play havoc with the economic and social life of the people.

The election to General Church offices of men of integrity is essential to the life of the church. This should be based on no other qualification than ability. An ardent AME church woman who was elected lay delegate to the 1948 General Conference has told me of the opposition to having a woman fill such a responsibility, but she served intelligently and well, true to the sacred trust of her Conference constituents. On the other hand, a well-known churchman, chairman of several 5th District caucuses, was very vague in his response when a candidate for a high church office approached the group with the offer to buy votes. It was not only an insult to honest churchmen and women, but a major indication of weakness in both the chairman and the candidate that this should have happened. Thanks to the courageous and immediate response of the late George W. City of Los Angeles the integrity of the delegation was saved. Nonetheless, the candidate won his election. Such tactics must be eliminated from our procedures. How can this be done? Only if delegates to the General Conference themselves will see to it that it won't.

Not Laymen's Problem Alone

There are those who have had great concern and who have expressed interest and enthusiasm, as well as unity of action, as demonstrated by the Laymen at the last conference.

It is not the task of the Laymen alone to solve or attempt a solution of what ever problems we may have—I am constantly told by well meaning ministers that, "If the Church is to be saved it must be saved by the Laymen." I know that you, too, have had that statement made to you many times—Many Laymen have unwittingly accepted that challenge and have gone forth with the zeal of a missionary to tackle and solve all of the problems of the church. The job of building a greater church; the task of passing our noble heritage on to posterity is **Not the Laymens problem Alone** but the

responsibility of all—Bishops, Ministers and Laymen alike.

The Ministers must display great undertaking and the laymen must give them wholehearted support when they do.

We must emphasize the glory and dignity of the active pastorate. And by the same token we must reduce and eliminate some of the attractive allurements of the Episcopacy, so that our ministers may be inspired to stick to their jobs of pastoring the people.

We must hold fast and preserve for posterity the noble heritage handed down to us. This is the real challenge to strong loyal Laymen—to assume the defeatist attitude will prevent or deny us the opportunity of making a real constructive contribution to her development—a winner never quits and a quitter never wins.

Lay-Organizations' Program Of Kansas Conference A M E Church

BY J. LOUIS RANSOM

—LAYMEN—

Hold High The Torch of African Methodism in the Crusade For Christ

For A Better World There Must be a Better Class of People. Christian Brotherhood is the Answer

PANEL DISCUSSION

Lay-Organizations' Program in the Kansas Conference African Methodist Episcopal Church Moderator conducting panel and asking questions.

A, B, C, D, E, and F represent the parties who answer the questions.

What is the purpose of the Lay-Organization in The Kansas Conference?

Answer: By A:

The purpose is two fold; First, to integrate the Laity, that is the church membership, into a more active service in the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church's program.

Second, To give the Laity a special assignment and responsibility in discharging all duties confronting the church by the demands of society and a rapidly changing social order. In other

words, to share a dual responsibility with the clergy in meeting the challenge to Christianity.

Question:

How were these duties and obligations of the primitive church designated?

Answer: By B:

They were referred to by the statement "Serving of Tables" which symbolizes—"The meeting of the needs of the temporal and secular demands that confronts the church. In the 6th chapter of the Book of Acts, St. Luke, the physician and Lay-leader writes about the acts of the apostles on this matter.

Question:

Will you give a brief review of the 6th chapter of Acts that deals with the establishment of Lay-leadership in the primitive church?

Answer By C:

In the period of time referred to in Acts the 6th chapter, it was the custom of the church to meet the temporal needs of its followers, converts and disciples. They were fed, clothed and issued such other necessities of life as needed; however, at this time the disciples



CLAYTON P. LEWIS

Clayton P. Lewis, president of the Laymen's League at Quinn Chapel A.M.E. church in Lincoln, Nebr., was one of four delegates elected from the Nebraska Conference to the General Conference to be held in Chicago, May, 1952. Besides being class leader, Mr. Lewis is chairman of the steward board and especially active in other departments of the church. He is serving his sixth year as Grand Master of Nebraska Masons and recently returned from the Grand Master's Convention held in Denver, Colo. Thirty-one Grand Masters were in attendance.

and followers had so multiplied in the church that too much of the time of the apostles was required for the "serving of tables" and keeping down dissension among the followers over an alleged discrimination in the fair distribution of the daily rationing of food and other secular needs. The Apostles decided to establish a lay set up to look after these things so they could give their time to spiritual guidance and preaching the Word of God exclusively.

Question:

How were these Lay-Leaders to be chosen and what qualifications were required of the Lay-Leaders?

Answer By D:

They represent our Lay-group of today and this is the Biblical foundation for the status of Our Lay-Organizations; however, we must be mindful of the fact that our leadership must be men and women of good Christian Character with understanding and

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President Speaks

By George Jones

With the destiny of a world at stake, for African Methodism to slip back would be unpardonable, to hold back unthinkable, to go forward—there is no other choice. Having put our hands to the plow, anything but progress would unfit us as followers of Christ.

Get rid of your sins and turn toward God, for a new day is about to be born."

This was the urgent call upon the lips of John the Baptist, of Jesus and of the first disciples sent out to preach and heal. "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The old age was passing, a new day was coming, and these children of the new birth were commissioned to usher it in.

This day is ours, in spite of all its differences from that far-off time, is much like it. No prophetic vision is required to know that we have already entered the beginning of a new and different world.

What we need is power—driving power—power that will lift—power to put our shoulders up against a great trembling pagan world and push it nearer to God.

Too many of our congregations are self-centered. Too many of our members are living on a spiritual starvation menu. Too many of them are hitting on only half of their spiritual cylinders.

There is too much provincialism, too much smugness, too much satisfaction with mediocre spiritual achievements, too many undecided areas of our personal and group lives.

What we need is power—power to see ourselves as God sees us, power to help us give up many things that are un-Christlike, power to be God's men and God's women in a critical moment of time.

The wheels go round; the committees meet; the preachers preach; the laymen pay the bills; but still we need power.

The time set apart by the General Conference as the high peak of the spiritual life of the year should be one of dedication. Unlimited opportunities and possibilities await the sensitive lay leader and preacher who can feel the hunger of his people for a deeper consecration and a higher dedication.

Exercise your imagination.

Voices From Grassroots

A committee has been chosen by the connectional president, Mrs. Anne E. Heath, to receive the reports for the quadrennium from the Conference Branch Presidents. These reports are to form in a pageant "VOICES FROM THE GRASSROOTS," to be presented on the night of July 9, 1951, Memphis, Tenn.

The pageant is to serve as the report of the work done in the four years. One hour has been allocated for the presentation and it is hoped that each Conference Branch President will give whole hearted co-operation and support in making the pageant a great success.

The pageant will be very impressive, inspirational and colorful. The reports will show what has been accomplished during the four years for Christian Missions, Home and Foreign for the Master. Costumes and appropriate music will give a beautiful setting to each project presented in the pageant.

Mrs. Anne Davis and her committee are working hard to make this one of the outstanding events of the convention.

Let each of us pray for the success of this meeting.

YOURS FOR GREATER SERVICE IN KINGDOM BUILDING,
Mrs. Anne Davis, Chairlady
Quadrennium Pageant
704 E. Colorado Ave.
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Take time to be holy and to make others holier. Use every resource, so generously given to you by the church, to make the Great Lay Movement in our church serve the purpose for which it was intended.

To what advantage is it here on earth to live when one takes everything that comes his way and never learns what it means to give.

Giving, opens the way to receiving, when it is done with a willing heart—to withhold, means subtraction, for it is then things begin to depart.

The returns for giving, work like magic and seem to steal quietly thru closed doors; like so many avenues of sickness and health, passing thru one's two hundred millions of pores.

When we get and hold tight, with no thought of sharing or giving, we are just fooling ourselves and are simply making a living.

S. Calif. Laymen In Colorful Celebration



The Will Fan Del Club House was the scene of the above picture where the Southern California Laymen entertained the Connectional president, Atty. H. L. Dudley; District Pres. Geo. Jones; other district officers; general officers; visiting and local laymen and visiting Bishops, during the Centennial celebration and convening Bishop's Council held at Ward's AME Church in Los Angeles. The Rev. Frederick D. Jordan was host Pastor and the Rt. Rev. D. O. Walker, host Bishop. Mrs. Camillia Leftridge was chairman of the program.

Musical Presented

Inaugurating its First Annual Musical, The Laymen's League of the Southern California Conference presented many outstanding

artists of the Southland in concert recently at Ward AME Church, 25th and Magnolia streets, Los Angeles, The Reverend Frederick D. Jordan, minister.

Beginning promptly at 4 p.m., the assembly stood and sang together the Negro National Anthem, followed by the invocation; then the crowded congregation seated itself and listened to the many outstanding artists including Mrs. Aslee Hollis of Emanuel AME Church; Mrs. H. H. Pettigrew, Walker Temple AME Church, Mr. Herman O. Surry, Trinity Baptist Church; Mrs. L. T. Gray, Second AME Church; the Gospel Choir of Second AME Church under the direction of Mrs. G. Bailey with Mrs. E. Conquest the accompanist.

After having enjoyed these most outstanding artists, Mr. Harvey Edwards of Allen Chapel AME Church, Riverside, California, was introduced and rendered the famous composition, "The Lord Is My Light" by Allston. The thunderous applause following this rendition is indescribable, as men and women stood in overwhelming acceptance of this young tenor. As an encore, he offered the simple, heart-touching selection, "Bless This House". Each one felt the warmth Mr. Edwards radiated in the solemn, prayerful selection.

Practically every local lay organization of the Southern California Conference was represented by its President and several members of each unit.