Hidden Tidbits in The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (2016)

Local Church Organization

Choirs
The pastor shall be the official head of the choir(s). No change in its or their composition shall be legal without his or her consent or cooperation. The office of minister of music, music director or other comparable positions shall be filled by the pastor.

Director of Christian Education (Local Church) – Page 233
There shall be a Director of Christian Education who shall be nominated by the pastor and confirmed by the Quarterly Conference. He or she shall be a member of the AME Church. The Director of Christian in the local church shall have the direction and supervision of all religious and educational interests of the local church, subject to the approval of the pastor and the local Board of Christian Education. The Direction of Christian Education shall work under the direction of the Pastor and the Quarterly Conference.

Minister’s Bill of Rights – Page 160
There are 13 Bill of Rights for Itinerant Ministers. It shall be the basic right of itinerant ministers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to:
1. Pastoral Appointment
2. Parsonage or Housing Allowance
3. Salary and Benefits
4. Basis for and Notice of Pastoral Charge
5. Preference over Itinerant Deacons for an Appointment
6. Dignity and Personhood
7. Appeal for an Office in the Church
8. Refuse Illegal Orders or Actions
9. Transfer to Another Annual Conference
10. Be Heard
11. Accept or Reject Voluntary Financial Obligations or Assessments
12. Retirement Benefits
13. Enforcements of All State Rights

1. Pg. 341
The AME Church and all its individual congregations shall ensure that their liability insurance policies cover Sexual Misconduct liability for its programs and activities. The Quarterly Conference shall be responsible for verifying that each local church has liability insurance covering Sexual Misconduct.

2. Pg. 360
The AME Church strictly prohibits and forbids any AME Church Clergy person, licensed and/or ordained, from performing or participating in, or giving any blessing to any ceremony designed to result in any pairing between persons of the same sex gender, including, but not limited by marriage or civil union.

3. Pg. 253
The council of Bishops shall, on the day designated, open the conference @ 10:00 am., and cause it to be opened with a religious service.

4. Pg. 148
If the presiding Bishop is present at any of the Presiding Elder's Conferences or Conventions, the Bishop will be asked to preside.
THE PURPOSE OF THE LAY ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the Lay Organization is to organize and train the lay members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, so that each member may utilize to the maximum the abilities and skills granted by God, in assisting with the improvement and extension of God’s kingdom, and creating happiness, peace and harmony among its members.

To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives are adopted:

1. To instill in the membership of the church a love for, and appreciation of the history, tradition, and principles of African Methodism.
2. To keep forever alive the sacred memory of Richard Allen, our illustrious Founder.
3. To advocate respect and loyalty at all times to constituted authority and leadership.
4. To encourage the laity to support the total program of the church in the local congregation, in the community, and throughout the Conference and Connection.
5. To encourage, stimulate, and educate the laity of the church in the history development, and organic laws of African Methodism.
6. To foster a systematic and regular study of the Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Parliamentary Procedure, to the end that greater knowledge and information may be disseminated among the laity, and with the further purpose of encouraging lay members to participate more largely in the general functioning and supervision of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
7. To foster, influence, and support all constructive and progressive legislation for the church that promotes the teachings of Jesus Christ.
8. To encourage development, recognition and utilization of the most appropriate operational practices and modern technology in conducting the activities of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
9. To promote the spread of personal evangelism through activities designed to prepare lay members for appropriately conveying God’s word.
10. To provide training in Christian Stewardship which causes lay members to recognize that the connotation of stewardship addresses more than giving money.
11. To increase the circulation of church papers.
12. To provide for the orderly and systematic training of lay persons, especially officers, in order that they might more effectively, perform their service assignments.
13. To promote activities which will result in harmonious fellowship, for lay persons throughout the Conference and the Connection.
14. To help in the support of the A.M.E. Educational Institutions.
15. To give financial assistance to the Connectional Lay Economic Development Corporation (CLEDC) in support of Connectional programs.

WHO CAN BE A MEMBER OF THE LAY ORGANIZATION?

If you are not an ordained minister, you are a lay person, and you need to be a part of the Lay Organization.

If you want to know how the laws of the A.M.E. Church are made, how bishops and pastors are chosen, and what the Church does with collected funds, you can find out in the Lay Organization.

If you want to make a positive difference in the direction of the Church, you belong in the Lay Organization.

CALLING THE ROLL FOR NEW & RETURNING LAY ORGANIZATION MEMBERS: WE NEED YOU!

1. Your role as laity(members) is automatic; we want to extend a personal invitation to join the Organized Lay Organization, which is a choice. Your involvement and membership will touch and embrace every sector of our Zion, as we move upward in Kingdom Building.

2. Come celebrate with us, as we offer a renewed appreciation of our history and legendary beginning, with a focus on our mission, purpose and themes. Remembering our past, present and a vision as we move Onward to Greater.

3. Provide a foundation and working knowledge of the A.M.E. Church structure and conference systems to include our Local, District, West Coast, 11th Episcopal, Annual and General levels.

4. Gain an increased awareness and application of Ministry roles, responsibilities and guidelines as component leaders and members. Resulting in a more confident and informed Leadership Team.

Activities of the West Coast Conference Lay Organization

- West Coast Conference Annual Convention
- Laity Leadership Retreats & Fellowship Activities
- District Lay Awareness Days
- Attendance at Lay Conventions on
  - Conference Level
  - Episcopal Level
  - Connectional Level
- Quarterly WCCLO Newsletter
- Lay Scholarships