



Good News from an Iffy Situation

Submitted by Dr. Clarence Kelby Heath

Bishop Thomas L. Brown, Sr., newly appointed presiding prelate of the Sixth Episcopal District, provided the morning meditation on Thursday, June 28th. The selected text Mark 4.35-39. Bishop Brown spoke about what it meant “to be between times” – just having served the Fourth Episcopal District for twelve years, and recently, being appointed to the Sixth Episcopal District. He is between times. He entitled his message “Good News from an Iffy Situation.”

Bishop Brown's initial address reminded us that “the church cannot ever be faithful unless it gets the Jesus question right.” When the church doesn’t know who Jesus is, it cannot get the question right.” There are times when the church is anemic. There is not enough hemoglobin or oxygen, and the church becomes exhausted, powerless, and weak.

Mark writes about two places: the banks of Galilee and the other side. Jesus commanded that the disciples would go to the other side. He had been around crowds all day and had to leave them behind. There are some things in life that need to be left behind. Bishop Brown used the context of General Conference to bring the text to life by speaking of the scriptures in the form of a resolution: “whereas ... be it therefore resolved”, as it related to going to the other side.

But, what does the other side promise us? “I don’t know.” There arose a wind storm. He mentioned Leonard Sweet, author of “Church of the Perfect Storm.” There are times when the storms of life are raging. There are also times when people commit suicide not only physically, but in various other ways to destroy life. There are times when God seems absent, but someone needs to go and wake Jesus up. Someone needs to ask, “Do you see our plight?” I suggest that we have enough on board when it comes to God. He is Son of God and Son of Man.



Delegates and attendees of the 2018 General Conference of the CME Church

General Conference 2018

Election of General Officers

Submitted by Rev. Valencia E. Edner

8th Episcopal District

On Wednesday, June 27th, 2018, the 39th General Conference and 38th Quadrennial Session held the election of General Officers in the BJCC in Birmingham, Alabama. Once all the preliminaries and calibrating of the "clickers" were successfully completed, the unopposed officers were elected by acclamation. Following this group election, the contest for the office of Executive Secretary commenced. The candidates were incumbent Jeanette Bouknight and Dr. Pene' Woods. The first ballot proved to be successful and Dr. Pene' G. Woods emerged as the new Executive Secretary.

Next was the election of the General Secretary of Christian Education. The candidates were Dr. Lisa Allen McLaurin and Dr. Carmichael Crutchfield. The winner of this election was the incumbent, Dr. Carmichael Crutchfield, who will serve another four-year term.

After these two elections, the contested General Secretary of Evangelism and Missions was next on the horizon. The incumbent, Dr. Faith Allen; Presiding Elder Trever Barnett; Presiding Elder Leon Moore; and Dr. Phillip Nelson were in the running. After two ballots, both Presiding Elder Barnett and Dr. Phillip Nelson withdrew from the race. The requirement of a majority vote for election caused there to be two more ballots, with Presiding Elder Leon Moore emerging as the new leader.

The Election of General Officers proved to be eventful even in a non-Episcopal election year. The process has spoken, and may God bless the work that will be accomplished by these who have been chosen. Bishop Godwin T. Umoette presided over the election process and reminded the new officers that they were not official until their installation on Thursday evening.

GENERAL OFFICERS AND JUDICIAL COUNCIL MEMBERS INSTALLED

Submitted by Editor Ore L. Spragin, Jr.

The installation service for all officers was held during the conference on June 28, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. The 38th Quadrennial Session and 39th General Conference saw the re-election of eight of the General Officers who served during the previous quadrennial. They are listed here, in order of election, along with the General Departments they administer.

Dr. Carmichael Crutchfield - Christian Education
 Dr. Tyrone T. Davis - Board of Personnel Services
 Dr. Leo Pinkett - Ministry to Men
 Dr. Clifford Harris - Lay Ministry
 Dr. Roderick D. Lewis, Sr. - Publication Services
 Dr. Princess R. Pegues - Women's Missionary Council

Dr. Ore L. Spragin, Jr. - *The Christian Index*
 Dr. Victor Taylor - CFO, Department of Finance

Elected during the 2018 General Conference were:

Dr. Pene' Woods Long - Executive Secretary
 Rev. Leon Moore - Evangelism and Missions

Though the Women's Missionary Council elects their own president, by *Discipline*, that person is a General Officer.

The Judicial Council members were named in yesterday's issue of *The Daily Index*.

Former Executive Secretary Jeanette Bouknight retired during this session of the General Conference. Dr. Faith Allen, who was not re-elected, served as General Secretary of Evangelism and Missions. The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church is grateful to God and to them for their faithful service in ministry.

Non-Concurrence

Submitted by Rev. Kai Horn, MDiv

Pastor, Hopewell Temple CME Church

East Texas Region, 8th Episcopal District

360° Leader, by John Maxwell, encourages leaders to lead up, lead out and lead down. This book is one of my favorite reads as a Methodist Pastor because of our levels of leadership. I remember the first time that I read it - thinking this works because supporting the Episcopacy and Presiding Elders is leading up, encouraging congregants to support District and Regional activities. Modeling the best of what we can give to ministry for my peers is leading out. Leading down is when we are encouraging the members in the church to “grow one step.” In setting a higher standard for myself as a leader, I encourage them to set high standards for themselves.

There were some great resolutions presented this General Conference. Some resolutions should have been legislated; and, there were others that were better served as initiatives, both leading to church growth. There were health initiative resolutions voted non-concurrence. I witnessed a resolution presented for reconsideration three times before the General Conference considered that specialized itinerant ministry can be just as significant as those who are preachers-in-charge. We almost left out our brothers and sisters of Africa because of our own lack of understanding about schools and Nigerian accreditation. It appears to me that while we do the business of the conference, strongly related to the resolutions presented should be the question, “How do these amendments, additions, revisions and enhancements contribute to the forward movement of the church?” Perhaps we should also ask ourselves, “What of these initiatives or ministries are the broken pieces that assure our safe passage to shore?”

There was a lot of debate over the resolutions that examined changing the educational requirements for ministers. Proposed legislation required pursuing a Bachelor’s degree for Deacons and pursuing a Master’s degree for Elders. The resolution was voted non-concurrent. I concur that our pay and benefits are not commensurate with some other denominations, which was one of the reasons that it was voted down. How do we challenge congregations to move to the next level when we as leaders are unwilling to move?

Bishop James B. Walker spoke Thursday night on “The Challenge of Godly Leadership.” He posits that “leaders learn how to make good use of a crisis”. We are in a crisis. What are we to do? I think that I should ask a different question. It is not what are we going to do? It is what are we prepared to do?

A GOOD DAY at the GENERAL CONFERENCE

Observations from Tuesday, June 26, 2018

Submitted by Dr. Clifford L. Harris

General Secretary, Department of Lay Ministry

Today's General Conference session began with an international service. The Worship Leader and Presiding Officer was Bishop Sylvester Williams, Sr., and the morning message was delivered by Bishop Godwin Thompson Umoette, Presiding Prelate of the 10th Episcopal District.

After the morning worship service concluded, the highlight, I feel, was the giving of reports by Rev. Dr. Paul L. Brown, Sr., President-Dean of our CME-affiliated seminary, **Phillips School of Theology**; and by the presidents of our CME-affiliated colleges: Rev. Dr. George T. French, Jr., **Miles College**; Dr. Dwight J. Fennel, Sr., **Texas College**; Dr. Logan C. Hampton, **Lane College**; and Dr. Jerry L. Hardee, **Paine College**. I found it very refreshing to hear the strides that had and are still being made at each of the institutions. The presidents, students and faculties are to be commended for the wonderful accomplishments that have taken place.

After a roll call for resolutions, reports of the standing committees began. The delegates heard the resolutions and recommendations, and, in some cases, there was much discussion before the recommendation by the Standing Committee was resolved.

During the afternoon and evening sessions, Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton was the presiding officer. More debate seemed to take place than during the morning session. Maybe it was because the Finance Committee gave their report. Several times the debate was intense; however, the atmosphere remained very orderly.

It was recommended by the Committee on Episcopacy, that the character of all the active and retired Bishops be passed.

After Mrs. Johana Hayes, former National Teacher of the Year who hails from Connecticut, addressed the delegates about her candidacy for the U.S. Legislature, each Episcopal District met in their caucus. It was a good day!

Observations From A Delegate's Perspective

Submitted by Adrienne C. Speas

1. Overall, the delegation appeared to be knowledgeable and responsive to the resolutions brought to the floor.
2. Parliamentary Procedures should be reviewed by those who preside.
3. The use of the clickers was inconsistent due to the application of parliamentary procedure.
4. Ministers did not have any options regarding how their retirement plans were set up or diversified.
5. Some resolutions could have been avoided if additional research had taken place in the sub-committees.
6. Camera shots should be on the speakers when addressing their concerns, rather than on the person presiding.
7. Microphone adjustments need to be made after each session; for example, the sound on mic 5 was muffled.
8. Even after repeated instruction, some delegates were unclear on how to operate the clickers.



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