

~A Message To Lay Ministry Leaders~

GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT CREATING A PLAN OF ACTION

BEING ESSENTIAL WITHIN  AN ESSENTIAL CHURCH



**DR. CLIFFORD L. HARRIS, GENERAL SECRETARY
DEPARTMENT OF LAY MINISTRY
CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

~GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT CREATING A PLAN OF ACTION~

Being Essential Within An Essential Church

“Step Up Your Game To Reach, Teach, Minister To, and Equip God’s People for Effective 21st Century Ministry”

In the Spring of 2009, while serving as President of the Connectional Lay Ministry Council, I wrote a Helping Hands Bulletin which opened with the following two statements and a question: “Get a new and fresh start in creating an action plan for your organization! You do have an “Action Plan” don’t you? If you do, I encourage you to build on what you have done and if you don’t, now is the time to get better organized with a focused “Plan of Action.”

This “Helping Hands Bulletin” is written to remind and urge Lay Ministry Leaders at all levels of Lay Ministry to take seriously my recommendation and plea! Again, a well thought out, collaborative, *written* “Plan of Action” will assist you and the lay ministry councils in which you serve to move toward more *positive, orderly, and organized engagement* during regular meetings and help to carry out effective and consistent ministry from one year to the next!

The “Annual Conference Season” is fast approaching, and I urge Regional Lay Ministry Leaders to: (1) Request from your District Lay Ministry Leaders their District Reports; (2) Complete your Annual Report (As you know, forms for both 1 and 2 are on the Lay Ministry Web Site); and (3) Use the form provided with this writing as a template for crafting your Plan of Action for the 2014-2015 Annual Conference Year. This will allow your Presiding Bishop and other leaders in your Region to know the **extent of your Council’s ministry efforts**. . . This is important! By the same token, District and Local Lay Ministry Leaders should provide the same form of documentation when making district and local reports. Certainly Presiding Elders and Pastors will receive valuable insight into the efforts that your respective Lay Ministry Councils will be involved in for the year.

Leaders, - you must plan your work and work your plan! ← If you don’t, you are subject to be left out and if you are included without the benefit of an active plan, someone else is subject to plan your work for you or leave you out of the larger plan altogether. . . *In Genesis 6, Noah was confronted by God and told to build an ark. - So that he could preserve himself and his family he planned and stayed on task for 120 years; he withstood criticism and was the brunt of jokes as he prepared for the flood. His plan and his focus allowed him to use his abilities and succeed in sparing the human race. **Who will be the beneficiaries of your plan and your focus?***

SUGGESTED PROCESS OR APPROACH TO FORMULATING YOUR PLAN OF ACTION

- ❖ Preferably, prior to your *major* annual meeting (annual conference, district or regional planning meeting, local church yearly planning meeting, etc.) - assemble the Lay Ministry Council members together and discuss the *Lay Ministry Objectives* that the Council would like to focus on or address over the next twelve (12) months.
- ❖ Be purposeful in getting input from/or insuring the presence of leaders and other organizational heads and/or their representatives. At the local level seek insight from your Pastor; at the district level, from the Presiding Elder; and the Regional level, your Presiding Bishop. The aforementioned approach will provide opportunity to begin with a collaborative and inclusive spirit, thus helping to reduce conflict and misunderstandings.
- ❖ Discussion should be facilitated in a way that allows all who are present to feel a part of the process. Provide each person present with a copy of the Lay Ministry Beliefs and Objectives sheets, and the Action Plan form (contained in this bulletin).
- ❖ Discuss and share in a way that prompts the council members to consider the objectives that will best assist in the needs, concerns, and overall life and witness of your work and your organization.
- ❖ *Don't get bogged down with individual agendas* and don't choose more objectives to address for the year than is practical for the council's energy and resources; focus on 3-5 objectives per year. Don't try to do it all in one session. Discuss to a point, explain what is needed for the next step and/or meeting and allow members to bring reflections and suggestions back to the next session.
- ❖ Be *certain* to include a cover page with the Lay Ministry Council name, the words Plan of Action with year, and appropriate leadership listing.
- ❖ If the Lay Ministry Council is serious about being "Poised for 21st Century Ministry", it and other organizations involved should establish a sound timeline (document and keep it updated regularly) throughout the processes for completion of planned actions and strategies. – It is very easy to get off track or behind schedule, especially when members have other responsibilities.
- ❖ Look for opportunities to team and collaborate with other organizations.
- ❖ *If the leader provokes the members to stretch to greater limits, - he/she must get prepared to stretch with them!*

THE LAY MINISTRY BELIEFS

STUDYING

WITH PURPOSE AND DETERMINATION

SEEKING

AND BEING SENSITIVE TO THOSE
WHO DO NOT KNOW CHRIST

SHARING

WITH A SENSE OF THANKFULNESS

SERVING

WITH A GLAD HEART

THE LAY MINISTRY OBJECTIVES

1. To study the Holy Bible with purpose and determination
2. To promote and engage in ministries yet unfulfilled in the local Church
3. To promote and exemplify Christian Stewardship
4. To study and appreciate the Discipline of the C.M.E. Church
5. To assist in establishing and maintaining a sound financial system
6. To inspire and encourage members to become more informed about the Church
7. To assist in communicating the need for and support of a strong tithing program
8. To assist in making Christian commitment more meaningful to one's whole life
9. To assist individuals in developing personal evangelism
10. To promote lay speaking training for church officers and other interested persons
11. To study, understand, and appreciate parliamentary procedure
12. To study and appreciate the history of the C.M.E. Church
13. To seek and maintain a good working relationship between pastors and laity
14. To promote, encourage, and model financial support of the Church's programs
15. To embrace a collaborative spirit in developing a vigorous teaching ministry

_____ CME CHURCH
LAY MINISTRY COUNCIL ACTION PLAN
 YEARLY ACTION PLAN ~ 20__ - 20__

Objective	Belief	Strategy/ Planned Action <i>[Make the objectives come alive!]</i>	Parties Responsible	Date of Implementation	Planned Completion	*Results

*Note: Communicate results during end of year report

**ALL SAINTS CME CHURCH
LAY MINISTRY COUNCIL
YEARLY ACTION PLAN ~ 2014-2015**

Objective	Belief	Strategy/ Planned Action <i>[Make the objectives come alive!]</i>	Parties Responsible	Date of Implementation	Planned Completion	*Results
(2) Engage in Ministries yet unfulfilled in the local church.	Seeking Serving	Establish a Career Development and College Preparation Ministry.	Mr. John Able, Lay Leader, Scholarship Committee	August 2014	On-going	
(6) To inspire other members to become informed about the church.	Studying Seeking	Partner with the Board of Christian Education to provide teaching and sharing sessions relative to the history, processes, and make-up of the CME Church at all levels.	Lay Leader, Christian Education Director, Pastor	September 2014	July 2015	
(7) To assist in developing a tithing program.	Seeking Sharing	In conjunction with the Pastor, provide teaching and insight into how one becomes a believing, faithful, and consistent tither.	Pastor, Board of Stewards, Lay Council	August 2014	November 2015	
(8) To make Christian commitment more meaningful as it relates to a person's whole life.	Studying Seeking Sharing Serving	Work to help increase Sunday School and Bible Study attendance among all age groups.	Sunday School Superintendent & Teachers, Pastor, Lay Council	July 2014	March 2015	
(9) To develop personal evangelism.	Seeking Serving	Partner with the Director of Evangelism in providing information, teaching, and training about how one shares his/her faith with others. Begin neighborhood and community faith walks	Department of Evangelism, Pastor, Lay Council members	August 2014 October 2014	On-going	

*Note: Communicate results during end of year report