

*Served as President*



*of the Lay Organization*



## **Brother Cleveland Frasier**

**Served as District and Conference Lay President**

**Dates: 1987 - 1995**

*(Beaufort District of the South Carolina Conference)*

**Dates: 1995 - 2001**

*(South Carolina Conference)*

A History Of the Beaufort District Lay Organization  
A Past President's View 1987-1995  
By Brother Cleveland Frasier  
February 13, 2016

I have been active in the life of the Beaufort District since about 1981. I was introduced to the Beaufort District by the late Reverend A. A. Hugine, Sr. At that time I met several great Laymen who were already active in the life of the AME Church. These first few pages are what I saw coming into the Lay Organization

At my first meeting those many years ago, I was the youngest person attending the District Lay meeting. Sometime during one of the elections, I was elected First Vice-President, I was able to keep this position for many years. During my early years with the organization the times were tough. The Organization did not always have funds to operate with or to pay it budget. The funds needed was not a whole lot but still getting it was tough.

Out of the need for funds, the idea of a banquet was conceived. Having some kind of annual fundraiser would give the lay organization some stability to meet some of its obligations. During this time, the ability to pay its budget was the main issue. Brother Fred Washington, Sr. gave the Lay Organization some of the funds it needed in order to function. Sometime after I was elected District President, he was reimbursed for his generosity to the organization.

As I remembered, there was not a great push to attend any Conference or Episcopal Meeting that came much later or because I was new it never dawned on me what was happening. It was not until much later, things beyond the District was revealed to me.

My first interaction beyond the Beaufort District was when The late Reverend Andrew Hugine, the pastor at the circuit where my membership is, asked me to attend a meeting in Columbia ,SC. It was there that I learned about an election for the office of Episcopal President. I remember that three persons were running for that position and that Brother James Hilderbrand was one of those persons and he was from the Beaufort District and the South Carolina Conference. Districts and Conferences didn't mean a lot to me at that time. Even though I knew I was a member of the Beaufort District it never registered what it meant.

After I had attended several of the Beaufort District Lay Meetings, things were becoming a little clearer. During my early attendance, I was the youngest person during those times attending the Beaufort District Lay Meeting as a result I was elected two times to attend the General Conference as a youth delegate. It was during those years that the Beaufort District got one or two persons from the lay electoral college to be a delegate to the General Conference. In fact, that practice continued for years. One year the district only got one person from the Lay members.

I was elected the First-Vice President of the Beaufort District Lay Organization and held that position until the late President Fred Washington, Sr. decided he would step down or the laws that affect the organization had changed.

The times before my election to become the new president the election were not as structured as they are in 2016. There was not a Nomination Committee. The election of 1987 was held at St. John AME Church in Cottageville, SC. All of the persons that I asked to help me ran for the position that I was seeking. The election process was conducted by the late Brother James B. Hilderbrand the past Episcopal President.

I was elected president in September of 1987.

The following persons served with me as district officers.

**Other officers were as follows:**

First Vice President-Sister CLeo Hood, Second Vice President-Cinella Brunson, Recording Secretary-Daisy T. Williams,\*1 Corresponding Secretary-Sister Betty White, Assist. Corresponding Secretary-Sister Alberta Aiken, Treasure-Dr. Andrew Hugine, Jr., Chaplin-Brother Thomas Edwards, Historiographer-Sister Mable B. Jenkins, Parliamentarian-Brother J.J. Summers, Director Of Lay Activities-Brother Louis Mitchell and Director Of Youth Activities-\*2Sister Mary Alice Waymer.

\*1 and \*2 would later become District President

My other colleagues were: Brother Joseph Boyd of the Charleston District Lay Organization and Brother Wilfred Green of the Edisto District Lay Organization.

**Levels Above**

The Episcopal President of the SED Lay was Brother Ralph James, the Connectional Lay President was Sister Katheryn M. Brown, and the president of the South Carolina Conference Lay Organization was Brother Bernard Walker.

**Being President**

When I became president after having observing Brother Washington for many years I had an idea of how I wanted the Beaufort District Lay organization to function as long as I was president. I had an opportunity to observed how the other district operated.

**The following Committees were Organized to help move the district forward:**

<u>Budget Committee</u>	<u>Annual Tea</u>
Dr.Andrew Hugine, Jr. Chair	Sister Carolyn Small, Chair
<u>Banquet</u>	<u>History of the Beaufort Lay</u>
*Brother James Risher, Chair	Sister Mable B. Jenkins, Chair
*Brother Risher chaired this committee for over twenty years.	

Lay Seminar

Brother Louis Mitchell, Chair

Courtesies and Recognition

Slster Joan Simmons, Chair

Directions

Brother James Williams, Jr.

Youth Activities

Sister Mary A. Waymer, Chair

Memorial

SlsterCinella Brinson, Chair

Ash Wednesday

Slster Betty White, Chair

When I became president, a lot of the persons that I placed in positions of leadership had not ever held a district function or chaired a district committee before. We were able at the onset to bring new persons into the organization. All of the persons remained in those positions as long as I was in a leadership role of the district. It made being president manageable.

With the exception of the Banquet Chairperson no one else, had served as a leader of a committee before.

**The committees that were organized function as follows:**

The organization had never had much money prior, many of the things I was able to do, was because I had resources to work with. During the time of my presidency, the organization had a steady source of income. Though the churches paying their budget, the banquet and later I was able to added the Ash Wednesday Service program gave the organization financial flexibility..

**The budget committee** gave the organization a blueprint on how we will get the funds and how it would be used.

The following committees (**Banquet, Ash Wednesday, and Annual Tea**) were three of the four ways funds were generated for the organization. The lay leadership of the conference was able to convince the presiding elders to include the lay asking along with their asking for the district. Also, other organizations were able to do the same.

Before strong funding was given to the district, the organization depended on Brother Fred Washington to personally meet many of the district obligations.

The other committees were part of the lay ministries of the District Lay Organization: The **Lay Seminar**-help to educate the lay members from a lay point of view.

The **Memorial-Committee** at the beginning of each conference year, we always remember lay persons that were active with the organization during the last conference year but have gone from labor to reward.

The **Courtesy and Recognition**-This ministry let members and their families know that the organization cares about them.

The **Youth Activities-Committee**-this committee works to bring young people into the organization.

Because the organization had sources of incomes some of the funds raised from the banquet were given back to some of the senior members of the district as a way of saying we care.

During my administration the Episcopal District Lay Organization held the Layman of the Year program in the Beaufort District; this was the first time this had ever happen.

### **The Local Presidents in the Beaufort District**

In 1991 the following persons were local president:

Name	Church
Brother Myron Reed	Allen Chapel
Brother William Bowers	Ebenezer
Brother W. Spencer Young III	Grace
Brother Maco Wiggins	Greater Mt. Olive (Smoak)
Brother Theodore Hamilton	Jerusalem
Brother Herbert Washington	Mt. Olive(Green Pond)
Brother Jackson Grant	Bethel (Green Pond)
Mrs. Joan Brown Simmons	Campbell Chapel
Brother James Pinckney	Greater Bethel (Fairfax)
Sister Philicia P. Warren	Jericho
Brother Thomas Edwards	Joshua
Sister Patricia Green	Mt. Pisgah
Sister Jackie Bryant	Mt. Pleasant
Sister Betty Days	Queen Chapel
Sister Desi Hayes	St, John (Cottageville)
Sister Estella Sanders	St. Luke
Brother Sammie L. Frasier	St. Mary