

EZRA YOUTH SEMINARY

Spiritual Restoration



FREE Virtual Leadership Seminar

For Teens 14-18 | Saturday, April 24, 2021 | 10 AM - 12 PM EST



Participate in the John Maxwell Leadership Game!
A fun and engaging challenge filled with open
discussions about leadership principles and values.

WWW.EZRAYOUTHSEMINARY.ORG

About the 2021 Spring Seminar

Spiritual Restoration is the theme for our seminar! We'll have a virtual, abridged play of the John C. Maxwell Leadership Game for Teens. The game is fun and engaging as it challenges the players to have open discussions about these four leadership principles: Listening; Character; Problem-Solving; and Vision as evidenced in the Bible Book of Ezra.

Program Flow

10:00am - 10:15am

Prayer, Welcome, Opening Remarks, Introductions

Rev. Charles Howell, Chaplain, Ezra Youth Seminary

Floriane Beyegue, Board Member, Ezra Youth Seminary

Tonya Miles, Facilitator, President, Ezra Youth Seminary

10:15am - 10:55am

Principle #1: Listening - Rev. Lauren Harris

Round #1: The Leadership Game for Teens

Principle #2: Character - Ms. Alison Nettles

Round #2: The Leadership Game for Teens

10:55am - 11:05am

Break

11:05am - 11:45am

Principle #3: Problem-Solving - Ms. Jessica Anderson

Round #3: The Leadership Game for Teens

Principle #4: Vision - Rev. Kevin Lamár Peterman

Round #4: The Leadership Game for Teens

11:45am - 12:00pm

Announcement of Winner, Wrap-Up, Closing Remarks

Tonya Miles, President, Ezra Youth Seminary

Harold Miles, Chairman of the Board, Ezra Youth Seminary



REV. LAUREN HARRIS is an itinerant elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.) with over 15 years of ministerial experience working with children, youth, and young adults. She holds a Bachelor's degree in English from the University of Maryland (College Park) and a Master of Divinity from Howard University. She's been published in Sojourners, Washington Family, Modern Loss, The A.M.E. Church's "Christian Recorder," Gospel Today, and many other publications. Rev. Harris is featured in the upcoming publication "Preaching During a Pandemic: The Rhetoric of the Black Preaching Tradition" set to release in 2021. Her professional experience includes working with several faith-based nonprofits, Mt. Ennon Baptist Church, Faith in Public Life, Wesley Theological Seminary, and she currently works for the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church in the Office of Leadership and Congregational Development. Rev. Harris' volunteer work includes speaking for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) in honor of her late first husband, Gabriel Jones, and she was even a finalist for MADD's search for a national president in 2018. Rev. Harris currently serves as Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church in Columbia, Md. She is married to Marvine Harris, a GIS Specialist, and is the proud mother of two children, Kent (10) and Lacey (7). She is a member of the Board of Directors for Ezra Youth Seminary, Inc. She acknowledges Jesus as the one who makes all things possible. Her favorite scripture is John 15:16, "You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name."

EZRA STUDY: LISTENING

Rev. Lauren Harris

Ezra begins with a message from God from the prophet Jeremiah (Ezra 1:1). God speaks through prophets, or those chosen to be God's mouthpiece.

God brings the promise to Israel to pass through King Cyrus. God moves upon King Cyrus so that Cyrus will enable the Jewish to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. God speaks through people, even those not designated as prophets. "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever it will" (Proverbs 21:1).

Leaders recognize when God is speaking and moving even when it's through unexpected people.

Many people felt called to help rebuild the temple. However, some felt led to travel back to Jerusalem, while others felt led to give valuables and offerings towards the project.

Leaders know what God is calling them to do because of their ability to discern what God is saying specifically to them.

When the Israelites returned to Jerusalem, they built an altar and started making sacrifices "following the instructions God had given to Moses" (Ezra 3:2). The Israelites were in Babylonian exile for 70 years, but when they returned, they were able to build an altar, make sacrifices, and celebrate their festivals because they had God's word.

The Bible contains the instructions we should follow. If we are seeking to hear from God, we should start with the Word of God.

After a major setback in the rebuilding of the temple, the Lord speaks to the Israelites through the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah (Ezra 5:1-2). The prophets kept encouraging the people in the Lord.

Ezra 6:14 says that as the work on the temple continued, Haggai and Zechariah continued to encourage the people through their preaching. They heard from God and were encouraged through preaching.

Ezra was a priest who spent his life "studying and obeying" the Law (Ezra 7:10). God gave Ezra favor with the King Artaxerxes.



ALISON LYNN NETTLES was born and raised in the Tidewater area of Virginia. She is a graduate of Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia with a Bachelor of Science degree. Since 2005, she has been a transplant to the Garden State, residing in Hillside, New Jersey. Ms. Nettles is a member of Fountain Baptist Church in Summit, New Jersey under the leadership of Rev. Dr. J. Michael Sanders. At FBC, she serves as a Youth Ministry leader and is the ministry leader of Girls' Rites of Passage (a Christ-centered, esteem building ministry designed for young ladies from 8-18 years old). This allows her to pursue her passion of empowering youth in leadership positions as it is her prayer that youth find their voices and purpose early on and Jesus will be the Lord of their lives no matter what.

Ms. Nettles is employed at Saint James African Methodist Episcopal Church in Newark, New Jersey. Saint James is the largest AME church in the state and is where she dedicates her 40+ hours per week toward kingdom building since 2007. She serves as the Executive Assistant to Rev. Dr. Ronald L. Slaughter while consistently looking forward to what the Most High has planned next for the ministry of Saint James and the members of the Saint James Village. Ms. Nettles has a wide range of interests, and traveling the world is her favorite past time. Her life philosophy can be summed up as, "if you leave my presence, and can say you felt anything but the love of Jesus, then I have done a great disservice to the kingdom, and I will not grieve The Holy Spirit like that..."

EZRA STUDY: CHARACTER

Ms. Alison Nettles

Dictionary.com defines character as “the aggregate of features and traits that form the individual nature of some person or thing”. God created all of us with uniquely different character traits. Ezra is one of the most notable biblical models of Christian character. He exercised consistent character through answering the call of his biological lineage of priesthood; his position as a trusted official to King Artaxerxes I of Persia, where he was responsible for the administration of Jewish Affairs of the kingdom; his role in the strategic planning and fiduciary responsibility in the expedition of people of Jewish race back to their homeland of Jerusalem after seventy years of captivity in Babylon; and his co-leadership with Nehemiah in the governance and rebuilding of the walls of Judah’s capital city with the strictest attention to God’s law to achieve the spiritual revival of their people. Ezra’s character was a result of him being a priest, devout scribe of God’s law, administrator, money manager, leader, intercessor, reformer, motivator, revivalist, and most importantly, his unyielding worship of God. The expression of traits of our character is an act of worshipping God. How is God getting glory through the unique character traits He has gifted you in leadership amongst your peers? How have you been a good steward over the gifts of the character traits God has instilled in you and how do you continue to nurture their growth?

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”
– Romans 12:2 (NIV)



MS. JESSICA ANDERSON serves as a Youth Leader for the Higher Ground Teen Church at Alfred Street Baptist Church where she feels called to walk alongside young people as they learn, lead, and strive to love themselves and their neighbors. She is passionate about building power and opportunity for young people and their families. She started her career as a youth developer in shelter, group home, and transitional housing spaces in San Francisco. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Criminology from the University of Florida and later moved to Atlanta, Georgia to pursue a Master of Public Administration in Nonprofit Management at Georgia State University. While in Atlanta, Jessica led special projects for hundreds of children and mothers experiencing homelessness in the Atlanta Mission network. Jessica then joined The Young Women's Project in Washington, DC as the Health Justice Director where she tripled the program size and impact to build the leadership and power of more than 300 teens in 24 DC Public and Public Charter High Schools. Jessica is a Managing Partner at The Management Center where she has the privilege to train an emerging generation of social justice leaders across the country. Jessica lives in Hyattsville, Maryland but she is a frequent flyer to her hometown of Fort Lauderdale, Florida where she enjoys Publix Subs and warm beaches.

EZRA STUDY: PROBLEM-SOLVING

Ms. Jessica Anderson

What's a "problem" you've noticed in the world? It could be anything from teens not having enough money to go to college to people not having enough food. Our purpose is figuring out what problem God has called us to solve. Noah's Ark, was an answer for flooding. David's slingshot was an answer to a Philistine giant. Ruth was an answer to a mother's grief. Ezra shows up at a time when his people were in exile in Babylon, or away from their home. He prays that they would have a safe journey for them and their children and they arrive safely. When they get there, the Israelites start marrying people from the lands and Ezra is asked to figure out what to do about marriages to foreign people. Ezra cries and prays as he tries to answer this problem. Not all problems will be easy to solve. Now I want you to fill in your name in the blank? What are YOU an answer to? Life will continually present you with moments where you have to both find solutions and be the solution. Let's get you ready now!



REV. KEVIN LAMÁR PETERMAN was born in Newark, New Jersey. The Reverend Kevin Lamár Peterman is a cutting-edge faith-based scholar who has been called by God to preach, teach, and advocate for a better world in the 21st century. He is a graduate of Howard University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science. He earned a Master of Arts Degree in Theology with an additional certificate in Black Church Studies from Princeton Theological Seminary. He also holds a Master of Science Degree in Higher Education from the University of Pennsylvania. Rev. Peterman is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Higher Education at Howard University. In conjunction with his regular course work, he has studied extensively throughout China, Japan, Ghana and South Africa in effort to learn more about the region's political, economic, and cultural affairs. currently serves as the Director of Assessment & Strategic Initiatives at the Howard University School of Divinity and a Research Fellow at the United Negro College Fund's Frederick Patterson Research Institute. He also serves as a Board Member and Founding Academic Dean of the Ezra Youth Seminary, a non-profit that works to nurture and cultivate young Christian leaders. As an activist, he has participated in demonstrations in Ferguson, Baltimore, Washington, DC, New York, Chicago and Ohio. He recently ended a series with National Public Radio where he was featured as a contributor on NPR's Sunday morning show, The Weekend Edition. He is an ordained Baptist minister and currently serves at the historic Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, DC. Prior to returning to the nation's capitol, he served at the Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, Illinois, the Cornerstone Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York and the First Baptist Church of Vauxhall, NJ. Rev. Peterman is a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and has been regarded as one of the nation's most preeminent millennial leaders.

EZRA STUDY: VISION

Rev. Kevin Lamár Peterman

Proverbs 29:18 teaches us that Where there is no vision, people perish. One of the most important components of an individual's development is the ability to cast vision for themselves and for others. True leaders have a vision, that is, they have a potential to view the present as it is and to invent a future culminating out of the present. A leader with a vision can foresees the future and can remain in the present. A vision is an end towards which leader can spend and direct his energy and resources. One must first have a vision for their own life and future. This requires intentional prayer, meditation, goal setting and execution. Your personal vision is how you commit to living your life. It influences all areas including family, spirituality, physical well-being, leisure, and work. A clear personal vision is an integration of your abilities, interests, personality, values, goals, skills/experience, family of origin, and stage of adult development. One must make both long term and short-term goals that are constant with the vision they have casted. A vision for one's own future ultimately extends to multiple visions for the work and the activities they are engaged in. Vision allows one to prioritize their goals and their daily commitments. It is also the source of optimism and resiliency.

ABOUT EZRA YOUTH SEMINARY

MISSION

Ezra works to nurture and cultivate Christian leaders through character growth, leadership skills progression, and Godly knowledge by offering programs in theology and Christian leadership to youths between the ages of 10 and 18.

VISION

Ezra Youth Seminary prays and strives toward a world in which:

- Young, developing Christian leaders have ample opportunities for training and mentorship based in the Word of God to better serve and cultivate a world that loves more justly;
- There is growth of young leaders who combine determination, strong foundation in Jesus and leadership skills to bring change, hope, and direction to a chaotic world, and;
- Youth are fully engaged and valued in their respective churches and ministries and have access to supportive mentors

STAY CONNECTED

To stay up-to-date on our work, please reach out to us online:

Website: ezrayouthseminary.org

Email: support@ezrayouthseminary.org

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CO-FOUNDERS

Harold Miles, Chairman of the Board

Tonya Miles, President

Established 2018

Ezra Youth Seminary, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Maryland. This corporation is organized exclusively for religious, charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.