

## Zion Mount Moriah Baptist Church History

Zion Mount Moriah Baptist Church was organized in 1872. Most of the original 63 charter members withdrew from then, Zion Benevolent and Beulah Baptist Churches. The church was organized for the convenience of African Americans living in the areas of Log Castle, Adams Bluff, Meeting House and Dry Branch Plantations. The charter members included individuals from the Baily, Belton, Bolton, Edward, Goodwin, Green, Harris, Hopkins, Jacobs, Johnson, Jones, Moye and Sumter families.

The church called Simon Jenkins to serve as its first pastor and seven men were called and ordained as deacons. Included in the deaconship were Pelham H. Jones, Robert Boyd, Scipio Green, Lewis Baily, Samuel Johnson, Joseph Sumter, Sr. and James Bolton. Brother Newman Boyd, another former member of Beulah, was elected as the church's first clerk. Deacon Pelham Jones was elected as chairman of the deacons. Deacons Jones, Boyd and Johnson were former slaves of Robert Adams Bluff Plantation. Within two years after the church was organized, it was agreed to purchase land to build a sanctuary. The church purchased land in 1870 from fellow member and church trustee Wilson Sumter. Construction was initiated on the sanctuary in 1880. Prior to completion of the sanctuary, the church worshipped under a bush arbor.

The following persons served as pastor of Mount Moriah Baptist Church:

- Reverend George Washington Taylor from 1886.
- Reverend Oliver H. Hopkins, a former slave of Joel Adams, Jr in 1887
- Reverend Andrew Richbourg in 1889
- Reverend Daniel Boyd
- Reverend William Lowman in 1892
- Reverend Spencer Adams in 1895
- Reverend Pelham Jones in the early 1900's
- Reverend Harrison Gallman in 1916

Active deacons during Reverend Gallman's tenure were Fred McCoy, Lee Davis, Paul Harris, R. W. Jones, Wilson Sumter, J. James. Peter Sumter and Milton Howell were the two trustees and Sister Mary M. Deas served as Sunday School Superintendent.

Reverent Westbury H. Neal was called as the tenth pastor of the church in 1942. Deacons serving during Pastor Neal's tenure included Robert Dwight, Josh Harris, Jerry Davis, Edward Harris, Phillip Sumpter, Hubert Yough and Lindburg Sumter. Brother William Dwight was the church clerk. Trustees during his tenure included Brother David Belton, Peter Sumter, James Sumter, and Pelham Washington. Sister Mary M. Deas continued to serve as Superintendent and Tillman E. Sumpter was elected church clerk in 1948. Shortly after Pastor Neal's arrival, a visiting minister observed the crowd and commented, "Build a new sanctuary or get rid of your pastor."

Sister Mary M. Deas was elected Secretary of the Wateree Sunday School Convention Upper Division in 1944. She a faithful member who had no children of her own, but adopted and raised children, including her niece, Anetha Sumter.

Under the leadership of Pastor Neal and the deacons, Zion Mount Moriah rebuilt their sanctuary in 1959. The entire church was bricked in 1968 during Reverend Neal's tenure. Pastor W. H. Neal resigned in 1978 after serving 36 years.

Zion Mount Moriah elected Reverend Blakely N. Scott, III as pastor in 1978. Deacons working with Pastor Scott included Robert Dwight (Chair), David Belton, Jerry Davis Sr, Edward Harris, Jimmie Harris, John Smith Sr, and Lindburg Sumter. Trustees were James Hopkins, Dearold Shiver, James Sumter, Peter Sumter and Pelham Washington. William Dwight served as clerk. Dorothy Goodwin became the Minister of Music and Jerry "Pop" Smith became the organist.

Under Pastor Scott's leadership, the church was renovated in 1986 and the church began plans to construct a new facility in 1995. The new edifice was completed to *the* glory of God on June 24, 2001. The membership praise God that the mortgage for the new edifice has been satisfied. Additionally, the membership has purchased 69.5 acres of land for future visions the Lord has in store for 'The Mount.'

Several ministers grew out of Mount Moriah Baptist Church. Current Associate ministers include Reverend Cheryl English, Reverend Edna Grant, Reverend Ronald Jumper, Reverend Lisa Prince, *Reverend* Dr. Dezmond Sumter.

May 6, 2018, Zion Mount Moriah elected Reverend Dezmond Bernard B. Sumter, M.D. as pastor!

" Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 1 Corinthians 2:9 (NKJV)