

HISTORY OF LIVINGSTON MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

The slave farm town of Livingston, Mississippi was incorporated in 1835. It was named in honor of Dr. Phillip Livingston who was a slave owner.

In 1838, the town was designated as the County seat of Madison County. In 1853, the County seat was moved to Canton, Mississippi.

In 1856, the church was erected, but not for Blacks. However, it was the old Black slaves who plowed the rough way smooth, singing as they plowed the fields, "Let Us Walk Together Children" and "Don't Get Weary." While their bodies were bent beneath a load of care, their minds blurred from cruelty, but they could still sing, "I'm So Glad That Trouble Don't Last Always."

In 1856, Blacks were able to purchase the church and six acres of land for \$60.00 so that they would have a place in which to worship. The first black families who began to worship in the church were the Harrises, Ricks, Smiths, Simmons, Websters, Champions, and Washingtons. Their pastor was the Rev. George Glenn, serving as best he could. Rev. Glenn was followed by Rev. James Thompson.

The next families that came were the Clemon Thompsons, Hence Haralsons, Robert Bennetts, Louis Smiths, Cornelius Lewises, the Solomons, Millers, Waltons, Hendersons, Browns and Griffins. They were pastured by the late Rev. James McClenty, Sr., Rev. James Wilson,

Rev. Jake Lambart, Rev. W. L. Jordan, Rev. I. J. Turner, Rev. Walter M. Weathers, and Rev. William Thomas. When Rev. P. F. Parker came, there were three (3) of the original members left, namely: the late Mrs. Fannie Smith, Mrs. Florence Bennett, and Mrs. Georgia Ann Hart who died June 1996 at the age of 96.

*Rev. Parker served, in what was then a frame building, until 1954. This frame house of worship has always been known as **HOLY GHOST HEADQUARTERS**.*

This building was torn down and re-built, but was not removed from its original foundation. In that building the Inspirational Choir was reorganized in October 1969 to render song service for Rev. P. F. Parker's 40th year anniversary. Rev. Parker gave forth(40) years of unselfish service before he was called unto his Father in Heaven in April 1970.

*In 1970, God sent Rev. George Vaughn of Jackson, Mississippi. In 1970, the Inspirational Choir held their Anniversary on November 29, 1970, in memory of Woodrow Williams. The closing song then was: "Pray for Me" which is still quite popular now. For if we ever needed prayer, we need it now. On March 23, 1973, Livingston sponsored a program entitled: **"Getting Ready for the Judgement."** The theme was: **Let Everything that has Breath Praise the Lord.** This theme was fitting then and is very appropriate now. In 1976, Rev. Vaughn, the dutiful officers and the dedicated members were enabled by God to erect another building. The deacons/officers during the planning and building stage were: James Thompson, Woodrow Thompson, John Thompson, Sandy*

McElroy, Sr., and Paul Bennett. All of whom are gone to glory. This time the building was moved a few feet down the hill from its original foundation where we are now. The old white frame building was torn down, but this is still

HOLY GHOST HEADQUARTERS. *God has Blessed us with new officers: Hulon Alexander and Ohylar Carson. Rev. Vaughn resigned in June of 1980.*

We were without a pastor for six(6) months, but never without a minister to deliver the Gospel and words of inspiration.

The church has grown tremendously over the years, both spiritually and financially. We were blessed to have had such efficient leaders and God is still blessing us today by allowing some of the old leaders to remain with us and by sending us new leaders.

In January of 1981, God sent Rev. Thomas E. Ray, Jr., of Jackson, Mississippi, along with his wife and their two(2) children. Rev. Ray was officially installed on April 5, 1981.

Rev. Ray resigned in September 1984. We were without a pastor for six(6) months, but we were blessed to have our Son of the House, Rev. Willie L. Thompson to deliver the message.

Rev. Ray was reinstated as our Pastor in April 1985. In July 1986 Lucious Wright and Fred McElroy were crowned as deacons.

We, the members and former pastors, have had some sleepless nights and troublesome days trying to solve problems in meeting financial needs of the church. This is our place of worship. We want God's House to be the Best House. God has taken care of us just like he has the little sparrow in providing us with all our needs. He wants us to come into the temple to sup with Him and find rest for our soul.

Rev. Thomas Ray, Jr. served as the Pastor for 17 years. Everything must change, the young becomes the old, but God stays the same. God saw that His sheep at Greater Livingston were without a shepherd. In January 1999, Rev. Lenell McGee, Jr. was instated as Pastor. Pastor McGee came to us from Chicago, Illinois along with his wife and three(3) children. He comes to us with a burst of energy that has been inspiring to all that come in his presence.

In March 2001, Monroe Alexander, John Bratton and Richard Grantham were made deacons. (We were able to purchase a 15 passengers van in June 2001 to bring members and friends to the house of worship.)

On November 28, 2004, Rev. P. F. Parker's son Aaron Parker, Pastor of Zion Hill Baptist out of Atlanta, Georgia preached our 147th year anniversary. He left on inspiring message to the membership.

So many people have donated their time, talent, and yes, their money for the success of winning souls to Christ. This paper is not long enough neither is this day to mention the accomplishments and contributions presented thus far. However, some have made great sacrifices in the

ministry of Greater Livingston. Whether great or small, God our Father through the blood of His son, Jesus, our Saviour sees them all. We have been blessed and we are being blessed.

God's plan may not seem logical, but it will work for our good if we follow it. If we are to keep our faith online, we must learn to follow God's plan without hesitation and follow it completely.

