

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE NEW MT. ZION MISSIONARY B.C., LEONARD, TEXAS  
"Serving the Lord since 1960"

51<sup>st</sup> Anniversary

The Church is one of the established institutions  
Throughout the world. No matter the name,  
a temple, cathedral or house of worship.  
Whatever the name may be, if there is a  
Church in the area, it makes better  
Individuals, families and a better community.

In 1960, the New Mt. Zion Baptist Church was organized through sunshine and tears, in the city of Leonard, Texas, Fannin County. God lay on the hearts of a few workers to organize a church in the Negro community. The original place of worship was in the home of Deacon K. C. Sparks. We moved to the gym where we worshipped for a short time. Our next place of worship was in the courthouse. Rev. R. D. Dread of Greenville, Texas was our shepherd in the early 1960's (1961-1971) and he labored with us for ten years. Under his leadership we moved from the courthouse and purchased a building of our own and moved it by the railroad track. The Church became "Mt. Zion Baptist Church." Some of the original participants were: K.C. Sparks, Eloise Sparks, Willie Nobles, Etta Nobles, Louis Keys, Irene Keys, Will Brewster, Juanita Brewster, Gertrude Holman, Erma Huey and Mary McFarland.

In 1969, we moved to our present building and location at 401 S. Cedar Street, Leonard, Texas, where the church became "New Mt. Zion Baptist Church." Mr. Bob Sheridan, a former resident of Leonard was very instrumental in helping the church to organize and purchase our building. After the purchasing of the building, Mr. Alden Golden gave continuous contributions to the church until his death. Rev. R. D. Dread followed God's direction and he resigned as pastor in 1971.

Rev. Washington was our next pastor and he labored with us for almost two years until his wife's health declined and he retired.

In 1973, Rev. William McDonald, Jr. of Garland, Texas, joined our flock and led us faithfully for eight years (1973-1982) and successful work was achieved under his leadership. With their hands in God's hands, the members continued to press forward, continuing in prayer.

The Rev. Starks was our next shepherd and he led us for three years (1982-1985) until his health failed.

Next God called Rev. Clarence Green to leadership and he labored with us for three years (1985–1987). Under his leadership the Mission Society was developed under his wife Sis. Green. The Youth Group was started in 1985 under the direction of Sis. Marie Owens. Beginning members were Jennifer Hailey, Jessica Hailey, and Juanita Harper.

In 1987, the next call was made to Rev. Charles L. Franklin of Dallas, Texas, who led us for more than three years (1987–1991). During his tenure we saw the Youth grow, had the first Vacation Bible School, bathrooms were added to the church, carpet placed and new pulpit furniture was purchased.

The Rev. Michael Stromile of Lewisville, Texas was called in 1992. The church grew in spirit and fellowship. Rev. Stromile labored with the church for more than three years (1992–1996). Under his leadership we continued to see the church grow with greater youth participation. Also under Rev. Stromile's leadership, we purchased the Mobile home in 1995 to be used for dinners, etc. The trailer hosted the Pastor's Study and Church Office. Rev. Stromile was a major part of our New Mt. Zion Choir, where he served as Director and singer. Rev. Stromile resigned in August of 1996.

We were without a pastor for several months and Rev. Willie R. Houston of Leonard, Texas, our Associate Pastor of New Mt. Zion Baptist Church was faithful in feeding the flock with the Word of God.

In May of 1997, Rev. Willie R. Houston was installed as Pastor. Rev. Houston was faithful in his leadership to New Mt. Zion until his resignation in August 2001.

Rev. Fred Green was our leader for a short span, November 2001 through March 2002.

Rev. Adolphus Davis and his wife Sis. Faye Davis led our congregation for 5 years. God sent them to us in November 2002. In 2006, great numbers were added to the church, mostly Youth and experienced growth in each department. Significant repair and maintenance was done to the Sanctuary that year. Rev. Davis resigned in December 2007.

Missionary E. L. Nobles has been faithful on the journey for the Lord and with our church for more than 50 years. She is an asset to the Church and to the Community.

Minister Joanna Hailey, New Mt. Zion Associate Minister has been very instrumental in work at the church and preaching the Gospel throughout the area.

**In May of 2008, the Lord sent to us Rev. Billy R. Jones and 1<sup>st</sup> Lady Betty Jones to lead the flock. We were few in number but large on faith. This had been a year of struggling and growth in all areas of our Congregation, still getting sure footing on the direction the Lord wants us to go. We were very blessed to have Pastor and Sis. Jones led us as God led them. Rev. Jones resigned as Pastor in February 2010.**

**Currently, Minister Joanna Hailey Leads our Congregation as God leads her. Minister Hailey volunteered to lead us and we accepted. The past few months have been rough but her spirit and encouragement mixed with our desire and her desire to continue with the up building of our Father's Kingdom has been our priority.**

Throughout 2011 Rev. Hailey continues to lead New Mt. Zion Baptist Church.

TRIBUTE  
TO THOSE CALLED FROM LABOR TO REWARD

Deacons

Louis Keys  
K. C. Sparks

Trustees

Will Brewster  
Fred Espy  
Willie Nobles  
K. C. Sparks

Members

Willie Jones  
Bobby Nobles  
Harrison Brewster  
Gertrude Holman  
Juanita Brewster  
Ida Bell Johnson  
Effie Brewster  
Lessie Brewster  
Lucille Woods  
Pinky Swift  
Wilma Moore  
Annie Myrtle Craver  
Corene Brown  
Annie Ransom