

ADDENDUM TO YESTERDAY AT MT. ZION A.M.E. CHURCH OF NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

THEME: "Where there is no vision the people perish"

As mentioned before, there was no musical instrument in the first church. Singing was rendered by the congregation. Later, a melodeon was installed, and played by a member, Sister Sibina Clark. The first director of singing was a white man, Brother Wright. He was later succeeded by Brother Saunders. Still later, Brother Josiah Henson who loved and devoted his spare time to music, desired to organize a choir. Some strongly opposed this feeling they could ill afford to pay for an organist. Others didn't like organ music. Time passed, and finally a decision was reached to get an organ. A Mason and Hamlin organ was secured, and Miss Kate Marsh played it for the church. Brother Henson finally organized one of the best trained choirs of that time. Miss Kate Marsh gave her services gratis the first year. The following six years her fees were paid through proceeds from entertainments. Miss Marsh was succeeded by her sister, Mrs. Sidonia Scudder. Other organists were: Miss Mamie Skillman (later known as "Mame Robinson"), William Green, Mrs. "Lizzie" Davis, Thomas Marsh...

During Thomas Marsh's period as the church organist, Miss Lydia Schenck directed the choir. Miss Mamie Skillman organized the first Junior Choir and Mrs. Lizzie Davis the first Vesper choir wearing choir robes...

Rev. Stiles and his wife, both talented musicians, organized a Junior Choir also. Mrs. Stiles conducted this group. Among one of her soloists was Elsie Johnson, now married and residing in New York City...

Other church organists have included: Mrs. Minnie Miller Demby, Mrs. Anne Jennings Williams, Mrs. Serita Jennings McRae, Thomas H. Jennings, Mrs. Eugene I. Jennings, Mrs. Grace Raddall Thompson, and Herman Scott...

Mrs. Mary L. Schenck Jennings has been chorister of the Senior Choir for 35 years...

Rev. H. Solomon Hill devoted considerable time to community activities. He was President of the New Brunswick Branch NAACP, on the Board of Directors of the New Brunswick Urban League (quite active as an officer and one of its founders), on the Board of the New Brunswick Red Cross Chapter; the Bayard Street USO, the Executive Committee of the New Jersey Council of Churches, and the New Brunswick Council of Churches, as well as the Civil Rights Committee of the New Jersey Welfare Council demanded much of his attention...

Rev. W. C. Cook also played an active role in community affairs. He served as the President of the New Brunswick Urban League, President of the New Brunswick Council of Churches, served on the Boards of the Neighborhood House, the New Brunswick Chapter of American Red Cross; was a member of the Community Welfare Council, Secretary of the New Brunswick Ministers' Alliance, and was a member of the New Brunswick Branch NAACP...

In our "BOUQUET OF MEMORIES" we recall the church helping at the Bayard Street USO during World War II... contributions to the United Fund; the New Brunswick Urban League; the Joint Hospital Fund and the YWCA Building Funds (Through the Willing Workers Club)... the fabulous Fashion Shows of the Ladies Aid during the leadership of Mrs. Annie Cummings- (this organization had its beginnings over 50 years ago. A group of women banded themselves together & formed the "Fair Committee." This Committee held an Annual Fair which was held several nights during a given week. Many pretty handmade articles were sold. Miss Lydia Schenck, Miss Viola Schenck, Mrs. Julia Venable, Mrs. Anna Timbrook Jackson, Mrs. Myra Staats, Mrs. Julia Franklin, Mrs. Elsie Saunderson, Mrs. A. Doughty, and Mrs. Annie Van Liew were among the active members of this Committee. In later years, this group became known as the "Ladies Aid")... Mary L. Schenck Jennings was the first Junior Stewardess of our time. She was appointed on the Stewardess Board when we had just one Board (1924)...

the fine anniversaries of the Golden Leaf Chorus...the Programs of Songs given by the Choirs and Usher Boards... the Imperial Dramatic Club's fine plays and the Helping Hand Club's Dinners, etc. under the leadership of the late Mrs. Dora Price (this Club was organized as a Coal Club of Mt. Zion; the group left in 1935, to organize as the present Helping Hand Club)...the Willing Workers Club plays, Coffee Hours, and Smorgasbords...Stewardess Board A's Dinners, Stewardess Board B's Baby Contests, Stewardess Board C's Feasts of Harvests ...the times certain members were so afraid of being left alone in the basement because of graves nearby...the Sunday School picnics at Bellwood Park, Boynton Beach, Keansburg...the Sunday School Honor Roll during the pastorate of Rev. Samuel Sturges...the inspiring sermons of Rev. H. Solomon Hill...the masterful playing of our organ at the dedicatory services by Carl Diton...the time we had 63 members contributing \$42 in dollar money (1872) and the pastor's salary was \$564.25 as compared with today... Elsie Mason heading Stewardess Board C for over 35 years -the only president of that Board, and Marion Lane serving as that Board's Secretary for over 25 years... that our "sister church"-the Ebenezer Baptist Church of New Brunswick-was organized in 1873 by a group of ex-slaves who worshipped at a Handy Street residence until 1878 when the group built a small church on the present site, corner of Lee Avenue and Comstock Street...

Mt. Zion has its share of outstanding citizens, among whom are: Mrs. Sarah Curry, Mrs. Amelia Robinson, Mrs. Ellen Hart Wales, the Misses Long, Edward Lane, Jr., Edwin Bess-Teachers; A. B. Cooper, Sr., former Lab Technician at Rutgers University and Author of "Foot prints of Prince Hall Masonry in New Jersey" (now seriously ill); J. Herbert Carman, New Brunswick's first Negro policeman; Government workers Jeannette Bryant, Minnie Miller Demby, Anne J. Williams, Belma J. Brooks, Serita J. Mc Rae, Corinne S. Henry, Jean Cooper, Harry A. Crumidy, Sr; Stanley Whittaker, Parole Officer in Berkeley, California... Henry Jennings, Jr., Postman... Dolores Adams, Lab Technician, Rutgers Department of Microbiology... Ann P. Bess, Lois M.

Bryan, Mrs. J. Herbert Carman, Sales Clerks (Mrs. Carman is also Assistant Buyer)... Clarence Bergen, Jr., Director of a community center in Srannton, Pa... Vivian P. Anderson, Alice J. Archibald, Social Workers... Doctors David Anthony and Ralph Birt (surgeon now practicing in Baltimore, Maryland)... Dr. Chester G. Peterson, local Dentist... James Twyman, Shift Supervisor, Calco... William Jackson who spearheaded the organization of the Holmes Marshall Fire Co... William Reid, Parole Officer in New Jersey... Claudine C. Lewis, prominent Club Woman and PTA Worker... Mitchell Thomas, outstanding Disc Jockey in Wilmington, Delaware... Etta Thomas and Aldrage B. Cooper, Jr., recent college graduates... Oscar Z. Roseberry, photographer... Eugene I. Jennings, Carpenter and builder... Mrs. J. W. Waters, Ex-Secretary of the Council of Church Women of the Oranges and Maplewood-the first colored woman to hold this office...

The vision of the early church official body--James Baker, Josiah Henson, George Martin, John Martin, Benjamin Hagaman, Primus Schenck, Abner Lee, Hannah Clark, Celia Conover, Hannah Henson, Catherine Saunderson, Martha VanHorn, Martha Marsh, Elizabeth Baker, Ellen Lupton, Jacob Anderson, Charles Schenck. Harriet Henson, Bertha Hagaman, and Catherine Anderson has certainly been reflected in the early progress of our church. In the more recent years, Mt. Zion has had or now has the families of Nixons, Schencks, Tituses, Marshes, Venables, Jennings, Holmes, Bergens, Adams, Birts, Harrises, Browns, Millers. Harpers, Twymans, Samples, Thompsons, Howards, Lewises, Cummings, Carmans, Doughtys, Williams, Woolseys, Hoaglands, Quicks, Grants, Zacharys, Van Derveers, Masons, Henrys, Roseberrys, Richardsons, Thomases, Garretsons, Middlestons, Robinsons, VanLiews, Lanes. Wrights, Salters, Worshams, Petersons, Fletchers, Crumidys, Hushes, Hathaways, Ways, Coopers, and a host of others too numerous to mention, but all doing some deeds of kindness that contribute to the glory of Mt. Zion...