

September 10, 1989

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS SILVER (25TH) ANNIVERSEARY
OF REV. HENRY A. HILDEBRAND'S PASTORATE OF MT. ZION AME CHURCH
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

"And we know all things work together for good to them
that love GOD, to them who are the called according
to HIS purpose." Romans 8:28

Greetings! Words of appreciation and best wishes to all of you assembled here today. The Occasion for this "time of jubilee" is - the year when Rev. Henry A. Hildebrand joins the "Quarter Century Club" having served Mt. Zion AME Church in New Brunswick as its spiritual leader for 25 years! This is his Silver Anniversary, and reaching this point of Christian Service at one continuous AME Pastorate is a very special achievement! Congratulations on reaching this important milestone, and of your meeting each challenge along the way!

These years were marked with excellency as a minister, leader, and administrator. Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Hurrah for you! Ole! Hallelujah! May GOD bless! "The great use of a life is to spend it for something that outlasts it." This you have done.

Members and friends of Mt. Zion have demonstrated through these years that the success of any project depends on the good will and confidence that you have in each other. "All chiefs and no Indians" will not produce successful programs. Your membership and friends have shown their loyalty and faith in your leadership, not only by their cooperation, but by their generosity. It is reflected in the wondrous record-breaking things that the church has accomplished over these two and a half decades!

Ours was a "creative vision" - a dream 25 years ago to build a new temple, and it has been realized! Count your anniversaries by memories of the happy worthwhile years you have spent, by the treasures you have amassed through the years. Let Mt. Zion rejoice! We salute you, and recognize well your role in the rejoicing.

For a quarter-of-a-century we have toiled together "in the Master's vineyard" being sustained by the POWER that watches over all! Many and varied have been our experiences. There have been occasions of victory and defeat, but our joys have out-numbered our moments of sadness and sorrow. We are grateful for the stamina and faith that enabled us to surmount the seemingly impassable obstacles that we have had to overcome. But we have the "blessed assurance" that GOD will guide and sustain us, and lift us from our defeats.

Oh how we thank the Creator for all the blessings we have had that enabled us to build and worship in the "new Mt. Zion!"--Rev. Hildebrand encouraged us to outgrow our fears, doubts, and suspicions. GOD increased our strength under his leadership, and geared us to continue undaunted in the face of adversity. For your care, direction, and blessings, we give GOD thanks, and

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entrust ourselves to your leadership.

May each future year find us wiser, happier, more useful to others, and more spiritually equipped to face the problems confronting us right on our doorsteps - drug abuse, alcoholism, illiteracy, inadequate housing, unemployment-to name a few.

Let our thanksgiving be expressed through sharing and also participating in services that will enhance the spiritual growth of the entire community. May we like the sturdy oak "grow tall in GOD's love." A ministry is a public trust. We pray GOD to continue leadership sensitive to HIS will, tempering power with wisdom.

We have ventured down "unknown corridors, - down which we feared to trod, but we thank Rev. Hildebrand for his help in preparing us to go that extra mile" to face the challenges that lie ahead. He brought out the best in us as we were impelled to seek improvements, to make new plans, to organize, and to build.

May this occasion prove to be a new revelation under GOD that this city and others of our time may become cities in which a "good GOD dwells!" We are happy that we have had a leader with creative ideas like ours, who was our partner in building this temple to serve the spiritual needs of this community.

In the fullness of this day's joy, we turn our hearts in praise and gratitude to our Lord! We look back with reverence and awe! We look ahead with anticipation of greater joys ahead! GOD be praised!

Alice J. Archibald