

1827 - 1932

History of Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church of  
New Brunswick, N.J. from 1827 to the present Date Nov. 1932

Picture in your mind a plot of ground with a long walk a small frame building like an old school house back in the rear as you enter and a burying ground around it—such is the first building of this Church.

In 1827 according to Rev. Morgan's history this church was organized. Aunt Jane Hoagland and her husband Joseph Hoagland being of the original founders, the land was given by them. This property was originally in Somerset County and according to the records in the Somerset County Clerks office Book N of deeds pages 725-8; 726. On the 12th day of December, 1829, these premises were conveyed to the trustees of Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church by Abraham S. Clark and wife the same being 30 ft. N. on Division Street 113 ft. 26 in. east to line belonging to dutch church 30 ft. South and 115 ft. West being bounded on the North by lot of late James Carmen; East by lot of Dutch church; South lot of Lewis Dears and West by Division Street. This church and St. Peters was the first this side the railroad which at that time was not elevated. The people used to bring fagots with them to church to make the fire and sometimes they would have so much spiritual fire they would not need any other fire. Bro. Joseph Hoagland was minister in charge until the conference began to send ministers. The men used to sit on one side the women on the other, officers in Amen corners.

Rev. Richard Robinson 1832-33; William Moore 1834-35; Israel Scott 1836; William Moore 1837; J. Bulagh 1838; John Boggs 1839; Henry Turner 1840-41; G. Gunly 1841; H. Turner and A. W. Wayman 1842; C. Durham 1843; Willis Nazery 1844-45; William Moore 1846; Israel Scott 1847; Sheperd Holcomb 1848; Thomas Oliver 1849-50; A. C. Crippen and Andrew Till 1851; A. C. Crippen 1852; J. Bulagh 1853-54; J. Young 1855; Spencer Logan 1856; G. W. Johnson 1857-60; Peter Gardener 1861;

In 1861 they considered building a new church. We have cancelled Bond & Mortgage dated October 11-1861 given for \$ 1233.25 to cover the cost of work and material of the new church, signed by the following Trustees: Primus Quick, York Williams. This building was a brick building. They removed some of the graves and built the church near the street. The bill for laying the floor dated January 4, 1862 and costing \$ 153.36 is still in existence. This bill was paid February 21, 1863. The bond for said church was paid in full, April 28, 1868. The Pastors during this time were: William Authors 1862-64; B. Lynch 1865-66; William H. Williams 1867-68; J. V. Pierce 1869-70; William H. Watson 1871-72; Henry Davis 1872-73; S. B. Williams 1873; Joshua Woodlin 1874-75; William Rodgers 1875; Redmond Faucett 1876-78. During Rev. Faucett's term the church had sagged and cracked across the end so it was unsafe and being condemned by City Officials, it was torn down and the present edifice started. While this was being built the congregation worshipped in a school house on Hamilton Street. There was a Mortgage taken on this building October 22, 1878 for \$ 1650.00 It was Dedicated October 16, 1881 by Rev. J. H. Morgan, Master of Ceremonies, Rev. S. B. Williams, preaching the Sermon, Rev. F. A. Davis, Pastor. During Rev. T. Davis's Administration Miss Louisa Thomas, now Mrs. Chas. Schenck; Miss Elizabeth Fields and Miss

Lydia Schenck, raised \$10 and the Pulpit was upholstered in beautiful Red Plush material. The balance of the money was used to buy a box the monthly

which was used for collecting the monthly gas bills. As each person passed out after dismissal they would drop in a coin. Uncle Benny Hageman usually took care of this box. The Trustees were: James Baker, John Taylor, Leonard Banks, Benjamin Forman, George Martin, Joseph Garretson. These ministers followed: Rev. Faucett. T. A. Cuff 1879-80; T. A. Davis 1881-82; J. C. Aylor 1883-85; L. Sturges 1886-89; W. A. Price 1889; A. H. Newton 1890; J. H. Price 1891-92. This Mortgage was paid in full 1892 during Rev. Pierce's pastorate. J. W. Cooper 1893. Under Rev. J. W. Cooper the parsonage was built at a cost of \$1000.00, this being borrowed from Harvey Shimway October 9, 1894. Josiah Henson, Pres. of Trustees, Theodore Davis, Sec. Following J. W. Cooper were: Walter Thompson 1896; I. W. L. Rountree 1897; J. H. Bean 1898; G. B. Smith 1899; J. C. H. Christmas 1901-04, J. T. Diggs 1905-06; H. C. Ashley 1908-09; A. A. Collins and C. G. Collins 1910-11; W. H. Hicks 1911-12. During this time the Mortgage was burned, Mrs. Martha Marsh being the oldest member and Miss Hazel Ivy, now Mrs. Goines, the youngest, holding the Mortgage. The next Pastors were: J. H. Morgan 1913; J. W. Morrishow 1914-17; who had the church repainted. S. Sturges 1918-21; During Rev. Sturges' time the parsonage was re-modeled. Rev. Joseph Stiles 1921-23; Rev. J. H. Jackson 1923-24. During his term the basement was renovated and necessary improvements made and a Pipe Organ purchased. But in 1925 Rev. C. G. Collins was appointed to this church. He then installed the Organ which was Dedicated July, 1925 with impressive ceremonies, Rev. J. H. Jackson, preaching the Sermon and leading the Dedication exercises. Rev. Collins also redecorated and painted the church. Rev. I. C. Horsey was appointed, who served from 1927 to 1930. After Conference 1930 he became ill and departed this life July 1930. Rev. J. H. Jackson, his brother-in-law, was then appointed to finish the Conference year. Just before Conference convened in 1931, Rev. Jackson was in an automobile accident of which he never recovered; he died May, 1931. He was reappointed but not recovering from illness, Rev. R. B. Smith was appointed to the charge of this church finishing the year, 1931 and returned 1932. During this time the woodwork of the front part of the church was painted and a new concrete stoop built by the Imperial Dramatic Club, members and friends, which improved the church greatly.

In this same year, May, 1932, our General Conference convened in Cleveland, Ohio. At this Conference, Bishop Heard was assigned to the First Episcopal District, our District, having served in that capacity a few years ago. After returning from Cleveland, Ohio, Bishop Heard called a Special Meeting of the New Jersey Pastors at Trenton, N. J., June 14, 1932, and at this meeting Rev. R. B. Smith was reassigned to the Camden-Trenton District, and as Presiding Elder.

Rev. G. H. Crayton was sent to New Brunswick as Pastor of this church. Seeing the need of having carpet in the church, Miss Mary L. Schenck began soliciting for helpers to secure the carpet, this being in Rev. Smith's Administration. After getting his consent, the following members were given books, donated by Mrs. Anna Van Liew for donation toward that Fund: Mrs. Polly Rhim, Mrs. Edna Holmes, Miss Mary Griffin, Mrs. Laura Matthews, Mrs. Ada Jennings, and Mrs. Edith Middleton who served as the Committee, Mrs. Anna Van Liew, Secretary.

*The Pews were re-varnished and floor painted by the same committee*

With the help of our Pastor, Rev. G. H. Crayton and our members and friends and God Almighty being at the Head, the pews have been restained and the carpet has been laid for this 105th Anniversary (November 27-December 5, 1932) which has greatly beautified our church. We pray for continued progress in the work of our church and may this History be preserved for the future generations. The present church Official Board is as follows: Mrs. Annie Jackson, Aretta Doughty, Lydia Schenck, Lillian Thompson, Elizabeth Carman, Jennie Nixon, Annie Cummings, Harriet Van Derveer, Ester Evans, Ada Jennings, Anna Salters, Edith Jennings, Anna Van Liew, Carrie Carman, Anna Davis, Laurah Whittaker, Mary L. Schenck, Thresa Fitzgerald, Sarah Cole, Elsie Mason, Castella Ransom, Polly Rhim, Mattie Williams, Laura Miller, Flossie Spradley Alice Williams, Edith Middleton, Olive Washington, Marion Lane, Walter Jackson, George Jennings, Edgar Jennings, Henry Jennings, Charles Schenck, Henry Haywood, Calvin Nixon, T. A. Butler, Peter Banks, Theodore Spradley, Tanner Wright, William Harper, Cyrus Grant, William Brown.

Typed by- Miss Anna E. Jennings.

December 15, 1932.