

# ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

## 102<sup>nd</sup> Church Anniversary

On the 17th day of February 1917, a small group of people began holding prayer meetings at 48 Shore Road, Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, N.Y. Having laid the foundation under the leadership of Rev. J.E. Roberson, they organized Zion Baptist Church at 48 Shore Road on the 6th day of June 1917. The names of the founders were Bros. Lincoln Downing, Alexander Clayborn, Daniel Pugsley and Sisters Estella Francis, Fannie Montree, Jane Downing, and Ethel Hill.

Under the leadership of Rev. Roberson the small group grew and when he left, after two years, they kept together, tarried, prayed, and fasted until they called Bro. S. Scott, a Licentiate to lead them. Bro. Scott was ordained by the group and became their pastor. After moving the congregation to 1108 Fulton Street, Rev. Scott resigned. Again, Zion was without a leader and the remaining members began to drift away until there were only a faithful few remaining. Eventually, all of the original members left except Deacon Downing. He, along with approximately eight or nine members waited, prayed and believed God for a leader. On the second Sunday in October 1921, God honored their faith and sent to them, Rev. B.J. Lowry. By this time they were worshipping on Atlantic Avenue near Washington Avenue. Dr. Lowry with strong determination and faith in God led them on at this place. With his dynamic preaching abilities and by the aid of the Holy Spirit, God added to their number rapidly. During this period of growth the church moved to 990 Fulton Street where they remained for 14 months and then moved to 87 Irving Place where Dr. Lowry had the church incorporated in June 1924. They continued to grow, accumulate finances, organize clubs, and were now on their way to building a lasting organization.

On July 1, 1924 God blessed them to be able to purchase the property on which the present Zion stands. They took title and moved in on the same day and held a dedicatory service in August 1924. The church grew from seven members in 1921 to more than 5,000. It has been blessed with faithful

*and loyal men, women, and children who with God's blessings were able to build the church, purchase a parsonage and The Fannie Montrie Educational Center; which was organized on June 17, 1973, and dedicated on October 2, 1977.*

*On May 5, 1968, Zion held the dedication and communion service for the B.J. Lowry Memorial Organ. At that time, they were blessed with a dedication sermon, litany, prayer, organ solo, and communion.*

*On Monday, January 15, 1973, the First Annual Observance of Dr. King's birthday was held. This became the first memorial service in honor of Dr. King's birthday in the City of New York. Not only is this memorial service still exciting and vibrant, it has evolved into an annual award ceremony where three different scholarships are awarded to graduating high school seniors with outstanding academic records.*

*For 63 years Dr. Lowry served faithfully until his health failed which led to him becoming Pastor Emeritus in 1984. Upon Dr. Lowry's death, on August 21, 1985, an era was ended and a chapter in the long history of Zion closed. The Pulpit Committee, appointed by Dr. Lowry, began to seek a new Pastor on September 29, 1985. On February 9, 1986, The Rev. M. Marquette Peace Jr. was installed as Pastor of Zion Baptist Church and the journey as Pastor and people began.*

*By God's grace we have accomplished a lot. Pastor Peace is a man with a vision and with a strong commitment to the cause of Christ. In 33 years many great and glorious things have been accomplished beginning with "Boot Camp" that has been a blessing to Zion and has brought Glory and Honor to God. The Holy Spirit continues to move in a mighty way and called for the first female to be ordained Reverend at Zion Baptist Church. Her name is Reverend Sophie Meusa. In 2018, God blessed this house yet again and called for the anointing and blessing of the second ordination of a female to be called Reverend. She is Reverend Teresa Williams.*

*Through the years, we have made major improvements on the Church and Parsonage. During 1986, Pastor Peace instituted the Evangelistic Task Force Ministry, under which many outreach ministries are serving our*

*Church and Community. He also began the New Members Bible Classes and established the Deacon's Watch Care Ministry.*

*On November 27, 1994, the Zion Baptist Church Bible Institute was officially opened and dedicated to the glory of God. We truly praise God for this Institute and the many lives that have been changed through Bible study and the resulting spiritual growth. We are especially thankful for the many students that have become active in ministries inside and outside of Zion because of studying the Word of God here.*

*In 1996, we were blessed to purchase property on St. James Place and on February 1997, we praised God as we burned the mortgage.*

*On January 19, 1997, Pastor Peace announced a bold, innovative, and Biblically supported move in Zion, when he appointed twelve women to be trained as Deacons. On November 30, 1997 at 3:30 pm, we shared in a momentous and historic occasion when twelve women were ordained as Deacons. The 12 women ordained that day were: Annie Barnes, Mary Cann, Velma Chapman, Yvonne Foulk, Estelle Ruffin, Colleen Herod, Linda John, Patricia Lewin, Nadeen McCall, Carol Petinaud, Rosa White, and Calotis Wingate.*

*On April 13, 1997, we had a ribbon cutting ceremony dedicating our second van to transport our seniors to and from Church.*

*On February 19, 1998, under the direction of Pastor Peace and the leadership of Sister Deborah Kennedy, the Kids Praise Ministry was initiated. Kids Praise is where our children come out on the second and third Saturday of each month to learn Christian values, how to apply those values to their everyday lives, and to fellowship with each other. Kids Praise has spawned additional thriving youth ministries such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Youth Praise, and Junior Missionaries.*

*Four years later on January 27, 2002, Pastor Peace ordained four Ministers and four Deaconesses. The Ministers were Annie Barnes, Patsy Haynes, Mittie P. Merriwether, and Winston Simmons.*

*On August 19, 2004, Zion purchased a 23-passenger bus for our Seniors and on October 2, 2004, a chair lift was installed. In addition, on June 27, 2007 a third church van was purchased to facilitate the movement of our members.*

*On November 22, 2009, renovation of the Educational Building began. In June 2010, the renovation was completed one month ahead of schedule. On September 26, 2010, this newly named "Multi-Purpose Building" was dedicated back to God during a ribbon cutting ceremony. God truly blessed this renovation as we seized the vision and moved by faith to make the vision a reality.*

*During the weekend of February 25, 2011 – February 27, 2011, Zion Baptist Church hosted its first Youth Conference. The theme was Youth Waging War - 1 John 4:4. Approximately one hundred Youth attended and many dedicated/rededicated their life to Christ during that glorious and Holy-Spirit filled weekend!*

*On November 25, 2012 Pastor Peace continuing his bold innovation, ordained Dorothy Gamble as a Deacon.*

*On January 20, 2013, Pastor Peace appointed a new Assistant to the Pastor, the Reverend Thomas Stokes.*

*As of January 2014, Zion is blessed with 54 different ministries. In addition to the Evangelistic Ministries referred to above, there are the Married Couples, Singles, Senior Citizen Spotlight, and Daughters of Zion ministries to address the specific needs of our various members. Per Psalms 150, we glorify God through the music and arts via five distinct choirs, a Mime Ministry, a Dance Ministry, an Audio & Video Ministry, and the Praise Team. Another example of how Zion Baptist Church is tending to the needs of its people is our Hour of Power, which is when our Seniors meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 12 noon for prayer and fellowship.*

*We give God praise for all that He has done and we cannot forget that our greatest joy comes from rejoicing, as many souls are being won to the*

*Lord. As we celebrate our 102<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary, under the guidance of Pastor Peace 3997 souls have come to Christ since February 1986. Praise God!*

*We pause to thank God for the distance that He has brought us, for the shepherds He has sent us and for all this body of Christ have accomplished. By His grace for the vision that's still bright before us...for His goodness and mercy that follow us...for His love and peace that surround us.*

*We Give God Praise!*