

## Church History

The Mount Airy Baptist Church began its long and illustrious history in the same geographic vicinity of the Nation's Capitol where it is presently located in November 1893, several blocks from the Capitol Building, at 110 F Street, N.W., a group of seven men met to pray with a sick man, as was the accepted Christian standard. The group grew in size and zeal as Rev. C. C. Mason began to preach the gospel and he encouraged them to form a mission to advance the Lord's work. The group soon organized into the Mount Airy Baptist Church and Rev. Mason was called as its first Pastor.

The church continued to grow and meetings were moved to larger quarters in the 400 Block of K Street, N.W., in property vacated by the Mount Carmel Baptist Church. Rev. Mason served faithfully for seven years until his death.

Around 1900, Rev. A.B. Hamm of the Zion Baptist Church succeeded Rev. Mason as Pastor. This man of inspiration, zeal and vision led in the acquisition of land on L Street, N.W., which is part of our present site. It is here where the first building was built. After seven years as Pastor, Rev. Hamm passed to his reward.

On June 1, 1906, Rev. Alfred J. Tyler, formerly of the Bethlehem Baptist Church of McKeesport, PA, was installed as Pastor. He found the church again in need of larger quarters and led the congregation in a building program. Groundbreaking for a new edifice occurred in September 1925, and "A Monument to Jesus" was erected. After 30 years of toil and preaching, Rev. A. J. Tyler went to his rest.

On February 18, 1937, one of the sons of the former Pastor, Rev. Earl K. Tyler, was unanimously elected Pastor. This young preacher quickly brought new congregants into the church and good works continued. Rev. E. K. Tyler organized new clubs, sponsored a Sunday School of over 350 children, and formed a "Junior Church," attesting to his love of young people. Rev. Tyler licensed and ordained various sons of the church who went on to extend the influence of Mount Airy Baptist Church throughout the city. Rev. Earl K. Tyler was called to his reward on May 13, 1955, after a pastorate of approximately 19 years.

In September 1956, Rev. Dr. Clarence M. Long, Jr., co-Pastor of Bethesda Baptist Church in New Rochelle, N.Y., answered the call and eagerly accepted his duties as Pastor of Mount Airy Baptist Church. Dr. Long carried out numerous innovations in the church and the community, including the merger of the Junior Church into worship in the main sanctuary, and the purchase of land for the construction of a church extension building for religious, social and education activities. In 1971, the building was officially named the "C.M. Long, Jr., Church Extension Center."

Additional accomplishments under Dr. Long include expansion of social missionary work at home and abroad, and sponsorship and control of a high rise, non-profit apartment building (the Tyler House), the first in the District of Columbia to be sponsored by a Black church. His persistence with the D.C. City Council, when the building was slated to be excavated, is the reason why Mount Airy Baptist Church continues to stand as a source of commitment for religious education and community enrichment. After 22 years of dedicated leadership, Dr. Long was called to his just reward in October 1978.

Rev. Rafe M. Taylor, Sr., former Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Boston, MA, was called as our sixth Pastor in November 1980. Under Reverend Taylor, the church continued to save souls and institute many new programs a "Feed the Hungry" program; an intern program with Howard University School of Divinity; and the Mount Airy Baptist Church Federal Credit Union were established. Perhaps one of his proudest accomplishments was the establishment of the Mount

Airy Baptist Church Pastoral Care and Counseling Center, the first for African-American churches in the Washington Metropolitan Area. It was open to members and non-members regardless of financial resources.

Under Rev. Taylor's tutorage, many young people were called to the ministry and continue to serve. God called Reverend Taylor home on May 7, 1992.

In June 1994, the congregation called Rev. C. Phillip Johnson as the seventh pastor. In September 1998, Rev. Johnson left to pursue other endeavors.

Our eighth and current Pastor is Rev. L. B. West. Under his leadership the Lord is preparing us to "Greater and more wonderful works". All clubs and societies are renamed ministries and several new ministries have begun (*i.e.*, the Children's Ministry; Christ Centered Young People (CCYP) Ministry; Puppet Ministry; Unity Contemporary Choir (UCC); Recreation Ministry; Information Technology (IT) Ministry which incorporates a state of the art computer lab and resource center; Family Life Ministry; Robotics Ministry; Health Education Ministry; Transportation Ministry; Women's Ministry and the Homeless/Drug Addiction Ministry).