

## Mt Pleasant Baptist Church History

Mount Pleasant Baptist Church was organized in 1866 in the old Floris School located on Frying Pan Road in Herndon, Virginia. The founders were Mary Ellen Naylor Bush, Rev. Fred Cook, Rev. Louis H. Bailey, Rev. William Smith, and Brother Temple Cheeks. Among the first to be baptized in 1866 were Burns Turner and Roberta Henderson. In 1882, Mount Pleasant was relocated to Horse Pen Road in Floris, Virginia (now known as Coppermine Road in Herndon), on land donated by Brother Henry Cook. The bell in the first church on Coppermine Road was donated in 1919 by Deacon Lewis Albert Bush, Sr., who was one of Mary Ellen Naylor Bush's sons.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of several pastors, the church continued to grow. Faithful pastors of the early church included :

Rev. Fred Cook (1866-1882)

Rev. Trent T. Hedgman (1896-1904)

Rev. Oliver Wood (1906-1911)

Rev. Louis H. Bailey (1882-1896)

Rev. Reuben Nickens (1904-1906)

Rev. Bentley Westley (1911-1913)

In 1914, Rev. William L. Hill became pastor and served prayerfully for nearly 50 years until his failing health caused him to retire in July 1964. Under his leadership, many of the current ministries were organized. They included the Men's Club, Women's Club, Senior Usher Board, Finance Committee, Senior Choir, Deaconess Board and the Missionary Society. Sunday Worship Services were held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays. Rev. Hill donated the first funds toward the building of a new church, once located on Coppermine Road.

Rev. Ronald Winters was called as pastor in 1965. It was through his recommendation that Rev. Hill became "Pastor Emeritus". The Youth Choir, Junior Usher Board, and the Youth Department were organized under Rev. Winter's leadership. Sunday morning worship services were expanded to four Sundays a month, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday being designated as "Youth Day". The church welcomed the presence of its first "church nurse," Sister Edith White. Rev. Winters shared Rev. Hill's vision of a new church and continued to work toward organizing the building fund. Rev. Winters served for seven years.

Rev. James Russell was installed as pastor in November 1973. Under his leadership the Benevolence Fund and the Building Committee were established. He also made preparations and worked toward implementing the first Constitution and By-Laws at Mount Pleasant. Like the pastors before him, Rev. Russell had a great interest in the building program. He prayerfully led Mount Pleasant for five years.

Rev. Lloyd Roberts was pastor from 1978-1986. During his tenure, the Nurse's Unit, Education Scholarship Committee, Drama Club, Gospel Chorus, New Member's Club, Sunbeams, Young Adult Chorale Ensemble, and the Food Bank were established. The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday was designated as Missionary Sunday and Bible Study was instituted as part of the weekly prayer services. On November 24, 1979, Rev. Roberts turned the first shovel at groundbreaking ceremonies for a new Mount Pleasant Baptist Church on Coppermine Road. The Mount Pleasant Baptist Church family, accompanied by many friends and supporters marched into the new house of worship at 13615 Coppermine Road on Sunday, September 19, 1982. There was a week of services following the dedication to celebrate Mount Pleasant's 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Rev. Roberts's third anniversary as pastor. The cornerstone laying services were held on September 25, 1982.

The year 1982 also marked 100 years since the donation of the land for the first church.

On August 19, 1987, Rev. Randolph Witcher was installed as pastor and served until 1990. A powerful music ministry evolved with a strong supportive ministerial staff. Under his leadership, the United Voices and the Young Adult Chorale Ensemble was renamed the Choral Ensemble. The Male Choir, the Inspirational Praise Ensemble, Prison ministry, and Singles Ministry were formed.

Rev. Paul Grandberry served as pastor from April through September 1991. The early morning service was added during his tenure.

In August 1992, Rev. Ronald Patrick was installed as pastor and served until June, 1994. During his tenure, the church bus was purchased to transport the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church members. A strong spiritual fellowship developed among the men and the Men's Ministry came into fruition. The first annual Men's Retreat occurred in July 1993. The Male Choir was reorganized and renamed the Male Chorus.

Rev. Dr. James L. Graham, Jr. was elected pastor by the church body in April 1995 and installed on September 16, 1995. The congregation grew rapidly and, in March 1996, the worship services were moved to the Herndon Middle School for a period of three years. On December 28, 1997, ground breaking ceremonies were held for the building of God's newest tabernacle. We entered through the doors of our present house of worship at 2516 Squirrel Hill Road on Saturday, May 1, 1999, with dedicatory and recognition services, followed by celebratory and praise services May 2<sup>nd</sup> through May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1999. The Cornerstone laying ceremony and basement dedication were conducted by Rev. Graham on March 26, 2000.

The Mount Pleasant Baptist Church Bible Institute was established in 1999, and a partnership with Faith Christian University and Schools in the Fall of 2000, the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church Christian Academy in September 2000 and the bookstore in 2007.

Under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Graham and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the church adopted a global vision for ministry. Numerous ministries have been added: the Youth Ministry; Nursery Ministry; Senior Citizens Ministry; Intercessory Prayer Ministry; Praise and Dance Ministries; Health, Fitness and Wellness Ministry; Step Team; Hospitality Ministry; and Counseling Ministry; to name a few.

In 2000, under the vision of Rev. Graham, Mount Pleasant Baptist Church developed its logo - A picture of the World Globe with a Cross on the left side. Underneath the World Globe are the words: ***God's World...Our Mission Field***. Mount Pleasant Baptist Church continues to place more emphasis on Missions as a church and has Mission efforts and partners in the U.S., Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, Benin, Nigeria, Haiti, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.

We cherish our past, and we are thankful for all of the outstanding pastors that the Lord has provided. God has blessed us tremendously. To Him, we give all the glory and honor. As we move toward our future Family Life Center, we shall always be mindful of our motto:

**“I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENS ME”**  
Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

The church enhanced its digital communications with its members through television broadcasts and the website, which featured online giving.

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On May 1, 2016, Rev. Dr. James L. Graham, Jr. retired after 21 years of service as the Senior Pastor. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, Rev. Dr. Kevin E. Donalson, Sr. was elected as the next Senior Pastor of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church. He was Installed on August 28, 2016.

Under the leadership of Pastor Donalson, God has continued to move Mount Pleasant Baptist Church. We are committed to building the Kingdom of God one soul at a time, through our four pillars: Seeking and saving the lost; Spiritual Growth; Service; and Social Engagement. We have emphasized local evangelism and service, continued to modernize the way we communicate, strengthened our online presence and online streaming broadcast, and become more engaging on social media.