



HISTORY OF THE SALEM BAPTIST DISTRICT ASSOCIATION, INC.

We thank God for our rich history. Salem Baptist District Association got its humble beginnings in the spring of 1946. A group of ministers from the Bethlehem Baptist District Association met at the Monumental Baptist Church of Chicago, 729 East Oakwood Boulevard, with host pastor and President of the Baptist General State Convention of Illinois, Rev. James Lafayette Horace. During this meeting, the organizing of a new district association was discussed. This was due to the desire of some of the ministers to remain affiliated and supportive of the Baptist General State convention of Illinois, Incorporated. After much discussion, letters were sent out to various pastors and churches on the proposal of organizing a new district. The response was overwhelming. On May 9, 1946 at the Union Tabernacle Baptist Church located at 4636 South Evans in Chicago under the pastorate of the Rev. Joseph e. Sullivan, the vote was unanimous by the following pastors/laymen: Dr. J.L. Horace; Rev. W.A. Johnson; Rev. W.D. Kilgore; S.A. Grayson; J.E. Sullivan; J.R. Davis; J.W. Ward; C. Campbell; R. Faulkner; O.L. Lewis; C.W. Jones; Rev. N.C. Lunford; Rev. W.C. Upshaw; T. Anderson; M. Anthony; Rev. J.W. Stewart; G.B. Locke; Rev. J.N. Wordlaw; Dea. Sidney Jones; Bro. E. Baker; Sis. Ella Lunford; A.K. Johnson; Sis. Mary Middlebrook; Sis. Mary O. Locke; O. Spencer; E. Briggs; H. Brooks; Sis. Mary Powell; W.R. Mosley; M.J. Leverett; M. till; Willie Williams; Sis. Zelma Daughtery; and Sis. Ethel R. Mars.

The Rev. A.J. Johnson suggested the new district be called the "Salem Baptist District Association" because Salem means "PEACE" in Hebrew.

This new district was to be an integral part of the Baptist General State Convention of Illinois, Incorporated. The purpose of the association is:

- to promote the kingdom of Christ on earth;
- to train and develop local church members in Christian education;
- to promote a spirit of Christian fellowship and leadership; and
- to closely observe Baptist principles and doctrines.

The first offering collected was in the amount of \$33.30. This was needed for representation in the State Convention. It was agreed that the regular meetings would be held one day monthly and two days quarterly. The Rev. A.J. Johnson was elected Moderator, and the first Constitution was adopted in August of 1946.

In 1952, Dr. Sterling Grayson was elected Moderator. Under Moderator Grayson, tenure was introduced due to the decline in membership and interest. Therefore, monthly meetings were implemented instead of quarterly. During Dr. Grayson's tenure, one person was awarded a one-

year scholarship to the Chicago Baptist Institute, and many missionary clinics were set up throughout the city to help the faithful spread the Word of God.

At the Annual Session in July of 1958, the Rev. Roy Faulkner was elected Moderator. Moderator Faulkner was considered an influential figure in the history of Salem as he and many conscientious workers conducted various workshops and seminars on Christian Principles, which has resulted in the continual growth of this Association. In May of 1961, Moderator Faulkner made his transition, and Dr. Hezekiah B. Brady, 1st Vice-Moderator, served until the Annual Session in July, at which time he was elected Moderator. This Annual Session was held at the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church.

During Moderator Brady's tenure, there was the unforgettable trip to Springfield, Illinois, where 75 young people and adults toured the State Capitol, Governor's Office, Chambers of the House of Representatives, Judge Parsons' chambers and courtroom. Visits were made to the Lincoln Monument and to New Salem, Illinois. On November 17, 1966, a Testimonial Luncheon was given to honor several senior citizens for 20 years of faithful and dedicated service to the Association.

In 1967, Dr. Shelvin J. Hall was elected Moderator. During his tenure, there was tremendous growth of churches within the Association. Some of his many accomplishments were to unify the auxiliaries and departments to function independently with no overlapping of efforts, directives or perspectives. A central banking system was implemented; the development of the H.R. Stephenson Institute, a prototype of the L.K. Williams Institute of Bishop College, was to include District Associations across the city for a week of study. The Institute was named in honor of Dr. Stephenson for his outstanding work in Christian Education. The Emmanuel (God With Us) Baptist Church was organized with Dr. L.K. Curry as the organizing Pastor. The Church Extension Fund was established to assist churches in emergency situations, with each church paying one cent per member per month. The Association was incorporated in 1971.

In 1973, Dr. Walter L. Cook was elected Moderator. The Association continued to grow in number as well as spiritually. Dr. Cook's keen knowledge and skilled Biblical doctrine, Parliamentary procedures and matters of organization greatly contributed to the prestige for which Salem was known. Stewardship accountability, matters of pedagogy and ethics were hallmarks in the governance of his administration.

In 1979, Rev. Theodore H. McFarland was elected Moderator. His tenure included 4-5 churches contributing \$1,500 to the National Foreign Mission Board to plant seed churches in South Africa; a full four-year scholarship was awarded to Rev. Overtis S. Thompson to attend the Chicago Baptist Institute; financial support was given to Black Campus Ministries. Moderator McFarland was elected to a second term in July of 1982, but was called to rest from his labors on December 22, 1982. First Vice-Moderator J.O. Bonds completed the year, and was elected Moderator in July of 1983.

Moderator J.O. Bonds was instrumental in stabilizing the Association after the sudden death of Dr. T.H. McFarland. It was during his tenure that the Young People's Department grew and added regional area Directors to assist in the work. Salem's Young People's Department was very much

alive and active in the State and National Conventions, especially in the Midwest Regional Conference where Salem registered more young people than any other association in the Midwest.

Dr. Carsie E. Barnes, Jr. was elected Moderator in 1986. During his tenure, his vision was to see a unified effort across the state. During those years, the pastors and ministers started meeting simultaneously with the Woman's Auxiliary on Thursday mornings. An office space was rented from Chicago Baptist Institute for a headquarters which later moved to the Ma Barnes Community Building of the Antioch Baptist Church. Sis. Jeraldine J. Bowen was the first to be hired as the Administrative Assistant. Dr. Shelvin J. Hall was elected President of the Baptist General State Convention of Illinois, Incorporated. The H.R. Stephenson Institute was given to Baptist General. The Baptist Youth Fellowship was organized, and Rev. Michael A. Griffin became the first Executive Director with Rev. James M. Ivy as the first President.

Dr. Charles B. Williams, Jr. succeeded Dr. Carsie E. Barnes, Jr. as Moderator in 1992. Approximately 22 churches joined the Association. Rev. Michael A. Griffin was appointed General Secretary and was given a job description. The lecture series during the Annual Session was named after Dr. N.C. Lunford. During this time, the Church and Pastor of the Year awards were established. The annual Minutes & Record Book were published. Dr. William organized the Young Pastors' and Ministers' Division with Rev. Ira J. Acree being appointed the first President. The Congress Department holds its own Annual session where the President and Dean would give their addresses. During Dr. Williams' tenure he established the District Revival. The Association celebrated its 50th Anniversary, and Dr. Stephen J. Thurston, Third Vice-President of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., was the featured Guest Preacher. During the Jubilee Celebration, the Association taped the International Sunday School lesson with a live audience. Attorney Rev. Jeanette Wilson served as Host. "The District that Advocates Peace" became the official motto during those years. The Salem Review was the first newsletter of the Parent Body. 25 years later, the Association organized the Spirit Redeemed Missionary Baptist Church, with Rev. Michael A. Griffin as their organizing Pastor. Dr. Williams also established many commissions to help carry out the mission and mandates of the Association.

Dr. Floyd D. James became the Moderator in 1998 at the Greater Mt. Hebron Missionary Baptist Church. "I Must Be About My Father's Business" became the focus for the next six years. Moderator James encouraged the Association to be Christ-centered. During his term, he was faced with many constitutional matters, especially in the area of District officers: the General Secretary position was adopted as an elected office; the Youth Director was appointed by the Woman's Auxiliary President, and the Congress President now appointed the Dean. Tenure was also a factor; it was adopted that all elected and appointed offices end when the Moderator's tenure ended. Also, during those years, the Shelvin J. Hall Institute was established as the official Congress Annual Session. The Baptist Youth Fellowship was re-organized; and the Salem District Community Development corporation was established for economic development. Dr. James' tenure was also faced with other challenges such as church disputes and long court proceedings, and land and property battles. Before his tenure ended, however, all issues were settled. One

of the most outstanding moments during Dr. James' tenure was assisting churches in the amount of \$40,000 through Church Extension. To God be the glory.

In 2004, Dr. Michael Aaron Griffin was elected the 12th Moderator. Rev. Griffin is energetic and creative, and was the only Moderator that grew up in Salem. He holds fast to the faith and traditions of his predecessors, which is to "keep the mandate". Moderator Griffin accomplished many things in two years; many commissions were established or reorganized to do greater works. The Young Pastors' and Ministers' Division was renamed the Associate Minister's Auxiliary; the office of the Vice Moderator At-Large and the Fifth Vice-Moderator were adopted; \$20,000 in benevolence was given to Senior Pastors with health challenges; eight new churches joined the Association; a new logo was adopted; the Association adopted the Emmanuel Christian School with \$1,000.00 given annually; the Salem Review was reestablished with its current name of "The Dove", which is the official newsletter of the Association; and the Salem Youth Bank (SYB) was organized. This bank is a joint effort with the Illinois Treasurer's office and the Seaway National Bank. This bank is operated by the BYF with 61 customers and over \$1,000 in assets. The website was launched in 2005. The Nehemiah Project (rebuilding the walls of the Gulf Coast) was established to assist the hurricane survivors. The "Team" has made two trips to the Mississippi area and stayed for a week on each rip. The "Blue Pages" (the Christian Directory) was established and its first issue is scheduled for July 2006. Moderator Griffin instituted the Peace Award (a prototype of the Nobel Peace Prize). This is the highest award given to outstanding servants who contributed to the work of the kingdom. Recipients included Dr. Rosa B. Cooper and Sis. Shirley Duncan. Moderator Griffin also serves as First Vice-President of the Moderator's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

From its humble beginnings sixty years ago, the Salem Baptist District Association continues to embrace the banner of Evangelism, Education and Edification.

In July 2007 Rev. Dr. William H. Foster, Jr. was elected as the 13th Moderator. The focus of his tenure is "Working Together in the Spirit of Unity". During his tenure, the District grew financially, spiritually and in numbers. Before his election as Moderator, Dr. Foster served in the Finance Department of Salem. He was instrumental in updating the financial forms to more accurately record church's monthly dues. During Dr. Foster's tenure as Moderator, revisions and amendments were made to the Constitution that was originally adopted in 1946. Dr. Foster also continued to unify the Association in keeping with his theme of "Working Together in the Spirit of Unity".

In July 2013, Rev. Dr. Carsie E. Barnes, III became the 14th Moderator. Dr. Barnes presented the District focus for the next six years: "A District Moving in a More Excellent Way", taken from 2 Timothy 2:15. The sub-focuses for the next six years were: 2014 – "A District with Preparation (2 Tim. 2:15); 2015 – "A District with Determination (Phil 3:14); 2016 – "A District with an Obligation (Mt. 28:19-20); 2017 – "A District with Persuasion (Ro. 8:37-39); 2018 – "A District with Expectation (Is. 40:28-31); and 2019 – "A District with Celebration (Ps. 150).

Rev. Dr. Reginald E. Bachus was elected to become the 15th Moderator of the Salem Baptist District Association, Incorporated in July of 2019. Dr. Bachus is continuing in the spirit of unity

that Moderator Foster previously established with the theme of “Many Members, One Body: Working Together, Advancing God’s Kingdom”, taken from 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.

PREVIOUS ANNUAL SESSIONS

MODERATOR	GENERAL SECRETARY	ANNUAL MEETING SITES
1946 – 1952 Rev. A.J. Johnson	Dr. C.W. Jones	Union Tabernacle; Great Hope; Shiloh; Friendship; Monumental; St. Luke
1952 – 1958 Rev. Sterling A. Grayson	Dr. W.D. Kilgore	Great Hope; Union Tabernacle; Providence; Monumental, Mt. Hebron; St. Luke
1958 – 1961 Rev. Roy Faulkner	Dr. W.D. Kilgore	Mt. Sinai North Chicago; Antioch South; Mt. Hebron
1961 – 1967 Dr. Hezekiah B. Brady	Rev. C.A. Staples	Shiloh; Friendship; Christian Hope; Great Hope; St. Luke; Union Tabernacle
1967 – 1973 Rev. Dr. Shelvin J. Hall	Rev. J.N. Wordlaw	Mt. Hebron; Friendship; Providence; Christian Hope; Great Hope; Mt. Hebron
1973 – 1979 Dr. Walter L. Cook	Rev. A.D. Spriggs	Friendship; Antioch South; Providence; Shiloh; Great Hope; Emmanuel
1979 – 1982 Dr. T.H. McFarland	Rev. O. Swansey Dr. William Ivy	Unity Fellowship; Friendship; Shiloh; Providence; First Baptist Church of Melrose Park
1983 – 1986 Dr. Joseph O. Bonds	Rev. A. Woods	Greater Zion Temple; Friendship; Shiloh; Prince of Peace
1986 – 1992 Dr. Carsie E. Barnes, Jr.	Dr. E.C. Thompkins Dr. N. Thomas	Great Hope; Antioch South; Providence; New Zion; Emmanuel; Friendship
1992 – 1998 Dr. Charles B. Williams	Dr. Michael A. Griffin	Unity Fellowship; Antioch South; New Zion; Providence; Greater Rock; Greater Mt. Hebron
1998 – 2004 Dr. Floyd D. James	Dr. Michael A. Griffin Sis. Gladys Gill	Great Hope; Friendship; Antioch South; Greater Rock; Emmanuel; Greater Rock
2004 – 2008 Dr. Michael A. Griffin	Dr. LaRue F. Kidd	St. Michael; New Zion; Antioch
2008 – 2013 Dr. William H. Foster, Jr.	Rev. Willie Doss Rev. Johner Wilson, III	New Zion; Greater Rock; Logos Baptist Assembly; Shiloh; Antioch; Providence
2013 – 2019 Dr. Carsie E. Barnes, III	Sis. Sandra Tappin-Hampton	Antioch
2019 – Dr. Reginald E. Bachus	Sis. Patricia Washington	