

# Mount Olivet Church History

500 Swayze Street • Monroe, Louisiana 71201

Church Website: [www.mountolivetbaptistchurch.net](http://www.mountolivetbaptistchurch.net)

In **January, 1949**, a group from the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church decided to initiate plans for organizing a new church. The Evening Star Missionary Baptist Church was used as a place of worship. The Reverend Anthony T. White and a council of churches and ministers from the Tenth District Missionary Baptist Association officially established the new church in February 1949, Worship services were held on the fourth Sunday in each month.

Brother James C. Jones suggested the name Mount Olivet and it was accepted by the membership. Reverend Willie Lee Brannon was elected Pastor. The deacons were Brother George W. Banks, Sr. and Brother Milliard Freeman. Later Brother McQuillar Hegwood was added to the Deacon Board. The Deaconess was Sister Mollie Lewis, Safronie Moore Hamilton, Leola Brandon, Thelma C. Blade, Eliza Jackson, Nellie Y. Freeman, and Naomi Hegwood.

A building site and material were needed to build an edifice. Three lots on the corner of Swayze and Maddox Streets were purchased from Mr. Jack Steele. A barrack was purchased from Selman Field and moved to the site. Blueprints were drawn by Brother James C. Jones, Contractor. Brother George W. Banks, Sr. was employed as carpenter and other members helped with the work. The ground breaking ceremony was held in November 1949.

After the edifice was completed, two hundred (200) steel bottom chairs and a piano were purchased. Sister Fannie Brown gave the first Bible. Sister Ida Hill donated a pulpit chair. The dedication service was in September 1951. In **February 1952**, Mount Olivet became a non-profit corporation.

During Reverend Brannon's pastorate, Brothers S. O. McHenry, Julius Greggs and Lee Andrew Warren, Sr. were added to the Deacon Board and a Boy Scout Troop was organized in December 1951 with Brother James C. Jones as Scout Master.

Reverend Brannon's leadership extended from 1949 to 1959. However in March 1964, Reverend William R. Ellis was elected presiding minister during Reverend Brannon's lengthy illness.

During Reverend Ellis' leadership, the church saw a tremendous growth; extended worship service to second and fourth Sundays; organized the Nellie Y. Freeman Scholarship Fund; purchased pews and office equipment; ordained Reverend Everett E. Slack; and crowned the following deacons: Brothers Richard Zemry Johnson, Willis Lawrence, Jr., James Jones, Charlie Gunn, Jr., and Daniel Head. Reverend Ellis resigned in April 1974.

In July 1974, Reverend Henry Jones was elected pastor. During his one-year service, a Pastor's Aide organization was formed. Reverend Jones' pastorate ended in December 1975.

**Rev. Oliver W. Billups Jr. was elected Pastor Sept. 17, 1976 and installed October 1976.**

Under Reverend Oliver W. Billups' leadership, in 1977, two lots were purchased from Daisy E. Goodwin. In 1979, Brothers Ricky Banks, Dorth Blade, Wilbert Hunter were crowned deacons. Worship service was extended to each Sunday in the month; a male chorus and a female chorus were organized in 1981. **July 1980 deleted assessments for church programs and taught *tithing*.** April 1981 completed plans for new building.

A new edifice was completed and dedicated in February 1984. In 1991, with the combined efforts of the Pastor and members we purchased a van. In 1994, Brothers Artis Wilson, and Scott Ward were crowned deacons. Junior deacons were also organized.

Brother Mariko T. Billups preached his first sermon the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, December 1994 in the morning worship.

The Lord kept his loving arms around Mount Olivet so much that we had our note-burning ceremony on May 28, 1995; just eleven years after the completion of the new edifice.

In April 2000 Bro. Mariko Billups, son of the ministry, came home from Morehouse School of Religion to do our annual revival.

We started a radio broadcast which can presently be heard each Sunday from 1:30 until 2:15 p.m. on KJMG 97.3 F.M.

We received a grant toward our after school Tutorial Program which enables the program to continue to make great strides.

**Thirty-nine** members were added to the congregation from February 2000 to February 2001.

Brother Mariko T. Billups was ordained for the Gospel Ministry after being approved by the Council of Ministers of the Tenth District Association; Moderator Andrew J. Mansfield presided on September 21, 2001.

On Monday, **July 15, 2002**, our church burned which resulted in one million dollars in damage and we were readily received by Pastor A.J. Mansfield and the First Missionary Baptist Church Family. We had our first Sunday school and Morning Worship service in First Baptist gymnasium on Sunday, July 21, 2002, after the church fire.

We were invited to continue at First Baptist until our church was repaired. We were made welcome to have our Sunday school teachers meetings, our auxiliary meetings, and our business meetings at First Baptist by using the sanctuary, fellowship hall and classrooms.

We began having combined prayer meetings and Bible study. Our male youth were invited to be the special guests of the First Baptist youth retreat, "Boy's Nite Out" sponsored by First Baptist's Brotherhood.

**Forty-two (42)** members were added to the congregation from February 2002 to February 2003.

## 2003

January 5, 2003 -April 6, 2003 – Joint Bible Study with First Baptist Church-“Journey Through Spiritual Bootcamp” (328 adults & youth in attendance).

May – First Sunday, Mount Olivet and First Baptist had combined morning worship at First Baptist Church.

Mount Olivet held its Rededication Service after being dislocated by fire for eleven months. Rev. A.J. Mansfield and the First Baptist family were our guests. Theme: “Returning Home” – May 25<sup>th</sup>.

On May 29, 2003 our church purchased two lots at 2925 and 2927 Maddox Street. The lots were cleared and a new parking lot and garage were constructed.

Our church participated in the Convoy of Hope (a food giveaway & evangelistic effort), through a financial contribution and witnessing to the unsaved – Monroe Civic Center – October 25<sup>th</sup>. – 2003.

Twenty – seven (27) new members were added to the church.

### January 2004

May – Mariko T. Billups, a son in the ministry, graduated from Morehouse School of Religion in Atlanta, GA with a Master's degree.

Thirty-seven (37) new members were added to the church.

### 2005

January 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> – Mount Olivet chartered a bus and accompanied Pastor Billups to install Rev. Mariko T. Billups as Pastor of the Calvary Independent Baptist Church in Blythewood, SC.

Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> – Traveled to Angola State Prison with Pastor Billups for worship.

Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> – Senior Mission began feeding the elderly and the sick and shut-in members on two Saturdays of every month.

Thirty-Six (36) members were added to the church from 4<sup>th</sup> Sun. Feb. 2005 to 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun. Feb. 2006.

### 2006

July 10 -14 Children's Day Camp – Bible Study. Visited I-MAX Theater and Louisiana Boardwalk – Shreveport; Biedenharn, Masur, & Black Heritage Museum – Monroe and Black Bayou Wildlife Refuge.

July 24-28 Older Youth – Bible Study and trip to Little Rock, AR. to Central High School, State Capitol Building, President William Clinton Library and the Riverwalk.

Sept. 23 Pastor's 30<sup>th</sup> Year Appreciation Banquet at Barak Shrine Center – Rev. Mariko Billups, Speaker

Sept. 24 Pastor's 30<sup>th</sup> Year Appreciation Program @ 3:00 p.m. Guest – Rev. Billy R. Billups, and Candlelite Baptist Church – Austin, TX., guests.

Forty-Eight (48) members were added to the church from Feb. 2006 to Feb. 2007.

### 2007

January 15 – Hosted the Martin Luther King, Jr. Foundation.

March – 2007 – *RECLAMATION MONTH*

November – 2007, Veterans Honors Day (members invited veterans to worship)

Sixty- - three (63) members were added from Feb. 2007 – Feb. 2008.

### 2008 – January - *Commitment Month*

February 24- 59<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary- Guests Rev. Morris Austin and Trinity B.C.- Shreveport

May

3- “Partners in Ministry and Growth”- Deacons workshop

17- “Youth Challenge- Youth Recognition Program

25- Trip to Jacksonville, FL. Installation Program of Rev. Mariko Billups @ The King Solomon Baptist Church- The Olivet Nation journeyed to Florida by bus, plane, vans and cars.

June 13-Carroll H.S. Class of 1958- 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Worshipped with Mount Olivet. We began having early service on Sunday, June 30, 2008, @ 10:00 a.m. with Sunday School @ 9:00 a.m.

### September

12-First Church Banquet- Monroe Civic Center

21-23-Rev. Edward Joseph, Marrero, LA. Evangelist-Youth Revival

November/December- adopted 60 families- shared food, clothes and gifts with these families.

### 2009

January 25-Tenth District Missionary Baptist Association- Installation of Pastor Oliver W. Billups as President. President Billups would serve for six years.

February 22- Mount Olivet's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary-Mt. Zion B.C.- Grambling, LA. (Founding members were honored, along with senior servants.)

May 25-29- "VBS- Extreme Spiritual Makeover" (361 Participants)

September 12- Mount Olivet Church Banquet- Monroe Civic Center

November 7-8 – Hosted Tenth District Ushers Workshop and Fellowship Program with State President Elizabeth Holiday, Guest Speaker.

December 20- Share-A-Gift- Mount Olivet membership adopted 42 families and shared clothes, toys and other gifts.

Throughout the year the "Olivet Nation" fellowshiped with... First MBC- Monroe, Riverside B.C.- Monroe, and Mount Pleasant B.C.- Monroe for various occasions i.e. Note Burning Service, Cornerstone Laying Service, 132<sup>nd</sup> Church Anniversary

**Fifty-Eight (58)** new members were added to the church Feb. 2009 to Feb. 2010

### 2010-The Year In Review

The year began with a commitment worship the first Sunday. Pastor Billups was the speaker for the City's annual Martin Luther King Program, Jan 15<sup>th</sup>.

In **February** we were blessed to celebrate our 61<sup>st</sup> Church Anniversary with Pastor Clarence Hicks and the Avenue Baptist Church of Shreveport, Louisiana.

**March** begin with Christian Growth classes- "The Introduction of the N.T." for eight weeks for adults and "Discipleship and New Life" for youth.

**April** brought *revival* of the church family through the preaching of Rev. Ronald Williams, Evangelist. It was also the beginning of our special days of *outreach*... Taxi Sunday, Nellie Y. Freeman Scholarship Day, Children's Day, Friends' Day, Harvest Day (foods are gathered to share), Share-A-Gift Sunday (gifts of clothes and toys are donated to share) and Pack-A-Pew Sunday (the unsaved were also witnessed to).

During the months of **May** and **June** we enjoyed the fruits of our evangelistic efforts with over 600 attendees in Vacation Bible School. Throughout the summer months we engaged in various workshops for church growth. *In November we hosted the Louisiana Baptist Convention, during which Pastor Billups was appointed Dean of the State Congress of Christian Education.* The fall of the year closed out with a Survey of the O.T. and our annual

Christmas Drama- “Simeon and Anna” with participants of all ages from the congregation, December 19<sup>th</sup> @6:00 p.m. followed by food and fellowship.

“The Olivet Nation” was privileged to fellowship with ... St. Joseph B.C.- West Monroe; New Daughters of Zion B.C.- West Monroe; Mount Zion B.C.- Grambling, LA.; and Church of the Present Truth- Monroe.....over the year 2010.

We were wondrously blessed, **79** souls were added to the church family from February 28, 2010 to February 20, 2011.

### The Year 2011

The church celebrated Pastor Oliver W. Billups Jr. 35<sup>th</sup> year of Pastorate. A banquet was held Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, and the Appreciation Worship was Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 3:00 p.m. with Rev. Mariko T. Billups as the guest speaker.

Throughout the year 2011, the Youth presented an Easter and Christmas Drama. They also held a car wash for the senior citizens and visited the War Veterans Home.

The church adopted 60 families and gave gifts and clothes for the church’s Share-A-Gift Program in December.

We were blessed with **Fifty-two (52)** new members February 2011 to February 2012.

### 2012 – The Year in Review

The 2012 year started with the new Pastor’s Alternative, a Sunday morning Bible Study, which was well attended by more than 125 members. This new class continued for 9 months.

In February, Mount Olivet Baptist Church celebrated its 63<sup>rd</sup> church anniversary with Pastor David Campbell and New Second Baptist Church of Bastrop, LA. The Youth Ministry sponsored a “Love” banquet for all members 60 years and older and also participated in the Renaissance Parade during Black History Month. Brother Earnie Myles of the Earnie Myles Show was our Black Heritage Speaker on youth Sunday.

**March**, we participated in the Spring Congress on Christian Education, Tenth District Association.

**April**, we were “wowed” by the Easter Drama entitled, “The Passion of Jesus”. Our Spring Revival, Rev. Aaron Dobyne was the Evangelist, Evergreen Baptist Church, Shreveport, LA. This month the Youth Department washed the cars of the “senior” members and this project extended throughout the summer.

**May**, The Ushers reflected on another year’s service in their Annual Anniversary, during the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday worship service. **Mount Olivet celebrated the academic achievements of its high school graduates and presented engraved Bibles and scholarships were awarded.**

**June and July** afforded teachers and potential teachers the opportunity of participating in the course “**Seven Laws of a Teacher**”. This curriculum was the first of its kind to be taught by Pastor Billups and was open to other churches. The purpose was to enhance present teachers to better instruct their students and to prepare new teachers.

**August**, Several single members attending the National Single’s Conference in Fort Lauderdale, Fl.; We also hosted the Tenth District Association Annual Session. The month closed with the Men & Women’s Weekend, which is always well attended.

**September**, We honored Mount Olivet’s Grandparents and acknowledged friends during our Friend’s Day Worship. The Word was shared with our youth during our Annual



Youth Revival with the motivational preaching of the Gospel by Minister Mark Lewis from Lafayette, LA, who always does a dynamic job in reaching others, both young and old.

In **October**, the Adult Choir spent a weekend reflecting on the “Reason Why We Sing” during a Saturday workshop facilitated by Pastor Billups followed by their anniversary celebration held during Sunday worship services.

**November**, Mount Olivet held its annual Veteran’s Day Recognition Service/Program to recognize the unselfish and honorable service to our country by men and women of all branches of the military. Mount Olivet brought non-perishable items and staples for the Harvest Day Worship and these items were donated to Granny’s Kitchen, a nonprofit kitchen.

As **December** drew to a close, we invited unsaved family members to worship with us during our Family Day Service; the Share-A-Gift program allowed us to bless children who were less fortunate with gifts for Christmas; the Senior Mission Fellowship gave the Mission an opportunity to rest from their year’s work of providing meals to the sick and shut in and visiting the nursing homes. The Year 2012 closed with the presentation of the Annual Christmas Drama “Angels on Assignment” with participants of all ages.

The year 2012 was filled with swift transitions; our congregation mourned the loss of six members. However, we do not despair as those who have no hope, for we were also able to REJOICE over the addition of **thirty seven (37)** new members who were added to the church between February 2012 and February 2013. WHAT A MIGHTY GOD WE SERVE!!!

### **The Year 2013 in Review**

Mount Olivet entered into the 2013 year with the same vigor and commitment as in previous years. The year began with a “Journey of a Lifetime” a 52 week study of the whole Bible, taught by our own Minister Scott Ward, III during regular Sunday School. The rest of the congregation attended a joint Sunday School class taught by several equipped members of our congregation. Bible Study is an ongoing educational tool used by Pastor to increase our understanding of biblical principles and the work of God. The “Seven Laws of the Learner” was offered as a continuation of a series introduced by Pastor Billups during the previous year to better prepare participants to teach the Word of God.

In **February 2013**, Mount Olivet celebrated its 64th Church Anniversary with Rev. Milton J. Ceasar and the St. Mark Baptist Church family of Jonesville, Louisiana, as our special guest. Rev. Ceasar shared with us “The Purpose of Our Lives” is to do the work of God. Mount Olivet installed the 2013-2014 ministry leaders during this anniversary celebration. Because we all experience grief and loss in different ways, Mount Olivet offered assistance to those who experienced difficulty in their grieving process by offering an 8-week Grief Support Group facilitated by credentialed counselors within our church body.

In **March**, ninety members of Mount Olivet attended and participated in the Evangelism class held at First Baptist during the Spring Congress of Christian Education. A class entitled Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) was offered to share guidance and instruction to parents of all ages on how to better understand the role and effects of positive parenting over 3 class sessions coordinated by one of our members.

In **April**, our annual revival provided just what we needed through Rev. Thomas N. Bessix of the New Gideon Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Word was declared with clarity and conviction, so much so that Rev. Bessix was asked to return the following year.

In **May**, Mount Olivet honored its Adult Ushers during their annual Usher's Anniversary with an encouraging word from Minister Ward, entitled "More Than Just Doorkeepers". Members used their personal vehicles to provide transportation for the unsaved or those out of fellowship to our annual "Taxi Day" Worship.

Mount Olivet regularly acknowledges the academic achievements of its young people and high school graduates during the month of **May**. Our Recognition program was held on Youth Sunday to disburse scholarships from our Nellie Y. Freeman Scholarship Fund. In addition to these events, our Vacation Bible School effort was spearheaded by a very capable directress and staff. This year's theme was "Rock It Out" with Jesus, which was very well received and well attended by all ages (over 300 attendees).

In **June**, Mount Olivet hosted the Tenth District Board Meeting and Worship Service and was the guest at Mount Pleasant for their 5th year Pastor's Anniversary. During the preceding months, Mount Olivet was involved in finalizing plans to host the Louisiana Baptist State Convention as it convened in Monroe, Louisiana in **July**. We served as the host church for the parent body, and late night services. The convention was attended by 1,500 registered participants who voiced a desire to return to Monroe soon, because of the hospitality shown by the entire Northeast Louisiana Host Committee. We were the guest church at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Grambling, Louisiana, for their 10th year Pastor's anniversary.

Despite being physically drained from hosting the State Convention, Pastor Billups and the Mount Olivet family drew on its spiritual strength in preparation for the Tenth District Annual Session which garnered similar success. This month ended with our Men & Women's Weekend, which is always well attended.

Because we are believers and we want our friends to be saved as well they were invited to worship with us during our Friend's Day Worship Service. Our Annual Youth Revival evangelist was Rev. Marcus Ellison of the Mount Olive Baptist Church, Greenwood, LA. Pastor Ellison captivated our youth as well as adults with many Bible based illustrations. He too was invited back next year.

In **October**, the Adult Choir spent time together during their Saturday workshop, and their Sunday morning Anniversary song service was nothing short of soul stirring.

In **November**, a "Veteran's Day Salute" was held to acknowledge and give thanks to the men and women who gave unselfish devotion securing the freedoms we enjoy today through service to God and country. As the year ended, Mount Olivet shared the bounty God has bestowed upon us throughout the year. We also gave hundreds of pounds of non-perishable food items to local community entities to help others. This year, our church prepared, distributed, and delivered over 100 "Love Boxes" to needy families in and around the Monroe area during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. These boxes contained smoked turkeys, ham, sugar, meal, flour, butter, eggs, celery, onion, cake mix, frosting, irish and sweet potatoes, brown and serve rolls, and more.

As we reflected on the goodness of God, we ended the year with a banquet themed "A Gathering of Our Spiritual Family" which was held at B. D. Robinson Conference Hall, Monroe Civic Center. This event proved to be "An Evening of Fellowship and Fun" for all. Each child in attendance and (some adults) left with stuffed bears courtesy of our Pastor, Oliver W. Billups Jr. The culminating event for this year was our Annual Christmas Musical, a spiritual reminder to us all of "God's Ultimate Gift to the World...His Son Jesus Christ".

While we, who are here today, were blessed to live through 2013, unfortunately, one member who started out with us was called to rest from her labor. Mount Olivet remembered

and celebrated the life of Sister Gracie Handy who will continue to live in our hearts and minds as we remember her contributions to humanity. As we continue ongoing evangelistic efforts we are mindful however that God gives the increase. As such, the Lord added **53** souls to the church during 2013. TO GOD BE THE GLORY FOR THE THINGS HE HAS DONE!!

### **The Year 2014 in Review**

The year started with a series of sermons. For the month of **January**, the subject was “Commitment” encouraging the church family to recognize what true commitment is. The sermons were: “Committed to What?”; “Be Faithful, No Matter What”; “What Shall I Render?”; “Choosing the Right Mate”. Our Youth Ministry participated in the Young Peoples Boot Camp at Alexandria, LA sponsored by our Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention. The Learning Quest Bowl subject was “Know Your Church History”.

In **February**, the sermons dealt with the subject “Love”: “The Main Ingredient of Relationships”; “The Consequences of Not Loving”; “The Patience of Love”. This month closed with our 65th Church Anniversary with Rev. Tegitra K. Thomas and First Missionary Baptist Church as our guests.

In **March**, the sermon series was on the subject “Understanding & Gaining Victory Over Abuse”: “But I Love Her”; “Sometimes, It IS What You Say!”; “Don’t Let Them Get In Your Head” and, “Picking on the Weaker Ones”. On Sunday, March 09, 2014 we had early worship at 9:00 a.m., Sunday School was cancelled and we journeyed on two travel buses to Baton Rouge, LA for Pastor Jesse B. Bilberry Jr.’s 30th Pastoral Anniversary at the Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church. We also begin the Bible Study...“Becoming An Authentic Christian”\_ the Books of Second Peter and Jude. The Learning Quest Bowl Competition was held between families. Series 2 of the Learning Quest Bowl subject was “Know Your Black (African American) History”.

In **April**, the sermon series focused on the subject “Revival and Evangelism”: “God’s Plan for Renewal” and “Admitting a Need for Revival”. Our Annual Revival was preached for the second year by Rev. Thomas N. Bessix of Baton Rouge, LA as the Evangelist. A set of questions and answers on the subject “Getting to Know God” was given to the congregation for the Learning Quest Bowl.

**May**, the Learning Quest Competition was held between families. The sermon series dealt with “Forgiveness”: “A Lesson in Forgiveness Part 1 and 2”; Mount Olivet was guest at the New Rocky Valley Baptist Church in Grambling, LA for Pastor Julius R. Sumler’s 12th Pastoral Anniversary.

**June**, the sermon series continued with the subject “Forgiveness”: “Forgiving is Work”; “If You Don’t Forgive!”; “How to Protect Your Heart from Bitterness”. The Youth Ministry had a blast at Fun Day in the Park, Kiroli Park in West Monroe. **The Youth Ministry also sponsored a Pre-Father’s Day Breakfast for the dads.**

**July**, the sermon series recommenced on the subject “Love” Part 2: “Love is Kind”; “Love Does Not Envy”; “Is Not Jealous”; “Real Love is Never Boastful or Proud”; “Love is Courteous”. Mount Olivet journeyed to Shreveport, LA to the Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention where Dean Billups delivered his 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Message. Twelve messengers attended the Convention.

**August**, the sermon series continued with “Love” Part 3: “Love is Never Selfish”; “Love is Not Irritable”; “Love is Grudge-Free”; “Are You Qualified?”; “What Love Does”. The Tenth District Missionary Baptist Association convened at the Riverside Baptist Church where President Billups delivered final message “Solidarity with the Savior Through His Witness”.



**September**, the Mount Olivet family were guests at the Morehouse Association Building for Pastor Johnny Green's Pastoral Anniversary. Youth Revival was held with Rev. Marcus Ellison returning for a second year.

In **October**, the Senior Mission attended the State Women's Conference in Lafayette, LA for a second year\_ theme: "Solidarity with the Savior: Women Growing in Wisdom and Faith". The Tenth District Baptist Association installed new officers. Mount Olivet Adult Choir celebrated their Anniversary with a Supper / Bible Study.

In **November**, the Tenth District Baptist Association held a Women's Conference and a Ministry Fellowship Breakfast. Mount Olivet recognized the Veterans with a "Salute". We also blessed 100 families with food boxes for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**December**, the Senior Mission held their Christmas Fellowship. The Mount Olivet Mass choir performed a musical, entitled "Love Came Down". Mount Olivet purchased a 28 passenger bus on December 14<sup>th</sup>.

During the year Mount Olivet bid farewell to four members, but God continues to give increase. **Fifty-eight (58)** souls were added to the church. **WHAT A MIGHTY GOD WE SERVE!!!**

### **The year 2015 in Review**

In **January**, The year started with Pastor Billups asking the membership to read the book, "I Am A Church Member which they were given. A series of sermons were preached from each chapter of the book by Thomas Rainer. The subjects in the book were: "A Functioning Church Member", "A Unifying Church Member", "I Can't Have It My Way", "I Will Pray for My Church Leaders", "Leading My Family to be Healthy Church Members", and "Treasure Church of Membership as a Gift". Each chapter was discussed in Bible Study and members were asked to sign the pledge at the end of each chapter.

Wednesday Bible Study, taught lessons on the Holy Spirit...The Coming of the Holy Spirit, The Work of the Holy Spirit, and The Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Mount Olivet members sponsored the Youth attending a ULM Basketball game...

In **February**, Mount Olivet married couples enjoyed a "Be My Valentine" Weekend with a Saturday morning Bible Study..."A Five-C Upgrade", Saturday evening Candlelit Dinner with entertainment, wedding pics video; and on Sunday morning Pastor Billups preached the sermon: "A Supernatural Love". The Saturday evening event was an elegant affair coordinated by Janice and Richard Winder Sr.

Black History Emphasis was done by our member Brother Carl Robinson Sr. who presented over one hundred with the "Artifacts of the African American experience." "Eyes on the Prize, America's Civil Rights Years" - video presentation were shown each Wednesday in February. Mount Olivet's 66<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary guests were Rev. (Dr.) Rory L. Bedford and Starlight Baptist Church, Swartz, LA

Christian Leadership Training for the New Church Officers and their Installation.

Children Church was reinstated this month with music, devotions, video lessons, and worksheets.

**March**, Mount Olivet Men's Ministry were guests at the Mount Olive B.C., Men's Day, Greenwood, LA

Pack-A-Pew Sunday

Mount Olivet was guest, Family and Friends Day at St. Joe B.C, Rhymes, LA

"Living a Christian Life" \_ Youth Bible Study began this month on Sunday evenings.

In **April**, Annual Revival Rev. Dale Sanders, Evangelist, Kenner, LA. The Youth Ministry presented “No Greater Love”, a liturgical dance in the Resurrection Sunday Worship Services.

**May**, The Mount Olivet Adult Ushers Workshop and Anniversary. The Youth Recognition Program was held in the morning worship with Sister Janice Winder as the emphasis speaker. Three (3) scholarships were given to eligible graduates. Vacation Bible School was attended by over 360 students. Theme: “Adventures at Sea: Diving Deeper for God’s Treasure”. “Not a Fan” another Youth Bible Study began this month on Sunday evenings.

In **June**, “Becoming a Woman of Freedom”, a women’s Bible Study was initiated on one Sunday evening a month. TAXI Sunday was again a success with members using their vehicles to bring others to morning worship. The Senior Mission fellowshiped at Copelands New Orleans Restaurant.

**July**, Pastor Billups gave his Annual Dean’s Address and the Children, Youth, and Young Adult choir, ushers and other members surprised Pastor Billups at the LA Missionary Baptist State Convention in Lake Charles, LA. Mount Olivet’s Youth Ministry fellowshiped with the Rocky Valley B.C., Simsboro, LA during their revival. The Men’s Ministry started a new study entitled “How God Makes Men”.

In **August**, Mount Olivet fellowshiped with the First Missionary B.C. for their 146<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary. Annual Men/Women’s Day\_ Saturday Bible Study, “Transitioning: Moving from Where We Are to Where God Wants Us, Preparing for Vision” and Sunday’s worship theme\_ Transitioning: Moving from Where We Are to Where God Wants Us.

**September**, Youth Ministry Back-to-School Bash at Kiroli Park. The Board of Directors accept the bid to build Brannon Hall on behalf of the Church. Friends’ Day Worship\_ Theme: “Walk as Children of the Light”. Mount Olivet held Groundbreaking Ceremonies for the W.L. Brannon Hall. Mount Olivet’s Music Ministry presented the musical “Make His Praise Glorious”. Singers from age 5 to 7 participated in giving God the praise due his name. The Youth Back-to-School Revival had Rev. Mark Thomas and St. Joseph B.C., Rev. Feeoptris Strickland and Mount Pleasant B.C., and Rev. Tegitra Thomas and First Missionary B.C. were our guests. Rev. Strickland and Rev. Tegitra Thomas are members of Mount Olivet. Mount Olivet was guest at the Unity Faith B.C. for their Pastor’s Anniversary.

In **October**, Senior Choir Anniversary. Mount Olivet was guest at the Peter Rock B.C. Bee Bayou (Rayville, LA) for their Church Anniversary. The Mount Olivet Adult Choir and Ushers accompanied Pastor Billups who preached at Mt. Sinai B.C. for Revival. Sunday School Promotion/Honors Day

**November**, Mount Olivet saluted our 40+ Veterans who were members of the church. SGM (Retired) John Wilson was our speaker for the Salute. Donated money to replaced food that had been stolen. Thanksgiving boxes were given by Rays of Sonshine.

In **December**, The dramatic presentation\_ “Come to Bethlehem and See!” was the Youth Ministry’s final presentation for 2015, complete with a musical from the Mass Choir.

Mount Olivet joined with the other churches of the Tenth District Missionary Baptist Association for the Watch Nite Services at Mt. Zion B.C.

Minister Scott Ward III was catechized by the Tenth District Association Ordination Council (December 4, 2015). Minister Scott Ward III was formally ordained for the Gospel Ministry (December 27, 2015).

During the year Mount Olivet bid farewell to seven members, but God continues to give increase. **Thirty-two (32)** members were added to the church. **TO GOD BE THE GLORY FOR THE THINGS HE HAS DONE!!**

### **The Year 2016 in Review**

In **January**, started the year off with the Bible Study lesson “Journey Into Knowing Jesus”. The youth choir fellowshiped with Zion Hill Baptist Church in Farmerville, La.

**February**, Mount Olivet participated in the Black Heritage Parade. Mount Olivet’s Sixty-Seventh Church Anniversary guest was Minister Bryant Carter from Birmingham, AL. who was a former member at Mount Olivet.

In **March**, Pack-a-Pew Sunday and Sunday School Round Up.

In **April**, the month was observed for Autism Awareness “Light It Up Blue” the members was ask to wear blue one Sunday. Mount Olivet had Family Movie Night where the membership came together and watched “The War Room”. Annual Revival, Rev. Dale Sanders Sr., Evangelist, Kenner, LA for the second year. Our theme was “Follow Jesus”, John 21:22c. Mount Olivet had thirty-eight families who were affected by the flood in March. A crisis intervention session was done by Dr. Janice Winder and Ms. Sabryna Herring titled, “Coping After the Storm”.

**May**, Adult Ushers Anniversary. The Youth Recognition Program was held during morning worship with Mr. Patrick J. Sumblor Sr. as the speaker. Vacation Bible School was attended by 250 students; theme: “The Ultimate Climb”.

In **June**, Mount Olivet fellowshiped with the Brown Grove Baptist Church in Jonesboro, LA for their Church Anniversary. The Senior Mission fellowshiped at the Olive Garden. Taxi Sunday members used their vehicles to pick up the unchurched.

**July**, Pastor Billups gave his Annual Dean’s Address at the Louisiana Baptist State Congress of Christian Education in Baton Rouge, LA. The choir, ushers, and members journeyed to Baton Rouge.

In **August**, Mount Olivet fellowshiped with Hopewell Baptist Church in Bosco, LA for the Pastor’s Anniversary. The Annual Men / Women’s Day Bible Study was Saturday, Lesson: “Practicing a Christ-less Christianity”. This was also Sunday’s worship theme.

**September**, Mount Olivet accompanied Pastor Billups who preached at Spiritual Harvest Worship Center for their 11<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary. “I Love My Church” Tee-shirts and sermons were initiated church-wide.

**October** was “I Love My Church” month. The members wore their tee-shirts every Sunday or on the Sunday of their choosing. Youth Ministry Renewal and Commitment *weekend* started with breakfast and forum followed by a skate party at SkateTown and Saturday night revival services, Rev. Dale Sanders Jr., a thirteen year old minister, Kenner, LA was the guest preacher. The fourth Sunday was Sunday School Promotions and Honors Day. Mount Olivet fellowshiped with the New Hope Baptist Church in Ruston, LA for their Church Anniversary.

November, Mount Olivet saluted 35 Veterans in the church and honored the oldest veterans of the church.

December, The Christmas Presentation "The Greatest Gift" was presented by the Youth Ministry. Mount Olivet joined with other churches of the Tenth District Missionary Baptist Association for the Watch Night Services.

The year 2016 was filled with swift transitions; our congregation mourned the loss of five members. However, we do not despair as those who have no hope, for we were also able to REJOICE over the addition of sixteen (16) new members who were added to the church. WHAT A MIGHTY GOD WE SERVE!!!