

# Cade Chapel M.B. Church:

## One Hundred Years and Beyond, Historical Reflections

1880 – 2000

Being brought to the land call “America” from the native African soil, by Europeans stacked in a ship in inhuman conditions and transported thousands of miles in this fashion. The mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters were concerned about their faith and beliefs. Regardless of this many followed the religious instructions of their slave owners. After many years of trials and tribulations many begin the courage to seek freedom not only from the physical aspects of slavery but the religious aspects. This begins the realization there was a time to begin their own religious beliefs and have their own place to worship. Many years before slaves worshiped in the basement of their slave owners church.

During the advent of the Underground Railroad and the belief there could be freedom many begin the desperate fate of working toward the mission of having their own place of worship especially after the slaves were freed. As time passed on and the Reconstruction Era was here, many problems still faced the African American community, keeping the faith and the community preserved. Keeping this faith and time passed a new beginning evolved for a small community.

The setting for Cade Chapel’s beginning was Jackson, Mississippi, during the 1830's, and it was intricately tied to that of another church, Mount Helm Baptist Church. According to the Rev. Patrick H. Thompson, author of *The History of Negro Baptists in Mississippi* (1890), Mount Helm grew out of the desires and efforts of some white and black residents of Jackson, Mississippi, which had been the Capitol of Mississippi since 1822.

During the early 1830's explains Thompson, there was no established place of worship for either white or black Baptists in Jackson. The only Baptist services available in Jackson were those provided by an evangelist-type minister, a Rev. Holloway, who preached to those willing to hear his sermon and baptized those who confessed.

One of the persons baptized by the Rev. Holloway was Prior Lee, a white slaveholder. Upon the death of his wife, Lee spent a considerable amount of time among the human properties he held, relating to the people his understanding of the “way of salvation.” Prior Lee, it related, donated the bricks, etc., used to build the church in which

services for white Baptists were carried out. Once constructed, the basement of this facility was designated as a place of worship for blacks. And blacks worshiped in the basement of the white Baptist church from the mid-1830's to 1867.

The law in effect during most of the years that blacks used the basement of the church stipulated that slaves were not to hold any religious services unless several whites were present. This law was enforced by white patrols that made sure no such gathering (or any others for that matters) was held unless there was written consent by the respective slave owner(s). Normally, a white minister was in charge of the religious services that were designed for blacks, while black men functioned as deacons.

The black deacons in this early, yet unnamed black church, during its formative years, were Marion Dunbar, Ruben Langley, William Tinsley, Charles Rollins, and Ben Foote, all of whom served in capacity until 1867.

Although the law and the apparent practice of the church indicated that a condition for the holding of services by blacks was that there would be white supervision. A practice of some members of the black congregation of blacks was told to somewhat spirited Sunday morning church meetings in the basement and other places while whites were asleep. This practice apparently persisted for some time, and eventually expanded to include "revival" type services.

In the meanwhile, time passed; the civil war was fought; and the period of adjustment set in. During this interim, the basement of the church served as a confederate hospital, and in 1866 it reportedly was a school for black youths. To many, however, there was no such thing as a period of adjustment, for there was no way that the "New Order" could be substituted for the old one. To some extent, this may have had something to do with the protests by white deacons and their decision in 1867 that blacks had to find another place to worship. Of course, there was no denying that the decision and ultimate removal was hastened by the fact that these jubilant, newly freed blacks insisted upon making a "joyful noise" unto the Lord with not only their voices and the rhythm that came forth from musical instruments as well.

The fact that the Lord works in mysterious ways and causes progress to grow out of chaos and adversity, can be attested to by the early Baptist Congregation at Jackson. First, these pioneer blacks Baptist in Jackson were born into slavery; through chaos and bloody war they were freed. Secondly, while in their condition as legally defined human property, these black Baptists had a church, although it was a basement. Yet, during the infancy of their freedom, when their problems were many and their need for a place of worship and spiritual fulfillment was as great if not greater than at any time before, they were literally put into the streets.

These black Baptist did not give up. Many of them had kept the faith during desperately dark days of slavery that they someday would be free. They knew, as the old hymn insists, that although Providence does not always intervene when wanted, the Master of the Universe is always on time. Positive proof of this was given in 1867 when a white man, Mr. Helm, donated to these blacks some land for a church and contributed financially along with blacks and other whites to its erection.

A tribute that was made to Mr. Helm was the naming of the church in his honor.

Mount Helm M.B. Church was erected at the corner of Church and Grayson Streets in 1867. Its first officers at the new location were Charles Rollins, Jack Bass, John Lee, Peyton Robinson, Ned Slaughter, Wash Newman, James Peacham, and Frank Shepherd, all deacons; Henry Mayson, clerk. Though records show that a Rev. Holloman served as pastor of the church for a while in 1867, Marion Dunbar, formerly a deacon in the basement church, served as the pastor of Mount Helm from 1867 to 1890.

Being the only church for blacks in the city of Jackson for more than a decade, Mount Helm was a fortress in the community. These years of Mount Helm's sole existence as the black Baptist Congregation in Jackson paralleled the Reconstruction Era. Reconstruction days were not merry and easy ones for black residents of Jackson nor for anywhere in Mississippi, in spite of the fact that blacks composed a significant portion of the city's population. (For example, there were 1,733 blacks and 1,753 whites among the city's 3,486 residents in 1866. Break down for the city's 4,234 and 5,204 residents in 1870 and 1880 respectively, are not available.

Likewise, the presence of numerous blacks such as James Lynch, Peyton Johnson, Thomas Andrews, John Peachy, Albert Banks, Nelson Potter, Milton Stamps, Charles Morgan, and Thomas Anderson, who held city offices in Jackson between 1869 and 1880, did not make Jackson a utopia for blacks. Moreover, the presence of blacks in the State Legislature and state-wide political offices, who resided in Jackson, did not mean that things were well. This is supported substantially by the many acts of racial violence against blacks and the murders of black residents of Jackson and Hinds County, including Charles Caldwell, a state legislator in 1875.

The great historian Carter G. Woodson in one of his publications, *The History of the Negro Church* (1921), wrote the following about Reconstruction:

“In some respects, the Negroes after the war were not far removed from the conditions obtaining in the North before the war. Many of their former problems still confronted them. The chief difference was that after the war the Negroes had fighting ground on which to stand to wage a battle for those things which, having been begrudgingly granted, were being gradually taken

away.”

Certainly the problems intensified as the years of Reconstruction passed as one can imagine from an omen suggested by the following editorial that appeared in a Jackson newspaper when blacks and Republicans lost their political advantage in city government. Speaking specifically of white men, the author wrote that “They had worn the Negro and Republicans yoke so long that they had believed it impossible to throw it off, and when the last vote was counted, the city of freedom went up from hundreds of lips, and the news made every true white man wild with joy.”

Never before had there been a greater need for worship and strength through faith. As could be expected, the Rev. Dunbar’s responsibilities increased accordingly. Moreover, as the Rev. Dunbar’s responsibilities became greater due to strains of the times, they also increased because of Jackson’s increasing black population.

People from all points in Mississippi and some surrounding states that made their way to Jackson for many different reasons. Most, it would appear, came because of the opportunities that existed in the State Capital. Some of them, upon arriving in Jackson with their families, sought places of worship. Blacks who moved to Jackson and professed the Baptist faith usually affiliated with Mount Helm Church.

Such was the case of a group of ex-slaves who migrated to the Jackson area from Grenada and Carroll counties and the other points North of Jackson sometime after the Civil War. Among their number were several families who probably had common slave experiences and decided that they would establish their home sites near each other. The area they selected was a section of Hinds County called “Asylum Hill,” so named because of its closeness to the mental institution. Presently, the site is occupied by the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

At any rate, after these families settled around 1879, they traveled a distance of 4-5 miles (round-trip) by foot to attend worship services at Mount Helm. Due to the necessity to provide needed educational instruction to children in the community at Asylum Hill so that they would be equipped to take their rightful place in society, there arose a need to build a conveniently located school. The property for the school was donated by Isham Cade, an ex-slave and member of the community, who believed to have been born in Carroll County, Mississippi. The property was located at Old Canton Road and Duling Street, where the Woodland Hills Shopping Center is presently located.

The teacher in this first school at Asylum Hill was Mrs. Hester Banks, whose family has maintained its relationship with the institution whose roots this Christian lady helped plant. According to Mrs. Blanche Cade Brown, a historian of this community and its offshoots, the building which housed this first school was subsequently used for a

community Sunday School.

Although the Asylum Hill community was one with houses and a school, its residents still were not satisfied. They wanted a church in their own neighborhood where they could worship and not have to walk a great distance during bad weather and a night during these turbulent times. To this end, the Christian men of the community conferred with Rev. Dunbar, their pastor, who had been described as “a faithful servant of God, “in late 1879 or early 1880 concerning the possibility and manner about which they should proceed in establishing a church at Asylum Hill.

As a result of the unique combination of divine guidance, the encouragement of the Rev. Dunbar, and the faith and determination of the men who went to see the Rev. Dunbar, a church in the Asylum Hill community became a reality in the latter part of 1880. It is recorded in the *Historical Record Survey* of 1942, as well as in William McCain’s *History of Jackson* that this church was built in 1885. However, the oral history of the church indicates that the first church was a “Brush Arbor.”

A Brush Arbor, according to elderly citizens who have seen them and Afro-American Literature, is/was little more than a roof of brushes supported by posts (and sometimes with brushes alongside it) that was used for a place of worship until a building could be erected. It was a church without question, for it was consecrated in the name of the Lord, and it was an accepted place of worship.

The land on which the Brush Arbor was located was donated by Isham Cade, and it was for him that the new church, Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, was named.

The nucleus of Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist was formed when several adult members decided the need for a church in the immediate community because the church in attendance was two miles away and there was no mode of transportation. Late in 1880 a church was formally organized under a “Brush Arbor.” This land on which the Brush Arbor was located was donated by Isham Cade. This was the beginning and the church was named Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in his honor.

“The First Years at a Glance”

1880—

Reverend George Wright of Grenada, Mississippi was elected to serve as the first pastor. The membership soon grew to thirty. A one-half acre lot was purchased from Brother Henry Harris and the first Church building was constructed.

1903-----

Reverend J. E. Hendricks became the second pastor. The membership outgrew the small building. A 24x45 foot was erected in 1904. This property is where Fondren Presbyterian Church presently stands on Old Canton Road.

1904 - 1928

Cade Chapel became the community center. The leadership was as listed:

1909 Reverend A.J. Bradley

1912 Reverend A. C. Morris - Services increased to 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays

1913 Reverend W. P. Whitfield - The participation under his leadership broadens the exposure of the growing congregation.

1917 Reverend A. H. Lovett

1923 Reverend Frank Williams and Reverend W.H. Robinson shared the ministry.

“The Next Forty Years”

A new era had its beginning for Cade Chapel, and Reverend J.D. Hayden would be the servant to lead the church to during the stormy time of 1928. The most noted accomplishment was when the whole community was to be uprooted and moved to new grounds. Reverend Hayden endeared himself to all by becoming a part of the whole fabric of change.

Participation in activities of local associations and classes enhanced the leadership of the church. This resulted in growing and broadening with the calm of a new location and removal of tension which resulted from the city's need to expand. The organizations grew and begin to expand in the church.

1929 To make sure then and outward symbols of permanence was established, a brick church was built on the first site on Ridgeway Street across from where we are located today.

The departments grew during the 30's and 70's, and according to records reviewed by Mrs. Mildred Washington, and Mrs. Blanche Cade Brown, the Sunday School was led by Bros. John Cosey, John Todd, Cornelius Hilliard and Oscar Cheeks. The Missionary Society continued to grow under the leadership of Mrs. Janie Williams, Mrs. Annie Warren, Mrs.O.D. Johnson, Mrs. Mary Ella Carter, Mrs. Annie Barrett, Mrs. Rosia Donald, Mrs. Leora Gray, Mrs. Erma Braxton, Mrs. Emma Turner, Mrs. Lucille Green, Mrs. Mary Coleman, and Mrs. Jimmie Hartfield.. Today the present leader of the

missionary society is Mrs. Thelma Donald.

During this period the Baptist Training Union was under the leadership of the following persons: Mr. Albert Warren, Mrs. Mary Oliphant, Mr. Willie Wright, Mr. Ben Triplett, Mr. Joseph Darden and Mrs. Nancy Jones. With continuous growth and leadership the Baptist Training Union has changed the name to Nurturing the Baptist Church and is under the leadership of Mrs. Willena Brown.

☺The deacon board in the 80's included: Bros. Clifton Campbell, Ollie Johnson, Wyatt Washington, Willie Wright, Eddie Banks, J.B. Harrington, Ben Triplett, Clarence Thompson, Arthur Watson, Beray Thigpen, Matthew McGee, Cornelius Story, Nathaniel Grant, Robert Shaw, and Walter Farrar. Those deceased who served during the middle years were: Green Britton, Albert Warren, John Cosey (to whom the first publication of the church yearbook was dedicated), Dave Pullen and John Banks. Today the present deacon boards consist of twenty-one deacons: McKenzie Crump, Chairman, Willie Bridgeman, Leo Hartfield, Charles Irving, Oliver Sims, Cornelius Story, Samuel Thornton, Ben Triplet, Earnest Ellis, Beray Thigpen, Willie Wright, Coy Gentry, Casey Coleman, Nathaniel Grant, J.B. Harrington, Stanley Wright, Troy Luster, Matthew McGee, Thomas Owens, William Wright, and Authur Watson.

A Deaconess Board was organized during the 80's . The members were Mrs. Mildred Washington (deceased) Mrs. Linda Farrar, Mrs. Dora Thigpen, Mrs. Shirley Watson, Mrs. B.A. McGee, Mrs. Annie Mae Grant, Mrs. Betty Shaw, Mrs. Cora Montgomery, Mrs. Elizabeth Banks, Mrs. Minnie Dallas, Mrs. Mandy Strong, Mrs. Ora Dean, Ms. Linda Harrington, Mrs. Ella Story, Mrs. Susie Thompson, and Mrs. Annie Wright. Today the present Deaconesses are: Mrs. Dora Thigpen, Mrs. Ella Story, Mrs. B.A. McGee, Mrs. Betty Shaw, Mrs. Cora Montgomery, Mrs. Elizabeth Banks, Mrs. Susie Christian, Mrs. Vonnie Gentry, Ms. Lucille Green, Mrs. Jimmie Hartfield, Mrs. Shirley Owens, Mrs. Mattie Triplett, Mrs. Annie Wright, Mrs. Joan Wright, Mrs. Mary Coleman, Mrs. Mattie Wright, Mrs. Bobbie Irving, Ms. Mamie Thomas, Mrs. Helen Luster, Mrs. Ouida Watson, Mrs. Mae Bell Harrington, Mrs. Doris Bridgeman, Mrs. Minnie Ellis, Mrs. Jerrie Thornton, Mrs. Susie Thompson, Mrs. Mary Crump, and Mrs. Donna Sims, President.

☺The Trustee Board included Bros. Will Anderson, Samuel Tatum, Ira Roberts, Earl Dampeer, Warren Craft, Douglas Anderson and Walter Drake. The Music Department during this period selected a Minister of Music, Mr. Beray Thigpen, and five staff members: Ernestine Ross, Directress, Carolyn Dear, Organist, Obra Porter, Pianist, Lisa Manyfield, Pianist and Shirley Pearson, Pianist. We were further assisted in the Sunday School by two accomplished musicians who volunteered their talents; Tita Lynn Cheatham and Chiketa Rene` Green. At present, Bro. William Martin serves as chairman of the trustee board and the members are: Gail Lowery, Johnnie Gray, James Cropper, Lee

Frison, Thomas Cheatem, Rosalyn Sylvester, Craig Blunston, Herman Porter, Robert Buchanan, Elmore Moody, and Napolen Gentry.

Members of the Mother's Board included during that period were: Sis. Janie Williams, Annie B. Russell, Amy Cosey, Annie Warren, Estella Pullen, Elmira Graham, Mamie Woodson, Zora Jones, O.D. Johnson, Mattie Triplett, Josie Ellis, Felicia Britton, Lizzie Garner, Mary Smith, Eva Jamison, Annie Mae Lindsey, Linda Harrington, Mary Smith, Odell Davis, Marseline Clayton, Leila Bell Holloway, Marie Petty, Cora Thomas, Ida Matory, Lottie Irison, Mrs. Andrew Williams and Mrs. Ed Blunt The present members include: Mattie Triplet, Vonnie Gentry, Rosia Donald, Cora Thomas, Pearlie Thompson, Susie Christian, Allene Sutton, B.A. Magee, Elizabeth Banks, Gussie Seals, Julia Robinson, Annie Mae Lindsey, and Dorothy Mennefield.

Traditionally, Cade Chapel in the past has had a deacon for the church clerk. During the life of the church, there have been five female clerks: Miss Jennie Bell Williams(deceased); Mrs. Sallie J. Cade (deceased); Mrs. Ella Kelly Luckett (a faithful member of Mount Helm Baptist Church); Miss Edith Carter and Mrs. Johnnie Gray (present clerk).

Cade Chapel has been richly blessed with the following "Sons in the House": Reverend Mark Johnson (deceased); Reverend T.W. Guice, Reverend John Todd, Reverend Claude Tucker, Reverend Arthur Sanders, Reverend R.L. Joiner, Reverend Wyatt Washington, Sr., Reverend Thomas Oliphant, Reverend Hubie Nelson, Reverend Leroy Harrington, Reverend W.E. Southward, Reverend Steve Mason, Reverend Walter Farrar, Reverend Darryl Magee, Reverend Charles Chiplin, Reverend Michael Culbreth, Reverend Ben King, Reverend Louis Ruckes, Reverend Charles Stanton, Reverend Riccardo Willis, and Reverend Reginald Buckley.

The Usher Board remains on of the finest in the city. Presidents have included Bro. John Todd, Sis. Annie Mae Dearing, Bro. Robert Shaw, Sis. Marie Hilson and at present Bro. Fred Gross.

The Youth Church performed on the First and Third Sundays with past and present church leaders being: Mrs. Stella Harrington, Mrs. Mary Oliphant, Mrs. Sallie Johnson, Bro. Willie Wright, Mrs. Ethel Anderson, Ms. Edith Carter, Mrs. Lorraine Hicks Roberts, Mrs. Eva Levy, Mrs. Verlene Drake, Mrs. Bobbie Buchanan, Mr. J.B. Harrington, Mrs. Lenora Gray, Mr. Frank Dennis, Mrs. Vivian Jackson and Mrs. Dorothy Mennefield, Miss Edith Carter, Mr. Clarence Thompson, Mrs. Obra Porter, Mrs. Mary Coleman and Mrs. Nancy Jones.. The Youth Church performs at the present time on the First Sunday and special occasions. Past Youth Directresses have been Mrs. Bonnie McNeal, Mrs. Thelma Donald, Ms. Glendell Crowley and presently Mrs. Jimmie Hampton Hartfield.

For many years our music department consisted of Miss Earnestine Ross, Mrs. Earlee Grinston and Mr. Ronnie Hicks (deceased). Presently our music department consists of a Minister of Music, Mr. Beray Thigpen; Directress/Pianist Ms. Earnestine Ross; Organist, Reverend Charles Chiplin; Key boards, Mr. Aaron Thompson and Mr. Greg Harris; Percussionist, Mr. Stanley Wright, Choir Directors/Directresses, Obra Porter, Mandy Strong, Michael Robinson, and Rickey Thigpen

Through the late fifties and sixties Cade Chapel again became the meeting place for the community. With the coming of the Freedom Riders and the Civil Rights Movement, much of the activities of the NAACP was carried on in our past and present buildings. Medgar Evers lived down the street, west of the church off Ridgeway, on Guynes Avenue (presently Margaret Walker Alexander Drive). Many of the members understood his work and message and were organizers and community workers in that movement and are today staunch supporters of the NAACP, because they saw and lived the movement. They went to jail, taught classes, demonstrated and magnified their faith. With the burning of churches, it took much courage to continue. The congregation persisted, however, and established one of the first Head Start Centers in its new facility.

1964 Still progressing with the times, membership increasing, Cade Chapels build the present building. After forty-one years, the beloved pastor, Reverend J. D. Hayden retired in 1969.

1969 "The Era Continues-----"

Dr. Horace Lawson Buckley accepted the invitation to this church. With his able leadership, our church is well organized, well-equipped for service and comfortable. Under the leadership of our dynamic pastor, such departments as the Pastor's Aid Club, Nurse's Aid, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Decorating Committee and Kitchen Committee were organized The Young Adult Fellowship was organized by Mrs. Mary Coleman and The Renaissance Club was organized by Mrs. Earlee Grinston. Other accomplishments listed:

1973 Mortgage Burning for the church  
Sunday School grew to three departments, Primary, In-Teen and Adult  
Membership increased to 745

The church and community cooperating in establishing a health program. In its first years of operation when state funds were cut off to the Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center, under Dr. Buckley's leadership, the church assisted

by housing the entire program in its assembly area and classrooms free of charge.

1974 A forty-passenger bus was purchased and a fifteen-passenger van for transporting of senior citizens to Sunday School and other church activities.

1980 Centennial Celebration Service

1985 A tragic fire partially destroyed the church. After this tragedy, major renovation resulted: a multipurpose room, library and thirteen classrooms up stairs, and renovation of one wing of the church to house the church offices.

- A summer tutorial program was established
- Orientation class for new members
- An archway was built on the north side to benefit all members
- The church purchased additional property
- The Brotherhood was organized

1988-89 The first and second female were elected trustees

1991 The Second Mortgage Burning

1993 The church held a Ground Breaking ceremony for the Center for Family Life and Family Day Celebration

1995 The dedication was held for the Center for Family Life. A 1.2 million-dollar facility, which includes a walk through, two levels, six classrooms, seven offices, a family room, four bathrooms, elevators, a gym/multipurpose room, kitchen, utility room, lockers, and showers. Some of the activities offered are: a day care center, tutoring, basketball, acrobatics, drama, and other functions to serve the community and a special project serving adults.

1997 The Partial Hospital Program was organized for follow-up and treatment of adults

1969 -2000

Other accomplishments:

- ★ Continuous growth of three departments in the Sunday School with integrated classes and an orientation
- ★ An Out-Reach program that meet the needs of neighborhood children
- ★ Organization of a Fellowship Choir, Male Chorus, and Voices of Love
- ★ An increase from nine deacons to twenty-one
- ★ Twelve trustees

- ★ A Day Care Center to accommodate the children in the community
- ★ Continuation of BYPU, BTU and presently NBC
- ★ Two worship services each Sunday

The membership has reached over the two thousand mark under Dr. Buckley's leadership. Several parcels of land have been acquired to aid in the future expansion of our facilities. The aim for the future is to focus on faith and more involvement and service to the members and the community. As servants of God we will need to firmly grasp the spirit of prayer for each other, love, and cooperation to follow our dreams. "When we all do what we can everything we do will look like a miracle". (HLB)

The work of this historical edition has meant tireless hours of thought, using the previous work of Mrs. Blanche Cade Brown, Mrs. Mildred Washington, Mayor Robert Walker, and Miss Edith Carter. Many of their writings have been used again to put this together and we are very thankful for their work. Without the heroes this could not have been accomplished.

Tracing the history-----

Mary E. Crump

Directory Committee Member