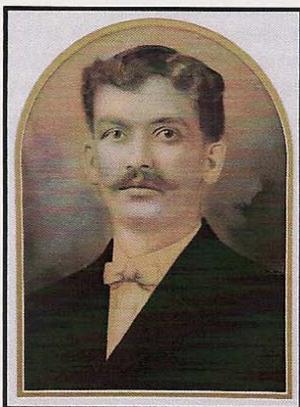


Pastoral History

And

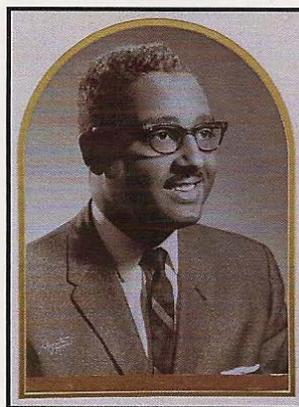
Church History

St. John's Baptist Church Pastoral History



Rev. Grant W. Hamlette (1911-1930)

The third Pastor of St. John's Baptist Church. Under the leadership of Rev. Hamlette, church membership grew and the expansion of the original building (located at Park Place) was completed. Rev. Hamlette was known for the outstanding fourth Sunday night Communion Services. Rev. Hamlette was the undersheppard of the St. John's Baptist Church for 30 years prior to his demise in 1941.



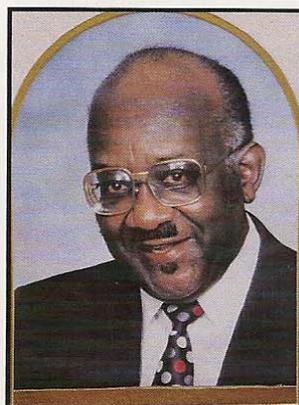
Rev. Sterling E. Glover (1950-1965)

The fifth Pastor of St. John's Baptist Church. Rev. Glover was a dynamic preacher of the gospel. Rev. Glover started a junior church for the young people of St. John's. Also, a Boy Scout troop was organized for the young boys of St. John's as a mentoring tool. Teaching and Training of the membership was a key focus of Rev. Glover's ministry at St. John's. Rev. Glover was the moderator of Middlesex Central Baptist Association from 1951-1954 (of which St. John's was a member church). Rev. Glover was the undersheppard of St. John's until 1965 when he relocated to Ohio to answer the call for pasturing there.



Rev. Rufus L. Sweeney (1942-1950)

The fourth Pastor of St. John's Baptist Church. Rev. Sweeney continued the spiritual growth of St. John's that Rev. Hamlette began. Many new ministries were added and the growth of the membership continued. Rev. Sweeney was the undersheppard of St. John's Baptist church for approximately eight years. In 1950, Rev. Sweeney relocated to Los Angeles, California, where he had been called to a Pastorate.



Rev. Kelmo C. Porter (1966-present)

Rev. Porter has been the undersheppard of the St. John's Baptist Church for the past forty-three years. Under the Divine leadership of the "Holy Spirit", Pastor Porter has lead the St. John's Family to a greater understanding of what Servant hood is all about. Teaching and training continues to be an important focus for Pastor Porter as we (St. John's) strive to become more Christ-like in these uncertain and changing times. Pastor Porter still believes that God is God.

St. John's Baptist Church Pastoral History

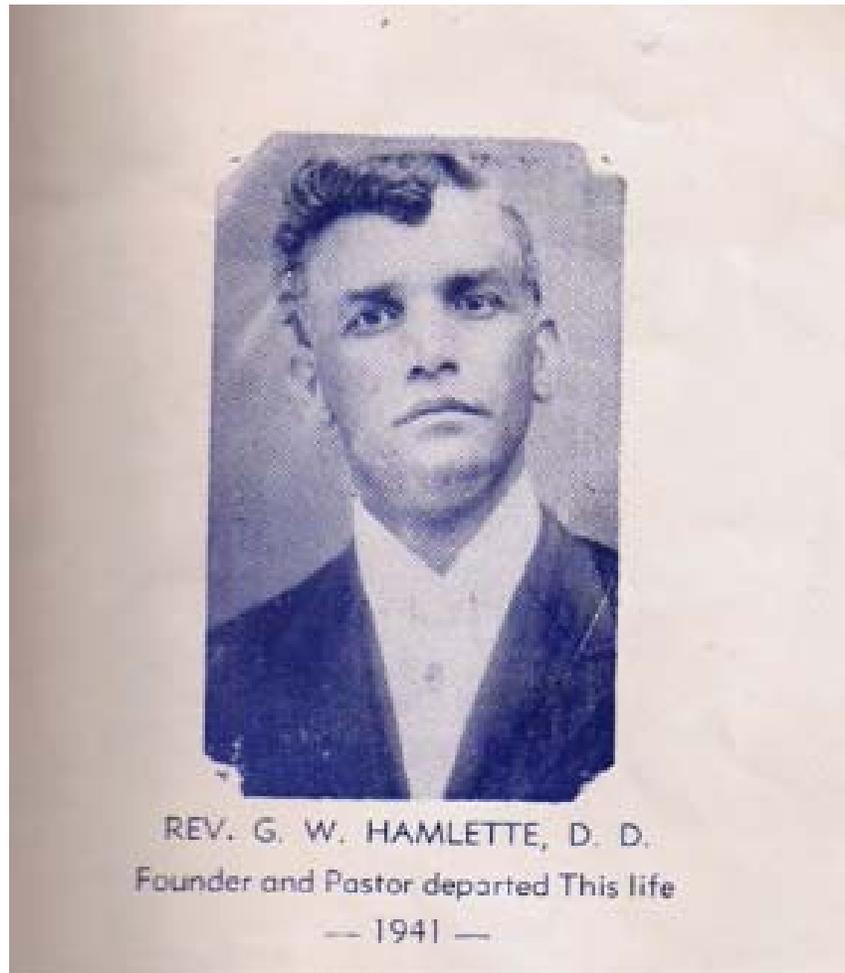
The founders of St. John's Baptist Church called on **Rev. Parsons to be the first Pastor** in 1909. Later that year **Rev. Gatewell was called to be the second Pastor.**

After the demise of Rev. Gatewell, the church of 12 members called **Rev. Grant W. Hamlette to be the third Pastor of St. John's from 1911-1930.** Under his leadership the church membership grew and the expansion of the original building (located on Park Place) was completed. Rev. Hamlette was known for the outstanding fourth Sunday night Communion Services. Rev. Hamlette was the undersheppard of the church for 30 years prior to his demise in 1941.

The fourth Pastor was Rev. Rufus L. Sweeney from 1942 -1950. Rev. Sweeney continued the spiritual growth of St. John's. Many new ministries were added and the growth of the membership continued. Rev. Sweeney was the undersheppard for approximately 8 years. In 1950, Rev. Sweeney and his family relocated to Los Angeles, California.

The fifth Pastor was Rev. Sterling E. Glover from 1950-1965. Rev. Glover was a dynamic preacher of the gospel. Rev. Glover started a Junior Church for the young people of St. John's. Also a Boy Scout troop was organized for young boys of St. John's as a mentoring tool. Teaching and training of the membership was a key focus of Rev. Glover's ministry. Rev. Glover was the Moderator of Middlesex Central Baptist Association from 1951 -1954 (of which St. John's was a member church). Rev. Glover was the undersheppard to St. John's until 1965 when he relocated to Ohio.

The sixth Pastor was Rev. Dr. Kelmo C. Porter, Jr. from 1966 to 2015. Rev. Porter served as the undersheppard until he transitioned to heaven. Under Rev. Porter's leadership of the "Holy Spirit", he led the St. John's family to a greater understanding of what servant hood is all about. Teaching and training was extremely important to him as St. John's strived to be more Christ-like in these uncertain and changing times.



Rev. Grant W. Hamlette
1911 – 1930
The Third Pastor

He served St. John for 30 years. He was known for his 4th
Sunday evening Communion service.



Rev. Rufus L. Sweeney
1942 - 1950
The Fourth Pastor

Rev. Sweeney was the Assistant Pastor under the administration of Rev. Hamlette. After 8 years of service with St. John Rev. Sweeney resigned. He and his family moved to Los Angeles California.



REV. STERLING E. GLOVER

Rev. Sterling E. Glover

1950 – 1965

The Fifth Pastor

Famous for installing Youth programs and mentoring.



Rev. Dr. Kelmo C. Porter, Jr.
1966 - 2015
The Sixth Pastor

He lead St. John to a greater understanding of Servant hood is all about. Creator of our church motto: "Entering to Worship, Leaving to Serve"

St. John's Baptist Church History

The Beginning

The spring of 1909 gave birth to the idea of a Negro Baptist Church in the small community of Scotch Plains, New Jersey in Union County. At that time, there were few people of color residing in this community and most of them attended Bethel Chapel Church in nearby Westfield, New Jersey.

After many years of traveling to Westfield to worship, three families, the Kates, the Webbs, and the Whites conferred with Rev. Preston Ross, the Pastor of Bethel Chapel about having a church in their own town of Scotch Plains. Rev. Ross was amenable to this idea and assisted in organizing a church. Shortly thereafter, the Webbs opened their home



St. John Church Erected on 2414 Park Place, Scotch Plains, NJ circa 1915

for community prayer meetings. Sunday after Sunday, a faithful few gathered at the 11:00 a.m. hour and prayed to God for Divine Guidance.

The growth of the community stimulated many more to join the community Prayer Band, still meeting at the Webbs.

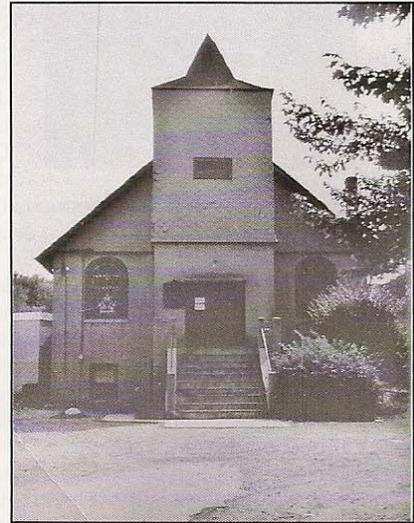
The Mission

Finally, it was decided that enough people were participating to establish a Mission. The formation of the Mission led to raising funds and the purchase of property to erect a future church. A Board of Trustees was formed. Among this first group was: Mr. John Kates, Chair; Mr. Kraft, Secretary; Mr. George Waller, Treasurer, and Mr. Van Pelt, member. Mrs. Emma White, a member of the Prayer Band suggested the name of "St. John's Baptist Church". The growth of the group necessitated a move to the home of the Walkers, where the Church was duly organized from a Mission and the **first Pastor, Rev. Parson** was called.

Following Rev. Parson, the **second Pastor called was Rev. Gatewell**, who began an earnest building fund and a building was purchased on the street now known as Park Place. After the death of Rev. Gatewell in 1911, the **Rev. Grant W. Hamlette** was installed as Pastor of St. John's. Under his leadership, the church grew and prospered. Additional space was needed and obtained by the membership.

Growth & Expansion

Later in Rev. Hamlette's administration, it became apparent that additional space was needed to accommodate the church's growth. Believing in God and the stability of Rev. Hamlette's leadership and vision, the membership began the process that would lead to the purchase of nine lots at a cost of \$50 each that would become St. John's new edifice. One outstanding service instituted by Rev. Hamlette was the fourth Sunday night Communion Service. His tenure saw St. John's grow from infancy to maturity.



St. John Church Grows and Matures

God's Work Continues

After Rev. Hamlette's passing, God's work continued under **Rev. Sweeney** who continued the growth process of St. John's. Additional physical work on the building took place and spiritual growth continued. The movement of God was once again felt when Rev. Sweeney relocated to California. A dynamic young preacher of the Gospel, possessing the



The Ground Breaking Ceremony for the New Church

ability to lead and teach the people of God the ways of Christ, was **Rev. Sterling E. Glover's** gift to St. John's.

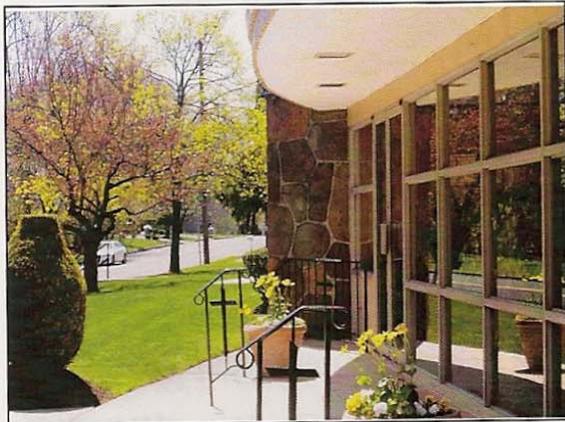
St. John's Baptist Church History (continued)



The Dome as it is Known Today

The Birth of The Dome

Rev. Sterling E. Glover was a great organizer, a friend to young and old, and a firm believer in the Church working together as a team in all matters pertaining to religion. During his administration, St. John's moved into its present edifice (The Dome) which was and is firm evidence that if God is for you, then no one can defeat you. Rev. Glover was about making sure that the people of God understood what it meant to be 'sold out for the Master'. Continued physical improvements were made to the building. Rev. Glover served faithfully until 1965 when he relocated to Ohio in 1965.



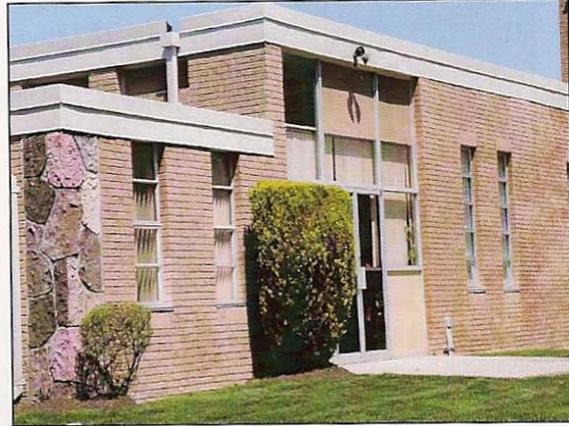
Improving What God Had Already Provided

God's New Shepherd

In 1966, God once again moved His hand as He directed the **Rev. Kelmo C. Porter** to become the Shepherd of the St. John's Baptist Church. For forty-three years, God has merged and forged a marriage of people and Pastor to a place of understanding that we are called to be as servants of the Most High God. Pastor Porter has seen us (as St John's) at our best and sometimes at our worst, but be-

cause of his commitment to God and his teaching of 'what thus saith the Lord', we, the St. John's family have arrived at one hundred years of service.

Pastor Porter has a favorite saying, "If some get some, and



New Construction and Expansion

some get some, it won't be so hard on some". In other words, we must all work together in order for God's house to be blessed and His people to be truly edified.

Continued Growth & Expansion

Rev. Porter is not only a good Shepherd, but he is also an excellent administrator. Rev. Hamlette undertook the construction of the first St. John's Baptist Church. Rev. Glover was responsible for the current unique structure known as "The Dome". But Pastor Porter rolled up his sleeves and went right to work improving what God had already provided. He oversaw the paving and black-topping of the church's first major parking area. His vision inspired the purchase of large portions of city-owned property which tripled the size of the church's parking facility.

He led the construction of a second floor on the church's activities building, thereby providing additional office space, classrooms, a library, computer room, conference room and restrooms. Under his guidance, a central air conditioning and a new heating system were installed. The congregation then undertook the project of refinishing the church's exterior, doubling the size of the fellowship hall, and totally beautifying the sanctuary. With God's help and guidance, St John's liquidated and burned the existing mortgage several years before the date of maturation.

To God Be The Glory

Today, St. John's is a pillar of the greater Scotch Plains community. Because of Pastor Porter's leadership and vision, every aspect of the church has greatly grown and mightily prospered. We must therefore say, "TO GOD BE THE GLORY."

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St. John's Baptist Church History continued

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Original Church, Circa 1915

The Ground Breaking Ceremony for the new church was attended by hundreds of church members, area residents and people from the surrounding area towns to witness this occasion.



The Reverend George Harris of Elizabeth, New Jersey, who was the Moderator of the Middlesex Baptist Association, was the guest speaker.

Mayor Mauro Checchio looked on while the Reverend Sterling E. Glover and Little Susan Westbrook, one of Sunday School children, broke ground.