

# THIRD NEW HOPE HISTORY

## New Beginning (1956-1961)

With this foundation and Jesus Christ himself being the Chief cornerstone, Deacon John Cunningham shared the commission placed on his heart by the Holy Spirit to establish an organized body of believers to carry out the work of the Lord. This word fell upon prepared hearts and they were all on one accord.

This newly formed congregation decided on the name "New Hope." This name according to the State Registrar had already been taken. They did not become discouraged because they knew they would be named "New Hope" – it was a symbol of their new beginning. *The founding members: Deacon and Sister John, Brother Joseph Keys, Sister Alfoncya Keys, Brother and Sister Gus Farrow, Sister Margaret Vinson, Sister Elizabeth Powell, Sister Agnes Haynes and Sister Lizzy Hart* decided they would become the **Third New Hope Baptist Church.**

It was the same month that the Lord led John L. Davis to become the first pastor of the Third New Hope Baptist Church. It was under his leadership that Third New Hope acquired its first church building at 1967 Carpenter Street in Detroit, Michigan. In obedience to the great commission of the church, they formed a missionary society and programs to reach the lost.

In October 1959, a larger building at 9801 Russell Street was purchased. In 1960, Rev. Davis left Third New Hope; Rev. James Walker became the new pastor, serving a short time.

## Growth and Fellowship (1961-1977)

In February of 1961, Rev. G.P. Chapman assumed the pastoral duties of the Third New Hope Baptist Church. Under the leadership of Rev. Chapman, the church continued to grow in membership and fellowship. A youth choir, usher board, nurses guild, benevolent and social outreach programs were established. The church registered with the Michigan Baptist District Association; The Baptist, Missionary and Educational State Convention; and the National Baptists Convention USA, Inc.

In 1974, the mortgage on the Russell Street property was burned. The membership continued to increase and it became necessary to look for a

larger building. In June 1977, Third New Hope once again moved into a larger edifice at 12650 Linwood Street in Detroit, Michigan. Rev. Chapman believed that God had great work for Third New Hope. After 16 years of dedicated service, he resigned knowing that God would send a "Joshua" to lead the way (Deuteronomy 34:4).

### Spiritual Awakening (1978-1999)

On December 18, 1977, the Lord sent a young, energetic, spiritually, inspired minister, **Edward L. Branch** to pastor Third New Hope Baptist Church. Pastor Branch's arrival marked the beginning of phenomenal spiritual. The energy and the vitality that Pastor Branch and his wife Lanell, brought to Third New Hope quickly spread throughout the congregation. Immediately, Pastor Branch taught the members to give God's way, through tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:8-10), and to study to show thyself approved, a worker that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15).

Pastor Branch and Lanell led by example, teaching Sunday school and weekly bible classes, directing the choirs and providing music. In an effort to make Third New Hope a leader in Christian Education, Pastor Branch established the Bible Instituted in 1983 where classes were offered to all ages, to meet the spiritual and social needs of the membership and community.

In an effort to accommodate the growing membership, renovation of the building continued until it was evident that Third New Hope had outgrown its existing site. With the cooperation of the membership, Pastor Branch, led by the Holy Spirit, stepped out on faith to purchase a larger building. In May 1985, the members marched into a beautiful new church home 12850 Plymouth Road, Detroit, MI.

Being a church alive, Third New Hope is serious about ministry. Emphasis is placed on worshipping God, warm Christian fellowship, spiritual nurturing, missions and evangelism. In 1984, we established an overseas feeding ministry in Grand River, Haiti; and in 1988 began supporting a Brazilian missionary through overseas missions.

In 1988, The Heritage Center for African American Religious Studies, was developed. Heritage Center is dedicated to advanced theological studies for clergy and laity. For years Heritage Center hosted the Black Church

Studies Program and continues the Diploma of Theology program for Ashland Theological Seminary. The first graduating class was in May 1995.

Numerous ministries have been birthed under the leadership of Pastor Branch and Sis. Lanell, these ministries impact the lives of men, women, youth and children.

### The New Millennium (2000-Present)

As Third New Hope continued to reach out to meet the needs of a changing community, Pastor Branch visualized a three-phase plan to upgrade the church property, renovate the church building, and provide greater service to the Third New Hope membership and community at-large. God has been moving and we are seeing this vision come to past.

In 2006 we formed the Tri-Unity Community Development Corporation. In 2007 we did a full sanctuary renovation and remodelled our Pastor's office making a beautiful office suite for his anniversary. Over the last 15 years we have acquired over 30 parcels of land. We have built new parking lots, remodelled our two bathrooms on the lower level and done a number of other beautification projects to improve our church. While doing all this we continue to start new ministries, expand our office and pastoral staff and are actively transforming our community. We are leaders serving a Great God making a great difference.

In 2010, Third New Hope launched its second campus; know as the **West Campus**. Dr. Genetta Y. Hatcher serves as the campus pastor.

In 2013, God gave Pastor Branch another vision which was to enlarge our territory and continue with *Kingdom Expansion*. January, 2014, the third worship location, the **Northwest Campus**, was launched under the direction of our Kingdom Expansion Director and interim Campus Pastor, Dr. Velva Burley Flowers.

***"God is up to something! What's ours to do is to find our something within the something God is up to, and partner with God to make great things happen in our world." E.L. Branch***