

## A New Land

*The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you." Genesis 12:1*

At the peak of the African American migration in 1917 from the South to the North, Beloit was a city that became the destination for many people. A large number of northern manufacturing plants recruited African Americans from the South to come North to work in their factories due to the loss of white workers who were away fighting in World War I. Fairbanks Morse & Company, located in Beloit, also needed additional workers to help fill the heavy demand of machinery that was manufactured by Fairbanks. Fairbanks employed an estimated 2,300 workers in 1915, of which only six were African Americans. The 1910 U.S. census recorded the population for Beloit to be 15,125, of which only ninety-four were African Americans. In 1916, Fairbanks enlisted the aid of a young African American from Pontotoc, Mississippi by the name of John McCord to help recruit black labor. This was the beginning of the Great Migration to Beloit for many African Americans. Eager for an opportunity to escape the Jim Crow laws of the South, begin a better life for themselves and their families, they knew they needed to also fill their spiritual needs. They believed to be without a church was to be without a place of spiritual consolation and worship of the God on which they relied. To be without a church was to be without a place of refuge from society's racist assaults on their culture and intellectual character. To be without a church was to be without a gathering place to celebrate, educate, and organize the spiritual and political agendas that concerned them as a people. A small group of African Americans, most who were from Pontotoc, Mississippi, felt the need to minister to the Baptist migrants employed at Fairbanks and the other African American residents of Beloit. It was with prayer and believing that God's will would be done that Second Emmanuel Baptist Church, now known as Emmanuel Baptist Church, was founded in April 1917. Their first service was held on April 15, 1917. Up until that time the city of Beloit had only one African American church, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which was founded in 1882.

## A New Church

*and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.*

*Matthew 1:23b*

With the assistance of the Reverend Ingram E. Bell, a white minister from the First Baptist Church in Beloit, a dedicated group proceeded to organize what was to be the first African American Baptist church in the city. The organizers consisted of: Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Guyton, Mrs. Moriah McCord, Mr. and Mrs. Grant Peter Lee Gordon, Mr. George Barr, Mrs. Millie Barr, Mr. and Mrs. William Harris, Mr. Reese White Sr., Mr. and Mrs. William S. Williams, Mrs. Mallie Grace Bell.

### THREE OF THE ORGANIZERS



MRS. MORIAH MCCORD



MRS. MALLIE GRACE BELL



MRS. MILLIE BARR

Armed with the belief and faith as recorded in Matthew 18:19-20, and seeking to continue their commitment to worship, this church body of Baptists assembled in Kent Hall on State Street.

*“where there are two or three gathered together in My name, touching and agreeing on the same thing, I will be in the midst”*

To formalize Second Emmanuel Baptist Church, the congregation filed a certificate of organization at the Office of the Registrar of Deeds for Rock County. This document was executed on July 12, 1917 and recorded in county records on March 20, 1918.

ORGANIZATION RECORDED AND CHARTERED

103

No. 278129 Second Emmanuel Baptist Church, Beloit.

Know all men by these presents: That the undersigned persons representing a body of people engaged in Christian work which have been duly organized as a church known as the Second Emmanuel Baptist Church of Beloit, County of Rock and State of Wisconsin, and in accordance with our sincerity we pray that the aforesaid statement be recorded and a charter issued. (The date of the organization of said Church is: April 15th, 1917.)

Rev. G. J. Fox, Pastor	G. W. Barr
G. W. Barr, Deacon	R. L. Guyton
Wm. S. Williams, Sect.	G. P. L. Gorden
Trustee	Wm. S. Williams
Board	

State of Wisconsin )  
Rock County. ) ss

Personally came before me this 12th day of July AD 1917 the above named G. J. Fox, Pastor, G. W. Barr, Deacon, Wm. S. Williams Secy; G. W. Barr, P. L. Guyton, G. P. L. Gorden and Wm. S. Williams Trustee Board to me known to be the persons who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged the same.

(N.S.) A. W. Blanchard,  
Notary Public Rock Co., Wis.

My Commission expires March 31, 1918.

Recorded 20th day of March A.D. 1918 at 9 o'clock A.M.

F. P. Smiley, Register of Deeds.

*"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." Matthew 16:18*

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS: That the undersigned Walter E. W. Brown, Robert Guyton, John D. Stevenson and George Hilliard, and those who are or may become associated with them for the purposes herein specified, have organized themselves into a religious society and denomination of the Second Emmanuel Baptist Church, a religious society and denomination located in the City of Beloit, in the County of Rock and State of Wisconsin for religious, charitable and educational purposes, which society shall be known and incorporated by the name of Second Emmanuel Baptist Church of Beloit.

The undersigned are adult members of said religious society, which society now maintains and heretofore has maintained regular public worship in the City of Beloit. Due public notice was given at a stated meeting of said society and denomination to have said society and denomination duly incorporated; and this certificate is made pursuant to and in accordance with Section 187.01 of the Statutes of the State of Wisconsin. Incorporation of this society and denomination was attempted by a certificate of organization bearing date April 15, 1917, and recorded March 20, 1918 in the Office of Register of Deeds of Rock County, Wisconsin in Vol. 2 of Church Records on page 103, and this action is taken and this certificate is made for the purpose of correcting defects in the proceedings heretofore taken and to make said society and denomination a corporation with all the rights and powers conferred upon religious societies and denominations under Section 187.01 of the Statutes of the State of Wisconsin.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals this 3rd day of June, A.D. 1927.

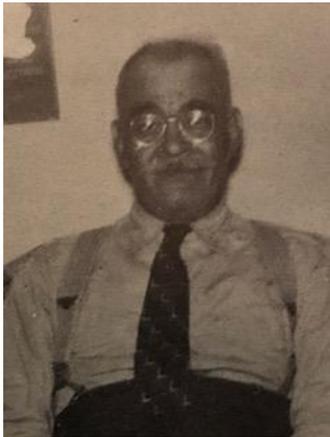
Walter E. W. Brown (Seal)  
 Geo. Hilliard (Seal)  
 John D. Stevenson (Seal)  
 Robert Guyton (Seal)

State of Wisconsin }  
 Rock County } ss. On this 3rd day of June, A.D. 1927, personally appeared before me  
 Walter E. W. Brown, Robert Guyton, John D. Stevenson and  
 George Hilliard to me known to be the persons who executed the foregoing instrument and  
 acknowledged the same to be their free act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned  
 (N. S.) Elinor McGinnis  
 My commission expires Aug. 17, 1930. Notary Public Rock County, Wisconsin  
 Received for Record June 4<sup>th</sup> A.D. 1927 at 9:20 o'clock A. M. P. F. Smiley, Register.

On June 3, 1927, Second Emmanuel Baptist Church filed their Certificate of Incorporation as a Wisconsin religious organization at the Rock County Courthouse in Janesville.

The Reverend George J. Fox was called to be the first pastor of the newly founded Second Emmanuel Baptist Church. Mr. Robert Guyton was the first Superintendent of Sunday School and his wife Eva was the pianist. Mr. Grant Gordon was church clerk and Mrs. Mallie Bell taught Sunday School. Deacons in the early church were Mr. George Barr, Mr. Grant Gordon, Mr. William S. Williams, and Mr. Anthony J. Jinks. The first baptism was held at the First Baptist Church located on East Grand Avenue. Among those baptized were Tommie Carr, Josephine Vance, Laura and Rubie White. Rubie and Laura were the daughters of Zack and Dora White, who had arrived in Beloit on April 19, 1917. Zack was a part of the recruitment of Fairbanks Morse. The White family joined the church shortly after their arrival. Zack and Dora White remained faithful and dedicated members of Emmanuel until their passing. Rubie wrote about her family settling in Beloit and attending Emmanuel Baptist Church, which been organized just a few days before her family arrived. Rubie also wrote that when she was young her mother Dora worked as a washwoman and purchased a second-hand piano, which she

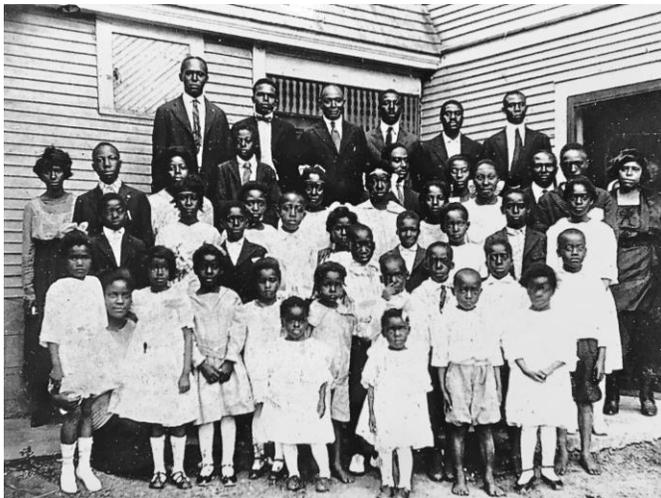
learned to play and became the pianist to accompany the Emmanuel Baptist Choir. By 1920 the membership had grown to more than 100 members. Reverend George J. Fox resigned at the end of October 1920. Reverends Arthur Pace and Shed Barksdale served as interim pastors until a permanent replacement could be found. In the meantime, the church had moved to a hall upstairs on Third and West Grand. In 1919, the church relocated to Booth Hall, upstairs where the old Diana Shop was located on East Grand Avenue.



Mr. Zack White



Mrs. Rubie White Bond



Early Sunday School at the Edgewater Flats. John D. Stevenson, Emmanuel's church clerk and financial secretary, third from the left on the back row.

## Beloit, “The Gateway City”

*The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Deuteronomy 31:8*

According to the 1920 U.S. census, Beloit had a population of 21,284. The African American population of Beloit now totaled 834. The increase was due in part to the recruitment of workers by Fairbanks and also families encouraging their relatives, which were still living down south, to move to Beloit. Stewart Warner and Iron Works were two manufactures that also employed African Americans. With the influx of African American workers, Fairbanks realized that something had to be done for housing. The white residents of Beloit did not fully embrace African Americans living in their neighborhoods. There were African Americans living in Beloit that could afford to buy or build their homes, but met resistance from realtors and banks. Many of the workers were given temporary housing. A “shanty like camp” was built at the corner of Pleasant and Lawton Avenue. In 1917, west of the Rock River, Fairbanks built the Edgewater Flats to house African American workers. Fairbanks also built the Edgewater YMCA for the African Americans near the Flats, for their social activities and accommodations for newcomers to Beloit. Fairbanks faced great opposition from Harry Adams, the then Mayor of Beloit, about the purchase of the land and his thoughts on where to house the “negroes”.

Established African Americans neighborhoods were growing in the south section of Beloit. Some of the streets included Race St., Colby St., St. Paul Ave., Prospect Ave. and Athletic Ave. These homes were located within the flood plain on the east side of the river, an area that was prone to flooding. For many families, the Edgewater Flats apartments were interim dwellings until they could purchase homes of their own. There was always a new family to rent a vacant unit. When families moved away from Edgewater Flats they moved to areas along Second, Third, and Fifth Streets, near the railroad tracks on the river’s west side. They also moved to locations on Harvey, Randall, and Copeland Streets, next to the Fairbanks Morse foundry.

Beloit did not have segregation laws when it came to the schooling of African Americans. At all grade levels, African American students attended integrated schools. Elementary school aged children attended Strong, Parker or Burdge. Junior High schools included Lincoln or Roosevelt. High school aged students attended Beloit High. Not only did the African Americans factory workers experience discrimination on their jobs, their families also faced discrimination around the city of Beloit. They weren't allowed to eat at restaurants or store lunch counters. Emmanuel members Jesse and Annie Turman owned the Dew Drop Inn, which was located at 208 Park Avenue. It was a local restaurant and rooming house for African Americans. The Beloit YMCA did not allow African Americans to become members or participate in any activities or clubs. The Edgewater YMCA under the supervision of John D. Stevenson, provided organized activities for the African American community. He organized the first African American Boy Scout Club, Troop 6 in 1924. The Black Girls Excelsior Reserve Club and Tacinca Clubs were formed for the African American girls. Many of Emmanuel's youth were involved in these organizations. Shopping became more restrictive. Public venues and civic organizations rolled back the welcome mats, as blacks were no longer appreciated. Beloit's civil rights activists organized a branch of the NAACP in August 1919 and a number of social clubs were also formed. Discriminatory practices were not only felt from Beloit physicians and dentists, but also Beloit's hospital system. In 1928, African Americans had little or no access to rooms at Beloit's hospitals. Dr. William Marshall and Dr. Ludie T. Gilmer had set up their practices in Beloit and served as the African American community's physicians. Beloit's African American community had their own business owners to serve them. William S. Williams, an organizer and chartered member of Emmanuel, operated a barbershop, served as a Justice of the Peace and worked as a realtor. Dr. Fred E. Norman, a dentist who had an office on Lawton Avenue, treated the African American community. Jesse Guy operated a dry cleaning business and was also a tailor. Many of the African American women took jobs as domestic workers, laundresses, maids and cooks. Despite earning meager wages at the factories, these men and women faithfully gave and supported their church.

## The Called

*And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. Jeremiah 3:15*

On January 9, 1921, the Reverend Walter E. W. Brown of Indianola, Mississippi was called to pastor by way of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Reverend Brown faithfully served twenty-two years. His beginning salary in 1921 was only \$45.00 per month. The congregation at Second Emmanuel had increased to 175 church members and was now worshipping in a large 2-story home that stood at the corner of St. Paul Avenue and Short Street. Church members that lived at the Edgewater Flats rode the Janesville and Rockford interurban train to the corner of State and St. Paul and walked to the church. It was a short walk for the members that lived in the neighborhood of Emmanuel. The church roll now consisted of names such as; Jesse McShan, who was the church janitor, Estelle Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Ross, Paul Evan, James Gordon family, Melinda Hobson, Thomas Bandy family, James Dent family, Robert Taylor family, Kate Bradford Mahan, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Halyard, Sidney Williams, Geneva, Eugene and Scottie Turman, Disken Watts family, Mary May, James Dotson and the Willie Townsend family.



Louise Scott and grandchildren Lula Belle, Ethel and John Watts  
Lula Belle tells the story of how she was baptized in the Rock River at the age of twelve by Reverend W. E. W. Brown.

## Second Emmanuel's first Missionary Circle



Pictured left to right; front row; Elhur Gaither, Eva Guyton, Mallie Bell, Mrs. Weatherspoon, Lula Brown, Mrs. Fountain, Ella Harris, Mrs. Grey, Lottie Hyde and Lou Scott. Middle row; Nannie Love, Della Pignes, Sarah Printup, Maggie Gordon, Reverend Walter E.W. Brown, Mrs. Fox, Nettie Duncan, Annie Barr Jinks, Edna Morris, Willie Townsend, Alberta Scott, Frankie Ollie. Back row; Joe Drommond, Jesse McShan, Georgia Printup, Jennie Hyde and Beulah Hyde.

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

*Matthew 28: 19-20*

Over the next few years, under the leadership of Reverend Brown, Second Emmanuel Baptist Church, established themselves as a bright light in the Beloit community as well as the state of Wisconsin.

In 1923, Second Emmanuel joined the Wisconsin State Convention and the Northern Baptist Convention, sending delegates to be a voice and represent the church.

Mr. John D. Stevenson, supervisor and secretary of the Edgewater YMCA, served as church clerk and financial secretary From February 6, 1923 to 1929. His hard work and dedication did not go unnoticed. Church history has noted during Mr. Stevenson's tenure he demonstrated distinguished skill and accuracy. Fairbanks & Morse had recruited John D. Stevenson, a staff accountant under Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, to come to Beloit. Other early committed church clerks were James Gordon and Mrs. Sadie Dent.

On April 30, 1924, the congregation purchased a lot on the corner of East Grand and Athletic for their future sanctuary.

On October 1, 1924, Mrs. Moriah McCord was selected as church mother. Mrs. McCord, born a slave in 1861, was one of the original organizers of Second Emmanuel. Moriah and her husband Jesse came to Beloit in 1916 at the urging of their son John McCord, who was employed by Fairbanks and assisted in the recruitment of African American workers from the South. Mrs. Kate Mayo, another dedicated church member, was elected President of the Missionary Society.

In February 1925, the Wisconsin State Association of Colored Churches was formed in Milwaukee. Second Emmanuel elected to send Miss Rubie White, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Zack White, as their first delegate.

In June 1925, the St. Paul Avenue location where the church had worshipped for almost five years was sold for \$3,500.00. The church moved forward with their plans to build on the corner lot of Athletic and East Grand Avenue. Cunningham Builders presented the plans for the new church. One being a brick veneer and the other was a concrete structure for \$5,500.00, which was accepted. By the fall of 1925, construction progressed enough for the congregation to move into the basement. They worshipped there for two years before the entire building was completed. Although membership had declined to about 150 members and finances were meager, the faithful members continued to move

forward believing that they would soon see the fruits of their labor. Completed in 1927, the congregation of Second Emmanuel Baptist Church could now worship in a beautiful brick building located in the heart of the African American community. In 1943, after twenty-two years of pastoral service, the well-loved Reverend Walter E. W. Brown, resigned.



Rita Cox plays across the street



Emmanuel's young adults



Emmanuel's Laymen 1957



Early Emmanuel church members

## The Interim Years

*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-12*

On August 22, 1943, the Reverend J. M. Price began serving as pastor. It was under his leadership that the congregation committed themselves to a mortgage rally. During the weeks of October 31, 1943 to February 5, 1944, Emmanuel raised \$1,639.93. On March 3, 1944 the bank mortgage on the church was paid and on April 17, 1944 Emmanuel Baptist Church celebrated the burning of the mortgage note to the church. Reverend Price served Emmanuel until June 15, 1945. Emmanuel, on September 21, 1945, elected Reverend Walter Lee LeBeaux as their next pastor. A June 1947 edition of a monthly paper published by Emmanuel called *The Messenger*, described Reverend LaBeaux as a pastor, who in a short time had brought life into the church and community. Reverend LaBeaux encouraged the Emmanuel membership by telling them, “For twelve months through the hazy pathway as we journeyed upward, many hardships were ours to encounter. But realizing that hardships and handicaps fits one for greater tasks, we pressed on toward our goal with great anticipation.” Reverend LaBeaux not only was involved in the community of Beloit, but also in the state of Wisconsin. He was known to travel abroad preaching and spreading the gospel. It was under his administration, in 1947, that Emmanuel purchased a home right next door to the church to serve as their parsonage. Reverend Walter LaBeaux’s ministry ended September 1949.



It was once again time for Emmanuel to search for a pastor to lead their congregation. In December 1949 they elected Reverend C. Milton Newton as their next pastor. He served until 1951.



Sam Simmons, Rev. C. M. Newton,  
Trustees Willie Duncan, Herron Johnson



Mrs. Newton, Annie Turman  
Mattie Montgomery, Nettie Duncan

Emmanuel then enlisted Reverend Eli Lomax, an assistant pastor, to lead the congregation. Reverend Lomax served as interim pastor until June 1952. Reverend Matthew Jones was elected pastor in of June 1952 and served until July 1953. The Emmanuel pulpit was again vacant and Reverend Eli Lomax served as interim pastor until Reverend Leonard W. Veal was called on March 15, 1954. His installation service was held from May 24th - 30th, 1954. On November 6, 1955, Reverend Veal submitted his letter of resignation. He continued to serve until his resignation went into effect on January 1, 1956.



Reverend and Mrs. Veal  
Delegate Mrs. Sims  
Sunday School and Baptist  
Training Union Congress  
Atlantic City, NJ  
1955

Again Reverend Eli Lomax was interim pastor until October 1, 1956. In search of a new pastor, Emmanuel called Reverend Alfred Robbs, of Terre Haute, Indiana. He was installed as pastor on January 20, 1957. Under the administration of Reverend Robbs extensive plans and preparation were made for a new church building. However, near the close of 1957, Reverend Robbs resigned to accept a call to pastor a church in Flint, Michigan.



Reverend Alfred Robbs



Mrs. Margaret Robbs



Senior Missionary Society



Trustee Board



Deacon Board



Deaconesses

This had to be another trying time for Emmanuel. The congregation faced another great challenge of finding a pastor to lead and provide guidance. Reverend Eli Lomax was again requested to serve. He was always willing and ready to do his part. Emmanuel was ever so grateful to Reverend Lomax for his service when called upon to fill in as interim pastor. The membership remained prayerful and calm as they were lead by a very efficient group of assistant ministers, who began to search for a new leader. It has been said that “the darkest hour is just before the dawn of day.” This seemed to be the hour of doom for the members of Emmanuel, the church was destroyed by fire in early 1958. This was indeed a very dark hour.



Demolition of Emmanuel after being destroyed by fire in 1958

The absence of a shepherd to lead the flock and to be without a place to worship made it seem like the end. The congregation relied on their faith and remained steadfast believing that God was with them and He would not fail. Emmanuel shall ever be grateful to all of the churches that offered their facilities, but especially grateful to Reverend Joseph Gaylor and the members of Bethel A. M. E. Church for permitting the use of their sanctuary for worship.

## The Good News

*And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news! Romans 10: 14-15*

Emmanuel extended a call to Reverend Cleavant Derricks, and after much deliberation he came to serve the church on July 6, 1958. He was installed as pastor over four days during week of November 13th-17th, 1958. Reverend Derricks set out at once to complete the church with an aggressive building campaign. Reverend Derricks changed the building plans, secured Mr. Edgar Davis from Memphis, Tennessee as the contractor, and Mr. Grover H. Lippert from Madison, Wisconsin as the architect. Within two years, Reverend Derricks had led the congregation to build and dedicate a splendid, ultra modern church. The Emmanuel congregation truly had a magnificent edifice in the city of Beloit. On Sunday, November 6, 1960, an Open House Service was held at the church. In the Open House souvenir booklet Reverend Derricks wrote, “Two years and four months ago, I began a new job for the Lord. I was led to the Emmanuel Baptist Church where I met a great challenge with a mammoth task ahead. I had little in hand but with faith in a Great God and confidence in the Children of God entrusted to my hand, we began the task with the blessings of God and the help of many friends.”

In 1963, Reverend Cleavant Derricks resigned to become pastor of a church in Washington, D. C. Emmanuel was blessed to have had Reverend Derricks as their pastor. Reverend Derricks’ wife, Carrie, had served as the church pianist and their three children sang in the junior choir. A legendary songwriter, Reverend Derricks penned the words and music to the song “*Just a Little Talk With Jesus*”, a popular song among Christians worldwide. Reverend Derricks was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 1984 and the Southern Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame in 2001. Reverend Cleavant Derricks passed away on April 14, 1977. Reverend Floyd Prude Jr., our pastor at that time, along with Deacon Oscar Bond attended the funeral services in Knoxville, Tennessee. Emmanuel mourned with Reverend Derricks’ family. He was a great man of God, who made a tremendous mark on the history of Emmanuel.



Cleavant Derricks, Sr



Carrie Derricks



William Clinton

Lovie Gwendolyn

Cleavant, Jr.



After the 1958 fire that destroyed Emmanuel's thirty-three year old edifice, plans were made to erect a new \$142,000 church. Pictured looking over the church plans are (from the left) the Rev. Cleavant Derricks, Oscar Bond and Eddie Baskin, the special building committee. A Cornerstone Laying Service was held on Sunday, July 30, 1961.



Emmanuel under construction



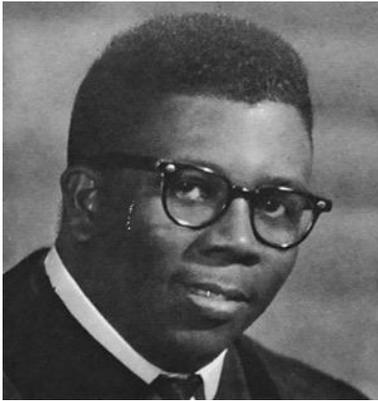
Emmanuel's new edifice 1960



Pictured above; the congregation, which had been worshipping in the lower auditorium, gets to worship in their new sanctuary for the first time. The modern buff brick building has a seating capacity of 1,000 and was modern in every respect.

*And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. Exodus 25:8*

The Reverend Nathaniel T. Burkes served as pastor for the next two years before Emmanuel extended a call to Dr. Joseph Van Alfred Winsett. He was pastor of Center Street Baptist Church of Owensboro, Kentucky. Reverend Winsett, a young and energetic pastor, came in April of 1966 and the church took on new life and the membership began to thrive with renewed vigor. Reverend Winsett obtained his Doctorate of Divinity Degree from Simmons University, in Louisville, Kentucky. Emmanuel held Reverend Winsett's installation service on June 4 and 5, 1966. Dr. Charles H. Owens and Lampton Baptist Church, of Louisville, Kentucky, were the special guests. Jacqueline, his wife, and their three children found their niche and served faithfully within the church.



Reverend J. Van Alfred Winsett



Mrs. Jacqueline O. Winsett



John Andrew Jacqueline Marie Lisa Jo

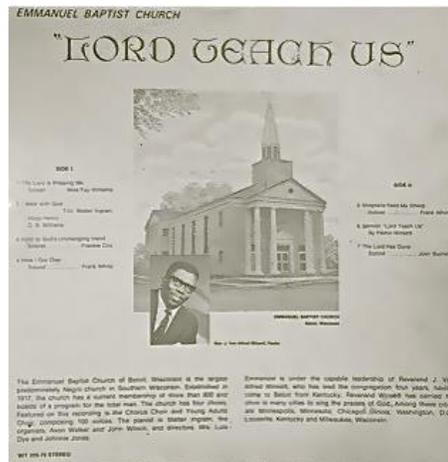
Although quiet and unassuming, Mrs. Winsett could always be found at the side of her husband, providing the support needed to lead Emmanuel's congregation. Within eight months, over one hundred new persons had joined the Emmanuel fellowship. An extensive campaign was launched to pay off a debt of \$64,000.00. Within three years, final payment was made to liquidate the mortgage on Emmanuel's church building. Reverend Winsett preached "Faith marches ahead of Progress and that, with Christ, all things are possible." Under his administration, the church purchased a new ranch-style parsonage at 1931 Sixth Street, for the sum of \$26,500. In May 1970, the church negotiated with the Catholic Diocese of Madison to purchase the former St. Peter Claver Interracial Center located at 1209 Athletic Avenue. This building became the Emmanuel Baptist Educational Center. It was used to develop Christian togetherness through fellowship, recreation, church planned activities and functions. The center included a chapel, a large kitchen, a gymnasium and three additional rooms for meetings.



The parsonage at 1931 Sixth Street and The Emmanuel Baptist Educational Center

Reverend Winsett was a pastor who was not only deeply engaged in Emmanuel church, but also the city of Beloit. He served as the President of the N.A.A.C.P., was very active in the Wisconsin State Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention. Reverend Winsett and Emmanuel delegates, young and old, attended many conventions across the United States under his pastoral leadership. He served as the president of the Wisconsin State Sunday School and the Baptist Training Union Congress. He was a faculty member of the National Baptist Sunday School, a training vehicle to promote Sunday School and young people's organizations within black Baptist churches. The BTU Congress quickly became an anticipated event where church workers could learn, share, and fellowship with other Christian workers from across the nation. Reverend Winsett was a world traveler. He made several mission trips, including travel to the Holy Lands and Rome Italy.

He organized a 100-voice choir that performed around the city of Beloit and made appearances in Washington D.C., Minneapolis, Minnesota and Louisville, Kentucky. The Emmanuel Baptist Young Adults and Chorus Choirs recorded and released an album entitled "LORD TEACH US", in 1970.



*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Psalm 98: 4*

Reverend J. Van Alfred Winsett served Emmanuel with dignity and reverence. He resigned in February 1973, after answering the call to pastor the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



Reverend and Mrs Winsett



Church delegates Odella Roberson and Sadie Bell



Reverend Winsett and travel group in Holy Lands, 1972



On a typical Sunday morning, with one of the choirs rendering the music, the congregation numbered almost 700.

## The Big Flood

*Two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.*

*Genesis 7: 9-10*

The date was Saturday, April 21, 1973. The Turtle Creek overflowed its banks, water filled the downtown streets and residential areas including Athletic Avenue. The unexpected heavy rains came over Easter weekend, pounding an already saturated ground from melting snow. As Easter Sunday dawned, the hearts of Emmanuel members were saddened by the news that the church was damaged by water, making it impossible to conduct worship service. However, the congregation bravely accepted God's will and His word. For the second time, disaster challenged the faith of God's people at a time when the church was without pastoral guidance. Emmanuel shall always be grateful to the Reverend James Wright of Madison, Wisconsin, who not only filled in while the pulpit was vacant, but also came to lend a hand to clear away the mud and debris left behind by the flood.



Under the spiritual guidance and watchful eyes of a conscientious Deacon Board and competent Trustee Board, Emmanuel kept moving forward.



Emmanuel Trustee Board



Emmanuel Deacon Board

It was on June 27, 1973, that Emmanuel church extended the call to Reverend Floyd Prude Jr., the pastor of the Rockland Baptist Church located in Hendersonville, Tennessee. Reverend Prude, a recent honor graduate of the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, accepted the pastoral leadership of Emmanuel Baptist Church. Beginning the longest pastorate to date, over thirty-six years.



The installation service for Reverend Floyd Prude Jr. was on Sunday, September 23rd, 1973. His theme scripture was Acts 20:28, *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood.*

On Mother's Day, May 13, 1973, Reverend Prude was invited to preach at Emmanuel. He was invited to preach a second time on Sunday, June 10, 1973, for the Willing Workers' Annual Day. His sermon subject was: "Someday We'll Be Together". The Emmanuel congregation joyously extended the call to pastoral leadership on Wednesday, June 27, 1973. On Sunday, July 22, 1973, Reverend Prude preached his first pastoral message, "God With Us", a testimony to the knowledge that God's presence can accomplish great things and achieve great goals.



The First Family  
Reverend Prude with his wife Regina and  
their children Sherri and Randy.

Reverend Prude's wife, Regina, walked steadfastly by his side throughout his ministry. A speaker and writer, she remained involved in various church ministries, including Christian Education and Women's Ministry. Mrs. Prude's gracious personality and untiring labor complemented her husband's work. A great under shepherd of the Lord, he brought grace and brilliance to the Emmanuel pulpit, profound teachings to the bible studies and extraordinary service to the Beloit community. Reverend Prude's boundless energy and selfless determination provided countless hours of service to the congregation and filled the daily needs of Emmanuel members.

In Reverend Prude's first four years, Emmanuel went through major improvements and additions that enhanced their thirteen-year-old church building and grounds. Some of the major purchases were a new pulpit, altar furniture, carpet, a new P.A. system for the lower auditorium, and pews for the choir stand and balcony. They refurnished and redecored the Pastor's office, the men's and women's lounges. New modern kitchen

appliances and much needed office equipment were purchased to replace that which was old and outdated. An \$18,000 central air conditioning unit was installed in the sanctuary. Beautification was a priority on Reverend Prude's agenda. The Education Center interior was painted, new glass and aluminum doors were installed at the four side entrances of the church. Extensive new outside lighting and fixtures were added and the graveled parking lot adjacent to the church was blacktopped. The former Jones property next door to the church was purchased and cleared for additional parking. Emmanuel also purchased four lots on the corner of East Grand Avenue and Athletic Avenue from the Redevelopment Authority. They converted a portion of the lots into needed parking spaces. A new church station wagon and bus were purchased for Emmanuel's outreach ministries. Emmanuel was able to make these acquisitions and refurbishments because of Reverend Prude's administrative leadership, encouragement to tithe and implementing a stewardship plan. These purchases were all made without incurring any additional debt.



Emmanuel's vehicle fleet

On January 25, 1976 the first edition of the "Lamplighter" was released. This was Reverend Prude's vision to develop an official news publication for Emmanuel members. The Lamplighter newsletter was full of informative news such as church activities, weddings, school accomplishments, military service and community involvement was distributed on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Reverend Prude knew the importance of investing in young people, for investment now would pay dividends in the future. The youth of Emmanuel were very important to Reverend Prude and he took great pride in organizing a Youth Ministry. With the

guidance of God, Emmanuel's Youth Ministry included youth rallies with daylong workshops and seminars followed by an evening banquet. He began an intramural sports program that consisted of volleyball, basketball, softball and touch football teams. The Emmanuel youth would dine together at a local restaurant following each first Sunday evening service, for their "Sunday Night Youth Fellowship". He attributed the success of their youth programs to the outstanding leadership and the many volunteer chairpersons of the Youth Ministry.



Church School Youth Class



Youth Ushers



Youth Choir

On Sunday, November 28, 1976, a mortgage burning service was held. Reverend Prude's words to Emmanuel touched upon that day as being one to celebrate and rejoice, pausing in gratitude for their dedicated founders. He challenged each member to continue in the spirit of love and dedication to Emmanuel, daring them not to leave their children a lesser gift than they received. Reverend Prude's commitment to Christian

education resulted in opportunities for members to explore the challenges of the Word, from his seminary-like Christian education training to the practical teachings on Wednesday Bible Study. Reverend Prude was a consummate teacher and educator.



Emmanuel Bible Training  
Institute Class



The Free Hot Lunch program, launched in 1982, has served over 330,000 meals to the needy. The church also served Thanksgiving Dinner to the community of Beloit during the holiday.

On May 15, 1999, the Emmanuel family proudly gathered on the grounds of Beloit College as President Victor Farrell conferred upon Reverend Prude the Doctor of Divinity degree. He was presented with a crimson and gold doctoral hood, an honor reserved for national figures celebrated in their field. This was only one of many dubious honors bestowed on the Reverend Dr. Floyd Prude, Jr.

In 2005, a capital campaign was launched to construct a nearly \$2 million Family Life Center. This multi-purpose facility was designed to enhance the spiritual lives of the Emmanuel congregation through outreach ministries. The congregation marched from the sanctuary to the former parking lot for a Ground Breaking Ceremony on Sunday, July 23rd, 2006, which was also Reverend Dr. Prude's 33rd Pastoral Anniversary.



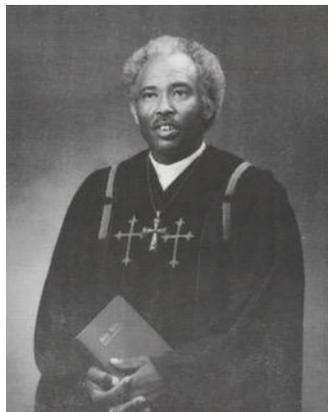
Emmanuel Family Life Center Under Construction

A year later, on July 22, 2007, the Ribbon Cutting and Dedication Ceremony of the new Family Life Center was held following the morning worship service. The congregation marched proudly out of the front door of the main church building, around Broad Street to the Family Life Center entrance. Emmanuel Baptist Church and its new Family Life Center illuminated the southern-most entrance into the city of Beloit, the “Gateway to Wisconsin”. Emmanuel was also celebrating Reverend Prude’s 34th Pastoral Anniversary on that day. Following the ribbon cutting and brief ceremony inside, the church served dinner to complete the joyous occasion. It was also on this day that the City of Beloit honored Emmanuel’s beloved pastor. They renamed the section of East Grand Avenue from Wisconsin Avenue to Broad Street, “Rev. Dr. Floyd Prude Jr. Avenue”. This is the only Beloit city street to receive such a distinction. Reverend Prude offered true leadership and service to the city of Beloit. He was highly respected by Beloit city leaders, who sought his voice and presence when representation was needed from the African American community.

Reverend Prude served as a denominational leader in the state of Wisconsin and on the national level. He was active within the Wisconsin General Baptist State Convention, the American Baptist College and the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. He faithfully served in different capacities from president, vice-president, board of trustees, advisory board and instructor. Reverend Prude truly had a servant’s heart. Reverend Dr. Floyd Prude Jr., was a recipient of over 300 distinguished awards and recognitions.

James C. Thomas, a young man who grew up within the church under Reverend Prude's leadership, was called into the ministry and was licensed in 1978. Emmanuel ordained James, in 1981. Reverend James C. Thomas currently serves as pastor of Mount Olivet Baptist Church in St Paul, Minnesota. Reverend Prude's son-in-law, Marvin Neal, united with Emmanuel shortly after he and Sherri were married in 1984. Marvin acknowledged his calling into the gospel ministry in 1989, after which the church licensed him. He was ordained in 1996 and currently resides in Nashville, Tennessee.

For the thirty-six plus years as the pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Reverend Dr. Floyd Prude Jr., committed his life to the role of Servant, Shepherd, Preacher, Teacher and Administrator. Burning with the desire of accomplishing and giving the most possible for Christ's glory. The expansive ministry and profound impact to souls who have been reached by Reverend Prude cannot be fully chronicled in these pages. Sadly and unexpectedly, on November 28, 2009, the Great Shepherd called Emmanuel's beloved pastor from labor to reward.



The theme of Reverend Prude's 4th Anniversary Celebration was "Let The Works I've Done-Speak For Me". Emmanuel said, "Well done thou good and faithful servant"

## The New Leader

*After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. Joshua 1: 1, 6*

Emmanuel then commenced the search for a pastor with both a passion for God's people and a commitment to God's ministry. After eighteen months of prayerful, careful, and intentional consideration, God gave Emmanuel a shepherd after His own heart, the Reverend Kevin L. Pullam. After serving God and His people diligently at Friendship Baptist Church in Corpus Christi, Texas for about eleven years, Reverend Pullam felt a sense of transition and a call to accept the mantle of responsibility as Pastor at Emmanuel Baptist Church. On June 19, 2011, Father's Day, the Reverend Kevin L. Pullam delivered his first sermon as the new pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church. Reverend Pullam and his wife La'Tonya are the parents of five children.



Pictured above are Reverend Kevin Pullam, Mrs. La'Tonya Pullam and their sons Kaleb, Kristian and Kamaron. Missing are son Kory and daughter Kevelyn.

Reverend Pullam believes that God sent him to Emmanuel to serve as a transitional leader. He has commented to the leaders that he's truly compelled that God sent him to merge the expanse between where Emmanuel has been and where it is going. He pointed Emmanuel toward the likeness of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Luke 2:52 and poured over them the motto, "In Tune with God, In Touch with Man". This had become his mantra and aim for ministry. The congregation seeks to internalize these values and

goals through his presentation of purpose, mission and vision statements. Reverend Pullam encourages Emmanuel to reach up, which is worship, to reach in, which is discipleship, and to reach out, which is evangelism. As he always strives to deliver a sermon with a sound doctrine, Reverend Pullam is masterful at making his message relevant to the current times, as well as suitable for the multi-aged congregation in attendance. Reverend Pullam is an energetic pastor whose sermons are sprinkled with humor, but speaks the truth.

Described as a pastor with a genuine heart, Reverend Pullam continues to be a loving shepherd to a church that has painfully bid farewell to a great host of loving members in this latest season of Emmanuel's history. He has also ushered new members into the family with a practical and relevant approach to preaching and teaching for "such a time as this". He has been diligent and faithful to the task that he's been assigned. This is commendable amongst the reality that change is hard for everyone. It has not been without growing pains, struggles and even some opposition, but Emmanuel continues to forge forward. Wanting to take Emmanuel to the next level, Reverend Pullam introduced a host of advancements to the congregation under his leadership. He implemented new software for financial accounting and a database for membership record keeping. A new church website was developed and a completely new audio/video system was installed. Reverend Pullam instituted new ministries that included the organization of a new college and nursery ministry. He personally leads a daily prayer call and lives streams the worship services. He introduced new welcome, birthday and departure songs for the congregation to sing. Reverend Pullam has always been realistic about his own struggles and testifies that he strives to make 100, knowing 99 and a 1/2 won't do. One of the many cherished verses he lives by is, 1 Corinthians 10:31. "Whether therefore you eat, drink or whatever you do, do it all to the Glory of God".

## The Future

*And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. Isaiah 58:11*

Emmanuel's historical journey chronicled over these pages gives only a glimpse of the sacrifices and hard work carried out by a dedicated group of people. Their unyielding faith along with innumerable contributions has shaped Emmanuel into the church that it is today. An immeasurable debt of gratitude is owed to Emmanuel's founders whose vision, fortitude and determination 100 years ago to establish a church that continues to have a spiritual impact on the community of Beloit today. Emmanuel doesn't have an enormous collection of historical records, photos or documents, many of which were lost in the fire and the flood. Emmanuel can only envision those early saints on a Sunday morning, like Mrs. Moriah McCord and Mrs. Mille Barr, who were born slaves, singing the old Negro spiritual, "*I shall not be moved*". Picture them holding hands and praying that their Savior would not pass them by. A spirit filled church worshipping, praising and thanking God for His "*Amazing Grace*". Hear their voices loudly reciting Isaiah 40:31, "*But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint*".

The torch that was ignited in April 1917 has been passed on and carried by a multitude of devoted Christians, both past and present. All united to preserve and carry out the ideals and dreams of those who labored before them for God's kingdom here on earth. Blessed by God's providence, Emmanuel forges onward into the future with the zeal and resilience, as their founding members did a century ago. With His divine guidance, they will march into the future with a renewed spirit, continuing to walk by faith and not by sight. Today the Emmanuel family celebrates their rich history and God's promise of an extraordinary future.