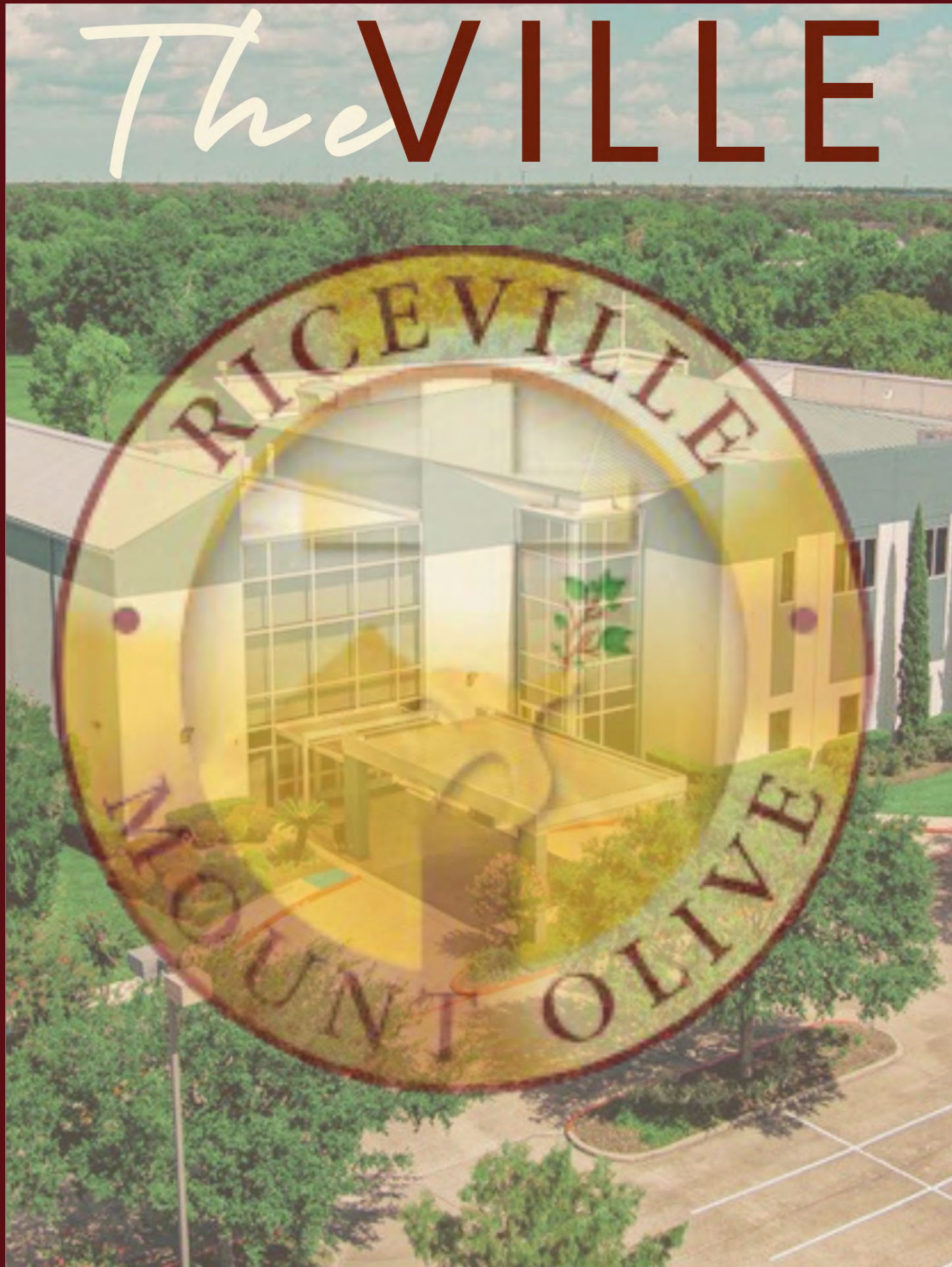


TheVILLE



2023
CORNERSTONE
NEWSLETTER
—
SPECIAL EDITION



TOGETHER WE ARE
STRONG



PHILIPPIANS
3:13-14

Inside this Issue

- A Message from the Leadership
- From Whence We've Come (Church History)
- Updates from the Pastor Search & Church Constitution Committees
- January to June (All things in photos)
- A Look at the Ministries
- Did You Know....
- Let's Look Ahead
- Ministry Contacts



MINISTRY CONTACT

ADULT MINISTRIES

Deacon Sylvester Thomas, Men's Ministry
Rev. Charles Wiggins, Riceville Adult Ministry
Donna Taylor-Iles, Women's Ministry

BENEVOLENCE MINISTRIES

Mae Joyce Williams, Benevolence
Alvies Carter, Clothes Closet
Winifred Flix-Isaac, Food Pantry

FACILITATING MINISTRIES

Deacon Leo Alfred, Christian Education
Deacon Reginald Fields, Deacon Ministry
Terre' Ford, Deacons & Ministers Wives
Deacon Willie Simmons, Prayer Ministry
Christopher Martin, Trustees
Jerry Gardner, Church Business Administrator

MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRIES

LeMorris Hunt, Interim Minister of Music & Arts
Deacon Clarence Harper, Men of Valor
Byron Cage, Mime Ministry
Lisa Frier, Youth Choir

RICEVILLE CHRISTIAN UNION

Naomi Flix, President

SERVICE/HELP MINISTRIES

DejaRiehl Brooks, Audio and Visual
Carolyn Payton, First Responders
Pier Gardner, JDJ Center
Brenda Harris, Kitchen/Culinary
Sunday Receptionist – TBD
Kenneth Butler/Robert Mercy, Transportation
Yvonne Pratt, Ushers & Greeters
Mildred Williams, Weddings

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Rev. Joseph Parks, Youth & Young Adult Pastor
Mildred Williams, Cover Girls
Carolyn Payton, Girl Scouts
John Riley, Young Lions

DID YOU KNOW . . .

...that you can contact the Church via email at: inbox@ricevillechurch.org. If you have a question, comments for improvement or other issues you would like the Church Leadership to be aware of, just drop a note. In most cases you will receive a response in 24 -hours.

...every member of Riceville should have a Church membership number so you can receive proper credit for your tithes and offering. If you have not received a membership number, please contact the Church Business Office at inbox@ricevillechurch.org or call between the hours 10am - 3pm Monday thru Friday.

...the Church is updating our membership list this year. We need every member to participate. If you are new to the church, or have changed contact information, please pick up a form at the front desk and or contact the Church Business Office. It is important that we have your most up-to-date information.

...that many of the forms required (e.g. Benevolence request, room scheduling, Foyer display, etc.) are located on the church's website. Just go to www.ricevillechurch.org and locate the tab "online" forms.

...that Riceville has two (2) authors with books out this year. They are Sis Melody Miles, the title of her book is "Working with Broken Pieces" and Sis Shirley Collins; the title of her book is "The Gospel with a Twist and ...". Their books are available via Amazon books and / or you can contact them at the church.

A Look Ahead

July

- Vacation Bible School

August

- Back-to-School Sunday
- Youth Annual Day
- Church Business Meeting

September

- National Back to Church Sunday
- Women's Annual Day

October

- Cancer Awareness Month
- Church Revival
- Fall Festival

November

- Veterans Recognition Sunday
- Thanksgiving Celebration

December

- Christmas Celebration
- Family Week
- Watch Night

A Message from Leadership

"...I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" Phil. 3:13 -14 KJV.

Church family, the Bible teaches us "to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven".

As we enter the second half 2023, let us embrace our season of change and transition. Psalms 37:7 tells us to be patient and trust the Lord! He has plans for us, and we know Him to give us our heart's desires. Patience gives us the desires to endure whatever comes our way with a good temper. We should not speak in evil tongues against anyone, let's keep the right attitude and be respectful of individual decisions and feelings, God allows certain things to happen in our lives to mature us. Grace under pressure, faith when times get tough, developing and using new skills with better ways of thinking and doing are all signs of a good Christian. We, as a church family just need to be patient and trust God!!!!!! Let's Thank Him together for being our Provider, our Protector, and our Keeper, being anxious for nothing but in all ways acknowledging Him!!!!

While we practice patience, let us celebrate the things of life, (e.g., the birth of new babies, new baptism, the 134th Church Anniversary, our 2023 graduating class, the bonding of loved ones in marriage, and members that have gone home to be with the Lord). Most of all, let's prepare to celebrate God sending our Church a new Pastor after HIS own heart. So let us gird ourselves for the work ahead and start this day to prepare for our season of celebration, change and transition.

So take a few moments and enjoy this edition of the Riceville Cornerstone Newsletter. Inside this edition, you'll learn what some of key ministries of the Church are doing, received an update of the Pastor Search Committee and Church Constitution Committee, a look forward of the major events remaining in 2023 and so much more....

Finally, it is most important that we PRAY, PRAY and PRAY some more for the Leaders of Riceville. We need to stay before the throne of GOD petitioning HIM for HIS protection, direction, and love during this season of transition (Philippians 4:6-7; Hebrews 4:16).

Riceville Church Leadership

Church History



The Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church was organized in a, "Brush Arbor," on March 11, 1889, by Rev. John L. Lilly, with a membership of eight. The first members were: Isaiah Jackson, Sophia Edwards, Mary Rice, Simmom McCode, Susie Marshall, Vinia Marshall, Rocksanna Rice and Diana Jackson. On October 11, 1889, a developer, John Ruby, donated land for the church and burial grounds on the back of Keegans Bayou. (The Riceville Cemetery is currently on the same property with the address of 9945 Honeywell Road). After several meetings and many discussions, Jake Rice, the longest community resident with eight members, decided Rev. John Lilly would be the official Pastor and the church was named Riceville. Rev. Lilly served as Pastor for twenty years until his death. He was succeeded by, Rev. I. Griffin, who served as the next Pastor of Riceville for sixteen years. During the year of 1916, the church was blown down by a storm. Rev. Griffin took on the task of constructing a larger Riceville church building during his tenure as Pastor. After the death of Rev. Griffin:

Rev. Lee Moton served as an interim Pastor for one year. Rev. J. C. Smith was elected and served as the Shepherd of Riceville for three years. Rev. Earl W. King held the pastoral position for nearly three years. Rev. Morris Goodman served as Pastor for four years. Rev. D. Pope served as interim Pastor for one year.

Rev. T. H. Shermann was called by Riceville and under his pastoralship, twelve feet of new construction was added to the Church building. The Christian Union was established and is a viable organization of the Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church today. Due to health issues, Rev. Shermann resigned after seven years of loyal leadership. In 1942, Rev. Travis Spiller was called to serve as Pastor. In an effort to build the membership, Riceville church services were changed to every Sunday instead of the customary second and fourth Sundays. Continuing under the guidance of Rev. Spiller, a new Church building was erected in 1944 by Rev. C. H. Mitchell, son of Deacon John E. Mitchell. The church was fully paid-off in 1947. Rev. Spiller saw a need for a cafeteria and Rev. Mitchell constructed two stories of additional building space to the existing church edifice. The cafeteria was on the first floor and the second-floor was utilized for classrooms and other church accommodations. Upon the resignation of Rev. Spiller in 1953, Rev. C. L. Miller was called to Pastor Riceville, serving fourteen years before resigning in 1967.

In August of 1967, Rev. Joe D. Johnson was called as Pastor. On July 4, 1968, the church building was destroyed by fire, a total loss; only a Holy Bible was found in the ruins. After the devastating fire, Sunday church services were held in a house on the property of



The **Riceville Audio Video** Ministry serves God and the congregations by enhancing the worship experience through video and sound recording, mass communications and social media engagement. Every Wednesday evening and every Sunday morning, the AV ministry live streams both Bible Study and Worship service. We average about 80 viewers on YouTube during Bible Study and of those 80, 40-68 stay until the end. For Worship Service we average about 200 viewers and of those 200 about 180 stay the full duration of service. Our Facebook views fluctuate week to week.

We're a small but mighty ministry seeking first the kingdom of God and all of His righteousness and just thanking Him for equipping us to get by week after week!



The First Responders Ministry

The **Riceville First Responders** Ministry is a "Helping Ministry". The original ministry name was Riceville Nurse Board, which was developed in 1962 under the leadership of Pastor C. L. Miller. The name was changed in 2007 to The First Responders.

Our Motto: " We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day, night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" John 5:4-5 NRSV
Some of the most recent Congregational and Community Projects

- CPR Class was offer to the congregation and held in February, 2023. Seventeen individuals completed the class and was certified to administer CPR based on AHA guidelines.
- A presentation was given to Riceville Girl Scouts as well as other churches on the many health care professions (Psychologist, RN, MD, Social workers, Nursing Professor, etc.). They had a recorded message from Dr. Autumn Acklin, a Medical Student at Meharry Medical School in Nashville, TN. Dr. Autumn Acklin, is a Riceville member who will be graduating in May, 2023 as a Medical Doctor. 25 Girl Scouts attended the event.
- Asanase Arlena was recruited as our Youth First Responder. We are inviting and welcome other youth 11 years of age or older to join our ministry as well – male or female. Come on over and join Asanase in this Helping Ministry.
- Maintain three First Aid Kits (2 at the main campuses and 1 at the JDJ Center) for the congregational health and well-being.
- Deidre Mooring and the Harris County Covid Vaccine Team offer Covid Vaccine to Riceville members and the Surrounding Community in 2022 and 2023 multiple times. We were present to assist as needed.
- Mental Health Awareness: Depression increases during the holidays. Multiple Articles and Resources were published weekly in our online Constant Contact Newsletter.
- Help at the Fall Festival at Briargate Elementary in Missouri City, TX. Cupcakes, door prizes were donated. We named a booth and even competed with the students on some games.
- Gave Fall Gift Basket for the Teachers and Staff at Welch Middle School to show our

appreciation to our teachers.

- Donate gift bags, door prizes, and pizzas to some of the students at Collins Elementary School in Alief to help the teachers with special school projects and holiday activities.
- Have Cancer Awareness Month in October of each year to help celebrate all cancer survivors. Cancer information is distributed on Colon, Breast, Lung, Prostate, Cervical Cancers, etc. Each cancer survivor that's identified is given a gift.
- The Women Ministry donate Christmas Gift Bags for Seniors to 2 nursing homes (Westbury and West Chase Rehab) during the Christmas Holiday. The First Responders donate gifts bags to help with their community project.
- We volunteer to help at other events at Riceville: The Fall Festival, The Women Conference, VBS and others events.
- Birthday Celebrations: each quarter, (example: January, February and March) all birthdays for those 3 months, we have a fellowship luncheon at a local restaurant all done to help celebrate life and friendship with our own First Responders members.
- Christmas Fellowship Event: We meet at our favorite Restaurant for Dinner. We all wear red, we play white elephant gift exchange games, we play more fun, silly games to win prizes, we sing Christmas Carols, we then exchange "Real" Christmas Gifts. We always had a fun-loving time together.

Future Projects

1. Cardio-vascular Health Issues in the African American Population:
 - Information on Stroke, "Heart Attack", High Blood Pressure, Kidney Disease, Diabetes
 - Informational Poster displayed in the lobby
 - Nurse available to answer any questions
2. Cancer Awareness Month in October, 2023:
 - Information on Breast, Lung, Prostate, Cervical and Colon Cancer
 - Pink Mask Given to all
 - Pink Ribbon given to all
 - *Gift given to each identified cancer survivor

Carolyn Payton
 President of the First Responders

Riceville School Road, now known as 11231 South Gessner Road, (North Campus). Under the leadership of Rev. Johnson, a new church was built, and the first service was held in May 1971. The church was paid-off in June 1974. Shortly after, in 1975, a house was moved on the premises, remodeled, and used as the "Fellowship Hall". All associated costs were paid off in April 1978. During the year of 1981, two church vans were purchased. In 1983 Riceville purchased property on South Breeze Drive for additional parking accommodations. During the same year, the front of the sanctuary was expanded by thirty feet. Property behind the existing church was acquired in 1985, and later that year a mobile building was placed on site. It is presently used for auxiliary classrooms and meetings.

Due to continued church growth, in July 1986, Riceville acquired approximately ten acres of land on South Gessner for construction of a new church building. An additional seventeen acres (approximately) were purchased in September 1994, with a cash pay-off in 1996. Pastor Johnson's vision of a larger Riceville had become a reality when construction of the new twenty-two thousand square feet building was completed on December 8, 2002. The new edifice doors were opened and the first church service at 11539 South Gessner Road, (South Campus), was held on December 22, 2002,

under the guidance of Rev. Johnson. The church building was paid-off eight years later. (The official, "Mortgage Burning Ceremony," was held during Church Anniversary Service on Sunday, March 13, 2011). In September 2009, after forty-two years of dedicated service, Rev. Johnson retired from Senior Pastor to Pastor Emeritus.

Rev. Melvin E. Bates served as interim Pastor until August, 2010.

Rev. Terry E. Mackey was called to serve as Sr. Pastor in the month of August of the same year. In November 2010, Rev. Mackey was installed and under his pastoring, church membership increased; the North Campus was remodeled and renamed the Joe D. Johnson, (JDJ) Center, currently utilized for Youth Church services, ministry gatherings, meetings, and community fellowship activities. Rev. Mackey initiated plans for construction of an "Impact Center," to better serve the needs of the growing church and surrounding communities. Rev. Mackey served faithfully for eight-years until resigning in December 2018.

In November of 2019 Rev. Dr. Calvin J. McFadden, Sr. was called to serve as Sr. Pastor of Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church. He commenced his pastoral ministry in February 2020 and concluded in February 2022.



Church Corporate Updates From the Pastoral Search Committee

A **Pastor Search Committee** (PSC) has been formed and commissioned to begin the process of securing GOD's new Senior Pastor for Riceville. The PSC consist of a cross section of members from the Church body. The PSC has been affirmed by the congregation at a duly called church meeting. It should be encouraging to all to know that Riceville has gone through this process before, so we have tried and true guidelines to follow. Below is and update from the committee.

Update for the PSC

The **Pastoral Search Committee** (PSC) consist of nine (9) voting members – Anthony Hawkins (Chair), C. K. Phillips (Co-Chair), Sylvia Mercy (Secretary), Mildred Jenkins-Williams (Assistant Secretary), Donald Cage, Dee Mitchell, Jerry Hughes, Carol Martin, Kenneth Butler, and 3 alternative members – Demetria Diggs, Carolyn Payton, and Shenee Wade.

The Senior Pastor job posted December 12, 2022 - February 28, 2023. There were one hundred thirty-eight (138) resume packets submitted. Once the job posting closed, the PSC began Phase II. Phase II included verifying the contents of each resume packet. Applicants that did not submit all of the required documents were notified by email and given an opportunity to submit the documents prior to the job posting deadline. There was a total of fifty-nine (59) Resume packets that did not submit all of the required documents by the deadline. These applicants were notified by email advising they would not be considered for the next phase of this process.

The PSC proceeded to the next step of Review/Evaluate with the remaining seventy-nine (79) applicants resumes/sermons. Once that process was completed, the committee begin the rating/ranking process for potential final Pastoral Candidates. Many of you have asked the following questions: "When will we get a pastor?" or "When will the congregation get to hear pastoral candidates?". The PSC assures the congregation, we are being thorough in this process and seeking God's guidance through fasting and prayer. During the month of April, the PSC met two Thursdays (4 hours) and two Saturdays (9 hours). In an effort to complete the final phases, the Committee met every Thursday (19 hours) and two Saturdays (6 hours) during the month of May and June. The PSC will continue to maintain this monthly meeting schedule as the need requires. Updates of the PSC's progress is provided monthly to the Deacon Board and congregation.

Additional steps of Phase II process include:

- Selecting perspective Pastoral Candidates based on matrix ranking.
- Establish and maintain an interview schedule for candidates.
- Conduct initial interviews of candidates.
- Establish consensus on the best candidates that will be recommended to the church body.
- Review with the Deacon Board candidates that will be recommended to the church body.
- Coordinate with Deacons and Trustees to develop a compensation package for Pastoral position.
- Coordinate with the Pulpit Supply Committee to schedule candidates to preach Sunday Service and teach Bible Study.
- Provide the congregation with each candidates' resume as they preach Sunday Service and teach Bible Study.

Phase III:

- Once the PSC is ready to make a recommendation to the Church, the congregation will be assembled in a called or regular business meeting by the Deacons to review the

The Riceville Christian Union

The **Riceville Christian Union** (RCU) was organized in 1936 and is presently comprised of 445 members of the Riceville Mt. Olive Baptist Church past and present. It is very easy and inexpensive to join.

It is not an auxiliary of the Church, and its main focus is to provide money to a member's beneficiary promptly. The free grave space in the Riceville Cemetery is optional.

The Union completed its 2023 annual membership collections in April. We were blessed to have 40 new members.

Individuals interested in joining RCU, please contact any officer. Our latest brochure is always on the Information Stand in the foyer of the Main Sanctuary.

Sis. Naomi Flix, President

Service and Help Ministries

Psalm 84:10 "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

The **Riceville Ushers and Greeters Ministry** exist to support the mission of the church and support the Pastoral and leadership staff. The Ministry meets, greets, and seats all parishioners, visitors, members, and friends that enter the sanctuary with patience and kindness as we promote the spirit of God.

The Ushers and Greeters Ministry strives to give joy to the sorrowful, hope to the lost, and sunshine to the darkness. We are door keepers giving open access to the warmth of holy fellowship in the House of the Lord.

Our faith continues away from the walls of the sanctuary as we engage in outreach activities. Our monthly Meeting is the 1st Monday, 7p.m. at Main Sanctuary.



The Music & Arts Ministry

The **Music and Arts Ministry** (MAAM) continues to lead the church in the worship of our God through song, music, performing and fine arts. Led by our Interim Minister of Music, LeMorris Hunt, the MAAM is visible each week providing leadership in the worship experience as each choir lifts their voice in praise to our most worthy God.

The ministry always presents with a spirit of EXCELLENCE that is seen in each of its components. Whether it is the Praise Dance and Mime ministry, the various choirs, or the Threads and Design ministry behind the scenes, each complement the other to bring forth a production that allows you to experience God in a special and unique way.

For more information on how you can become a part of this thriving ministry please email the ministry at inbox@ricevillechurch.org or contact LeMorris Hunt for choir, or Byron Cage for Praise and Mime.

Riceville Youth Ministry

Riceville's **Youth Ministry** is led by Rev.



Joseph Parks. Its goals are to integrate young people into the body and mission of Jesus Christ, while helping assist our families to grow our youth to

be committed followers of Jesus Christ. While striving for such an impactful lifestyle we use support groups and programs such as bi-weekly Sunday Youth Church services at the JDJ. In addition to other support groups such as Young Lions and Cover Girls mentor groups for ages 9 -17 and Youth Choir.



We are the Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church **Youth Choir**. We serve as praise and worship leaders every third Sunday. We have scheduled rehearsal dates the Tuesday and Saturday leading up to third Sunday's.

We pride ourselves with introducing our youth to sacred hymns, contemporary Christian music and old negro spirituals. Our youth learn all about music theory, pitch, dynamics and breathing techniques.

We are excited about our Annual Back to School Bash which we celebrate on the third Sunday in August. We also look forward to the Christmas season when we share holiday cheer through song with the area nursing home.

If you are between the ages of 5-17 and love to sing, we would love to have you join us

committee's recommendation.

- The PSC or the Deacon Board will present the finalist to the congregation with a summary of the candidate's resume. The congregation will be provided a ballot to cast their vote on the candidate. The recommended candidate must receive two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes to be considered for Pastor.
- Ballots will be tallied by the PSC and results presented to the Church that night.
- If the candidate receives the necessary two-thirds (2/3) majority votes, the PSC and/or Deacon Board will inform both the congregation and the candidate of the call.
- The candidate will have thirty (30) days to accept or decline the position as Pastor.

(Note: Each Phase is in accordance with the current Constitution and By Laws

The Pastoral Search Committee ask you to continue to fast and pray with us that our eyes and heart will be open to identify the man God has already ordained, appointed, and anointed for Pastor of Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church.

2023
Guest Ministers



Update from the Church Constitution Committee

The Constitution Committee members are:

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| • Joann Andrus | Alton Baines | Winfred Issac |
| • Mary Archer | John Riley | Joyce McCowan |
| • Minister Oscar Smith | Christopher Martin | Frederick Simpson |

Alternative members: Mary Edjeren and Wilford Wells

The Constitution Committees' first meeting was held via Zoom on November 5, 2022. The leadership team was selected.

They are listed below:

Chairperson: Joann Andrus ----- Co-chairperson: Minister Oscar Smith
Secretary: Mary Archer ----- Assistant-Secretary – Winnie Flix-Issac

An action plan for the Constitution review was established on November 5, 2022. The Committee met multiple times from November 5, 2022 through February 19, 2023. During that time span multiple reviews and Draft copies of the Constitution were done. The Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church Constitution Draft #3 dated 2/19/2023 is the completed and final Constitution Draft to date. Copies were made and given to the Deacon and Trustee Ministry as requested on February 22, 2023.

The Leadership Staff continue to review Draft #3 dated 2/19/2023 of the Riceville Constitution.

JoAnn Andrus, Chairperson Constitution Committee

A message from the Deacons

Greeting Riceville, I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior and I pray God's continuous blessings upon us. We are very thankful for your service to the Lord, as His church, Riceville is the beneficiary of your labor of love.

As we are quickly approaching the close of the first half of 2023, we continue in prayer for God's mercy and grace.

Church family, let us continue in unity as we make preparation to receive the "Pastor" according to Jeremiah 3:15, "and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which will feed you with knowledge and understanding."

When we are preparing, we are encouraged to look back for clarity and understanding as we move forward. Looking back, we can acknowledge the many successes and challenges that we faced. During our challenges, we reminded what the Apostle Paul words in Hebrews, 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

One area of service that we were made very aware of coming out of the pandemic is that our members still need a personal touch. Over the course of the past several months, the Deacon Board has made valiant efforts to continue visiting the sick, hospital bound and those experiencing bereavement. We thank those who received our visits; however, we know there are many more that we need to visit. Regardless, we are prayerful that God's Grace and Mercy will continue to cover you and comfort you.

The Deacons have also tried to provide support to the various ministries of the church with the great work you all are doing. Riceville is a blessed church to have the dedicated members providing service

to our Lord God's divine plan for His Church and Community.

In addition, the Deacons would like to give



God thanks for blessing all of us with life, activity and a reasonable portion of health and strength. With that being said, we would like to give a Happy Birthday shout-out to Deacon Charlie Lagway, who recently celebrated his

87th birthday. We wish you could have seen the surprise on his face when he realized that he was not going to church service but instead to his Surprise Birthday Celebration hosted by his family.

Lastly, we praise God for Deacon Thomas and his lovely wife, Sister Patsy Penson, for celebrating 50 years of a wonderful marriage. In that a celebration, the Penson's had a beautiful vow renewal service.



If you ever need to reach out to the Deacon Board, our email contact is deacon@ricevillechurch.org. We are here for you... Blessings.

Operations:

The Clothes Closet – apparel is Free/Gratis "Helping Those in need of Clothing". Matthew 25:36 is our motivational scripture. It is coordinated by the Clothes Closet Team. Pre-COVID, the Clothes Closet opened the 1st Wednesday of the month. We now are open in conjunction with the Riceville Food Pantry on the 3rd Saturday at 9:30am to 12 noon.

Operating rules: People are to come quarterly, so we can assist as many as possible. There is a limit of 5 outfits and 2 pair of shoes per family members. In cases of emergencies (Fire, Evictions, Family Crisis, etc.), please call the church (713-778-0992) and the Clothes Closet Team will be notified.



FACILITATING MINISTRIES

Riceville has several facilitating ministries which are core ministries of the church. Following are a few stories.

The **Christian Education** department has had a very productive year.

Our Sunday School is still thriving, we have transitioned most of our instruction to in person classes, while also conducting virtual classes. Sunday School has consistently been a staple for our church, and we look forward to continuing to teach, build, and encourage each other through Biblical study.

Several of our Christian Education leaders had the opportunity to attend the IC3 Church Conference in April. We left the conference enriched, encouraged, and equipped. As leaders we gained a wealth of knowledge and will be incorporating several of the learned principles to our Christian Education department.

Currently we are preparing for Vacation Bible School, which will be held in July 2023. We are excited for our future as we are confident that it will be Bigger and Better.

BENEVOLENCE MINISTRIES

Riceville's Benevolence ministries assist our members and the needy of the community with financial aid for such items as rent, utilities, clothing, food and more. Below are the stories of the ministries.

Total Served to Date				
Dates	Families	Adults	Children	Total Served
18-Mar	6	11	20	31
15-Apr	57	57	48	105
20-May	112	112	84	196
17-Jun	60	130	86	216

Food Pantry Ministry - In the 1980's the Riceville Mt. Olive Baptist Church started gathering food for those in need. Sis. Clementine Hinton was one of the original founders under Pastor Joe Dean Johnson's leadership. Sis. Hinton was assisted by Deacon Charlie and Sis. Anne Lagway, Bro. Jessie B. and Sis. Lettie May Smith, Bro. Ellsworth Williams, Sis. Tommie Garcia, Sis. Alvis Carter and others.

Later Sis. Joyce Harper volunteered to lead the pantry with the support of her husband, Deacon Clarence Harper. The Harpers lead the food pantry for several years until the pandemic. The food pantry was closed for about 2 ½ years as the pandemic continued. At the end of the pandemic, due to failing health Bro. and Sis. Harper resigned their leadership.

In February 2023 Winifred Flix Isaac was asked to lead the Food Pantry. With the assistance of Glenda Williams, Mary McCarter, Judy Bailey and Karoline Johnson, 90% of the food in the pantry was expired and had to be discarded.

A request was sent out for volunteers, with a great response we started again in March 2023. Our new team consisted of Glenda Williams, Mary McCarter, Judy Bailey, Karoline Johnson, Debra Flix, Glenda Kennedy, Reola Mack, Deacon. Reginald Field, Shenee Wade, Pam Fenley, Barbara Hawkins, Therese Mitchell, Joyce Harper, Deacon Clarence Harper, Sis. Gloria Powell Johnson and Clareese Gray. We have been greatly supported by Sis. Melody Miles (and the Miles Ministry) and the Women's Ministry. The Food Pantry volunteers have done a magnificent job of providing for the needs of others.

The **Riceville Clothes Closet Ministry** - Ready to Serve --- As a result of the COVID pandemic, the Riceville Clothes Closet was not operating fully. We assisted several families and individuals that called the Riceville Church in need of assistance. We kicked off our re-opening of the Riceville Clothes Closet with the Spring Clothes Closet Give-Away on April 29, 2023.

The Clothes Closet Team is thankful for those who volunteer to assist in the mission work to help those in the community. Due to the generous donations from Riceville members and others, we distribute quality, gently worn clothing, household items, etc.

It All Began:

The Clothes Closet started in the late 1980's as a Mission project under the direction of Pastor Joe D. Johnson by Circle #7 then President-Sister C.C. Hinton and Junior Mission then President-Sis. Velma Pete in order to provide clothing assistance to needy families and emergency crisis situations in our community.

Dedicated service has been given to operation of the Clothes Closet by the late Deacon Ellsworth Williams, the late Sister Clementine "C.C." Hinton, the late Sister Carolyn Fobbs-Lee and the late Sis. Annie Lee Johnson. We are thankful to the volunteers that previously and currently give of their time to serve.



Youth Ministries



O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.
Psalms 96:9

Mission Statement - the **Riceville Cover-Girl** "The Beauty of Holiness" mentorship program is designed to engage young girls ages 8-17. Our mission will be met by utilizing a curriculum and activities that address issues related to self-esteem, self-awareness, and decision-making skills with a primary focus on biblical and moral value clarification.

Motto - Transforming lives through Christ, one daughter at a time.

Logo - The logo symbol is represented by a cross centered multi-colored butterfly. The cross is a reminder to our young girls to be Christ-centered in everything they do. The multi-colored butterfly is a symbol of their transition into womanhood. The colors of the butterfly are representative of the colors in the Old Testament and the tabernacle.

Colors

- Blue = heaven
- Purple = royalty
- Scarlet (Red) = sacrifice/atonement
- Green = life/growth
- White = purity/righteousness
- Gold = holiness unto God

The Cover Girls meet the 3rd Saturday of each month 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM @ the JDJ. If you have questions and are interest in joining the Riceville Cover Girls, contact Sis. Mildred Jenkins-Williams at millieje489@gmail.com



The **Riceville Young Loins** Mentorship Program (YLMP) is designed to help boys experience and work through the rites of passage to becoming a young man. The program addresses spiritual, emotional, and social needs. The YLMP brings together these aspects of a young man's world to build within him a strong sense of self.

The aim of the YLMP is to enable our boys to achieve their God-given potential and to proclaim Jesus Christ to them, admonishing and teaching them with all wisdom, that they may grow into the likeness of Christ. To this point, the purpose of the YLMP is to shape boys into followers of Christ and leaders of their families and communities.

All boys ages 9 to 17 are welcome to come out to the monthly meeting every third Saturday of the month. If you know any young man that need a mentor contact Bro. Johnny Riley - 713-205-1982





Riceville's **Women's Ministry** exists to support the mission of the church in saving souls through prayer, evangelism, and discipleship. The ministry meets weekly to pray for the church, individuals, and community, as well as hosts retreats, outings, and social events throughout the year. #StrongWomenPray every Thursday on the conference prayer call at 6:00 P.M. Mother's Day 2023 was a success, and we look forward to Women's Annual Day.



A look at some of the Church Ministries



Riceville's **Men's Ministry** has grown to be a very active and well attended Christ centered fellowship, ministry, and mission outreach. This is due in large measure to a solid balance of spiritual growth, personal evangelism, and mission work. We have become a vibrant "ministry to men" and a "ministry by men"... Heart then Hands.

The focus of the Men's Ministry is building strong, Christ centered, trusting relationships, while addressing the needs of men in maintaining and improving their walk with God. Monthly meetings/bible study, group outings, and special men's event are just a few ways men can get involved in this dynamic ministry. Men who desire to live a godly life must devote time and energy to knowing the Lord and each other. As Christian men, we must choose to associate and fellowship with other Christian men, who will support, encourage, challenge, and strengthen us. Men need other men of God to help develop god-like character in their lives, as Proverbs 27:17 says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another".

Further, the Men's Ministry plans are to identify and assist our most vulnerable elders of the church. So far this year, we have witness for Christ by going to the streets to share the good news of our Lord. We've just completed our Men's Annual Day and Father's Day events. In the near future we will be inviting leaders of the city for a question-and-answer session prior our going to the voting polls in November. We will culminate the year with a Men's ministry social in December.



Riceville **Adult Ministry** (RAM) is an organization for those adults 50 and over. Riceville Adult Ministry Progressive (RAMP) was organized for those adults 50 and over but are still working. RAM meets every 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month from 10AM - 2PM. We are lead in exercise and a Biblical lesson by our leader Pastor Charles Wiggins and his staff. We also provide a hot meal. RAM goes on several trips throughout the year.

