

HISTORY
of
Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church



"Look How Far We've Come In The Lord"

-- Hebrews 11:1-6

*8550 Saul Bell Rd., N.W.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87121
Dennis G. Dunn II, Pastor*

Hebrews 11

¹Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ²For by it the elders obtained a good report. ³Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear...

⁴By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. ⁵By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. ⁶But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:1-6



From the Pastor's Pen...

An old, familiar song says, *"We've Come This Far By Faith... leaning on the Lord... Trusting in His Holy Word, He's never failed us yet!"*

What a privilege it has been to serve at a church where we pray the Lord, and others, can see the members of the Body of Christ truly striving in His Word, to DO His Will, desiring to be more and more like Him. It is only through God's Grace and His Perfect Will that any of us are chosen, for Our Father will always find some faithful in His Service. We are blessed to be among His Called-Out Servants.

What a blessing, Fellowship, that God has seen fit to use this Body of Believers, now, for over 60 years! Each one of us has a purpose in God's plan for Fellowship, even before the first meeting in the home of Sis. Florence Napoleon, until this moment. You and I were intended, from the beginning of time, to be together on this day, on this occasion, to celebrate the Goodness of Our Jesus. Every one of us has the opportunity to serve God's purpose in the continually unfolding mission of Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church. The Charge from Our Heavenly Father is no less great for a single member than for the Pastor, for you, than for me. We are called to move forward, in faith, until He calls us home. Continue, Fellowship, to walk by faith...not by sight, and see what marvelous things the Lord yet has in store for us.

Let this Church be blessed to continue as a praying church, a fasting church, a serving church, humbled before God, and committed to His people, as we go forth, walking by faith. Always, according to His Will, may this be a Church of ministry to God's people and of service to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let this be our purposeful service, through our fervent and continual prayers, through our joyful praise and in our daily practice as we follow Him. May Jesus guide us in every tomorrow. Just LOOK where He's brought us from!

**In His Service,
Dennis G. Dunn II, Pastor**

Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church



*May we, Dear Lord, in Your service,
today and every new day, fulfill Your
Will in our lives and in the service of this Church, Your Bride.
May we, the Fellowship Family, always, continuously, sincerely and
with Your love, heed Your Call to take forth the Message of Your Good News,
and ever be willing and ready to run on for You, Lord Jesus.
Make us a blessing in our community and abroad,
as we heed Your call to,
"Go ye, therefore, teaching all nations..." (Matt.28:19).
Make us a shining Light and Example of the Love of Christ.
Use us at home and abroad, to lift, encourage and inspire,
ever holding up the bloodstained banner for the Call of Christ.
Help us, Dear Lord, for we know we have only come this far – by Faith!
In the precious Name of Jesus we pray, Amen.*



Trailer location of Fellowship, on Riverside Dr., S.W., pre-1972

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”
-Matthew 25:21

COMMEMORATING the FOUNDERS

**In Loving Memory of the
FOUNDERS
of the
Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church**

Mother Florence Napoleon

Mother Josephine Brown

Sis. Ruby Hooker

Sis. Margaret Key

Bro. McKinney

Bro. Allie and Sis. Irene Shaw

Bro. Robert and Sis. Bea Shields

Bro. Thomas Bell

Sis. Ella Houston

Rev. Vernon Lawhorn

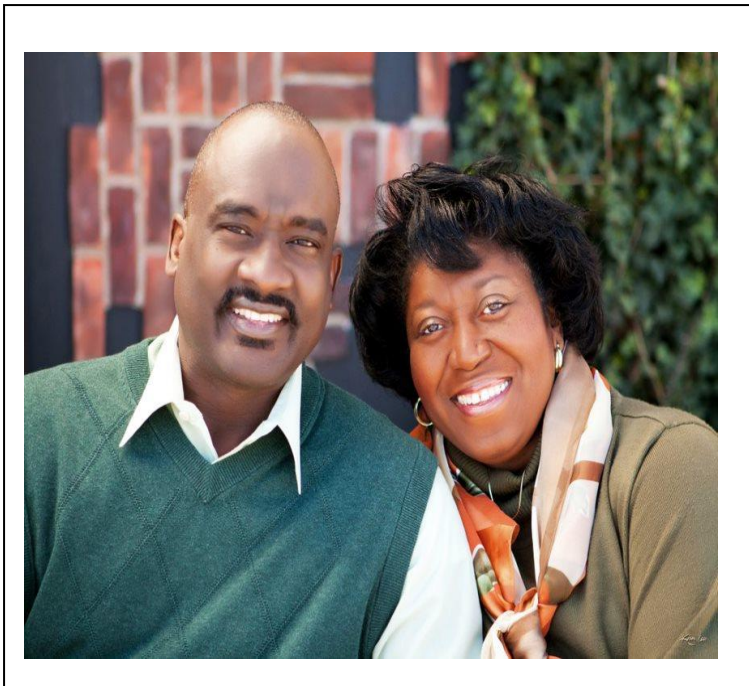
Bro. Elliott Moore

Sis. Lillie B. Smith

Mr. and Mrs. Riley Stevenson

- March 2, 1959 -

“...Upon this Rock I will build my church...” - Matt. 16:18



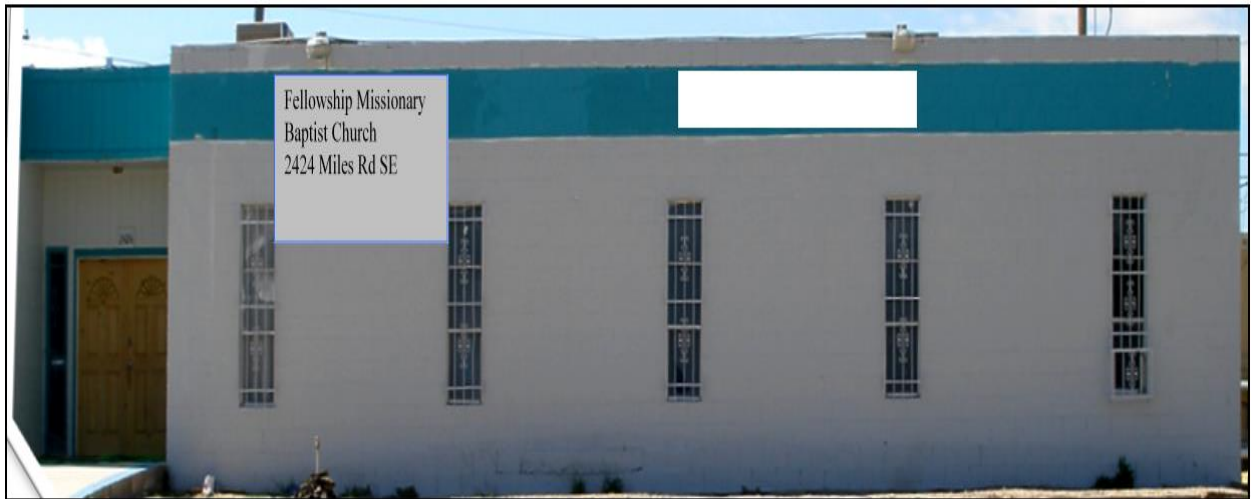
**Pastor Dennis G. and
Sis. LaVerne Dunn**

Deacons

Deacon Randolph Dillard, Chair
Deacon Emeritus, Willie Burrell
Deacon Glen Chelf
Deacon Dennis G. Dunn III
Deacon Matthew Grimes
Deacon James Jackson
Deacon George Moore
Deacon Eric Rankin
Deacon Cedric Roberson, Jr.
Deacon Newton Robinson
Deacon Ceznary Walker
Deacon Geno Ward

Board of Trustees

Sis. Ramona Dillard, Chair
Sis. Alesia Bell
Deacon Willie Burrell
Pastor Dennis G. Dunn II
Sis. LaVerne Dunn
Sis. D’Nienne Hatch-Sanders
Sis. Pamela Herndon Mathewson
Sis. Keisha Reinke



First home built for Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, 2418 Miles Rd., S.E.



New Construction Dedication of Fellowship on Saul Bell Rd., N.W., September, 2002

Left to Right: Pastor Dennis G. Dunn, Sis. LaVerne Dunn, Dennis Dunn III, Khelsia Dunn, Deacon Robert Shields, Deacon Willie Burrell, Sis. Ruby Hooker

THANKS and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We Give Thanks

We give thanks to every faithful member of Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church who has, over the years, thought it not robbery to dedicate and volunteer their time, their talents, their gifts and service to the Lord, to His work with His people and to the uplift and building of His Church and

His Kingdom.

-2 Thessalonians 1:3

Recognition

We recognize that God has placed in the path of our church body, Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, amazing opportunities to do His Work, to make known His Will and to carry forth His Gospel of the love and redemptive power of Jesus Christ, both here, at home, and abroad, and we recognize the awesome commitment of those who have been faithful, eagerly responding to His call.

-2 Thessalonians 2:13

Loving Acknowledgement

We lovingly acknowledge, with deep gratitude, giving heartfelt honor to every Brother and Sister of the Fellowship Family who have supported the work of the Lord's Church with their precious gifts of time, resources and hearts of service.

-1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3

²"Every time we think of you, we thank God for you. Day and night you are in our prayers ³as we call to mind your work of faith, your labor of love, and your patience of hope in following our Master, Jesus Christ, before God our Father." – 1 Thess. 1:2, 3



THANKING GOD for ALL THESE YEARS!

LOOK WHERE HE'S BROUGHT US FROM! **God is indeed TRULY amazing! Just think back :**

- To 1959, when Fellowship was founded in the home of Sis. Florence Napoleon, along with surviving founder, Sis. Ruby Hooker.
- From Riverside, S.W., Fellowship experienced several moves before it built its first own construction in 1970 at 2418 Miles Road, SE, in a small, but spirit-filled home to this Family of dedicated Believers.
- To 1992 when Fellowship voted to sell the property at 2418 Miles Road, SE, to find a larger church home.
- To 1993, when Fellowship was blessed to discover that we were able to 'trade' the Miles Road property for a facility over 2 and a half times the size of the previous property--at no cost-- and we moved, by the Grace of God, to 515 Ash, S.E., with a mortgage burning held within only 8 months after the move.
- To 1994, when the Fellowship family called Rev. Dennis G. Dunn to pastor the congregation.
- To 1995, when the Capital Stewardship Campaign was first presented at the Albuquerque Convention Center, proposing the need for expansion of the church property.
- To 1997, when a survey of various Ministry needs was conducted to assess the desired physical layout and accommodations of a 'visionary' new church home.
- To 1998, when a Land Search Committee was commissioned to 'spy out a new Canaan,' identifying proposed parcels of land for purchase on the west side of Albuquerque.
- To September, 1999, when the Lord touched the hearts of Fellowship's bankers, moving them to finance the purchase of a 2 acre parcel of land.
- To December, 1999, when the \$285,000 mortgage was burned for the lot purchased only four (4) months prior! Praise the Lord!
- To March, 2000, when the final pledge drive was completed, goals met and celebrated at Fellowship's 41st Church Anniversary.
- To the blessed acquisition of yet another acre of land in the summer of 2000.

- To 'The EXODUS CELEBRATION,' when Fellowship moved across the river, in September of 2002, from the Ash St. property to the newly constructed church home for Fellowship at 8550 Saul Bell Road (at Unser Blvd. and Bluewater) to a beautiful new location on 3.5 acres of land. Wow!
- Groundbreaking for two (2) newly acquired lots (south of the church) in 2003.
- To January of 2003, when the First Fruits Christian Academy was opened and Christian education for Fellowship's Family and the community we serve was made available!
- To March of 2007, marking the dedication of the Family Life Worship Center, and a grand Ribbon Cutting Celebration, introducing new classroom space, a gymnasium, commercial kitchen, choir room, and multi-purpose meeting space.
- To --**NOW!** --- what more does Our Amazing God have in store for us? And aren't you glad you are able to play a part in this saga of miracles?!

"HOW," you ask? --Just get into God's Word and He will guide you...

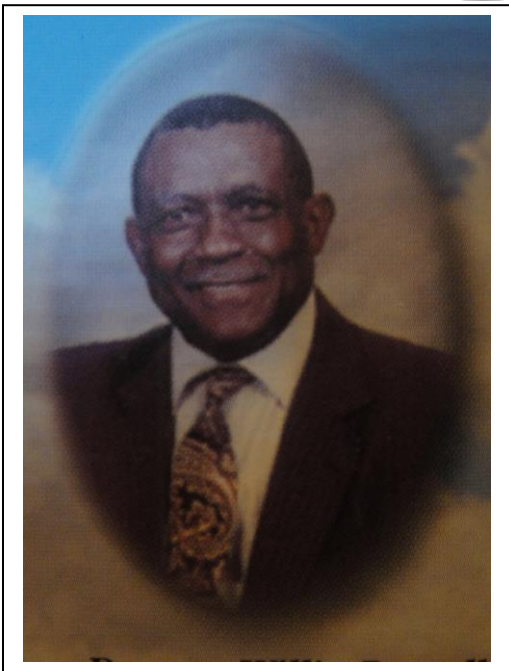
*"...And you know the plans I have for you," says the Lord...
"To give you a future and a hope." -- Jeremiah 29:11*

"...God has brought Fellowship through so much... now He's blessing us again. I thank Him for letting me live to see everything He's done for us

"...I can remember moving from the old church.. now here.. and then,--I just have to throw my hands up in the air...and say, 'Thank You, Jesus!' God is



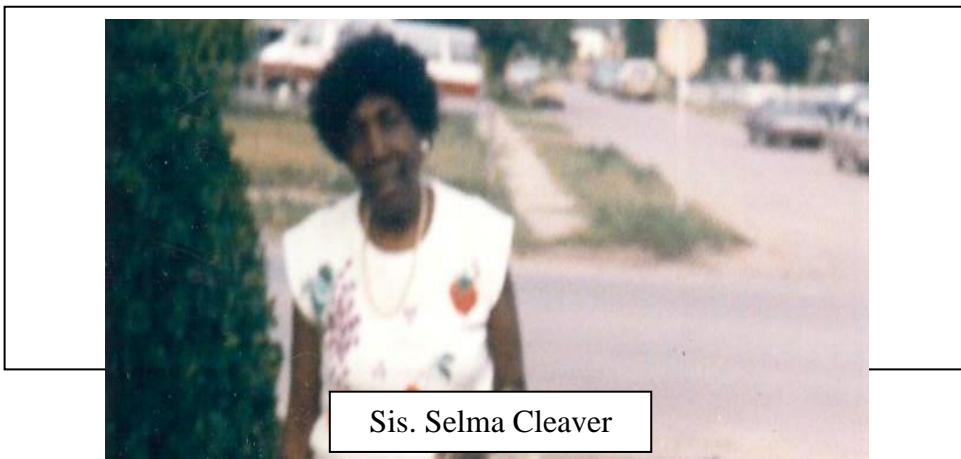
Sis. Ruby Hooker



Deacon Willie Burrell



Fellowship Home at 515 Ash, S.E.



Sis. Selma Cleaver



Deacon Robert Shields



Sis. Beatrice Shields



Sis. Bonnie Gatson

"... The program, "SEEDS of FAITH," is too large for any one of us. It is too large for all of us put together. No campaign, however, is too big for God..."

*-- Bro. Gregory Mallory and
Dr. William Thompson,
1996 C.S.M. Campaign Directors*



Deacon Willie Burrell



New Fellowship Home at Unser and Saul Bell Rd., N.W., 2002



Mother Anna Richardson



Mother Josephine Brown



Sis. Gladys Jones



Sis. Mildred Louise Pinkett



Bro. Thomas Bell



Bro. Henry Pinkett



Sis. Jessica Collins



Bro. Eddie A. English



Sis. Erma Bottoms

Honoring & Remembering



Mother Florence Napoleon



Sis. Lillie B. Pinkett Smith



Sis. Irene Shaw



Deacon Allie Shaw



FMBC Usher, Sis. JoAnn Greene



Sis. Francine McCain Island



Sis. Selma Cleaver

Honoring & Remembering



Fellowship hosts the Willow Creek Global Leadership Summit

Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church

CHURCH HISTORY

*Compiled from the writings of
Sis. Lillie Smith, Sis. Ruby Hooker,
Sis. Gwendolyn M. Drake, Sis. Ann Johnson and Sis. Marsha K. Hardeman*

Someone may ask, 'Why is the Church history important?' Just as in our current Sunday [Bible] Study of the birth and growth of the Christian Community, in the Church, where we see the Hand of God at work, carrying out His plan of redemption, it is also important for us to know the unique history of the local church body in which we have been placed, to serve, to continue carrying out God's Plan through the power of the Holy Spirit. Fellowship's history is a remarkable demonstration of God's faithfulness to redeem, encourage, guide and direct His people.

God is truly amazing! Just look back at March of 1959...at a time when the Barbie Doll was launched, Alaska became the 49th State and Hawaii became the 50th state, Fidel Castro came into power in Cuba after the Revolution, N.A.S.A. introduced America's first astronauts to the world including John H. Glenn, Jr., and Alan Shepard, Jr., the United States launched the first Weather Station in Space, and Albuquerque's farthest eastern and northern border limits were San Pedro and Lomas! A loaf of bread cost 20 cents, a gallon of gasoline cost 25 cents, ladies (silk) stockings cost \$1.00, and the cost of a premium, adult movie ticket was \$1.00.

In the midst of all this, on March 2nd of 1959, Fellowship Baptist Church was founded in the home of Bro. and Sis. Joseph and Florence Napoleon, where approximately 35 people attended worship services. The last of our original Founders, Mother Ruby Hooker, passed away in 2014, and until the last day of her life, was still active, serving the Lord with us, filled the Spirit and always fueled with a fire and passion for Fellowship. The Church was organized under the leadership of Rev. Vernon J. Lawhorn. Deacon Willie James Burrell soon joined Fellowship, shortly after its organization. He, too, has been and continues to be steadfast in his love for God and in his faithful and enduring service to the Church.

Following its organization, Fellowship held worship services at several temporary locations, including a location on Broadway, Carpenters Hall, on Coal, S.E., a church on Arno, S.E., and a location on Riverside Drive. From Riverside, Fellowship built its first construction at 2418 Miles Rd., S.E., a small, but spirit-filled home to this family of dedicated Believers. In 1972, a ground-breaking ceremony was held at the 2418 Miles Rod location and the Church was dedicated in July of that same year.

During those years, the members were spiritually and physically committed in their efforts to build a strong community of Believers and to spread God's love to others. By God's Grace, they often filled

multiple roles in the Church, provided the labor in the building of the Church on Miles Road, and paid the church expenses, often, from their own personal checkbooks.

Fellowship was blessed to acquire other property, including a parsonage and 'Fellowship West, located in the 1900 block of South Broadway, which was used as a Fellowship Hall and an Activities Center for Church ministries. Fellowship West also housed the Baptismal for the Church, and part of the property was used as a kitchen and food service site to feed the homeless for nearly two years. Deacon Robert Shields, also one of the original Founders, faithfully organized, managed, and was the Chief Cook for this outreach ministry for its duration.

During the 1960's when Fellowship acquired the Miles Road property, the hard-working Church family pulled together to erect the frame of the church, put up the sheet rock for walls, paint, lay carpet and prepare the little landscape, neatly and primly, for the new church home. Sis. Bonnie Gatson, one of the young adult members, at the time, always told, proudly, that she hung her sheet rock, right along with the Brothers! Sis. Lillie Smith, who served as President of the Women's Senior Mission and Choir Mother for many years, would speak of the sacrifices of the little group of faithful members, as she and others, like Sis. Ruby Hooker, Deacon Shields and his wife, Sis. Bea, Sis. Irma Bottoms, Mother Josephine Brown, Bro. Allie Shaw and wife, Sis. Irene, Sis. Verdia and Deac. Willie Burrell, would often pay the light and gas bills, the water bill or insurance for the Church, out of their own pockets. Bro. Elliot Moore, the Church Pianist for years, played without compensation. When Sis. Francine McCoin Island became the Church Pianist (and served as the only musician for over 20 of her more than 30 years at the church), she would later share her 'salary' of \$35 a month with other subsequent musicians.

It was during the period of the late '70's to early '80's, while Fellowship was on Miles Road, that so many young adults, with young families found, joined and remained a part of the great Family atmosphere that the Lord had birthed in Fellowship's people. Family style birthday parties, for the children, included everyone, with not a single invitation needing to be sent out, formally, but, simply letting the Church Family know a party was being planned, for young or old, and everyone would come, including moms and dads, children, grandparents, church 'Aunties' and 'Uncles', more friends and relatives of relatives. Fellowship began the tradition of an annual camping trip, in late summer or at the beginning of each school year,

Back In the Day - In 1959

The average cost of a new car was \$2,200.00. Average worker earned \$91.53 per week, yearly wages earned was \$5,010.00 and the cost of a new house in America was \$12,400.00. The U.S.S.R. Luna 2 crashed onto the Moon as the first man-made object and Luna 3 sent back the first photos of the far side of Earth's moon. The first pictures of the Earth, itself, were sent from space, taken by Explorer 6. IBM shipped the transistor-based IBM 1401 mainframe, and Xerox launched the first commercial copier.

In 1959, television viewers were enthralled with the popular programs like "Rawhide", "The Huckleberry Hound Show" and "The Twilight Zone" and the show "Bonanza" premiered on NBC-TV, the first weekly television series broadcast completely in color." The hit movies included "Some Like it Hot", "Sleeping Beauty," and "Ben Hur" premiered in New York City, as the Boeing 707 Jet Airliner had been introduced into service in America. Dwight D. Eisenhower was President of the United States, the U.S. Grammy Music Awards were begun, the last musical from Rodgers and Hammerstein "The Sound of Music" opened on Broadway and the chartered plane transporting musicians Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and the Big Bopper went down, fatally, in an Iowa snowstorm, killing all four occupants on board. But, Black music and 'Negro' history were alive, being birthed and emerging in the talents of Ella Fitzgerald, Chuck Berry, Della Reese, Fats Domino and the 'Father of Gospel Music,' Thomas A. Dorsey and of The 5 Blind Boys, Mahalia Jackson, and more. Cassius Clay was climbing the ranks of Jr. Boxing. The 'SPINGARN MEDAL' was awarded to Duke Ellington for his Musical prowess and "[Raisin in the Sun](#)" by [Lorraine Hansberry](#) became the first Broadway play written by a Black woman.

In Albuquerque, the first McDonald's restaurant sold its popular hamburger at 15 cents each, The Dog House, on Central Ave., part of the nation's famous roadway, Route 66, was a frequent meeting place; the Hiland Theater was the center of the town and 'Uncle Cliff's Kiddieland' opened up. Kirtland Air Force Base had developed a separate, segregated housing addition for its Negro servicemen and families, the Kirtland Addition, and civic action was being pursued for housing discrimination against Black families who sought purchases in other parts of the city.

to discuss with the teens and youth of the church the challenges of being ‘in the world, but not *of* the world,’ as Christians, steadfast and true to Christ Jesus, as challenged by organizer, Sis. Marsha K. Hardeman. The first ‘trip’ was actually in the Miles Road Church parking lot, with Fellowship children and friends, plus parents, sleeping in tents on the church grounds, inside the Church or even, for the less adventurous ones, like Sis. Gwen (Germany) Drake, Sis. Barbara ‘Bucky’ Smith, Sis. Ann Johnson and Sis. Pat Rhodes, inside their vehicles and camper shells on the back of trucks of members. In following years, the campers ventured up to the Sandia Mountains, to Camp Patten, owned by the Mt. Olive Baptist State Convention, of which Fellowship was an active part. The commitment to the camping venture was so great, even when the hantavirus threat precluded the campers from heading to the mountains, the group pitched tents in the back yard of Sis. Marsha Hardeman and went on a midnight hike on the mesa of Rio Rancho, with Deacon Robert Shields, Bro. Raymond Island, Deacon Don Rhodes and Deacon Willie Burrell setting up their grills and portable kitchens for Deacon Shields’ famous ‘S.O.S. breakfast’, early the next morning.

Many of us, as young adults, ‘grew up’ at Fellowship, and became family to one another: Sis. Ruby Hooker stood in, for many, as mother, and, when on Miles Road, faithfully sat, in every service, on the last pew, on the right side of the church. Sis. Sharron Gatson Johnson and Sis. Gwen Germany Drake recall, as young mothers, often, rushing in with their baby girls and their accompanying baby bags, to hand Baby Jaime or Baby Brandi over, bags and all, to Sis. Hooker, so she could care for the babies as Gwen and Sharron raced to sing in the choir. Sis. Hooker, Sis. Verdina Burrell, Sis. Erma Bottoms, Choir Mother, Sis. Lillie Smith, and others cared for the babies of most, if not all the choir members who were young parents. They encouraged us and tutored young, new mothers, and listened and counseled us on many and various family issues over the years. We loved them dearly. And just as Sis. Hooker stood in for our mothers, Deacon Willie Burrell (‘Willie James’ as his wife, Sis. Verdina, would call him), stood in for fathers. Always willing, we called on him for endless car repairs, tire changes and many other needs to ‘repair’ our lives as he counseled us, wisely and lovingly. We have loved ‘Deac’ for decades.

Other, younger adults, who just ‘picked up and stepped in,’ for parents who had committed to the music ministry, were Sis. Barbara ‘Bucky’ Smith, Sis. Wanda Kay (Thrasher) Marbury and Sis. Ann Johnson, who regularly had others’ children in their laps, as well, when they were not serving as ushers. The commitment to doing things ‘decently and in order,’ prompted most members to be watchful, chastising and directive for everyone’s children, as if they were their own. The deep, bass voice of Rev. Al McCoin would be heard admonishing little ones to “...get on inside there...,” as Services were beginning. Or, as Sis. Francine (McCoin) Island, the only pianist for Fellowship for over 20 years, would be racing inside the church, the choir already lined up to march in, would drop her babies into someone’s receiving arms, those ‘lap mothers’ who knew of the chronically late pattern of this survivor of cancer, lupus, diabetes and numerous other ailments, lovingly received the kiddles. And, yet, despite all the maladies of the body, Frannie, like others, remained steadfast in her commitment to the Lord and to Fellowship, never waning or diminishing in faithful service, no matter the circumstances of life or the trials, the people or things that came against her. *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant...”* (Matt. 25:21)

The blessing of these closely knit family relationships were the undergirding that ensured that this Fellowship family endured challenges and weathered the various storms of life that always test the grit and loving tenacity of families. By God’s Grace, we are still here.

During the period from 1979 through 1986, a Prison Ministry was initiated, entering the Los Lunas and Santa Fe Prisons. A church van was purchased for the expanding ministry in and around the Fellowship neighborhood and around the state, as Pastor Elwood J. (Musomi) McDowell, Rev. Al McCain and Rev. Robert Smith pressed outreach opportunities to serve the incarcerated and those recovering from various addictions. Along with the early Evangelical Outreach Team, led by Bro. Anthony (Tony) Onimole, the Music Ministry of Fellowship's Gospel Choir, Young Women's Auxiliary, Senior Mission and, later, the Homeless Outreach, Fellowship's ministries continued to serve and grow in their commitment to take the Gospel to the city, the state and beyond. Now, purposely called Fellowship *Missionary* Baptist Church (to distinguish from another, local church with the same F.B.C. name), the Church determined, by God's divine Will, to, "...press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," (*Phil. 3:14*), moving beyond various challenges of this world, with, thank the Lord, Victory in Jesus, time and time again.

In 1992, Fellowship was blessed, through the creative real estate negotiations of Sis. Mary E. King-Jackson, realtor and mother of Sis. Marsha K. Hardeman, to *trade* the Miles Road property for a facility over two and a half times its size, and moved, by the Grace of God, to 515 Ash St., S.E., with the burning of the mortgage (for the mere closing costs), held within only 8 months after the move. God has simply been amazing to this Family of Believers.

In 1994, the Fellowship family called the Rev. Dennis G. Dunn, from Houston, Texas, to pastor the congregation and this church family began to experience amazing growth, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, and the power of God's Word, taught faithfully and persistently, "...in season and out of season..." by Pastor Dunn. The Lord blessed Fellowship through Pastor Dunn's leadership and, clearly, through the uncompromised preaching of His Word. By 1995, the Capital Stewardship Ministry campaign (C.S.M.) was presented to the church body, proposing the need and a plan for expansion of the church property in order to meet the needs of the conspicuously growing ministry. Who can still remember the theme, whispered, week after week, "C.S.M. C.S.M. C.S.M. --- Catch the Vision!" ? A Scholarship Program was set up to honor and commemorate Sis. Diane Thorpe, after a tragic auto accident, which Deacon Larry Chapman originally chaired, along with a reintroduction of Fellowship's original 'Church Newsletter,' (illustrated by the artistic Min. Robert Smith), in the new launch of *The Kerygma*, originally published and edited by Bro. Jim and Sis. Haroldie Spriggs, keeping the church abreast of the many activities and accomplishments that God brought to fruition within the Church.

In 1997, Pastor Dunn commissioned a survey of various ministry needs, led by Sis. Billie DeWitt, which was conducted to assess the desired physical layout and accommodations of our visionary, new church home. Fellowship had outgrown its location on Ash St., which seated approximately 250 people, comfortably. After several years of dual services, a Land Search Committee was impaneled to spy out and identify proposed parcels of land for purchase, on the west side of Albuquerque.

In 1999, the Lord touched the hearts of bankers, moving them to finance the purchase of a two (2) acre parcel of land on the west side of Albuquerque, where the survey had revealed the vast majority of the church membership then resided. In December of 1999, the \$285,000 mortgage was burned for the lot purchased only four (4) months prior. God was still working—and, still, amazingly so!

In March of the year 2000, the '*Seeds of Faith*' pledge drive had reached its goal(s) and trucks started rolling in. The foundation was laid and construction began on the new facility. In September of 2002, Fellowship launched the 'Great Exodus,' planned and executed by Sis. Victoria and Bro. James Williams, with a jubilant caravan that traversed across the city of Albuquerque, from the Ash St. location to the new site at 8550 Saul Bell Rd., N.W. The celebrated 'Grand Opening' of the new church home was blessed all the more to have living Founders Deacon Robert Shields and Sis. Ruby Hooker, along with Deacon Willie Burrell be present with Pastor Dennis Dunn, wife, Sis. LaVerne Dunn and family, all welcome the hundreds of members and guests who arrived for the celebratory launch, christening and first service at Fellowship's new home. What a blessing!

But, God wasn't through with us, yet! In 2003, Fellowship opened the doors of the First Fruits Christian Academy, offering Christian education, from Kindergarten through Third (3rd) Grades, led by Sis. LaVerne Dunn as the school's Administrator. Her committed teaching staff began to grow and develop every child that was entrusted to the care of First Fruits. As faithful teachers fed the minds and spirits of the children, another Soldier for the Lord, in the person of Sis. JoAnn Green, commandeered the F.M.B.C. Kitchen, preparing children's meals, daily, or, supported by Sis. Debbie Smith, the masses for Fellowship's various events delighted palates. And Fellowship continued to thrive. Soon, Fellowship faced the challenge, once more, of having outgrown the space of the new facility. Thus, Fellowship was able, by God's Hand, to purchase land to the south of the main facility location for the further expansion of the church facility and First Fruits. A designated Management Team was created to plan and facilitate the building of this expansion, led by Facilities Coordinator and Trustee Chair Sis. Ramona Dillard.

In the year 2006, construction began for the Family Life Worship Center (F.L.W.C.) and new housing for First Fruits Christian Academy, was completed in February of 2007, with its Grand Opening in March, 2007. This celebration was highlighted with an official Honor Guard, in grand regalia, dignitaries from around the City and special honored friends who accompanied Pastor Dunn in the celebratory processional, leading friends and neighbors all around the new building and its wonderful interior spaces, offering spacious meeting rooms, school facilities, a commercially graded/approved kitchen and a spacious gymnasium, adequate to house activities, athletic events, plays and many more and varied occasions for the future. This facility currently accommodates between 700-1,000 people for banquets and/or theatre style auditorium seating. The Lord continues to keep His Hand upon our First Fruits Christian Academy and He allows us to continue serving students from many and diverse walks of life in the F.L.W.C. facility through this school ministry.

From 1994 to 2008, Fellowship's membership grew from 127 to over 1,000 members. Under the leadership of Pastor Dennis G. Dunn II, Fellowship launched or reinvigorated over 18 ministries, but growth, and God's work, never cease. With the visionary mandate to serve the Fellowship Family, all its parishioners, 'from the cradle to the grave,' as Pastor Dunn would declare, over thirty (30) ministries came into fruition, including Administration, Announcements, Children's Church, Deacons' Ministry, F.A.I.T.H., God's Talented Teens (G.T.T.), Health & Wellness Ministry, Leadership Council, Marriage Ministry, Men's (M-3) Ministry, Music Ministry (including six (6) choirs and Praise Team), Sunday Bible Academy for All Ages, Transportation Ministry, Hearts of Humility, Media Ministry, Missions, Mountain Top Victory (M.T.V.) New Members' Orientation Program, Photography and Visual Arts Ministry, Rites of Passage (R.O.P.), for young boys/teens, Scholarships, Seasoned Saints' Ministry, Social Media Ministry, Theatre Ministry, Training Ministry, Ushers' Ministry, Women's United Ministry (W.U.M.), and more as we continually strive to meet every need within our Body of Believers.

Extending Fellowship's mission field beyond the State of New Mexico and the United States, the Lord gave vision to Pastor Dunn to move the laborers in His vineyards across the oceans. Fellowship's Mission Teams have traveled and served, building houses, teaching children, training teachers, evangelizing, repairing homes, roofs, churches and providing medical assistance, books, shoes, wells for fresh water, and, always, spreading the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, abroad to Guyana, South America, the Dominican Republic, Hong Kong, Kenya and more to come. The Church has also been blessed to take Educational teams to Greece, Israel and to 'walk in the steps of Jesus,' throughout the Holy Land.

So, we share our church history to keep alive our story and many testimonies of all the Lord has done for us, how He has watched over us, kept us in His Precious Care and continues to challenge us to be used by Him, and to enlighten all who will come after us, and to continually assess if we are continuing the work of the true purpose and Calling of God's Church.

Just look where God has brought us! The prayer that Pastor Dunn prayed as we launched the 'C.S.M.' campaign, in 1995, still applies today,

“Lord, Thank You for a people who trust You and Your Word to be complete. Thank You for ministry that will not benefit only us, but our community. Bless each and every member as we continue to strive, and as You continue to strengthen and teach us, daily, Your ways.”

Truly, God keeps on doing GREAT THINGS for us! How much further may the Lord lead us if we remain faithful and committed to His Call!

Amen. And may the Lord, Sovereign God, continue to bless and keep us, the Fellowship Family, ever in His Precious Care.

*In Loving Memory of the
FOUNDERS
of the
Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church*

Mother Florence Napoleon

Mother Josephine Brown

Sis. Ruby Hooker

Sis. Margaret Key

Bro. McKinney

Bro. Allie and Sis. Irene Shaw

Bro. Robert and Sis. Bea Shields

Bro. Thomas Bell

Sis. Ella Houston

Rev. Vernon Lawhorn

Bro. Elliott Moore

Sis. Lillie B. Smith

Mr. and Mrs. Riley Stevenson

- March 2, 1959 -

“...Upon this Rock I will build my church...” - Matt. 16:18