

A Profile of
ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

Cincinnati, Ohio



“The Church with A Royal Welcome”

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INTRODUCTION

Zion Baptist Church in Cincinnati, OH is prayerfully seeking a new pastor to lead our congregation and the Pastoral Search Committee is in prayer seeking God's guidance in this process.

The committee believes that God will send Zion a shepherd to lead our congregation. The committee has prepared a profile of Zion which summarizes her guiding principles, history, organizational structure, strengths, challenges, demographics, compensation, and a listing of the Pastoral Search Committee members.



It is our hope and prayer that as candidates read this document, the Holy Spirit will guide them to explore this great opportunity to lead God's people at Zion. The search committee has prepared a job description for Zion's next pastor, which is available online at zioncincinnati.org.

Zion Baptist Church is a loving, family-oriented congregation, located in the Avondale neighborhood, a predominately African American urban community in Cincinnati. She has been a part of the Cincinnati community for 179 years and is still serving God's people. She is surrounded by good schools, two outstanding universities (University of Cincinnati, Xavier University), and a world class hospital (Children's Hospital, rated number 3 in the country). The city has a vibrant arts community, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, three professional sports teams and many beautiful parks.

Zion is a member of American Baptist Churches, USA and Progressive National Baptist Convention which was founded in 1961 at Zion under the pastorate of the late Rev. Dr. L. Venchael Booth. During that same period (1964), the Rev. Dr. Martin L. King spoke at Zion for her 122nd Anniversary Celebration. For her 179th Anniversary Celebration, the Rev. Dr. Julius R. Scruggs, past president National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. was the speaker. Zion has a rich heritage, and we look forward to working with our next pastor. May the Lord bind us together to do the work of His kingdom.

OUR VISION

“**T**o be the church that glorifies God and welcomes all people.”

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS

While the Bible, God’s Holy Word, is the ultimate guide for the members of Zion Baptist Church, the documents which follow amplify these teachings as they relate to how the church seeks to accomplish its mission.

The Church Covenant

The Church Covenant outlines our commitment to one another as a Body of Christ. The covenant is available in our church hymnals and our constitution. The congregation reads the covenant on the first Sunday of each month when we celebrate communion.

Having been led, as we believe, by the spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinance, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to teach our children the Christian truths; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of abusive substances and intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this Covenant and the principles of God’s word.

The Church Constitution

The Zion Church Constitution sets forth the basic principles that prescribe the nature, functions, and operational limits of the church. The Preamble to this document states: “We declare and establish this constitution to secure the principles of our faith as practiced in Missionary Baptist Churches and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of the sovereign body.”

Our Mission

To advance the kingdom of God as revealed through the Word of God and through the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus Christ. To seek to attain this end through public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, missionary endeavors, Christian education, and the support of worthy causes consistent with the word, teachings, and ministry of Jesus Christ.



Statement Of Faith

We believe in one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God, and it is the basis for any statement of faith; we band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally and cooperatively committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of this church are baptism and the Lord's supper.

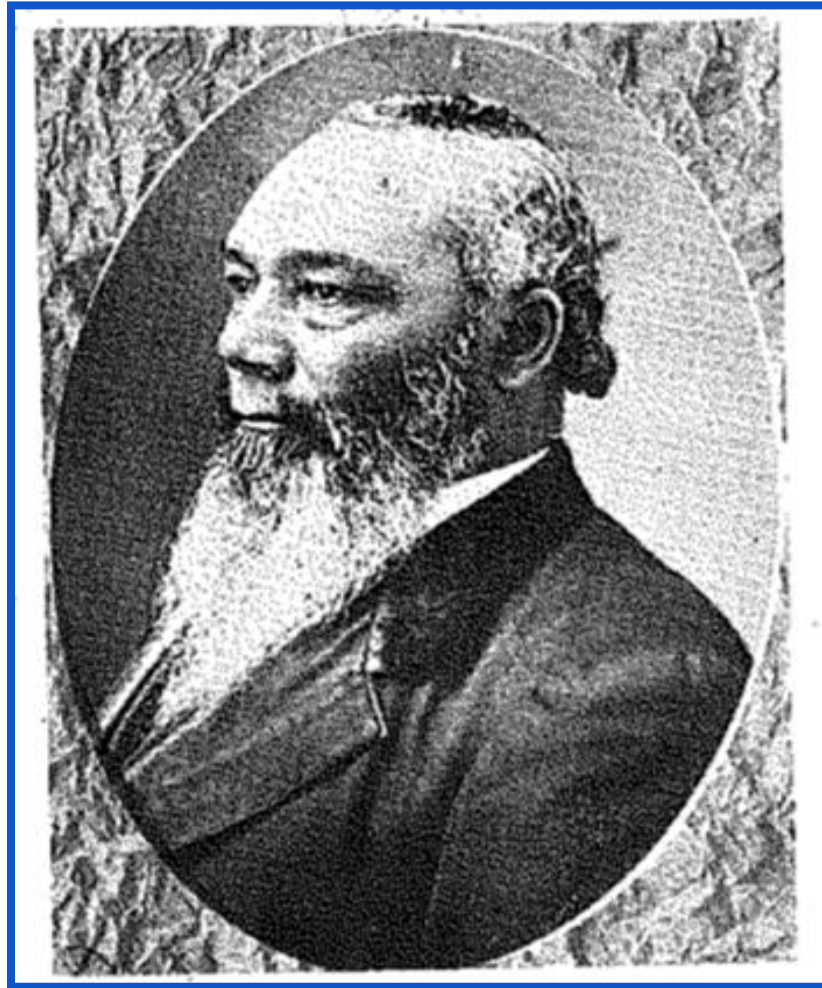
Relationship

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body but is recognized and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches.

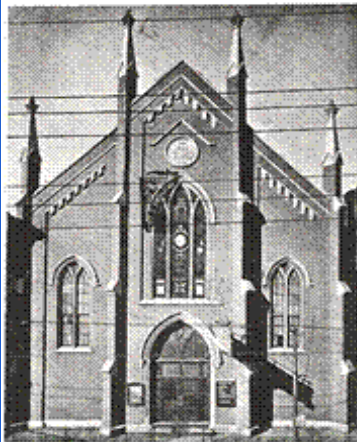


FATHER WALLACE SHELTON

This is where it all began.



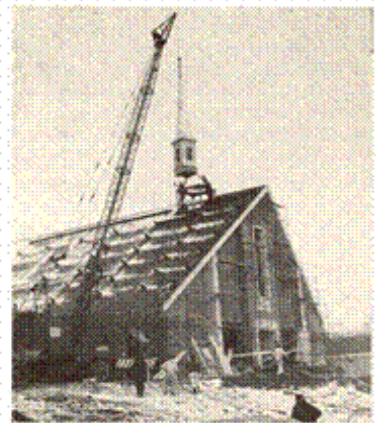
Pastor 1842 - 1873



ZION BUILT IN 1887
430 WEST 9TH STREET



ZION 1953
430 WEST 9TH STREET



ZION 1981
CHURCH SPIRE INSTALLED

A GLIMPSE OF ZION'S HISTORY

For a more detailed accounting of our history, please see our website zioncincinnati.org and click the "History" tab.

Zion Baptist Church is Cincinnati's second oldest African American Baptist congregation. Under the leadership of her founder, Reverend Wallace Shelton, Zion was organized in 1842. The first church was located on Plum Street and from this location became active in the Underground Railroad System which aided fugitive slaves. This pioneer group built the first brick church owned by African Americans in the city in 1867. Rev. Shelton established many churches in and beyond Cincinnati, leading Zion to be known throughout the country as "Big Zion."

Following Reverend Shelton's pastorate, Zion had a series of pastors whose tenures were minimal.

1874 – 1875 Rev. John P. Willis

1876 – 1879 Rev. A. W. Fuller

Rev. Harrod

Rev. Dodd

1880 – 1881 Rev. Henry H. Williams

1881 – 1882 Rev. Phillip B. Ferguson

1882 – 1884 Rev. Wilton R. Boone

1884 – 1891 Rev. Charles T. Thorpe




1892 – 1893 Rev. Aaron W. Fuller

1894 – 1895 Rev. William Gray

1895 – 1896 Rev. Phillip B. Ferguson

1897 – 1904 Rev. Henry H. Harris

The tenures of most of the subsequent pastors were longer. Under their leadership, significant strides were made.

 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">REV. J. FRANKLIN WALKER</p>	<p>Reverend J. Franklin Walker (1905-1913)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Installed electricity & added a galvanized roof. ● Purchased Zion's pipe organ. 	 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">REV. P. W. EDISON</p>	<p>Reverend P.W. Edison (1913 -1926)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Led Zion's Great Awakening: 1,080 members were added to the membership.
 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">REV. B. F. REID</p>	<p>Reverend Barney F. Reid, D. D. (1927-1951)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purchased the church annex at 432 W. Ninth Street, three buildings and a parking lot on Richmond Street, a parsonage at 135 Huntington Place, a church bus, public address system and electronic organ. ● Conducted an accredited School of Religious Education. ● Hosted the Ohio Baptist Sunday School and BYPU Convention in 1938, and the National Sunday School and BTU in 1943. ● Represented Zion at the Baptist World Alliance three times. 		



The Reverend L. V. Booth (1952-1984)

- Relocated the congregation from downtown to its current location in 1961 and built the present edifice.
- Added 1000 members.
- Installed carolinic bells as a memorial to deceased members.
- Instituted the Zion Federal Credit Union.
- Burned the mortgage on the church (1979).
- Built Zion Care Center Nursing Home (1967); Shelton Gardens (a low-income facility for seniors) (1968); Reid's Valley View Manor, the Walker apartments, Founders Home apartments (low income for seniors) (1970), and Edison apartments (1971).
- Founded the Progressive National Baptist Convention at Zion in 1961.



Reverend Edward L. Wheeler, Ph.D. (1985-1991)

- Revived and reenergized church membership; membership grew to 850 persons.
- Implemented the Church Council.
- Started the Feed the Hungry and the Bag Lunch ministries.
- Involved the church in outreach efforts to assist the Avondale Food Pantry and the Winton Terrace Guild.



Reverend Leonard Thompson, Sr. (1992-1996)

- Initiated 7:30 a.m. Sunday morning worship service.
- Assisted in the founding of the Zion Christian Leadership School.
- Renewed the Hattie Jackson Missionary Guild.
- Established the Zion Baptist Church Praise Dancers and the Step Team.



Reverend James H. Cantrell (1997-2022)

- Initiated the Health and Wellness Ministry, hosted health fairs and on-going screenings; partnered with Closing the Health Gap to conduct Covid-19 testing
- Implemented the Dr. Martin Luther King Interfaith Vesper Hour (January 2005)
- Instituted Adopt-A-Student Ministry for college students
- Formed an educational partnership with local neighborhood schools
- Began the Zion Endowment Fund
- Established The Walk of Faith ministry (2002) to honor Zion's deceased and current members
- Assisted in the establishment of The Zion Summer Enrichment Program

ZION 2022

Presently, Zion has 134 active members who participate in church activities and contribute to the church financially. Zion has one worship service held on site each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Services are available on Facebook and by phone for remote worshippers. We serve communion on the first Sunday of the month. Sunday School meets Sundays at 9:15 a.m. on site and virtually and at 6 p.m. on Zoom. Bible study classes and discipleship groups meet throughout the week. The church staff includes an office manager, minister of music, and two part-time custodians. The church celebrates Easter, Christmas, Church and Pastor Anniversaries, Black History Month, Family and Friends Day, and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Interfaith Vesper. On the following pages, you will find an outline of the organizations and structures through which Zion provides for the spiritual needs of her people and a demographic breakdown of the congregation and community.

ZION'S STRENGTHS

Zion's greatest strength is the love and dedication that her members share with each other, the church, and the community. Seniors are our largest age group, and they are deeply committed to Christ and Zion. The shutdown demonstrated this—giving levels did not change during that time because members made sure to send their offerings by mail or electronically. Members cite the various church-based prayer opportunities, the benevolence fund for the needy, and outreach efforts of the Missions Ministry and Sunday School as ways that Zion shows her love. Biblical teaching provided in the Sunday School, Bible Study classes, and discipleship groups is strong. Zion's boards—Deacons, Trustees, Board of Christian Education—continue to provide functional and effective leadership. Many of our ministries are viable and have embraced new communications technology so they can operate virtually and in person. The Music Ministry is very strong and inspiring. The minister of music is nationally recognized for his excellence.

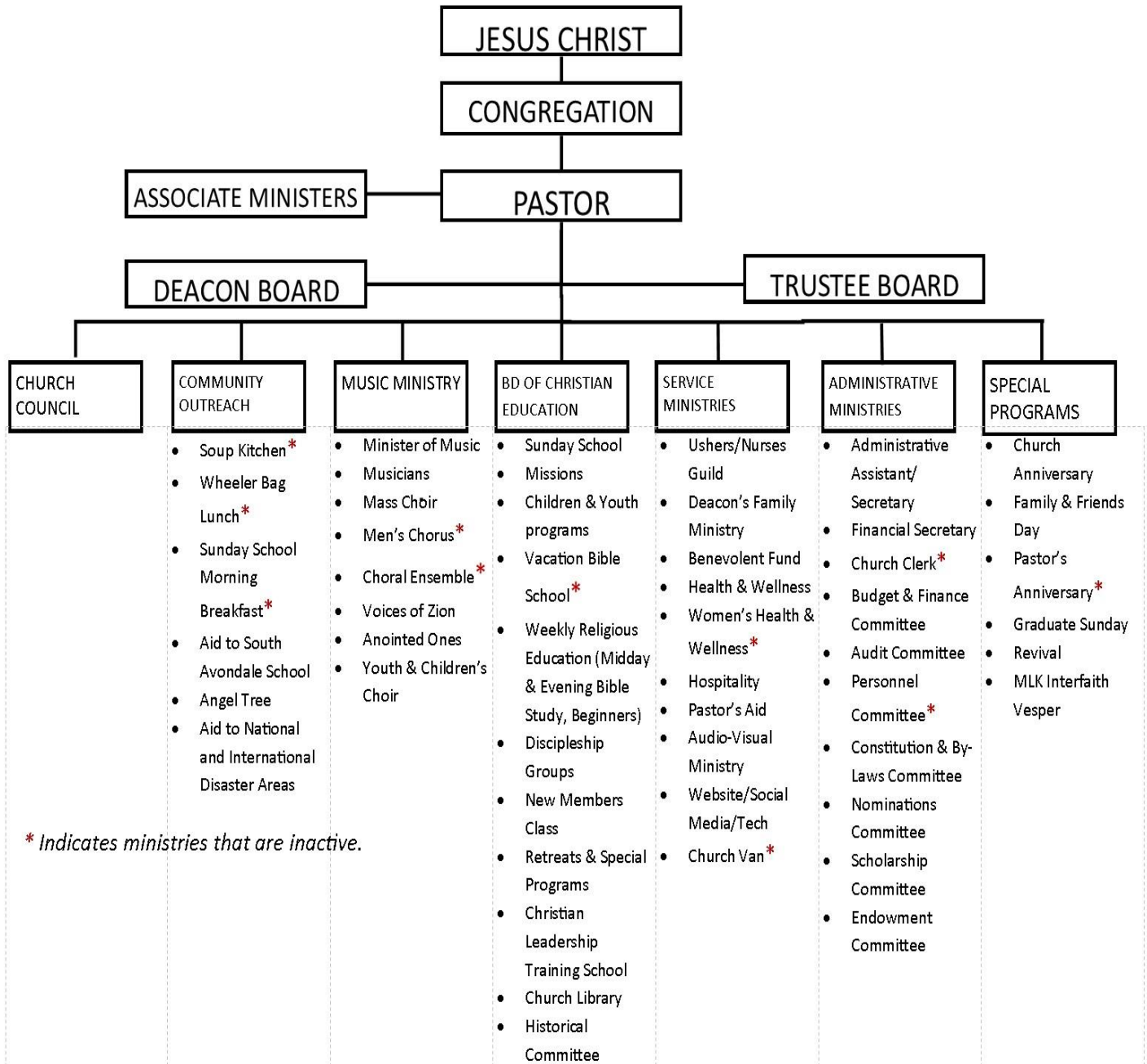
ZION'S CHALLENGES

Zion also has challenges. Her membership has decreased and needs restoration. Like many American churches, we have a dwindling number of people to support all the ministry we do. We struggle to make meaningful connections with new people, especially those under 50. We need to bring more young families with children to Christ. Our beautiful but aging edifice needs proper attention to meet contemporary needs. Our members share the safety-related anxiety of many American churchgoers—anxiety related to Covid, crime, mobility and travel of our seniors, and gun violence. Above all, Zion needs to ensure that her worship service inspires and reflects her vision to exalt God and welcome all. Zion needs a short-term and a long-term strategic plan for addressing these challenges. We need a leader with vision to help create and implement those plans.



ZION'S ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

This chart gives an overview of Zion's organizational structure and lists the ministries through which the church serves her members and the broader community.



Deacon Board

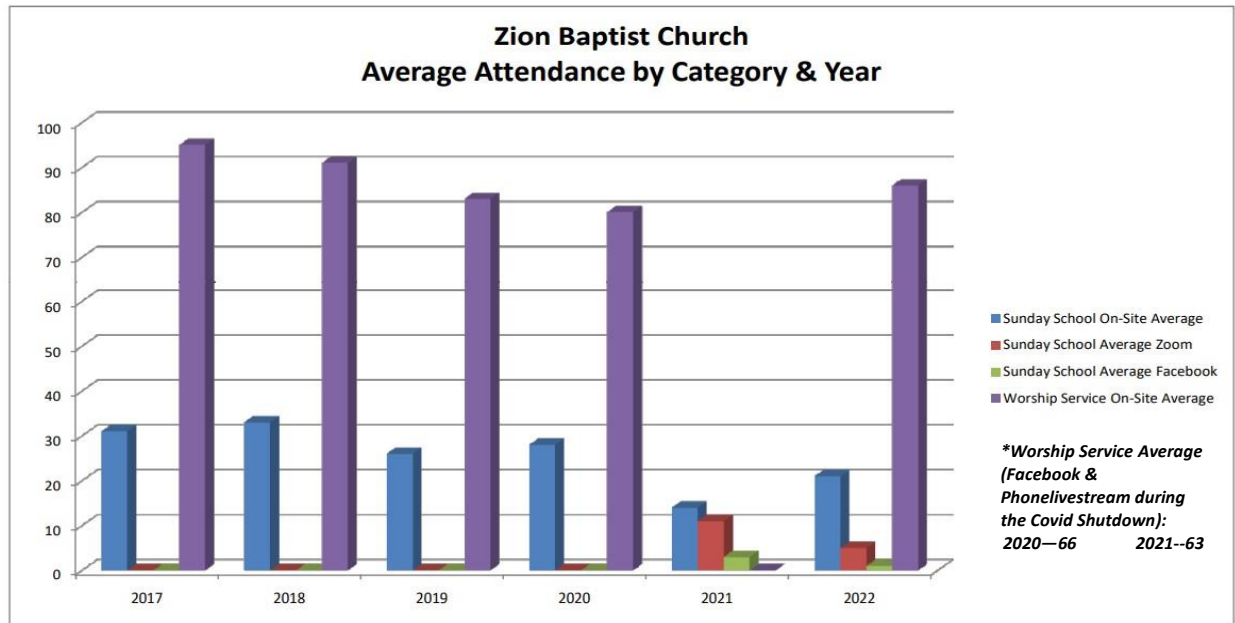


Board of Christian Education

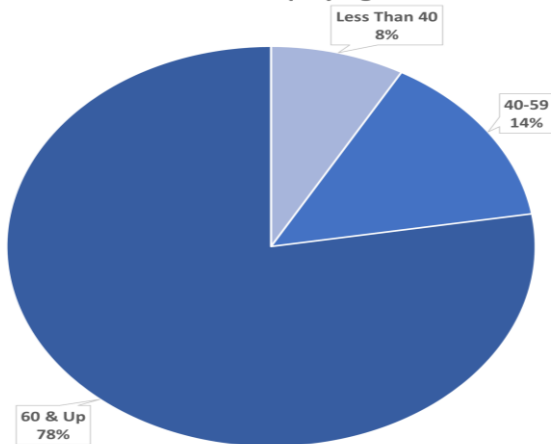


Trustee Board

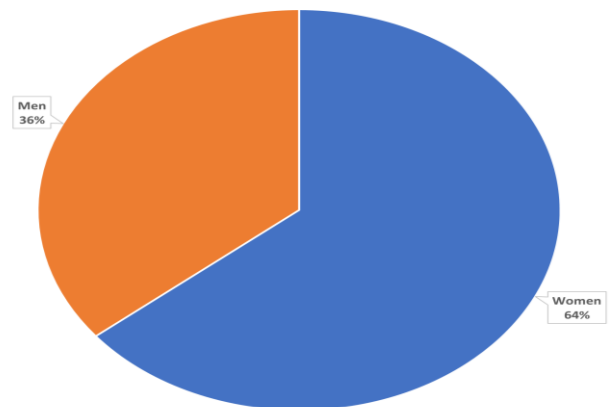
DEMOGRAPHICS



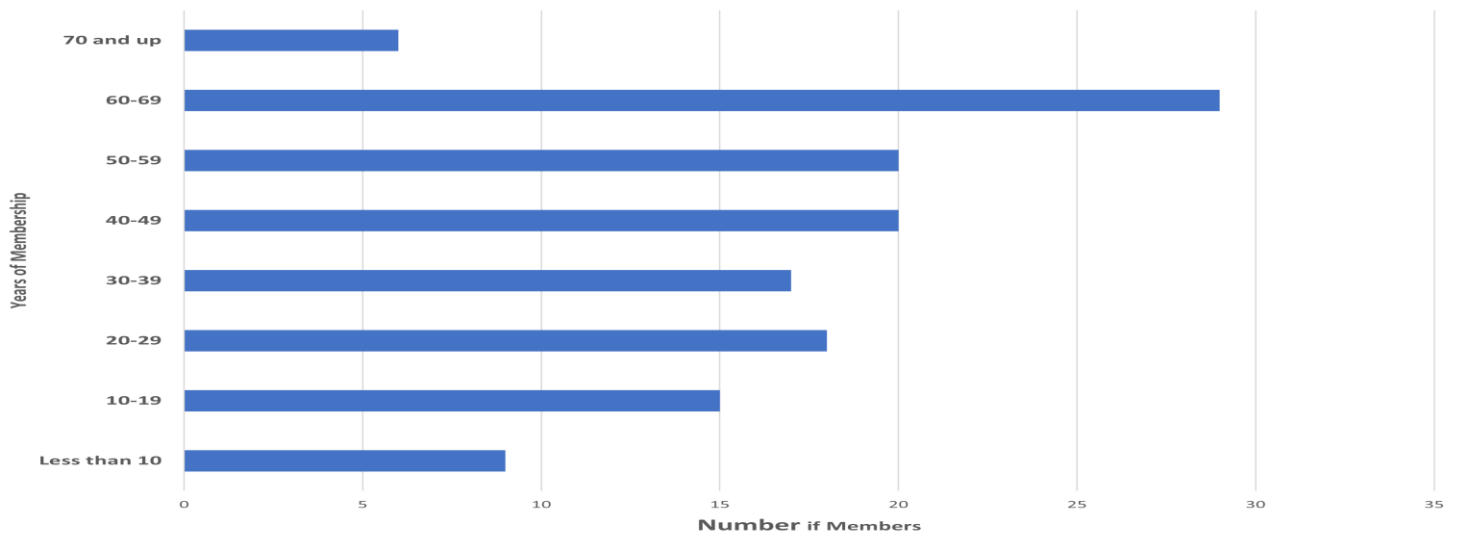
Membership by Age



Membership by Gender



Congregation by Years of Membership

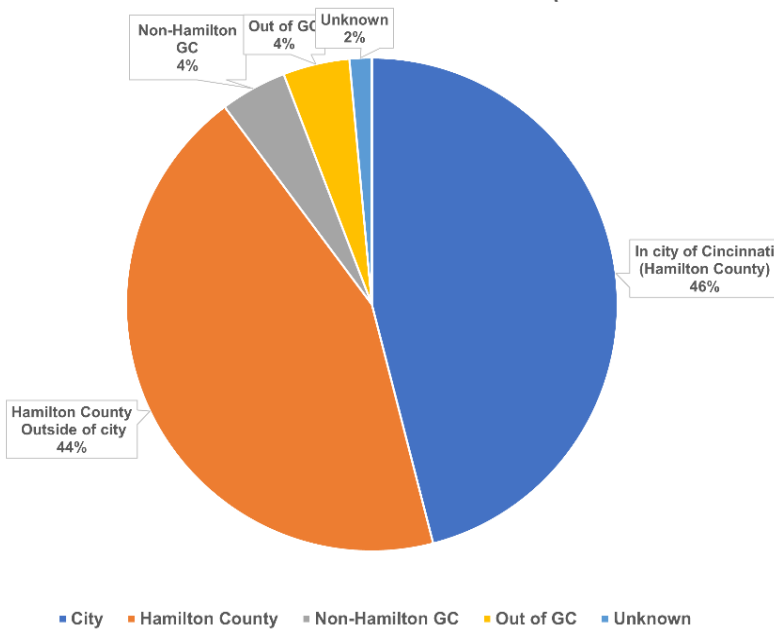


Selected Demographic Data for Avondale, Cincinnati, and Greater Cincinnati

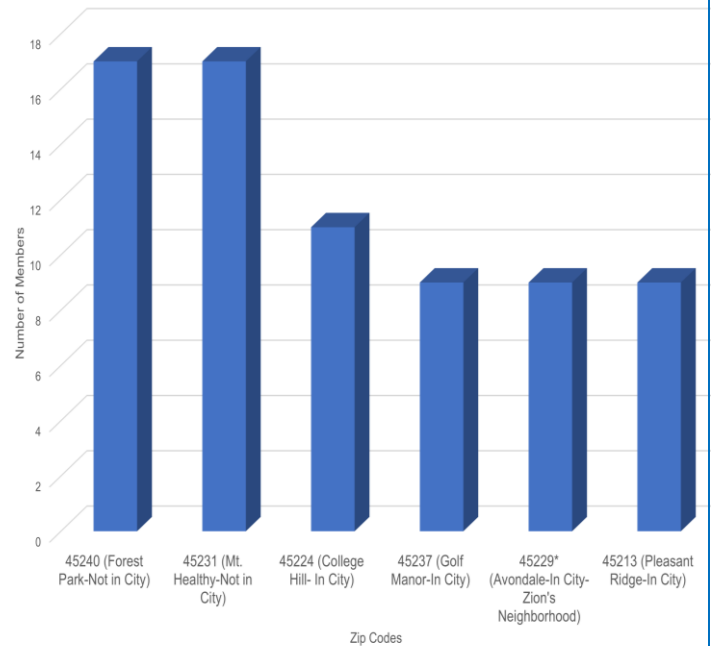
	Avondale	City of Cincinnati	Greater Cincinnati Area
Percent Black	68	41	12
Median Household Income	\$28,454	\$42,633	\$66,435
Percent in Poverty	38	24	12
Percent of Population 18-64	58	66	61
HS Completion Percent (Adults over 25)	83	88	92
Percent of Units Occupied by Renters	68	61	33
Percent married	26	32	51

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2020). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN Metro Area <<http://censusreporter.org/profiles/31000US17140-cincinnati-oh-ky-in-metro-area/>>

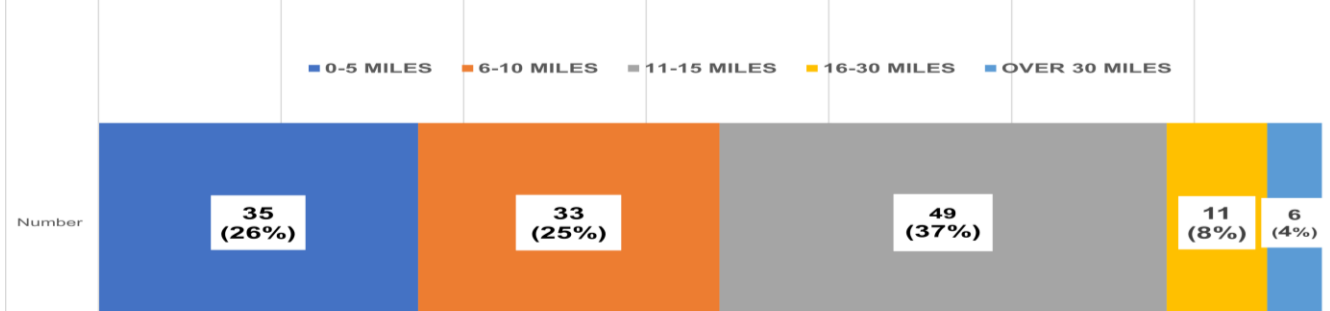
Membership by Residence in the Greater Cincinnati Area (GC)



ZIP CODES WITH HIGHEST NUMBERS OF MEMBERS



How Far From the Church Do the Members Live?



Church Budget

The current church budget will be available during the interviews.

Compensation

The terms and level of compensation are negotiable and will be commensurate with experience, education, and ability.

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

Mrs. Doris Jackson
Pastoral Search Committee Co-Chair
Member-at-Large

Mr. Derrick Tillery
Pastoral Search Committee Co-Chair
Deacon Board, Chairman

Mrs. Angela Campbell-Harris
Pastoral Search Committee Secretary
Trustee Board, Secretary

Minister Cheryl Grant
Pastoral Search Committee Chaplin
Member-at-Large

Mr. Anthony McMiller
Deacon Board

Ms. Millicent Mickle
Member-at-Large

Mr. Emory Ogletree
Trustee Board, Assistant Treasurer

Dr. Babette Plummer-Craig
Trustee Board, Vice-Chairperson

Mr. Robert Todd Stewart
Deacon Board

*To contact the
Pastoral Search
Committee:*

Email: Zbcsearchcom@fuse.net

Mail: Zion Baptist Church
c/o Deacon Derrick Tillery/Mrs. Doris Jackson, Co-chairs
PO Box 29071
Cincinnati, OH 45229



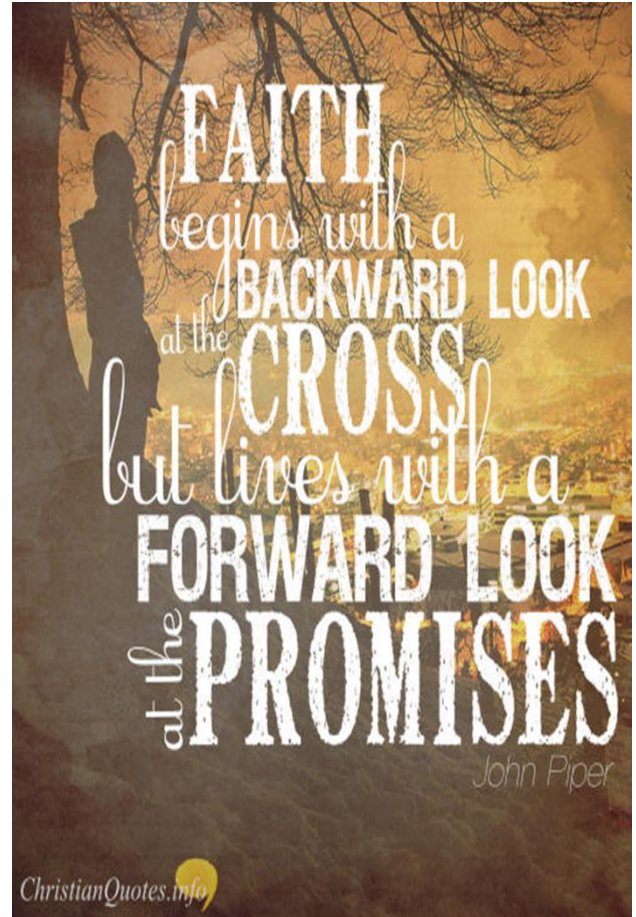
Reverend Mark Click, Executive Minister
American Baptist Churches of Ohio
4215 Ryan Court

Liberty Township, Ohio 45011

Cell Phone: 513.773.8779

Email: markclick@zoomtown.com

We thank Reverend Click for his assistance during this search process.



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