



Proclamation

WHEREAS, the year 2022 marks the 155th anniversary of the establishment of the Historic Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church in Ocala, Florida; and

WHEREAS, in 1867 was a jubilant year when the sweetness of Emancipation filled the air with excitement and hope. Former slaves of the First Baptist Church felt that the time had come for them to establish a place of worship where as Christians they could sing, give praise, pray and worship with the fullness of their spirit, unrestricted by racial barriers; and

WHEREAS, in May 1867, Reverend Samuel Small and ninety members withdrew from the First Baptist Church and organized a church that they named “Mount Moriah Baptist Church”; the former slaves constructed the church of 30’ x 50’ logs near the present site of Firestone Tire Company on South Pine Avenue; and

WHEREAS, Mt. Moriah is referred to as “*The Mother Church*” because it is the first black church established in the City of Ocala and because several Baptist churches emerged from Mt. Moriah throughout the city and county, namely, Shady Grove Baptist, Calvary Baptist, Santos, St. Mary’s Baptist, Silver Spring, Covenant Baptist and Hopewell Baptist; and

WHEREAS, in 1911 the membership purchased property closer to the downtown Ocala area (55 SW 3rd Avenue) where it constructed a sanctuary and fellowship facility, and, with expansions and remodels, it remains an impressive presence in our downtown area; and

WHEREAS, the Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church has a well-known history of excellent pastors, leaders and congregants who have been at the forefront of our community’s spiritual, academic, cultural, social, service, civil rights, and political advancement; and

WHEREAS, On August 25, 2019, Dr. Jerry B. Alexander became the pastor elect. He preached his first sermon on September 1, 2019 as the 14th pastor, and on November 17th, 2019, Dr. Jerry B. Alexander was officially installed as pastor; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church family will launch its 155th Anniversary celebrations on May 15, 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala, Florida, do hereby proclaim May 15, 2022 as the kickoff date for

THE 155th ANNIVERSARY OF MOUNT MORIAH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

in the City of Ocala and I urge all citizens to join with me in paying tribute to this church.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Ocala, Florida, to be affixed this 11th day of April 2022.



Kent Guinn, Mayor
City of Ocala