

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

MISSIONARY SOCIETY PRESIDENTS

Mrs. Emma Starkett (1899)
 Mrs. Mayme Hyde
 Mrs. Laura Jones
 Mrs. Emma Scott
 Mrs. Pinkie Bryant
 Mrs. Rowena Yates (1937-1959)
 Mrs. Minnie R. Davis
 Mrs. Doreatha Foster
 Mrs. Lois Williams
 Mrs. Alice Jones (1970)
 Mrs. Arlen Clay (1975)
 Mrs. Alice Jones (1980)
 Mrs. Thelma Harston (1986)
 Mrs. Vina Mae Carroll (1991)
 Mrs. Mary A. Easley (1996)
 Mrs. Argirtha Sivels (2001)
 Mrs. Betty Booker (2002)
 Mrs. Rosetta Wilkins (2006)

Rev. Harry W. Knight, Friendship's first pastor, organized the Missionary Society in 1899. **Mrs. Emma Starkett** served as the first president. The next presidents included **Mrs. Mayme Hyde, Mrs. Laura Jones, Mrs. Emma Scott and Mrs. Pinkie Bryant**. In 1937, **Mrs. Rowena Yates** was elected to serve as president. She served for 22 years under four pastors. Her tenure ended under the leadership of the Rev. Shelvin J. Hall.

During Mrs. Yates' administration, the Young Women's Auxiliary, the Young Matrons Auxiliary and the three Red Circle Groups: Caravans, Tabs and Trail Explorers were organized. Our young people participated in Salem District Association and the Baptist General State Convention of Illinois.

Mrs. Minnie R. Davis became the next president. Under the administration of Mrs. Davis, Missionary Society Number two was organized. She was instrumental in the organization of the Willing Workers Circle with Mrs. Isabel Armstead as chairperson, the Loyal Workers with Mrs. Artelia Holloway as chairperson, and

the Ruth Circle with Mrs. Doreatha Foster as chairperson. During this time, Friendship moved from 1958 West Washington Blvd. to 3411 West Douglas Blvd.

Mrs. Doreatha Foster became the next president and she served for only 2 ½ years. By this time the church, under the leadership of Pastor Hall, instituted a policy that an auxiliary officer's term would be limited to five years. Mrs. Lois Williams, who had been vice president, served the remainder of Mrs. Foster's five-year term. Under Mrs. Williams' leadership, Missionary Society Number Two became the Dorcas Circle with Mrs. Edna E. Williams serving as chairperson.

Mrs. Alice Jones became president in 1970, with Mrs. Sarah Clark as vice president. Under Mrs. Jones the Loyal Workers merged with the Willing Workers. In 1972, Mrs. Jones began the Mission Workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to teach missionary and benevolent works, and to educate as to their differences.

Mrs. Arlen Clay became president in 1975 with Mrs. Althia Gray as vice president. Under Mrs. Clay "The Revolutionary Faith," a play written by Mrs. Minnie R. Davis was performed. The Friendship Missionaries went out into the community and knocked on 84 doors. As a result, two souls accepted our Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. A picture of each president, beginning in 1937 was framed and hung in the Missionary Room.

Mrs. Alice Jones became president again in 1980, with Mrs. Thelma Harston as vice president. The Missionary Workshop was reactivated. Friendship moved into its new African-Hut styled building in the spring of 1983. During the same spring, the Honorable Harold Washington was elected the first black Mayor of the City of Chicago Pastor Hall was elected president of the Baptist General State Convention of Illinois.

Mrs. Thelma Harston became president in 1986 with Mrs. Vina Mae Carroll as first vice president and Mrs. Olivia Peek as second vice president. The workshop was continued and a Mission Service Center was organized to provide home confined cancer patients with such things as bed pans, tote bags, hospital walkers and wheel chairs. A Hymnal Tea was also give under Mrs. Harston's administration. Mrs. Peek was unable to complete her term of office due to her death.

Mrs. Vina Mae Carroll became president in 1991, with Mrs. Charlotte Thames as vice president. Under Mrs. Carroll, the membership participation increased. The circles were put in charge of organizing the Missionary Workshop and the Annual Day Services. The Missionary Workshop date changed from the second Saturday in January to the Saturday before the Missionary Annual. Delegates were sent to Salem Baptist District Association and Baptist General State Convention Spring and Fall Board Meetings.

Mrs. Mary A. Easley became president in 1996, with Mrs. Josephine Morgan-Brown as vice president. The Mission Service Center was reactivated under Mrs. Argirtha Sivels, chairperson of the Ruth Circle. The special program in September was changed to a "Sit-In." Friendship's Missionaries were not only active, but well represented in both the Salem Baptist District Association and the Baptist General State Convention. Friendship won first place in the Baptist General Women's Auxiliary "Parade of Hats" and got special recognition in other district and state events, such as Salem Baptist District Association Annual Prayer Breakfast, and its Women's Auxiliary Annual President's Day. Friendship was also represented at the Missionary Workshop Annual Salem Baptist District Women's Auxiliary Retreat and the "Christian Women Traveling to Glory by Ship" Mission Seminar.

Mrs. Argirtha Sivels became president in 2001, and with Mrs. Betty Book as vice president. Vowing to continue the legacy of the Missionary Society, Mrs. Sivels continued to support Salem District and the Baptist General State Convention and her church by stressing attendance and participation in various meetings, programs and workshops. It was her desire that the Missionary Society would be a leader in the area of evangelism and that through their efforts more souls would be brought to Christ. Early in her administration, Mrs. Sivels became ill and was called from labor to rewards. The remainder of her term was filled by Betty Booker, vice president.

Having fulfilled the term of Mrs. Sivels, **Mrs. Betty Booker** was elected president of the Missionary Society in 2002. As president, she became instrumental in maintaining the integrity of the Missionary Society and supporting the activities of the church, district and convention. Through her leadership, the Missionary Society experienced growth spiritually, numerically and financially. The Missionary Society continued to sponsor the Mission Workshop. Mrs. Booker represented Friendship as a speaker for workshops sponsored by the Baptist General State Convention Women's Auxiliary. In April 2004, first vice president Rosetta Wilkins represented Friendship's Missionary Society as a speaker for the Baptist General State Convention Women's Auxiliary Annual Retreat.

Mrs. Rosetta Wilkins was elected president in 2006. She instituted several new ministries and resurrected some that had been inactive: The Good News Ministry, to spread the gospel; caring for those in Nursing Homes Ministry, a ministry to keep in touch with sick and shut-in members and the Prison Ministry to encourage those who are incarcerated. Mrs. Wilkins stated that the Missionary Society would be a "Mission of action."