

# IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF EBENEZER WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH

In the year 1925, Rev. J.R. Evans who was at the time a local preacher in St. Paul AME Church, Delray Beach, Florida, under the pastorship of Rev. J.E. Harris, was invited to preach at Trinity WM Church, Miami, Florida, by their Pastor Rev. Alexander Allen. It was during this visit that Rev. Evans received the revelation to serve in the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Rev. Evans and his followers searched the City of Delray Beach for a place of worship and was offered by Bro. Dave Watkins the Worthy Chief of the Good Samaritans building, which was located between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue on Atlantic Avenue. They chose the name EBENEZER WESLEYAN METHODIST. Ebenezer means, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." (1 Samuel 7: 12).

Along with Rev. Evans and his wife, Estelle, pioneer members included Mr. T.B. Delancey, Mr. and Mrs. S.C. Rolle, Mrs. Eliza Collier, Mr. Thomas Pratt, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Thompson, Mrs. Edith Butler, Mr. Wilmore Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. David Sims, and Mr. and Mrs. Howard Bethel. Worth noting, in 1928 Mr. Robert Rolle and Sis. Meria Dean became affiliated with the church, and in 1931 Mrs. Tycena Moss joined.

A church was erected on the west side of the SW 6th Avenue and 2nd Street intersection in 1926 but was damaged in the same year by the 1926 Storm. A new structure was built on the present site but that again was damaged by the 1928 Storm. Another structure was constructed in 1929, which remained until it was torn down in 1966 and replaced by the current edifice; this was done under the leadership of Rev. E.E. Newbold.

Other pastors that served Ebenezer included **Rev. Howard Demeritte**, 1950 to 1953; **Rev. Chester Solomon**, 1984 to 1985; and **Bishop R.L. Howard**, 1985 to 2014. Under Bishop Howard church membership increased and additional property was purchased. Bishop Howard has always stated, "We must work while it is day, for night cometh, when no man can work." **Rev. E.J. Funches** served from February 2015 to October 2018, when he was called home to be with the Lord. Rev. Funches stated goals were to "Save souls for Christ," and to instill in the church family the importance of working together in love. **Bishop Michael Brennen** currently serves as Senior Pastor. We at Ebenezer have "Come this far by faith," and we will continue to stand up for Jesus, as we go forth in the Name of the Lord.

On behalf of the City of Delray Beach City Commission, we are honored to recognize the 100-year anniversary and dedicated community service of the Ebenezer Wesleyan Methodist Church.

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Thomas F. Carney, Jr.

Mayor

*Recognized this 12th day of August 2025*