

BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS WHEN BROTHERS DWELL IN



PSALM 133:1

A Move Ordained by God

A Special Edition Newsletter by Mt. Oni Baptist Church

Connecting Membership | November 2015

What do you get after months of searching for a Pastor—receiving visiting candidates, search committee meetings, evaluation forms, and much corporate prayer? You get a minister ordained by God.

Mt. Oni proudly welcomes Pastor Elect Marvin Gilliam II and First Lady Jennifer Gilliam. Pastor Elect Gilliam will serve as the eighth Pastor of Mt. Oni.

Although the title is still very fresh, he is constantly planning and pruning God's people for His word and for unity.



Mt. Oni meet Pastor Elect Marvin Gilliam III

To the members and friends of Mount Oni Baptist Church:

Greetings in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! It is with great joy that I greet you as the eighth pastor of Mount Oni Baptist Church.

Jennifer, Marvin, III and I are so excited to be a part of this church family and are grateful for the awesome way that you all have embraced us. Know that we are always praying for this church - that God would bind our spirits together in love and unify us for the work ahead. We look forward to partnering with you all in ministry and growing together in grace.

As we begin our journey together as Pastor and People, I am grateful to God for the work of those who have faithfully served over the 145 year history of our church. From esteemed pastors to passionate parishioners, the Mount Oni Church has shined as a beacon of light in Caroline County. In a time when churches are closing their doors, this church has been kept by the grace of God with a purpose of serving this community and compelling people to Christ. I celebrate the legacy of this church and am humbled to have the opportunity to lead the way into the future.

God's word to the prophet as recorded in Isaiah 43:18-19 says, "Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new. It's bursting out! Don't you see it?" (The Message Translation) As we pause to reflect on the church's history, there have been both good and trying times. Both have come together to shape this community of faith, yet there is still more that the Lord desires to do in this season of ministry. As the aforementioned text challenges us, let us anticipate and celebrate in advance that which God is preparing us to experience. We must be intentional about remaining focused on the move of God in our present and promise of things to come. As the Psalmist states, we should keep our eyes lifted toward the hills from which comes our help.

When I look around our church, I see the great potential for what God can do in us and through us. Much of what the Lord has lead me to share through preaching, teaching, and conversation has been geared toward creating a Christ-centered community of believers that are unified in love and serving in excellence.

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Realizing this vision for Mount Oni will require each of us to reaffirm our commitment to worship, discipleship, fellowship, outreach, and generosity. There is much work that needs to be done and every member of our church plays a unique role in building a church that honors God and is relevant for 21st century ministry. I am counting on your partnership in becoming the people and the church that God would have us to be.

I challenge the Mount Oni church family to commit to the work of this ministry and reach out to those who have drifted from the fold. Share your excitement, not just about the new pastor, but about the new thing that God is doing. It is a new season at Mount Oni Baptist Church and as I have shared, I believe that God is up to something!

We are Mount Oni Baptist Church: Centered in Christ, Unified in Love, Serving in Excellence.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Marvin L. Gilliam, Jr.
Pastor-Elect

Rev. Marvin L. Gilliam, Jr. is a native of Chesterfield County, Virginia. He was baptized at an early age at the Union Branch Baptist Church in Chesterfield, VA, where he was licensed to preach the Gospel in June, 2003. While at Union Branch, Rev. Gilliam served in various ministries, culminating in 3 years of service as Youth Minister. Additionally, he served for 3 years as the Children and Youth Minister at the Historic Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia, where he was ordained in May, 2014. Rev. Gilliam is currently the Pastor-Elect of the Mount Oni Baptist Church in Ruther Glen, VA.

Rev. Gilliam was educated in the Chesterfield County School System. He continued his education at Virginia State University, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Vocal Music. Additionally, Rev. Gilliam holds a Master of Divinity degree from the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union. He is currently employed as the Choral Director at George Wythe High School of the Arts in Richmond, Virginia. He also serves on the General Board and Youth Advisory Team of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia. Rev. Gilliam is married to the former Jennifer Tate; they currently reside in Petersburg, Virginia and have one son, Marvin, III.

Rev. Gilliam seeks to serve as a living epistle of God's grace, mercy, and favor. His guiding scripture, Romans 8:28, states "All things work together for the good of those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose." With a goal of empowering all he encounters, he desires to be all that the Lord has called him to be, using his gifts and experiences to show a dark world the light and love of Jesus Christ.