

*Riceville* History  
IS  
**Black** History



**The Church That  
Loves, Learns & Prays  
SINCE 1889  
136 YEARS STRONG  
Pastor Thomas T. Davis**

# Riceville Our History

From a humble brush arbor on Honeywell Road to a thriving two-campus ministry on South Gessner, Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church has stood as a pillar of faith, perseverance, and community for more than 136 years. Each generation has built upon the vision of the eight founding believers, keeping worship and service alive for Riceville and beyond.

## **1889 – The Beginning**



On March 11, 1889, the church was organized in a brush arbor by Rev. John L. Lilly with eight founding members: Isaiah Jackson, Sophia Edwards, Mary Rice, Simmom McCode, Susie Marshall, Vinia Marshall, Rocksanna Rice, and Diana Jackson. Land was donated later that year behind Keegan's Bayou (9945 Honeywell Road), and Rev. Lilly served faithfully for 20 years. He was succeeded by Rev. I. Griffin, who pastored for 16 years.

## **1916 – Rebuilding After the Storm**

A devastating storm destroyed the church in 1916. Under Rev. Griffin's leadership, the congregation rebuilt a larger structure. During this era, several pastors served faithfully. Under Rev. T. H. Shermann, twelve feet were added to the church and the Christian Union was established.



## **1942 – Growth and Expansion**

Rev. Travis Spiller expanded services from twice monthly to every Sunday. In 1944, Rev. C. H. Mitchell oversaw construction of a new building, which was paid off by 1947. A two-story addition later housed classrooms and a cafeteria. Rev. C. L. Miller served faithfully for 14 years until 1967.

# Riceville

## Our History Cont.

**1968**

### **Fire and Faith**

On July 4, 1968, the church was destroyed by fire. Only a Holy Bible was found in the ruins. Services were temporarily held on Riceville School Road (now the North Campus). Under Rev. Joe D. Johnson's leadership, a new church opened in May 1971 and was paid off by 1974. Fellowship halls were added, land was purchased, and the sanctuary expanded over the years.

**1986–2002**

### **Vision on South Gessner**

In 1986, Riceville purchased 10 acres on South Gessner, followed by additional acreage in 1994. Construction of the 22,000-square-foot South Campus was completed on December 8, 2002. The first service was held December 22, 2002. A Mortgage Burning Ceremony in 2011 marked the church becoming debt free



**2009–Present**

### **Continuing the Legacy**

Rev. Joe D. Johnson retired in 2009 after 42 years of leadership. Rev. Terry E. Mackey served from 2010 to 2018, followed by Rev. Dr. Calvin J. McFadden, Sr. (2020–2022). In November 2023, Rev. Thomas T. Davis, Jr. was called as Senior Pastor, continuing Riceville's legacy of strong spiritual leadership.

# What is next for *Riceville*

## Our Vision for the Future

### **Building for the Future:** Our Multipurpose Center

At Riceville, we believe this is more than just a building project—it's an investment in our people, our mission, and our future. The new Multipurpose Center is designed to serve our congregation, empower our youth, and extend our reach into the community.

### **This space will:**

#### **Empower Youth:**

Provide flexible areas for Youth Church, Sunday School, recreation, and a proposed gymnasium that encourages healthy fellowship.

#### **Foster Fellowship:**

Offer a place where we can gather, share meals, and grow stronger together as one family.

Future site of the  
**RICEVILLE CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
*"Making An Impact, Inspiring Generations"*

**FAITH IN ACTION**  
**Capital Campaign**  
**\$900,000+**  
Give or Pledge Today  
°Your generosity helps bring this vision to life  
°Every pledge counts, no matter the amount  
[www.ricevillechurch.org](http://www.ricevillechurch.org)

We are building on the good Stewards who have already made an Impact

Make your FAITH IN ACTION pledge Today!

**RICEVILLE MOUNT OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
*"The church that loves, learns, and prays"*  
Rev. Thomas T. Davis, Jr., - Senior Pastor

## A Space With Purpose

**Maximize Every Space:** With modular rooms designed for worship, teaching, meetings, and events, no square foot will sit idle.

**Engage the Community:** Host community-approved events—birthdays, weddings, receptions, conferences, and more—creating new opportunities for outreach and sustainable revenue.

It's more than classrooms. It's more than walls. It's a hub of ministry, fellowship, and service—built to meet spiritual, social, and community needs while keeping Christ at the center.

# Riceville

Help us build the  
Christian Development Center!!



“There is no limit  
to what you can  
give and no gift is  
too small”





**Make your Faith in  
Action Pledge Today!**



# Riceville Quiz

1. In what year was Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church organized?

- A. 1875
- B. 1889
- C. 1902
- D. 1916

2. Where was Riceville first organized?

- A. A schoolhouse
- B. A storefront
- C. A brush arbor
- D. A tent revival

3. How many founding members started Riceville?

- A. 5
- B. 8
- C. 12
- D. 20

4. What major event destroyed the church in 1916?

- A. Fire
- B. Flood
- C. Storm
- D. Relocation

5. What was found in the ruins after the 1968 fire?

- A. A cross
- B. Church records
- C. A Holy Bible
- D. The church bell

Bonus:

Name at least 3 pastors who have served Riceville over the years.



## Answer Key!

- 1. In what year was Riceville Mount Olive Baptist Church organized?  
B. 1889
- 2. Where was Riceville first organized?  
C. A brush arbor
- 3. How many founding members started Riceville?  
B. 8
- 4. What major event destroyed the church in 1916?  
C. Storm
- 5. What was found in the ruins after the 1968 fire?  
C. A Holy Bible



# Join the Campaign Today!!

## FAITH IN ACTION Capital Campaign

Thank you for your generous support of the Impact Capital Campaign.  
Your giving laid the foundation for what we are building today.  
Now, we invite you to join us in completing the vision through the  
Faith In Action Capital Campaign.

### Recommended Levels of Giving

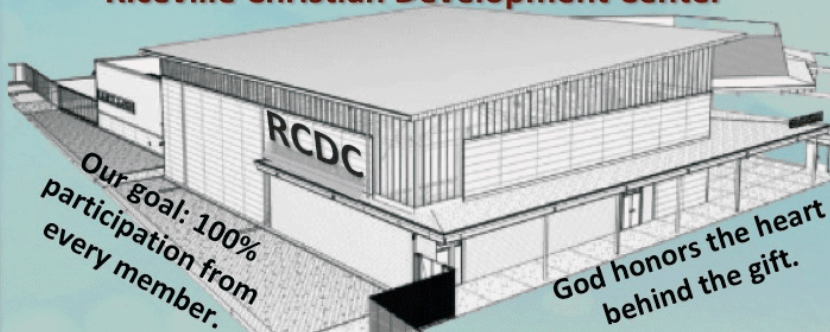
- Foundations of Faith**  
\$5,000<sup>+</sup> x 50 = \$250,000
  - Pillars of Promise**  
\$4,000<sup>+</sup> x 50 = \$200,000
  - Walls of Worship**  
\$3,000<sup>+</sup> x 50 = \$150,000
  - Halls of Hope**  
\$2,000<sup>+</sup> x 100 = \$200,000
  - Doors of Dedication**  
\$1,000<sup>+</sup> x 100 = \$100,000
  - Lights of Love**  
up to \$999
- \$900,000<sup>+</sup>**

### "Equal Sacrifice, Not Equal Giving"

"There is no limit  
to what you can give,  
and no gift is too small."

"Every member needed.  
Every pledge matters.  
Every gift counts."

### Help us build the Riceville Christian Development Center



Join the Campaign Today!!!



"Making an  
Impact, Inspiring  
Generations"