

The Proclaiming Messenger

The Occasion

Bishop Oscar Benton, Jr., shepherd of this flock, First Lady Diane Benton, visiting clergy, and all who love the Lord, Who is the Good Shepherd:

We have come to celebrate the service given by our shepherd, who has the heartbeat of the Good Shepherd. The word, **celebrate**, is a verb. It means *to mark as an anniversary* or as *a festivity*. The word, shepherd, is a noun. It means *one who tends sheep*.

Since coming to us 29 years ago, our pastor has consistently proclaimed the **Kingdom Message**. To **proclaim** means **to officially and publicly announce**. Our pastor proclaims Jesus Christ died for our sins, was resurrected from the dead and is alive forever more, and is our soon coming King.

A praying man with a heart for missions, our pastor's proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ on foreign fields in far away places such as Panama and India, has resulted in his elevation to the office of Bishop in the Church of God in Christ. He now serves as Prelate of the Sixth Jurisdiction of India in the Church of God in Christ. This new responsibility, in addition to serving as our local pastor, has caused a shift in Jurisdiction affiliation and responsibilities. But it has not diminished his faithfulness in proclaiming the Kingdom Message at home and abroad.

The message that "At the Cross the weak become strong, obstacles are overcome, Satan is defeated and God's promises are made sure" is what he preaches. He also states in the Cross, there is healing for the hurt, help for the helpless, and salvation for the sinful.

Our pastor's elevation in the Church of God in Christ from pastor to bishop, has been marvelous. Yet he remains faithful to his duties as our pastor.

We hope this celebration today, October 27, 2024, inspires you to be faithful to God's call on your life. BUT today we celebrate, Oscar, Oscar Benton, pastor of Monroe Street. Dot, dot, dot.

By Stella Matthews Pete