



## **The Reverend Dr. Margaret J. Mitchell**

Church has always been a part of my life from as long as I can remember. My parents, the late Deacon Frank Mitchell, Jr. & Deaconess Sarah O. Mitchell were active members of the church and so church attendance was not an option. I loved Sunday School, BTU, Vacation Bible School and just church in general. I gave my life to the Lord Jesus at 12 years of age and was baptized by the Reverend Dr. Odie M. Hoover whom I have always affectionately called "Big Daddy".

Many people have been instrumental in my call into the ministry. My mother has always told me that God had a special plan for my life and those words I simply hide in my heart. Rev. Hoover began putting me in the National Baptist Convention oratorical contest long before I even knew or thought of standing before an audience. Rev. Hoover let me know that God had a plan for my life and to keep listening to God. It was also Olivet and Rev. Hoover who sent me off to college. The Olivet Brotherhood Club awarded me a 4-year partial scholarship to Baldwin-Wallace College where I majored in education thinking that God wanted me to teach his children so I proceeded to become an employee of the Cleveland Municipal School District. I faithfully taught and loved working with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and my final years with kindergarten students. However, God sent men and women of God into my life who fed my Spirit and encouraged me in the things of God. This list included Bishop Charles Watkins of Pentecostal Church of Christ, Rev. Solomon Sutton of Sardis Baptist Church, Rev. Dr. Thomas Chapman of Avon Ave. Baptist Church, Pastor Roberta Vines of Confirmed Faith Center, Rev. James L. Bevel, aide to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rev. A.E. Campbell of Temple Baptist. Each of these pastors took me under their wing because they said the Lord said so and I thank them. It was because of them that I entered the McCreary Center for African American Religious Studies and then Ashland Theological Seminary.

I was a Sunday School teacher and Bible teacher before Rev. Dr. Moss came but after he came he moved me into becoming the teacher for Olivet's Teacher Council and an instructor in our Spring and Fall Academies. I love teaching the people of God even more than teaching children the three R's. I acknowledged my call to ministry to Rev. Moss and became Olivet's first female to be licensed (1988) into the preaching ministry. I am forever grateful to Rev. Moss for being willing to go against the grain and become the first pastor in a major and historical Black church in Cleveland, Ohio to open the pulpit to women. I thank God for touching his heart and I thank God for now calling me to the ordained ministry in 1995. I love teaching the Word of God to His people. I see preaching time as a teaching time also where we can encourage, edify and equip God's people just without dialogue! I am called to serve this present age and I am open to the voice of God as to what that means. It is my joy to serve my God, my church and my pastor.