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**Greater St. John AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL Church**

**6201 S.Throop Street**

**Chicago, IL 60636**

**MATTIE REEVES MISSIONARY SOCIETY**

**Founded 1933**

**HISTORY**

Greater St. John Missionary Society was organized in 1933 under the leadership of First Lady, Mrs. Mattie Reeves and pastorship of Rev. Timothy Reeves. Because the church was in financial difficulty, the membership pulled together to reform the church. Consequently, the Missionary Society failed to exist as an organization, but kept together to help in the financial aspect of the church. In 1940, a group of women of the church assembled again to reorganize and unify the society. This group of women consisted of Bessie A. Payne, Laura Vicks, Janie Meredith, Mattie Minor and Nancy Reed who served as the 1st president. They decided to name the society Mattie Reeves Missionary Society in honor of our 21st Minister’s wife, Mattie Reeves, who served our congregation along with her husband, Pastor Timothy Reeves from 1933 to 1935. The year 1940 was given as the date of initial organizing.

Mrs. Nancy Reed served as president from 1940-1949. The other missionaries were Laura Vicks, Vice-President, Resale Payne, Secretary; Janie Meredith, Treasurer; Mattie Minor, Chaplain; Laura Vicks, Membership. The society has existed and functioned through decades of efforts and Christian commitment of its leadership and membership.

The Society has gone through many changes and growth spiritually and economically aligning itself within the Area, Conference Branch, District and Connectionally cooperating in all efforts that have been asked and expected of us. The Society has a working YPD Department involving the youth in all programs of which Sister Bettye Ford was the first Director. The WMS is one of the largest visible organizations of our church taking part in all functions- spiritual and financial. When there’s no one to call on, we are there!

During the many decades, the Presidential Leadership of the WMS has been led by: Nancy Reed, Bessie Payne, Janie Meredith, Lillian McWhorter, Carrie Owens, Exie Reed, Alberta Readye, Mildred B. Hays, Dorothy Foley, Artishia Irvin, Irma Routen, Helen Jackson, Earlean Hayes, Mildred B. Hays (Interim President) Opal Ervin, who extended the society to a unit, appointing Deborah Manning as Unit Chairperson, and Mary Jones.

Deborah L. Manning, President

Rev. K. Andre Brooks, Pastor

Revised: February 2017

Reviewed: MEC, September 2018