

Pacific Mount Olive Chronology of Events

Pacific Mount Olive is one of the landmark COGIC churches in Los Angeles, CA. Bishop E. B. Stewart was consecrated bishop over Northern California by Bishop C. H. Mason. Bishop Stewart pastored approximately forty years, his successor pastored for thirty years.

At the request of the membership, Bishop Blake (then jurisdictional bishop) appointed a new pastor. After approximately eight years, it was discovered this person was placing church property into a personal, privately held corporation. We appealed to Bishop Blake who requested he leave the pastorate of Pacific Mt. Olive, which he did.

The next pastor Bishop Blake appointed around 2008 was son-in-law of Supervisor Francis Harris, of Pasadena, CA. shortly thereafter Bishop Blake became the Presiding Bishop and Bishop Joe L. Ealy became the jurisdictional bishop. In a very short time because of mistreatment of some of the elderly members became a source of friction, he also began to divert rental income to a newly opened account without the knowledge of the church financial officers for personal gain. In addition, other provisions of the COGIC constitution were violated. After notifying Bishop Ealy in writing, no action was taken to correct these violations. The members filed a lawsuit in Superior Court, the pastor subsequently resigned in May 2011.

Bishop Ealy attempted to pressure the church to drop the lawsuit after a period of time, in a letter dated July 17, 2012 he dismissed us from his jurisdiction¹ and said,

“Your affiliation has been terminated effective immediately. Please feel free to seek affiliation with another jurisdiction of the Church Of God In Christ where you are willing to respect that jurisdiction and its leadership. Within the next thirty (30) days, I will await notification from you of any other jurisdiction of the Church Of God In Christ to which you wish to move your affiliation. I will communicate with the Prelate of such other jurisdiction regarding this matter, and we wish Mount Olive well in its new relationship.”

This was another violation of the constitution; Article VIII, Section A. We sent letters via certified mail to Bishop Lyles and the Judiciary Board and received no response.

After being dismissed by Bishop Ealy, ignored by the General Secretary, the members invited several speakers to preach and they began their own Pastoral search. On October 27, 2013 the members chose Elder Milton L. Joyner and notified him in a letter dated November 3, 2013.

The current controversy and lawsuits began in October 2013. Here is the chronology of events;

1. **July 17, 2012**—Bishop Ealy terminates Pacific Mount Olives affiliation with the First Jurisdiction.
2. 2013 Pastoral Search begins

¹ Bishop Ealy’s termination letter to PMO

3. **October 27, 2013**—A meeting duly announced four times per church bylaws was held by the members of Pacific Mt. Olive.
 - a. Members elect Elder Milton L. Joyner as interim Pastor
 - b. Members by vote remove three Trustee Board Members for cause per local church bylaws.
4. **October 28, 2013**—Letters sent to Trustee Board members who were removed; Edna Smith, Barbara Stewart, Dora Vernelle Ballard.
5. **October 31, 2013**—Request to join Metropolitan Jurisdiction made the trustees voted out of office four days after removal and three days after notification letter with Dora V. Ballard alleging she is still the Chairperson.
 - Dora V. Ballard (removed from office 10-27-2013)
 - Alton Ballard (Spouse)
 - Barbara Stewart (removed from office 10-27-2013)
 - Edna Smith (removed from office 10-27-2013)
 - Wanda Williams
6. **November 3, 2013**—Letter notifying Elder Joyner of members selection
7. **November 23, 2013**—Supt. Milton L. Joyner notifies Bishop Hackworth he and his church Greater Holiness Church Of God In Christ are, *“no longer affiliated with the Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, Southern California.”*
8. **December 1, 2013** —The Greater Holiness Church merged with Pacific Mt. Olive
9. **January 1, 2014**—Bishop Hackworth sends Supt. Joyner a letter which states; *“You are hereby notified that effective immediately, you are no longer a member of Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Southern California.”*
10. **January 2014** — Pastor Joyner with Pacific Mount Olive approval begins to fellowship with Bishop Hillrie Murphy and the California Southwest Jurisdiction and pays his National report through California Southwest. Bishop Murphy duly appoints Supt. Milton Joyner as Pastor of Pacific Mount Olive Church of God in Christ in Los Angeles, CA
11. **January 28, 2014** —Bishop Blake sends a letter which says *“...as the Presiding Bishop of the Church of god in Christ, I am assigning Mount Olive to the Metropolitan Jurisdiction. This assignment is effective immediately.”*² This is a grab for authority, an abuse of power not given by the COGIC Constitution, or any other written document.

12. **June 16, 2014** —after six months of fellowshiping with California Southwest, Pacific Mount Olive sends a letter to Bishop Murphy stating the members had voted and agreed to join California Southwest Jurisdiction.
13. **June 22, 2014** — Bishop Murphy sends a letter of acknowledgment of Pacific Mount Olives acceptance into California Southwest.
14. **August 3, 2014** —Bishop Blake sends another letter telling Bishop Hackworth of his authority over Pacific Mount Olive.
15. **August 20, 2014** — A “Notice of Charges/Trial” addressed to “Dear Pastor/Elder” stating “...*This letter is to inform you that charges have been brought against a pastor of MEJ.*” The person being charged was not identified. In this letter, a trial was set for September 15, 2014.
16. **September 15, 2014** —Metropolitan Jurisdiction Pastors and Elders Council conducts a ***trial***. Pastor Joyner, who is not part of the Metropolitan Jurisdiction is not notified), finds Pastor Milton Joyner guilty of all counts. On September 17, 2014 they send a letter to Bishop Lyles (not Pastor Joyner) notifying him of the decision and punishment. [How can you try people who are not part of your Jurisdiction?]
17. **October 3, 2014** — Superior Court Judge signs a restraining order protecting Pastor Joyner from Bishop Hackworth for three years. He and his agents have attempted to illegally possess our church about ten (10) different times by removing or changing door locks and even welding one entrance. On each of these occasions possession of the property was returned to us by the LAPD.
18. **October 31, 2014** —Bishop Hackworth and the Metropolitan Jurisdiction file a lawsuit against Pastor Joyner and the current members of the Board of Trustee, they are claiming ownership of Pacific Mount Olive
19. **November 7, 2014** — Pastor Joyner indirectly receives a copy of the November 17 letter
20. **January 4, 2015** — in a letter dated January 4, 2015 a grievance against the Chairman and Council of SCMEJ is filed with the General Council of Pastors and Elders alleging misconduct requesting the decision against Pastor Joyner be revoked.
21. **March 3, 2015** —Bishop J.H. Lyles sends Pastor Joyner a letter stating his credentials are suspended for five years because of the SCMEJ Council’s verdict.
22. **March 23, 2015** —General Council of Pastors and Elders issues a stay of execution
23. **April 13, 2015** —General Council overturns SCMEJ P and E Council verdict and punishment. The

- a. Bishop Hackworth and SCMEJ have no standing; as of January 1, 2014 Pastor Joyner was not part of SCMEJ
 - b. All of the following penalties are **overturned**;
 - Five year loss of credentials
 - Removal from Pacific Mount Olive properties
 - Original Trustee Board restored
 - All PMO finances received since December 2013 be replaced
24. **April 21, 2015** — a notification letter dated April 21, 2015 issued of the General Council's order.
 25. **July 20, 2015** —in the civil lawsuit brought against PMO, Judge Fredrick Schaller throw out Bishop Hackworth and SCMEJ Motion for Summary Adjudication.
 26. **August 28, 2015** —Judge Steven J. Kleifield sustained a demurrer filed for Pastor Joyner and Pacific Mount Olive citing Bishop Hackworth **had not** established standing.
 27. **September 15, 2015** —Ignoring the General Council's Order, Bishop Blake issues a letter which in the last paragraph states:

“Bishop J. Bernard Hackworth and the Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction are authorized by the Church of God in Christ, Inc., to enforce the trust so created and manage all ownership rights of the Church of God in Christ, Inc., over the property of Pacific Mount Olive Church of God in Christ, a corporation, both real and personal which is the subject matter of the above referenced law suit. Furthermore, the trespassing named defendants and their affiliates and agents are ordered by the Church of God in Christ, Inc. to immediately vacate the aforementioned Church premises.”
 28. **September 2015** — Pastor Joyner receives his credentials from Bishop Lyles for 2015-2016 received by Bishop Murphy and California Southwest Jurisdiction.
 29. **January 6, 2016** — Bishop Blake sends a letter in which he states; ““...you are ordered to cease all operations of Pacific Mount Olive Church of God in Christ, located 1385 East 21st Street in Los Angeles, California, by Saturday, January 9, 2016. You are further ordered at that time to turn over to Bishop J. Bernard Hackworth and the Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, or his representative, all keys, papers, bank accounts and all property of any kind belonging to Pacific Mount Olive Church of God in Christ.”
 30. **February 13, 2016** —Pacific Mount Olive files charges against Bishop Blake per Article VIII alleging:
 - Failure to abide by the rules and regulations of the Church of God in Christ
 - Malfeasance
 - Misfeasance
 - Abuse of powers and prerogatives of a Bishop.
 - Conduct unbecoming a Bishop

31. **May 2, 2016** — A letter from Chairman James W. Hunt written in which he; “*After my investigation of the Charges against Bishop Blake, I have come to the conclusion that the charges are frivolous.*” [This is a huge violation of Article VIII of the COGIC Constitution.]
32. **May 2016** — Pacific Mount Olive files an appeal of Chairman Hunt’s decision to the Judiciary Board (COGIC Supreme Court).
33. **July 28, 2016** — Judiciary Board renders a unanimous decision;

“... Church of God in Christ Constitution does not afford the chairman of the General Assembly the authority to receive a complaint filed with the General Assembly and/or arbitrarily or unilaterally dismiss the complaint.

“*The Secretary of the General Assembly shall submit the charge to the chairman of the General Assembly who shall appoint an investigating Committee of not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) members to examine the facts of the subject complaint and ascertain whether there are reasonable grounds for having the member brought to trial.*” *Article VIII, Judiciary Qualifications and Nominations Committee, 3(B) (2) Procedures for filing and handling charges.* The Church of God in Christ Constitution assures that legitimately aggrieved members of the Church are heard, that fairness prevails throughout the membership, and that equal protection and due process are and continue to be the right of every church member. Violations of the constitution deprive members of their rights and privileges thereunder.

This Tribunal determined that the dismissal of the subject complaint is void *ab initio*. This matter is hereby remanded to the General Assembly pursuant to *Article VIII, Judiciary Qualifications and Nominations Committee, 3(B) (2) Procedures for filing and handling charges.*”