

## Our Pastor

*'Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.' Galatians 6:6*



In 2005, John Simmons, on fire for the Lord, became Pastor of St. Mary Missionary Baptist Church of Taft. He entered the Gospel Ministry in 2001 at Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church in Orlando, under the leadership of Pastor Walter R. Prince, Jr. Before becoming our pastor, he served as Youth Pastor at St. Mary, under the leadership of Pastor Gary Key. Pastor Simmons was born in Greenville, South Carolina and was a member of Trinity Baptist Church in Anderson, where his father Robert C. Simmons, Jr., is pastor.

After graduating high school, he matriculated to the University of South Carolina in Columbia. In the spring of 1992, he became a proud member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. Pastor Simmons graduated with a degree in Psychology. He would later earn his Master's degree in Varying Exceptionalities from Nova Southeastern University.

For the past 22 years, Pastor Simmons has been employed by Orange County Public Schools. During his first seven years, he served as a Special Education Educator; after which, he continued for 12 more years as an Administrative Dean of Discipline. The last three years have presented him the opportunity to conduct duties as the Dean of Discipline at Oak Ridge High School. One highlight of his career has been to coach the Boys' Basketball team for 19 years, leading them to the Orange County Championship during the 2001-2002 school year, a proud accomplishment.

Pastor Simmons is happily married to his lovely wife, Mrs. Melanie Simmons. Their two hearts met while attending the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC. In May of 1999, the charming couple returned to USC where they were married in a glorious ceremony in the campus Chapel, a short distance from where they first met. Khalil and Samantha are their pride and joy! Pastor's ministry is to serve God and God's people. When he is not teaching, preaching, or studying the Word, Pastor Simmons enjoys spending time with his family and cheering for his beloved USC Gamecocks.

