

In April of 1877, W.R. Hill and W.H. Smith formed the Nicodemus Town Company along with five other Black religious leaders, originally from Kentucky but then living in Topeka. They platted the townsite on the northwest high plains of Kansas and named it Nicodemus, after the first African Slave to purchase his freedom. They returned to their former Kentucky, Bluegrass homes to solicit settlers. Rev. Roundtree, Secretary and W.R. Hill, Treasurer spoke to congregations in several Scott County churches. Rev. Morris Bell was the first minister at Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Georgetown and became the president of the 'Lexington Colony' the first group to migrate to Nicodemus in 1877. (see handbill). 3/4 of the congregation at the Mt. Olive Baptist Church migrated to Nicodemus. Rev. Daniel Hickman, a deacon at the time went with the group and in 1879 established the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, the first church in Graham County, and named it after his former church in Georgetown. Jerry Scruggs Sr., Ras Kirtley, Thornton Williams and Minor Lewis were former deacons at Mt. Olive Baptist in Georgetown, and migrated to Nicodemus with the group in 1878.