



103rd Church Anniversary and Mortgage Burning *Celebration*

October 1, 2023



Rev. Leon Perry, III
Senior Pastor



Dr. Frank A. Thomas
Guest Speaker

Metropolitan Community Church

4610 S Prairie Avenue | Chicago, IL 60653

Happy
Birthday

REV. LEON PERRY III





Good Morning and Welcome!

It's great to see so many beloved and familiar faces on our church's 103rd anniversary. The Lord has been so good to our church family and days like this remind us of how special and important this body of Christ has become to this community.

It was in obedience to God, much prayer, collaboration, research, and reflective meditation that I announced the God-given VISION to build a new edifice to the Glory of God!

The journey hasn't been easy but in the midst of and in spite of it all, God's vision was in place and we continued to be obedient to God; and now we are here and we are still going strong.

Church growth isn't easy but all of you have proven that it's not impossible when every member of the congregation steps up and fully commits to winning the hearts and minds of those willing to listen to our message. Each year we continue to be blessed with new members. And make no mistake, each and every one of you is a valued member of this church body.

You have proven your commitment and loyalty to the work of the Lord and for that we've all been richly blessed. As we worship together this morning, let us keep our eyes focused on His glory and all the blessings He's seen fit to bestow upon us.

We've overcome so much to reach another church anniversary. I'm thankful to see each one of you today and to have the chance to come together in a spirit of praise to the Holy One. There's no denying that this church community is a gift from the Lord Himself.

In fact, this church is nothing short of a miracle. And yet we all know that the Lord God Almighty is in the miracle business.

To pay off the loan, many congregants committed to tithe, the Biblical mandate promising a percentage of the believer's income to the church.

In 2018, the church paid off mortgage B in the amount of \$100,000.00 leaving the remaining loan of \$2,190.646.00 for 5 years. The church was paying \$180,000.00 a year on the loan. In December 2019, about \$1,782.493.71 of the mortgage remained.

We felt if 150 households were to pledge sacrificial commitments over two years on top of their tithe, we could finish paying off the mortgage. We had been paying extra principal money and had a mortgage burning plan in place," Our sacrificial pledges became a reality to the Glory of God. We know and believe our biblical teachings, "not equal giving, but equal sacrifices" is the way.

Members, local pastors and friends of Metropolitan Community Church heard the clarion call and offered financial gifts in support of our monthly need and the VISION.

In the midst of Covid 19 we pledged to follow our Christian mission and continued to feed the hungry, provide clothing and bedding to a local women's shelter, offered financial support to our active college students, coordinated activities for our youth, extended additional outreach ministry to our community through our weekly food pantry, support and equipment to nearby homeless population, christened babies, officiated weddings, and provided service to woman's shelters. We strengthened our commitment to our local school partnership and our Ghana missions.

Members participated in spiritual development via conferences and workshops, weekly Ministry of Biblical Studies, weekly inspirational text messages, 'Thankful Thursdays' Prayer Calls, and Zoom Fellowship Calls.

Members and persons from the community were nurtured from our Just A Sister Away and Brotherhood ministries. We structured and offered mentorship to local ministers and seminarians in their quest to serve in God's Kingdom building mission.

While this is not all that we did, it is important to reflect, and even doubt, but most of us individually and collectively knew that God never fails. We knew we would succeed if we walked by faith and NOT by sight.

Paying off our mortgage is critical to further our mission of ministering to the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual needs of all people, by spreading Christ's liberating gospel through word and deed.

We stand committed to preach the word of God and live the work of God through our ongoing efforts of continuing and expanding the array of community services we provide to our congregation, the Chicagoland community, and our African missions.

May the Lord bless us today as we lift our hearts to Heaven and humbly ask Him to fill this building with His goodness and mercy.

Because of His Grace, I remain.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Pastor Leon R. Perry, III." The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Pastor Leon R. Perry, III.



Guest Speaker

Dr. Frank A. Thomas

Frank A. Thomas, PhD, currently serves as the Nettie Sweeney and Hugh Th. Miller Professor of Homiletics and Director of the Academy of Preaching and Celebration at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana. Indicative of his great love of preaching, an updated and revised version of *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God: The Role of Celebration In Preaching*, considered by many to be a homiletic classic, was released in August 2013. For many years, Dr. Thomas has also taught preaching to Doctoral and Masters level students at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois, and at Memphis Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tennessee. He is the CEO of Hope For Life International, Inc., which formerly published *The African American Pulpit*. With a long history of excellence in preaching and preaching method, Dr. Thomas was inducted into the prestigious Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers of Morehouse College in April 2003. He also serves as a member of the International Board of Societas Homiletica, an international society of teachers of preaching.

Dr. Thomas holds a PhD in Communications (Rhetoric) from the University of Memphis, a Doctor of Divinity from Christian Theological Seminary, Doctor of Ministry degrees from Chicago Theological Seminary and United Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity from Chicago Theological Seminary, and a Master of Arts in African-Caribbean Studies from Northeastern Illinois University.

Dr. Thomas' most recent book, *The Choice: Living Your Passion Inside Out*, published by Hope For Life International Press October 2013, explains and explores the spiritual and coaching process to live your passion from the inside out. Dr. Thomas is a nationally and internationally sought after keynote speaker and lecturer. He and his wife, the Rev. Dr. Joyce Scott Thomas, have two adult children.



Guest Psalmist

Minister Rodnie Bryant

Rodnie Bryant was raised in a “very religious” and musical home. In his youth, he learned music theory alongside his older sister at the Wurlitzer Music Company and later took private lessons. His musical repertoire draws from the classical and jazz music he studied and the gospel music he sang every Sunday.

In 1995, the Indiana State Fair asked him to coordinate “Gospel Music Day,” which features both local and national gospel music talents. Since the first program, which had 400 attendees, Gospel Music Day has grown to host an audience of nearly 4000 every year. Rodnie takes pride in producing an event that is “wholesome, good and able to service an entire family.”

Mentored by “musical giants” in Indianapolis, such as Robert Turner, Al “The Bishop” Hobbs, and Delores “Sugar” Poindexter, Rodnie soon gained national recognition as a gospel musician and recording artist. His accomplishments include a Grammy Award nomination in 1998, and winning Gospel Music Workshop of America Excellence Awards for both “Choir of the Year” and “Song of the Year.” His music has become a staple among church choirs in many congregations, both locally and beyond.



Order of Service

103rd Church Anniversary and Mortgage Burning Celebration

Call to Worship

We gather, looking back to see the paths taken,
Looking forward to see our path.
We honour those who have gone before us,
Learning from their successes and failures.
We celebrate who we are today,
And welcome the possibilities and opportunities before us.
We gather to worship God,
the God of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Processional: “The Church is One Foundation”

The church has one foundation, 'Tis Jesus Christ her Lord; She is His new creation, Through water by the word. From heav'n He came and sought her To be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation, Yet one o'er all the earth, Her charter of salvation— One Lord, one faith, one birth. One holy name she blesses, Partakes one holy food; And to one hope she presses, With every grace endued.

Long with a scornful wonder, Men saw her sore oppressed, By schisms rent asunder, By heresies distressed. Yet saints their watch were keeping To hail a brighter day, When God should stop their weeping, Take their reproach away.

The evening sun is shining, The cloudy day is past; The time of their repining Is at an end at last. The voice of God is calling To unity again; Division walls are falling, With all the creeds of men.

Back to the one foundation, From sects and creeds made free, Come saints of every nation To blessed unity. Once more the ancient glory Shines as in days of old, And tells the wondrous story— One God, one faith, one fold.

Litany of Worship

Leader: Give thanks to the Lord who is good.

ALL: God's love is everlasting.

Leader: Come, let us praise God joyfully.

ALL: Let us come to God with thanksgiving.

Leader: For those people, both in our past and our present, who gave of themselves fully and completely to the building of our faith community;

ALL: We thank you, Lord God.

Leader: For those among us who dared to dream, to see what others could not, who, inspired by God's leading, pushed forward in faith;

ALL: We thank you, Lord God.

Leader: For the generous contributions of time, talents, and the commitment of pastors, leaders, and members who tirelessly worked toward the completion of this project in spite of obstacles and challenges;

ALL: We thank you, Lord God.

Leader: For the unwavering commitment and abundant generosity of those who contributed so that this dream could be fulfilled;

ALL: We thank you, Lord God.

Leader: For the faithful prayers of members entreating God's guidance and blessing;

ALL: We thank you, Lord God.

Leader: For our children and the commitment to Seventh-day Adventist education, recognizing that educating a child in and for Christ is one of our most important missions;

ALL: We thank you, Lord God.

Leader: For the Holy Spirit's leading in each generation, from our smallest beginnings to the present;

ALL: We thank you, Lord God.

Leader: We praise You, Eternal God, for Your goodness to us. We celebrate and give thanks to You for a milestone reached, a debt paid, and a promise kept.

ALL: Give thanks to the Lord, who is good.

Leader: We pray that God will continue to guide us with a spirit of unity, inspiring us with wisdom and knowledge to continue His work. While this project is now complete, we dedicate ourselves anew to continuing to envision new ways to share the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout this community, our nation, and the world.

ALL: With joy in our hearts, recognizing the blessing of God in lifting this burden of debt, we transform this cancelled mortgage, the symbol of our completed task, into the incense of prayer and thanksgiving.

Scripture Reading
Ephesians 1:3-19

St. Paul writes,

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

The word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Invocation

Eternal God, let this building, which we dedicate to your name, be a house of salvation and grace where Christians gathered together may worship you in spirit and truth, may learn of you, and may grow together in love. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Congregational Hymn “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow—
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Remarks

The Honorable Pat Dowell
3rd Ward Alderman

Gary Brooks
*President, Cal-Met Village Apartments &
Board of Directors, Gilead Management*

Introduction of Musical Guest

Minister Rodnie Bryant
Indianapolis, IN

Introduction of Guest Speaker

Dr. Frank A. Thomas
*Christian Theological Seminary
Indianapolis, IN*

Sermonic Selection

Minister Rodnie Bryant

Sermon

Dr. Frank A. Thomas

Invitation to Christian Discipleship

The Giving of Tithes and Offerings

Gracious God, we thank you for your faithfulness in providing for our needs. Help us to always be faithful in returning a portion of what you have entrusted to us. As we give our tithes and offerings, may we do so with joyful hearts, knowing that we are contributing to your work in the world. Amen.

Special Acknowledgments and Presentations

Remarks

Dorothy Cole-Gary
*Chairman, Ministry of Trustees
Metropolitan Community Church*

Pastor Leon Perry, III
Senior Pastor, Metropolitan Community Church

Closing Song
“See What The Lord Has Done“

See what the Lord has done, See what the Lord has done,
What we’ve waited for, has come to pass, see what the Lord has done.

The Burning of the Mortgage Ceremony

**The Benediction and Release of Balloons in
Memory of Our Cloud of Witnesses**

Gala Reception





Happy **Birthday** *Metropolitan!*

Metropolitan Community Church was organized in 1920, but moved to this current location in 2006.

Today is the 103rd anniversary/birthday celebration for our current facilities.

We honor this milestone with the burning of the mortgage. Just as you would any birthday, we will offer a special fellowship/Gala reception after the worship service in our Multi purpose room.

You may also like to look at some of the memorabilia on display. We hope you enjoy the worship service today and find it meaningful. Clearly it is a day to express thanksgiving to God who has blessed us so abundantly.





A mortgage burning ceremony is a celebration of freedom from debt. But for a congregation it goes much deeper. It symbolizes God's guidance and blessing for this church. It is a tribute to the faith and persistence of God's people. And it inspires us toward new visions, dreams, and the further fulfillment of mission.



**Metropolitan Community Church
Mortgage Campaign Activities**

Tree of Hope

95th Kick-Off (for the 5:1 loan)

Breakfast with the Pastor
Bud Billiken Parade

Taste of Victory

Vision 20/20 Events

20/20 5-Linx
20/20 Dress for The King
20/20 Dress for The King Sponsors
20/20 Karat Bars
20/20 Superbowl

Ravinia

Spelman Glee Concert
Spelman Glee Concert DVD

Alvin Ailey

Paint With A Purpose

Bowling

Holiday Pictures

Pathway to Victory

Level I
Level II
Level III
Level IV

Special Acknowledgement of the 20/20 Mortgage Commitments Received Above and Beyond

Amount of Pledges Received: **\$105,119.50**

Gary Bell	Loretta Mopkins
Ruana Pace-Bell	Wilma R. Newchurch
Judith Bell	Chandra Nicks
Gary & Latrice Brooks	Rosager & Sheila Parker
Yvonne N. Bryant	Pastor Leon Perry, III
Adrienne Cutlet	Deborah Peters
Nefertari Cutler	Lori Reavley
Aurora Edwards	Bernice Reed
Dolores Elliott	Lisa Robinson
Shawn English	Brenda Ross
Richard E. Evans	Pastor Eric Sanders
Frank & Dorothy Gary	William Saunders
Patricia Gayden	Ruth Simpkins
Candace Gregory	Minister Darnette Solomon
Claudette Gregory	Bernard & Rochelle Stinson
Linda Haggins	Gloria Stratton
Karen Hannsberry	Janice Thomas
Lemar & Hattie Howell	Cheryl VanEaton
Renardo Johnson	Helena Wiley
Bobbi Keys	Dr. Paulette Wilson
Elaine Mann	Marshall & Marcella Wright
Josie Moore	MaryE Young

Because of the generous gifts given so far toward our Capital Stewardship Program, Metropolitan Community Church of Chicago, established 1920, was able to pay off our current mortgage.

This means that further gifts and offerings to the Metropolitan Community Church will be used to prepare for future development on our church campus at the corner of 46th and Prairie Avenue. Thanks be to God!

Acknowledgments

When any church is involved in a project for this long a period of time, you can imagine there is a long list of people to thank. This would be why we won't even attempt to do so.

There are those who were dreamers, facilitators, leaders, organizers, experts, builders, planners, givers, cheerleaders, prayer warriors, realists, encouragers, preachers, teachers, and we could go on and still have left someone out.

What was a constant was God's ever abiding presence in directing decisions that culminate in today's celebration.

Special Thanks

The 2023 Strategic Coordinators

Dolores Elliott

Shawn English

Veronica Mosely- Raggs

Deacon Deborah Peters

Minister Darnette Solomon

Gloria Stratton

Raymond Walker

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

WAYS TO GIVE

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

-2 Corinthians 9:6-7

1

**CHECK OR MONEY ORDER BY MAIL
ATTN: MINISTRY OF TRUSTEES
4610 S. PRAIRIE AVENUE
CHICAGO, IL 60653**

2

GIVELIFY.COM OR THE GIVELIFY APP

3

**DROP-OFF (HAVE SOMEONE PICK UP
AND DROP OFF FOR YOU) IN THE
MAILBOX LOCATED ON THE
FRONT OF THE CHURCH**

4

**TEXT "MCCGIVE" TO 554-69
AND FOLLOW THE LINK**

#WEARETHECHURCH

**#MONEYISAKINGDOM
RESOURCE**





Metropolitan Community Church

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

Sunday School @ 9am via Facebook Live
Praise, Worship & Word @ 10:30am via YouTube

Wednesday Ministry of Biblical Studies @ 11am via Facebook Live

4610 S Prairie Avenue | Chicago, IL 60653
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REVEREND LEON PERRY, III
Senior Pastor