

Greater Emmanuel Temple



Elder Robert Gamble Dist. Eld. Charles Byrd Dist. Eld. Melvin Davis

“STILL STANDING, STILL STRONG”

56 Years Strong

June, 1960

June 2016



“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

HEBREWS 10:25

The History and Legacy of Greater Emmanuel Temple

We began

Emmanuel Temple Apostolic Church, known now as Greater Emmanuel Temple Apostolic Church, has a rich legacy of true worshippers. From a humble beginning it has flourished into the wonderful worship center as it stands today. God, in his infinite wisdom, put it in the heart of Elder Robert F. Gamble, as he was a minister at Bethlehem Temple Apostolic Church, to start a mission of his own. In June of 1960 the late Elder Gamble began a ministry in his basement on York Street. After a few months the church was moved to a house at 1033 E. York Street. The church members consisted of Elder Gamble, his wife - Sister Ruth Gamble, his mother-in-law - Sister Annie Wagner and soon to be joined by Elder Archie Searles Jr. from Port Huron, Michigan.

Sister Nora Edwards was the first person saved under Elder Gamble's leadership, who is still a faithful member of This great church.

In 1964, after many troubles, trials, and heartaches, the church moved to 1117 E. Genesee Avenue, the present location. Elder Heron Johnson, now the late Bishop with the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, became the pastor's assistant and then the lot was passed to Elder Horace Strozier as they were among the many supporters of this infant church. God blessed the efforts of this group and Greater Emmanuel Temple grew. In October 1966, Elder Gamble became ill and in January of 1967 he departed this life and went to his reward.

We continue

In April, 1967 Elder Charles F. Byrd was called to lead the flock along with his gracious wife Sister Maggie K. Byrd. Elder Byrd was said to be a man with a vision.

The church continued to thrive and grow. It continued to teach the true words of God and impelling souls to be saved. Under his leadership, the first soul to accept Christ was Sis. Josephine Powell. Elder Byrd not only fed and led the people but he led by example as he donated various items for the glory of God. An organ was one such donation.

In 1973, a fire sweep through Greater Emmanuel Temple and the congregation felt a great loss. The beautiful organ was destroyed along with other valuable items. The church was remodeled and new instruments were purchased including a piano to accompany the organ.

Under the watchful eye of Elder Byrd the church continued to grow and prosper both spiritually and naturally. The church had their mortgage burning service in 1976, nine years ahead of schedule. Additions were put in place for the comfort of God's people such as running

water, lounges, a natural gas heating system, a baptismal pool, a parking lot was erected, and many more improvements were put on the site. Many others donated items, their time and expertise, and cash, to further the beatification of the church. At this time the church was renamed from Emmanuel Temple Apostolic Church to Greater Emmanuel Temple Apostolic Church.

Because of the faithfulness and services to God's people Elder Charles F. Byrd was elevated to District Elder of Northern District Council, 5th Episcopal District of the PAW, Inc. in September, 1992.

Elder Byrd continued to preach and teach God's people until his health began to fail. He loved the congregation of Greater Emmanuel Temple Apostolic Church. In 2005 as his health concerns progressively worsened, he retired from pasturing after 39 years in 2006. He asked the congregation to choose another qualified, God fearing, truth teaching leader to continue the work started by Elder Gamble and continued by him. After much prayer he asked Elder Melvin Davis if he would consider pasturing GETC. He informed the Northern District Council of his wishes, after which the members of Greater Emmanuel gladly elected Elder Melvin Davis as their new pastor.

We're still here

In 2006, after much prayer was sent asking for guidance, the congregation chose another visionary leader. This dynamic, God fearing, praying, and a willing worker of God; was Elder Melvin Davis a former member of Bethlehem Temple Church in Flint. He and his lovely and gracious wife, Sister Barbara Davis, entered the life of the Greater Emmanuel Temple family and were immediately welcomed.

Elder Davis did not only believe in seeing and improving the future of Greater Emmanuel Temple but, as the watchman on the wall at Greater Emmanuel Temple Church, he would also roll up his sleeves and tackle a task that needed to be done. In the few years he has been at the helm he has given the building a new look, inside and outside. His first task due to flooding was that of re-gutting the basement (he and a few brothers) so that it would be conducive for four classrooms, church office, ministers' lounge, bulletin room, and a conference room along with the men and woman restrooms. He has fixed up, torn down, painted, and routinely performs other maintenance to the building and the church continues to be a beautiful and comfortable place to worship.

Elder Davis brought with him his administrative and managerial skills which he acquired from a 33 year banking career. Under his leadership; church bi-laws were updated; a policy and procedure manual was created which outlines policies and procedures for every department

and position within the church; created new positions; such as church administrator, auxiliary and facility coordinators. Due to his God given leadership skill the Greater Emmanuel Temple Church family is excited about the vision God has placed in the spirit of our own Pastor and First Lady Davis.

What is most ironic about the line of leadership in which God has blessed this church with is that all of the pastors came to us from Bethlehem Temple Church under the great leadership of District Elder B.T. Scott.

Respectfully submitted by

Sister Myrtle Washington