

Elder John T. Elders and Sister Laura Elders of Detroit MI came to Ypsilanti to start a church. “A white church on a corner in Ypsilanti” is what Sister Laura Elders is quoted as saying she saw in a vision.

A small group of believers started having prayer meetings, standing on the corner of Monroe and Hawkins in Ypsilanti MI (in a wooded area Sister Elders named “Messias Grove”-as stated by Bro. Doug Franklin). From there they were invited to have prayer meetings in the home of Bro. Edgar and Sister Lena Barfield.

While the church was in preparation, there were some faithful saints who came with Elder and Sister Elders to start the work in Ypsilanti – some of those names are still heard in our church and in homes yet today. Such as Bro. & Sister Edgar (Lena) Barfield and daughter, Gladys; Sister Powell; Bro. & Sister James Naylor; Bro. Curtis Naylor; Bro. and Sister Ludie; Bro. James Frierson (Sis. Marjorie Franklin’s dad).

Later faithful members such as, Bro. Moses Bass; Bro. Sylvester and Sister Hattie Smith; Bro. John and Sister Betty Barfield; Bro. Douglas and Sister Marjorie Franklin; Sister Lois Holman; Bro. Chambers; Bro. John and Sister Margaret Cannon; Bro. and Sister Henry; Sis. Anna Belle Arnold; these all embraced and carried on the ‘faith of the saints’ as committed workers in the vineyard, praying for souls to fill the newly built Messias Temple Church.

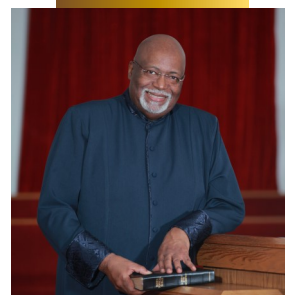
Though Messias Temple Church Number One was formed in 1940, it was not until June 1941, that the church at 565 Monroe Street, Ypsilanti, MI was recognized as an organization. Joyfully, in the year 1945 the church building was completed (and, of course, they painted the outside “white”), and on June 3, 1946 the church was dedicated by Bishop Samuel N. Hancock, and John T. Elders was ordained as Pastor, with his wife Sister Laura Elders by his side. Just 3 years later, on March 2, 1949, Pastor John Elders left his earthly home at the age of 66. Elder John T. Elders was pastor of Messias Temple Church for 9 years, from 1941 to 1949.

Later that year in 1949 Sister Laura Elders took the mantle as Pastor of Messias Temple Church. Members of the congregation banded with Pastor Laura Elders and continued the work of the Lord. In the early 1970’s Pastor Laura Elders Bass now married, saw a great revival of new converts. Much of the time she was confined to her house and a wheelchair but was still on fire for God. Young and old came in and received the gift of the Holy Ghost and were baptized in the name of Jesus. Her latter years of being pastor were indeed fruitful. On October 1, 1974, Pastor Laura retired as Pastor. Two years later she passed from this life to Glory on October 6, 1976. Pastor Laura Elders-Bass pastored Messias Temple Church for 25 years, from April 1949 to October 1, 1974.

A faithful servant to Pastor Laura Elders-Bass until her death, on May 25, 1975 Elder Jesse Ross was elected Pastor of Messias Temple Church. Under Elder Ross’s leadership, the church membership continued to grow, as the 1970’s and 1980’s continued to bring souls in hungry for the Word of God, and wanting to be filled with the Spirit. Yes, and many were, so much so that the need for a larger Church was put into the heart of the Deacon board and the Pastor. Elder Ross built a strong foundation leading by example, teaching that prayer, fasting and a daily intake of the Word was needful for a successful life in Christ.

In 1984, the Messias Temple Church family members along with friends and community leaders, marched from 565 Monroe to 200 Harriet Street, (current church edifice). On June 7, 1991 after a lengthy illness, the Lord saw fit to call home Pastor Ross. Elder Jesse Ross was pastor of Messias Temple Church for 16 years from May 28, 1975 to June 7, 1991.

In September 1991, Elder Harry S. Grayson was elected by an overwhelming vote by the members, under the direction of Bishop William Abney to be the next and fourth Pastor of Messias Temple Church. On January 25, 1992, the installation service was filled with anticipation as the members anxiously awaited the mantle to be passed Elder Harry S. Grayson, Bishop Willie Burrell preached a dynamic sermon, “Raise it, Raise it” (Psalms 137:7). Messias Temple Church saw the mighty move of God that night as his will was wrought.



Messias Temple Church has had transitional times as do most churches, Pastor Grayson at Messias Temple Church stays firmly grounded in the Word of God, teaching, and preaching the “one God” whose name is Jesus. And because of that teaching many are convicted under the anointing and ask, “What must I do to be saved?” The record is clear in heaven and in the earth that for the last 30 years, under the leadership of Elder Grayson, District Elder Grayson, Suffragan Bishop, and now Bishop Harry S. Grayson, many were “restored” to their walk with the Lord, and over 2000 souls baptized in the name of Jesus; with many of that number filled with the Holy Ghost.

Bishop Harry S. Grayson was duly elevated to the office of Diocesan Bishop of the 60th Episcopal District Council of the Western Cape, South Africa, under the leadership of Presiding Bishop Charles H. Ellis III at the 2018 Summer Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

Bishop Grayson’s outreach ministry has taken him to the continent of Africa to Cairo, Egypt and to Harare Zimbabwe, in West Africa where he preached for ten days and was able to leave a financial contribution that helped to complete the funding needed for a new church sanctuary and the beginning phases of building a new medical clinic, which was named in his honor.

Bishop’s compassionate, outgoing spirit is evident in the “We Care We Share” Hot Meals ministry, which he implemented in his early years of the pastorate, which feeds over 10,000 people locally at the church here in Ypsilanti Michigan yearly. With a yearly budget of over \$100,000, the “We Care We Share” ministry is a powerful entity of Bishop Grayson and the Messias Temple Church outreach. People are fed weekly, and clothing is provided to help the homeless families that have been negatively affected by the economy. Even through the 2020 pandemic this program stayed open and provided needs to the local community.

Other added Outreach Ministries today include weekly “Live Streaming” over the internet as well as a local Radio and TV Broadcast; these efforts focus on outreach in our home community, surrounding communities, and to the world.

During his tenure, Bishop Grayson has served the office of the Mayor of Ypsilanti, and the Ypsilanti Police Departments, also local school communities. Further, as he saw the need, he implemented the Aeon Bible College satellite base at Messias Temple Church where many received their fundamental foundation of the Principles of the Word of God and of the Apostolic Doctrine.

Bishop Grayson completed his Mechanical Engineering degree from Washtenaw Community College and University of Michigan, while continuing his full-time position with University of Michigan as a Refrigeration and Heating Engineer, where he worked for 20 years until a year after his elevation as Pastor of Messias Temple Church, when the Lord placed in his spirit to fully devote his time to the pastorate.

Bishop Grayson resides in Ypsilanti, Michigan since 1973 with his lovely wife, Lady Mary, where they raised their son, Evan Joshua and twin daughters, Maya Britney and Shari Whitney, and one granddaughter Olivia.

“Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” Isaiah 28:16

Today, in the year 2021, Messias Temple celebrates a great heritage of its 80th year of existence in the Ypsilanti community, as well as, now Bishop Harry S. Grayson’s 30th pastoral anniversary. God has done a mighty work indeed!