

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST MILLER'S TEMPLE 1950

"The Lord works in mysterious ways, His Wonders to Perform." He uses His people for His purposes, and, if they will only heed His voice, then many things can come to pass that man cannot anticipate when he plans his life.

The Reverend George Miller will bear witness to this truth.

Reverend Miller was born on March 8th in 1900, in Cold Water, Mississippi. He grew up in the rural South, and on December 9, 1919, married Martha Sims. Their union was blessed with four children — one son, Joseph, and three daughters, Ruby, Mae, and Julia.

Rev. Miller met the Lord in 1928 in Hollings, Missouri, and was saved by grace. From that time, when he was born again and put his life in the hands of the Lord, he never doubted his life would become one in which he could serve as a true witness for Christ.

In March of 1937, he came to Camden and served under the late Elder B. T. Morris as a Deacon in the Church of God in Christ in that town. He accepted his own call to the Ministry in 1945 and was ordained in 1945 in the Wells' Cathedral, Church of God in Christ, in Newark, New Jersey, by Bishop Wells.

By this route we come to the establishment of the Church of God in Christ in Palmyra. When Reverend Miller and his wife and children found their way into this area, they found that the original organization, which had first been established as a mission at 200 Arch Street in Palmyra, New Jersey, had not been operating for quite some time. It had been set up for the first time in 1932 and had been served from time to time by Elder Mills, Reverend Alfred Williams, Elder Cotton (now Assistant Bishop of the State of New Jersey), and Elder Willis.

Reverend Miller relates how, prior to the time he arrived in Palmyra, Mother Marguerite Rogers, who had been saved and filled with the Holy Ghost in the Wrightsville (Trinity) AME Church, had been praying for the Lord to send a man of God to Palmyra. Her next door neighbor, Sister Janie Pryor, unaware of Mother Marguerite's activities, was also praying for the same thing. With the coming of Reverend Miller, their prayers were answered.

The most immediate need was to find a place to worship, and, since there were no funds available on which Reverend Miller could draw, this presented a real problem. However, after walking from place to place and asking all those he could for help, he found a garage for rent. It was located at number five Market Street in Palmyra, and even though it required an extensive amount of work to make it suitable for even the humblest place of worship, Reverend Miller set himself to the task.



"An early congregation of Miller's Temple."

The Church held its first Sunday Worship Service on Easter Morning, April 9th, 1950. At that time the church had, in addition to Reverend Miller, only two members . . . Mother Martha Miller and Sister Izelia Harrison.

The work was blessed, and on the following Easter Morning, it was necessary to rent the other half of the garage to accommodate the growing congregation . . . the partition that separated the two garages was removed, and in this way seating capacity was increased to permit everyone to worship together.

Members continued to come in. It was all too evident that larger quarters would have to be found, and soon!

The congregation bought a lot on what was then called Washington Street, but has since been renamed Kennedy Street, and the work of erecting the Church was begun. Many came to offer their help. There was Elder Felder Morague, present pastor of Jones Temple, Church of God in Christ, in Philadelphia; the late Elder Baker; Elder Elijah Reid, pastor of the Mt. Carmel Church of God in Christ, in Berlin, New Jersey; and many, many others gave their aid in all possible ways.

There were many trials and problems, but all these were overcome and, singing praises to the Lord, the congregation was able to march into their own new Church on Sunday, April 10th, 1955.

The Church of God in Christ is a busy place where many, many things are going on, the better to bring the Lord and the people together in faith and service. The Sunday School department is very well filled, and great care and love is given to teaching the Scriptures, telling the old Bible Stories and teaching the hymns of praise and thanksgiving to the young people who come to receive their Christian Education from their devoted teachers.

The Choirs add their joyful sound to the Worship services which are held on Sunday mornings. There are two groups . . . a Senior Choir and a Junior Choir. Deacon Charles Wilson is the President and the Senior Choir is under the direction of Beverly Adamson. Mrs. Willa Green and Iris Miller work with the Junior Choir, and there are several members who serve as accompanists . . . Mrs. Adamson, Rev. Lowell Brown, Mrs. Green, Mrs. Miller. All give freely of their time and talents, and through their efforts the ministry of music at the Church has become an important part of the program.

Services are not limited to Sundays only. There is a regularly scheduled service both Tuesday night and Friday night.

Reverend Miller has seen his little flock increase in numbers, until in 1976 the rolls list approximately 50 names. He, himself, has ordained eight ministers and continually gives thanks to the Lord for those who have come out of the Church and gone out to serve in other churches.

Even as the Church family has grown, so, too, has the Miller family grown. Rev. and Mrs. Miller count among their blessings six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Reverend Miller was appointed as District Superintendent of the Church of God in Christ of the Camden District on August 10th, 1964. In 1966 he was honored at the Chapel of the Four Chaplains for outstanding Christian Service. He is also, at present, the Pastor of the Fellowship Temple, Vine and Center Streets, in Clayton, N.J.

In a brochure which outlines the history of the Church, these words are written down, under the title "The Acorn":

"THE ACORN"

This is the acorn, planted in the sands of time;

From which our oak tree grew

As pictured on our cover page, proudly displayed for you.

It is not green leaves and branches you see,

It's wood, brick, cement and stained glass,

Standing tall with an open door, to any travelers that pass.

Welcome, come inside, rest your body and mind.

It is the House of God.

Thank God for our blessed accomplishment,

But we yet remember our start.

The congregation of the Church of God in Christ remembers their past, and in the present they remain determined to give all the glory, honor and praise to God for what they have brought to pass by His Divine Power. They proclaim the good news that to be used by God is a great privilege, and step confidently into the future, knowing the Lord will provide direction, support, and aid in all things.

Reverend Miller and his congregation believe with all their hearts that the years ahead will be filled with challenges . . . but in the words of the Psalmist, the Lord is their Shepherd, they shall not want . . . He will protect His people and lead them on.

Miller's Temple Church of God in Christ Palmyra, N.J.

