

Church History

A Personal Commitment to Christian Service on Sunday, November 11, 1980, a new congregation of worshippers was formed by a number of persons who had met only for the purpose of observing Holy Communion. The Fellowship was so strong and sweet that on this date they informally became "The Church of Worship". During the following months the fellowship was strengthened by their commitment to Bible Study. They adopted the "Doctrine of Christian Assistance" as found in Matthew 25:31-46, as their Disciples Creed. On March 11, 1981, a commitment was made by the worshippers to become "The Church of Christian Compassion" with Leonard Smalls as the founder and Pastor. On December 31, 1986, Rev. Smalls resigned. After Rev. Smalls' resignation several ministers presided over the church as interim pastor until the Lord sent one of His shepherds.

On May 23, 1994, the members who were still a part of this body unanimously voted to accept W. Lonnie Herndon as the Pastor of this congregation. Pastor Herndon is the embodiment of the commitment on which the church was founded in Matthew 25. In 1995, one year after becoming the Pastor, W. Lonnie Herndon led the Church of Christian Compassion in the burning of a 30 year mortgage. Founder, Rev. Leonard Smalls returned to preach the sermon during this prestigious Mortgage Burning Service.

Holding true to Matthew 25:35-36 "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me", in the second year of Pastor Herndon's pastorate a candlelight service was held and the Church of Christian Compassion partnered with a local outreach mission that ministers to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of homeless men. Continuing to fulfill God's commission for the church, missions and evangelism became top priority.

The mission of the church is - The Church of Christian Compassion exist to glorify God by leading people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and introducing them to the family of God. While being instrumental in helping them to mature in Christ, we are equipping them for ministry and commissioning them for missions throughout the world.

In 1999, The Church of Christian Compassion was listed as one of the top three (3) givers of missions by the Philadelphia Baptist Association. In 1999, 2000 and 2001 three years in a row, members of the congregation were awarded the Philadelphia Baptist Association Honors for Evangelism and Hospital visitations. During the summer of 1999 Christian Compassion had its first park revival and saw the birth of the Compassion Street Service Evangelism Ministry, which was a vital part of the church growth. The ministries grew, the congregation grew and the work became too much for one person. The emergence of leaders became evident by the licensing and ordaining of several men and women to preach the gospel and to lead ministries. As a result, Pastor Herndon began to implement leadership conferences where leaders were taught the responsibilities and the accountability of leadership.

God opened doors for Foreign Missions in 2001 and enabled us to send members of the congregation to go on missionary trips. From 2001 through 2008, members have been to South Africa, Ghana, Haiti, Czech Republic, Bolivia, Monrovia Liberia and Thailand.

With the increase in space Christian Compassion was able to offer weekly discipleship classes, Compassion Bible Institute, leadership conferences and many other ministry fellowship events. Compassion began many Offsite Bible Studies in key locations throughout the Philadelphia area and tri-state area.

We praise God today for how He continues to bless this ministry. We give Him all the Glory holding true to Matthew 25:31-46, The Church of Christian Compassion not only partners with a local mission which ministers to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of homeless men, we also minister to women at the Eliza Shirley Shelter, the Rahab Ministry ministers to prostitutes by providing them with toiletries and other essential needs, our nighttime evangelism team takes to the streets of Center City Philadelphia and provide blankets, coats, clothing and food to the homeless living on the streets and in the subway.

Obedying God's word and following the vision, the church has acquired many properties: The West Lumber Yard and garage on 61st and Cedar. The former West Lumber Yard is now the location of the brand new state-of-the-art Worship Edifice. The garage has been totally renovated as it is now the Community of Compassion (CDC) building (the renovation was completed in 2001).

The CDC sponsors many programs that benefit the community such as: A Cyber Café, after school reading programs, exercise classes, line dancing classes and many other programs. Other properties in the Compassion portfolio are: the Chapel (627 S. Felton Street), a daycare facility, Compassion Court Apartments and many other properties located adjacent to the church. The church continues to be a beacon of light in the community. We are anticipating and looking forward to the opening of The Church of Christian Compassion's very own Children's Church located directly across from our new worship edifice on the 6100 block of Cedar Avenue.

"We are the Church in the heart of the community, with the community at heart." To God Be The Glory.