CITY TEMPLE'S HISTORY - WEBSITE

Organization - Our Beginning

The Seventh-day faith was preached to Blacks in the territory of the present-day Southwest Region Conference as early as 1876, the same year in which the Rust brothers, Seventh-day Adventist laymen, came to Texas and gathered the first group of White converts in the Dallas area. D.M. Canright, visiting Texas in May 1876, reported that one of the young members, Eddie Capman, was conducting a night at school three times a week for Blacks, teaching old men and little children to read and write. He also described a preaching service for Whites where many Black people, according to the local custom, sat outside and listened.

Later that same year, A.B. Rust reported going with Purson Medlin, who had attended Capman's night school, to preach in several neighboring counties. In a community of 700 in Mansfield, Texas, he preached in their log church. The next spring, Ohio native Joseph Clark and his wife taught at a school in Grand Prairie, near A.B. Rust's home, in a building that had been erected by Black workers, with the aid of contributions from the local White citizens.

History - 1919

During the early 20th century, the number of Blacks in Dallas increased considerably. Blacks accounted for one out of every five residents in Dallas. Since the end of the Civil War, Blacks had congregated in the eastern part of Elm Street at Central Avenue, near the intersection of Good Latimer Expressway, and also in the area of Hall, State, and Thomas Streets now known as the Dallas Arts District, as well as the areas surrounding Freedman's Cemetery and City Place., In the summer of 1919, a small tent was pitched on Central Avenue near Littlejohn Drugstore. The result of this encampment produced the first company of believers which would later grow into what is now the congregation of City Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Elder Sydney Scott was the evangelist, assisted by his wife and Mrs. Katie Baker of Mosier Valley (now known as the city of Euless, Texas), as well as Laura Moore and H. Murphy. Several members, including Naomi H. Turner, accepted the three angels' message and joined the remnant church. A Seventh-day Adventist Church was started in the home of Sister Turner at 1112 ½ South Carroll Street. The early company of believers numbered about twenty-five. Sister Naomi Turner wrote, "we loved the truth with all of our hearts."

1920's - 1930's

In January of 1920, Elder R.L. Bradford, Sr. arrived in Dallas from Wichita Falls, Kansas to assist in the proclamation of the advent message. In the spring of 1923, Elders E.M. Gates and R.L. Bradford, Sr. pitched the first camp meeting tent on North Central Avenue at State and Washington Streets. This was the first camp meeting. At the close of this meeting, the church moved from Montezuma and Hawkins Street to Mrs. Hall's building on State Street. It was here that the vitality of the members was crushed and began to disintegrate, dwindling down to two members. Sister Naomi H. Turner writes, "our hearts were made sad to see our little group to fade away by migration, apostasy and death."

Beginning in the spring and ending in the fall of 1926, Pastors J. Gershom Dasent, Henry Miller, A.K. Watkins, and B. Lyons came to Dallas to run another meeting. They pitched their tent in the Christian Park area on Thomas and Washington Avenue in North Dallas. The church was officially organized with these charter members: Katie Baker, Hazel Bell, Crawford Cooper, Hanna Carr, Gladys Halston, Laura Moore, H. Murphy, and Naomi Turner. The church activity spread rapidly through the work of enthusiastic lay members.

In 1928, another tent was pitched on Haskell Street. A letter addressed to the City of Dallas, handwritten on North Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists letterhead, correspondence dated September 4, 1928, stated that there was "no objection to the Colored Seventh-day Adventist people building on the northwest corner of Forman and Haskell where their tent has been since May 24th". In a letter addressed to the Mayor and Board of Commissioners of the City of Dallas, S.E. Gillespie, the building inspector, informs the gentlemen that A.K. Watkins requested a permit to build a church. A petition was received that protested the building of the church since it was a segregated issue. The request was referred to the committee for recommendation. On October 30, 1928, City Plan Engineer Forrest L. Park responded with a favorable letter giving guidelines for the construction of Beulah Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In 1929 the church moved into its first building, erected on the corner of Haskell and Day Streets, with a seating capacity of 200 under the pastorate of A.K. Watkins. The church was **Beulah Seventh-day Adventist Church**, 1526 South Haskell Avenue - the first Seventh-day Adventist Church for Negroes in Dallas.

1930's - 1950's

The church spread rapidly through the work of lay members. Following the relocation of Elder A.K. Watkins, Elder Milton M. Young, Sr. served as the shepherd of the flock until his untimely death in 1936.

Elder Young was succeeded by Elder J.N. Fisher, who served as pastor until the coming of Elder Stanley Huddleston in 1942. Pastor-Evangelist R.T. Hudson was described as a dramatic evangelist, having the ability to persuade large crowds on points of doctrine. He was replaced by Elder A.B. Humphrey. Between 1946 and 1949, Elder J.H. Williams conducted a series of evangelistic meetings on Hall Street, adding more souls to the church. Then came Elder Walter W. Fordham with another crusade in 1949, adding 70 members by baptism. Pastor Fordham, who was also the conference president, moved the membership from Beulah Seventh-day Adventist Church on South Haskell Avenue to 3711 Oakland Avenue, now known as Malcolm X Boulevard. The new church and elementary school and the Southwest Region Mission were built by contractor E.A. Lewis for \$42,500.

The Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook quotes the following regarding the Southwestern Mission:

December 16, 1946, the Negro Constituency of the Arkansas-Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, and Texico conferences were combined and organized into the Southwestern Mission, effective January 1, 1947.... This new mission was a unit comparable to a conference, with its own officers, committee, and departmental secretaries, and headquarters at 3711 Oakland Avenue, Dallas, Texas. The first mission officers chosen by the constituency were Walter W. Fordham, president; Vincent L. Roberts, secretary-treasurer and home missionary secretary; J.H. Jones, publishing secretary; Helen Wiggans Beckett, Sabbath School secretary. At the end of two years as a mission, the membership was 1,939 and total net worth was \$35,824.85.

1950's - 1960's

As evidence of God's leading, the Southwest Region Conference and the Oakland Seventh-day Adventist Church and its school were rapidly growing.

In 1954, Elder W.J. Cleveland came from Seattle, Washington to serve as the leader. He is remembered for for training the members in dignity of church decorum, and conducting a correspondence Bible school program as a lay activity endeavor for the members.

Elder J.E. Cox, Jr. arrived in 1956 and began looking for a new location for the church. Negotiations for the building at 1900 South Boulevard began in earnest with Southwest Region Conference president H.R. Murphy and J.E. Cox, Jr., the pastor of what was then called the Oakland Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church. They met with Irving L. Goldberg, Temple Emanu-El congregation president, and Hyman Kanter, executive director of Temple Emanu-El. Elder Cox assured them that the highest standards of the Jewish tradition would be upheld including the observance of the Sabbath and that no unclean meats would ever be served in the temple. The asking price was lowered and the final negotiated price was \$130,000. "The realty firm of Henry S. Miller handled arrangements and the contract was signed Jan[uary] 5, [1956]." The move in date was set for October 1, 1956. The headline "Adventists Buy Temple Emanu-El" appeared in The Dallas Morning News on February 28, 1956.

On October 6, 1956, the Oakland Seventh-day Adventist Church became **City Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church** and worship commenced at the new location, 1900 South Boulevard and Harwood Streets. This was also the new location for the Southwest Region Conference, pre-school and academy. Pastor Cox's love for music led him to organize the chancel choir, which became known throughout the city and over the radio. Elder Cox's public relations ministry with the choir and evangelistic efforts brought the membership up to 400 strong.

In 1958, Elder Charles E. Dudley, Sr. arrived from Baton Rouge, Louisiana with an aggressive approach to the leadership of the church. The church program included a weekly radio program and the start of a successful church school whose enrollment increased from 76 to 310 students in two years, under the principal leadership of the late Sis. Ruth Jordan Paschal. An active welfare program took care of the needs of the disadvantaged and indigent in the local community. A community service project of a nursery, kindergarten, and preschool program cared for 120 children daily, with the late Mrs. Naomi Lewis as director. Financial progress was a hallmark of this period.

On Thanksgiving weekend, November 26th-29th of 1959, convocation was held to celebrate the forty

years of progress for the work in Dallas. Elder Dudley wrote the following in the souvenir bulletin:

God has been very kind to us during these years that the Three Angel's Messages have been preached. The membership is ten times as large as it was after the first meeting was held by Elder Sydney Scott. The church has changed location three times during these years. Each time that the location has changed, it has been a challenge to the congregation, but God has been with His people . . . The purpose of this Convocation is to report at least another \$10,000 or \$20,000 on the remaining balance of our project. Whatever the accomplishment we shall say: "To God be the Glory".

1960's - 1970's

During the tenure of Elder Dudley, a \$30,000 church building debt was paid off just four years after his arrival. The mortgage was burned on March 11, 1962. Many of these historical events are documented in news articles published in the *Dallas Express* newspaper, now known as *The Dallas Post Tribune*.

Over the next several years, church growth increased and City Temple continued its outreach activities. New pastor L.B. Baker preached with conviction in many evangelistic crusades and souls yielded to the gospel call.

Elder William C. Jones, former president of Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, along with the dynamic and loved Elder C. Sampson Myles and Elder J.A. James, received a call to labor for Christ in a new vineyard, the Northeastern Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This left the late Elder Louis D. Henderson Sr., then the treasurer of the Southwest Region Conference, to serve as interim pastor for 5 ½ months. Along with Elder Henderson, an intern was assigned—Pastor Helvius L. Thompson II.

City Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church, located at 1900 South Boulevard and Harwood Street, housed a church, a 12th-grade academy, and the local conference office. A health and welfare center was also operated in South Dallas by the City Temple Church. The possibilities for evangelism were numerous.

Eminent domain - a right of government to take private property for public use by virtue of the superior dominion of the sovereign power over all lands within its jurisdiction.

The population of the City of Dallas was ever growing. An expansion of Interstate 45 highway was cited. The freeway expansion would require the destruction of the "ideal" church location. In the eminent domain proceeding in *The State of Texas vs. Southwest Region Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists*, public record indicates that an amount of damages was awarded from the special commissioners of Dallas County Court at Law No. 1, in the sum of \$400,000.00, payable to the defendants. Possession of the property was then issued to the State of Texas. If the structure was present today, it would be designated as a historical landmark.

The search began for a new place of worship. Searching for property in the Oak Cliff area, sights were considered off of Interstate 35 South near Laureland. In 1969, Elder Louis D. Henderson, Sr., interim pastor and treasurer of Southwest Region Conference, along with the late Elder William J. Cleveland, Sr., conference president, were instrumental in securing property at the present location of 1530 and 1600 Bonnie View Road at Arrow Streets, formerly owned by Christ for the Nations. While working toward completion of the new church structure, the City Temple family worshiped at the building which is now the academy.

The church family envisioned a church that would be a beacon to the community in which it was built. Provisions were made for a large air-conditioned and heated auditorium with overflow area, treasurer's office, choir loft, baptismal pool, mother's room with speakers and sound-proofing viewing glass, fully equipped kitchen, deaconess room, choir room, pastor's study and secretarial office, and lots of storage space, including five large classrooms with storage cabinets in each room. On June 27, 1970, Elder James Edgecombe arrived, completing the building for entrance into the new structure on May 16, 1971 at 1530 Bonnie View Road. The school location was now 1600 Bonnie View Road. At this point, The Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was no longer housed in the same building as the church.

Ministers Elder Warner Rice and D.J. Williams (who was later elected Secretary of the Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists), and interim Pastor J.C. Hicks, served prior to arrival of Elder G.N. Wells. Elder Wells' ministry brought many souls into the fold. He was a warrior for Christian education. Many Sabbaths Elder Wells would leave the rostrum area to come to the floor to promote

Message Magazine, the Oakwood College offering, and ingathering. He also charmed the children with his wonderful children's stories. In 1980, the year of the General Conference session in Dallas, Texas, City Temple church ranked #1 in Message Magazine subscriptions with the leadership of Elder Wells. Another young intern, Pastor Alex Horton, served along with Elder Wells.

1980's - 2000

Near the end of the year 1980, the idea of the formation of another Seventh-day Adventist church in Dallas began to develop in the minds of members of City Temple. After much meeting, praying and fasting, a few individuals stepped out in faith. On January 17, 1981, Dallas Fellowship Church opened its doors for worship at Bishop College. Elder James Thomas became its first pastor. In March of 1983, twenty-six acres of land were purchased at 5014 Bonnie View Road. On July 17, 1983, the congregation held its first ground-breaking ceremony.

In 1982, Elder Jack A. Morris and family arrived in Dallas, from the Hammond, Louisiana district. One of the youngest pastors to receive a full-time assignment to City Temple, he passionately shared his love for reading with his local elders. He initiated Sabbath afternoon Spirit of Prophecy classes and New Year's Eve family communions. That same year, Evangelist Oscar Lane brought revival to Dallas, Texas, and as a result of his proclamation of the gospel, the Faith Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church was established, and it continues to serve as a beacon in the community.

In 1983, Mrs. Verdia Tucker, Bible worker for the Southwest Region Conference, initiated S.W.A.T. (Soul Winning Action Team) at City Temple Church. Mrs. Tucker and S.W.A.T. gave Bible studies in South and West Dallas neighborhoods. During the summer of 1985, Elder Nathaniel Lee, Mrs. Virginia Phillips and S.W.A.T. conducted a Revelation Seminar resulting in fifteen baptisms, leading up to the organization of what is now the Penuel Seventh-day Adventist Church. On November 16, 1985, the Penuel Seventh-day Adventist Church was organized as a new church in the West Dallas community. On January 25, 1986, forty-six members transferred from City Temple to Penuel.

Pastor Morris was assigned to Faith Temple for a short period, during which time Elder Rawden Brown served as interim pastor to City Temple. Sister Tucker Williams was assigned to serve the needs of Faith Temple. The Lord then provided Sister Oree Smith to City Temple, who served faithfully as a Bible worker. Having a desire to continue to raise funds for Christian education, Sister Lallage Egleston began a cup ministry following the conclusion of the Children's Story, a tradition that continues even today.

From July 1990 to December 1990, City Temple was without a pastor; but through the leadership of the first elder, Kenneth Medlock, the worship continued. Souls were nourished by many guest speakers of the gospel.

In December 1990, Evangelist Helvius L. Thompson, Jr., was introduced as the new pastor. Known as an outstanding pastor, evangelist, builder, educator, and community leader, Thompson filled all of the roles of administration. Pastor Thompson conducted panoramic, multimedia three angels' gospel crusades at the church and in various locations in the metroplex. As a builder, he orchestrated the renovation of the church and school. Evidence of his community involvement was focused on in a December 6, 1997, *The Dallas Morning News* article in the Religion Section, entitled, "Face to Face".

Student pastors Willie Johnson, Jr. and Michael Washington of Southwest Adventist University were given the opportunity to round-out their education by serving the City Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church under the guidance of Elder Thompson. Additionally, Pastor Ron Williams started his ministry as the church's Associate Pastor/Bible Instructor.

In the summer of 1995, the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists' outreach effort known as Ebony Evangelism came to Dallas, Texas, featuring Pastor Calvin Watkins. Many took their stand and vowed an allegiance to Christ. Associate Pastor Tyrone Douglas and Bible Instructors Shirley Smith and Ron Williams ministered and evangelized alongside Pastor Thompson.

With the reassignment of Pastor Thompson to Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Orleans, Louisiana, the City Temple family was again without a pastor. First Elder Kenneth Medlock once again shouldered the responsibilities of leadership for City Temple from June 1999 to January 2000.

2000 - Present

On Sabbath, January 8, 2000, Pastor Alex Horton was installed as the Pastor of City Temple Seventhday Adventist Church. For the second time, a former pastoral intern had returned to serve as senior pastor of the congregation. During his tenure, Pastor Horton restarted a radio ministry around August, 2002, broadcasting every Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. on KHVN Heaven 97. In November, 2007, a listener was baptized from this ministry.

City Temple again birthed a new church, Agape Fellowship, which started as a company June 2004 and which in 2007 was voted as an official church of the Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Chaplain Tyrone Boyd was influential as the pastoral overseer of the church, donating full-time service to this effort.

Pastor Horton taught the church how to have fun, and started an annual Church Retreat at Lone Star Camp. The church members looked forward to a spiritual refreshing with programs that took place from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon.

Pastor Horton also focused on the youth by reintroducing Associate Pastors to the church in the persons of Pastor Patrick Jacques and Pastor Kevin Bruce. Pastor Jacques started a Sycamore Cafe program for young adults that was continued by Pastor Kevin Bruce.

On December 8, 2007, Pastor Horton preached his farewell sermon after accepting a call to the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. For the third time, Head Elder Kenneth Medlock picked up the reins as church administrator.

On December 22, 2007, the Conference announced the appointment of an interim Pastor, Charles Sanders, who served the Southwest Region as Stewardship, Sabbath School, and Children's Ministries Director. Pastor Sanders' most prominent gift to the church was the ability to express a genuine love for God's people—he fed and "tended" the sheep.

On July 31, 2008, the Conference Executive Committee voted Pastor Eddie Polite from St. Louis, Missouri, as the next pastor of the City Temple Church, effective September 1, 2008. Pastor Polite was officially installed as Senior Pastor on October 4, 2008. Pastor Charles Sanders remained as Associate Pastor.

On August 1, 2013, Conference Executive Committee voted Pastor Jaime Kowlessar from New York City, as Associate Pastor of City Temple. Pastor Kowlessar was installed October 5, 2013.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

The table below lists pastors who have served the church over the years, along with church accomplishments/achievements.

* - deceased pastors

1919	Elder Sydney Scott*
1919	First company of believers organized after tent was pitched
	on Central near Littlejohn drugstore. The seventh-day
	Adventist church started in the home of Mrs. N.H. Turner at
	1112 ½ South Carroll Street.
1920 - 1923	Elder R.L. Bradford. Sr.*
1920 - 1923	Spring 1923, first camp meeting held.
	Church home moved to Mrs. Hall's building on State street.
1923 - 1926	Elder E.M. Gates*
1923 - 1920	Elder E.ivi. Gales
	Spring of 1926, another tent meeting conducted in Christian
	Park on Thomas & Washington avenue in North Dallas.
1006 1007	Church officially organized into charter. Elder J.G. Dasent*
1926 - 1927	Elder H.J. Miller*
1926 - 1929	
1926 - 1929	Elder Antonio K. Watkins*
	1000 tent meeting conducted on Healtell Street
	1928 - tent meeting conducted on Haskell Street.
	October 3, 1928 - Construction of Beulah Seventh-day
	Adventist Church begins.
	Adventist Church begins.
	1929 - First church building completed on corners of Haskell
	and Day streets. Church seating capacity was 200.
1929 - 1936	Elder M.M. Young, Sr.*
1936 - 1937	Elder P. McDaniels*
1937 - 1939	Elder J.N. Fisher
1940 - 1943	
	Elder Stanley Huddleston*
1943 - 1944	Elder R.T. Hudson*
1944 - 1945	Elder A.B. Humphrey
1945 - 1946	Elder L.R. Proctor*
1945 - 1949	Elder J.H. Williams*
	Conducted several evangelistic meeting, adding several
	members by baptism.
	1946 - Conference [called a mission] office organized with
	first officers.
1949 - 1951	Elder W.W. Fordham*
1949 - 1951	Conducted a crusade, adding 70 members by baptism.
	Conducted a crusade, adding 70 members by paptism.
	Built new church location and school. Moved church from
	South Haskell to 3711 Oakland Avenue. Church seating
	capacity was 400.
1947 - 1948	Elder Samuel D. Meyers*
1951	Elder C.E. Bradford
1951 - 1952	Elder G.E. Bladdord Elder Fred Parker*
1954	Elder W.J. Cleveland* Known for evangelistic efforts in West Dallas.
1955 - 1958	Elder J.E. Cox, Jr.
1900 - 1900	LIUGI J.L. COX, JI.
	1956 - Adventists purchase the Temple Emanu-El at 1900
	South Boulevard, with the Southwestern Region Conference.
	Official move was October 1, 1956.
	Official friove was october 1, 1950.
	Elder organized the adult choir which became known
	throughout the city over the radio. This ministry increased
	church membership to 400 strong.
1956 - 1958	Elder V.L. Roberts* [Interim]
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Known for his aggressive approach to leadership. He started: a successful church school academy with an enrollment increase from 76 to 310 students in two years under the principal leadership of the late Mrs. Ruth Jordan Paschal an active welfare program providing care for the local disadvantaged and indigent a community service project of a nursery, kindergarten, and preschool program providing care for 120 children daily, with the late Mrs. Naomi Lewis as director a mortgage burning occurred March 11, 1962 Financial progress was a hallmark of this period! November 26-29th, 1959 40-year anniversary convocation conducted November 26-29th, 1959 40-year anniversary convocation conducted 1962 Eider L. Baker* 1969 Eider W.C. Jones [Interim]* 1969 Eider Jourse Interim* 1969 Eider Jourse Interim* 1970-1972 Eider Jerose A. James 1970-1972 Eider Jerose A. James 1970-1972 Eider Jerose A. Edgecombe* May 16, 1971 - construction completed at new 1530 Bonnie View location. 1972-1973 Eider Norma Sappes [Interim] 1973-1975 Eider Norma Sappes [Interim] 1976-1982 Eider Jourse Interim* 1976 Eider J. Hides [Interim] 1976-1982 Eider Gerald N. Wells January 17, 1981 - Dallas Fellowship Seventh-day Adventist Church opened its doors for worship at Bishop College. A few individuals from City Temple Church stepped out on faith to form this new church. 1982-1990 Eider Jourse Interim* November 16, 1985 - S.W.A.T. conducted a Revelation Seminar which resulted in 15 baptisms and the formation of a new church in West Dallas - Penuel Seventh-day Adventist Church in January 25, 1985 - forty-akx members transfer from City Temple to Penuel Church a new Church and the Children's Story - this tradition continues to date. 1980 Eider Rawden Brown [Interim] November 16, 1985 - S.W.A.T. conducted a Revelation Seminar which resulted in 15 baptisms and the formation of a new church in West Dallas - Penuel Seventh-day Adventist Church in West Dallas - Penuel Seventh-day Adventist Church in West Dallas - Penuel Seventh-day Adventist Church in West D	1958 - 1962	Elder Charles E. Dudley*
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	1990	Elder Rawden Brown [Interim]

1990 - 1999	Elder Helvius L. Thompson
	Known for conducting panoramic, multimedia third angel's gospel crusades.
	Organized the renovation of the church and school.
	Pastor Ron Williams started his ministry as the church's Associate Pastor/Bible Instructor.
2000 - 2007	February 16-19th, 2000 80-year anniversary program conducted.
2000 - 2007	Elder Alex Horton
	July 22, 2001: New church website goes live (www.dallascitytemple.org)!
	August 25, 2002: Church restarts live radio broadcast on KHVN (970 AM).
	2003: Another renovation of the church occurs.
	January, 2004: Church installs new audio/visual equipment and A/V ministry in place.
	April, 2004: Church renovates entire sanctuary and furniture.
	June, 2004: Several members from City Temple Church canvas the DeSoto/Lancaster area. Agape Fellowship Company is the result with Chaplain Tyrone Boyd as the pastoral overseer. In 2007, Agape becomes a church in the Southwest Region Conference.
	October, 2004: Junior Bible Bowl team established by Dr. Michael McHenry.
	December 8, 2007: Pastor Horton preaches his farewell sermon, accepting a call to the South Central Conference.
2007 - 2008	Elder Charles Sanders [Interim]
	Pastor Charles Sanders, Director at the Southwest Region Conference is announced and serves as the Interim Pastor of City Temple Church from December 22, 2007 to August, 2008.