

***BRIEF HISTORY OF CCAF, given the congregation on Sunday, October 27, 2024...CCAF HERITAGE DAY.***

Pentecostalism in America began in the late 1800s as Christians in America began to experience the Baptism of The Holy Spirit with the evidence of Speaking in tongues. The movement began in America's Midwest but spread across the continent. In 1906, the Pentecostal movement in America began to accelerate as the result of a Revival led by a Methodist Minister named William Seymour. The Pentecostal Experience became more and more common in America. As word of this Biblical experience spread, spiritually thirsty Christians began to gather in houses and places of worship in search of an infilling of the Holy Spirit.

This experience was widely rejected by the mainstream Christian Church community. Prayer meetings were formed that were led by men and women who had personally had a Pentecostal Experience of Speaking in Tongues as the Spirit gave them the ability. Those prayer meetings became churches, and those churches formed alliances. One of the key churches in the early days of Pentecostalism in America was **Christ Temple of Indianapolis, Indiana**. The Pastor of Christ Temple was **Bishop G. T. Haywood**. Bishop Haywood was the first Presiding Bishop of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Incorporated (PAW). Not only is the PAW one of the oldest Pentecostal organizations in the world, it was founded intentionally interracial.

Bishop GT Haywood led the PAW from 1925-1931. In the early 1900s, Christ Temple was not just a thriving congregation, but a hub of Pentecostalism and is considered a Mother Church of The PAW. Bishop Haywood was filled with the Holy Ghost in 1906.

According to several historians, many people made their way to Indianapolis to have the Pentecostal experience. One of the employees at Christ Temple was a Wisconsin native named **Albert Roberts**. It is believed that Bishop Haywood sent Elder Roberts along **with his wife, Lula Roberts**, to Columbus. Elder Roberts founded The Apostolic Faith Church. It was located on Goodale Street at that time.

In the Spring of 1915, a preacher by the name of **Brother Glenn Cook** began to preach about the Oneness of God and the importance of administering baptism in Jesus' name. Until then, all believers were baptized using verbiage that is based on the Trinitarian description of the Godhead. Reverend Cook began to share his revelation and eventually shared it with Bishop Haywood. Bishop Haywood accepted the teaching and was rebaptized in Jesus' name. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1915, he rebaptized his entire congregation in the Fall Creek River in Indianapolis.

For some unknown reason, Bishop Haywood sent (then Elder) **Robert C. Lawson** to Columbus to lead this Apostolic Faith congregation. Among the first persons to be baptized during Bishop Robert Lawson's tenure in Columbus was a young Methodist Pastor named **Reverend Karl Franklin Smith**. Reverend Karl F. Smith was a student at Wilberforce University. In 1915 Reverend Smith was assigned to lead a Methodist congregation in Columbus and stopped by the Apostolic Faith Church. On April 18, 1915, Reverend Karl F. Smith had the Pentecostal experience and left the Methodist Church and Wilberforce University to serve under Bishop Robert Lawson.

In 1919, Bishop Lawson turned the church over to Elder Smith and went to New York, where he continued to establish churches around the country and the world. Also in 1919, Bishop Robert Lawson renamed the Apostolic Faith Church to The Church of Christ of the Apostolic Faith (CCAF). It is noteworthy that while he was in Columbus, Bishop Lawson founded an Apostolic organization named The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, also known as COOLJC.

Additionally, before leaving Columbus for New York, Bishop Lawson also mentored a young minister who would eventually relocate to New York, and then to Washington, D.C. His name was Bishop Smallwood Williams. Bishop Smallwood Williams is the founder of Bibleway Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ World-Wide, Incorporated.

By God's Grace, CCAF has been significant in the lives of these two historic Apostolic organizations. Only God knows the list of great men and women that were birthed at, or nurtured at CCAF over the years.

Bishop Karl F. Smith led our congregation from 1919 until 1972. During his tenure, CCAF was at the forefront of the Apostolic Pentecostal movement. Bishop Smith's accomplishments and influence cannot be overstated.

- One of the founding members of the Central Ohio Council (Pre-ODC).
- One of the founding members of the Ohio District Council of Pentecostal Churches in 1925.
- One of the founding members of COOLJC.
- General Secretary of COOLJC from 1919-1924.
- General Secretary of The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc., from 1925-1931.
- General Secretary of a merged organization that was formed in 1931, named the Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ. This was a merger of the Apostolic Churches of Jesus Christ and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. (Bishop Smith was the only African American member of the official board of the merged Apostolic organization in 1931.)
- Co-founded Aenon Bible College in 1941 with Elder LaBaugh Stansbury.
- Diocesan Bishop of the Illinois, Indiana, Missouri Council from 1941-1955.
- Diocesan Bishop of the Ohio District Council 1955-1972.
- Personal friends with Bishop G. T. Haywood, Bishop Hancock (founder of the Pentecostal Churches of the Apostolic Faith), Bishops Schultz, Morris Golder, Austin Layne, Leland Guthrie, James A. Johnson, Frank Bowdan, Raymond Robinson, B. T. Scott, Raymond Lloyd, Evangelists Mae Lofton, Ballard, Zelma Reed, and Lottie Glenn.
- He mentored individuals like Bishop Arthur Brazier, District Elder Ernest Hardy, Bishop James W. Gaiters, Bishop Edgar Posey, Bishop Howard Tillman, and the list could go on and on.
- Counselor and mentor to these Presiding Bishops: Bishop Brisbin, Bishop Paddock, Bishop Francis Smith, and Bishop Paul A. Bowers.

Time will not allow us to itemize the impact of Bishop Smith. And, all of this, while leading The Church of Christ of the Apostolic Faith. **Bishop Smith's son, Jack Smith**, once wrote that Aenon Bible College was his father's heart.

Aenon Bible College was founded in 1941. Bishop Karl Smith wanted to provide a collegiate experience for Apostolic Pentecostals. Eighty years later, Aenon Bible College continues that same mission and vision. Aenon Bible College was so prominent in its early days, that students would move to Columbus to attend Aenon. Again, there is a long list of Spiritual giants who attended Aenon Bible

College in Columbus, between the years of 1941 and 1979 (when it was relocated to Indianapolis, Indiana.)

There are several Aeon-Columbus alumni present in this room right now. One of those students was a young preacher from New York, Minister Noel Jones.

We are gathered here today to pay tribute to the favor of God upon this church. We want the world to know how grateful we are to God for using CCAF to spread the Gospel in the earth.

And most of all, we want to build on that legacy by doing more and more and more.

Join me in thanking God for allowing us the privilege of continuing the good work He began at The Church of Christ of the Apostolic Faith, the light of Columbus since 1910.