

## Highlights from the History of People's Community Church

02/17/1973 - 02/17/2023

On February 17, 1973, ten Christians, seeing a need for a non-denominational church in Berea, established People's Community Church. The founders were Pastor Hezekiah Ford, members Carolyn Ford, Booker and Juanita Collins, Trummie and Ilona Hudson, Leo and Wilma Norris, and Dwight and Winifred West. Baldwin Wallace College/University graciously allowed the Church to use its facilities. The first service was held on March 11, 1973- in McKelvey Hall.

- People's Community Church was incorporated in 1973.
- The first Blessings were given to Sirron and Sirree Norris on April 15, 1973.
- The first Baptism was held on June 3, 1973 for Cheryl L. Sutherland.
- Mrs. Delia Mae Simpson was named the first Mother of the Church in 1973.
- From February 3, 1974, to August 1989, the Church held its services at the Baldwin Wallace College Lindsay-Crossman Chapel.
- On March 30, 1975, Rev. Hezekiah Ford resigned after accepting employment in Detroit, Michigan.
- June 29, 1975, we voted unanimously to call Rev. Leroy McCreary as our second pastor and on August 31, 1975 installed him as the new leader.
- Rev. Patrick Hunt was installed as Associate Pastor on November 9, 1980. He served until 2007 when he was called to pastor the Heritage Congregational Church in Berea.
- In 1981, People's Community Church joined the National Council of Community Churches now the International Council of Community Churches (ICCC). Pastor McCreary was president from 2007- 2009.
- In 1986, an academic scholarship in memory of Leon R. Dozier II was established.
- 1988 We ordained our 1st 2 deacons. Clyde (Al) Albergottie and Trummie Hudson.
- The following deacons were ordained at a later date Bobby Bland (1990), Howard Pincham (1997), Mose Payne, Keith Jefferson (2007) Edward Napoleon (2016).
- 1989 after 15 years of much hard work and prayer we marched from BW Chapel to our permanent home at 631 N. Rocky River Dr.
- In subsequent years we were able to purchase adjacent homes which allowed for expansion of the church and community services.

- In 2000;
  - Sister Laura Dozier was named the second Mother of the Church.
  - Rev. David Graham joined the pastoral staff.
  - The African American Library was opened.
- The Church has been involved in several significant outreach efforts, including aid to missionaries serving in Haiti and Africa.
- July 2003, we completed our new sanctuary.
- In 2006, the Church approved the North End Foundation of Berea.
  - The Berea Youth Works provides summer jobs to youths.
  - Annual science camps for Berea students.
- March 14, 2010 Rev. Leroy McCreary and Elaine McCreary Youth Outreach Center was dedicated.
- On Sunday, November 27, 2011, the first and only color electronic sign in the City of Berea was dedicated at People's Community Church.
- In 2012, People's Community Church became an authorized member of the Cleveland Foodbank in Berea.
- In 2013, the Church paid off the mortgage on the new sanctuary. All subsequent-buildings and property have since been paid off.
- PCC continues with the following outreaches:
  - Feed the Kids Summer Lunch program, Family reading night, Fun Day.
- September 30, 2018 after 43 years of service, Rev. Leroy McCreary preached his last sermon as pastor of People's Community Church.
- October, 2018 we welcomed our new Pastor Rev. Charles (CJ) Harkness.
- March 2020 closed church due to Coronavirus (COVID-19). The newly formed Tech team enabled us to continue services through Zoom. We now have people joining via Facebook and YouTube from all over the country.
- Going virtual brought about the Praise Team, accompanied by Reggie Bowens Jr. followed by Reggie Bowens Sr. along with other supporting music and dance.
- Additional safety precautions were put in place, for the food bank, which includes efficient, drive-up distribution, which continues to work well today.
- June 2020 began in person service with 30 people and continued via Zoom and Facebook. We now have full service and all are welcome.

Through the Grace of God, People's Community Church has established itself as an important part of the Christian community and the North End of Berea. People's Community Church looks forward to many more years of Christian service.