



## 1950 REV. RICHARD DOBBINS

In 1950, Rev. Richard Dobbins (1927-2014), who had been serving as a traveling evangelist, began to feel God calling him to start a church in his hometown of Akron, Ohio. He began in 1950, by meeting with a group of people for Bible study in homes to explore the possibility of a new church.



## 1950 - 1958 SOUTH AKRON ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Rev. F.E. Whiskey (an ordained Assemblies of God minister, owned a church on South Street in Akron known as South Akron Pentecostal Church (57 West South Street). Whiskey suggested that, since he had the church building, but no people, and Dobbins had the people, that the group should meet in his building on South Street. That first July Sunday only 29 children and adults attended Sunday school, but the Lord was there and the church grew. After time, the church affiliated with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and became known as The South Akron Assembly of God. (NOTE: The church currently owns the cornerstone of this building. It is located in the church offices.)

The group which became known as the South Akron Assembly of God (AKA Glad Tidings Assembly of God) was able to purchase the property from Whiskey for \$7,000. God blessed the small church on South Street. People were being saved, baptized in the Holy Spirit and healed. The church later sold the building to the City of Akron to make room for the west leg of the Akron Freeway for \$35,000.

### "THE ALTAR OPENED, I DID NOT WAIT..."

Longtime member, Jim Songgrass recounts a personal experience with the Lord. In late 1951, he and Lorena began to attend the church on South Street. Jim said, "On Easter Sunday in 1952, we had an all day sing and dinner on the grounds. It seemed like the quartets were singing directly to me. That night, Pastor Dobbins was preaching hell, fire and brimstone in the evening evangelistic session. When the altar was opened for salvation, I did not wait. When I got to the altar, the Holy Spirit hit me and I went down under His power! Before I got back on my feet, I had found Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and I have never looked back." Jim Songgrass served faithfully as a Trustee and Deacon. He served as a Sunday school teacher and prayer warrior. Jim was the number one handyman for many years.

- 1951 Testimony from South Akron Assembly of God

## 1958 - 1968

### BROWN & VINE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

In 1958, a new church was born—the Assembly of God at Brown and Vine. The church known as Bethel Assembly of God at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Chittenden Street, later becoming known as Central Assembly of God because of its location, and Dobbins' church of South Akron Assembly of God (AKA Glad Tidings Assembly of God) merged. The new congregation was officially called The Assemblies of God, Inc. or the Assembly of God at Brown and Vine. The merged church at Brown and Vine experienced rapid growth. Many people were being saved, healed, and filled with the Holy Spirit. By 1961, it became obvious that larger facilities were needed for the congregation. Every member of the congregation was urged to look for plots of four acres of ground or more near a major traffic artery. Plans began to find a new location and to build.

### Introducing Evangel Temple



## 1968 - 2005

### EVANGEL TEMPLE

On August 9, 1964, this congregation broke ground and began construction on a new building. Immediately following Sunday school, a parade of over 100 cars led by Mayor Edward O. Erickson and City Councilman Joseph Costello made its way from Brown and Vine Streets to the new location. More than 200 people were on hand for the groundbreaking ceremonies. The building was dedicated on May 2, 1966, with Rev. C.M. Ward, the Revivaltime speaker, as the dedication speaker. His father, A.G. Ward was one of the early founders of the Pentecostal movement.

## 1972

### EMERGE MINISTRIES FOUNDED

In 1970, Dobbins received his doctorate in guidance and counseling from the University of Akron. In 1972, Dobbins founded Emerge Ministries at Evangel Temple. In 1987, Emerge Ministries relocated to its Mill Avenue location.



### "A SIGNIFICANT HEALING"

Bob and Dorothy Gibson learned in July 1956, that their second child, Marilyn (Gibson) Parker, had Spinal Polio. Marilyn at months was not able to use her right arm. Her deltoid muscle in her right arm was 70% paralyzed. She could not lift her arm to come forward and was unable to feed herself. The attending physician, Dr. Kiri, advised the family that the child would never be able to use her arm and he fitted her with a brace. On the first Sunday of February in 1956, Dorothy began to sense God wanted to do something special for Marilyn. She told Bob she thought they needed to take Marilyn forward for prayer when Pastor Dobbins opened the altar time for those needing healing. Pastor Dobbins prayed for Marilyn and nothing happened...until two days later. On Tuesday morning, Marilyn, now 17 months, was sitting in her highchair waiting to be fed. She miraculously raised her right arm and began to feed herself! Marilyn was healed!

- 1956 Healing at South Akron Assembly of God

### PREVIOUS SENIOR PASTORS:

- 1950 - 1976  
Rev. Richard Dobbins
- 1976 - 1997  
Rev. Derrill R. Sharp
- 1997 - 2002  
Rev. Michael Mancari
- 2002 - 2014  
Rev. Jeff Wade



REV. ZACH & HEATHER PROSSER  
SENIOR PASTORS  
2014 - PRESENT



## 2005 - PRESENT

### CELEBRATION CHURCH

In May 2005, the church's name was changed from Evangel Temple to Celebration Church. Under the new name, many successful ministries have and continue to happen. On Wednesday, July 4, 2017, under the leadership of Pastors Zach & Heather Prosser, the church saw revival break out amongst the congregation. The church remains in revival to this day and is continuing for revival to spread throughout the Great Lakes region.

## 1988

### DOORS OF LOVE BUILDING CAMPAIGN

Under Rev. Derrill Sharp the foyer, second floor, additional classrooms and restrooms were added. A major renovation of the sanctuary and educational wing were also part of this \$650,000 project.

