

Bishop D, Rayford Bell **Presided 1989- 2000**

Bishop Dennis Rayford Bell was born on July 9, 1923 in Mississippi. In April 1949, at the age of 26, he first heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and began a new life.

Bishop Bell came up through the ranks of Christ Temple Church in Chicago, serving in such positions as Sunday School Teacher, Assistant and Superintendent of the Sunday School Department, Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Youth Department, Trustee Assistant Pastor and became the Pastor in 1958. He is the Founder of the Christ Temple Apostolic Church in Joliet, as well as the Founder and President of the Midwest Apostolic Bible College in Chicago. Bishop Bell is also the Founder of the Samuel Barnes Christian Academy, a K-8th grade school named in memory of his Pastor District Elder Samuel Barnes. Both schools are housed in the Dr. D. Rayford Bell Educational Center, located at the Christ Temple Church complex. Bishop Bell is the creator of the Mother Darlene Bell Scholarship Fund to help further the educational dreams of deserving students.



Dr. Bell served as Presiding Bishop of the Pentecostal Churches of the Apostolic Faith from January 1990 – July 2000. He also served as the Assistant Presiding Bishop for 19 years under his best friend the late Bishop Elzie W. Young.

As senior pastor of Christ Temple Apostolic Faith Church for 49 years, his motto is “He is Apostolic across the fence, behind the barn and everywhere.” Bishop Bell’s life has been one of serving the church and the community. He’s also a Chaplain for the Chicago Police Department. His primary joy is sharing the life and saving grace of Jesus Christ with others.

Bishop Bell has preached the Gospel from the street corners of Chicago to 49 states in the Union; more than 50 Countries on five Continents to the Isles of the sea.

Bishop Bell is a firm believer that salvation along with education is the road to true freedom and success. He completed high school at Chicago’s LaSalle University. He received a Bachelor’s Degree in Religious Studies from Oklahoma’s Southwestern College. At American Bible College (Florida), he was a straight “A” student pursuing his Master’s in Theology. In August 1979 from Toledo Bible College, he received his Doctorates of Theology and Philosophy. Accolades were lavished on him for being the first person to receive 2 Doctorate degrees in one year.

The sentiments of his heart play like the lyrics of this song, “If I can help somebody as I travel along; If I can cheer somebody with a word or a song; If I can tell somebody that he is traveling wrong, then my living shall not be in vain.”

