



Bishop Elmira Jeffries (Served from 1946-1964)

When God gave birth to Mount Sinai Holy Church of America, Incorporated, Elmira Jeffries was right there. She was part of a small group who had made a formal request to the state of Pennsylvania for the privilege to legally become a religious entity. Knowing something about Elder Jeffries' character, it is believed that she petitioned God concerning His will for Mount Sinai before she petitioned the State of Pennsylvania. She knew that prayer is a means for obtaining what God has for His people. Elmira Jeffries, the petitioner, became the corporation's first vice-president.

As a true follower of Jesus Christ, Bishop Elmira Jeffries spent much of her time in prayer. Those who knew her well were very much aware that prayer was a very important part of her ministry. The early Mount Sinai Year Books provide historical records that make references to the activities of Elmira Jeffries. Many of the services were either opened with a prayer led by Elder Jeffries or closed with prayer by Elder Jeffries. For some services it was both. There is no question that prayer occupied a very prominent place in her life. The experiences of the Christian home in Littleton, North Carolina, where Elmira was born on December 2, 1882, initiated a great love for the church. Her parents were John and Betty Williams. She spoke often of the influence of a Godly mother and grandmother. During her youth (age 12) she was led to the Lord. As she matured, a craving for more of God developed in her. At the age of 20, she was sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost Shortly thereafter, she was called to the ministry.

As the wife of policeman, William Henry Jeffries, Elmira continued to search for a special place in God. According to an article in the Young People's Quarterly for September, 1962, Sister Jeffries searched for fifteen years for a leader and a church that preached and practiced the Word of God in its fullness. She found such a church when she accepted an invitation to visit the Mount Olive Holy Church in Philadelphia. At Mount Olive she found that after taking of communion, the saints washed one another's feet Sister Jeffries was so thrilled to find a group of Christians carrying out an act that Jesus had instituted with his disciples, that she relocated from East Orange, New Jersey to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; joined Mount Olive; assisted the pastor where needed; and continued to grow in Christ.

While visiting her hometown in North Carolina, Sister Jeffries had the opportunity to share her testimony in her home church. She told the congregation how the Lord had delivered her from "sin and sinning." The church deacons, much disturbed over this great claim, held a meeting to which she was summoned and rebuked for her statements. However, one of the deacons spoke up on her behalf; "We turn people out of the church for sinning. Now - she says she doesn't sin. Who are we going to keep in the church?" Problem solved! Subsequent to the death of Bishop

Ida Robinson, Elder Jeffries was set aside to the Bishopric in 1946 by Bishop W.E. Fuller, President of the Fire Baptized Holy Church. She also became president of Mount Sinai Holy Church of America, Inc., and the pastor of Mount Olive Holy Temple in Philadelphia.

Bishop Jeffries purchased a home at 1510 N. 15th Street in Philadelphia. Her sister, Eliza beth Harrison, Deacon and Sister Whitfield, and Sis Corean Lambert all became members of the household. Years later, this home would become the office of Mt. Sinai's headquarters. While living at 1510 N. 15th Street, the Physicians' and Surgeons' Hospital located next door at 1512 - 1514 became available for sale. Bishop Jeffries had always had a deep desire to accommodate the elderly and single saints. After much prayer and consideration, the hospital was purchased by Mount Sinai Holy Church. Bishop Jeffries' dream was realized. Bishop Mary E. Jackson was the first overseer. Elder George H. Brown was the first president, Elder Lillian Bagley was the first vice-president, Brother Samuel Rumber was the caretaker, and Sister Mary Jane Winchester was the first matron. Later, part of this facility was designated for use as a convalescent home. Today it is a brand new, 189 bed, skilled nursing care facility extending from the corner of 15th and Jefferson Streets through 1514 N. 15th Street. It has been named, The Elmira Jeffries Memorial Home.

Bishop Jeffries was a woman of prayer, faith and dedication. She had gifts of hospitality and liberality. She had a special love and concern for her family and the people of God. She never relinquished her belief in the healing power of God. Her sermons were often warnings such as, "Neglect Brings Regret" and "The End of All Things is at Hand."

She pastored the Following churches:

Bethel Pentecostal Church, Bridgeton, NJ

Mount Nebo, Baltimore, MD

Zion Gospel Mission, Newark, NJ

St Paul's Holy Church, Philadelphia, PA

Mt Olive Holy Temple, Philadelphia, PA

Bishop Jeffries had a long and fruitful ministry. Her life of eighty-one years, her dedicated service to mankind, and her unrelenting allegiance to Christ won her the deep respect and esteem of her many friends.

On Monday, June 15, 1964, she went suddenly to be with the Lord.

"...let her own works praise her in the gates." Proverbs 31:31b

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