

THE HISTORY OF NEW SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH



Dr. Whit W. Allen
Founder and Pastor (1902 - 1942)

Dr. Whit W. Allen's Era

New Shiloh Baptist Church was founded in October 1902, by the Reverend Whit W. Allen. Rev. Allen organized the Shiloh Free Baptist Church of Baltimore City over a rag shop on Myrtle Avenue near George Street. He began with two members, Brother Solomon Causby and Sister Carrie Reed. In 1906, the first church building was purchased at Clinton Avenue and George Street, and a year later, the name of the church was changed to Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore City.

Rev. Allen who received his call to the ministry in the fall of 1901 while serving as a Deacon and Sunday School Superintendent at New Psalmist Baptist Church, graduated from the Clayton Williams Academy with honors in 1908.

In 1913, a second floor was added to the church to accommodate a pipe organ, the baptismal pool, stained glass windows and steam radiators. The membership continued to grow and by 1916, the church was incorporated and became New Shiloh Baptist Church. The mortgage of \$16,000 was burned on Tuesday, October 21, 1919 and by then the church had grown to more than 500 members.

Ten years after the addition, New Shiloh has outgrew its building on George Street and purchased a larger building on the corner of Fremont and Lanvale Streets. On Sunday, October 23, 1926, hundreds of people joined in a glorious march to the new edifice, which had a beautiful parsonage next door.

Rev. Allen married Miss Ertie T. Pierce in May of 1922, a teacher from Halifax County, North Carolina. She was an excellent church worker and became involved in many of the church activities.

During the summer of 1930, one of the greatest religious campaigns in history, was launched by New Shiloh. The Reverend Billy Sunday delivered a great sermon to a massive audience. Hundreds gave their lives to Christ and baptizing was held on the third Sunday in September at the Druid Hill Park swimming pool at the climax of the services. Over 300 people were baptized before more than 10,000 worshipers, the largest gathering of its kind in Baltimore.

Two years later, New Shiloh launched its first Vacation Bible School with 183 students enrolled. It was the beginning of a tradition of summer Bible study that continues today.

On April 30, 1939, the church celebrated the laying of the cornerstone by the Grand Order of Masons, directed by Grand Master Willard Allen. The Governor, Ex-Governor, Mayor and Pastor of the First Lutheran Church, the congregation from which the Fremont and Lanvale Street edifice was purchased, were all in attendance.

Following a brief illness, Rev. Allen passed away on Palm Sunday, March 29, 1942. During his life, he was well loved and always kind and considerate. He is remembered as a visionary, a tireless worker and an innovator who loved, worshiped and praised the Lord.