

As Highway Tabernacle prepares to celebrate its Seventy-fifth Anniversary during this year 1969, fervent thanksgiving is offered to our God for His faithfulness to us throughout the many years which have gone by since Highway Tabernacle was established.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 1894, about eight faithful Christian workers covenanted to reorganize the then disbanded Cross and Crown Association which had been quite active in carrying on Gospel services. They decided to conduct prayer meetings and as a result many more workers were added to their ranks.

Desiring to reach non-church-going folks, they procured a Gospel Wagon and began to hold services at outdoor locations throughout the city during the summer months. In December 1895 they complied with a request that they assume responsibility for the operation of a mission hall at 23rd and Jefferson Streets.

One of the group, Brother Frederick Reel, became the first Pastor and continued in that position for twenty-six years, resigning at the age of 70 years.

Since Pastor Reel held a responsible position with the Reading Railroad, he refused to accept a salary from the Church during the entire period. Brother Reel was a mighty preacher of the Word and harvested many, many souls for the Master. Under his leadership, Highway Tabernacle became known throughout the U.S.A. and, through its missionary representation on the foreign fields, throughout the world.

From its inception, Highway Tabernacle grew rapidly, necessitating the move from the small Gospel Chapel to an eight-room school house located at 22nd and Oxford Streets, which was remodeled to accommodate a main auditorium, baptismal pool and classrooms for the growing Sunday School Department.

On May 31, 1899 Incorporation proceedings were initiated with, 77 charter members.

As God continued to bless the work in an outstanding way, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was experienced in various locations throughout the nation, and a deep hunger was inspired within the hearts of the saints at Highway, and they too, began to seek after the infilling with the Holy Ghost.

Pastor Reel was called home to his eternal reward during the year 1925 and the work which he founded and nurtured through the years stands today as a lighthouse in the Central Philadelphia area.



Frederick Reel
1894 - 1920