

## **CORONA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC**

### **A Brief History of 100 Years**

In 1916, a group of dedicated Christians felt the need for a religious institution where they could worship freely and provide their families with the necessary religious educational training. After several meetings in the homes of faithful members and embracing the Congregational faith, the church first named the Union Congregational Church was renamed the First Congregational Church. Reverend Stephen S. Holder from Harlem began as temporary Spiritual Advisor and later invited Rev. George Hinton to speak during his absences.

The church moved to 103<sup>rd</sup> Street between Northern Boulevard and 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue and changed its name to Corona Congregational Church where Rev. Hinton became the first permanent pastor in 1917. Under the leadership of Rev. Hinton, the church grew in number, a building fund was started, and members worked throughout the first and second World Wars and the Great Depression toward their goal of a new church at our present location. The ground was broken for the building in 1953 and the church opened on Palm Sunday 1954. In 1958, Rev. Hinton was honored for forty-one fruitful years as pastor.

In September 1958, Rev. Robert D. Sherard was appointed pastor who then began twenty-eight years of dynamic church leadership and a renewed community. During his tenure the Florence E. Smith Community Center was built as a multi-purpose community center.

Rev. Lancelot Waldron later followed Rev. Sherard during which time the church continued its spiritual growth through Bible Study, a regenerated children's corner, and music ministry.

Rev. Eugene Palmore provided pastoral leadership until 2013 where the church experienced 'The Unwrapping of Gifts' which included the institution of the stewardship ministry, food pantry and revitalization of the Prayer Ministry.

The pastoral journey and a new century of spiritual work and worship continued with Pastor Rev. Reginald Brantley who became designated pastor in 2016 and settled pastor in 2018 serving through February 2023. Corona's continued visioning for the 21<sup>st</sup> century includes renewed community involvement efforts and diversity outreach; church building revitalization; heightened music ministry; equipping and empowering disciples to develop and exercise their spiritual gifts; and, preparing a future generation of church leadership through our youth.