

Rev. Dorothy Flexer

Dorothy Graff Flexer was born in 1913 and grew up in Reading, Pennsylvania. Her family was Presbyterian in their religious practice but at an early age, Dorothy knew there was more to the invisible world than what her traditional faith had revealed. She and her sister Ruth began attending classes and workshops at Silver Belle, a Spiritualist Camp in Pennsylvania. The camp was named after the Doorkeeper guide of materialization medium Ethel Post-Parrish who became Dorothy's spiritual teacher.

It was soon evident that Dorothy had a natural mediumistic ability and was soon giving messages to friends and strangers. Dorothy and Ruth started their own Spiritualist Church in Reading when she was 23 and called it "The Friendly Little Church of Truth". This provided her great experience for the development of her mediumship and speaking ability.

Dorothy's father died in 1933 when she was 19. One of 6 children, Dorothy became the breadwinner of the family by working in a hosiery factory. She continued her spiritual studies and the development of her singing ability, one of her passions.

At the age of 25, her prayers were answered when she met Russell Flexer, a man who had many similar personality traits to the Father she adored. His sense of humor opened the doors to the hearts of everyone he met. Russell shared her love of music and played the violin. Shortly after, in 1940, Russell and Dorothy were married.

In 1941, the Flexers were invited to help with a church in Norfolk, Virginia. A little later, the Flexers started a church in nearby Portsmouth and called it "The Shrine of the Master". They continued to study at Camp Silver Belle and joined the International General Assembly of Spiritualists (IGSA). Later they joined the Spiritual Episcopal Church (SEC) on January 21, 1951. The denomination was based at Camp Chesterfield, outside of Indianapolis, Indiana.

In 1946, Dorothy had a dream in which her spirit teacher, Dr. Charles Davis, suggested she and Russell go to Florida to start a Spiritualist church. They moved to Tampa, Florida and in 1947 they started Shrine of the Master Church of Tampa. Two years later, they started Shrine of the Master Church of Sarasota.

The Flexers worked hard with the founding members the churches to help them become well established. Bear in mind, this is the South and there were few Spiritualist churches in Florida in the late 1940's. They were true pioneers who believed in the teachings and guidance of Spirit. Despite the resistance they encountered from parts of the local community, the church took hold and began to develop.

Dorothy continued the development of her spiritual abilities which included most phases of mediumship including trance speaking. In 1948 at the age of 35, she developed the physical phenomena of "trumpet" or "direct voice" in which ectoplasm is drawn from her

body to levitate an aluminum horn called a trumpet. Within the trumpet, a vocal box is created by Spirit Chemists and through the vocal box, spirit people can talk independently of the medium's vocal box.

The evening services included a time for spirit messages; contacts made from loved ones in spirit through the mediumship of Rev. Dorothy and Dr. Russell. Oftentimes they would use billets where those in attendance would write the names of loved ones in Spirit and then write a question. On rare occasion, Rev. Dorothy would go into trance on the platform and the talk would be given through her by Dr. Davis. The talks were always 20 minutes in length and touched on various lessons in life that were beneficial to all who were present.

Trumpet classes were held four times a week by the Flexers. In Tampa, the class was held on Monday nights and the focus was mediumship development. Dr. Davis would open the class with a healing prayer and then ask if anyone had a question. After the Q & A, he would lead the class in some form of developmental experience.

Each class member would have a chance to address his or her Spirit Doctor to give their results of the exercise. The Doctor would give feedback to his student in a loving and understanding manner. Mediumship development classes were held in Sarasota on Thursday afternoons and Thursday evenings. On Wednesday evenings, the class was devoted to Master Teachers who would come in and speak on the profound questions of life. There was always an air of great respect by those in attendance as the teachers spoke.

In 1958, the Flexers founded the denomination: Church of Metaphysical Christianity (CMC). In 1960, the Flexers closed the Tampa church and moved to Sarasota because it was growing so rapidly.

By 1963 Rev. Dorothy no longer needed a cabinet in order to produce physical mediumship with the trumpet. She would sit at the head of the room and the chairs would be positioned in a semicircle around the walls opposite her. Dr. Russell served as her battery and would also go into trance. In addition to the trumpet classes, Rev. Dorothy on rare occasions would produce materializations in the red light.

Dr. Russell made his transition in July of 1977. Lay ministers began to cover the Sunday night services that he used to conduct giving them valuable experience.

Rev. Dorothy Flexer led her life according to the principles she taught. Her life was her faith and her faith was her life. She was first and foremost an instrument of Spirit and trusted her teachers explicitly. Her life-long dedication to being of service to Spirit and mankind provided a blueprint for those who knew her. In August of 1996, at the age of 82, Rev. Dorothy made her transition and went to her spiritual home.

It should be noted that she was still the sole Pastor of the church and went as she had wished, still active and being of service to others. We feel her presence each week

during the church services and know that she is still as dedicated as ever to helping the Shrine of the Master to be a center of light for those seeking knowledge, understanding and a place of love.

The Shrine of the Master Church's name was changed at a meeting of the Congregation in June of 2010 to Sarasota Center of Light. Everyone felt the new name better reflected the teachings of the Church. The Church is healthy and strong today and continues to attract people who are searching for the truths taught by the Masters.

Should you get an opportunity to be in the Sarasota area, please join us at one of our services. More information can be found at the church website:
www.SarasotaCenterofLight.com