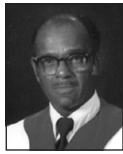


BISHOP EDDIE LAWRENCE



Bishop Eddie Leroy Lawrence, 94, a life-time resident of Callahan, made his eternal transition on December 28, 2022. He was born November 15, 1928 in Callahan to the late Chandler and Maggie Noble Lawrence, the only boy in a house full of girls. Bishop Lawrence attended the local community school and began working at an early age.

He was employed with the Seaboard Railroad for 22 years. His other places of employment included: Rayonier Sawmill and St. Regis Paper Mill. He also worked as a truck driver for Mr. Tom Arline for a short period of time before becoming self-employed. He purchased his own truck and started working in the Pulpwood Industry. He was known in the community for wearing his overalls and driving his small pulpwood truck, sometimes only transporting one log on the back of it. He eventually retired from driving the pulpwood truck and working in the wood; however, he didn't retire from working. On any given day you could pass his home and find him in the yard mowing the grass at the age of 94. He took pride in remaining active and refused to just sit around in his favorite chair and do nothing. Over the course of his life, he was married three times and enjoyed the beauty of family.

He joined Bethel A.M.E Church in his youth and served as a Deacon for many years. In 1968, he accepted the call to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Bishop Lawrence pastored for a very long time in Nassau County, his first pastoral assignment was Friendship Baptist Church in Yulee, followed by Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Gross Community, and his last pastoral assignment was at St. James Baptist Church in Evergreen Community. While pastoring St. James he was consecrated as a Bishop by Chief Bishop Dr. Lorenzo Hall, Sr. After retiring from full time pastoring, he joined and attended Church of God Sanctuary of Praise in Jacksonville, Bishop Kevin M. Hardy, Senior Pastor.

In addition to pastoring, Bishop expressed his servant heart to God's people by opening the doors of his home for prayer and worship. He and his wife Mother Elease Lawrence opened their home every Tuesday night for a community prayer meeting. Many came from near and far for these weekly gatherings to lift up the name of the Lord. Many received Christ as their Lord and Savior under Bishop Lawrence's ministry. He was a spiritual father to many.

Bishop Lawrence's love for the Lord was expressed in his love for people and for God's church. The central tenet of his ministry revolved around his commitment to prayer and pastoring. With more than 54 years of service to God and His people, the Lord called him from labor to reward on Wednesday, December 28, 2022.

Those that preceded him in death include his wives; parents; daughters Apostle Edith Jones, Mary L. Walker and Mildred Grant; son Donald Lawrence; sisters Louise Lawrence, Maggie Hill, Isabelle Lawrence, Hilda Johnson and Altamese Denefield; grandchildren Rodney Fairwell, Tonja Watson and Shawn Lawrence.

He leaves to cherish his memory, his sons Leveny Reese and Charles Lawrence (Frances); daughter Avis L. Kemp of Callahan; step-daughter Anna Calhoun (Anthony); grandchildren Prophetess Victoria Blue (Bishop Thomas), Pastor Walter (Gwen) Cooper of Callahan, Pastor Dr. Keva Hampton, Terri Cooper, Dr. Jason Kemp, Adrenia Kemp, Shannon Kemp of Callahan, Derrick (Tanya) Davis, Donald J. Lawrence, Jr. of Fernandina Beach and Alana (Lance) Reed; 15 great-grandchildren; 16 great-great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

The family received friends January 6 at Bethel AME Church in Callahan. The celebration of life service was held Saturday, January 7 at True Believers Church of God by Faith in Callahan. Interment followed at Callahan Community Cemetery.

Sarah L. Carter's Funeral Home Northside served the family.