

In Loving Memory
of
William Henry Smith

Sunrise
January 27, 1930



Sunset
October 7, 2013

1:00 p. m.

Saturday, October 12, 2013

Shiloh Baptist Church

237 E. Fifth Street

Lexington, Kentucky

Rev. Dr. Joseph L. Owens, Pastor

Rev. Dr. Junior Greenlee, Officiating

Obituary

On Monday, October 7, 2013, William Henry Smith, Sr., was called by God from work to reward.

William Smith was born in Georgetown, Kentucky on January 27, 1930. He was the ninth of eleven children born to Reverend Thomas H. and Mrs. Helen E. Smith. He was converted and baptized at Shiloh Baptist Church in 1938, under the pastorate of his father. He was united in Holy Matrimony on June 26, 1954, to the former Virginia Bright. To this union were born three sons: William H. Smith, Jr., Jeffery K. Smith and Daryl W. Smith.

In his book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins described the characteristics of leadership that led good companies to become great companies. Those leaders were "self-effacing, quiet, reserved, even shy." He called them a "paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will." This description is quite fitting for William "Bill" Smith.

One of his grade school teachers remarked that his early life ambition was to become a "country preacher." This would seem fitting since his father, two uncles and three brothers were preachers. But God had other plans. Following graduation from Dunbar High School in Lexington, he enrolled at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. The Korean War interrupted his school days, however. He honorably served his country for two years, including sixteen months of active duty. Following his stint in the military he returned to Indiana University, completed his degree, and prepared to become a teacher. But again, God had other plans.

There was a fledgling, segregated branch YMCA in Lexington in 1956. The assets of the branch were two pool tables, two desks and two rooms. From time to time the branch drifted from old schools to dilapidated buildings. Bill Smith was "called" to lead that branch. Under Smith's leadership the branch was transformed into a first-class facility featuring a three-story dormitory for residents, gym, olympic-sized swimming pool and library. He was a one man gang, pouring all of his energy into giving African-American kids their first camping experience, involving them in sporting events, leadership clubs, and social activities. Under his leadership, the Second Street Branch YMCA was a tremendous source of pride for the African-American community and a model for the nation, with integrated staff and programming. He later became the Associate General Director of the YMCA of Central Kentucky. One of the last programs he helped organize at the Lexington Y was the YMCA Black Achievers. He retired from the YMCA in 1991.

But as a servant of God, Smith's involvement went well beyond the YMCA. He professed a hope in Christ in 1938 at the Shiloh Baptist Church (75 years of service). He served as Sunday School Superintendent at Shiloh for over 40 years. He served as a Trustee at Shiloh for 30 plus years (Trustee Emeritus). He was a longtime member of the Shiloh Senior Choir and sang with the Shiloh Male Chorus. For many years he led efforts for the Male Chorus to sing and fellowship with residents at senior living facilities in Lexington. When Shiloh constructed an educational building in 1979, he was called on to organize and lead the campaign to pay off the mortgage. The mortgage was paid off ten years ahead of schedule. He served as an instructor in the Howard's Creek District Association for over 3 decades. He was an active member of Kiwanis International for over 20 years. He was a founding board member of the Community Kitchen and the Lexington Clergy Campaign for the Homeless. He served as a Volunteer Coordinator for a Job Corps program. He worked with Opportunity Workshop, Children's Services and countless other community groups and efforts.

Mayor Foster Petit appointed Smith to the Lexington Fayette Urban County Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners in 1972. He was reappointed by Mayors Jim Amato, Scotty Baesler and Pam Miller. He served on this Board for 29 years, serving as Commissioner, Vice-Chairperson and Chairperson. He was a quiet and behind-the-scenes Commissioner whose advocacy for affordable housing and its tenants spoke volumes to his compassionate commitment to this community.

In 1983, at his YMCA office, the Black Church Coalition of the Bluegrass was organized. He served as treasurer of the Coalition for most of its nearly 30 years of existence. He was a man of high integrity and trust. Over 20,000 families have received assistance through this ministry.

He was a self-described "human relations facilitator" that quietly and effectively served his community. Whether helping remodel a church basement, organizing a program or conducting a fundraising campaign, Bill Smith's life was guided by a set of simple yet profound principles:

- *"It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness"*
- *"Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime"*
- *"Brighten the corner where you are"*
- *"I am my brother's keeper"*

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Virginia B. Smith; sons William H. Smith, Jr., Jeffery (Lee) Smith and Daryl (Danielle) Smith; four grandchildren, William Vincent, Darin DeWayne, Michaela Alise and Delia Yvette; sister, Kathryn Smith Stephens; brother, Reverend Charles H. Smith and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Reverend Thomas H. and Mrs. Helen E. Smith and siblings, Mrs. Mary Smith Simpson Matthews, Thomas H. Smith, Jr., Carter Omega Smith, Rose Anna Smith, Mrs. Minnie Smith Hall, Dr. John T. Smith, Reverend Gloster M. Smith and Reverend Horace R. Smith.

Order of Service

Processional

Selection..... *"We'll Understand it Better By and By"* Shiloh Choir joined by
Black Church Coalition Mass Choir

Old Testament Reading..... Proverbs 3:1-6 Reverend Tom Smith

New Testament Reading Revelation 21:1-7 Reverend Daniel Childs

Prayer Reverend John Reese

Selection..... *"He Knows Just How Much We Can Bear"* Kathryn Smith Stephens

Acknowledgements/Resolutions..... Rev. Dr. Junior Greenlee

Silent Reading of the Obituary..... (Soft Music)

Selection..... *"I'll Fly Away"* William Harris
Accompanied by Doris Jean White and
Marion Rogers

Remarks..... Visiting Clergy
(limit remarks to a maximum of 2 minutes)

Special Remarks..... Reverend Charles H. Smith

Selection..... *"Stand"* Shiloh Choir joined by
Black Church Coalition Mass Choir
Led by Vincent Poole

Eulogy Rev. Dr. Joseph L Owens

Recessional..... *"Total Praise"*

Interment
Lexington Cemetery

If I Can Help Somebody

A. Bazel Androzzo

If I can help somebody as I pass along,
If I can cheer somebody with a word or song,
If I can show somebody he is trav'ling wrong,
Then my living shall not be in vain.
Then my living shall not be in vain,
Then my living shall not be in vain;
If I can help somebody as I pass along,
Then my living shall not be in vain.
If I can do my duty as a Christian ought,
If I can bring back beauty to a world up-wrought,
If I can spread love's message that the Master taught,
Then my living shall not be in vain.
Then my living shall not be in vain,
Then my living shall not be in vain;
If I can help somebody as I pass along,
Then my living shall not be in vain.

Pall Bearers

Shiloh Deacons and Trustees

Theodore Berry

Julian Jackson

Clark Laprelle

Austin Simms

Acknowledgements

The family wishes to thank everyone for all acts of kindness.

In Memory Of William H. Smith

Donations may be made to the Black Church Coalition of the Bluegrass or the Shiloh Baptist Church Capital Campaign. Donations should be sent to the Shiloh Baptist Church, 237 E. Fifth Street, Lexington, KY 40508, in care of Edith Turley, Church Clerk. Please note your agency preference when submitting your gift.

Arrangements By:

Smith & Smith Funeral Home

340 East Third Street

Lexington, KY 40508

(859) 255-6273

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