REV. DR. WILLIAM SMITH,
PASTOR OF ONE OF ATLANTA'S LARGEST CONGREGATIONS
RECEIVES HIS CROWN IN GLORY

Reverend William Smith, a prominent Pastor of the Israel Missionary Baptist Church, located at 2071 Hosea Williams Drive, S.E. in the historic Kirkwood community of Atlanta, GA fell asleep in death on Tuesday, May 5, 2020. Pastor Smith beautifully exemplified unfailing love in his ministry throughout the years.

His unfailing love extended to his beautiful wife, Lisa Jones-Smith, his children, Necia and Douglas, Israel Missionary Baptist Church membership, family, dearest friends, and all whom he gracefully crossed in his walk with Christ. His beaming and genuine smile never met a stranger and his spirit overflowed in faithfulness. To say it was a pleasure to know Pastor Smith is an understatement, as his continued cultivation of the fruitage of the spirit was truly awe-inspiring. An awe-inspiring gentleman Pastor Smith was, and an awe-inspiring gentleman he will be remembered as his seeds of faith ever blossomed and planted throughout his 61 years in the ministry.

God elevated him from the fields of his birthplace in Penfield, Georgia to the Church pulpit. In 1964, Reverend Smith was called to pastor Israel Missionary Baptist Church, previously located at 70 Daniel Street, S.E. Atlanta, GA. After a massive fire destroyed the church facilities, the congregation was relocated to 110 Howard Street, S.E. in Kirkwood area of Atlanta. In obedience to the will of God and realizing the overwhelming spiritual and enormous physical church growth, Pastor Smith led the congregation to its current 900 person capacity sanctuary at its present location.

Most notably, though, was his unfailing reliance on God in prayer and meditation on the scriptures. Pastor Smith genuinely enjoyed such reflection, an admirable quality of which exuded in his relationships with others. For he well knew the importance of “rejoicing in the answer” (Proverbs 15:23) in his shepherding of others. His words, so eloquently spoken, invited upwards of 5,000 people to the congregation of Israel Missionary Baptist Church, a ten-fold increase from the original 500 members in 1964. Israel Missionary Baptist Church, a historic landmark of Hosea L. Williams Drive, is admirably remembered by the ministry of a truly historic gentleman. Reverend Smith untiringly pastored and throughout the years has had more than 100 sons come under his leadership.

Though his leadership emanated, his humility and grace were far more reaching. Pastor Smith opened his heart to the joy around him and let gratefulness flow from the inside out unto others. He performed
as many as 35 revivals each year and traveled both near and far to spread the powerful word of God. In 1996, Reverend Smith journeyed to the Holy Land and preached on the Sea of Galilee, and was also instrumental in the upbringting of two powerful ministries in both the Virgin Islands and in Haiti. Truly, Pastor Smith beautifully embodied that we are never more than one grateful thought away from an increased peace of mind and a greater peace of heart. Per Matthew 12:28-29, Pastor Smith was lowly in heart and his refreshment was plentiful. “Pleasant sayings are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and a healing to the bones.” (Proverbs 16:24) Just as a honeybee spreads pollen from flower to flower resulting in a most vivid bloom, so did Pastor Smith preach the sweet sayings of the Bible. On one occasion while serving as pastor of Israel Missionary Baptist Church, Reverend Smith had more than 65 sheep give their life to Christ and baptized as many as 103 ministers of God. Further, his pleasant sayings were inspiring to countless people, families, and congregations, alike, as his Sunday afternoon radio broadcast ministry aired weekly from a Metro Atlanta Radio Station for seventeen (17) years.

In accordance with Reverend Smith’s favorite scripture, John 3:16, we, too, now await the day that we are reunited with our beloved Pastor, Husband, Father, Brother, and Friend, William Smith. As we envision our dear Reverend William Smith adorned in his favorite white cowboy boots and matching hat, with a beaming smile and gentle eyes twinkling in the sun, we are filled with gratitude… gratitude for having being inspired—even to this day—by his remarkable spiritual leadership and self-sacrificing spirit towards helping others. Although our hearts are saddened, we rejoice in the precious moments shared and memories held with our loving servant of God. His awards, accolades, and affiliations highlight his outstanding outreach, through his loving compassion and care for all of God’s sheep will continually illuminate his memory. Rev. Dr. William Smith, a humble gentleman who preached God’s word for 61 years and served as an outstanding Pastor for 55 years, will firmly be held in God’s perfect memory. “For God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name by ministering and continuing to minister to the holy ones.” (Hebrews 6:10)

A public viewing and Memorial will be held at the Israel Missionary Baptist Church, 2071 Hosea L. Williams Drive SE, Atlanta, GA 30317 on Thursday, May 21st, from 12:00 Noon to 8:00 PM, Friday, May 22nd from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM and Saturday, May 23rd, from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM. There will be a Private Family-only Interment on an undisclosed date and time.

He is survived by his loving Wife, Mrs. Melisa (Lisa) D. Jones-Smith; Daughter, Ms. Necia Michelle Smith; Son, Mr. Douglas Bernard Jones, Jr.; Brothers, Rev. and Mrs. John (Darla) Smith, Deacon and Mrs. Emmitt (Linda) Smith, Mr. Joseph Smith (Fannie) and Mr. Roger Smith (Dorothy); and Sisters, Mrs. Cornelia Jones and Mrs. Dollie Robinson.

The Smith Family humbly asks for your prayers and extends their sincere gratitude for your expressions of love. In lieu of flowers, the Smith Family is requesting that contributions be made to:

REV. DR. WILLIAM SMITH SCHOLARSHIP

For those who do not utilize GoFundMe, sentiments may be sent to:

Israel Missionary Baptist Church
2071 Hosea L. Williams Drive, SE
Atlanta, GA 30317