

PORTRAIT OF THE PASTOR AND HIS FAMILY



Rev. Willie B. Lewis is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Willie B. Lewis; a former member of the St. John Baptist Church, Red Oak. He is a graduate of Nash Central High School, and received his A.B. and B.D. degrees from Shaw University. He has done further study at South Eastern Seminary, Wake Forest.

Rev. Lewis has been an outstanding leader everywhere he has worked and will always be remembered for the progress he had made spiritually and financially in the following churches and areas:

Bethlehem Baptist Church, Raleigh, where he improved the physical structure and also brought new spirit to the church.

Wake Chapel Baptist Church, Millbrook, where he rebuilt it in two years and set aglow the "fire of the Holy Spirit" in the hearts of the congregation.

New Bethel Baptist Church, Clayton, which he found leaking and, even on some Sundays because of rain and cold in the church, he had to preach in his overcoat. He left this congregation in 1955 with enough money to build a new structure, which was built and now stands in his honor.

Then he was called to the Shiloh Baptist Church, Wilmington. In December of 1955, the church and parsonage were destroyed by fire leaving only the Bible which did not burn; and can be seen now in the church. The church only had \$7,000.00 to start a new building.

During the next four years he led the church to rebuild the church and parsonage, at a cost of \$180,000. He stayed at this church nine years leaving the church with a very small indebtedness. Under his leadership, many members were added to the Kingdom of God. Many programs and organizations were established.

They expressed a high appreciation to him for what he had done for them. The Board of Deacons and the congregation got together and told him to make an itinerary and anywhere in the world he wanted to go they would pay for it. He had dreamed of going to the Holy Land and this was his chance and he did visit the Holy

Land, Germany, France, Greece, Italy, Africa, Syria, Lebanon, India and Istanbul.

At the passing of the late Rev. J. W. Jones, the Holy Spirit directed the congregation of the Fayetteville Street Baptist Church to Wilmington. Rev. Lewis came to Raleigh in 1964 and started on the building project. During the first four years, land was purchased and over \$60,000 was raised to start the new church. The church was completed in twelve months.

Rev. Lewis is not only active in his church and religious work, but works with the community diligently. He has served as president of the Nash County B.T.U. Convention, president of the Ministers' Alliance, Wilmington; chairman of the TV and radio program of the Interracial Ministerial Association of Wilmington, Clerk of the Johnston District Baptist Association.

He also received an award for outstanding community services from the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA in 1961.

He now holds membership in the following organizations: Historian of the General Baptist State Convention of N. C.; member of the executive board, General Baptist State Convention; member of the executive board of Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention; NAACP; National Baptist Convention, Inc.; Clerk of the Wake Baptist Association; Business and Professional Men's League of Raleigh; Board of Directors of Rich Park, President of the Interracial Ministerial Association of Raleigh, and pastor of the New First Cosmopolitan Baptist Church, 1515 Cross Link Road, Raleigh.

He is married to Mrs. Lillie Hilliard Lewis, who has been a great companion to him in his work. She is a graduate of Fayetteville State University and teaches at Brentwood School in Raleigh.

They have two daughters: Wilhelmina Jeanetta, a Ligon High School graduate, who is now a sophomore, majoring in Music Ed., at Virginia State College, Petersburg, Va., and Liteta Yvette, who has completed the sixth grade at Crosby-Garfield School and will be attending Fred J. Carnegie Jr. High School in September.