



Rev. Robert "Bob" Brown

September 19, 1941 - September 1, 2024

Robert Taylor Brown was born on September 19, 1941, in Lexington, Ky, to Robert D. Brown and Mary Elizabeth Brown (Garner). Over the course of his 82 years, "Bob" contributed tirelessly to his church, his company, his community, and his country. He made a public profession of Christ Jesus as Savior at the Main Street Baptist Church and was baptized on April 2, 1950, under the pastorate of the late Rev. Reggie H. Johnson. On October 26, 1963, he and Bertie Marion Henderson united in holy matrimony. With her, he would build a beautiful and inspiring family and home life over the next 61 years.

Reared in the city's public schools, Bob exhibited strong leadership skills, vision, and an orientation toward service. After serving as Vice President of the Senior Class at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, from which he graduated in 1959, he immediately enlisted in the United States Navy. Inspired by strong teachers and a loving community that shaped his early development, he returned to Lexington after a successful and honorably discharged Navy tenure of four years that had taken him around the world.

In June 1963, after working various jobs back home, Bob joined International Business Machines' inventory division in Lexington. He was promoted in 1969 and became a Department Manager in 1975. A goal-oriented professional who became known for getting results, he held several managerial positions at IBM from 1975 to 1996. By the time he retired in 1996, Bob had succeeded

for 33 years in positions including Supplies Manager of Manufacturing and IBM Site Equal Opportunity Manager, which he held from 1975 to 1981.

Bob earned his degree in Business Management from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and

he was certified in Stephen R. Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.

While at IBM, Bob also was active in public affairs. He was the first African American Chairman of

the Board of the Lexington Housing Authority, a position he held from 1972 to 1977 and in which he

oversaw the recruitment of the agency's first African American director.

A serious Christian, Bob was actively involved in the Main Street Baptist Church for several years.

He was ordained a deacon at the young age of 25 after Pastor Johnson noticed his moral convictions and dependability. He taught Sunday School and served in other auxiliaries and on

various committees of the historic church. In February 1981, Bob acknowledged the highest of

callings – his call to the ministry. He attended Lexington Bible College, was ordained on December

15, 1983, under pastor Benjamin Baker, and was led to Pleasant Valley Missionary Baptist Church

in Garrard County, Ky., where he served for the next 23 years. He resigned as pastor of Pleasant

Valley and organized a new church in 2006.

Pastor Bob led a very small group of saints to New Horizon Missionary Baptist Church, which met

in a funeral home until the congregation was able to purchase a building at 229 Fox Run Trail in

Danville, Ky.

Pastor Bob's health began to fail shortly after starting New Horizon, and he subsequently resigned as pastor, reuniting with the Main Street Baptist Church. In his later years, he faithfully

served and, until he could no longer attend services, would work from home, teaching and organizing.

He quietly transitioned from this life to everlasting joy on Sunday September 1, 2024, at St.

Joseph Hospital. Pastor Brown and his bride, Bertie Marion Brown, would have celebrated 61 years

of marriage on October 26. To their union, one daughter (Gina Michelle) and one son

(Tannare Cornelius) were born.

Other than his parents preceding him in death were daughter Gina; sisters Beverly Darneal, Bessie Cody, Cuthrophia Harkless, and Shirley Beatty; and brothers Lawrence Brown, Danny Brown, Jay B Persley and Charles Gaines.

He is survived by his wife, son, Tannare; granddaughter, Ariana C. Brown-Jones; grandsons Tatum Brown and Tannare Christopher Lee Brown; great grandson Asir Brown; great-granddaughter Kherrington M. Brown; three sisters, Valerie (Joesph)Bradley, Virgie Demeritt, and Barbara Berry; and two brothers, Kenneth Brown and Command Sergeant Major (Ret.) Dwight (Angela) Brown.

A Beacon in his Profession

Bob was a storyteller, and most of his stories were about hard times and perseverance. He often told the story about how, as a young man just out of the Navy seeking promising employment, he would get up early on Monday mornings (Monday was the day on which IBM hired), put on his one and only blue suit, and walk to IBM to inquire about employment opportunities. Finally, after many of these trips, that one Monday when he walked into IBM, the lady hiring said to him, "You come every week, and today I have a job for you."

He was hired as an inventory clerk on June 19, 1963, by IBM in Lexington and, over the next 32 years and nine months, brought value to the growing company. Quickly ascending the corporate ladder from Rotating Inventory Clerk in the accounting department, he eventually earned promotion to Inventory Investigator and, in 1969, Stockroom Manager roles. In 1975, he entered management, joining the personnel department as Equal Employment Opportunity Manager. Other promotions came, and in 1991 he became the Manager of Manufacturing Product, the position from which he retired on March 29, 1996, marking 33 years of faithful service to IBM.

A Light in the Community

In retirement, Bob Brown devoted himself anew to the uplift of the community. Starting in 1999, he committed to closing the achievement gaps among students in Fayette County. He joined the African American Education Coalition in the spring of 1999 and began investigating African-American pupils' achievement-test scores. He collected and analyzed data and made his findings known. Approached to present his findings to the Interim Joint Committee of the Kentucky legislature, he worked with state senators to pass legislation focused on closing the achievement gap for all Kentucky students, what we now know as SB 168. After intense

negotiations with state Commissioner of Education Gene Wilhoit, in Spring 2002, an achievement-gap closure committee was established and eventually would be known as the One Community, One Voice project. Through this effort, Bob gave generously of his time and other resources to coordinate the annual “Back to School Rally” that enthused the community about academic opportunities in the year ahead. In 2005, the rally served more than 3,000 students and families in preparing them for school.

A pioneering servant-leader, he once said, “Helping every child succeed is just too important. We’ve got to do everything we can to help these children.” For his contributions to the commonwealth, numerous organizations recognized Bob Brown with humanitarian honors and awards during the period 2003 to 2005.

Cemetery Details

Camp Nelson National Cemetery

Nicholasville, KY

Previous Events

Funeral Service

SEP 11. 11:00 AM (ET)

Main Street Baptist Church
582 W Main St
Lexington, KY 40508
(859) 252-3838

Visitation 11 am until time of Service at Main Street Baptist Church.

Tribute Wall

TF

“ The Turners from FL purchased the *Pretty Please* for the family of Rev. Robert "Bob" Brown.



The Turners from FL - September 10, 2024 at 10:17 AM

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“ The Turners from FL planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. Robert "Bob" Brown.

The Turners from FL - September 10, 2024 at 10:17 AM

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“ The Shepard Family purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of Rev. Robert "Bob" Brown.



The Shepard Family - September 10, 2024 at 08:32 AM

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“ The Woodfork family love always. purchased the *Arrive in Style* for the family of Rev. Robert "Bob" Brown.



The Woodfork family love always. - September 10, 2024 at 07:24 AM