

Pallbearers

Family and Friends

Floral Bearers

Family and Friends

Biblical Faith and Human Suffering by Dr. Latta Thomas, Sr.

“Let worship centers, church-related schools, and caring communities join God in the new covenant to implement more fervently the will of a just and compassionate God in the many ways open to us, to promote responsible biblical scholarship, to prophetically challenge counterfeit religion and to reclarify the nature and value of the separation of civil and ecclesiastical powers. Let the Western world hear.”

“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” Luke 4:18,19 RSV

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Dr. Latta R. Thomas Endowed Scholarship at www.benedict.edu/give.

Services Entrusted To:

Taylor Street Chapel

1831 Taylor Street
Columbia, SC 29201
(803)771-7799

I. S. Leevy Johnson
-Owner & Director-

Leevy's

F U N E R A L H O M E

Chris Leevy Johnson
-President & Managing Director-

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9120 Garners Ferry Road
Hopkins, SC 29061
(803) 776-6922

Leverette A. Williams, II
-General Manager-

*Home Going Service
Celebrating the Life
of*

REVEREND DR. LATTA R. THOMAS



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2021
10:00 A.M.

SECOND CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH
1110 MASON ROAD
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

REVEREND DR. CARL R. WELLS
-PASTOR-



Latta Roosevelt Thomas

Theologian Scholar, Author, and Civic Leader

Latta Roosevelt Thomas was born October 12, 1927 in Union County, SC. He departed this life on Friday, December 10, 2021. He graduated from Sims High School, in Union, South Carolina in 1947. In the fall of that year, he entered Friendship Junior College, from which he graduated Salutatorian of the Class of 1949. He continued his education at Benedict College, where he received a Bachelor of Arts Degree and graduated Salutatorian of the Class of 1951. While at Benedict College, Latta received the Phi Theta Psi Award of Merit in Language.

After graduation from Benedict College, Latta attended Colgate Rochester Divinity School, in Rochester, New York, from which he received the Bachelor of Divinity degree, graduating among the Top Ten of the, Class of 1955. He received the Master of Sacred Theology degree from Andover Newton Theological Seminary, Newton Center, Massachusetts in 1966 and the Doctor of Ministry degree from the same institution in 1973. At Andover Newton, Latta was cited by Nels F. S. Ferré in 1965 for meritorious Work in the Master of Sacred Theology Program. Dr. Thomas had a long Career as a pastor, beginning with his pastorate of Monumental Baptist Church, Elmira, New York from 1952 to 1963. Dr. Thomas retired from Second Calvary Baptist Church in Columbia, South Carolina in 1996, a congregation which he served for twenty-two years. Between those two pastorates, he also led Ridge Hill Baptist Church in Ridge Spring, South Carolina; Lockhart Baptist Church in Saluda, South Carolina, and Mount Olive Baptist Church, in Newport, Rhode Island.

As a scholar, Dr. Thomas was well known for his work at Benedict College, where he held various positions, ranging from Assistant Professor of Religion to Chair of the Division of Humanities. He served as Head of the Religion and Philosophy Study Area from 1974-1992. He retired as Professor of Religion in January 1995. At Benedict College, Dr. Thomas also served as College Minister for 20 years, from 1965 to 1985.

In addition to his work at Benedict College, Dr. Thomas also served as a lecturer at Elmira College, Elmira, New York; Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC; Newberry College, Newberry, SC; Voorhees College, Denmark, SC; Morris College, Sumter, SC; Columbia College, Columbia, SC; the University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA; Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, NY; Duke University, Durham, NC; Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC; and Midlands Technical College, Columbia, SC.

Dr. Thomas authored a number of publications to his credit. His first book, Biblical Faith and the Black American, was published by Judson Press in 1976. His essay "Love Transcends Everything" was included in Upper Room Disciplines in 1976. In 1987, his book The Biblical God and Human Suffering was published by David C. Cook under the auspices of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, which also cited him as an outstanding author in 1986. He also wrote an essay "The American Baptist Churches" Contribution to Black Education in Southern America; "Testimony from a Beneficiary" for American Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XI. December 1992. He also coordinated the initial efforts for the writing of the history of Benedict College, The Enduring Dream.

In addition to being a pastor, and an author, Dr. Thomas also served with great distinction as a civic leader. He was Chairman of the Greater Columbia Community Relations Council from 1982 to 1983; he was a member of the local board of the Salvation Army; the NAACP; the Mayor's Fighting Back Committee Against Substance Abuse; South Carolina Democratic Campaign Committee; and served as chair of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Committee.

Dr. Thomas' work was widely unrecognized. He is listed in Who's Who in Religion (1975-76), Community Leader and Noteworthy Americans 1975-1976, Who's Who Among Black Americans (1979). He received numerous service awards and recognition, including a citation by the South Carolina House of Representatives (1991); Emissary Assembly Membership Certificate, World Jewish Congress (1991); Certificate of Appreciation, Columbia Chapter of the Urban League (1989); Certificate of Recognition, Pastors and Christian Workers Conference (1989); Outstanding Service Award as Chairman of Humanities Division at Benedict College (1988); Plaque of Appreciation, E. W. Cromartie Citizens Advisory Committee (1986); Certificate of Appreciation, Friendship Center (1984); Leadership Certificate, Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of S.C. (1985, 1986 and 1987); Certificate, South Carolina Department of Mental Health (1985); Certificate, University of South Carolina Minority Parent/Student? Faculty Alumni Weekend (1985); 20-Year Service Award, Benedict College (1985); Plaque Community Aid Club Humanitarian Award (1985); Plaque, Greater Columbia Community Relations Council (1983); Certificate, Benedict College (1983); Living the Legacy Award, National Council of Negro Women (1981); Certificate, W. J. Keenan High School (1981); Certificate, Benedict College Student Government (1997); Certificate, Eau Claire High School (1978); Resolution, Benedict College Board of Trustees (1979); Plaque, Gordon Jenkins Pre-Theological Association (1974); Plaque, Elmira Branch NAACP (197 IL Certificate, Elmira Neighborhood House (1961); and Certificate, Elmira Civic Improvement Club (1960).

Dr. Thomas said his philosophy of life was shaped by three strands of influence: the prophetic branch of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Black American experience, and the extraordinary persons who took an interest in him. In his words, "That philosophy is this: the creative, healing and liberating events and achievements in human history are brought about by the active cooperation of the human being with the providential potency of God. This is the meaning of the covenant concept in Judeo-Christian tradition. It is the liberation quest, the Church-based Black liberation thrust, it is not the act of God alone nor the act of man alone. The two must come together. God, for many legitimate reasons, will not liberate unilaterally; man cannot unilaterally and effectively liberate. God's active demand and man's active response produce liberation and redemption. History's littered with the aborted efforts of those who relied on one to the exclusion of the other. Life issues from trust in divine possibilities and human responses."

Reverend Thomas was preceded in death by: his wife of 58 years, Mrs. Bessie L. Thomas; and a son, Ronald Jerome Thomas.

Reverend Dr. Latta R. Thomas is survived by: his son, LCDR Latta R. (Patricia) Thomas, Jr. USN Chaplain (Retired); three grandsons, Latta, III, Christian, and Christopher; and two great-grandsons, Sebastian and Solomon; one sister, Agnes Brice; other relatives and friends.

Order of Worship

Prelude

Processional

Invocation.....Reverend Dr. Carl R. Wells

Selection.....“May the Work I’ve Done Speak For Me”

Old Testament – Isaiah 1:10-20..... Reverend James A. Jamison

New Testament – 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.....Reverend Dr. Samuel K. Lewis

Remarks.....Ms. Mary Lynn Diggs

Prayer.....Elder Darrell Jackson, Sr.

Selection.....“It Is Well With My Soul”

Words of Comfort.....Reverend Dr. Carl R. Wells

Committal and Benediction.....Reverend Dr. Blakely N. Scott



Interment

Lincoln Cemetery
4900 Farrow Road
Columbia, South Carolina