

# This Is Your Life Tribute Brings Expression of 'Cathedral'

"I feel cathedra down deep in my heart," expressed an overwhelmed Dr. John S. Williams at the end of a "This Is Your Life" tribute citing his services in Omaha some 40 years ago as a minister, educator and musical leader.

"I realize for the first time that you feel toward me just as I have felt toward you — love and appreciation," he declared after being gifted with a Money Tree and hearing former parishioners and students and friends recall his influence for good on them.

Dr. Williams, now minister of music at historic First A.M.E. Church in Los Angeles, Calif., served as pastor of Hillside Presbyterian Church (now merged with Calvin Memorial) here during the 1930's. He was the first Black music teacher in the Omaha Public School System, first Black to be elected moderator of the Omaha Presbytery and directed several vocal groups who received acclaim throughout the Midwest.

The tribute was sponsored by the 20th Century Club of St. John A.M.E. Church, where his son, the Rev. John R. Williams, is pastor.

20th Century President Meredith Harrold, serving as mistress of ceremonies, hailed Dr. Williams as one "who built bridges" and "for sharing his talents."

St. John Choir Director Lester Corbin, a student of Dr. Williams at Long Grade School, praised him for "existing upon excellence" and exclaimed: "Anybody who had him for a teacher, had somebody."

Douglas Corbin, who sang in some of Dr. Williams' musical groups, said he was "proud that God made him part of my life."

Herbert Childs, Sr., who was baptized into Hillside membership by Dr. Williams, recounted singing with a double quartette with him on regular weekly live programs over Radio Station WAAW (now KOWH).

Family friend Belle Taylor said "he couldn't be forgotten in Omaha."

Former pupil Paul Briggs recalled how incensed Dr. Williams became when a principal stopped a program rather than let Briggs sing "The Negro National Anthem."

Long-time Howard Kennedy principal Johanna Chapman recounted how volunteer service as a music teacher at her school led to Dr. Williams' hiring.

Granddaughter Sandra Williams, a student at Adams State (Colo.) College, proclaimed that "the greatest thing he has given our family is his example being a Christian man."

Reminding that the "Black preacher and the Black teacher have been a sustaining force in the struggle of Blacks for liberation" Human Relations Director A. B. "Buddy" Hogan, presenting Dr. Williams with a key to the city and a honorary citizenship plaque, said "we owe a great deal of gratitude to those like Dr. Williams who showed the way."

Others participating in the celebration included singer Doris Newland, friend Susie Williams, 20th Century member Ollie Penn, Rev. Marion Jones and Rev. John R. Williams.



Education . . . Dr. Williams, Miss Chapman and Rev. Williams



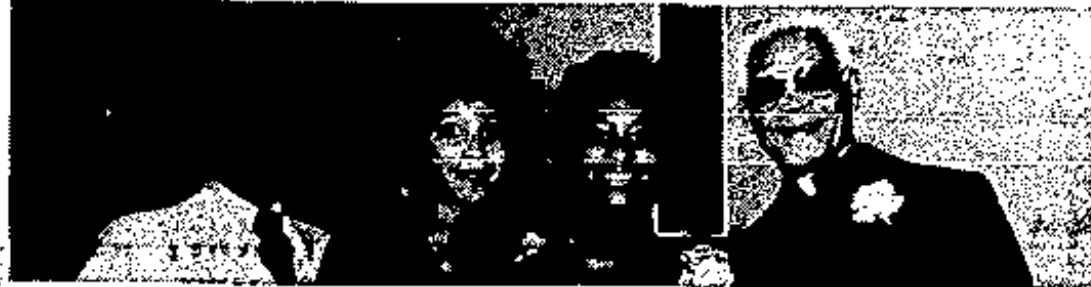
20th Century members . . . (from left) Katherine Hubbert, Meredith Harrold, Maxine Murray, Dr. Williams, Idelle Smith, Herietta McClarity, Rev. General R. Woods, Ollie Penn, Ruth Kellogg, Lucille Tyler, Mildred Barton, Elizabeth Stewart and Ossie Lewis.



Renewing friendships . . . (from left) Ollie Penn, Amelia Orduna, Phylliss Brown, Maxine Murray, Dr. Williams, Rev. Jones, Susie Williams, Herietta McClarity, Ruby Bradley, Pearl Brown, Idelle Smith with Johannah Chapman (left) and Belle Taylor in forefront sitting.



Remembering when . . . (from left) Rev. Marion Jones, Rev. M. Jewell Bowles, Lester Corbin, Paul Briggs, Ruth Downing, Pearl Brown, Herbert Childs, Douglas Corbin, Doris Newland and Charles Washington with Dr. Williams holding honorary citizenship.



Family . . . Son Rev. Williams, Granddaughter-in-law Ann Williams, Granddaughter Sandra Williams and Dr. Williams.

## Gov's Gallery Featuring Authentic African Jewelry

This month Gov's Gallery, 4965 Dodge, will feature authentic African jewelry, sterling silver jewelry by JoBe and feather jewelry by Karen Ulrich, backed up with local art featuring Betty Brougham of Council Bluffs (prints) and Douglas Perrin (watercolors). This showing will run from January 9 through February 5. We would like to wish you a good new year. Thank you very much.

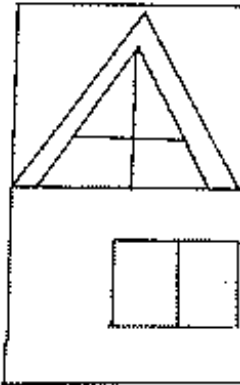
Sincerely,  
Gov's Gallery  
Oran D. Belgrave

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CITATION (APA STYLE)

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