



## Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.

October 20, 1935 - April 20, 2022

"A CHOSEN VESSELL"

Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.

Bishop Willie L. Balthrop Sr., D.D. passed away on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, at Chippenham Medical Center, Richmond, VA, in the arms of his son, Anthony Balthrop at his bedside.

Bishop Willie Balthrop, Sr., D.D. was born in the City of Petersburg, VA to the late James and Florence Balthrop on October 20, 1935. He attended and graduated from Peabody High School, Petersburg, VA. In furthering his education, he took courses from Moody Bible Institute and the American Bible College both of Chicago, IL. He also attended St. Leo College in Fort Lee, VA and Virginia State College in Petersburg, VA in 1970. He received his Doctor of Divinity Degree on May 30, 1981.

Bishop Balthrop was a Licensed Insurance Agent with Virginia Mutual Insurance Company. He was a Licensed Barber, drove taxi cabs and served in United States Navy until honorably discharged in November 1960. He was employed by the former Brown & Williamson Tobacco Company in Petersburg, VA and retired to enter the ministry full-time, having been Pastor of Bethesda Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ since 1974 until his passing. Bishop Balthrop also served as Chaplain at Southside Regional Medical

Center, Petersburg, VA.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James and Florence Balthrop; father-in-law, Deacon Willie E. Ferguson and mother-in-law, Evangelist Elnora Byrd Ferguson; along with a host of aunts and uncles.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 53 years, Doris Christine Balthrop of Petersburg, Virginia; two daughters, Sharon E. Payton of Petersburg, Virginia and Tonya J. Balthrop of Prince George, VA; two sons, Willie L. Balthrop, Jr. (Wanda) of Virginia Beach, VA and Anthony Balthrop (Iris) of Henrico, VA; four grandchildren, Christopher A. Payton of Colorado, Justin Harris of Delaware, Chikyia Marissa-Monique Balthrop of Maryland, and Scharell Revell (Greg) of Florida.

Bishop Balthrop started this journey over forty years ago by coming to the Lord through an affliction and through the witnessing of his Aunt Dora Davis. The then Bro. Willie Balthrop, was asked by Bishop J.S. Beane if he would accept the water Baptism in Jesus Name and Bro. Balthrop replied if it will make me feel any better than I do now, yes. The then Bro. Balthrop was baptized in Jesus Name and shortly thereafter received the gift of the Holy Ghost and became a member of Bethesda Church.

Being a newly saved saint, the then Bro. Balthrop was very zealous and witnessed to most everyone he came in contact. He also witnessed to his Mother Florence Balthrop, and she was saved and a few years later his father the late Deacon James Balthrop came to the Lord and was saved, and both became members of Bethesda Church.

After receiving the Holy Ghost, the then Bro. Balthrop received a strong hunger for the word of God. He began attending Bible Study, Missionary Service, and Noon Day Prayer Service under his pastor, Bishop John S. Beane. The then Bro. Balthrop began to become a student of the word and felt a call from God to preach His word. He relayed this to his Pastor, Bishop

Beane that he knew the Lord had called him to preach. Bishop Beane walking with a limp down the aisle said, "That's good son, now go sit down until you get something in you to preach." Bro. Balthrop was devastated that his pastor was not ecstatic about his call to preach, but he was obedient to the man of God and sat down and continued to attend Bible Study, Missionary Service and Noon Day Prayer and absorbed the word from his pastor. The then Bro. Balthrop attending the missionary service taught by Mother Miranda Beane, they called him "Missionary Balthrop."

In 1965 he was ordained an Elder. He was tutored by Bishop J. S. Beane and took courses from Moody Bible Institute and the American Bible College both of Chicago, IL. He also attended St. Leo College in Fort Lee, VA.

The then Elder Balthrop worked diligently with Bishop Beane. As his assistant, he preached on the street corners for three years and was blessed with a work at Baltimore Corner in Ford, Virginia. His rent was \$3.50 per month.

Min. Balthrop married Ms. Doris Ferguson, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Willie Ferguson of Disputanta, VA, in June 1968.

From 1968 to 1971, Elder Balthrop preached to the walls. After getting discouraged he told his wife he was going back to Bethesda because his work wasn't yielding any fruit. Sis. Balthrop told him, "No you are not going back; you said the Lord called you to preach so preach." Through this encouragement. Elder Balthrop and his family stayed at Baltimore corner preaching to the walls and the Lord began to bless. Through his consistency and faithfulness, he was able to win three souls to the Lord: Buck Gates and his wife (was known as the meanest man on Baltimore Corner) and Sis. Effie Austin who remained with him as a member. The Lord had put confirmation on his work. He baptized all three of these souls at Bethesda.

God was blessing but the devil was still busy. A member of Bethesda had offered Elder Balthrop a church on Terrace Avenue in Petersburg, VA. They had the lights and water turned on and provided him with the keys. But it came with a condition, he had to split Bethesda Church. Elder Balthrop was not a thief, nor was he going to hurt his spiritual Father Bishop Beane. So, he gave those keys back to this person. But see how God works. This same church that was offered to Elder Balthrop the wrong way, came available through the then Elder Wesley Taylor and Bishop Beane put his approval on the move and Elder Balthrop took over the church which was named St. Mark Bible Way Church. He was able to get the same church but didn't have get it the wrong way.

For three years Elder Balthrop preached the word on Terrace Avenue and the Lord blessed. On one Saturday they were putting on rally to get a bus and telephone at the church. Bishop Beane came by that evening and embraced Elder Balthrop and told him, not to buy a pew, a bus or telephone for this church because you won't need it. The next week Bishop Beane had died. Elder Balthrop had been faithful to Bishop Beane. Regardless of trials, tribulations, ostracism, and criticism, he has never stopped pointing souls to Christ. On May 26, 1974, at 4pm Elder Willie Balthrop, Sr. was installed as pastor of the Bethesda Bible Way Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ (The Mother Church of the State of Virginia for Bible Way Churches World Wide & Bible Way International) 459 Harding Street, Petersburg, Virginia. When Elder Balthrop took over the church in 1974 it had seventy-eight members and \$1,200.00 in the treasury. For the next nine years Elder & Sis. Balthrop work diligently. Sis. Balthrop was a very idealistic and put on many building fund drive programs because Elder Balthrop saw the need and the Lord had placed in his heart to build a church. It made economic sense due to the heating costs being incurred.

Moreover, on May 30, 1981, the then Elder Willie L. Balthrop received his

Doctor of Divinity Degree. Under the now Dr. Balthrop his ministry grew, a highlight of Dr. Balthrop's ministry was his invitation to preach by his Presiding Apostle, the Late Apostle Smallwood Williams. Dr. Balthrop membership had grown to over 500 plus and at the Norfolk Scope in Norfolk, Virginia, he was one of the first Bible Way preachers to bring a 500-voice choir. Through the creativity of Sis. Doris Balthrop they were able to raise more than \$85,000.00 to set aside to build a new Church but all were not on board. A faction of the membership caused a split in God's house about seven years after the then Elder Willie Balthrop taken over the church. Nevertheless, the work must go on. Elder Balthrop his family and the remaining of congregation were able to do what many said could not be done. A contractor, Garfield Dillard was hired, and the old Bethesda was demolished to make way for the Greater Bethesda Bible Way Church.

In 1983 the Old Bethesda was demolished. To God be the Glory, Dr. Balthrop's vision for a greater work for the was coming to fruition. For the next year the saints worshipped in the dining room next door while the Greater Bethesda was being built. "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness in the Lord in the Land of the living," Psalm 27:13.

In 1985, we were cutting the ribbon to the Greater Bethesda Bible Way Church. The Lord proved all things are possible to them that believe. At the dedication service for the church the late Bishop Smallwood Williams elevated Elder Balthrop, Sr., D.D. to District Elder At-Large. District Elder Balthrop continued expanding his outreach of his ministry with a Prison Ministry at Camp 13, an all-women's prison, in Chesterfield, Virginia, where he baptized many that were incarcerated and would also receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Dr. Balthrop was invited by Dr. Grady Powell, former Pastor of Gillfield Baptist Church of Petersburg, VA, to join the Downtown Churches United where he served the homeless. Constantly, expanding his ministry Dr. Balthrop was a radio and tv (WRIC 8) evangelist. He broadcasted each Sunday Night (WDYL 92.1) from 7am to 7:30pm for almost 30 years declaring

to lost souls that you have "One Life to Live & One Soul to Be Saved TM" was District Elder Willie Balthrop, Sr., D.D.'s trademarked motto whether you greeted him in the street, preaching a funeral or a revival.

In 2000, Apostle Lawrence G. Campbell, Sr., Presiding Bishop & Chief of Apostle of Bible Way International, bestowed upon District Elder Balthrop and elevated him to the office of Bishop of Bible Way International, which he was consecrated to the Bishoprick at the Bible Way International Convocation in Richmond, Virginia.

Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr., D.D. has been faithful and consistent to his calling, to wife, his family and his church, may his sweet soul rest in the arms of God until the Lord Jesus comes back for the Resurrection, your work on this side has been done. Rest on! Rest on! Until We Meet Again, Rest On!

"One Life to Live & One Soul to Be Saved TM"

A Homegoing Service to celebrate his life will be held on Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 10:00 A.M. at the Zion Apostolic Christian Memorial Temple, 1601 Youngs Rd., Petersburg, VA, with Dr. Suzie Wright, Pastor, officiating. Interment will follow at the Virginia Veteran's Cemetery at Amelia, Amelia, VA. Bishop will lie in state on Monday, May 23, 2022 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. at Tucker & Fisher Funeral Home and 5:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M. at The Greater Bethesda Bibleway Church, 459 Harding St., Petersburg, VA. Masks will be required. In lieu of flowers the family request that a donation be made to The Greater Bethesda Bible Way Church.

Final Care and Compassionate Services are being provided to the family by the professional staff of Tucker & Fisher Funeral Home and Cremation Services, 415 Halifax St., Petersburg, VA (804)324-5529.



# Previous Events

## Balthrop Public Viewing

MAY **23**. 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Tucker and Fisher Funeral Home  
415 Halifax Street  
Petersburg, VA 23803

## Balthrop Visitation

MAY **23**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

The Greater Bethesda Bibleway Church  
459 Harding St.  
Petersburg, VA 23803

## Balthrop Homegoing Celebration

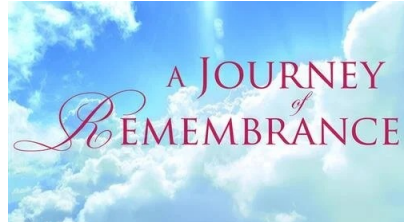
MAY **24**. 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Zion Apostolic Christian Memorial Temple  
1601 Youngs Rd  
Petersburg, VA 23803

# Tribute Wall



“ M.E. Fisher Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.



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M.E. Fisher Funeral Home, Inc. - May 22, 2022 at 06:23 PM



“ M.E. Fisher Funeral Home, Inc. created a Click Here for Live Stream in memory of Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.



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M.E. Fisher Funeral Home, Inc. - May 22, 2022 at 05:21 PM

AM

“ Praise the Lord Balthrop Family,



*I will always remembered when Bishop Balthrop would do the altar call when I was a teenager. The young people choir remembered it word for word. I never forget when he would get up to preach his message, He would start off singing, " One Day, We will be caught up to Meet Jesus in the Air." That was his Theme Song, that I will never forget. He was very consistent and he put in a good work and labor for the Lord. Rest Well Bishop from your labor. Love to you all Balthrop Family and the Bethesda church family. May God bless you richly and keep you in His loving arms. We will keep him in our hearts because Bethesda Church is where our relationship with the Lord increase to deeper depths and higher heights.*

*Love and Peace Always,  
Evangelist Arletha Mayfield and the Mayfield Family*

Arletha Mayfield - May 23, 2022 at 03:35 PM



“ 28 files added to the album Life Tributes



M.E. Fisher Funeral Home, Inc. - May 22, 2022 at 06:19 PM



“ 64 files added to the album Life Tributes



M.E. Fisher Funeral Home, Inc. - May 22, 2022 at 03:39 PM

ES

“ My uncle would end his service with , When you write a ceremon for a service it had a ending But when you preach of the Goodness of GOD IT HAS NO ENDING.  
That I would always remember 💕💕

Earnestine Saunders - May 13, 2022 at 05:10 PM



“ 0 file added to the tribute wall

M.E. Fisher Funeral Home, Inc. - April 28, 2022 at 12:48 PM

HJ

“When I think of the very goodness of Jesus and all he has done for me my soul cries out hallelujah, I praise God for saving me. " Praising God for Bishop Balthrop and all the Word of God he instilled in us as our Pastor for almost 20 years. Also, sending our condolences to Mother Doris, Willie Lee, Jr., Anthony, Sharon, Tonya, grandchildren and family. We love you and we're praying for you. May God comfort and strengthen you in knowing to be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord.

*Elders Henry & Joyace Jones*

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**Henry& Joyace Jones** - April 28, 2022 at 10:28 AM

CP

“ My condolences to the family. I pray God gives you peace and comfort at this time. You love him but God loved him best. He is gone from this earth but not forgotten. Now he is your guardian angel watching over you. Blessings to call. Love Cassandra Person and family.



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**Cassandra Person** - April 28, 2022 at 10:12 AM

AT

“ Bishop Balthrop was a good friend of ours and a true man of God with much wisdom and knowledge. He was a walking Bible. He was very close to my father and our families share a special bond. He will be missed and continued to be loved by many. Prayers to the family.

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**Antonio Tucker** - April 28, 2022 at 10:03 AM

HJ

“ Henry & Joyace Jones lit a candle in memory of Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.



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**Henry & Joyace Jones** - April 28, 2022 at 09:43 AM

NS

“ Nancy Saunders lit a candle in memory of Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.



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**Nancy Saunders** - April 25, 2022 at 05:46 AM

PR

“ To the Balthrop family, and to my late Pastor Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, I will always remember him for crying loud and lifting up his voice like a trumpet in Zion telling the people, “you have one life to live and one soul to save. I love him for how he taught us the word of God on Tuesday nights in bible class. He will truly be missed. To God be the glory for the things he has done.

*From Sister Patricia Raines*

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**patricia raines** - April 24, 2022 at 03:37 PM

CT

“ May God bless you and your family in this time of sorrow.

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**CHARLES TOWNES** - April 24, 2022 at 01:12 PM

ES

“ Dear Balthrop family, we extend our deepest sympathy for your loss. Bishop Balthrop was a friend of our family for many years and will be missed greatly! - Elder Walter and Dorothy Stith and family.

Elder Walter and Dorothy Stith - April 23, 2022 at 04:05 PM

DP

“ Deacon Michael & Belinda Piercy lit a candle in memory of Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.



Deacon Michael & Belinda Piercy - April 22, 2022 at 10:51 PM

BM

“ Brenda D Malone lit a candle in memory of Bishop Willie L. Balthrop, Sr.



Brenda D malone - April 21, 2022 at 05:20 PM

BS

“ My condolences to the Balthrop family on your loss.

Bill Stinson - April 21, 2022 at 04:37 PM

CB

“ I will never forget Bishop Balthrop, he was truly a man of the word of God, anytime you spoke with him he would speak God's word. He will truly be missed. My sympathy and prayers to the family.

Carolyn Brown - April 21, 2022 at 11:06 AM

HH

*"One life to live and one soul to save" will always ring in my ear from his messages. Rest well Bishop.*

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**Harriet Hill** - April 21, 2022 at 11:16 PM

ER

*To the family of Bishop Willie Balthrop I would like to let you know that you are in our prayer. May the Lord give you just what you need to make it through this difficult time of your life. May you find the comfort you need in His given word. Keep looking to Jesus for earth has NO SORROW that HEAVEN can't HEAL. In christ, Mo. Naomi Roberts*

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**Edna Roberts** - April 28, 2022 at 12:42 PM

SJ

*To the Balthrop Family:*

*Death leaves a pain nothing can heal; but loves leaves memories no one can steal.*

*I am sincerely praying for the family! I know exactly how you are feeling! Please remember this: there are so many positives that Bishop Balthrop (your dad), shared, that heartache, disappointment, sadness, and/or uncertainties, cannot compare.*

*For years, I remember your dad as a stable man of God. He exemplified an optimistic life. His words were always seasoned with grace and sincerity. He was thorough, true to his word, and openly demonstrated his love for God.*

*So, do not be sad for too long, because your dad is fine! And as long as he is fine...bye, and bye, you will be also! Hold your head up! Hang in there! Remember the things that you were taught!*

*Blessings and favor,  
Sharon L. Johnson*

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**SHARON L JOHNSON** - April 30, 2022 at 12:48 AM

DS

“ *To the Balthrop family*

*I want to say to you get the Lord Jesus Christ is a man acquainted with sorrow and grief it is an understatement to say beat in Carriage I say have your grief and mourn for Bishop Life and Legacy but also rejoice that he has move from labor to reward family is Alexander Pope wrote hope springs eternal breasts Man never is but always to be blessed the soul uneasily and conference from home rest and expatiate in a life to come I bid you my love and grace .*

*In the masters care,  
Deacon Michael Freeman Sr of  
Christian Tabernacle Church , Petersburg location  
Under the direction and leadership of Bishop Kenneth Hicks and  
pastor Michelle Hicks*

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**Deacon Michael Freeman Sr** - April 20, 2022 at 09:47 PM

RP

*Deepest Empathy to the Balthrop Family.  
Former St.Luke St.Neighbor Rev.Dorothy Prude Davis*

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**Rev.Dorothy Prude Davis ( Peaches)** - April 26, 2022 at 12:35 AM