



## **American Baptist News Service**

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### **Former ABC Leader Rev. Harrison Williams Dies**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 2/5/13)**—The Rev. Harrison E. Williams, former deputy for regional operations, American Baptist Churches USA, died on Thursday, January 24, 2013. He was 93.

In an active ministry which extended more than 30 years, Williams displayed notable gifts of leadership and responsibility in a varied Christian service.

As regional deputy, Williams carried the responsibility for interpreting the general secretary's concepts and intentions to the regional secretaries (region/state/city) and providing the general secretary with both detail and summary reports that reflect the mood and the activities of these secretaries.

Upon Williams' retirement in 1983, Dr. Robert C. Campbell, then general secretary of American Baptist Churches USA, said, "We have appreciated [the Rev. Williams'] ministry with us and in his earlier service in a variety of responsible positions in ABC. He has been thoroughly professional in the manner in which he has carried out the responsibilities of his office and yet very sensitive to all persons with whom he worked throughout the denomination."

From 1964-65, he was director of Urban Ministries for the Cleveland Baptist Association. He then became the executive minister of the American Baptist Churches of Monroe Association (now ABC of the Rochester/Genesee Region), NY, and associate executive minister of the American Baptist Churches of New York State. In 1970, he was named New York State's executive minister.

In addition to serving in regional capacities, Williams possessed a broad experience that includes service as chaplain in the US Naval Reserve, and as pastor of the First Baptist Church, East Rochester, NY (1946-49) and the Lyndhurst Baptist Church, Cleveland, OH (1949-64).

Williams graduated from Syracuse University and Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Crozer. He took graduate work at the College of William and Mary, the University of Rochester, and Western Reserve University.

In recent years, Williams was a member of Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, Oakland, CA.

The Rev. H. James Hopkins, pastor, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, said, “The Lakeshore and American Baptist families lost a great leader, a gentle spirit, and a wise friend when the Rev. Harrison Williams...passed away last Thursday at age 93. Harry made significant contributions to every community he was part of as a pastor and denominational leader. Certainly our congregation, along with the residents and staff at Grand Lake Gardens, his home for the last decade, will miss his steady, unflappable presence.”

Harrison Williams’ memorial service will held on February 23 at 2pm at Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, 3534 Lakeshore Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610.

*American Baptist Churches is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with over 5,200 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God’s mission around the world.*