

THANK YOU

THE JOHN O.  
WILLIAMS  
*77<sup>th</sup> Annual*  
NATIONAL  
LECTURESHIP  
*Banquet*



THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023

"SALUTING FALLEN SOLDIERS AND  
HONORING SERVANTS OF THE REDEEMER"

HYATT REGENCY HOTEL - HOUSTON, TX



## THE HISTORY

**T**he idea of the National Lectureship Banquet held among African American Churches of Christ, was conceived by the late John O. Williams who then served as Evangelist of the Central Church of Christ in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The objective of the Banquet is to recognize and remember the lives of deceased Ministers within our fellowship who made contributions and great sacrifices on behalf of the Lord's visible kingdom. John Oscar Williams for whom the Ministerial Banquet is named, was born on April 19, 1910, in Vidalia, Georgia, to the parents of John Henry and Annie Williams. He received his education at both Vidalia Industrial School and from Magnolia High School in Valdosta, Georgia.

In the year of 1930, John Oscar Williams married the former Miss Gertrude Jones of Valdosta, Georgia, and to this union they were blessed with one daughter. Sister Gertrude Jones Williams passed away on December 19, 1982. In the summer of 1931, while attending a gospel meeting held in Valdosta by the late Marshall Keeble, Brother Williams accepted Christ and was baptized. With the encouragement of Brother Luke Miller the local Evangelist, John O. Williams began his illustrious ministerial career which spanned for over fifty-seven years. He traveled extensively with brothers Miller and Keeble during tent meetings throughout the South as a song leader and Bible reader. John O. Williams served Churches of Christ in the states of Georgia, Alabama, Missouri, Michigan, Ohio, Florida, Texas, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. While serving the Jackson Street Church of Christ in Nashville, Tennessee, Brother Williams attended Nashville Christian Institute and took theology classes at Fisk University. It was during this time that he became editor of the *Crusader* - the newspaper of Nashville Christian Institute.

In the year of 1958, John O. Williams began his culminating twenty-seven years of full-time ministry with the Northside [now Central] Church of Christ in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Upon the arrival of Brother Williams, there were approximately sixty (60) precious souls. However, within a few years the congregation experienced phenomenal growth with a membership totaling well over three-hundred. The interest in Christian education by Evangelist John O. Williams was demonstrated in the fact that he was a member of the Board of Directors of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas; a staff writer of the *Christian Echo*, and a consultant for many gospel preachers across the brotherhood both young and aged. Having retired from active pulpit ministry in the year 1982, Evangelist John O. Williams passed away on March 7, 1988, while on vacation in Bradenton, Florida. In the year 1988 during the 44th National Lectureship in St. Louis, Missouri, a formal resolution was unanimously passed by the National Lectureship Advisory Committee, naming the next Lectureship banquet - "The John O. Williams Ministerial Memorial Banquet."

## THE PROGRAM

**OPENING PRAYER OF ADORATION**  
Dr. J. M. Crusoe - Hopewell, VA

**CHORAL SELECTIONS**

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**  
Randall F. Tucker, Sr. - Houston, TX

**INTRODUCTION OF MASTER OF CEREMONY**  
Dr. Russell A. Pointer - Minneapolis, MN

**MASTER OF CEREMONY**  
Wesley T. Leonard - Orlando, FL

**BANQUET PRAYER - DR. J. M. CRUSOE - HOPEWELL, VA**

~ **DINNER SERVED** ~

**CHORAL SELECTIONS**

**INTRODUCTION OF BANQUET SPEAKER**  
Dr. Willie L. Rupert, Jr. - Baltimore, MD

**BANQUET SPEAKER**  
Dr. Harvey M. Jackson - Mound Bayou, MS

**TRIBUTE TO DECEASED MINISTERS AND WIDOWS**  
Dr. Steven N. Thompson, Sr. - Milwaukee, WI

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE NATIONAL LECTURESHIP**  
Dr. David C. Penn - Chicago, IL

**SPECIAL TRIBUTES TO THE LATE**  
**DR. ROOSEVELT C. WELLS AND DR. EUGENE LAWTON**  
Dr. Russell A. Pointer

**CLOSING PRAYER OF APPRECIATION**  
Wesley T. Leonard