

Pastor William M. Campbell, II

Pastor William Monroe Campbell, II is a living legend. He has devoted his life to serving God and God's people. A loving husband, father, and grandfather, Pastor Campbell has nurtured generations through his work in the church and in the community. Boldly speaking truth to power and reaching out to uplift the seemingly forgotten, Pastor Campbell has been a dedicated minister of the gospel and a steadfast voice for social justice.

Born on May 24, 1947, in Los Angeles, California, to Daniel Louis and Rosa Olivia Avery Campbell, Pastor Campbell was the second of four children. He, along with his brother David, and sisters Edna and Anna and their parents attended the Second Baptist Church in Los Angeles. Pastor Campbell was forward focused even at a young age. Growing up in Second Baptist Church, he was nurtured in a congregation that took an active role in the fight for social justice. As a child, he saw Second Baptist support their pastor Dr. J. Raymond Henderson as he traveled the nation to raise money for the cause of civil rights. Second Baptist paid for the court briefs of the Brown vs Board of Education case of 1954. Pastor Campbell listened as Dr. Henderson preached profound sermons like the one entitled "Moses Was the First Civil Rights Leader." He was there as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. took the pulpit to preach twice, first under the pastoral leadership of Dr.

Henderson and then again at the invitation of Dr. Thomas Kilgore, Jr., Pastor Henderson's successor.

Baptized by Dr. Henderson and licensed and ordained by Dr. Kilgore, Pastor Campbell was groomed by giants in ministry, community building and social justice. The first Black President of the American Baptist Churches USA, President of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Governing Board Chair of Morehouse College and the University of Southern California, and one of the planners of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, Dr. Thomas Kilgore was Pastor Campbell's father in the ministry. Pastor Campbell learned the meaning of pastoral leadership from Dr. Kilgore. He also learned Baptist polity from his actual father, Deacon Daniel L. Campbell.

As a youth, Pastor Campbell served in multiple leadership rolls within the church and in school including President of the Baptist Youth Fellowship and President of the Debate Society. He also received accolades for scholarship and service from several organizations including the Kappa Alpha Psi Award of Achievement and the John Danforth Faculty Award of Leadership and Character at Thomas Jefferson High School.

At the age of 15 at Second Baptist, Pastor Campbell met the former Marilyn Ann Campbell when she and her family joined the church on December 2, 1962. He decided at first glance that he would marry her. They married on July 6, 1969.

After graduating high school, Pastor Campbell enrolled in California Baptist College, then Pepperdine University where he pledged the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. through the Beta Omega Chapter, inspired by his friend and brother, Johnnie Cochran, Jr. and his beloved family friend, Mel Davis. Pastor Campbell served as Polemarch of Beta Omega 1968 – 1969. While at Pepperdine, Pastor Campbell reformed the Black Student Union and served as President. During his leadership, a Black teenager who lived in the neighborhood was shot by a Pepperdine security guard, and Pastor Campbell led the BSU in closing down the university for a week. This was an early step in Pastor Campbell's life of leadership in social justice.

Encouraged by his dear friend and adopted big brother Rev. Dr. Paul Martin, Pastor Campbell followed in the footsteps of Dr. Martin and Dr. Henderson and transferred from Pepperdine to enroll in Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia, where he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology, and received the Wilma Straus Alexander award for Sociology. Upon graduation, he also began his seminary education at Virginia Union's Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology where he received the award in Greek/English New Testament. While in Richmond, he served as the Minister of Youth for the Good Shepherd Baptist Church.

After his first year in seminary, Pastor Campbell and his lovely wife moved back to Los Angeles where he attended and earned his Master of Divinity degree from the American Baptist Seminary of the West while serving as the Student Minister and Assistant to the Pastor at Second Baptist Church under the leadership of Dr. Kilgore. During this time, their daughters Katari and later Kristin were born.

In 1974, Pastor Campbell, his wife Marilyn, and their daughters Katari and Kristin moved to Berkeley California where he served as the Minister of Christian Education at McGee Avenue Baptist Church where Rev. James H. Stewart was pastor. While in Berkeley, their son, William III was born.



*Rosa Avery with children
David, William, Edna and
Anna*



*Pastor William M. Campbell
with father Deacon Daniel L.
Campbell*



*William and Marilyn's
wedding day*

In 1977, the Campbell family returned to Southern California. Pastor Campbell began serving as the Associate Pastor at Calvary Baptist Church of Pacoima, California under the leadership of Pastor Hillary T. Broadous where he continued to work in the community, leading the Parent Association at Filmore Elementary School and worked with Pastor Broadous to develop the struggling school into one of the strongest schools in the area. Filmore would later be renamed Hillary T. Broadous Elementary School.

In 1980, Pastor Campbell heeded the call of God to establish a church in the Artesia/Cerritos Area. After much prayer and planning, Pastor Campbell, with the support of his wife Marilyn, organized the Baptist Church of the New Covenant in Jesus Christ of Artesia Cerritos. The church would later shorten the name to New Covenant Baptist Church. While pastoring New Covenant, Pastor Campbell worked with an ecumenical association of clergy known as The Gathering. He served as the secretary and later the Executive Director of the multicultural organization. Pastor Campbell moved on from New Covenant in 1985 and continued to maintain a loving relationship with members of New Covenant.

Pastor Campbell became the Senior Pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church in Altadena, California in 1986, and served the congregation and community for two years. Upon leaving Metropolitan, he served as a Pastoral Associate at Calvary Baptist Church of Pacoima, supporting his good friend Pastor William T. Broadous as he took over the Senior Pastor position after the death of his father, Pastor Hillary Broadous. Pastor Campbell served at Pastor Broadous's side for several years before returning to home to Second Baptist Church where he served as a Pastoral Associate under Senior Pastor Dr. William S. Epps.

At home again, Pastor Campbell taught the Young Adult Sunday School class, which grew into a thriving group. The young adults at Second often commented on the honest, open, and deeply meaningful classes that Pastor Campbell taught. At a young adult retreat some of the young men commented that they had planned to leave early, but after participating in a workshop that Pastor Campbell taught on love and dating, they decided to stay throughout the retreat. He had a deep impact on all who would listen. Pastor Campbell has such a knack for getting right to the heart of what people really needed to hear, even though that hadn't realized how much they needed to hear it until he said it.

While at Second, Pastor Campbell continued to work in the community. He taught classes at California State University at Northridge and the Ecumenical Center for Black Church Studies. He was the Outreach Coordinator for NAACP and the Community Redistricting Committee. He was a founding member of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE), and he founded the African American Clergy, Community Leadership Commission. He attended the Harvard Divinity School Summer Leadership Institute in 1999. He fought for a living wage along with AFLCIO, and was a founding member of the MAGI (a group of ministers dedicated to social justice). A constant voice for equity and justice, after the beating of Rodney King by the Los Angeles Police Department and after proof of foul play by then Police Chief Daryl Gates, Pastor Campbell spoke before the Police Commission and was the first person to publicly call for the resignation of Chief Gates.

In addition to teaching the Young Adult Sunday School Class, Pastor Campbell developed Project Open Door, a ministry of the Second Baptist Church. Project Open Door was

a drop-in center in the heart of Skid Row, providing services to homeless persons in the area. Pastor Campbell built this special center from an empty storefront into a library, café, and into a mental, emotional, and spiritual sanctuary for God's children who needed to know that God still loved them. One man gave Pastor Campbell three long strands of beautiful wooden beads. He told Pastor Campbell that previously, when he had a thought, he would add a bead to the string because he had no one to talk to. He said that he was giving the string of beads to Pastor Campbell because with Project Open Door, he no longer needed them. Pastor Campbell provided juice; donuts; coffee; reading material; board games; hotel and clothing vouchers; bus tokens; case management services; a safe place to sit; a listening ear; and human dignity to all who entered the open door.

In 2001, Pastor Campbell accepted the call to pastor the Mt. Gilead Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California. While at Mt. Gilead, he continued to work in the community, working with the Los Angeles Council of Churches where he served as president in 2001. He encouraged the group to be the voice for the people with regard to candidates for public offices and began inviting political candidates to speak to the council, reminding them that Black churches would hold them accountable. He demanded that candidates answer difficult questions that pertained to the concerns of the Black community.

Pastor Campbell takes seriously his work of service and leans in consistently to the challenging work of fighting for justice. He also has a lighter, sentimental side. He enjoys spending time with his family. He still gives Sister Campbell gifts on the anniversary of when they began dating at the ages of 15 and 14. He finds joy in laughing and vacationing with his family, enjoying the company of Sister Campbell, their children Katari, Kristin, and William and spouses Cedric and Christine, along with the grandchildren Sabane, William, and Cofi.

Pastor Campbell's life seems to have come full circle as he began serving and continues to serve as the First Vice President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Southern California, the national organization developed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As dedicated to social justice and community organizing as Pastor Campbell is, pastoring God's people was his primary concern. At Mt. Gilead, he poured all his love and energy into serving God and God's people with all that he had learned and experienced along his life's journey of ministry and service. Every lesson learned and insight from God, every book he'd read, every sermon he'd heard, every effort for social justice, he poured into the people of Mt. Gilead. Years of wisdom, a prophetic understanding, an uncanny ability to see both the big picture and the details inspired the way he taught this congregation. He gave Mt. Gilead everything that he had received. He poured all that he could into the congregation for 21 years as he had with his own children – offering critical insight and perspective, listening to the voice of God and providing prophetic leadership that saw into what was to come. He truly loves God's people with every ounce of his being, and he gave and served until God said that it is time to move on. Only God's call could have moved him.

Now, as he enters retirement from Senior Pastoral service, know that his work of social justice and community ministry is not over. Thus begins a new chapter...



*Dr. Thomas Kilgore Jr.,
Bishop Desmond Tutu,
Campbell Family and others*



*Pastor William M. Campbell
at Mount Gilead*



*Pastor Campbell and then
Senator Joe Biden*