The Right Reverend Preston Warren Williams II, D. Min

Bishop Preston Warren Williams II, is a willing, winning, worker for Christ; a successful philanthropist, entrepreneur, academician, social activist, and civic leader. Following his historic 57-year career of service to the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in 2016 Bishop Williams and his beloved wife Dr. Wilma D. Webb Williams established the Preston and Wilma Williams Foundation for Social Change (WFSC). Through the Williams Foundation, Bishop Williams continues his life-long legacy of making a difference in the lives of people by providing social services and basic life supporting provisions to include a sustainable clean water program to cities in the United States and throughout the world.

A man of great purpose and born to the higher calling of accomplishing God’s will and work, Bishop Williams has spent his life championing the cause of the downtrodden and disenfranchised and fighting for economic, social, and political justice and equality for all people. The WFSC culminates Bishop and Dr. Williams’ life-long mission and calling by combining their one-on-one Christian outreach ministry with social action and assistance projects. WFSC’s Project Purity is one such initiative. Project Purity brought together the American Red Cross, Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, and Local 951 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and delivered 57,490 gallons of bottled water to Flint, Michigan residents as a result of the Flint water crisis. Other WFSC initiatives include building homes for low-income families in the southern United States, providing scholarship and other educational opportunities for at-risk youth, and establishing a clean well water project to provide clean water to people in Africa.

During his storied ministerial career, Bishop Williams served as pastor to A.M.E. churches throughout the state of Georgia. During that time, he developed a partnership with the Housing and Urban Development Authority and Herman J. Russell, Inc., which led to a 15-million-dollar renovation program of more than 600 apartment units in the city of Atlanta. Additionally, he secured more than a million dollars of support for the purchase of a 33-unit apartment complex for homeless mothers and children. In 2000, after four decades of caring for Christ’s flock within the United States, God elevated him to the Episcopacy and apex of A.M.E. leadership when he was elected and consecrated the 119th Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

From 2000 to 2004, Bishop Williams served as the Presiding Prelate of the 17th Episcopal District, covering eight countries within Central Africa. Through God’s hand of deliverance, Bishop Williams grew the 17th District’s membership from 152,000 to 256,000 members, a staggering increase of 104,000 new members to the A.M.E. church. This astronomical increase required the creation of an additional district to the connectional church, establishing the new 20th Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Church.

From 2004 to 2012, Bishop Williams served as Presiding Prelate of the 7th Episcopal District (South Carolina) as well as Chairman of the Board of Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina and Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce, Ohio. Bishop Williams ushered in a renaissance at Allen University by procuring $30 million dollars to construct two new dormitories, renovate dilapidated campus buildings, hire new faculty and staff, expand the curriculum and opportunities for post-graduate studies, increase student enrollment, and improve the caliber and quality of the University and university life. Bishop Williams partnered the 7th District with the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice establishing Teen After School Centers throughout Columbia, SC, and donated $100,000 dollars to help fund a Community Connections Center for at-risk youth. Bishop Williams also partnered the 7th District with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) and provided thousands of underprivileged children with free lunches. With the SCDSS, the 7th District sponsored statewide health fairs offering guidance and information on how to lead healthy lifestyles. This partnership produced the “Eyes On The Child” program through which the 7th District provided mentors to at-risk youth in the South Carolina public school system, offering academic and social support to help them improve their academic performance.

From 2012 to 2016, Bishop Williams served as the Presiding Prelate of the 6th Episcopal District (Georgia), as well as Chairman of the Board of Morris Brown College and Turner Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. Bishop Williams’ premiere achievement during this era is best described as saving Morris Brown College. When Bishop Williams arrived in Georgia in 2012, he discovered Morris Brown was more than 35 million dollars in debt and its buildings, grounds and other properties were on the verge of being parceled off and sold. This would have destroyed a beacon and bedrock of African Methodism. Through four challenging years maneuvering through intricate legal battles, through God’s grace Bishop Williams led Morris Brown College victoriously through the process of Chapter 11 Bankruptcy and filed a reorganization plan that was approved by the federal courts. Bishop Williams called upon his prominence as a public figure in Atlanta politics and business to wrestle Morris Brown College from being demolished by its creditors. Bishop Williams reduced Morris Brown College’s 35-million-dollar debt to 15 million dollars, and the school is currently working towards regaining its accreditation. Because of Bishop Williams’ support, Morris Brown College remains in existence and available to future generations so they will be able to discover its rich and proud legacy, safeguarding a hallmark of the A.M.E. Church.

A firm believer in the power of education, Bishop Williams served on Atlanta’s Board of Education for 19 years as President, Vice President, Chairman of the Superintendent Search Committee, and Chairman of the Finance Committee where he was responsible for the plans and management of a 430 million dollar budget. With over 50 years of entrepreneurial experience, Bishop Williams owned the Williams Insurance Agency, partnering with Allied Health Agencies to support the insurance needs of the local communities in which he lived. Bishop Williams also served as a member of the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches and was chosen as the State of Georgia Distinguished Churchman.

Bishop Williams earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Southeastern University and a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree from Turner Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA. He completed further studies in the Continuing Education Program at Yale University Divinity School and earned his Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) degree from American University’s Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. Bishop Williams has received numerous honorary degrees including: Doctor of Law, Daniel Payne College (Birmingham Alabama); Doctor of Humane Letters, Lee Theological Seminary (Jacksonville, Florida); Doctor of Humane Letters, Morris Brown College (Atlanta, Georgia); and Doctorate of Divinity, Turner Theological Seminary (Atlanta, GA) and Jackson Seminary (Little Rock, Arkansas).

Bishop Williams is a champion of social and political action, economic empowerment, and business enterprise development. He has devoted his life to the noble pursuit of helping others, Bishop and Dr. Williams now continue their labor of love and legacy through the work of the **Preston & Wilma Williams Foundation for Social Change**.