

Deacon Bowman Colwell was born in Sumter County, Georgia on January 27, 1924. He was told by his mother, the late Mrs. Annie Rose Kitchens Colwell, that January 25th was his birthday, and he was named Bowman Samuel Albright Kitchens. He was the only son of the late Mr. Alphonso Wakefield, but his last name was provided through his mother's marriage to the late Mr. Sidney Colwell.

Deacon Colwell attended the schools of Sumter County through the 3rd grade, having to quit to work on the farm to take care of his mother and siblings when she became seriously ill. At an early age, he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and joined the Lebanon Baptist Church, Plains, Georgia in 1938. He faithfully served the church in many capacities including the following: Choir President, Supervisor of the Young Men Christian Club, President of the Pallbearers Club, Adult Sunday School Teacher, Deacon Board member, Assistant Chairman, and Chairman (for 25 years until retirement as a Deacon Emeritus); he also served on the Banking Committee of the Church, worthy Commander of the Local Lodge of the Independent Fraternal Union, a member of the Free and Accepted mason, the Holy Royal Lodge and the Parents' Council. Around 1976, he served in several capacities related to the current Lebanon Baptist Church sanctuary building project. Founder, President of the Statewide Quartet Convention and he also served as manager of the Soul Stirrers Spiritual Singers (of the Sumter County area).

Deacon Colwell was a gold card member (for his service years of membership) in St. Bartholomew Masonic Lodge #177 in Plains, Georgia. He joined the lodge on December 29, 1949, and was the oldest member of the lodge at his passing. He was a faithful member always willing to help maintain the lodge hall when asked or needed. He was also a faithful member of Ulysses Hill Chapter #55 of the Royal Arc Mason, also in Plains, Georgia.

Deacon Colwell's employment included farmworker in Sumter and Webster Counties; construction worker building bridges and interstates in Georgia, Florida, and Alabama with companies that included the following: Parker Construction, H&H Construction, Daniel Construction, and Baugh & Coody, Inc. Around 1971, he became self-employed in cement/concrete masonry until his retirement. He then returned to his farm working skills, continuing to plant his garden of vegetables and fruit, planting his cane patch, distributing cane, pressing, and distributing cane juice, and making and distributing cane syrup. He finally retired from his passion of gardening to care for his wife of almost 75 years, during the last stages of her illness.

Deacon Colwell departed this life on the night of February 20, 2022, at his home surrounded by family. He was preceded in death by his wife, Ella Mae Harvey Colwell; 6 of his 15 children: "Mary", Bowman Jr., Michael, Alphonso, Daniel, and Freddie Mae; two sisters, Mamie Kitchen Woods and Shaheeda Faruq (Carolyn Wakefield); two brothers, Alvin Lee Colwell and Daniel Eugene Colwell, Sr.; three grandchildren: Avis, Alphonso "Fonda", and Sonia; and one great grand, Quanesha.

Deacon Colwell's life and legacy will be cherished by his 9 children: Burnette C. Dunning, Americus, GA; Samuel Colwell, Sr. (Codane), Columbus, GA; Beulah C. Ross (James), Americus, GA; Naomi C. Evans (Ernest), Americus, GA; Eddie Lockett (Jennifer), Albany, GA; Abraham Colwell, Maywood, IL; David Colwell (Eretha), Jonesboro, GA; George Colwell, Americus, GA; Steven Colwell, Atlanta, GA; two sisters: Regina Tullis and Annie Dean Shepherd (David), both of Americus, GA; three sisters-in-law: Josephine Harvey, Americus, GA; Janie Prather, Stuart, FL; Dorothy Harvey, Newark, NJ; devoted cousin, Mary Wakefield Wright Minion and all other Wakefield family members; over 46 grandchildren; over 50 great grands; over nine great-great grands; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives and friends who survive.