Robert Handley

**Biography for Robert L. Handley**

**Life Story of Robert L. Handley**

*Born February 10, 1946*

**Early Life**

I was born on February 10, 1946, in Tillar, Arkansas, to **David Handley Sr.** and **Verna Mae Rucker Handley**. I am the eighth of sixteen children and the fifth of twelve boys.

Our family income was below the poverty line, and I was seriously educationally deprived. Because of working on the farm, I rarely attended school more than two days a week before Christmas, and the same happened in April and May. As a result, I struggled through elementary, middle, and high school.

In 1965, I graduated from Wolfe Project High School at the age of 19.

**Education**

In September 1965, I enrolled at **AM&N College**. Because I was financially deprived, the only way I could attend college was through the National Defense Student Loan and by participating in work study.

In 1969, I completed the requirements for graduation and earned a **B.S. degree in Math Education**.

I went on to pursue additional studies, earning:

* A **Master’s degree in Education Administration** from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
* A **Doctorate degree in D.Min and Pastoral Ministry** from St. Martin College and Seminary, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**Career in Education**

After graduating in 1969, I was hired as the **bookstore manager** at AM&N College, a position I held until 1975.

I then became a **math teacher** at Southeast Middle School in the Pine Bluff School District. In addition to teaching, I also served as a **bus driver** for the district. Later, I advanced to become **assistant principal** and then **principal** at the same school.

Though I retired, I was later rehired as **interim superintendent** for the district, followed by serving as **principal of Pine Bluff High School**. I officially retired from the district in 2012.

**Ministry**

I accepted the call to ministry and in **February 1977**, I became pastor of **Mt. Harmony Missionary Baptist Church**. I have faithfully served as pastor of this church for over 37 years.

Through ministry, I have taught, preached, and evangelized in churches across America, as well as in parts of **Europe** and **Africa**.

**Service and Leadership**

I served **15 years on the Arkansas State Claims Commission**.

In addition, I have held leadership roles including:

* President of the District Congress
* Moderator of the District Association
* President of the Arkansas Congress of Christian Education

**Family**

I am married to **Carrie L. Rayford**, and together we have three children: **Thaddeus, Leslie, and Cassandra**.

We are also blessed with five grandchildren: **Thaddeus Jr., Raven, Kimarra, Carrington Mills, and Barry Joe Minor**.

**Faith and Legacy**

From education to ministry, my life has been centered on service, leadership, and faith. To God be the Glory.