

Services Held In Lufkin For Former Pastor Of Local Church

Funeral services for Rev. J. D. Simmons, a former pastor of Grapeland's St. John Baptist Church, were held Saturday, April 1, at the First Missionary Baptist Church in Lufkin with the Rev. Fabian Jacko and Rev. Roy G. Smith officiating. Interment followed at Trinity Community Cemetery in Trinity under the direction of Colonial Mortuary Funeral Directors.

Rev. Simmons was born October 8, 1926, in the Shara community near Trinity and was a son of Walter and Edith Woods Simmons. He passed away Sunday, March 26, 2000, at his residence. He was 73.

A graduate of Sam Houston High School in Huntsville, Rev. Simmons attended Mary Allen College for two years of academic studies and received his Bachelor of Theology Degree from Conroe Normal and Industrial College. Rev. Simmons was called to the ministry in 1964. He was licensed and ordained from the Bowen Pilgrim Baptist Church in Trinity and was in pastoral service for 34 years. He started his pastoral work at Simpson Chapel Baptist Church where he spent seven years and served six years as pastor of St. John Baptist Church here. At the time of his death he was serving as pastor of the First Missionary Baptist Church in Lufkin where he had been for the past 28 years. Under his leadership membership

grew from fifty-four member to one thousand fifty-six members. He has also led the membership in building a half-million dollar church and paying for it in a five year period.

Rev. Simmons was General Bowen Pilgrim District Moderator for eighteen years and became First Vice after serving his term. Rev. Simmons was singer and manager of the Sensational Preachers. He was a Corporal in the U. S. Air Force, serving at the Tuskegee Air Force Base.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Marjorie Davis Simmons; sisters, LuElla Calhoun and Elnorda Phipps; and brothers, Hyrma, A. D., Clyde, Atma, L. B. and Wiley Simmons.

Survivors include his wife of eleven years, Marva Kelley Simmons of Lufkin; sons, Jerry Simmons of Houston, Ramon Simmons of California, Tony Simmons of Arlington, Cedric petty of Trinity; daughters, Walterene Dennis of Trinity, Patricia Gunn of California, Sophia Alexander, Sandra Walker and LaTonya Green of Lufkin and Tabitha Moyer of Elk Grove, California; sister, Marie Hamilton of Trinity; sisters-in-law, Barbara Sterns, Vera Johnson, Norma, Gertie Mae, and Sue Mae Simmons; brother, Otis Simmons of Richmond, California; brothers-in-law, Johnny Johnson and G. W. Sterns; daughters-in-law,

Sharon, Brenda and Debbie Simmons, Anna and Disiree Moses and Michele Petty; sons-in-law, L. C. Gunn, Lee Walker, Billy Alexander, Glenn Moyer, Clarence Green and Ricky Dennis; grandchildren, Deon and Michael Moses and Tony D. Simmons, all of Arlington; Cedric R. Simmons and Donte Simmons of California, Brandy, Teralingua, Jennifer and Tamara Simmons; a host of other relatives, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, god-children, cousins, nephews and nieces.