**Pastor Leslie Edward Stratton is the third of seven children born to Albert and Amanda Stratton. He was educated in the public school of Nashville, graduating in 1978 from Hume-Fogg High School.**

**Raised in a God-fearing home and taken to Sunday School each week, he accepted the invitation to accept Christ and was baptized in April of 1975 at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee under the pastorate of the late Reverend R. L. Evans. While attending Tabernacle he served in several ministries for some 20 years.

After graduating from high school, he attended Tennessee State University. He majored in Business Administration with a minor in management. Upon completing his course requirements, he earned the Bachelor of Business Administration degree in December of 1983.

While attending Tennessee State University, he began working at the J. W. Adkins Funeral Home and took overwhelming interest in becoming a mortician. After graduation from Tennessee State University, he enrolled at John A. Gupton College of Mortuary Science. Completing all course requirements, he graduated in May of 1986 earning an, Associates of Arts degree in Mortuary Science. In 1987, he completed state licensing requirements and has since served as a Licensed Funeral Director & Embalmer.

He is blessed with two wonderful adult daughters: Candice C. and Chelsea N. Stratton.**

**Having been raised in a Christian home and having a grandfather, uncle, cousin, and brother to serve as pastors of various congregation, ministry was a way of life for he and his family. Pastor Stratton admits that preaching was the last desire he ever had. However, struggling with what he felt was a call to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ for some 14 years, after much prayer and denial he accepted what God had predestined for his life.**

 **One the second Sunday of September in 1991, he surrendered his will and accepted God’s will and announced his call to preach the Gospel at Tabernacle Baptist Church under the pastorate of the late Reverend Richard D. Hunt. On Sunday, November 10th at 6:19 p.m., he preached his first sermon entitled” A Foolish Request” scripture reference 1 Kings 19:1-18. He was licensed as a Minster to preach the Gospel by the church council the same evening.**

**In January of 1992 with the desire to better equip himself for the ministry, Reverend Stratton enrolled in the Th-B Program at the American Baptist College. In May of 1994, he completed his course requirements and graduated magna cum lade with a Bachelor of Bible Theology degree. Also, on May 22, 1994 he was ordained as a Christian Minister of the Gospel.**

 **Pastor Stratton is quick to admit that God graciously reassured him of his calling by allowing**

**him to preach and teach the word of God continually each week with few Sunday’s free of**

**preaching engagements. In 1996, he co-served as interim Minister at Covenant Christian**

**Church, (formerly called the Gay-Lea Christian Church) for eight months.**

**Again desiring to better equip himself for Christian ministry in January of 1996, he enrolled**

 **at David Lipscomb University in pursuit of a Master of Arts degree in Religion. He took leave**

 **after accepting the pastorate of Rockland Missionary Baptist Church in September of 1997**

**and resumed his studies towards completion of a Master’s Degree in Religious Studies,**

 **graduating on May 10, 2003.**

 **Pastor Stratton ministerial journey has allowed him to serve for several years at the Sunday School Publishing Board of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., during its annual Sunday School Congress and Convention conferences. Also, he serves as a guest evangelist, conference facilitator, and instructor for many congregations and associations. His passion for preaching and teaching the word of God continues to demonstrate his desire to exemplify the ministry of Jesus, while striving to become a Kingdom Builder for Christ.**