

Order of Service

Mr. Homer Danley, Officiating
(Former student, lifetime friend)

ProcessionalSoft Music

Solo "I'm Free"
Deacon Darfus Dallas

Invocation..... Deacon Ben Sexton

Scripture Readings:

Old Testament.....Psalms 23:1-6..... Bishop Randy Parker

New Testament.....I John 14:1-4 Reverend Roudell Wilson

Selection Combined Choir of Douglas County

MemoriesTwo Minutes, Please

Mr. Esau Birdsong

Mr. Stewart's Barber and Long-term Friend

Judge Barbara Caldwell

Former Student and Lifetime Friend

Alquetta Thurman

Neighbor, former student, lifetime friend

Mr. Clarence Zachery

Former Student and Lifetime Friend

Mrs. Hazel D. Burton

Former Student, Secretary for Over 20 Years, Lifetime Friend

Family Representative Remarks Stephen Huffman, Nephew

Acknowledgements Ruby Cannon

Selection Combined Choir of Douglas County

Eulogy.....Reverend Charles Sexton

Zion Hill Baptist Church Truth Center

Committal.....Reverend Charles Sexton

Recessional "Going up Yonder"

Ms. Linda Dobbs

TOGETHER AGAIN...



PALLBEARERS

Morris Ellison
Renard Burton
Nathan Zachery

Deward Burton
Leon McClarty
Alphonso Thurman

FLOWER LADIES

LaSonya Burton
Sonya Griggs Chasten
Yolanda Ellison

Connie Jones Peltier
Terri Griggs
Trina Smith

HONORARY FLOWER LADIES

Phyllis Ayers

Georgie Danley
Florence Danley

Faye Dobbs
Gloria Dobbs

INTERMENT

Lincoln Hill Cemetery

408 Miller Avenue | Gadsden, Alabama 35903

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Stewart family expresses thanks to the many students, friends, and church family for their cards and expressions of kindness. May God bless the kind hands and hearts extended to our family.

SERVICE BY PROFESSIONALS



1318 EAST BRIDAL ST.
GADSDEN, ALABAMA 35903
PH. 256-492-4366 | FAX: 256-492-4326

A SONG OF LIVING

Because I have loved life,
I shall have no sorrow to die.
I have sent up my gladness on wings,
to be lost in the blue of the sky.
I have run and leaped with the rain,
I have taken the wind to my breast.

My cheek like a drowsy child to the face
of the earth I have pressed.
Because I have loved life,
I shall have no sorrow to die.
Amelia Josephine Burr

Celebration OF LIFE FOR



MR. John Willis STEWART

SUNRISE

June 25, 1924

SUNSET

April 19, 2026

"Some people shine too brightly to ever be forgotten."

Saturday, May 2, 2026

Family Hour: 10:00 AM | Service: 11:00 AM

J. W. Stewart Middle School Auditorium
8138 Malone Street | Douglasville, Georgia 30134

Mr. Homer Danley, Officiating
(Former student, lifetime friend)

Obituary

"To everything there is a season..... A time to every purpose"
Ecclesiastes 3:1

John Willis Stewart entered the presence of God on April 19, 2026, at the age of 101 years. Mr. Stewart was married to Juanita Elizabeth Ellison Stewart, who preceded him in death after 72 years of marriage. Though no children were born to this union, Mr. Stewart and his wife gave and in return, received love, encouragement, and support to family, friends, students, employees, fellow educators, and other leaders within their Douglas County, GA community throughout their years.

A TIME TO BE BORN ECCLESIASTES 3:2

John was born on June 25, 1924, in the rural community of Victoria, TN. He was the youngest of nine children born to the late Addie Robinson and William Scott Stewart. His beloved siblings all preceded John in death: four sisters, Lecta Stewart Benton, Ica Stewart Fortune, Grace Stewart Butler, and Aileen Stewart Williams; and four brothers, Marvel, Henry C., Ray, and Roland B. Stewart.

A TIME TO BE SAVED JOHN 3:3

John began his Christian pilgrimage at Missionary Ridge Baptist Church in Tennessee at a young age. Later in life, he joined Zion Hill Baptist Church, Douglasville, GA. In Douglasville, he also attended other churches to interact with the community in worship.

A TIME TO BE TRAINED PROVERBS 22:6

John's primary and secondary education was in the Marion County School System in Tennessee. After graduating from high school, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. Following his active military service, John's oldest sister, Lecta Benton Stewart, an educator who lived near the Tuskegee campus, encouraged and supported his studies at Tuskegee University. His educational accomplishments include a degree in Agricultural Education from Tuskegee Institute, followed by a Master of Education degree from New York University. He also completed educational seminars and workshops, earning numerous certificates, including those from Atlanta University and West Georgia College.

A TIME TO SERVE MATTHEW 20:4

Mr. Stewart served as an active-duty soldier in World War II, 1943-1946. Mr. Stewart's service roles to Douglas County and the State of Georgia community included: membership on the U.S. Draft Board, GA, for three years; and life membership in the NAACP, NEA, GEA, and GTEA. He also served on several state and local boards.

Little-known historical fact: Though Mr. Stewart did not have an active role in the Civil Rights Movement, he strongly supported the movement. He was identified as a key figure in obtaining permission from the City

of Douglasville to coordinate the provision of lunch by Zion Hill Baptist Church to the Freedom Riders during their 1961 journey through Georgia.

TIME TO LABOR GENESIS 3:19

The combination of Mr. Stewart's farming experience as a boy and teen, military background, and agricultural degree led to a role under the state of Georgia to increase the efficiency of farming in Georgia. John's role included instructing future African American farmers on new techniques and research to improve land productivity, increase crop yields, and shift toward raising livestock and poultry.

Mr. Stewart's role as an agricultural instructor led to a recommendation that he pursue his master's degree in education. Upon completion of his master's degree, he accepted a position as teacher, basketball coach, and later assistant principal of Hutchinson High School in Douglas County, GA. In 1957, the graduates of Hutchinson High School (the school's final year) recognized Mr. Stewart's guidance.

Following the closing of Hutchinson High, Mr. Stewart served as the founding principal of R. L. Cousins High School—one of the first African American high schools in Douglas County, GA—for 29 years. The building that housed the former R. L. Cousins continues to serve as a middle school today. In 1974, the school was named John W. Stewart Middle School in Mr. Stewart's honor.

Mr. Stewart also served two years as assistant superintendent of Douglas County Schools. Mr. Stewart retired in 1981 after 34 years with the Douglas County School System.

A TIME TO LAUGH A TIME TO DANCE ECCLESIASTES 3:4

To his family and friends, John was best known for his passion for fishing. After their retirement, he and his wife could frequently be found in their fishing boat on lakes and rivers in Georgia and other states. They also loved watching sports, traveling, and exploring new cultures. Highlights of their travels include the Holy Land and Africa.

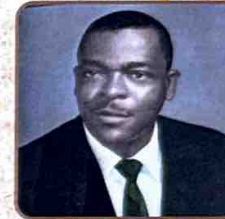
A TIME TO DIE A TIME OF PEACE ECCLESIASTES 3:2 8

The Bible tells us God is our God forever. He was John's guide even unto death. John leaves to cherish his memories: his nieces and nephews, Margaret Scott of MI, William H. Williams of MI, Reverend Cressie L. Inge of NY, Ray (Trecia) Stewart of MI, his caregiver, Willis (Mery) Stewart of GA, Linella Stewart of MI, Lecta Stewart of MI, Stephen (Christie) Huffman of AL, Karen Huffman of AL, John (Desiree) Huffman of AL; an abundance of grand-nieces and grand-nephews; and many caring and loving friends.

Down Through the Years



1940s - 1960s



Beautiful Day - 1952

R.L. Cousins Year-Book - 1964



90 years (Nieces and Nephews)



97 Years



100 Years



101 Years

*God's Been
Good To Me...*