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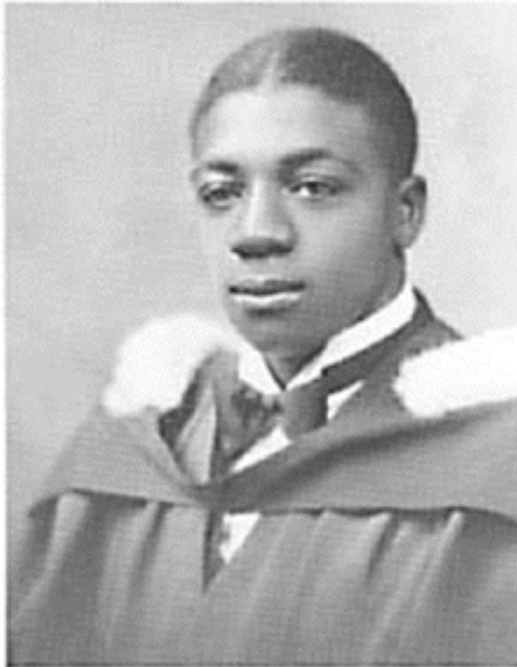
Rev. Dr. William Pearly Oliver

Rev. William Pearly Oliver was born in Wolfville, Nova Scotia on February 11, 1912. He grew up to become the first African Nova Scotian to graduate university with two degrees, holding a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Divinity from Acadia University. In 1936 he married Alethea "Pearleen" Borden of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia.

The two met while Oliver was completing his student ministry in New Glasgow. Their union would go on to last 53 years and together they parented five sons; William Jr., Leslie, Philip, Jules, and Stephen.

Following his ordination, Dr. Oliver became the pastor at Windsor Plains– Middleton– Inglewood Baptist Church. In 1937, Oliver took over pastoring at Cornwallis Street Baptist Church. This church is known as the mother church of the African United Baptist Association. He would spend 25 years at Cornwallis Street, where he developed several youth programs, greatly increased church membership, and gained support from the broader community. In 1942, he joined the

Canadian Army and served as chaplain in the Halifax area. After leaving Cornwallis Street, he took over Beechville Baptist Church, where he had been ministering since 1937 in addition to his work at Cornwallis Street. He remained minister at Beechville Baptist Church until his death in May 1989.



In 1962, Oliver was elected president of the Maritime Baptist Convention. He was the first African Nova Scotian to hold this position. Oliver was also employed with the Adult Education Division for the Province of Nova Scotia, where he worked as a regional representative of education.

Dr. Oliver was the recipient of many awards and honours during his lifetime, including two honorary doctorate degrees in Civil Law from Kings College and Acadian University, and the Human Relations Award from the council of

Christians and Jews. Oliver was also appointed to the Order of Canada in 1984. Dr. Oliver was also instrumental in the founding of the Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, the Black United Front of Nova Scotia, and the Black Cultural Centre.