

Dr. Lonnie Davis Wesley, III, is in his 17th year as pastor of the Greater Little Rock Baptist Church. Born and reared in Pensacola, Florida, Dr. Wesley was the seventh of seven children to the union of L. D. and Osie Mae Wesley, Sr. As the youngest of the "preacher's children," Pastor Wesley was left at home when Sister Wesley passed in 1983, all of his siblings having already left home to pursue their own lives, leaving the 13-year-old home alone with his father. But even that proved to be more of a heavenly training ground as the older Pastor Wesley would nurture and mold the future Pastor Wesley. Our pastor would even one day admit, "I had no idea of what was going on in my life. I knew I didn't want to be a preacher; I did not want to be a pastor. I knew that. But that just goes to show how little we know...God knows what's best. Romans 8:28 was all over my life and I didn't have a clue about it."

One year before he was graduated from Escambia High School in 1987, Pastor Wesley attended Booker T. Washington High for his junior year, and that is when he met the love of his life, LaTonya (Neal) Wesley. This union has been blessed with three children (Kalen, Jeffrey, and James), and LaTonya has supported and encouraged her husband to begin his post-graduate career at Reformed Theological Seminary, and to earn his Master of Christian Education (from Selma University, 2006) and Doctor of Ministry in Biblical Preaching (from Anderson University, 2019) degrees.

In the fall of 1987, Pastor Wesley entered his beloved Alabama State University (ASU) in Montgomery, Alabama, as a student, and ended as a student-athlete. In the spring of 1992, after a very solid collegiate baseball career, he received a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communications (Public Relations) from ASU, before entering the workforce through Jackson State University's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics in 1994. Before being hired by JSU, he trained as an intern in the Public Relations offices of the Dallas Cowboys in 1991, and of the Cleveland Browns in 1992.

While in Jackson, Mississippi, Pastor Wesley answered his calling into the preaching ministry, returning home on August 11, 1996, to the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church (his childhood church) to preach his initial sermon under his father's watchful eye. In the fall of 1997, the Terry Grove Baptist Church would call Pastor Wesley as their pastor, and he would serve Terry Grove for seven years. Upon leaving Terry Grove, what was once a 30-something, weekly congregation, was a 250-something congregation; with newly-acquired acreage, and an educational ministry that grew from two Sunday School classes to 12; two Bible Study classes to seven; and many souls added to the Book of Life.

While here at Greater Little Rock, Wesley has overseen the adding of over 28,000-square feet of educational, office, and recreational space. We have been through an F-1 tornado and a global pandemic together. And, as only God can do, we have grown through each challenge set before us. Lives continue to be changed. Souls continue to be saved.

Active in the community, Dr. Wesley has served on a number of local boards to include Achieve Escambia, United Ministries, and Baptist Hospital. He is also past Moderator of the First West Florida Baptist District Association. Dr. Wesley is currently on the Board of Directors of the FAMU Medical Marijuana Education and Research Initiative, and he is a current gubernatorial appointee to the Escambia County Children's Trust Board of Directors. He is also a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.