



## Nathaniel Lawson

May 15, 2020

Nathaniel Lawson, affectionately known by many, as Uncle Nat, born May 23, 1943, peacefully transitioned on May 15, 2020 at the age of 76 years old. Nathaniel, a native New Orleanian, was born to Gertrude Smith Lawson and James Lawson. He survived by his sister Mary Bell Chatman Hayes, nieces and nephews, Dr. Deidre D. Hayes, Brandon Blake, Isis Lawson, Kim Lawson Annette Lawson, Troy Lawson, Ronald Lawson, Cleveland Lawson, Deanne Mancuso, Robert Humbles, Deborah Humbles, Daniel Humbles, and a host of other nieces and nephews who considered him their favorite uncle. He will be fondly missed by sisters-in-law, Mary L. Pretz-Lawson, and Bonnie Blake. He was preceded in death by his parents, Gertrude and James, siblings James Chatman, Alton Lionel Lawson, Talmadge Lawson, Cecile Humbles, Bertrand Blake Sr. and nephew Bertrand Blake Jr.

Nathaniel graduated from McDonogh 35 High School in New Orleans and Southern University in Baton Rouge with a bachelors and master's degree in education. He retired from the New Orleans Public School System after teaching for thirty-five years at William J. Fisher Elementary School. He was a leader who was always willing to share his knowledge, and encouraged others to be their very best self. While teaching at William J. Fischer, he partnered with the Naval Base to develop a mentor program to connect students to positive role models, and organized fundraisers to support an annual trip for the students to places like Astro World in Houston, Disney World and Washington D.C. These projects fostered partnerships between parents and teachers and taught kids the worth and value of hard work to achieve a goal. When you meet people, who attended Fisher they often will say, "Mr. Lawson was my favorite teacher."

Nathaniel was a committed member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church for over fifty years. He served in many capacities, including, Council President, Sunday School teacher, and chairperson of the usher and hospitality committees. He also created the Thelma Mills Scholarship fund, hosting an annual prayer breakfast that provides scholarships for the youth of the Bethlehem. Additionally, Uncle Nat coordinated a mentor program for children of incarcerated parents and served as a support system for all youth in the community, funding anything from school supplies to senior budgets. Sundays at church were joyful experiences for him, as he attempted to cajole everyone into giving him the sweet treats,

he knew he was not supposed to have.

As an uncle, he always helped with homework, attended every graduation, and advised on every major life decision. As a brother he was always there, supporting his siblings in good and bad times. Uncle Nat was always a pillar of strength, working, partnering, mentoring and leading. He was a true example of a servant leader. Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

The family would like to acknowledge Peristyles and Passages Hospice for their loving care.

Due to the Covid Crisis a memorial service will be held at 11:00 AM on Saturday, October 17, 2020 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1823 Washington Ave. Mask and social distancing protocols will be strictly enforced. Please check the Bethlehem Lutheran Church website or email [Pastor@blcnola.org](mailto:Pastor@blcnola.org) for details. In lieu of flowers please send donations to the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Scholarship fund.

