

Biography of Deacon John Edward Cotten, Sr.

Deacon John Edward Cotten, Sr. was born on May 19, 1948, in Bethel, NC. He was born to the Late Deacon Edward Lee and Mother Leatha Cotten. He comes from a long line of pastors and deacons. In the early 1950's, he, along with his parents and siblings, migrated to New Haven, CT. He later accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and joined the St. Matthew UFWB Church, under the leadership of the late Rev. Dr. Lloyd Taylor. He attended Winchester School and graduated from Wilbur Cross High School in 1966. After graduating from Wilbur Cross, he was advised by the Rev. Gloria Hope and Bishop Herman Epps that barbering is a good business and trade. So, Deacon John Cotten started by enrolling into Vaughn's Barber School in Hartford, CT. After graduation from Vaughn's Barber School, Deacon Cotten started his professional career as a barber in 1967. On August 1, 1970, Deacon John Cotten married the former Sandra J. Bruton. Through this union, they had 2 sons, Rev. John Cotten, Jr. and Steven T. Cotten. He worked for Worthy's Barber Shop from 1967-1989, 22 years. After working at Worthy's Barber Shop for 22 years, Deacon Cotten open his own barber shop and beauty salon, called Cotten's Barber Shop. From 1989 to 2019, Cotten Barber Shop was a beacon of light and hope to the community of New Haven. Deacon John Cotten, Sr. has in the past received honor and recognition on a local and state level for his business savvy and his professionalism. He has been the barber for people in business, politicians, lawyers, doctors, clergy down to the everyday person.

While being a barber and businessman, Deacon John Cotten, sung in St. Matthew's Youth & Young Adult Choir, as one of its founding members, and the Intermediate Choir, Male Chorus and, a member of the Men's Club. As his faithfulness was observed and his loved for people continued, he was ordained a deacon in 1979. Deacon Cotten served as a Deacon at St. Matthew UFWB Church from 1979-2005. He then joined his son, Rev. John Cotten, Jr., in ministry at the Gospel Mission Baptist Church, Bridgeport, CT. In 2011, Deacon John Cotten, Sr., as Chairman of the Deacon Ministry, was very instrumental in the success of merging the two churches, Gospel Mission and New Hope Baptist Church in New Haven. In 2016, Deacon Cotten became a Senior Deacon at New Hope Baptist Church, where he continues to serve the church and community while encouraging and leading the next generation of deacons and church leaders.

To this day, Deacon John Cotton, Sr. can be seen and observed being an anchor and staple in New Haven Community as a retired businessman and barber, also an active church leader, as well as a pillar in the community. Wherever he goes, and wherever he is, he continues to be a blessing and lets his light shine before men, that they may see his good works and glorify his Father, which is in Heaven.