Congregation Honors Minister On Receipt Of Doctorate

Gary Stephen Kaufman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Mt. Gilead, was honored by the congregation on Sunday, December 14, in recognition of Kaufman's Doctor of Ministry degree conferred the day before. The Rev. Dr. Kaufman received his degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at Wake Forest on December 13, 1986. Prior to the Christmas musical, "The King of Love," sung during the worship service the following morning, Chairman of the Board of Deacons Johnny Almond led the congregation in the following declaration of congratulations:

"You came to us with strength and love to light the way. With a combination of talents and ministries, you challenge us to grow, to think, to study; to draw near to our Father through our Saviour, and near to each other in brotherly love; to live by an "inwardlight;" to draw near to God in Truth and sincerity; to press to our calling in Jesus Christ. You have proven to be in the finest sense our pastor; teaching, preaching, counseling and sympathizing, sharing in tears and laughter. To you now we wish to express our fondness and deep appreciation.

"As Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary confers upon you the degree of Doctor of Ministry, we of Mount Gilead First Baptist Church proudly confer upon you and Beverly Ford Kaufman - "behind every great man there is a great woman" - the degree of Doctor of Inspiration."

The ceremony came as a complete surprise to Dr. Kaufman and his wife, Beverly. Dr. Kaufman told the congregation that his surprise had turned to gratitude. "Being recognized for this achievement made me feel understood," he said. "Your understanding of all the hard work that went into the degree makes me feel very satisfied. Thank you."