



EPHESUS SDA CHURCH

Living Legends



Sabbath, February 15, 2025



EPHESUS CHURCH
EMPOWERING. REVIVING. TRANSFORMING.

LIVING

ANNIE LAURA BENNETT

WAYNE BLANDING

DWIGHT BOONE

SANDRA BOWENS

MARY ANN CALHOUN

DELSADIE PULLAR CALLINS

CLARICE FAIRER CALVIN

RUBY CHAPPLE

MATTIE COOK

WILLIE EDWARDS

VERA ANN FORD

WILLIE FORTUNE

WILMA GERMANY

CLARENCE HARRIS

MILDRED HEARD

ANDREW HOLLOWAY

JANE HOOD

JOHNNIE LOUISE KOHN HOWARD

BARBARA ANN KELLEY KING

CORINE LEONARD

ETHELYN ROSETTA LINDSAY LUSAIN

WILLIAM E. LUSAIN, SR.

ANNIE MARBURY

NADINE MONROE

HATTIE MOORE

MARY LOUISE OWENS

JOHNNY PAYNE JR.

PERRY PRIDE

WILMA DORIS GREEN PRIDE

BENJAMIN J. SELLERS, SR.

FLORENCE SHORTER

DORIS W. SMITH

ELOISE STAPLES

CLEMMIE TRUEVILLIAN

DORTHY WASHINGTON

MILDRED WATKINS

WILLIE MAE WHATLEY

FREDDIE WOODS



LEGENDS

*COMMUNITY LEGENDS

Celebrating Our Living Legends

FAITH • SERVICE • LEGACY

Honoring the Living Legends of Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church Black History Month is a time to reflect on the strength, resilience, and achievements of African Americans throughout history. It is a period dedicated to celebrating the past, acknowledging the present, and inspiring the future. Within the Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church, this commemoration holds even deeper significance as we take this opportunity to honor our Living Legends—the cherished members of our congregation who are 75 years and older.

These individuals have not only lived through some of the most pivotal moments in Black history but have also contributed to the growth and vitality of our church, our families, and our communities. Their lives are testaments to faith, perseverance, and the power of unity. They have endured hardships, broken barriers, and paved the way for younger generations to thrive. Through their steadfast commitment to God, their dedication to service, and their unwavering love for others, they have left an indelible mark on the spiritual and cultural fabric of our church.

Celebrating our Living Legends during Black History Month allows us to recognize their invaluable contributions while emphasizing the importance of oral history, legacy, and intergenerational wisdom. Many of them have firsthand experiences with historical events that shaped the Black community—civil rights struggles, social justice movements, and milestones in education, healthcare, and leadership. Their stories are living history, offering guidance and inspiration to those who follow in their footsteps.

By honoring these pillars of our congregation, we affirm that history is not just something written in books—it is alive in the people who have shaped our church and our faith. Their sacrifices and triumphs remind us of God’s faithfulness and the power of a strong, united community. As we celebrate Black History Month, let us take this time to listen, learn, and express gratitude for the Living Legends of Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church, ensuring that their legacies continue to shine for generations to come.

Mrs. Annie Sellers

Ephesus Church Family Life Leader

ANNIE LAURA BENNETT

Annie Laura Bennett was born on September 18, 1931 in Birmingham, Alabama. She was the 14th child born to Velma and Parlie Hicks.

Annie Laura married at an early age. She is the mother of seven children and the grandmother of ten children; she also has three great grandchildren. She has served the Lord at an early age of nine years old. Although she accepted Christ at an early age, and joined the Baptist church as a teenager, she can remember visiting the Adventist church and her mother saying that the Adventist church was the right church.

She can also remember before her mother died, she said that she (her mother) wished she had joined the Adventist church.

To my mother I say:

MOM'S HANDS

To the strongest woman I will ever know.

At first glance Mom's hands may seem crippled and meek. She flinches when you bump them and her grip is quite weak.

But these hands are a reflection of the woman inside, although burdened with limits, still strong with pride.

When opening a jar seems too great a task,

It's only after great hesitation that she finally asks.

Don't let that mislead you for you must understand.

It's not what they can't do, but rather what they can.

These hands have the strength to raise a family right, to wipe away every tear and hold you real tight.

They come together each day in prayer, a and whenever you need them, they're always right there.

So if these hands don't appear all that tough, remember they're full of tenderness and love and for me that's enough.



WAYNE BLANDING



Born into the heart of the Deep South, in Birmingham, Alabama, on October 3, 1946, Wayne Blanding emerged into a world shaped by rich culture, community ties, and the echoes of civil rights struggles. His parents, Catherine and John Blanding, provided the foundation of love and support upon which Wayne's remarkable life would unfold.

In family, Wayne found guidance and inspiration from his maternal grandmother, Odessa Avls, and his paternal grandfather, the Reverend James Avls. Their stories of resilience and faith instilled in him a deep sense of pride in his heritage and a profound understanding of the power of perseverance in the face of adversity.

Wayne was the third of seven siblings, surrounded by the lively energy and camaraderie of four brothers and two sisters. Growing up in a bustling household, he learned the values of compassion, teamwork, and determination that would shape his future endeavors.

His educational journey began at B.C. Hill Elementary School, where his innate curiosity and thirst for knowledge quickly became evident. Wayne's academic journey continued at A.H. Parker High School, where he not only excelled in his studies but also emerged as a leader among his peers, actively engaging in extracurricular activities and community service initiatives.

Upon graduating from high school, Wayne's quest for knowledge led him to the University of Wisconsin, where he embarked on a transformative academic journey. Immersed in a vibrant campus environment and exposed to diverse perspectives, Wayne expanded his horizons and deepened his commitment to social justice and community activism.

In 1992, he joined the Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church. Finding solace and community within its walls, Wayne embraced his faith wholeheartedly and dedicated himself to serving others. His commitment to his church deepened when he joined the Deacon Board in 1993, embodying the principles of compassion, empathy, and service to others.

Throughout his life, Wayne Blanding's unwavering dedication to his family, faith, and community has been the guiding force behind his endeavors. Whether through his academic pursuits, his involvement in church activities, or his commitment to social justice causes, Wayne's life serves as a testament to the transformative power of resilience, faith, and love in overcoming obstacles and making a positive impact on the world around us.

DWIGHT BOONE



Dwight Boone, was born to the late Nathaniel Boone and Bessie Wilson on August 8, 1946 in Brookdale Alabama. His father worked for Jim Walters mining company as a miner until an accident caused him to retire early his mother was a stay at home mother.

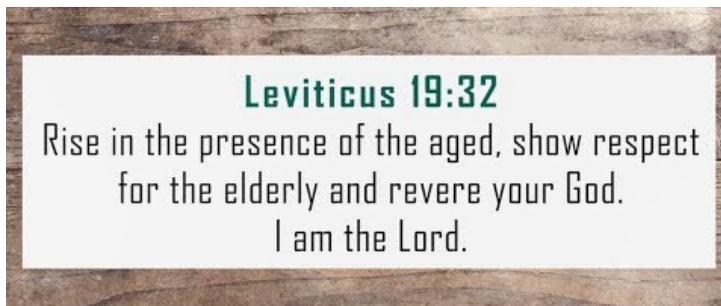
Dwight Boone had a happy childhood and is the second oldest of four brother(3 deceased) and 3 sisters (one deceased). He graduated from Hooper City High school in May of 1965.

He worked several job between 1965 and 1968, served in the military and is a Vietnam veteran. In 2006 he retired from Norfolk Southern Railway Systems with 34 years of service

His hobbies include fishing and spending time with grandkids; they keep him young.

In 1966, he met the love of his life Miss Linda Tucker. They were married in October 1968 and she is still the love of his life and his inspiration. Linda always provides directives to face something and give him the spirit to look ahead with optimism to try and realize his dreams. She constantly affirms him always will be his BFF. They have been married for 57 years and God has blessed their union with two well educated children. Daughter Terrilynn Be Moore and So Dwight L. Boone. He is the proud grandfather to two grandsons and 5 granddaughters.

The greats moment in life was when his wife introduced him to the Seventh-Day Adventist faith and became a baptized member under the leadership of Pastor Compton Ross. Dwight Boone lives to give his best for himself, his family and others. His family is his spirit.



SANDRA BOWENS



Sandra Bowens was born to Mr. Samuel Heard Sr. and Mrs. Susie Jean Heard on November 28th, alongside her twin brother, Samuel Jr. At the time of her birth, her father was enlisted in the Navy in Long Beach, California. When she was three years old, the family moved to Alabama.

During her school years, Sandra attended Washington Elementary School and Immaculata High School, graduating in May 1965. She held a summer job as a file clerk with the Social Security Administration.

Sandra grew up in a large family with seven brothers and two sisters, which provided her with plenty of company, fun, and activities. She later became the mother of three children.

Her spiritual journey began as a member of The New Pilgrim Baptist Church, under the leadership of Pastor N.H. Smith, Jr. She had the remarkable honor of meeting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., as well as Fred Shuttlesworth and Ralph Abernathy, and she heard Dr. King preach. Sandra also sang in the S.C.L.C. Choir.

Her educational pursuits included earning an associate degree and becoming a Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) through UAB. She worked at Simon Williamson Clinic, Princeton Hospital, Brookwood Medical Center, and The Kirklin Clinic (UAHSF).

Sandra is now a member of the Ephesus S.D.A. Church family, continuing to live out her legacy.

Sandra J. Heard Bowens has a rich history of faith, family, and professional dedication.

The
JOY of the
LORD IS MY
STRENGTH
(nehemiah 8:10)

MARY ANN LEE CALHOUN



Mary Ann Lee Calhoun, was born under the warm glow of spring on March 18th, 1940. Little Mary Ann was the third of six children our Lord graciously blessed Viola Holifield Lee and Albert Henry Lee

She entered the world with a sense of purpose. Her primary years were spent receiving an education at Powderly Elementary, and her high school years were split between Wenonah High School and Parker High School. She later attended Jefferson State Community College seeking a degree to aid in her desire to one day obtain a position which would allow her to share her nurturing heart and spirit with those in need.

Like many others, she unfairly fell victim to systemic racism, and her higher learning was cut short. No amount of hatred would stand in the way of Mary Ann's spiritual growth. She joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church under guidance of Pastor E.T. Mimms in 1965.

With great persistence, she later enrolled at the Birmingham Skill Center under director Eulia Cooper, where she received LPN training.

Mrs. Calhoun's favorite saying is, "Obey the first time." Well, she obeyed her heart and it led to fifty years of service in the nursing profession. Her career consisted of caring for Civil Right Activist, Fred Shuttlesworth, which proved to be an honor to both lives.

She selflessly shares her love with not only her late husband Sam Calhoun, children and grandchildren but countless others. She is fondly referred to by some as May May "Ran" and May Girl. She enjoys reading, singing, church ministry, camp meetings, family events and spreading her love to the sick.

*"Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
'Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all.'" (Proverbs 31:28-29)*

DELSADIE PULLAR CALLINS



Delsadie Callins was born in Jamaica, West Indies, as the youngest of eight children to Clarence and Irene Pullar. Raised in a Christian home, her family underwent a profound transformation when they embraced the Seventh-day Adventist faith. This shift began with changes in their diet, as they gave up pork, catfish, shellfish, and other forbidden foods, along with alcohol and coffee. Despite owning two stores, her parents began observing the Sabbath by closing their primary store, opting to serve customers through a window instead.

Their growing interest in Adventism drew the attention of a nearby church, which sent Bible Workers to their home. Over time, an evangelistic crusade led to the baptism of her mother and six siblings. Later, Delsadie, her father, and her sister were baptized. At the time, the local church had only ten members, with the Pullar family making up the majority. The family's

commitment to their new faith was further demonstrated when they donated their store to host the first church services in the community.

Delsadie's journey continued as she pursued a medical degree at the University of the West Indies, graduating at the age of 24. Her final year externship at Harlem Hospital is where she met Joel Callins, who was pursuing his Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery residency. Their meeting marked the beginning of their relationship and future together.

Joel quickly grew fond of her, flew to Nassau to attend her graduation and visited her during her internship at Princess Margaret Hospital. At the time of their meeting, Joel wasn't a Seventh-day Adventist, but she took the time to teach him about the faith. Joel eventually joined the church and became so passionate about it that he shared his beliefs with friends and family, some of whom also joined the Ephesus congregation.

The couple has two children and four grandchildren. Son, Joel, attorney and later a civil and criminal court judge. He is married to Dr. Keisha Callins. Daughter Jodel, a nurse in Birmingham. Their grandchildren are Joel, Abigail, Jullian, and Joiya.

She has supported the Ephesus SDA Church since moving to Birmingham in 1978. Over the years, she has served as a Sabbath School teacher, Pathfinder leader, Bible worker, school board member, Head Elder, SCC board member, and Personnel Department member. She loves the Lord and dedicates her time, talents and resources toward His Ministry.

CLARICE FAIRER CALVIN



Clarice Fairer Calvin was born on January 16, 1948, to Clarence and Bernice Fairer at Llyod Noland Hospital in Fairfield, Alabama. She was the second oldest of five children and grew up in Oxmoor, Alabama, where she attended Oxmoor Elementary School. Raised in a loving home by two devoted parents, Clarice had a strong foundation of care and support.

At a young age, Clarice, along with her eldest sister and mother, lived with her grandfather while her father and local men built their family home. Living with her grandfather, whom they affectionately called “Papa,” was a memorable experience. There, she learned about raising cattle, preserving meat with salt, and playing outdoors. Papa’s log house, the only one of its kind in Oxmoor, featured cement walkways and a goldfish pond.

At age 12, Clarice’s family was introduced to the Third Angels’ Message and the Sabbath by Bible workers from Ephesus Church. The Fairers accepted the message and became Seventh Day Adventists. Clarice graduated from Rosedale High School in 1966 and went on to attend Wenonah Community College. At 19, she married her high school sweetheart, Albert Calvin. After Albert Sr. joined the military, the family moved to El Paso, Texas, where their second son, Derrick, was born. They later returned to Birmingham, where they had two daughters, Jemecia and Delvetra.

In 1982, Clarice graduated from Lawson State Community College as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). She continued her education, earning an Associate Degree in Nursing in 1991, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Alabama in Huntsville in 1999. After 35 years of service, including 22 years at the Veterans Administration Medical Center, she retired.

Clarice has been a devoted member of Ephesus Seventh Day Adventist Church for over 60 years, serving in many roles, including deaconess, usher, and Junior Sabbath School Teacher. She is passionate about reading, has an active card ministry, and recently completed training as a Medical Missionary. Clarice enjoys gardening, traveling, walking, and spending time with her family. Over the years, she has met Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. She is forever grateful for God’s mercy and grace in her life.

RUBY CHAPPLE



Ruby Chapple was born on July 27, 1949, to Johnny William Chapple and Mattie Chapple. As the eldest of four siblings, Ruby has always taken on a leadership role within her family, embodying the values of strength, compassion, and wisdom. Throughout her life, she has been a pillar of support and love for her loved ones, holding the cherished position of matriarch of the family.

As a mother of four, Ruby has nurtured and guided her children with a deep sense of care and devotion. Her love extends beyond her immediate family, as she is also a proud grandmother and great-grandmother, continuing to offer her wisdom and love to the next generations.

Ruby's commitment to her faith is central to her life. She has always found strength and solace in her church family, where she not only nurtures her own spiritual growth but also

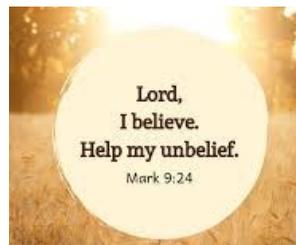
serves as a living example for others. Ruby's approach to life is one of service and authenticity—she believes in letting her actions speak louder than words and strives to embody the values she holds dear in every aspect of her life.

Her nurturing spirit is evident in her passions. Ruby has a deep love for plants, often filling her home with vibrant greenery that reflects her care for life in all its forms. Cooking is another of her passions, where she expresses her creativity and love through the meals she prepares, always ensuring that those around her feel cared for.

Known for her nurturing nature, Ruby is a source of unwavering support to her family and friends. Her wisdom is sought after, and she is always ready with kind words, guidance, and encouragement. Whether it's in her home, church, or family gatherings, Ruby's presence is felt as a steadying force, someone who offers both comfort and inspiration to all who are blessed enough to know her.

Favorite Bible Verses

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6



MATTIE COOK



Mattie Smith Cook was born on November 11, 1949. She was named after her grandmother, Mattie Sewell Smith and her mother's baby sister Mattie Goree.

Her parents Mr. & Mrs. Willie & Candus Smith raised ten children. Five boys and five girls. She is the oldest of the girls. She grew up in Smithfield, AL and attended Lincoln Elementary. She also attended Immaculata High school until her junior year when her school closed in 1966. Integration started while she was in high school. With the advice of her parents' they selected Phillips High School for her senior year where she graduated in 1967. There were over 400 white students and only four of us black students in that graduation class.

In 1970 WENN Radio was hosting a Miss Black Teenage and Miss Black Alabama Pageant. She tried out and made it through the auditions and she was SUPER excited! She placed third in the Miss Black Alabama Pageant!

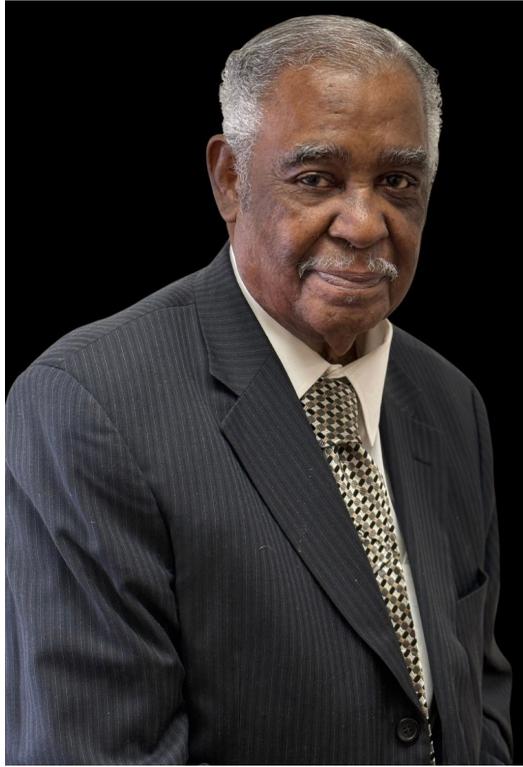
Mrs. Cook stated that she was destined to be an Adventist. At the age of 5 years old, her mother's friend told her about Ms. Elizabeth Wesley (Nanny). Her mom was so impressed with how good she was with the children and how she taught the Bible. Several years later, when she was an adult she learned that Mrs. "Nanny" was a 7th Day Adventist.

In the 1960's her mom would send all the older children to attend the tent revivals held on Graymont Avenue and learned so much about the love of God. In 1974, Pastor Murray Joiner baptized her at Ephesus S.D.A Church. She was a secretary under Nanny Joiner, Principal of Ephesus Academy. In addition, she worked for Jefferson County Health Department for 13 years and City of Birmingham Park and Recreation Board for 7 years.

She has served as an usher for over 50 years, worked with Community Service, Pathfinders and Greeter at church. In her spare time, she enjoys reading her Bible, decorating, thrifting and collecting black art.

She is the mother of two adult daughters. Danica Cook-Davis/Herman, Dayna Cook-Heard/Travis. Five grandchildren Janelle, Jeremiah, James Davis, Gabrielle, Travis "TJ" Heard.

WILLIE EDWARDS



Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.

Booker T. Washington, author and politician

WILLIE FORTUNE



Willie Fortune, born on June 11, 1939, in Birmingham, Alabama, has led a rich and diverse life marked by dedication, service, and family. His educational journey took him through Thomas Elementary School, Parker High School, Lawson Community College, and ultimately Birmingham Southern College, where he graduated with a Business Degree.

In service to his country, Willie enlisted in the Army, serving for three years from 1963 to 1966. Following his military service, he embarked on a career that included roles at AG Gaston and culminated in retirement from US Steel in 1999.

A chance encounter at a barber shop led Willie to meet his beloved wife, and together they shared 19 years of marriage and raised five children. Despite the loss of his wife, Willie remains devoted to his three remaining children, Andre,

Sonya, and Alfredia, finding immense joy in his five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

In 1982, Willie's spiritual journey led him to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church, influenced by the teachings of Pastor Vincent. Within the church community, Willie has been actively involved, serving as Usher Coordinator, Deacon, Bereavement Ministries participant, and Elder.

Beyond his commitment to his faith and family, Willie finds pleasure in various sports and traveling, embracing life's adventures with enthusiasm and gratitude. His enduring spirit and dedication to service serve as an inspiration to all who know him.

**WISDOM IS FOUND WITH
THE ELDERLY, AND
UNDERSTANDING COMES
WITH LONG LIFE.**

- JOB 12:12

VERA ANN FORD



Vera Ann Ford was born September 13, 1949, to the parents of the late Robert L. Ford and the late Sarah Williams-Ford in Birmingham, Alabama. She is the 2nd of nine children.

Sister Ford was educated in the Birmingham City School System, beginning at Center Street Elementary, Carrie A Tuggle Elementary, and Kingston Elementary. She graduated from Carol W. Hayes High School, class of 1967. She furthered her education at Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, where she received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education in 1971. She also attended Miles College in Fairfield, AL. She later obtained a Master of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Sister Ford is a retired educator from the Birmingham City

Schools where she taught for over 40 years.

After retirement from the Birmingham School System, she taught Kindergarten at Ephesus Academy (EA) and was a substitute teacher at EA as well as EA CDC She later extended her career by becoming a missionary. She received her certification as a Medical Missionary from Wildwood Health and Evangelism College in Wildwood, Georgia. She also received her certification as a Nursing Assistant from Lawson State Community College.

Sister Ford was baptized in the faith at the age of 13 years old at the First Baptist Church Kingston in Birmingham, AL. She had a desire to know the truth and was later baptized at Ephesus SDA Church Birmingham in 1974. She was instrumental in starting a branch Sabbath School at Adamsville Church in 1977, which is now First SDA Church Adamsville. In 1982, she helped organize the New Life SDA Church in McCalla, AL. Sister Ford has a great passion and love for winning souls for the Lord. She has worked as an AYS Leader, Sabbath School Teacher and Superintendent, Usher, Deaconess, Treasurer, Women's Ministry Leader, and a Pathfinder Counselor.

Sister Ford currently owns a non-profit ministry, Reconciled Faith Ministry, where she serves as a bible worker, gives books and bibles to those she serves. She has distributed over 2000 books in the last five years. Sister Ford is also a volunteer worker with the Ephesus SDA Church Birmingham Community Service Ministry and Bessemer SDA Church's Community Service Department.

Ms. Ann Ford is the proud mother of three adult children, Tamecia, Gwendolyn, and Frederick, seven grandchildren, one daughter-in-law and one son-in-law. She enjoys teaching and enhancing students' education as they progress. As a missionary, she loves nurturing others and assisting them with their needs. Her favorite hobbies are reading, walking, gardening, creating crafts, baking, and assisting others.

WILMA GERMANY



It was a heartbreaking day when William and Eugenia Flakes' twin boy was stillborn, and the doctor told them that Eugenia would never be able to have any more children. However, two years later, they were blessed with a healthy, strong, and beautiful daughter, Wima. She quickly became the "Apple of Daddy's Eye." When Wima was two, her father became concerned about her mother combing her hair, as Wima would scream loudly enough to disturb the neighbors. To solve the issue, he bought her a dark brown coat and matching hat to prevent her mother from combing her hair.

Though Wima loved being around other children, her mother was very strict. The family grew to include three more children. Wima often crawled under the barbed wire fence to play. At age six, she entered 61st Street Elementary School, where she excelled in cursive writing, timetables, and spelling. However,

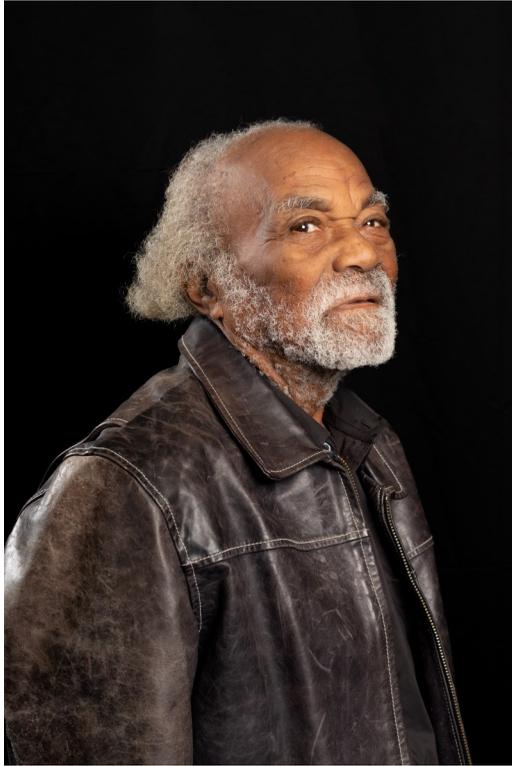
her conduct grades were poor, preventing her from making the honor roll. She skipped to the fifth grade but struggled academically, which led to her growing disinterest in school. She eventually adjusted to the challenges. In 1947, she entered Fairfield Industrial High School.

In 1949, during her 10th grade year, prom season arrived. A boy named John Germany asked her to the prom, and despite her mother's strict warnings, she was smitten. Wima married John on August 1, 1965, and they moved to Boston. Eighteen months later, they had a son. John, who was raised in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, had discussed his faith with her, which left a lasting impression. In 1970, both Wima and John dedicated their lives to Christ, a significant transformation, especially for John.

With a growing family, Wilma reflected on her life and her role as a parent. She knew God's love was forgiving and patient. Her blessings came in many forms, including her education and 30 years as a Christian Education Instructor, receiving several awards. John passed away on March 3, 1999. In 2004, Wima returned to Alabama and became a member of Ephesus Church. Her faith in God has sustained her through life's challenges. — He has not failed her yet.



CLARENCE HARRIS



Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

- Former President Barack Obama

MILDRED E. HEARD



Mildred E. Heard was born to Samuel and Susie Heard. Her parents owned their own construction company and were gifted with extraordinary musical talents, gifts that were also shared by Mildred and her siblings.

She attended Washington Elementary School (Booker T. Washington) and later graduated from Parker High School (Arthur H. Parker), two of the oldest schools in the City of Birmingham School System. Both schools were located in communities that were socially and politically active, particularly during periods of strife in Birmingham, Alabama.

Mildred supported her aunt, Lula Belle Dumas, in community activism by helping establish the JCCEO Head Start program for children in Birmingham, Alabama. She distributed flyers, explained the program, and encouraged community

participation.

She gave her life to God and was baptized into the South Park Seventh-day Adventist Church by E. E. Cleveland and W. J. Cleveland.

Mildred later became an official Bible Worker for the South Central Conference at the South Park SDA Church under the leadership of Elder Michael Harp. She found immense fulfillment in witnessing many individuals give their lives to the Lord. Through her ministry, she shared her singing talents and testimonies as part of the church's Prison Ministry. Additionally, she worked at Ephesus Academy and later at Ephesus CDC until her retirement.

She attested to her faith with the words: "I have been 'shattered but not broken, wounded but time has healed, heavy the load, the cross I bear... yet still I rise!' By the



ANDREW DOUGLAS HOLLOWAY



Andrew Holloway was born on a sweltering summer day, July 14, 1946, in the vibrant city of Atlanta, Georgia. He was the beloved son of Frank Holloway, a native Atlantan, and Emma McQueen Holloway, hailing from Montgomery, Alabama. From the very beginning, Andrew's life was shaped by a rich tapestry of family, faith, and service.

His educational journey began at Roosevelt Elementary, where he displayed an early aptitude for learning. He continued his studies at Wenoah High, where he excelled academically and formed lifelong friendships. Andrew's thirst for knowledge led him to pursue higher education, attending both Miles College and Lawson State, where he further honed his skills and expanded his horizons.

In 1968, as the nation grappled with the turmoil of the Vietnam War, Andrew made the courageous decision to enlist in the U.S. Marines Corps. For three years, he served his country with honor and distinction, demonstrating bravery and resilience in the face of adversity.

After his military service, Andrew returned to civilian life, where he embarked on a career with U.S. Steel. His dedication and hard work were evident throughout his tenure, and he eventually retired after many years of faithful service.

In 1983, Andrew's spiritual journey took a significant turn when he embraced the teachings of the Adventist Church. Finding solace and strength in his newfound faith, he became an active member of the church community, forging deep connections with fellow believers.

In 1990, Andrew answered the call to service once again, this time as a member of the Deacon Board. He approached his role with humility and devotion, serving as a beacon of hope and compassion to those in need.

Throughout his life, Andrew's greatest joy came from his family. He was a devoted father to his son, Andre Holloway, and took immense pride in watching him grow into a fine young man. His grandchildren, Andranna Holloway and Andre Holloway Jr., brought boundless joy and laughter into his life, filling his days with love and warmth.

As Andrew reflects on his journey, he is grateful for the experiences that have shaped him and the relationships that have sustained him. His life is a testament to the values of courage, faith, and service, and his legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

JANE HOOD



Jane Hood born on July 28, 1948, at home, 1635-B 4th Place North, Birmingham, Alabama, to the late Rev. Ben Hood and Effie Z. Davis Hood. Son Benjamin J. Jackson; two grandsons, Demarcus Tre Washington (Takisha), and Elgin Raynell Washington. Five great grandchildren; Antwan, Ricardo, TaLula, TaLiah, and DeRyan. One god-sister, Jacqueline Bledsoe. She has one deceased son; Charles A. Washington Jr.; four deceased siblings; Albert Jenkins, Daniel Hood, Joanna E. Hood, and Bruce D. Hood; and one deceased god-sister, Priscilla A. Thomas.

At birth, her mother was a member of Ephesus SDA Church. Later Jane became a baptized member of Ephesus. She served in many capacities in the church; Sabbath School Teacher, Sanctuary Choir, Deaconess, Treasurer, Assistance Treasurer, Adventist Community Services Leader, Hostess on

Ephesus Prayer Line, Alexis Club, SWAT (Soul Winning Action Team), Usher, Seasoned Saints, and Bible Worker.

Hobbies included sewing, cooking, and being a caregiver. In her marriage to the late Charles A. Washington Sr she made her wedding dress and finishing touches on the bridesmaid dresses. Her son (Charles Jr.) insisted that she make something for him, so she made a suit. She enjoyed fellowship and frequently church members and visitors were invited to her home for Sabbath Dinner. She is still serving as caregiver for her family. As a choir member, her favorite saying was “she would make a joyful noise to the Lord, while everyone else was to stay on key”.

Jane was educated at Ephesus Jr. Academy and received her high school diploma from A.H. Parker High School in 1966. Afterwards, she obtained Associate Degree in Business Education at Wenonah Jr. College and continued to Continental Commercial College and Birmingham Southern College. Her training for Community Services and Disaster Response came from the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventist and South Central Conference. In time of disaster, she has been deployed to cities in Alabama, also in the states Mississippi, West Virginia, Tennessee, New York (911), and Indiana to name a few.

She was employed at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama for thirty-four plus years. She retired in July of 2005. Is currently serving as Adventist Community Services Leader at Ephesus SDA Church. Favorite Scripture: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalm 119:105

JOHNNIE LOUISE KOHN HOWARD



Johnnie Louise Howard was born October 4, 1935, to Beatrice Kohn Kelley (Mamadear) and George Harrison. She is the second oldest of seven siblings (Vantaln Loretta Perkins (Lady), Johnnie, James (Allen) Kelley, Barbara Gholston, Edwin, Sandra, and Phillip Ray) she and Lady paved the way and often assisted with care of their younger siblings. They completed chores and worked jobs at young ages to contribute to the family. As a gifted seamstress she often made coordinating outfits for the girls.

She was first in her family to accept the Seventh-day Adventist message over 60 years ago and now the whole family knows of the sabbath, and the majority are members of the church.

In 1957 she married Joe N. Dickson, and they became parents to daughters Vantaln Joann and Janet Rachelle. She later married Derry Howard and they became parents to Derry Jerel (Poopie).

Joe was very active in the civil rights movement and as a young mother Johnnie also participated. She is captured with a partner integrating a church in downtown Birmingham.

She acquired her LPN and RN licenses after motherhood and retired from Jefferson County Health Department after an illustrious 40+ year career specializing in labor and delivery nursing.

Johnnie Howard is a proud and loving grandmother of four (Justin and Julian Smith, Miles Essix and Aleah Howard)

She possesses internal and external beauty, has a kind and gentle spirit, and has always been generous with her time, open door to her home, and resources.



BARBARA ANN HARGROVE KELLY KING



Barbara Ann Hargrove Kelley King was born March 31, 1935. She attended the Birmingham school system, and graduated from Immaculata High School. There are fond childhood memories of summer visits she and her brothers took to Aunt Lissa's peach orchard, and drinking the cold water they pulled from the well. The first car she owned was a blue Chevrolet Corvair. Her first job was as a Doctor's Office Assistant. She worked with the Board of Education for many years as a Substitute Teacher, as Director/teacher at Ephesus Child Development Center; she retired from BMC Princeton Hospital

She met and married the love of her life, Luke P Kelley Jr. - and his son Luke III, to their union was born Patrick, Janice and Curtis. Throughout her life she has made countless sacrifices for Family, Community, Church and Friends. It was evident to her Family, as a devoted mother with her young children in the YMCA, little league, basketball and cheer leading camps and now with her grandchildren and great grandchildren (and a host of other close family members); in the community as a neighborhood block President, currently participating in a community bible study; in her Church as a faithful, loving member working in various organizations to advance the cause of Christ; to her Friends, past and present, she gives her tireless love, support and words of wisdom.

As she grew in grace, her desire to return to school grew more. So at the age of 40 she enrolled at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Because she had a deep desire, not only to advance her education, but to show young people, that you can always START OVER and YES you can go back and finish school. She continues this day with her education, because she still believes there is always room for improvement, but the desire to improve must come first.



CORINE LEONARD



Corine Leonard was born Corine Davis in a small town in Talladega County, Alabama .

In the late 1960s, she married her husband to become Corine Leonard and found the true religion of the Seventh-day Adventist.

In the early 1970s, her and husband moved to Birmingham, AL and she became a member of the Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church. She has always been active in Ephesus Church by serving in various capacities - Sabbath School Teacher, Pathfinder Counselor, Bible Worker, and Treasury Room Staff .

Corine is a firm believer in Christian Education and has sent four generations of her family to Ephesus Academy - Jacoby (her son), Tiffany and Simuka (her daughters), Calvin Jr. (her grandson). She not only sent her children to Ephesus Academy, but she served as Home and School leader for more 20 years. She continues to support the school through fundraising efforts.

In her spare time, she enjoys cutting her grass, planting flowers around her house, spending time with her youngest grandson, and traveling with her church sisters - Annie Dailey, Gloria Ryce and Annie Sellers

*C*HARM can be deceptive
and beauty doesn't last
but a woman who fears
and reverences God
shall be greatly praised

PROVERBS 31:30

MARILYN RUTH (RADNEY) LACOUNT



Marilyn Ruth (Radney) LaCount was born in 1946 to William McKinley and AnnaBelle (Seay) Radney, who migrated from Stewart County, Georgia, to Cleveland, Ohio, during the Great Migration. Marilyn grew up with her brother, Richard, and three sisters, Rosalind, Mischelle, and Crystal, in a segregated Cleveland community. She attended all-Black schools and showed an early passion for art, honing her skills as a child and later creating murals for her classrooms.

Despite challenges, including a teacher's doubts about her academic potential, Marilyn graduated as valedictorian of her high school class in 1964. Scholarship opportunities led her to Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University), but after experiencing discrimination, she transferred to Andrews University in Michigan. During a visit to Oakwood College (now Oakwood University), she met

Alvin Louis LaCount, who later became her husband. They married in 1968 and began their life of ministry together.

Marilyn supported Alvin through seminary and joined him in pastoring churches in North Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Arizona. Over nearly 50 years, they pastored 16 churches and conducted about 20 evangelistic crusades, including one in Rwanda, Africa. Alvin passed away in 2022.

During her time in Arizona, Marilyn earned a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics Education and a Master of Education degree from Arizona State University (ASU). She worked at ASU for over 25 years, developing and administering educational outreach programs statewide. In 2014, at age 68, she completed her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on Mathematics Education. She later founded STEM – Elation, an initiative to improve STEM attitudes in communities of color, along with tutoring and faith-based STEM programs.

Marilyn and Alvin had three daughters—Anissa, Chandra, and Shayla—who now serve in medicine and education. In 2024, Marilyn relocated to Helena, Alabama, to be near family, where she continues to seek meaningful connections through her church community.

ETHELYN ROSETTA LINDSAY LUSAIN



Ethelyn is the first born Grand Daughter/Child of Lindsay Family (George E Lindsay Sr and Malinda Bridges Lindsay). She is the last surviving Child of this household. Ethelyn was lead by her Mother to begin education in early 50's in Kindergarten at age of 4 and to begin and complete 8th grade at 12 years of age (Washington Elementary School) and Ulman High School at 16 years old.

Pastor Edgar Mims (uncle) and Aunt Ethelyn Lindsay Mims brought Ethelyn into the Ephesus Church and she was baptized prior to attending Knoxville College via scholarship (A BLESSING). As a Freshman in 1965 Ethelyn met William Lusain (Advisor to Freshman) and their first date was for him to go to the Knoxville Adventist Church. William proposed marriage in 1968 as he was drafted into the Army. She accepted job offer

with IBM in Rochester Minnesota. Another blessing occurred when the induction was rejected, and William returned home. Ethelyn was blessed with a Computer Programing job with ALCOA in Pittsburgh to follow William as he was accepted in the Master's program at the University of Pittsburgh. Another blessing as Pastor Mims was the Pastor of the Pittsburgh SDA Church. William's move back to Knoxville after receiving his Ph D led the family back South.

Ethelyn was again blessed with a move back to Birmingham in 1976 as a Manager at BellSouth (they were looking for a Black manager). This was a blessing as Elder Willie Mae Whatley was the Children's Sabbath School Teacher and inducted her into Children's Sabbath School at the Ephesus SDA Church. Working as a Manager at BellSouth and eventually as Senior Director at AT&T, tools and skills were obtained (Company paid for MBA from Samford University – A Blessing) that allowed Ethelyn to work in the background and support ALL needs of Ephesus Church. Ethelyn's focus has been on Children at Ephesus for the last 48 years.

Ethelyn and William have been blessed with 55 years of Marriage, Sons, W. Earl (deceased) and W. Eric; Daughter in Laws, Marie and Kesha; Grand daughters, Karmen, Karli, Erissa, and Emille; and Great Grand Son, Matthew. Ethelyn also has a brother and sister from her father (Aristotle Williams and Jennifer Williams) whom the late Aunt Annie Bell Lindsay kept FAMILY ties with.

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

Lift every voice and sing, Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise, High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come, over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past, Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might, Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, May we forever stand,
True to our God, True to our native land.

ORDER OF SERVICE

February 15, 2025

Introit

Call to Worship. Elder Mark and Mrs. Tameka Hannah

Doxology

Hymn of Worship. “Lift Every Voice and Sing” Ms. Maria Sellers

Welcome Mrs. Charmeretta Timothy

Pastoral Greetings/ Announcements. Pastor James Owens

Musical Selection Lawson State Community College Choir
Mr. Bruce Henderson, Choral Director

Special Guest Honorees. Mrs. Annie Sellers
and the Ephesus Church Family Life Team

Intercessory Prayer. Elder Cedric Burden

Tithes and Offerings. Elder Cedric Burden

Scripture. Ms. Annie Kate Dailey

Introduction of Speaker. Mr. Wendell Timothy

Meditation of Praise. Lawson State Community College Choir
Mr. Bruce Henderson, Choral Director

Sermon. Dr. Carlton P. Byrd
President, Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Benediction. Elder Tyrone and Mrs. Veronica Williams

WILLIAM E. LUSAIN, JR.



Dr. Lusain has had a passion for education since he began teaching in the Pittsburgh Public School System. Working with African American students in the 60's inspired him to pursue his Ph.D. so that he could become a leader in education, making a difference in the lives of our children.

Dr. Lusain has had a distinguished career in academia as a teacher, principal, senior college administrator and as a consultant to a variety of institutions and universities. After serving as Director of Student Administration Services (Knoxville College), Director of Planning & Title III Programs (Talladega College and University of Arkansas), Assistant Dean for Curriculum and Student Affairs (Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine), Dr. Lusain came home and served as Principal of Ephesus Academy in 1985 for four years, enhancing the curriculum to the 10th grade with the

largest (234) student body of its 100 year history. Ephesus Academy expanded its physical structure at this time to accommodate K- 10th grade school and Child Development Center. After leaving Ephesus Academy in its prosperous time, Dr. Lusain worked as Principal of Hancock Central High School (Georgia), Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs at Fisk University (Tennessee), and Provost of The Piney Woods School in Mississippi.

In 2014, Dr. Lusain agreed to come out of retirement again to serve as principal of Ephesus Academy, bringing vast experiences in teaching, leadership and academia from all levels of the educational spectrum to push Ephesus Academy further ahead in this new millennium, attaining re-accreditation and invoking plans to extend Ephesus Academy to a full 12th grade Academy.

Dr. Lusain is supported by his wife, Ethelyn; sons Earl and Eric; two daughter-in-laws, Marie and Kesha; and four granddaughters, Karmen, Karli, Erissa and Emille, and great-grandson Matthew.

ELDERS WHO LEAD EFFECTIVELY
ARE WORTHY OF DOUBLE HONOR,
ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO WORK
HARD AT PREACHING AND
TEACHING.

- 1 TIMOTHY 5:17

MRS. ANNIE L. MARBURY



The former Annie Lois Jackson was born on August 8, 1937, on an 80-acre farm in Riverside, Alabama to Mr. and Mrs. Archie and Janie Jackson. She was the fourth of 8 children – 5 girls and 3 boys. While matriculating through the Pell City school system, her parents instilled in her strength of character and a desire to help others.

While she has committed herself to ensuring a Christ-centered home life and education for her family, she also devoted a great deal of her young adult years caring for seniors and the children of family members, neighbors and friends.

She has been a devoted member of Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church for 46 years, where she has served faithfully as Head Deaconess, a Bible Worker, Sabbath School Teacher, sanctuary choir member and a member of the hospitality and

community service teams.

Mrs. Marbury's hobbies include sewing, cooking and reading. Her absolute favorite thing these days is spending time in her garden and sharing her bountiful harvests with family and friends.

Rendon and Annie were married, on August 29, 1960. Celebrating 62 years of marriage in the year 2022, their fruitful union has produced three children, one daughter-in-law, two sons-in-law, eight grandchildren, one grandson-in-law, one granddaughter-in-law and one great-grandchild.



NADINE MONROE



Nadine Monroe was born in Brooks County, Georgia, to Solomon and Irene McCall. Her earliest memories were of the red clay fields and gardens on her grandparents' farm, where she first felt God's presence. She joined the Seventh-Day Adventist Church through her aunt and learned about the Bible and the Sabbath.

Nadine spent most of her early years in Georgia, but her family relocated to Cleveland, Ohio, where she finished high school. She was active in Bethel SDA Church. Feeling called to serve, she completed a licensed practical nurse program at Riverside Hospital in Nashville, TN, and later earned her registered nurse license from Kettering Nursing School in Ohio. She spent over 40 years in nursing, specializing in cardiac and emergency medicine.

At Riverside, she met Pastor Ceasar E. Monroe, and they married on February 6, 1972. They had three daughters—Courtneye,

Candyce, and Cara—who became a speech pathologist, an educational technology specialist, and a physician pathologist. She is also the grandmother of two: a granddaughter at Oakwood University and a grandson excelling academically. Before Pastor Monroe's passing, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Together, they brought souls to Christ, with Mrs. Monroe supporting her husband's ministry. In 1980, they began 32 years of service in TN, MS, FL, and AL under the South Central Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists. As First Lady, Mrs. Monroe organized public health and community programs.

Friends, family, and church members sought her prayers, counsel, and advice. She desires to see others saved, often saying, "It shall be well." An ardent believer in God's power, she continues serving at Ephesus SDA Church on the Prayer Ministry team and as a Sabbath School instructor, determined to serve until Christ's return.



HATTIE S. MOORE



Hattie S. Moore was born March 13, 1943 to the late Sarah Pennington and the late Rev. M. J. Smith in Birmingham, Alabama.

Her early years were spent attending Zion City and Hopper City Schools. In 1987, she received her greatest accomplishment when she obtained her High School Diploma. Afterwards, she obtained a Certificate in Early Childhood Development from Jefferson State Jr College.

Sister Moore is the mother of three, James J. Pugh, Yolanda R. Spencer and Jacquescia D. Moore. She is also the Grandmother of six and the Great-Grandmother of three.

In 1982, she received an invitation to Bible Study in her home by the late Queen Walton. The lessons were taught to her by the

late Alex & Helen Pollard and Mother Pugh. In 1983, she surrendered her life to the voice of Christ and was baptized by Dr. Patrick Vincent. From that day to this, she has been in love with the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Through her guidance, her daughter Yolanda, her mother Sarah and her husband Parker and numerous others became baptized members as well.

Hattie Moore has a love and passion for homeless ministries and continues to devote her resources and efforts toward blessing others.



*Whoever is generous
to the poor lends to the
Lord, and he will
repay him for his deed.
Proverbs 19:17*

MARY LOUISE OWENS



The amazing Mary Louise Owens was born April 19, 1941. God brought a treasure into the world! Her love for our Lord was apparent at an early age. She has spent her life in His Service; A missionary and teacher in the Holiness Church, deaconess, teacher, prayer warrior, singer and faithful member in the SDA church. She demonstrated a unique ability to teach children. She earned several certifications in the early childhood education field, and taught in that domain for many years. A gifted and creative person, she was the go-to person for art projects and bulletin board designs.

Mary's most important endeavor was to raise her four children to accept Jesus as their personal Savior and serve Him. She more than accomplished this goal! She mastered memorizing passages of scripture and poetry. Her life motto "I can do all things through Christ who gives me Strength" has always been lived to the fullest.



JOHNNY PAYNE JR.



Johnny Payne Jr. was born on October 6, 1938, in Birmingham, Alabama, to the late Johnny and Mary Payne. Growing up in Birmingham, he attended Washington Elementary before graduating from Ullman High School.

After completing his education, Johnny embarked on a career at Haynes International, where he dedicated himself to working on airplanes. It was during his time at Haynes International that he was introduced to the Seventh-day Adventist faith. During lunch breaks, Johnny and his coworkers, under the guidance of Elder Jenkins, delved into discussions about the Sabbath, sparking Johnny's spiritual journey.

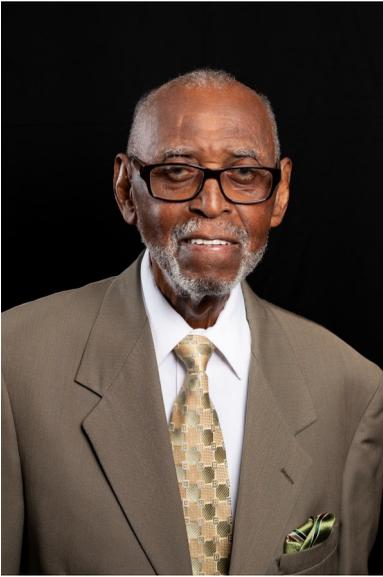
Under the mentorship of his pastor and prayer partner, Pastor Vincent, Johnny embraced his newfound faith and was baptized, marking a significant turning point in his life.

Johnny's family has been a cornerstone of his life. He is a proud father to six children, and the joy of his life comes from his 13 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

In addition to his dedication to his family, Johnny has been deeply involved in his church community. He served as a Deacon for eight years, bringing his warmth and compassion to the congregation. Johnny's love for music led him to become an active member of the Male Chorus and Sanctuary Choir, using his talents to uplift others in worship.

Beyond his musical contributions, Johnny's commitment to his church extended to practical support. He played a pivotal role in driving the church bus, ensuring that members could attend services and events. Additionally, Johnny lent his hand to the construction of the new church building, leaving a lasting legacy of his dedication and service to his faith.

PERRY LEE PRIDE



Perry L. Pride was born in Hurtsboro, Alabama in 1932 to Brittingham and Laura Pride. He is the youngest of ten children. His father died early, and the family relocated to Birmingham, Alabama when Perry was six. He attended Council Elementary in Ensley, Birmingham, A.H. Parker High School, and Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama.

Perry grew up in the Methodist Church. Around age nine or ten, he encountered the "Three Angels Message" when the Seventh-day Adventist Church set up a summer tent next to his home. His mother was initially resistant but allowed Perry to join the church in the summer of 1944. She later joined before the tent was taken down.

After graduating from high school in 1950, Perry enlisted in the U.S. Army for three years, serving in Korea. After an Honorable Discharge as a Corporal in 1953, he used the G.I. Bill to attend

Miles College, where he earned a degree in Physical Education in 1957. He also played for the Miles Golden Bears Football team.

While at Miles, Perry met and married Wilma Green. Though not an active member of the Adventist Church, he introduced her to it, and they both attended a 1957 Tent Meeting where Elder E.C. Ward spoke. Wilma was baptized, and Perry rejoined the church.

After college, Perry worked for the Veteran's Hospital for five months before joining the U.S. Postal Service for 30 years, retiring in 1987. In 1997, he worked part-time at UAB until 2013.

Perry has been an active member of the Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church, serving in several roles, including Elder, Deacon, Sabbath School Teacher, Assistant Superintendent, Choir Director, Young Inspirations, Male Chorus, Men's Ministry, Community Services, Pathfinders, Seasoned Saints Ministry, and Treasury Department.

Perry and Wilma are the proud parents of five children: Ronald (Wintrey), Jacqueline, Barry, Anita (Anthony), and Kevin. They are grandparents to Brian (Branika), Jasmine, Jocelyn, Darius, Ahmani, and Ahmya, and great-grandparents to Christian, Christopher, and Caitlin. They strongly believed in Adventist Christian Education and enrolled all their children at Ephesus Jr. Academy, Brakeworth Academy, and Forest Lake Academy in Orlando, Florida.



WILMA DORIS GREEN PRIDE



Wilma Green, born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1937 to William H. Green and Atlee Green, was the second of four children. She attended East Birmingham Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, and Parker High School before earning a Bachelor of Arts in Math from Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama.

Wilma grew up at 45th Street Baptist Church, where she was active in the Youth Choir, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and BTU. At Miles College, she was the secretary of the Freshman Class, Miles Sweetheart of the Sophomore Class, a Math Club member, and an honor student. She met and married Perry L. Pride while there, and through him, she was introduced to the Adventist Church. Wilma was baptized after attending a Tent Meeting in 1957.

After graduating, Wilma worked for the Social Security Administration for four years, then taught at Ephesus Jr. Academy for seven years, serving as principal for six. She later worked in public schools for six years before returning to Ephesus for two more years. Wilma then opened Little People's Learning Center, which she ran for ten years. Afterward, she worked as a Childcare Consultant at Childcare Resources for eight years. Wilma finished her career at Children's Hospital Near and Dear Childcare Center, where she worked for five years before retiring in 2005.

Over the years Wilma has been an active member of Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church serving in several capacities such as Lower Division Leader, MV Leader, Pathfinder Counselor, School Board Chairman, Sabbath School Teacher/Superintendent, Hospitality, Health Food Store Manager, Family Life Leader, Community Services, Chairman of the Board of Ephesus Childcare Center and volunteers at Ephesus Jr. Academy, and secretary of the Seasoned Saints Ministry.

Wilma and Perry are the proud parents of five children. Ronald (Wintrey), Jacqueline, Barry, Anita (Anthony), and Kevin; Grandparents to Brian (Branika), Jasmine, Jocelyn, Darius, Ahmani and Ahmya; Great-Grandparents to Christian, Christopher and Caitlin. Perry and Wilma believed in Adventist Christian Education and enrolled all their children at Ephesus Jr. Academy, Brakeworth Academy and Forest Lake Academy in Orlando, Florida



BENJAMIN JOSEPH SELLERS SR.



Benjamin Joseph Sellers Sr. was born on November 5, 1945, to Charles Sellers and Annie Mae Simmons Sellers in Mobile, Alabama. He is the youngest son of the family. His siblings include Sylvia (deceased), Charles Jr. (Adell), Arthur, Deborah, Marcheta (Ed), and Cathy.

His mother was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church when he was just a few months old, and he later became a baptized member of the same church during his early school years. Benjamin attended Dearborn Street Seventh-day Adventist Church School and graduated from Central High School in Mobile, Alabama, in 1964. He went on to graduate from Dental Lab School in 1965 before serving in the United States Army from 1966 to 1968 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Later, he earned a double major in Criminal Justice and Political

Science from the University of South Alabama. Following this, he pursued a career as a nurse after graduating from Beville State and worked in the field until his retirement.

Over 40 years ago, Benjamin met and married the love of his life, Annie Nicole Jones Sellers. Together, they are proud parents of four children: Benjamin Jr. (LaShawnda), Matthew (Alethia), Maria, and Brandon. They are also blessed grandparents to Nyah, Matthew, Avery Grace, Michael, and Nyla Rose.

Throughout his life, Benjamin has been actively involved in various ministries within the church. His roles have included Youth Elder, Bible Worker, Choir Director, Chorister, Sabbath School Facilitator, and currently, he serves as Church Elder and Sabbath School Superintendent.

He enjoys traveling, studying and teaching the Bible, and spending quality time with his wife, children, grandchildren, and other family and friends.



FLORENCE SHORTER



Florence Shorter was born on December 31, 1941, in Panola, Alabama, to Howard and Classie Granger, she grew up in a bustling household with six brothers and one sister. After completing her education at Virginia College, she earned an Associate Degree.

Her professional journey began at New York Telephone and later transitioned to Bellsouth, where she dedicated 37 years of her life before retiring. In 1977, she tied the knot with James Edward Shorter, and together they raised five children. She now enjoys two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Throughout her life, she found solace and community in her faith, transitioning from being a Seventh-day Baptist to joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Beyond her career and family life, she finds joy in singing, gardening, and sewing.

Her compassionate spirit led her to volunteer for various community service initiatives.

Upon retirement, she continued to serve others by working as a lunchroom coordinator at Ephesus Academy. Not content with idle retirement, she relocated to Carson, California, for a year to assist her daughter.

With a heart full of love and a spirit of service, she has touched the lives of many through her dedication to family, faith, and community.

*"Who can find a
virtuous woman?
For her price is
far above rubies."*
Proverbs 31:10

DORIS W SMITH



Doris W. Smith was born on October 31st in Jefferson County, Alabama. She was married for 42 years and resided in California for 60 years. Doris is the proud mother of three sons, as well as the grandmother of eight granddaughters and two grandsons. She is also blessed with two great-grandsons and two great-granddaughters.

Doris dedicated 40 years of her life to education, teaching students from pre-K to college. She also served as a college administrator and instructor, guiding students at the associate, bachelor's, master's, and post-graduate levels.

While living in California, Doris volunteered as a chaplain at Loma Linda University Hospital, offering her services for six years.

A devoted member of her church, Doris has passionately contributed as a Sabbath School teacher, youth leader, Family Life director, Women's Ministries leader, Pathfinders coordinator, Inner City Summer Program organizer, and Church Retreat coordinator.

In her leisure time, Doris enjoys serving others, creating art, crafting, doll-making, ceramics, reading, and traveling.

Her favorite scripture is Philippians 4:8-9.

Favorite quote:

"Things may happen around you and things may happen to you but only things that really count are the things that happen in you."

"I claim my greatness"



ELOISE STAPLES



Eloise Staples was born on May 29, 1948, to Mary Allen and W.B. Montgomery. She pursued her early education at Lincoln Elementary and Parker High School before continuing her studies at Lawson State and the University of Alabama, where she earned a degree in Education.

With a passion for teaching, Eloise dedicated her career to shaping young minds, serving as an educator in the Birmingham City School System and at Ephesus Academy. She was one of the first Black females to teach at the Alabama Boys Industrial School in Roebuck. She also shared her artistic talents as an art teacher at the A.G. Gaston Boys Club. Her commitment to community service led her to work with Positive Maturity and the Office of Senior Citizen Services, where she oversaw senior centers across Jefferson County and collaborated closely with Meals on Wheels.

Even after retiring, her love for education and service never waned. She returned to Ephesus Academy as an art teacher and played an active role in the PTA/PTO.

Eloise is the proud mother of two daughters, Michelle Collins and Tiffany Young, and the beloved grandmother of four—Sean, Dwight, Sydney, and Derian.

Today, she continues to embrace life with joy and purpose, attending weekly church services where she is deeply cherished, visiting the senior center alongside a former director, and spending her days immersed in her lifelong passion—creating art.



CLEMMIE TRUEVILLIAN



Clemmie Truevillian, Shondolyn Young Richardson's grandmother, was born on January 12, 1922. Clemmie and her husband, Melvin, had 3 children: Jeanette, Joyce, and Melvin Jr. Sadly, her husband was killed in a trucking accident when their children were young, so she raised them on her own.

Clemmie taught Head Start students until retirement. All 3 of her children followed in her footsteps and became educators. Her oldest child, Jeanette, taught 3rd grade and eventually married but developed acute myelocytic leukemia shortly after her daughter and only child, Shondolyn, was born. She passed in 1978 at the age of 34 when Shondolyn was only 18 months old. Clemmie's son, Melvin Jr., joined the military and years later became a college

instructor. Unfortunately, he passed away of a heart attack in

2004. Clemmie has one surviving daughter, Joyce, who is a retired elementary school teacher.

Clemmie is known for her soft-spoken voice, calm demeanor, contagious prayer life, and strong support of the Adventist church. For many years, she served faithfully as an Elder and in many other capacities at the Jesus is the Way SDA Church in Indianola, Mississippi. Over the years, Clemmie also served as a literature evangelist and Bible worker whenever needed. By God's grace, she was able to live independently in her own home until she reached age 99, and she maintained a vegetarian lifestyle. She is now 103 and still faithfully reads her Bible and enjoys singing with family.



DORTHY WASHINGTON



At the venerable age of 82, Dorothy Washington reflects on her life and how God has planned and shaped her journey through various situations and experiences. Her plans have often been redirected, and the Lord's will and way have taken precedence throughout her life. With the Holy Spirit guiding and influencing her decisions and choices, particularly in her career, Dorothy has consistently sought to glorify God. She instilled in her children, from an early age, the importance of allegiance, obedience, and respect for God above all else.

Serving God and ministering to others has always been a joy and delight for Dorothy and her family. Every step in her professional journey was a ministry rather than a chore or mere work. Whether she served as an elementary and kindergarten teacher for 26 years at Ephesus Academy, an early childhood director, curriculum instructor, principal

during the formative years of Cornerstone Schools of Alabama, or as a homeschool teacher for six years in California, each role was a privilege and a calling from God to minister.

Her Christian journey extended beyond her professional life, especially during her time in California, where she served at the Perris Seventh-day Adventist Church. There, she took on roles such as Women's Ministry Leader, Sabbath School Teacher, Sabbath School Superintendent, Co-Pathfinder Leader, and Church Elder. Each responsibility enabled her to grow spiritually and strengthen her walk with Christ.

Living and traveling in various states and interacting with people from diverse cultures—including Russia, Japan, Africa, Bolivia, and more—offered Dorothy the opportunity to witness God's love. Whether building sandcastles on the beaches of the Pacific Ocean or standing atop a San Bernardino Mountain peak gazing out over the "Rim of the World," she embraced the beauty of God's creation.

Through times of scarcity, poor choices and their consequences, and moments of God's discipline, as well as the best and worst of times, Dorothy testifies to the constant presence of God in her life. She has witnessed His grace and mercy, undeserved yet unwavering.

Whatever accolades, credits, or achievements Dorothy has earned that might constitute becoming a "living legend," she insists that all the glory belongs to God. He is, and has always been, the Master of her fate and the Captain of her soul.

Favorite Scripture : Joshua 1: 5-9 ♦ Favorite Song: Be Thou My Vision

MILDRED WATKINS



Mildred Watkins was born on December 22, 1935, in Birmingham, Alabama. She would be the oldest daughter of seven children. In her youth, Mildred attended Lincoln Elementary School and Parker High School and was involved in band and several other extracurricular activities. She was also an active member of Galilee Baptist Church and diligently served in various roles while a member.

As a young adult, in 1956, she married Harrison A. Watkins Jr., and was blessed with 4 children. While her kids were still small, she decided to attend Miles College to study Elementary Education, which proved to be a profession that she loved and that suited her personality well. It was soon after this time, in 1969, that she heard about a tent effort from her neighbor, Mrs. Crawford, and the Holy Spirit led her to attend. She accepted the

Three Angels' Messages and became a member of Ephesus SDA

Church where M.M. Young was the pastor at the time.

After graduating from Miles College, her first job had been with Wilkerson Elementary School and then with the Boys School of Alabama. But she was soon led to accept a teaching position at Ephesus Jr. Academy. She loved the students and soon had a reputation of being a disciplinarian. While teaching at Ephesus, she furthered her education by attending Oakwood College and then Andrews University. She would serve her entire career at Ephesus as a teacher and principal, which spanned over 45 years. Her dedication to teaching and leadership left an indelible mark on the school, its students, and the surrounding community.

Mildred Watkins celebrated her 90th year in December of 2025. To God be the glory! She continues to be the matriarch of her family, a humble servant to her church, and to the community at large. Her faith and steadfast dedication remain an inspiration to all who know her. She loves the Lord! May the Lord continue to bless her with spiritual strength, physical strength, and long life.



WILLIE MAE WHATLEY



Willie M. Whatley was scheduled to graduate from U S Jones High School in Demopolis, AL May 1965. But due to the civil rights activities going on at the time the principal cancelled the graduation. She experienced a first hand experience of whites only signs, drinking fountains, and back door entrances to restaurants, doctor's offices, and segregated schools.

Willie M. Whatley attended Miles College, but graduated from Jefferson State Junior College with an Associate in Science degree in nursing I 1977, and UAB School of Nursing with a BSN in 1987.

She was married to Sammy Whatley, Sr for 53 years at the time of his death in 2021. Together they had 4 children, Wanda, Sammy Jr, Jonathan, and Bethany. They also have 9 grandchildren and 1 great granddaughter.

Willie Whatley retired from UAB in 2013 after serving for 36 years as a Registered Nurse. Due to the void left by retirement, she enrolled in Lawson State Community College and received an Associates in Applied Science degree-Culinary Arts in 2017.

She has served at Ephesus Academy as a volunteer and worked in various capacities since 2017.

She has been a member of Ephesus SDA church for over 50 years and has served in several departments.

She has given Bible Studies to many children, youth as well as adults leading to their baptism. To God be the glory!

Her favorite scripture is Proverbs 3: 5,6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.



FREDDIE WOODS



Freddie Woods was born on March 27, 1938, in Birmingham, Alabama. He grew up in the Titusville community and, at the age of fifteen, moved to New York City.

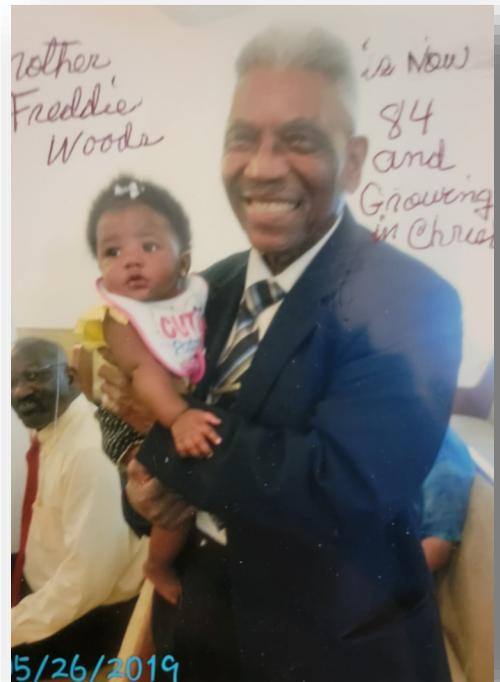
In New York, Freddie pursued his passion for boxing, a sport he had loved since childhood. His boxing career spanned approximately four years. After retiring from the ring, he began working in New York's garment industry, where he was employed for about a decade.

Seeking new experiences, Freddie transitioned to a life of travel, working various jobs in the meat industry across states such as Connecticut, Ohio, California, and Arizona. After his time in Arizona, he returned to Birmingham in the late 1980s and currently resides at Bankhead Towers.

Brother Woods has been married twice. His first wife passed away, and his second marriage ended in divorce.

During the 2021 pandemic, Freddie attended the Revelation Seminar led by Elder Eugene Marshall. Inspired by his studies, he decided to pursue baptism into the Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church. Despite delays caused by COVID-19 restrictions, Freddie, along with eleven others, was baptized by Pastor James Owens.

“To God be the glory!”



HONORING OUR COMMUNITY'S LIVING LEGENDS

Every community is built upon the dedication, passion, and resilience of individuals who go above and beyond to uplift those around them. These living legends have shaped our neighborhoods, inspired future generations, and left an enduring impact through their contributions in education, activism, the arts, business, and beyond.

In this section, we celebrate two remarkable individuals whose tireless efforts and unwavering commitment have strengthened our community. Their stories remind us that change begins with a single act of kindness, leadership, or courage. Join us in recognizing and appreciating these extraordinary individuals who continue to make a difference every day.

THE HONORABLE MARY BUSH

REVEREND CALVIN WALLACE WOODS, SR.



IN TRIBUTE TO THE LATE RENDON A. MARBURY, JR.

With heartfelt remembrance and deep admiration, we honor the legacy of Rendon A. Marbury, Jr. His unwavering dedication, profound impact, and enduring spirit continue to inspire all who had the privilege of knowing him.

This section includes a tribute to his remarkable life, his contributions, and the lasting imprint he leaves on our hearts.

THE HONORABLE MARY BUSH



The Honorable Mary Bush is one of the top women in the world in international finance and corporate governance. She has served on more than a dozen boards of major, global public companies, including Marriott, T. Rowe Price, Discover Financial Services, Texaco and United Airlines. She has chaired Governance and Audit Committees, served on Finance and Compensation Committees and chaired or served on the Boards of several charitable organizations. While in the corporate world - - with Chase Manhattan Bank, Citibank, Bankers Trust and Fannie Mae, she became widely known for ground-breaking transactions with multinational companies and investors.

Ms. Bush served three Presidents – as U.S. Director on the IMF Board, head of the Federal Home Loan Bank System during the S&L crisis and Board member of Sallie Mae. At the

IMF, she represented the US government on critical policy matters during the 1980s emerging market debt crisis and led the creation of a new lending program that propelled developing countries toward free-markets and entrepreneurship. She also chaired a bipartisan congressional commission to transform the \$32 billion of U.S. foreign aid to give greater emphasis to investment and human resource development. She also was appointed by US Treasury Secretary, Hank Paulson, to the U.S. Treasury Committee on the Audit Profession.

Ms. Bush advises government and corporate leaders and is a frequent speaker on economic, governance and financial matters. She speaks to youth audiences on the power of strong values and self-determination. She was one of NACD's top 100 Directors in 2012. Current boards include Bloom Energy, ManTech International and Private Export Funding Corporation. She is Chairman of Spark the Journey, a not-for-profit that mentors low-income youth through high school and college. Her M.B.A. is from the University of Chicago and her B.A. in Economics, Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude, is from Fisk University.

Education: M.B.A. in Finance, Chicago Booth, University of Chicago. B.A., Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude, Fisk University. She was born in Birmingham, Alabama and resides in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Interests: Singing, art, mentoring young people, golf.

REVEREND CALVIN WALLACE WOODS, SR.



Bishop Calvin Wallace Woods, Sr., a prominent civil rights leader and advocate, has been a pivotal figure in Birmingham, Alabama, for over seven decades. His involvement in the community began in 1963 when he led the Transition Committee to integrate business sectors post-demonstrations. That year, he filed a lawsuit on behalf of his daughter and other students suspended for their roles in demonstrations, ensuring their reinstatement.

Woods was a key organizer of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR) under Dr. Fred L. Shuttlesworth after the NAACP was outlawed in Alabama in 1956. ACMHR focused on non-violent direct action to combat racial injustice, including boycotts, picketing, and voter registration efforts.

In 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. appointed Woods as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) City Convener for Birmingham. His role was to educate ministers on civil rights issues, including history, non-violent protest, and voter registration. He was arrested several times for advocating desegregation, including for encouraging his congregation to sit anywhere on city buses. Woods was also imprisoned for sitting at a lunch counter and beaten after Dr. King's room was bombed. He faced repeated threats from the Ku Klux Klan.

Woods served as President of the Birmingham Metro Chapter of the SCLC until 2021 and is currently 1st Vice President of the National SCLC. He was honored with a state marker in 2014 for over 57 years of civil rights activism.

Bishop Woods is a native of Birmingham and the son of Rev. Dr. Abraham Lincoln Woods, Sr. and Maggie Rose Woods. He and his deceased wife, Lucille, are proud parents of thirteen children. He served as Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Norwood for 35 years and is now Pastor Emeritus. He graduated from A.H. Parker High School, Miles College, and the Birmingham Easonian Baptist Bible College, and has received four honorary doctorate degrees. He retired as an administrator from the Birmingham Board of Education. Woods has dedicated his life to ministry, preaching for over 70 years, impacting countless lives through his faith and leadership

RENDON A. MARBURY, JR.



Rendon A. Marbury, Jr. was born on June 30, 1937, the eldest of nine children to Rendon and Eula Bell Rose Marbury, Sr. He took great pride in being a big brother.

A 1956 graduate of R.R. Moton High School, Rendon was a standout quarterback. Inspired by stories of Satchel Paige at Rickwood Field, he dreamed of playing for the Birmingham Black Barons. That dream became reality when he joined the Negro Leagues, playing for the Black Barons and Indianapolis Clowns. Known as “Jug” Marbury, he was a skilled line-drive hitter with a rifle arm, excelling at double plays.

He endured racism firsthand, often denied service at restaurants or forced to sleep on buses. Years later, he received a mere \$3.26 royalty check from MLB, which he never cashed—preserving it as a symbol of the past. Despite challenges, he never harbored bitterness, believing God, not baseball, was the author of his faith.

Rendon was honored for his contributions to the Negro Leagues, featured in museums in Kansas City and Birmingham, and celebrated at the Rickwood Classic and the Atlanta Braves Stadium. He also helped organize the "Great Baseball Festival" in Leeds, Alabama.

In 1958, he began a 39-year career at ACIPCO, interrupted by U.S. Army service. Before deploying, he married Annie Lois Jackson, and together they raised three children—Perrin, Allison, and Angie. Following retirement, he drove buses for Birmingham City Schools for 10 years.

A devoted member of Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church, he served as Head Deacon and Bible Teacher. He was admired by many for his great storytelling and tremendous ability to impart wisdom to people of all ages.

His children and grandchildren are forever grateful for his dedication, ensuring they attended church school and graduated college. Rendon rejoiced in their success but found even greater joy in their commitment to Christ as Seventh-day Adventist Christians.

Rendon departed this life on June 4, 2023, surrounded by his loving family.





A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children. Proverbs 13:22





Thank You

The Ephesus Church Family Life Team would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of our Black History program honoring our Living Legends.

Your dedication, time and support made this event truly special. From organizers to volunteers, program participants, and attendees— your efforts celebrated our history and heroes beautifully.

We deeply appreciate your commitment and passion!



Ephesus Family Life Team

Annie Sellers, Leader

Charmeretta Timothy

Wendell Timothy

Annie Kate Dailey

Living Legends booklet created by Tameka Hannah

