

The Sunset Service for

Sunrise
October 17, 1918

Sunset
January 11, 2011

A portrait of Deacon William Jay Johnson, an older man with grey hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a light-colored tie. His right hand is resting on his chest, and his left hand is holding a pair of sunglasses. The background is a solid blue color.

Deacon William Jay Johnson

Favorite Scripture: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen." Hebrew 11:1

Friday, January 21, 2011 - 11:00 a.m.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

929 Dill Avenue

Linden, New Jersey

Rev. Derrick R. Dumas, Pastor

Bishop Wayne L. Johnson, Eulogist

SPECIAL THANKS AND APPRECIATION

It is impossible for me to thank all of you individually, but I must extend special thanks to:

Deacon Marion Scott- for from the time that he came on the deacon board as a “deacon-in-training,” up to now, he has truly exemplified the word DEACON and FRIEND for the many acts of humanitarian kindness he has displayed to me. Words cannot convey my deep appreciation and respect for this God fearing young man.

Deacon Ezra & Deaconess Edna Brown- In 2000, I could no longer drive at night so Deacon Brown offered to drive me to all of the various church meetings I attended. He would always refuse to accept any offers of compensation, and would say, “My father taught me to do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” He even comes to the nursing home and brings me to church every first Sunday. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks to him and his wife. May God continue to bless them both.

Bishop Wayne L. Johnson- I heard of him when he was only a teenager going all around Roselle and Linden to various churches preaching the word of God. I knew him when he was elected and installed as the worshipful master of Acacia Lodge #23 for I was THERE. I knew him when he was elected and installed as the Grand Master of the M. W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge State of New Jersey for I was THERE. At his coordination as a Bishop I knew him, for I was THERE. I knew him when he was my Guest Speaker for my 70th, 75th, 80th, 85th, and 90th birthday celebrations for I was THERE. Now, I have asked the Lord, so this time I am not there in body, but my spirit is there with you. It has been my privilege to have known you.

If I had a thousand tongues, I could not thank each of you enough. If I had ten thousand tongues, I could not thank God enough for His goodness and tender mercies.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM JAY JOHNSON

I was born in Bishopville, South Carolina on October 17, 1918, the tenth of twelve siblings of Harmon and Florence Susan Johnson, Sr. In 1921 when I was three years old, my parents decided to move to Roselle, New Jersey where we resided at 1216 - 12th Avenue. I attended the public school of Roselle. My mother was a Deaconess and a Sunday School Teacher at Mt. Hannon Baptist Church in Bishopville. She saw that there wasn't a black Baptist church in the area (and knowing that our black children needed a Christian education) would go out in that area on Sunday mornings and gather up as many children as she could and bring them to our house to teach them about the bible. Soon the word got out that there was a "church" going on at the Johnson's house and adults as well as children began going to "church" at the Johnson's home. The living room at our home became too small and that is when the men took over and they found an empty store on St. George Avenue between Chandler and Harrison Avenue in Roselle. Now to be as concise as possible and eliminating all procedures, that small group of church loving people built a building at 1300 Lincoln Street and named it "The First Baptist Church of Linden, New Jersey." My father and mother were among the "founders and charter members" of that church. Therefore, the foundation was laid in the home of my parents Deacon Harmon and Deaconess Florence Susan Johnson, Sr.

After many years of "being away" from First Baptist Church, in 1963 I rejoined and immediately I got active in and about the church. The then Pastor, Rev. Dr. Eugene Shell, Jr. noticed me and all that I was doing and he recommended me to the Deacon Board. He advised the board that they make all proceedings necessary to make me a deacon-in-training. So, again, to be as concise as possible, on January 23, 1964, I became an "ORDAINED DEACON" of the First Baptist Church of Linden, New Jersey. Again, I immediately got active in and about the church. I attended the Northern Baptist School of Religion, not to become a preacher, but to become a more theologically knowledgeable deacon. So again to be concise, myself and ten others were the founders and charter members of "The Monday Night Bible Study Class" of the First Baptist Church. As of this writing, there are only three of the original members still alive, and by the grace of God I am still one of them. As the song says, "I'm glad to be in the number one more time."

After having served all preliminary offices, I became Chairman of the Deacon Board of First Baptist. Again, to be concise I served a very fruitful term as chairman. In 1984, I suffered a stroke which left me partially physically incapacitated and with a severe speech impediment. Nomination of all church officers was coming up soon and I informed by brother deacons that I would resign but stay on as the chairman. One of them in particular, Deacon William L. Lawson, (may God continue to bless his soul) told me to stay on as chairman and whatsoever needed to be done, he and the other deacons would do. But to the surprise of everyone Deacon Lawson nominated me as chairman of the deacon board and he was the co-chairman, but I declined the nomination for myself and nominated him instead. The pastor at this time was the late Rev. George Abnathya announced that: "Due to the long and many services that Deacon Johnson has done not only to the deacon board but to the church as well, I now

announce that as of now he is Deacon William Johnson “Chairman Emeritus” of the Deacon Board of First Baptist Church. This is a title I now hold and will cherish until I am called “HOME.”

In 1943, I married Alma Lee Williams of Elizabeth, New Jersey, a union that lasted forty-two years until Alma’s death in 1985. I was drafted into the United States Army and spent four months in this country and two years and eight months in the European Theater of Operations in England and France. I attained the rank of Sergeant in the Military Police unit that was attached to the 3rd Army of General George S. Patton. On March 8, 1946, I received an Honorable Discharge from the army and returned back to Roselle to be with my wife. In August of 1946, we moved to 138 Catherine Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey. (This is where my wife Alma died, where my sister, Alphonsa died, and where I had intended to die – but God saw fit to allow me to live my remaining years in the care of Riverton Nursing Home). I was very active in and around the City of Elizabeth; and I was elected to the committee of the 12th district of the 6th ward of Elizabeth, a position I held for ten years. I also joined the Elizabeth Police Reserve – a position I served for twenty years, from 1950 to 1970.

On January of 1959, I was raised from a dead level, etc., in Lincoln Lodge #62 as a Master Mason and immediately became active in the lodge. In 1963, I was elected as the Worshipful Master. Then I became active in the Prince Hall Grand Lodge, State of New Jersey in 1964. I received the first of many Grand Lodge appointed offices. Because of a lack of space I will only list a few of these appointments; I received my highest office as “The Sixth District Deputy Grand Master” of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New Jersey. Then I received the office that I loved best of all which was the office of Editor of the Grand Lodge News Bulletin. This position caused me to do a lot of writing and to those of you who know me, I enjoy and love writing. After serving twelve consecutive years, the incoming Grand Master gave the title of “EDITOR EMERITUS” of The Pillar and presented me with the “apron & collar” along with a certificate, which I cherish greatly. I was a thirty-two degree Master Mason and Shriner.

My fifty year membership of The Grand Lodge was officially January 24, 2009. This certificate was presented to me by the Worshipful Master of Lincoln Lodge #62 at Riverton in April 2010.

I also served for two years as co-editor of “The Starlight”, which was the news bulletin of Oziel Grand Chapter of the Eastern Stars. Last, but surely not least, I must pay tribute to my dear friend and companion of many years, Ella Mae Feggan. May God continue to rest her soul in an eternity of celestial bliss. Her physical body has gone, but her memory will linger with me into eternity.

And now my long and bountiful days are coming to an end for the sun is slowly beginning to go down into sunset. I must close this eulogy, but before I go, I leave behind: my niece, Ms. Barbara Eden Foxx, her daughter, Dawn Bryant, and her daughter, Miss Jasmine Bryant; as well as a lot of very dear friends. When God decides to dispatch his chariot to take me “home” to be with my parents, eleven siblings, my wife, Alma, and longtime friend, Ella May, truly I WON’T COMPLAIN BECAUSE GOD HAS BEEN SO GOOD TO ME.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Pastor Derrick R. Dumas, Officiating
Minister Barry Walker, Organist

Musical Prelude

Processional Clergy and Family

A Parting View

Hymn of Consolation Choir

Scriptures Deaconess Marjorie Rouse
Old Testament - Psalm 23:1-6
New Testament - II Corinthians 15:51-58

Prayer of Consolation Trustee Ozzie Rouse

Selection *“One Day at a Time”* Deaconess Ella M. Spears

Tributes Deacon Ezra Brown
Deaconess Lorraine Journigan

Poem Sister Sharon Pryor

Acknowledgements
and Condolences Ms. Victoria Williams

Obituary -*Autobiography of William J. Johnson* Read silently

Solo *“I Won’t Complain”* - Deacon Cole Carson, Jr.

Eulogy Bishop Wayne L. Johnson
Pastor- Bibleway Deliverance Center, Roselle

Closing Prayer

Recessional *“When We All Get To Heaven”*

Interment
Graceland Memorial Park
Kenilworth, New Jersey

*After the Interment family and friends are invited to
return to the church for Fellowship and Refreshments.*

Services Entrusted To:

G.G. Woody Funeral Home, LLC

206 East Eighth Avenue • Roselle, NJ 07203

www.ggwoodyfuneralhome.com

“Where Our Sympathy Expresses Itself Through Sincere Service”

PALLBEARERS

My brother Deacons and Trustees from First Baptist Church

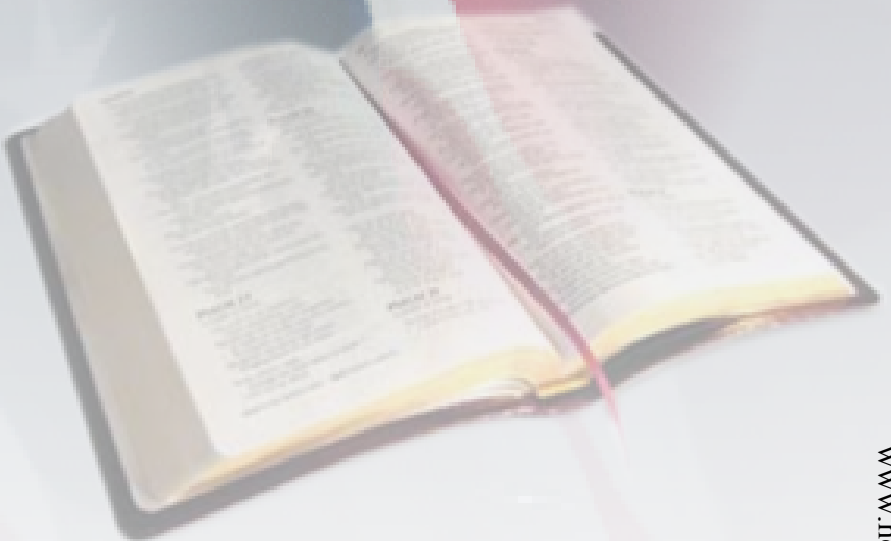
Dea. Franklin Green	Trustee Ozzie Rouse
Dea. Samuel Thomas	Dea. Ezra Brown
Dea. Benjamin Johnson	Dea. Cole Carson, Jr.

Honorary Pall Bearers

My Masonic brothers Past Masters from Lincoln Lodge #62
Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, State of New Jersey

R. W. Ralph McNeil 33*	R. W. Willie Kimbel 32*
R. W. Willie Wiggins 32*	R. W. Claudy Michel 32*
R. W. Alvin Donaldson 32*	P. M. Allen Bulle

I most truly and sincerely thank each and every one of you that made my last Days on earth an enjoyable one, as much as it could be. With your many visits to Riverton to sit and talk with me, and your many cards, letters and prayers my heart was made glad.
“Thanks Be to God.”



Acknowledgement

The family of **Deacon William Jay Johnson** acknowledges with sincere appreciation every thought and act of kindness expressed to us during this our hour of bereavement. We will always keep you in our prayers. May God continue to richly bless you.