



Mother Jessie Baker Gurley May 1, 1934 - May 11, 2020



Thursday, July 22, 2021
Viewing at 5:00 p.m.; Service at 6:00 p.m.
Greater Bethel COOLJC of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.
282 Governor Street, Paterson, New Jersey 07501
Elder Joseph Moore, Pastor

Saturday, July 24, 2021
Viewing at 1:00 p.m.; Service at 2:00 p.m.
Macedonia Good Shepard Church
672 Sulphur Springs Road, Warrenton, North Carolina 27589
Elder William Henry Baker, Pastor

Obituary

District Elder Levi Gurley, 86, Pastor of House of Faith Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, departed this life on Friday, April 24, 2020. He was born on April 12, 1934 in Louisburg, North Carolina to the late Jesse and Alice Alston Gurley. After his mother died, he was raised by his great Aunt Katie Belle Foster Davis and her husband Anthony Davis.

Levi married Jessie Baker Gurley on September 22, 1955 at Green Funeral Parlor in Warrenton, North Carolina. Shortly thereafter they moved to Philadelphia before migrating to Paterson for better job opportunities. To this union, four daughters (affectionately referred to as the Gurley Girls) were born: Gwendolyn Elaine, Chanie Annette, Lenora and Hilda Viola.

Inspired by His wife, Levi was spiritually born into Greater Bethel Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith in 1962. Under the guidance of the late Bishop Herbert Frazier, he faithfully served as a Sunday School teacher, a deacon, Chairman of the Deacon Board, Chairman of the Finance Committee and Sunday School Superintendent. He was called to the ministry in 1971. He is the original pastor of Olivet Good Shepherd Church of Christ in Paterson, N.J. He founded House of Faith Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ in 1984.

Pastor Gurley attended the Hawthorne Bible School in Hawthorne, New Jersey where he earned a three-year certification and a four-year certification in "Truth of the Whole Bible" and "Bible Teaching" respectively. He also acquired teaching certification and certificates in People Psychology and Sunday School Supervision from the Wheaton Bible College Institute of Wheaton, Illinois. He was valedictorian of his graduating class at Abundant Life Institute of Christian Education where he earned his master's degree in Christian Education. Pastor Gurley also graduated from W.L.Bonner College in Columbia, South Carolina where he took courses in "Clergy Leadership Training."

In addition to his parents and his Great Aunt Bell and Uncle Anthony, Levi was pre-deceased by his sister, Chanie Gupton and her husband, Ollie.

His devoted wife of 64 years, Jessie, took wings and followed her husband in death on May 11, 2020.

He leaves to cherish precious memories four daughters: Lady Gwendolyn Gurley Maxwell and her husband, Pastor Kenneth Maxwell of Davenport, Iowa; Dr. Chanie Gurley Peterson and her husband Joseph Peterson of Teaneck, New Jersey; Lenora Gurley Taylor of Matteson, Illinois; and Hilda Gurley of Charlotte, North Carolina; eight grandchildren: Jermaine, Kendra and her husband Gabriel, Myron, LeRena, Nigel, Gabriel, Bryce and Adrianna; a Godson: Miguel; nine sisters-in-law; seven brothers-in-law; the House of Faith Church family; a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. Also surviving are many people who came to Christ under his ministry and those who have continued to support his ministry.

Pastor Gurley will long be remembered for his scripture-based preaching and teaching, his love of people, his generosity and his willingness to do anything he could to help anyone he encountered. He was especially concerned about winning souls to Christ.



Mother Jessie Baker Gurley, First Lady of House of Faith Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, departed this life on Monday, May 11, 2020, just two weeks after her husband, Pastor Levi Gurley entered eternal rest and 10 days after her 86th birthday.

Jessie Baker Gurley was born on May 1, 1934 in Warrenton, North Carolina, one of 18 children born to the late Martha Spruill Baker and the late Frank Baker, Sr. She attended Stony Lone Elementary School and John R. Hawkins High School in Warrenton. During those high school years she met and dated Levi Gurley whom she wed on September 22, 1955. Shortly thereafter, she and Levi moved, first to Philadelphia, then to Paterson, New Jersey where she took sewing classes at the Adult Learning Center of Eastside High School. She honed those skills and used them to make many of her children's clothing and uniforms for church choirs.

Jessie began her spiritual journey when she was baptized in Jesus' name the Sunday after Thanksgiving Day in 1961 at Greater Bethel Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Under the pastoral guidance of the late Bishop Herbert Frazier and the late First Lady Maggie Frazier, Jessie served as vice president of the Willing Workers and as a member of the Usher Board and Sunday School Department. She received her Missionary License in 1974.

Jessie was a model mother of four daughters whom she raised with a stern, steady, protective and loving hand. She consistently placed high value on integrity, education and work ethics.

Jessie quietly and staunchly supported the ministry of her husband for well over 40 years. She served as Missionary Board president for many of those years. In that capacity she spent a lot of time in hospitals and nursing homes visiting and praying with the sick. She often took plates of food and baskets of toiletries and other goods to homes of invalids and the elderly for whom she would also do hair and clean houses.

In addition to her husband and parents, she was preceded in death by six brothers: Frank Jr., Millard, Sr., Wardell, Alfred, Willie Lafayette and Plummer; and two sisters: Ardell and Georgianna.

Jessie is the cherished and much beloved mother of Lady Gwendolyn Gurley Maxwell and her husband Pastor Kenneth Maxwell of Davenport, Iowa, Dr. Chanie Gurley Peterson and her husband Joseph Peterson of Teaneck, New Jersey, Lenora Gurley Taylor of Matteson, Illinois and Hilda Gurley of Charlotte, North Carolina; dear grandmother of Jermaine and Myron Maxwell, Dr. Kendra Maxwell Hudson and her husband Gabriel, LeRena Thomas, Nigel Dillard, Gabriel Taylor, Bryce and Adrianna Highgate; Godmother of Joseph Miguel Cepero.

She is also survived by her sisters: Geneva Tyler, Ella Scott, Annie Mae Walden, Susan Williams, Sarah Harris with her husband Thomas; brothers: James Edward, William Henry and his wife Linda, Ernest, Wilbert and his wife Theresa; sisters-in-law: Nevia, Jenail, Mattie Pearl, Irene; brother-in-law Ceola Belvin.

Also surviving are the House of Faith Church Family, a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, greatnieces and great nephews.

Jessie will be greatly missed and remembered for her grace, wit, style, wisdom, quiet strength in the face of all things and unwavering devotion to her husband and children.

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Order of Service

Facilitator		
Prayer of Comfort	Elder Robert Walker	
Scripture Readings Old Testament (Ecclesiastes 3:1-13) New Testament (I Thessalonians 4: 13-18)	Sister Tiffany Stewart Deacon Glenn McClide	
Choir Selection	Be Faithful	
Reading of Acknowledgements, Resolutions, Cards.		
	Sister Jean NoelAnje and Lisa Thompson (niece & great-niece)	
A Letter to Our Parents	Lenora Gurley Taylor	
Special Tribute to Mother Gurley (Proverbs 31:10-3	1)Sister Fay Cepero	
Mother/Daughter DuetHilda Gurley and Adrianna Highgate I Will Make the Darkness Light		
	Ardean Sims (Niece) Sister Fontella Howie Sister Thelma Stokes Grandson): When Great Trees Fall by Maya Angelou Ider Joseph Moore, Pastor, Greater Bethel COOLJC	
Choir Selection Medley: We've C	Come This Far by Faith and I Will Trust in the Lord	
Eulogy	postle Fred Rubin, Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ	
Family Response		
Benediction		

Saturday, July 24, 2021 Viewing at 1:00 p.m.; Service at 2:00 p.m. Macedonia Good Shepard Church 672 Sulphur Springs Road, Warrenton, North Carolina 27589 Elder William Henry Baker, Pastor

Order of Service

Facilitator	A	Assistant Pastor Mark McCollum (Nephew) Miracle Temple Churches of America
Prayer of Comfort		Elder Ernest Stokes
Scripture Readings Old Testament (Lamentation New Testament (II Corinthia	s 3:22-26)ns 5:1-9)	
Choir Selection		I Shall Wear a Crown
Reading of Acknowledgements	s, Resolutions, Cards	Leavonia Williams (Great niece)
Elder Levi Gurley		
Letter to Our Parents		Lenora Gurley Taylor
Mother/Daughter DuetHilda Gurley and Adrianna Highgate I Will Make the Darkness Light		
	Dr. Regina Wald	LeRena Thomas (oldest grandchild) en-Austin, Pastor at The Tabernacle (Niece) Brother Joseph Peterson (Son-in-Law) tor, House of the Lord Church (Son-in-Law)
Choir Selection		Highway to Heaven
Eulogy		Elder Steven Baker, Pastor (Nephew) Bethsalem Baptist Church, New York
Benediction		2 - Mariem Baptist Charlett, 110W Tolk

Repast in the church dining room

TO OUR MOTHER, MOTHER JESSIE GURLEY

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Matthew 25:21

Today, we said our good-byes to you – the one who gave us life, our First Lady, Mother Jessie Gurley: quiet warrior, gracefull servant, comrade in the gospel.

You did not succumb without protest. In the tradition of valor you have always shown us, you faced down formidable foes, one after another sent to attack your mind and body. Each time, you survived. But your battles weakened your body. Through the blessing of technology, we sought to surround you with the love of your children and grandchildren in your final days. We prayed with you, sang songs of victory. But we witnessed death as it hovered at your door. Beyond it lay still waters, a place where a weary soldier could rest. And you, our quiet warrior, surrendered sword and shield, to study war no more.

You were tired. We know. And your mission had been completed. We saw how hard you worked for us, how selflessly you gave of yourself to bless others. We saw you stand up for you, take care of yourself, and we learned to value ourselves. We are your legacy, the product of your labors of love. We are who we are - with our mother's love, joy, humor, stick-to-it-iveness and wisdom navigating life - because of you, and we are grateful that you are our mother.

The world is not the same place that it was. We know that many share in our loss.

Today, you have passed through the portal through which our ancestors have passed. You have gone where our father has gone. We know that we will join you someday. We know that you are at peace. Still, the loss of you has left a hollow place inside us. We will fill it with our memories of you.

We love you, Mommy. Through our tears, we rejoice in your transition. Rest from your labors. Rest in eternal peace.

Gwen, Chanie, Lenora and Hilda May 11, 2020

AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR FATHER, PASTOR LEVI GURLEY

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:7-9

Dear Daddy:

Yesterday, in the early morning while you slept, you slipped away from us. We had planned to FaceTime you that morning, to tell you just one more time how much we love you, and how much your presence has meant to us; to be certain we had impressed this upon you during your time on this earth. If we could, we would have heard your laughter, seen your dimpled smile, even felt your guiding hand firm on our shoulders; if we could – just one more time. But God, in his time, gathered your ravaged body in his arms and lovingly extracted that part of you that would see eternity in his presence.

In this December of your life, when you battled in your body the devastations of advanced age and ever-evolving disease, we worried, we prayed. We doubted, we believed; and though circumstance demanded that we do this from a distance, you were never alone, for not only were we with you in heart and mind, but God was with you always, to the end of this earthly life and beyond.

You are with Him now, and soon we will find it in our sorrowful hearts to rejoice with you in your newfound peace and rest, knowing that, for those to whom you were father, husband, grandfather, pastor, cousin, uncle, brother-in-law, father-in-law, friend, there could never be enough one more sermons, one more songs, one more prayers. We were graced by your earthly presence for eighty-six-years, and for our generation and the next, eighty-six more could not be enough.

So we must resign ourselves to embrace you in our hearts. The hateful diseases that took your body away from us cannot take you from us in spirit, nor can they negate the many blessings you have brought upon the lives of others, or the hearts and souls that you have introduced to the love of Christ. We carry you always in the lives that you have taught us to lead, the faith that your ministry has inspired. We have taught our sons to be men like you, our daughters the principles by which you taught us to live. We pray that they will pass these to their children, and that they will pass them to theirs; and in this way, your presence will always be here, with us.

We love you always. Rest in peace, Daddy. Gwendolyn, Chanie, Lenora and Hilda April 25, 2020























Expressions of Gratitude

The family of **District Elder Levi Gurley** and **Mother Jessie Baker Gurley** wishes to express our sincere appreciation for the love, care and kindness so many of you have shown and expressed through your prayers, phone calls, text messages, Facebook posts, greeting cards, flowers and monetary blessings. We thank each and every one of you.

Pastor Joseph Moore and saints at Greater Bethel Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Paterson, New Jersey

Pastor William Henry Baker and saints at Macedonia Good Shepard Church, Warrenton, North Carolina

Elder James Taylor and House of Faith Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ membership, Paterson, New Jersey

Deacon Harvey Alston and Perry's Missionary Baptist Church, Louisburg, North Carolina

Regional Apostle Fred Rubin, Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ Of the Apostolic Faith, Region III

The staff at Carnie P. Bragg Funeral Homes, Inc., Paterson, New Jersey

The staff at Richardson Funeral Home, Louisburg, North Carolina

Extended Family & Everyone who so willingly Participated in Our Homegoing Celebrations

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