Homegoing Celebration for

Rev. Dr. Leroy Hodges, Sr.

July 22, 1935 - October 23, 2021

Saturday, November 6, 2021 - 9:00 a.m.

Transcend Worship Center 971 Clinton Avenue • Irvington, NJ 07111 Pastor Jerry Smith, Host Officiant-Rev. Dr. Arthur Cook, New Life at First Church, COGIC



Rev. Dr. Leroy Hodges Sr. was born on July 22, 1935 to the late Willie Hodges and Evelyn Hodges-Harris (nee Netter) in Belzoni, Mississippi. He was the sixth child born and was predeceased by siblings Leola Hodges, Cleveland Hodges, Lorene Liggins, Lucille Littlepage, Ora Lee Boone, Dorothy Reed, Rev. John Harris and Deacon Willie Hodges Jr; and sons Leroy Hodges Jr., William Ross Hodges and Steven Hodges. He was also predeceased by the mothers of his children: Wealtha Lee Hodges, Diane Daniels, Agnes E. Haynes, Louvenia Williams, Emma Goodman and wife, Elizabeth Hodges.

He started his education in the Mississippi school systems and continued throughout life as he was a firm believer that there were always lessons to learn while living each day. From childhood, Leroy showed fortitude and drive as he begin working to assist in the household as he desired to ensure he helped carry the load with his father. Despite the struggles, he mentally equipped himself with motivation to become a business owner one day. That day came after Leroy and family moved to NJ seeking more opportunities. He worked in many fields – building superintendent, restaurant employee, truck delivery for stores and faithful Rebco Inc. employee for 20 years, honing his skills to provide the best customer service possible. He learned many trades but nothing would speak to him like glass and mirror.

After working for others, in 1979 he founded the Hodges Glass and Mirror Corporation in the city of Newark. He took pride in providing the best material and work performance for each customer and he built a rapport with many companies and businesses including a long-standing relationship with NJIT and The Fidelco Group with Mark Berson. He also became the first black owned True Value Hardware Store in Newark. He served his community with dignity and commitment. These businesses paved the way to him co-founding the Newark Coalition of Small Business Association, where they were able to secure \$12 million in federal funds for businesses and forming the Clinton Avenue Merchants Association of Newark. He became a member of the Newark Chamber of Commerce, Newark Urban Zone Advisory Committee, and received numerous awards and citations that included Board of Trustees United Community Corporation Award, Sharpe James Civic Award for Outstanding Service to Newark, Black History Award for Community Service and Certificate of Outstanding Involvement in Education Award for dedicated service to the Clinton Avenue School community. After more than 25 years of operating businesses, he retired to rest and concentrate on health matters.

In 1980, while actively worshipping, he felt the calling of the Lord to ministry and was ordained a Licensed Minister in the Church of God In Christ organization under Bishop Chandler Owens at Wells Cathedral Church of God In Christ. Through faithful dedication at Wells Cathedral, he also became an ordained Elder and continued to serve until 1991 when he founded and incorporated Strangers Home Church of God In Christ, the first Church of God In Christ congregation in Irvington. It was here that he pastored many and created services and events that helped to impart support and hope to the community members. He was appointed Superintendent of the Irvington-Newark District, NJ 3rd Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Church of God In Christ to bridge various churches to convene annually. He was then appointed as the Administrative Assistant to the NJ 3rd Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and continued in efforts to further the work of the Lord. He was appointed Chaplain to the Police Department of Newark and Chaplain to the Police Department, Fire Department and Department of Public Works of Irvington, where he served each assignment with fervor and support. He received many accolades including the NAACP Outstanding Citizen Award, Mayor's Award for Outstanding Citizen and numerous others that showed his dedication to the communities.

Desiring to become well fit for his pastoral role, he sought sound doctrine and foundational course work. After years of studies, he gained substantive training and was granted a Doctor of Philosophy degree from New Jersey Bible Institute: Lighthouse Christian College in 2001. The teaching allowed him to become a mentor and resource for many. It was through his congregation that he sought to bring even more support to the members and community and the Strangers Home Day Care Centers and the Strangers Home Community Development Corporation were created. It was through these ventures that he was able to connect to people and provide effective planning while being a reliable ally to all those who were in need. After more than 25 years of active pastoring, he retired and relocated to Princeton, NJ.

Though he accomplished so many things such as becoming an entrepreneur, property owner and supportive citizen to the community, family meant the world to him. He always wanted his family members to gather and support one another. He wanted love to always be a priority and it was the only thing he desired the family to embrace because as he said, "when you love one another, nothing is impossible". He loved to recollect on memories of Mississippi and music, which were always in his heart. Wherever he went, it was always noted that he would bring smiles to all whether through a joke, life experience recollection or an encouraging word. His warm smile and jovial nature were always a welcome sight and will be missed by all.

Left to cherish his memory: Sister, Patricia Belle of NJ; Sister-in-law, Jacqueline Hodges of NJ; Children, Willie B. Williams (Eleanor) of IL, Anitenette Hodges of NJ, Phylliss Hodges-Hayden of MO, Annette Lewis (Gary) of MA, Anthony Hodges Sr. of MO, Belinda Brown (Charles) of FL, Michael Haynes (Alicia) of FL, Denise Hodges of MO, Dwaine Haynes of NJ and Royce Hodges (Katrina) of NJ. 29 grandchildren, 52 great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, a host of cousins, church members and supporters, and cherished friends that include Pastor Arthur Cook and Missionary Annie Brown and family.

Order of Service

Musical Prelude

Scripture Reading Old and New Testament......Bishop-Elect Vanessa Everett (DJICC)

Prayer of Comfort.....Pastor James L. Holmes (Greater Harvest Evangelistic COGIC)

Solo.....Brother Troy Daniels

Acknowledgment of Pulpit Guests.....Pastor Arthur Cook

Resolutions and Proclamations: Essex County Commissioners President Wayne L. Richardson Rev. Louise Rountree, Clergy Affairs: Newark and other agencies

> Condolences and Acknowledgments Executive Pastor Denise Baldwin (DJICC)

Life Reflections/Obituary (Read Silently)

Family MomentProphetess Phylliss Hodges-Hayden

Solo.....Brother Marquis Cook

Eulogy.....Pastor Arthur Cook

Benediction and Recessional

<u>Final Disposition</u> Evergreen Cemetery 1137 North Broad Street Hillside, NJ







Jim Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free, I'm following the path God laid for me. I took his hand when I heard his call, I turned my back and left it all.

I could not stay another day, To laugh, to love, to work, to play. Tasks left undone must stay that way, I've found that peace at the close of the day.

If my parting has left a void, Then fill it with remembered joy. A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss, Ah yes, these things I too will miss.

Be not burdened with times of sorrow, I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow. My Life's been full, I savoured much, Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch,

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief, Don't lengthen it now with undue grief. Lift up your heart and share with me, God wanted me now, He set me free.

Acknowledgement

The family of Dr. Rev. Leroy Hodges, Sr. will remember and cherish your many expressions of love, sympathy and prayers so graciously extended. Thank you and may God Bless you.

Professional Services Provided By

130 Main Street Orange, NJ 973-675-6400

COTTON FUNERAL SERVICE 1025 Bergen Street Newark, NJ 973-926-6400

COTTON-PARKER FUNERAL HOME 37 Clinton Avenue Jersey City, NJ 201-433-1000

