

A Celebration of Life

Rev. Thomas Clifford Harris, Sr.

Sunrise
March 23, 1933

Sunset
May 28, 2017



Sunday, June 4, 2017 - 6:00 p.m.

PROPHETIC CHURCH OF GOD

123 North 5th Street

Paterson, New Jersey

Rev. Warren F. McDowell, Officiating

Scott Cumberbatch, Organist



Reflections of Life



Reverend Thomas Clifford Harris

was born in Paterson, NJ on March 23rd 1933 to his parents, the late Deacon Henry Harris, and the late Sister Essie Dee (Palmer) Harris. He was educated in the Paterson Public School System. After graduating from Eastside High School Paterson in 1951, he enlisted in the United States Army Signal Corps and Special Services; serving in Okinawa, Japan

during the Korean War. Upon completion of his military service, he attended Fairleigh Dickinson University earning his B.S in Chemistry. He also completed advanced studies in Business Management from St. John's University and Cosmetic Science from Columbia University. He attended Anderson Theological Seminary and was a graduate of the Manhattan Bible Institute in New York City.

Rev. Harris worked in the cosmetic science and research industry at many levels, in which he was the owner of several patents. In 1977, he formed his own chemical company, The Harris Chemical Company Inc. it was the first minority owned chemical distribution firm in Paterson, NJ representing several major chemical and personal care companies in the U.S and abroad. In addition, he served as a substitute teacher in Paterson Public School System.

He was a co-founder of Paterson Community Health Center and sat on the Board of Trustees. He was a lifetime member of the local branch of the NAACP. He served on various boards such as The Paterson Chamber of Commerce, CETA, Rotary Club and the Board of Trustees of St. Joseph's Hospital in Paterson. He was the Chaplain of Falls City American Legion Post 268 and the Volusia County Sheriff's Department in Deltona, FL. He was a certified law enforcement tactics instructor for the State of Florida. He was an avid athlete with a love for skiing, golf and bowling. He was a former boxer and held black belt ranks in the arts of Aikido and Kenpo.

Reverend Harris was a part of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Lambda Upsilon Chapter of Paterson with over fifty years of Omega Service and thirty plus years as Chaplain.

Reverend Harris literally grew up in the Church of God. Rev Harris served in many capacities in the Church of God to include serving on the Board of Directors for the National Men's Organization, Financial Secretary for the New Jersey State Ministerial Association until he was called to the ministry. He served as interim pastor of the Mission Church of God in Paterson and was the Associate Pastor of the Prophetic Church of God. He was extremely active in the community ministering and mentoring to anyone who needed support.

He fell in love with and married his high school sweetheart, the late Sister Betty Kennedy Harris. They were united for 51 years before the Lord called her home in 2007. Together, they raised four children; Thomas, Michael, Elaine and Brenda.

He is survived by one sibling, Douglas Harris; sisters-in-law, Barbara Harris, Marian Alexander-Redman, Gloria Brown, Betty Harris; two sons-in-law, Thomas Michael Askew and Richard Jackson; three daughters-in-law, Sandra McKay-Gaston, Michelle Clark-States and Marva Morris; fourteen grandchildren, Endi Dabney-Cox, Morris Cox, Allen Jefferson, Seana Jefferson, Andrew Jefferson, Candace Jefferson, Stephanie Harris, Rakeith Woodson, Julia Harris, Michael Askew Jr., Mikayla Askew, Susan Grupenhoff, James Grupenhoff, Raymond White Jr. and Renae McKay; twelve great grandchildren, Christopher Holmes, Aiden Jefferson, Aivan Jefferson, Aizell Jefferson, Ana McKay, Anthony Capers, Armon Kelly, Skylar Askew, Jaxon Askew, Serenity Woodson, Rakeith Woodson Jr, Keith Grupenhoff; two great-great grandchildren, Christian Holmes and Aubree McKay; six God children, Quajay Donnel, Jocelyn Harris, Regina Harris, Iasha Harris, Zaire Harris, Yvonne Alexander and a host of family, nieces and nephews.

Order of Service

Prelude

Invocation and Lord's Prayer Pastor Warren McDowell

Poem Valerie Hall-Chestnut

Selection "It Satisfies My Soul"

Scripture Readings

Old Testament

New Testament

Words of Comfort Rev. Juan Harris

Dr. Mary Garner-Paterson Community Health Center

Wanda's Team

Acknowledgements

and Resolutions Andrea Wheeler-Kinion

Obituary

Selection "How I Got Over"

Words from Family and Friends

Honorable Judge James Key, Esq.

John Hall

Family Salutation

Martial Arts Salute- Shihan Thomas Harris

Poem- Michael Harris

Elaine Harris-Askew

U.S Army Sergeant First Class- Allen D. Jefferson Jr

Selection "All in Jesus"

Eulogy Pastor James Barnes

Recessional Marching to Zion

Entombment

Laurel Grove Cemetery •Totowa, New Jersey



He
Met each sunrise and sunset on his knees
Planting seeds in prayer
So that the fruits we would daily feast on
Were what he knew we needed
And not what we asked for
He
Showed us how to walk on paths crooked and straight
We played and danced on safe streets and sidewalks
Learned in classrooms with dedicated teachers
For he knew the courses, the homework assignments
When they were due and that we presented them on time
He was there
He
Led us everywhere
And we followed him
Everywhere
Keeping our eyes affixed on him
Because He always brought us safely to the other side of the road
He
Took us to majestic places
And taught us how to climb snowcapped mountains
Descending them with skill and patience
And how to run with wings on our heels
Watching from a distance as we would often fall short
And try again
He
Showed us the difference between religion and relationships
That everything he did, accomplished, touched, loved
Came by the wisdom of instruction book, and he never deviated
Cut corners, and his "nay" was as final as the last chapter in Revelations
He
Was Pop Pop to more children than we could ever count
There was always room for another, and another
He
Presided over our unions, our births, our celebrations and sorrows
And we wondered, what manner of man was this
Who was all to so many
The strong root of a tree bearing so many branches
We are
Because He is
And will always be..

Acknowledgement

The family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of love, concern and kindness shown to their family during this hour of bereavement. May God Bless and Keep You!

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