

Celebrating Aging and Continuing Service

Eighty Eighty Plus Class of 2022 (Part 2)

They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, "The Lord is upright; he is my Rock..."
 -Psalm 92:14 (NIV)

In the 2022 Summer Issue of *The Oldtimers' Grapevine*, we announced four members of the **Eighty Eighty Plus Class of 2022**: Jacquelyn G. Dyer, Elder Brenda Clark Mikota, Norweida A. Rayford Spencer, and Leon Whitney. (Refer to the summer issue to view their profiles.) As a ministry that promotes connection, fellowship, and community for retired servants of the church, we are pleased to honor and celebrate the remaining members of the 2022 Class: Reverend Ellis O. Martin, Karen Vroman, and Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty. By sharing their profiles, we hope to encourage younger readers: **"There is life and ministry after 80!"** and remind those readers who are older: **"You too can be successful in ministry, while experiencing the joys and challenges of aging!"**

EIGHTY EIGHTY PLUS 2022 CLASS PROFILES



REV. ELLIS O. MARTIN
 REDDING, CA

"My calling is to be helpful to people as they deal with the problems of life and try to understand the Christian Faith," reflects **Reverend Ellis O. Martin**. Recently widowed in February of this year, Rev. Ellis is a nonagenarian who is learning to live without his beloved wife of 68 years, Gloria McRayde. In dealing with this loss, he relies on his faith and the blessed assurance that God is always present and is there to give encouragement and strength under the most difficult situations.

He is a 1955 Bachelor of Theology graduate of Bushnell University (formerly Northwest Christian College of Eugene, Oregon) and a 1958 Master of Theology graduate of Drake University (Des Moines, Iowa). He was ordained in his home church, First Christian Church in Molalla, Oregon.

Rev. Martin is an active member of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Redding, California, where he teaches a Bible Class. He serves on the Church Board and the Finance Committee. He also sings in the choir and preaches when his Pastor, Rev. Janet Chapman, is away.

Rev. Martin states, "Since I am retired, I do not see Bible study and meetings as work, but as something I enjoy doing and hopefully, I am making a contribution to the life of the church and its participants." Quite an understatement, according to his Pastor Rev. Janet Chapman, who referred him for the Eighty Eighty Plus program because of his selfless and loving service, which flows freely from his giving heart. He is indeed, a remarkable and deserving servant leader.

Before retiring in November 1991, he served as pastor of his current church from 1965-1968. Throughout his ministry, he served Disciples of Christ pastorates in Oregon, Iowa, and Montana. He also served as Administrator of Buttes Christian Manor of Marysville, California; a 100-unit, low-income senior apartment. After retirement, Rev. Martin volunteered as Chaplain for the Redding Police Department from 1996-2006. Currently, he is a member of the Board of Directors for the Tree House, a 60-unit low-income senior citizen apartment in Redding.

Rev. Martin describes his greatest joy in life: "I thank God for the opportunity to live life. I feel that life has been good."

(Class of 2022 Profiles continue on next page)



KAREN S. VROMAN
GRIMES, IOWA
In her own words...

**"WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF YOU?
TO DO JUSTICE, TO LOVE KINDNESS, AND TO WALK HUMBLLY WITH YOUR GOD."
-MICAH 6:8**

Karen Vroman credits her mother as her greatest influencer throughout her life. Her mom lived her life with the scripture above as a spiritual motivation. Christian service was her way of life. It became Karen's motto for living very early in life, growing and expanding with each new chapter of her life's journey.

Due to her early childhood influences of helping, caring for, and service to others, Karen knew choosing a career that contained these elements was a no-brainer. Nursing was her obvious choice...if for no other reason than she loved *"those cute little white hats nurses wore back then."*

In nursing school and active nursing, while working with older adults, Karen realized a "calling" to specialize in ministering to older adults. Karen says, *"Working with the National Benevolent Association (NBA) was a huge influence in my growth toward Christian service to this population."* It was also the realization of her adult-lifelong desire to care and advocate for older adults. She currently volunteers monthly at Ramsey Village, a former NBA care facility in Des Moines, and regularly counsels friends in methods of proper care for their older loved ones.

Karen has served in numerous positions at the local, regional and general levels of the church since her high school days, now almost 65 years. In addition to serving on the Grapevine Board, Karen enjoyed working with Rev. Dr. John Foulkes on the General Assembly Workshop Planning Committee for four separate assemblies. She served for 18 years on the Upper Midwest Regional Commission on ministry and is currently the President of the Board of her local congregation, Covenant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Urbandale, Iowa. These connections have created the recognition that any undertaking is a ministry and Christian service when it's done in the love of Christ.

Joys in life for Karen are her family and friends. During her free time, she enjoys traveling with the love of her life, Don, golfing, bowling, playing bridge, and reading. To encourage Grapevine readers of all ages, Karen says, *"Learn something new every day and maintain a positive outlook on life."*



DR. NORMA ELLINGTON-TWITTY
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI
In her own words...

**"I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU DECLARES THE LORD. PLANS TO PROSPER YOU
AND NOT TO HARM YOU. PLANS TO GIVE YOU HOPE AND A FUTURE."
-JEREMIAH 29:11**

Who would have thought that a little girl born in Chicago, Illinois, who lived in a modest home with no electricity or indoor plumbing in Fulton, Missouri would grow up to be a clinical psychologist; whose most rewarding positions in life involved ministry? Certainly not this writer!

I grew up thinking you had to be an ordained minister to pursue a career within the church. You can imagine my joy when I became a National Benevolent Association Vice President in 1985 and discovered that I could use my background as a clinical psychologist in ministry to help vulnerable children, their parents, and older adults around the country. Two worlds intersected - a lay profession and ministry - to form a "dream job" that I had never dreamed of at all. Now that I am in retirement, I have another dream job: a volunteer position serving the Grapevine ministry. For years prior to my retirement, my mother shared her joy in reading each issue of her beloved newsletter. Her love for the Grapevine was deep and unabashed; however, I never dreamed of serving this ministry.

As a "wise" new octogenarian, what does this history of successful ministry, without dreams and intentional preparation on my part tell us? Although the NBA and the Grapevine were not in my plans - they were in God's plan for me. He sent a loving mother and father who planted me in Centennial Christian Church, where I gained wonderful lifetime mentors, William K. Fox, my first pastor and Grapevine founder; and Samuel W. Hylton, my second pastor.

As we are blessed to age gracefully, we must remain open to the Spirit to discern how the Lord can continue to use us in ministry. What plan might He have for me? If only we will continue to listen and say: *"Here I am - use me, Lord."*

**Thanks be to God for the gift of
Rev. Ellis O. Martin, Karen S. Vroman, and Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty.
Congratulations on being a part of the Eighty Eighty Plus Class of 2022!**



LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Together in Ministry: Stories from the Grapes

Dear Beloved Grapevine Readers,

As the year draws to a close we thank you, our Grapevine readers and supporters for a very good year - after a great Anniversary year in 2021. Readers continue to support the Fund Drive, now officially ended in September 2022. We continue to welcome endowment gifts, along with your generous annual fund gifts.

As we anticipate the joy of Christmas, we also look ahead to renewal and building a bright future for *The Oldtimers' Grapevine*. The board is working on organizational change that will help us modernize, update, and secure sufficient funding to carry out our mission. As ever, we need your support. Just as it is essential that we as Christians remain connected to the True Vine, Jesus Christ, in order to bear fruit; it is essential for the Grapevine and our readers to stay connected in order for our ministry to prosper.

It is good to share a budding connection between the Grapevine and our readers that we hope will continue to flourish: we are seeing an increase in Grapevine articles coming from you, our readers. In the 2022 summer issue, we featured an "In Touch" article by the three retired James brothers. A number of readers commented on how much they enjoyed hearing from these faithful servants of the church who have greatly blessed us and the denomination.

In this issue, we have several articles by readers, as well as stories that reflect local/congregational/regional happenings. The Grapevine's mission is to build Christian community by sharing the mutual experiences of retired servants of the church. The more we share your stories; the more we will keep our national readership informed, connected, and spiritually renewed for kingdom building.

We are initiating a new section of the newsletter, **HEARING FROM THE GRAPES** to showcase YOUR stories. Be sure to check it out. The new name is a clarion call we would often hear from John R. Foulkes whenever the board might be celebrating an achievement or identifying an unmet need. He would remind us of one more critical goal, "We need to hear from the grapes!"

Well, John - we are moving in the right direction. As we grow the vine, we need the grapes - you, our readers! Your stories enable us to fulfill our mission: **Together in Ministry**. Let us "Hear From The Grapes!"

On behalf of the board & staff, we wish you a blessed and joyous Christmas!
Many thanks for your generous support.

Your Sister In Christ,

Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty
Board President

Contact us:
P.O. Box 441695
Indianapolis, IN 46244
oldtimers.grapevine@gmail.com

Oldtimers' Grapevine Seeks New Editor

With the retirement of Rev. Dr. John R. Foulkes, *The Oldtimers' Grapevine* Board of Directors is seeking a Managing Editor. In its 31 years, the newsletter has been blessed to have had only three editors leading this ministry. Applicants are encouraged to apply to the announcement below.

The Oldtimers' Grapevine newsletter, a nonprofit ministry, is seeking a Managing Editor to serve as editor and administrator. The Oldtimers' Grapevine newsletter is a publication that seeks to minister to the needs of retirees and older adults affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The newsletter is currently published three times per year. The position requires experience editing and publishing newsletters or similar periodicals. Applicants must also have administrative management experience. Applicants should understand and identify with the mission of the Oldtimers' Grapevine and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This is not a full-time salaried position.

Information on the newsletter can be found using this link: [Oldtimers' Grapevine Info Sheets](https://bit.ly/3Rr4BtX) <https://bit.ly/3Rr4BtX>
The position description can be found at the following link: [Managing Editor - Position Description](https://bit.ly/3uJr0Jc) <https://bit.ly/3uJr0Jc>
The most recent newsletter can be viewed here: [Oldtimers' Grapevine Newsletter - Summer Issue](https://bit.ly/3yxUjAr) <https://bit.ly/3yxUjAr>

Resumes and any questions should be directed to: Katherine Fox-Cunningham, Chairperson, OTG Search Committee
oldtimersgrapevine1991@gmail.com | (844) 462-6246 Ext.700

THE WIDER CHURCH

Historical Society's New President



Dr. Joel Brown

The June 29, 2022 Disciples News Service article announced that Dr. Joel Brown was called as the new President of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society (DCHS), to begin service on September 1, 2022. The extensive search process was led by Rev. Rebecca Hale, search committee chair and DCHS board member. She described the Society as seeking a visionary leader to work alongside the Board of Trustees to lead DCHS into a future that lives into the vision illustrated at the March 2022 Kirkpatrick Lectures with the theme: "Systematic Racism, Antiracism, and Reconciliation in Our Shared History and Tradition."

Dr. Brown recently earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago with a dissertation titled: "Preparing the Way: African American Women and Social Christianity in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago." He holds a Master of Theology from Texas Christian University, Brite Divinity School, where his thesis was titled "White Evangelicals and the Civil Rights Movement" and a Master of Divinity from Abilene Christian University, Graduate School of Theology. He also received a Bachelor of Arts from Abilene Christian University.

Joel's recent work includes serving as the Associate for Publications and Programming at the Disciples Divinity House at the University of Chicago, serving as the Managing Editor for the Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion, and as the Managing Editor for the Religion & Culture Forum (2016-2018).

Dr. Brown notes: "I am incredibly honored and deeply humbled by the call to serve in this leadership role and to continue the important work that DCHS has been doing of preserving and telling our history, both lifting up those narratives that tell of our movement's faithfulness and achievements as well as reckoning with those parts of our story where we have fallen short and caused harm...I look forward to working with our churches, ministries, schools, and partners in other streams of the Stone-Campbell Movement to realize that critical and faithful study of our history that can be a source for liberation, justice, and wholeness as we move forward into the future."

Disciples Home Missions New President



Rev. Chris Dorsey

The June 22, 2022 Disciples News Service announced the call of Reverend B. Chris Dorsey, to serve as the new President and CEO of Disciples Home Missions (DHM). An extensive search process was led by Reverend Derrick Perkins, search committee chair and DHM Board Member. The Search Team sought a transformative and visionary leader who can help DHM move into this important time in the life of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The DHM Board believes that Rev. Dorsey is the one who can help make DHM develop resources to form change makers and leaders, support the ministries of both congregations and regions, as well as offer leadership to bring innovation and intention to address equity and justice and strengthen ministry support for youth and young adults.

Rev. Dorsey is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and has most recently served as the President of Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM). He has also served as Professor of Theology and Preaching at Western Theological Seminary and as the Vice President of Development and Marketing at Chicago Theological Seminary. He also served as Chaplain and Director of Religious Life at Clark Atlantic University, Atlanta, Georgia and as Senior Pastor at Woodlawn United Methodist Church, Chicago.

He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Texas in 1991 and a Master of Divinity degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in 2001, followed by a Graduate Certificate in African Studies from Northwestern University in 2002. Rev. Dorsey is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Chicago. He resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Rev. Dorsey shared: "I consider myself to have been formed in the mold of co-laborer, servant leader, and consensus builder, with a commitment to justice, social transformation, and ministry for and with those whom Christ calls the 'least of these'. I'm humbled and honored to receive the call to serve...I look forward to working with leadership across the wider church to strengthen DHM as we continue to equip and empower Disciples everywhere to better serve in mission."

Stories Connecting Us to The True Vine & One Another*

Rev. Terry Overfelt, Assoc. Minister
Broadway Christian Church
Brenda Hartley, Event co-chair
Fifth Street Christian Church



"In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me." -John 15:4 (MSG)



On Saturday, July 30, 2022, two sister churches in Columbia, Missouri came together for the **5th Street Praise and Worship Community Concert**.

Fifth Street Christian Church and host church Broadway Christian collaborated after a year-and-a-half-long discussion as to how we could best and most safely gather the communities for this event.

The energy in the room was so Spirit-filled as six churches brought talent and inspiration to the early evening experience. The concert was a long overdue hope to sing, praise, pray and worship together as we emerge from the pandemic. It was also to launch the fundraising for 5th Street Christian Church which needs renovation and restoration. The good start sets the hopes in motion for a lofty sum that is needed to honor this church which has celebrated continuous worship for 161 years!

Highlights were the voices from 5th Street and Broadway singing as a combined choir and then a Spirit prompting for a surprise performance from the 5th Street choir who had not sung together for three years. They remained on the stage (pictured above) to sing one of their signature praise songs, "How Excellent!" All rose to their feet to join in the chorus as we celebrated the diligence, devotion, and spirit of this beautiful community.

The concert was a compelling way for the youth to help with hosting and to join in the celebration that rattled the rooftop in a worship style that was diverse and powerful. Sister Brenda Hartley, Co-Chair with Brother Alvin Cobbins, of 5th Street expressed her gratitude, "For the bringing together of these sister churches in Columbia to work for the good of the Lord. People were really in need of this spiritual outlet and to get out and hear good Gospel music while interacting with each other."

Mid-America Regional Minister Rev. Dr. Paul Koch remarked how this concert was not just a one-time event, but a culmination of the entire Beloved Community in Columbia that has studied together, prayed together, worshiped together, participated jointly in mission, prophetic witness, and in civil rights landmark pilgrimage together. We will continue to unite our communities and broaden our reach to one another as we commune in loving God and our neighbors while reprising the chorus, "We Praise Your Name!"

Why does an octogenarian African American woman attend a conference in Texas for Spanish-speaking members of the Christian church (Disciples of Christ)? It began with an invitation. My friend, pastor of Principe de Paz CC, asked if I would like to go. I trusted that she would help me get to know Obra Hispana, the fast-growing part of this denomination.



Brenda Clark Mikota

As preparation for "Iglesia de Impacto," I zoom-attended the Kirkpatrick Academic Conference, sponsored by Disciples Historical Society. Because I am a history nerd, I gladly learned about Hispanic history and more during that conference. I was inspired to bring some of the lectures back to the Oregon/Southwest Idaho region for our Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation Team activities.

As a trainer for Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation, I ask: What are the next steps for reconciling with the systemic racism in our institutions? I had been seeking ways to be active in this reconciliation. I hoped that being present with people unlike me would give me some insight. I hoped that other people would be inspired to mingle with the discomfort of being one of the "few people like me" in a gathering of other ethnic groups.

When I traveled to Fort Worth in July 2022, the weather was in the 100s, the airfare was expensive, and even though I tried, I couldn't find a roommate to share my hotel room. Those obstacles were opportunities to test my ability to be independent at this stage of my life. I also relied on God to be a fence all around me as I traveled.

Each day's activities included lunches, Bible study, workshops, dinners, and worship. The business meetings and worship featured translation from Spanish to English, which was gratefully welcomed by me and other English-speaking guests. The worship music was full of spirit from talented musicians. My mentor and her husband were faithful companions during the workshops, dinners, and leisure times during the conference.

The experience of being unable to eavesdrop on conversations, or initiate conversations was humbling and I gained an appreciation for people who come to the United States without knowing the language. Having spent time with the Christians of Obra Hispana, I want to share that my life has been enriched by those three days in Fort Worth with my Mexican mentor and all the Hispanics from Oregon who attended.

-Written August 14, 2022, Portland, Oregon



***A new section featuring stories from - and about - our readers! Contact us if you have a story to share!**

oldtimers.grapevine@gmail.com

Sending Shout Outs in Celebration and Appreciation...



Dr. Linda Tobias-Doss, D.Th, M.Div, MSN
Minister Breona Hawkins M. Div, MSW

Historic Installation of Co-Pastors | July 31, 2022
Memorial Boulevard Christian Church | St. Louis, MO

With an installation service theme of "Led By The Spirit," the first Co-Pastors and the first African Americans were installed for ministry at this congregation, with a long history of fighting for social justice and equality. Doss, a career nurse and former Associate Minister at Centennial CC, and Hawkins, a former campus minister, see their intergenerational partnership as bringing the wisdom and experience needed to fulfill the call of God and the mission of the Church.

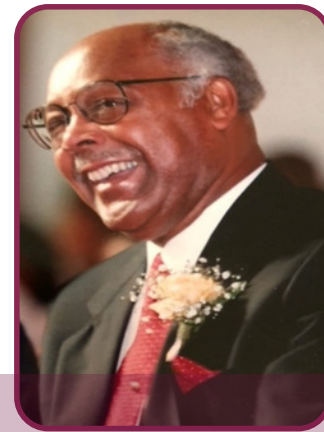
"This partnership represents endless possibilities and inspires newness that can be revolutionary. We have the opportunity to lead and care for our congregation and the community in groundbreaking ways that we hope will bring collective liberation," said Breona Hawkins.



Ruth P. Hobbs
Board Member Emerita
& daughter, Falvia Roberts
Ridgeland, Mississippi

In September 2022, Falvia reports, "Mother was able to do one of her favorite things last Sunday, worship in the sanctuary."

"It really made her day and as the oldest member of our congregation, at 107, it made all the congregants happy. Secondly, [attending worship] gives her a regular dose of fried chicken, greens, coke and either sweet potato pie or lemon pie, and she is a happy camper. Making her happy, makes me happy."



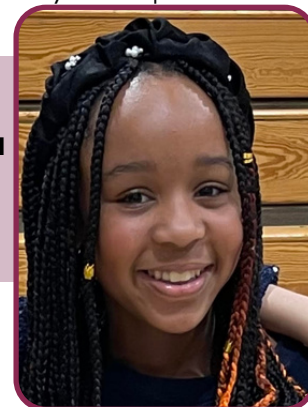
The Late Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, Jr
Dedication and Legacy Sunday | July 17, 2022
Centennial Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
St. Louis, MO

"He left his mark." He was strong in love and grace.
"A bright light, a conduit for the love of Christ." "He had the courage to imagine the kingdom of God among us." "Hold his legacy high."

These were some of the tributes to Rev. Hylton from church leaders including Rev. Dr. Paul Koch, Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Mid-America and Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, niece of Hylton and founder/Senior Pastor of Ray of Hope CC (Disciples of Christ) Decatur, Georgia.

The North Chapel of the church was dedicated in Rev. Hylton's honor as a meeting place and meditation room. Secondly, a rare honor was announced by St. Louis City Mayor, Tishaura Jones: the Honorary Naming of a portion of Fountain Park Avenue, near the church, as *Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, Jr. Ave.* New street signs were presented. Political dignitaries heralded his record of service, which greatly impacted residents in the areas of education, housing, social services, and community development.

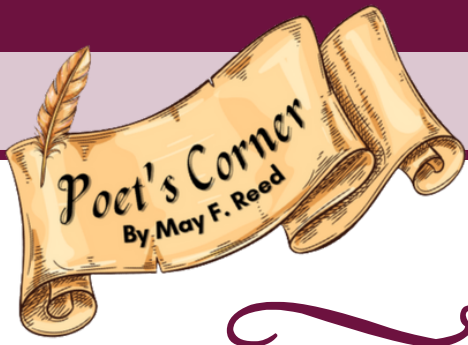
Journeye Sanai Strickland
11 year old daughter of
Anthony & Jennifer Strickland
Baptism Sept. 25, 2022
St. Paul Baptist Church
Peoria, IL



What a life changing and life saving decision you have made! We welcome you as a new Christian, whom we will continue to love, guide, and support.

Remember: "...he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philipians 1:6
Love, Gran





A TRIBUTE FOR LADY ELECT JEAN JEFFERSON BROWN

**Immediate Past President
MINISTERS' WIVES HUSBANDS FELLOWSHIP
of the National Convocation**

by May Reed, Grapevine Poet Laureate

Precious soul, precious life, you have fled
This earthly strife.
You were loving, you were kind,
Your new life with God tis sweet, sublime.
You'll wear your hallowed crown with joy,
No more alarm, no more alloy.
You were faithful, you were true.
In life you sought only good to do,
To do the things that Jesus taught,
Yes, these are the things
You earnestly sought.
Like the content of an Alabaster jar,
You poured out love and peace afar.
You were loved and will be missed.
As we march on, we'll sing with bliss
Till one day when we meet again
We'll no longer speak of fear and sin.
Rest now at the Savior's feet,
Earthly life here ended.
Sit joyfully in peace, your new life begun,
Joyful, blessed, fulfilled and complete.

Written July 19, 2022

[Because of the tragic circumstance of the demise of our former president, our fellowship held a sweet memorial service. I was asked to write a tribute to Jean's memory.]

THERE ARE SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WINNERS AND LOSERS?

A winner listens; a loser just waits until it's his turn to talk. A winner works harder than a loser and takes more time; a loser is always "too busy" to do what is needed. {I'm sure that THOSE reading these situations do not have any of the problems of a loser - but thoughts such as these can help keep a "Winner" on task.} You're a winner if you simply do your best whenever you can lend a helping hand.

SOME SEASONS IN LIFE

There are many interesting Seasons, or maybe I should say many vicissitudes that occur within one's life, and certainly many more that occur in one's mind. How often are we doing one thing while thinking of something else entirely. Have you ever noticed sometimes, when you are talking with someone - that their eyes tell you they are not really listening to what you are saying but appear to be thinking about something else entirely, so you kindly end the conversation and bid them adieu.

Now some may decide they are going to make the individual listen and give an opinion or thought on what it is they're talking about, but probably shouldn't.

Another Season, you might say is watching your character. If anyone should be watching it, it should be "You." Often one's thoughts become words and your words can become actions, and actions often become a habit. Now that's all good, when these things are good.

Too often, it seems, too many people have become complacent. I haven't heard that word much lately, but I lament over the abundance of this condition. Life was meant to be so much more and can be with a right relationship with God.

When my son was in High School he told me of the first day of school in his 9th grade class. The teacher allowed them a few moments of silent devotions. Only a few students actually bowed their heads and whispered a prayer (he being one who did). Most just sat idly looking about. One student ridiculed those who had prayed and even laughed... You've heard many times the phrase, "The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few" and one might think for a moment, "Yes" a bumper crop of ingrates, not knowing the meaning of gratitude. And there are many more "Life Seasons." What Seasons have you experienced?

A FEW CHUCKLES

TEACHER: When water becomes Ice, what great change takes place?"

PUPIL: "The change in price."

TIGHTENING THE BELT: A friend asked, "Did the doctor limit you to any particular diet?"

The response was, "No, but his bill did."

Our Donors

Thank you for your generosity!

Gifts in Support of the Grapevine Annual Fund

July 15, 2022 - October 15, 2022

Mrs. Carolyn Brown

Ms. Katherine Fox-Cunningham

Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty

- *In memory of John Gould*
- *In memory of Carolyn Shanklin*
- *In memory of Ms. Flor D. Tourner*

Jamie Frazier

- *In memory of Eugene and Bonnie Frazier*

Minister Sheryl Holmes

Dr. Norma Ellington-Twitty

- *In celebration of Saundra Bryant's 39th Anniversary as Executive Director, All Peoples Community Center, Los Angeles, California*
- *In celebration of Margrett Butler's 90th Birthday!*
- *In celebration of Joan Parham's Birthday!*

Reverend Arzolla Phillips

- *In honor of Reverend Norman & Elder May Reed*

M. Faye Vaughn

- *In memory of Oscar Haynes*

Reverend Dr. Michael & Suanne Yarbrough

GIFTS IN SUPPORT OF THE GRAPEVINE ENDOWMENT FUND

Dick & Mindy Hamm
In memory of Marilyn Foulkes

Dr. Paxton Jones

Reverend Dr. Michael & Suanne Yarbrough



A Thankful Heart 

Greetings! *The Oldtimers' Grapevine* continues to be blessed with ongoing contributions of financial support to ensure that future publications of the newsletter can fulfill the mission of the organization. We are now encouraging gifts to support the Annual Fund to cover production and other ongoing operational costs.

We are also finding that donors are expressing an interest in contributing to the Grapevine's endowment fund. This will build up resources that will make an annual distribution to the Grapevine, thus ensuring a steady stream of income that arrives at the end of each year.

Thank you again for assuring the board and readers that *The Oldtimers' Grapevine* IS a newsletter worthy of being a voice for African American disciples, and disciples everywhere!

Thank you, and blessings!

In Christ,

Kirby Gould, Chair

Development Committee

John Robinson Gould 1931 - 2022



John Robinson Gould was born September 6, 1931, the fourth child of Edward Allen and Allena (Robinson) Gould, in Cushing, Oklahoma. He passed away on August 15, 2022 at Olathe Hospice House. A memorial service was held on September 23, 2022.

John's childhood was filled with fun and energy with his seven siblings. His father owned the Coca-Cola bottling company in town and John worked there along with his other siblings. John loved cars and in high school, he entered the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild model car competition out of Detroit, Michigan. He took second place in 1948 and third place in 1949.

John attended Oklahoma A&M College, Stillwater, from 1950-1952, until friends and countrymen "invited" him to join the Army and serve in Korea for two years. He was assigned to the frontline field artillery unit to determine the coordinates for the enemy's location via radar.

Following this service, John held jobs in the oil and gas industry in Kansas and Wyoming. He returned to Oklahoma State University, graduating in 1959 with a degree in business. He pledged Sigma Chi Fraternity and kept in close touch with his fraternity brothers throughout the years.

After graduation, he worked in the food industry and public service. He acquired his real estate license and eventually moved to Oklahoma City where he was engaged in real estate and property and building management.

He met his wife Kirby at a Methodist church singles dance in 1987. They married in Edmond, Oklahoma on March 25, 1989. His first satisfying career move came upon the birth of their daughters when he left the business world to become a *Mr. Mom*.

The family of four traveled extensively; during the summers, and spring breaks, as well as accompanying Kirby on business trips. They attended the World Convention of the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ/Disciples of Christ in Sydney, Australia in 2000 and Brighton, England in 2004.

At Hillcrest Christian Church John served as an elder, trustee, and chair of the property committee. For several years he was a faithful monthly volunteer at Argentine Food Kitchen (later Cross-Lines) serving guests their noon meal. His most satisfying call to service was on the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from 1996-1999.

He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Kirby (Hughes) Gould; two daughters Virginia Gould Hoskins (Benjamin James) of Castle Rock, Colorado; Katherine Allena Gould of Olathe, and her partner Sean Groff. He is also survived by grandsons, siblings, and a host of relatives and friends.

Janice Idenia Hylton Hale 1928 - 2022



On September 7, 2022, a funeral service was held for Janice Idenia Hylton Hale at Loudon Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Roanoke, Virginia.

She was born on June 11, 1928, to S.W. and Idenia Hylton. She showed a great interest in education and was the valedictorian of her graduating class.

Having been recruited for her impressive grades, Janice attended and graduated from Talladega College where she majored in Economics. She was initiated by the Chi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and joined Beta Chi Omega Chapter after graduation. This year, she celebrated 75 years of membership, becoming a Diamond member.

After college, Janice worked at the Lincoln Terrace Housing Development until an opportunity in special education came her way. She went on to teach special needs students for over 20 years.

Janice's love for service continued outside the classroom extending into her church and community. She was a lifelong member of Loudon Avenue Christian Church where she taught Sunday School, was an active member of Christian Women's Fellowship, and one of the church's first female elders.

Janice served on the Board of Disciples Home Missions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). As a member of the Young Women's Christian Association, she organized Bible study and activities for young women and children in the area. She loved working with Church Women United, for which she served several terms as president.

Janice was a charter member of the Altruist Club, the Friends of the Roanoke Symphony, the Chums Inc., and an Alumnae member of the Links Incorporated.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Benjamin Harrison Hale, Jr.; siblings, Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hylton, Jr., and Kenneth N. Hylton; and grandson, Devin Hilton.

She is survived by her son, Benjamin Hale of Richmond, Virginia; daughters Jewell C. Hale, and Benecia Hale-Hilton, of Roanoke, and Cynthia L. Hale, the founding/Senior Pastor of Ray of Hope Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Decatur, Georgia, and a former Grapevine Board Member; a host of loving relatives, including sister-in-law Mildred M. Hylton and her daughter Karen Hylton of Saint Louis, Missouri; and a host of other family members and dear friends.

Obituaries continue on next page

Mary Louise Toney Reynolds 1923 - 2022



Mary Louise Toney was born on December 28, 1923, in Naples, Texas to the late Thomas Jefferson Toney and Mary Magdalene (Tennel) Toney. She went to her eternal rest on March 12, 2022.

She was educated in Naples Public Schools and graduated from Carver High School. Upon graduation, Mary moved to San Diego,

California with her friend and cousin Josephine Graham where she took on various jobs including working as a "Rosie the Riveter."

At the end of the war, Mary moved to Los Angeles where she married George V. Reynolds, also from Naples Texas. To this union, three children were born: James Toney, John Willard, and Sandra Arnetta. George had a daughter, Bertha Mae Reynolds, from a previous marriage.

Mary held many different jobs while raising her family. Always striving for better opportunities, she worked as a domestic worker, licensed vocational nurse, and insurance agent.

Mary started volunteering at All Peoples Community Center in the 1960s. She was hired as a secretary, promoted to Family Worker, and, after 22½ years of service, retired as the Senior Volunteer Director. One year later, she packed her bags and moved to Las Vegas for the next 17 years. She served First Christian Church Las Vegas until she retired as Elder Emeritus.

Mary believed that "faith without works is dead." She believed in service and in helping others and that is how she lived her life. Her work at All Peoples Christian Center included service at the regional level. She was a church camp counselor and founding member of the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee. The MLK committee established an event to celebrate the life of our Dr. King through the presentation of college scholarships, worship service, and the presentation of the Disciple of the Year award. Mary was also a recipient of the Disciple of the Year award.

All Peoples Community Center was well known for its annual bazaar. Mary was an excellent cook and her specialty at the bazaar was running the fried chicken booth. People came from near and far to taste Mary's fried chicken. When she retired, the All Peoples kitchen was officially named the "Mary Reynolds Kitchen."

Mary leaves to cherish her memory, son Johnny (Madeline); daughter Sandy (Leo Bryant), Grapevine Board Member; sister Adalene (Patsy) (Robert Belle); eight grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; 16 great-great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and a host of relatives and friends.



DID YOU KNOW?



Change by Cynthia Hibbler

Darn it! Deem Red Bords
went-n run off my Hummin bords!
They done took over
The Lord's Rose of Sharon.
Deem Redheads came with a
family makin' errand.

"it's the Hummin bords house",
The gardener
on her hot toes announced.
Ah' shook the tree fiercely,
"Stop" said the gardener's ol' knees.

Ah gave up hope to see Hummin bord's
Little chil'in dance roun' ma head,
Ah' moved the homemade sugar water
Sipper to the garden instead.

Munch to ma' joy,
An ol' Hummin bird stopped by ah fluttering,
It was a boy!
It made me want to cook up some mo
Sugar water while ah' sip a li'l soy.

Written July 2017

This poem is dedicated to May Reed.
Her poems with dialect inspired me.
"Ah' did alright, good" as you can see.
She opened up a path of new possibilities. ~C.H.



Issues dating back to the premiere edition of The Oldtimers' Grapevine (February 1991) through 2019 are available for viewing online! Check out this rich historical repository of community news and connection to our Christian faith.

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The Oldtimers' Grapevine is a free print and electronic ministry published three times a year through tax exempt donations. The ministry networks Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seasoned pilgrims by: 1) enhancement of communication and sharing of mutual experiences; 2) conveying a holistic view of aging and health; 3) being an advocate for seniors to become a supportive, loving and caring community; 4) giving honor and dignity to the lives of those included in "For Whom The Bell Tolls"; and 5) highlighting opportunities for the maintenance of a high quality life style and service in retirement. With roots in the National Christian Missionary Convention and the National Convocation; the Grapevine values its diversity in readership, newsletter content, board leadership, and editorial staff, always striving to reflect our oneness in Christ. Past issues of *The Oldtimers' Grapevine* (1991-2019) may be viewed [here](https://digitalcommons.discipleshistory.org/oldtimersgrapevine): <https://digitalcommons.discipleshistory.org/oldtimersgrapevine>

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