

## Active Pallbearers

Quincy Burton  
Michael Smith, Sr.  
Bryan Hall  
Cedric Hall  
Kingsley Smith  
Doug Spann

## Honorary Pallbearers

Sons & Grandsons  
Nephews  
Friends & Family

## Flower Bearers

Nieces  
Friends & Family

## Interment

Sylvarena M. B. Church Cemetery

## Repast

Sylvarena M. B. Church Family Life Center

## Acknowledgements

*The family of Pastor A. J. Johnson, Sr. wishes to express our sincere and heartfelt thanks for the flowers, cards, calls, visits, and other expressions of love during our time of bereavement. Special thanks to Banks Florist for providing the casket spray. Also, a very special thanks to our wonderful sister Gloria for her unselfish support, ongoing encouragement, and loving care*

*-The Family*

## Services Entrusted to Smith Mortuary



851 W. Northside Dr.  
Clinton, MS 39056  
601-924-6300

[www.smithmortuary.net](http://www.smithmortuary.net)

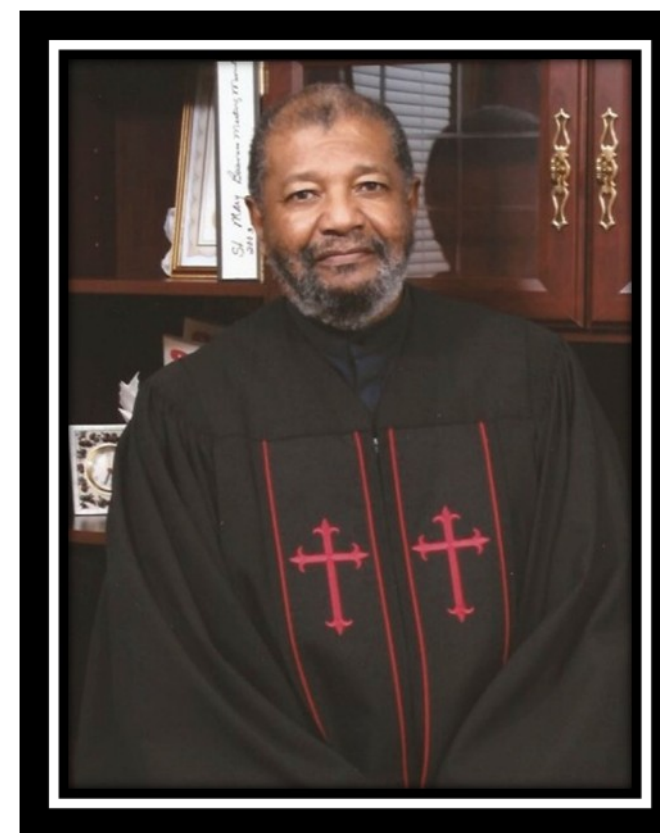
*"Professional Services at Affordable Prices"*

## Celebrating the Life Of

# Pastor A. J. Johnson, Sr.

*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 15:57-58*



### Services

**Tuesday, November 29, 2016  
11:00 a. m.**

**Sylvarena M. B. Church  
1220 John-Mayton Road  
Brandon, MS 39042**

**Rev. Harold Howard, II-Pastor  
Rev. Raphael Johnson-Officiating**



## *Im Free*



*Dont grieve for me, for now Im free  
 Im following the path God has laid you see.  
 I took His hand when I heard him 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 found that peace at the close of day.  
 If my parting has left a void  
 Then fill it with remembered joy.  
 A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss  
 Oh 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 savored much  
 Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.  
 Perhaps my time seemed all too brief  
 Dont lengthen it now with undue grief.  
 Lift up your hearts and peace to thee  
 God wanted me now; He set me free.*

*From A.J. to My Family*

## **A Song Flung Up To Heaven**

I sing because nobody can hear me talking...I speak in a soft shallow voice.  
 I cannot scream out loud because the pain is buried too deep to find an escape to the surface...  
 And if I lend vocabulary to its ferocity, the world would crumble from the force and fury and longevity...  
 A howl of raw entreaty that would shake the foundation of the earth would spew from within me...  
 So. I sing... a humming sound that originates in the bowels of my despair, and resonates from the depths of my soul.  
 I sing because God can understand the lyrics of pain...  
 The Balm of Gilead is the only relief I know...  
 I sing because God does not require Operatic nuisances, or fine-tuned deliverance of words, or perfect pitch, or synchronized movement, or musical accompaniment...  
 I sing because the "non-words" can reverberate against good memories and bounce off broken dreams and sink down...and curl around my favorite feelings. Find solace and solidarity....Fellowshipping...  
 Weak notes with confident ones  
 Uncertainty with assurance...melting together  
 Creating a crescendo of melody...building a tidal wave of confidence...  
 Working its way up from my toes though my whole history of woes...flavored with the very essence of me.  
 Remembering the times when I was so far down in the valley until the sun was only a vague mirage of recollection...  
 Basking in the mountain-top moments when the winds blew gently at my back, sunshine was warm on my face...When the Good Lord held me in the hallows of His hands...and I dangled there with cavalier nonchalance...  
 Knowing that my future was secure.  
 I inhale deeply...  
 The verse gathers together my scattered questions  
 And the lyrics weaves a tapestry defining their form  
 And the rhythm fine-tunes their character  
 And the words legitimize my existence...the story belongs to me  
 With the same cavalier certainty that  
 ...But for Jesus...

Written by Eloise Jackson-Family Member



## **Your Spirit – A Tribute to Our Brother**

*We know that no matter what  
 You will always be with us.  
 When life separates us  
 We'll know it is only your soul  
 Saying goodbye to your body  
 But your spirit will be with us always.  
 When we see a bird chirping on a nearby branch  
 We will know it is you singing to us.  
 When a butterfly brushes gently by us so care freely  
 We will know it is you assuring us you are free from pain.  
 When the gentle fragrance of a flower catches our attention  
 We will know it is you reminding us  
 To appreciate the simple things our life.  
 When the sun shining through our window awakens us  
 We will feel the warmth of your love.  
 When we hear the rain pitter patter against our window sill  
 We will hear your words of wisdom  
 And will remember what you taught us so well  
 That without rain trees cannot grow  
 Without rain flowers cannot bloom  
 Without life's challenges we cannot grow strong.  
 When we look out to the sea  
 We will think of your endless love for your family.  
 When we think of mountains, their majesty and magnificence  
 We will think of your courage for your country.  
 No matter where we are  
 Your spirit will be beside us  
 For we know that no matter what  
 You will always be with us.*

By Tram-Tiara T. Von Reichenbach

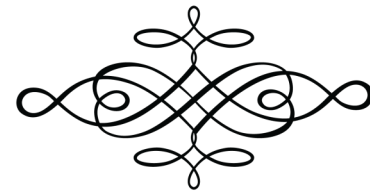
# Tributes

## FROM THE CHILDREN

### CLOSE THE GATE

For this one farmer the worries are over, lie down and rest  
your head,  
Your time has been and struggles enough, put the tractor in  
the shed.  
Years were not easy, many downright hard, but your faith in  
God transcended,  
Put away your tools and sleep in peace. The fences have all  
been mended.  
You raised a fine family, worked the land well and always  
followed the Son,  
Hang up your shovel inside of the barn; your work here on  
earth is done.  
A faith few possess led your journey through life, often a jag-  
ged and stony way,  
The sun is setting, the cattle are all bedded, and here now is  
the end of your day.  
Your love of God's soil has passed on to your kin; the stories  
flow like fine wine,  
Wash off your work boots in the puddle left by blessed rain  
one final time.  
You always believed that the good Lord would provide and  
He always had somehow,  
Take off your gloves and put them down, no more sweat and  
worry for you now.  
Your labor is done, your home now is heaven; no more must  
you wait,  
Your legacy lives on, your love of the land, and we will  
close the gate.

By Nancy Kraayenhof.



### *An Angel Sent To Heaven* From the Grandkids

Sometimes I feel all alone  
Because God sent him home.  
We used to be so close,  
But I miss him the most.  
I used to ask him for prayer,  
But now he's not even here.  
When he stepped on Heaven's shore,  
Oh, how he couldn't love God more.  
He opened the door,  
He kissed the floor.  
We can talk about God all day,  
And the memories we have will never fade away.  
I shed a tear every night,  
I tell God and my Grandpa goodnight.  
Life had its ups and downs,  
But you turned life all around.  
Now he's a beautiful angel up in the sky.  
I know you're in a better place,  
But I can't wait till I can see your face.  
I know you're watching over me and guiding me in everything I do.  
The prayers you prayed and the things you did,  
I want to say thank you and I love you.

By Erika Kent



### *To My King, My Husband*

*I married you not knowing what to expect.  
I told my mom that I wasn't going to marry a  
Preacher, but she told me that God's got  
this and you should do this!  
So, I did. I have the greatest memories because of you.  
I know I couldn't have done any better.  
God used us to share His love. We grew together,  
through the good and bad times by the  
Guidance of the Almighty.  
I enjoyed taking care of you when you felt good  
and when you felt bad;  
I wouldn't have had it any other way.  
I miss your physical being,  
But you'll always be my man!*

*Love,  
Your Princess Joy*

# Reflections

A.J. was the third child born to the late Carlie Johnson and Alice Williamson Johnson in Simpson County, MS on February 14, 1941.

Pastor Johnson transitioned from this life to his eternal home on Wednesday, November 23, 2016 at 10:05 a.m. in the VA Hospital.

After graduating from McLaurin Attendance Center in 1960, A. J. joined the Air Force and served for eight years in active duty and four years in the National Guard. After leaving service he attended Jones Jr. College graduating with an Associate Degree and from Southeastern Baptist College with a Bachelors of Arts Degree, being the first black to graduate from the College.

Throughout his 57 years of ministry, Pastor Johnson pastored several churches: Leaf River, Queens Chapel, Mount Nebo, G Grove, Jerusalem, and Saint Mary. He touched so many lives throughout his life and brought many souls to Christ.

Pastor Johnson served as the moderator for the Spring Hill District Missionary Baptist Association from 1988 to 1996 (8 years).

At an early age, Pastor Johnson joined the Mt. Moriah Baptist Church in Mt. Olive Mississippi, and later joined Sylvarena Baptist Church in Brandon, MS.

On December 26, 1962, A.J. was joined in holy matrimony to Joy Lee Johnson of Johns, Mississippi and to this union five children were born, Djuna, A.J. Jr., Angel, Raphael and Laura. A.J. and Joy touched and improved countless lives throughout their ministry. For years they worked tirelessly together, as a unit, showing love to everyone God allowed to cross their path.

A.J. leaves behind a host of family and friends who will cherish his memory: His devoted wife of over 50 years Joy Johnson; children A.J. Jr., (Terresa), Angel (Willis), Raphael (Angel), Laura (Julius); a loving mother Alice Johnson; siblings, Sadie Lee, Carjester (Tina) Johnson, Dollie (David) Carter, Joyce Fleming, Carl Ray (Gloria) Johnson, and Paul B. (Denise) Johnson; sisters-in-law, Shirley Johnson, Ira Ebbs, Ersal Hall, Jean Johnson; and one brother-in-law, Silvanus Johnson; twenty-six grandchildren; two great-grands and a host of nieces and nephews, family and friends. His daughter Djuna preceded him in death leaving behind a very special son, Matthew Simmons, whom they later adopted. His father, Carlie Johnson, sister Daisy Harland, and brother Houston Johnson also preceded him in death.

# Order of Service

Program Guide, Angel Johnson, Daughter-in-Law

*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*  
1 Corinthians 15:57-58 (KJV)

Processional .....	The Family Soft Music (Free At Last)
Song.....	St. Mary Male Chorus
Old Testament Reading.....	Moderator Arthur Milton
New Testament Reading.....	Pastor Clifton Boggans
Prayer.....	Pastor Moses Johnson
Words of Comfort.....	Pastor Harold Howard, II
Special Prayer.....	Bro. Josiah Griffith (Grandson)

## TRIBUTES—3 Minutes PLEASE

As a Pastor.....	Brother Roosevelt Gipson, St. Mary M. B. Church Brother Ira Singleton, Jerusalem M. B. Church
As A Spiritual Leader.....	Deacon Juan Tucker St. Mary M. B. Church
As a Friend.....	Pastor E. Darnell Moffett
Resolution.....	Sis. Gloria Johnson Spring Hill District Association
Solo.....	Bro. Chris Adams

## FAMILY TRIBUTES

As a Brother-in-Law.....	Bro. Silvanus Johnson
As a Brother.....	Rev. Carjester Johnson
From the Children/Grandchildren.....	Bro. Matthew Simmons
Acknowledgements/Special Thanks.....	Sis. Angel Johnson
Song.....	St. Mary Male Chorus
Eulogy .....	Reverend Raphael D. Johnson (Son)

Funeral Directors of Smith Mortuary In Charge

Recessional.....	Ministers and Family
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