

Acknowledgements

Words cannot adequately convey the heartfelt gratitude that the family of Jesse Johnson feels for you, our church family, and our circle of friends. Your expressions of love, support, cards, calls, texts, and prayers have helped sustain us. We would like to thank the Hebrew Missionary Baptist Church, Pastor Henson and the pastoral staff, and the Deacon Board for their prayers and continual support of our family over the past ten years that Dad has been a member. The love you have shown, the kindness you have provided, and the time you have spent with us will always be remembered and cherished. A special thank you to Delores Groce, Nicole, Nurse, (The Grand of Dublin), Leon Courts, Trey Bosley, Glenda Potter Brathwaite and Courtney Brathwaite.

Pallbearers

Trey Bosley - Marcus Brown - Joshua Goshay
Joseph Long II - Shaun Seymour - Cameron Walker

Honorary Pallbearers

Mark Johnson - Russell Walker - John Love - Madison Simms
Gary Harger - Curtis Walker - Colin Brathwaite



To offer condolences to The Johnson Family,



A Celebration of the Life of

Jesse C. Johnson

September 24, 1925 - June 13, 2024

Saturday, June 22, 2024

Visitation: 11:00am Service: 12:00pm

Hebrew Missionary Baptist Church
1338 Gault St., Columbus, OH 43205

Reverend James Kendrick Jr., Officiating Minister
Dr. Bennie T. Henson Sr., Eulogizing Minister

Reflections of Life

Jesse C. Johnson was born on September 24, 1925, in Topeka, Kansas, to Jesse and Effie Johnson. His early years were marked by both adversity and resilience. Following his birth, his family relocated to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Tragedy struck early when Jesse lost his father at the tender age of 12, thrusting him into the role of a protective older brother to his younger siblings, Ida, Dwight, and Harold.

In 1942, at the age of 17, Jesse embarked on a journey of service by enlisting in the United States Army. He served with honor until 1946 in the Asian Pacific Theater, stationed in China, Burma, and India. Jesse's exceptional work ethic shone through as he served in the trucking outfit, traversing the challenging terrain of the Burma Road and ensuring the safe transportation of essential supplies such as gasoline and ammunition.

After his military service, Jesse returned to Grand Rapids to pursue his childhood dream of entrepreneurship. His entrepreneurial spirit led him to establish a successful cab company before eventually settling in Indianapolis, where he was employed at a country club. Upon leaving Indianapolis, it was in Richmond, Indiana, where he met the love of his life, Mary Harger. While residing in Richmond, Jesse was the manager of a dining room. Jesse and Mary were married in 1953 and settled in Anderson, Indiana, where Jesse continued to excel in his career of entrepreneurship, and he furthered his education in Business Administration, Accounting, and Tax Preparation at Indiana Business College.

Jesse's passion for equality and community led him to become a prominent figure in Anderson. Frustrated with housing discrimination, he ventured into real estate and insurance, striving to provide fair opportunities for all. Jesse founded Johnson Real Estate and Insurance, using profits from his other successful business ventures to purchase the office building. He had the distinction of being the first Black general insurance agent in Anderson. He was a SCORE Business counselor and helped prospective businesspeople. As a general contractor, Jesse built over 35 brick homes from 1968 to 1976 and was able to reduce real estate discrimination by selling these homes to Blacks in desirable areas. Jesse worked in real estate for 30 years and took great pride in his contributions to the housing sector. His efforts in combating discrimination and promoting equal housing rights made a lasting impact on the community.

Jesse was a Civil Rights Activist and was part of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission from 1962 to 1966. He would travel around with representatives of other cities in Indiana to inform Blacks of laws they were unaware had passed. He was also active in advocating for the passage of Indiana laws before they were enacted at the federal level. Jesse was a lifetime member of the NAACP and was an active member for many years.

Jesse's commitment to serving others extended beyond his professional endeavors. He had the prestigious role of serving as the president of the Urban League for two terms, leaving a lasting mark on the community through his leadership and advocacy. Additionally, Jesse was an Ivy Tech board member, and committee chair responsible for bringing Ivy Tech to Anderson. He was also involved with various boards such as Community Hospital, and United Way, and he served on the Anderson City Planning Commission. His involvement in the community exemplified his unwavering dedication to making a positive impact on the lives of others.

Jesse had a gift for connecting with people; he never met a stranger. Together with Mary, they embarked on travels with their children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and friends. Jesse and Mary shared a passion for golf, forming many friendships on golf courses throughout the United States. Additionally, Jesse was an enthusiastic sports fan who enjoyed watching a wide variety of sports, including golf, football, basketball, and tennis.

Jesse and Mary loved sharing their blessings with others, and their home on Shepherd Road was a gathering place for numerous family and friends for many years. In 1988, Jesse and Mary bought a home in Plant City, Florida. They desired to spend winters in Florida, enjoying days on the golf course, and summers in Anderson. For 20 years, from November 1st to May, they were members of their neighborhood country club, Walden Lake. Plant City also became a gathering place for family, friends, and friends of family.

Above all, Jesse's unwavering faith and devotion to God were the cornerstones of his life. As a devoted member of the Allen Chapel AME Church in Anderson for 40 years, he served on numerous church committees and lent his beautiful voice to the men's choir for 30 years.

Despite the passing of his beloved wife Mary in 2009, Jesse continued to find joy in life, surrounded by his loving family and friends. In 2014, Jesse relocated to Columbus, Ohio, to be closer to his daughter and grandchildren. He became a member of Hebrew Missionary Baptist Church, where he found solace and community, and occasionally sang in the men's choir. Jesse had a deep passion for studying the Bible, Gospel music held a special place in his heart, and he looked forward to weekly Bible study.

In 2021, Jesse had an unforgettable experience traveling to Washington, D.C. on an Honor Flight. As a World War II veteran, his sacrifices were honored, and he was recognized as a hometown hero on NBC4 in Columbus.

Jesse's love for his family was unwavering, and he took great pride in being a devoted father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and uncle. His enduring faith and compassionate spirit enriched the lives of all he encountered.

Jesse peacefully took his rest from earthly labors and went home to be with the Lord on June 13, 2024, leaving behind a legacy of love, service, hard work, and resilience. Jesse's passing leaves a void in the hearts of all who loved him, but his memory will forever be cherished and celebrated. He is preceded in death by his beloved wife, Mary Johnson, daughter Karen Johnson, grandson Trenton Johnson, daughter-in-law Doris Johnson, and siblings Dwight Johnson, Harold Johnson, Ida Johnson, Ernestine Robinson, Moses Robinson, David Robinson, and Jacob Robinson.

He is survived by his devoted daughter, Cheryl "Sherry" Holloway; his son, Mark Johnson (Paula); his adopted daughters, Mary Jelks and Delores Groce; his sister, Hattie Garrison; his granddaughters, April Johnson and Tacarra Davis; his adopted granddaughters, Tajana "Nikki" Groce, Risa Long, and Senora Jelks; his great-grandchildren, Terry "Boomer" Cornett III and Tylar Cornett; his adopted great-grandchildren, Kaia Long and Joshua Goshay; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, and friends whose lives will forever be touched by his love and kindness.

Order of Service

MUSICAL PRELUDEBrother Lewis Drafton II

PROCESSIONAL Clergy and Family

SCRIPTURE READING Brother Joshua Goshay
Old Testament.....Isaiah 40:28-31
New Testament Revelation 21:4-7

PRAYERElder Sandra Davis
New Covenant Believers' Church

SONG OF COMFORTSister Serena Roberts

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS Sister Sandra Hill

REFLECTIONS
Rev. Tony Cornett - Hebrew Missionary Baptist Church
Rev. Nathaniel Moody, Pastor Emeritus - Brown Hutcherson Ministries
Glenda Potter Brathwaite

LIFE SKETCH..... Courtney Brathwaite

SPECIAL MUSIC...Hebrew Missionary Baptist Church Choir

The Eulogy

Dr. Bennie T. Henson Sr., Pastor
Hebrew Missionary Baptist Church

BENEDICTION Reverend James Kendrick Jr.
Hebrew Missionary Baptist Church

RECESSIONAL Clergy, Family, and Friends
"When We All Get to Heaven"

Interment - Monday, June 24, 2024 @ 1pm
Anderson Memorial Park Cemetery
6805 Doctor M.L.K. Jr. Blvd., Anderson, IN 46013