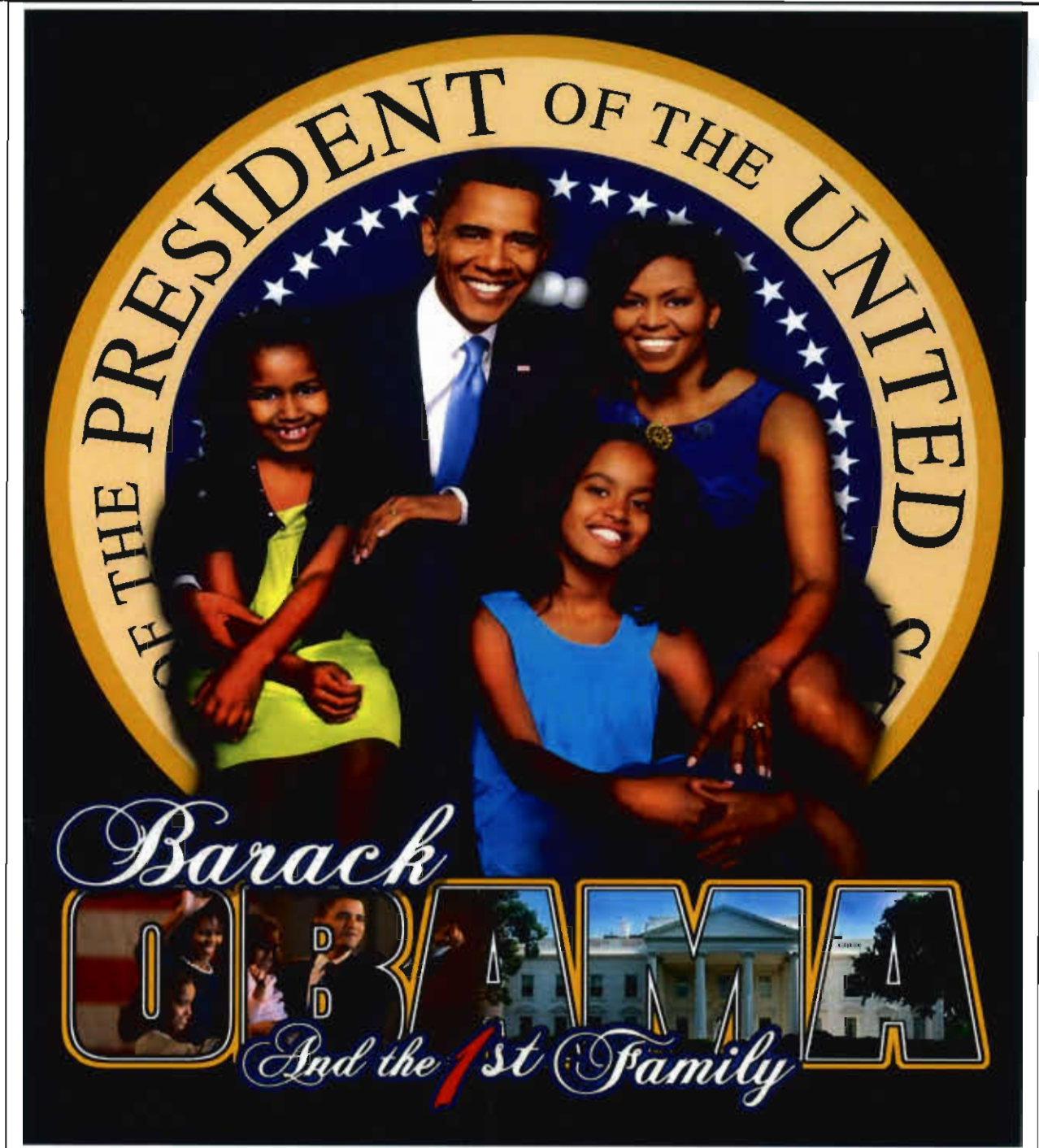
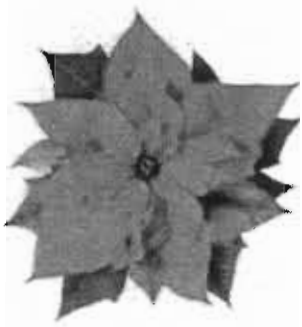


# *The Cumberland Flag*



*December . 2008*



Almost 400 hundred years ago, our fathers came to America against their will. They came because they were torn from the bosoms of their mothers. It was a terrible event creating emotional and physical pains that we can never understand. It was in 1692 that the first servants were brought here from Africa. Who was at fault? Some of our brothers were in on the deal, with European Americans looking to make a buck. We know this system as Free Enterprise. Free labor has been a common practice for four hundred years. It has also been a code word to work poor people and pay them very little.

The story in Exodus 3 has many of the themes that are reflected in the story of African- Americans. A great leader is chosen by God to go and liberate the slaves out of Egypt. God tells Moses, "I have seen the affliction, I have heard their cries, and I have come to deliver them." I do believe that God spoke in a very emphatic way on November 4 with the election of Barack Obama. Just look at the similarity between the exodus from Egypt and this story. God told Abraham that his descendants would be in Egypt for over four hundred years. In just eleven years, 2019 will mark the 400<sup>th</sup> year that the first Africans came to this country. It is not by accident that the first African-American is elected president of our country.

God is still working and we are blessed to witness his handy work. The message to the church is simple. We must continue to preach and teach our message of hope. We must tell everyone in our reach that God is working. We need to intensify our Worship and accelerate our praise for our Savior. From mountaintops to valley lows, we must praise Him! From the county lines to the city streets, we must Worship Him. We must remember that while God Is Working, there is no time for His church to sit still!

**Merry Christmas and a most blessed New Year to all!**

*Rex, Harry M. Johnson, Moderator*



**Now retired, he started when blacks were in the kitchen.** By Wil Haygood November 7, 2008

Reporting from Washington --

For more than three decades, Eugene Allen worked in the White House, a black man unknown to the headlines. During some of those years, harsh segregation laws lay upon the land.

He trekked home every night to his wife, Helene, who kept him out of *her* kitchen. At the White House, he worked closer to the dirty dishes than to the Oval Office. Helene didn't care; she just beamed with pride.

President Truman called him Gene. President Ford liked to talk golf with him. He saw eight presidential administrations come and go, often working six days a week. "I never missed a day of work," Allen said.

He was there while racial history was made: Brown vs. Board of Education, the Little Rock school crisis, the 1963 March on Washington, the cities burning, the civil rights bills, the assassinations. When he started at the White House in 1952, he couldn't even use the public restrooms when he ventured back to his native Virginia. "We had never had anything," Allen, 89, recalled of black America at the time. "I was always hoping things would get better." In its long history, the White House -- note the name -- has had a complex and vexing relationship with black Americans. "The history is not so uneven at the lower level, in the kitchen," said Ted Sorensen, who served as counselor to President Kennedy. "In the kitchen, the folks have always been black. Even the folks at the door -- black."

Before Gene Allen landed his White House job, he worked as a waiter at a resort in Hot Springs, Va., and then at a country club in Washington.

He and wife Helene, 86, were sitting in the living room of their Washington home. Her voice was musical, in a Lena Horne kind of way. She called him "Honey." They met at a birthday party in 1942. He was too shy to ask for her number, so she tracked him down. They married a year later.

In 1952, a lady told him of a job opening in the White House. "I wasn't even looking for a job," he said. "I was happy where I was working, but she told me to go on over there and meet with a guy by the name of Alonzo Fields." Fields was a maitre d', and he immediately liked Allen. Allen was offered a job as a "pantry man." He washed dishes, stocked cabinets and shined silverware. He started at \$2,400 a year. There was, in time, a promotion to butler. "Shook the hand of all the presidents I ever worked for," he said. "I was there, honey," Helene said. "In the back maybe. But I shook their hands too." She was referring to White House holiday parties, Easter egg hunts.

They have one son, Charles, who works as an investigator with the State Department.

"President Ford's birthday and my birthday were on the same day," he said. "He'd have a birthday party at the White House. Everybody would be there. And Mrs. Ford would say, 'It's Gene's birthday too!' " And so they'd sing a little ditty to the butler. And the butler, who wore a tuxedo to work every day, would blush.

"Jack Kennedy was very nice," he went on. "And so was Mrs. Kennedy." He was in the White House kitchen the day Kennedy was slain. He got an invitation to the funeral. But he volunteered for other duty: "Somebody had to be at the White House to serve everyone after they came from the funeral."

The whole family of President Carter made Helene chuckle: "They were country. And I'm talking Lillian and Rosalynn both." It came out as the highest compliment.

First Lady Nancy Reagan came looking for him in the kitchen one day. She wanted to remind him about the upcoming state dinner for German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. She told him he would not be working that night. "She said, 'You and Helene are coming to the state dinner as guests of President Reagan and myself.' I'm telling you! I believe I'm the only butler to get invited to a state dinner."

Husbands and wives don't sit together at these events, and Helene was nervous about trying to make small talk with world leaders. "And my son said, 'Momma, just talk about your high school. They won't know the difference.' "The senators were all talking about the colleges and universities that they went to," she said. "I was doing as much talking as they were. "Had champagne that night," she said, looking over at her husband. He just grinned: He was the man who stacked the champagne at the White House.

Colin L. Powell would become the highest ranking black of any White House to that point when he was named Reagan's national security advisor in 1987. Condoleezza Rice would have that position under President George W. Bush.

Gene Allen was promoted to maitre d' in 1980. He left the White House in 1986, after 34 years. President Reagan wrote him a sweet note. Nancy Reagan hugged him tight.

Interviewed at their home last week, Gene and Helene speculated about what it would mean if a black man were elected president. "Just imagine," she said. "It'd be really something," he said. "We're pretty much past the going-out stage," she said. "But you never know. If he gets in there, it'd sure be nice to go over there again."

They talked about praying to help Barack Obama get to the White House. They'd go vote together. She'd lean on her cane with one hand, and him with the other, while walking down to the precinct. And she'd get supper going afterward. They went over their election day plans more than once. "Imagine," she said. "That's right," he said.

On Monday, Helene had a doctor's appointment. Gene woke and nudged her once, then again.. He shuffled around to her side of the bed. He nudged Helene again. He was all alone. "I woke up and my wife didn't," he said later. Some friends and family members rushed over. He wanted to make coffee. They had to shoo the butler out of the kitchen.

The lady he married 65 years ago will be buried today.

The butler cast his vote for Obama on Tuesday. He so missed telling his Helene about the black man bound for the Oval Office.

**Haygood writes for the Washington Post.**

## Election 2008

I am so happy the Lord let me live to see Barack Obama elected as the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America. I never dreamed in my 93 years, I would see a black man as President.

Growing up on a farm in Mississippi, the limits for blacks were very clear. Even while serving in the U.S. Army, blacks were segregated and treated different. So for me to be able to witness Election 2008, was truly exciting. It was a joy to see such a gifted, young black be elevated to the highest office in our nation.

I believe Barack Obama was sent from God, his forerunner was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

I will continue to pray for Mr. Obama, and encourage everyone to keep him lifted up in prayer. Thank God for Barack Obama, ask Him to order his steps, surround him with wise counsel, men and women of integrity. Pray for his discernment, understanding and knowledge, so our nation may live in stability internally and abroad.

Submitted by Rev. Andrew West, Pastor Emeritus, First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, Chicago, Il.

My feelings about the election process and outcome are probably not the norm. While I am very excited about the possibilities of the 2008 elections, I cannot help to reflect upon our past. My parents lived through the days of poll taxes. They never thought they would live to see the possibilities of an African American as the president of the United States. Our ancestors, who paved the way for us, must really be rejoicing at this moment in history. Our country has made great strides. However, we still cannot rest on our laurels.

It never ceases to amaze me that people assume I vote for a person because they are Black. Dr. M. L. King's words resonate in my mind, "We must judge a person based on the content of their character rather than the color of their skin." Prior to the election, people asked me if I were voting for Obama. I told them I would look at both candidates to see what their positions on issues of concern were. Then I would prayerfully make a decision. This reply seemed to have surprised many. We are admonished in the scriptures to choose our leaders with great care. Please see Exodus 18:21. I was looking for a candidate whose stance closely aligned with Christian tenets. A look at how a nation treats the "least of these" gives insight to the heart of that nation.

As we celebrate this milestone, my heart is saddened that we as the church, who should have the true message of hope, cannot seem to excitedly share the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit convicted me as I encouraged folks to register to vote. When has the church gone door to door? When has the church had folks standing in the rain to hear the message of Jesus Christ? When has the church been filled to capacity with an overflow other than a funeral? When has the church had folks paying for bumper stickers to place on their cars? When have our children, youth and adults been so excited to talk about Jesus Christ? People did those things because they were excited about the message of hope that Obama spoke. How much more should we be excited about the one who truly gives us real hope? Lord, please forgive us.

In Christ, Venessa Edmonds



# C P Consultants Prepare to Lead on Evangelism

Cumberland Presbyterian Church (CPC) and Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA) Christian education consultants gathered for the annual Consultant Training Event (CTE), July 30-August 1, at St. Columba Conference Center, Memphis, Tenn.

With evangelism as its focus, this year's CTE was crafted to give its 48 clergy and lay participants exposure to issues, strategies, and resources that impact outreach and discipleship. The CTE, which is sponsored by the United Board of Christian Discipleship, had three main components. First, was a hands-on introduction to the 2009 Miniversity design, "Keep the Flame Burning—Share the Story." The second component was a keynote presentation on the state of Christianity in North America by noted author Phyllis Tickle. Finally, there was an opportunity for attendees to share insight and resources related to the theme.

Frank Ward, executive director, Discipleship Ministry Team, led the participants through three and a half hours of focused training on evangelism. Each consultant took part in the miniversity design so that they could get a feel for how they might lead one of the miniversities scheduled for next year. Working through the miniversity design gave consultants time to reflect on what it means to share one's faith. However, it was the keynote speaker who challenged the participants to think about the ways un-churched people respond to evangelism.

Tickle, the founding editor of the Religion Department of Publisher's Weekly, said from the outset of her presentation, "You better know your Jesus." Speaking without notes for nearly four hours, Tickle was conversant about what she terms, "The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why," which is also the title of her latest book. Not merely focusing on history, Tickle also explained how proactive individuals and congregations are helping people see Christianity as relevant for their lives today.

Judy Madden, director of lay ministries, St. Matthew CPC, Burleson, Texas, one of eight first-time CTE participants, said this of Tickle and her insights on church growth and outreach, "She is excellent! She affirms some of the things we are doing at St. Matthew and challenges us to raise the bar in other areas."

The third segment of the CTE included inspirational worship and preaching on biblical text related to the theme, all of which were led by participants. On the final evening, several attendees offered suggestions on evangelism through such programs as the Alpha Program and Evangelism Explosion, and how basic courses in personal financial management can open a door for spiritual conversation.

Elton Hall, pastor of East Waco CPCA, Waco, Texas, summed up his overall experience at the CTE, "I was able to come and communicate with people from different churches. I have learned to communicate God's word better. I hope to reach more people and to be a better person."

To learn more about the upcoming miniversities and the Consultant Training Program contact Cindy Martin, Coordinator of Children's Ministries and Consultant Coordinator, at

901-276-4572, ext. 219, or [chm@cumberland.org](mailto:chm@cumberland.org). To learn more about Phyllis Tickle, visit [www.phyllistickle.com](http://www.phyllistickle.com).

**About the writer:** LISA SCOTT is an ordained CP minister who has served congregations within Arkansas Presbytery since 1998. A native of Cheyenne, Wyo., she enjoys travel, reading, baking, and spending time with her dog Bella. This is her first contribution as a volunteer writer for The Cumberland Presbyterian.

### 50th Wedding Anniversary

Thomas and Pearlene Ward celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary Sept. 6, 2008, with a dinner reception at Henderson Federal Savings Bank community room. Thomas Ward and Pearlene Hill were united in marriage Sept. 6, 1958, at the home of the bride's parents the late Rev. H. V. Hill and Alma Hill with Rev. Travis Terry, of Dallas, friend and classmate of the Wards. They were the first couple married by Rev. Terry and he was in attendance at the couple's reception. The celebration was hosted by the couple's daughter, Rev. Kay Ward Creer. Thomas was employed by Henderson Clay Products and is now employed at Lowe's in Henderson part-time and is a Henderson City Council member District 3 since 1994. Pearlene is retired from Henderson Independent School District as a teacher and served on the Henderson Independent School Board for nine years. They both are active members of the Pine Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church.



### **What About the "X" Letter?**

**Dr. Henry Bradford, Jr., Pastor Emeritus Church Street CPCA  
Huntsville, Alabama**

**The Christmas season is indeed a very special time for Christians all over the world. Christmas is a time to be joyous and exuberant and thoughtful and energetic. For young children, Christmas is excitement time and an expecting time, and a waiting time.**

**From yet another perspective Christmas suggests a parade occasion and a time to see brightly decorated floats and vehicles of all descriptions in a procession embellished by marching music. Neighborhood bands are often given a special place in the lineup to insure their marching at proper distances between the colorful floats. As an enjoyable onlooker, it was possible to see an interesting inscription on one of the floats in the Christmas parade that inspired the title for these comments.**

**One of the beautiful floats in the Christmas parade said, "The letter "X" has replaced His holy name!" After reading the float's message one spectator beside me spoke vehemently saying, "Yes, they scratched out the name of Christ in Christmas and have replaced His holy name with an "X" and that is absolutely ridiculous!" However, the truth is that such an indictment was not quite correct because an historical flashback really will reveal the true significance of the letter, "X" when the spelling of the season becomes Xmas.**

**The use of the "X" is associated with the isolation, and the segregation and the persecution which the followers of Christ experienced during the days of the early church. The political hostility imposed upon the followers of Jesus and the adherents of the teachings of the apostles caused human safety to be highly questionable. Indeed, Christianity was a new religion in the midst of rampant polytheism and the high-powered thinking of the philosophers of the time as the Epicureans and the Stoics. The continuous cultural intervention and disturbance by the Roman military leaders and their known domination, and the annoying political potentates associated with Hebrew governmental patterns and religious regulations all caused a feeling of personal threat. Such nervous tension emanated from a variety of unknown sources often led to an atmosphere of incessant wonder and endless fear of death. In view of so much real and psychological discomfort there was an ever-present need for the follows of "the way" to develop as many tactics as possible to establish a strong feeling of sure but secret identification strategies and symbols which could be known only among the Christians. Such maneuvers were used to indicate their genuine loyalty to Jesus and to the wide implementation of the great commission. The Lord proclaimed that challenge as it is recorded in Matthew's gospel when He, the Son of God said:**

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations  
baptizing them in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:  
Teaching them to observe all things**

**Whatsoever I have commended you: and lo, I am with you always,  
even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:19-20 (KJV)**



### **What About the "X" Letter? (Continued)**

The letter to the Hebrews gives a series of dramatic accounts which confirm the wisdom of the early Christians to utilize a series of descriptions, including the letter "X" to help minimize the serious plight of the faithful but suffering followers of Jesus the Christ. Whenever they saw another person scratch an "X" in the surface of the earth, it was a known fact that they had a depth of spiritual commitment and a strength of faith that compared to the faith of those who "desired a better country, that is, a heavenly wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:16 (KJV) It is true that while they lived and witnessed on earth, they frequently marked the "X" sign in the dirt to be quickly recognized by their brothers and sisters in Christ. The Word says, "And many others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; . . . they wandered, in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Hebrews 11: 36-38 (KJV) Even in the circumstances here mentioned, there was even more unknown suffering because of their unyielding allegiance and undiminished Christian fervor, and so it was that they were known to each other by using the "X" as one among many identification devices and designs.

In the future when the letter "X" begins the spelling of the holy season for celebrating the birth of Christ, it would not be improper to say Merry Xmas! Indeed, such a vibrant greeting should just bring to mind the inexplicable and unbelievable problems which the members of the early Christian faith encountered and how vigorously they formulated so many effective and ingenious secret communication devices, signs and symbols in order to remain alive. The unconfirmed belief is that they were very concerned about leaving a valuable legacy for posterity. What a great and exciting challenge is left for Christians in present and future generations to be even more vigorous in witnessing and in faithful service as the early Christians were during their troublesome and perilous times.

*Home-Going Services*  
*For*  
*Linnie Clay*

Sunrise  
June 21, 1920

Sunset  
September 6, 2008

Saturday, September 13, 2008  
11:00 A.M.



**St. Bettie's Cumberland  
Presbyterian Church in America**  
Henderson, Texas  
Rev. Billy Tribble ~ Pastor  
Eulogist

## *Peace I Give Unto You*

*God saw the road was getting rough,  
He gently closed those loving eyes  
And whispered, "Peace be thine."  
The weary hours, the days of pain,  
The sleepless nights are passed;  
The ever-patient worn out frame  
Has found sweet rest at last.  
God saw that you were getting weary,  
So He did what He knew best;  
He came and stood beside you  
And whispered, "Come and rest."*

## *Obituary*

Mrs. Linnie Clay, daughter of the late Jessie and Lela Williams, was born in Rusk County, Texas June 21, 1920. She attended Antioch public schools in the Tatum, Texas, community. Linnie united with the Fairfield Baptist Church at an early age and later became a member of St. Bettie's Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America where she remained a faithful member until her health failed. Linnie Williams was united in Holy Matrimony to Lobis Clay and to this union two children were born. She was preceded in death by her loving husband, Lobis Clay, a son, Lobis Clay, Jr., a sister, Katie Williams and brothers, Clifton and John R. Williams.

Mrs. Linnie Clay departed this life September 6, 2008, at Mother Frances Hospital, Tyler, Texas leaving to mourn her passing, a devoted daughter and son-in-law Kim and Terrence Dixon of Tyler, Texas; a grandson, Austin Campbell of Tyler, Texas; a brother, Jessie Williams of Henderson, Texas; a special niece, Kathryn Williams of Dallas, Texas; two god children, Johnny Allison of Aledo, Texas and Joe Frank Allison of Mesquite, Texas; special friends, Dorothy Ross of Tyler, Texas and BeDe Pentecost of Kilgore, Texas; along with many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

*Celebrating the Life of  
Mr. Theodore "Theo"  
Carlton Hampton Sr.*

*Friday, November 8, 1913~*



*Sunday, August 31, 2008*

**Services:**

Saturday, September 6, 2008  
11:00 A.M.

**True Vine Baptist Church**  
713 West Oakwood Street  
Tyler, Texas

## Obituary

Theodore Carlton Hampton, Sr., affectionately known as "Theo," was born Friday, November 8, 1913, in Rusk County to the parents of Jacob (Jake) and Ella Johnson Hampton. Theodore was the youngest of nine brothers and sisters. He grew up on his family's farm in Rusk County, where he attended church services and engaged in many practical and rich experiences. After high school, in Murvaul, Texas, he attended Mary Allen Junior College. During his sophomore year he met his sweetheart, Olivia Cary, a freshman at the time. Following his two years at Mary Allen Junior College he attended Houston-Tillotson University where he received a Bachelors of Arts in History and Mathematics. He obtained a masters degree in Agriculture from Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas.

Theodore joined the United States Army, and during his tour of service he married his sweetheart. The couple's first child, Glendora Louise was born shortly after he got out of the Army. He taught agriculture at the segregated schools until integration occurred and his career path lead him to employment with the United States government, Farmers Home Administration. Soon after came the birth of the couple's second child, Theodore Carlton, Jr.

Theodore loved to study and teach God's divine word. He was a humble and devoted man of God; full of sound advice and wisdom that he imparted to all whom he counseled and helped. He has always been an active member of the Presbyterian Church. He was an Elder at the Memorial Cumberland Presbyterian Church where Reverend Robert E. Thomas is the pastor.

"Papa," as his grandchildren called him, made his family his first priority. He loved his wife, daughter, grandchildren and great-grands very much. He continually encouraged those around him to first be men and women of God and then lovers of humanity through service and honesty. He could light up a room with his smile and his humorous way of looking at life was contagious. Time spent in his presence was always fun and lighthearted.

Mr. Hampton passed quietly away at his home early Sunday morning, August 31, 2008. He is preceded in death by his father and mother, his son Theodore Jr., and all nine brothers and sisters. He leaves to cherish his memories and celebrate his life, his devoted and loving wife of 64 years, Olivia; daughter, Glendora Carter; his grandchildren, Cherie Rene Carter-Nicols (Tommy), Theodore Carlton Hampton III, Christopher Cary Carter (Kara), Chebecka Yvette Carter; his eight great-grandchildren, and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

**Your presence will be missed by all the lives you touched!**

*Home Going Celebration  
For*

*Elder Laster Giles Underwood Rice*

*Sunrise May 21, 1916*



*Sunset September 16, 2008*

*Services To be held*

*Saturday, September 20, 2008  
12:00 p.m.*

*Oak Hill C.P. Church of America  
Clinton, Alabama*

*Reverend Willie G. Fulgham, Pastor  
Officiating*



## Obituary



*Elder Laster Giles Underwood Rice was born to the late Mr. Tom Giles, Sr. and Mrs. Dora Bell Harris Giles on May 31, 1916 in Green County, Alabama.*

*Upon confessing Christ as her personal Savior, at an early age she joined Piney Grove. Later in life, she united with Oak Hill C.P. Church of America, and served faithfully until her health failed. She served in various capacities such as church clerk, secretary, and Elder. She was the oldest member of the church.*

*Elder Rice was united in holy matrimony to the late Hurtis Underwood. To this union one son was born, the late L.M. Underwood. Later in life she was united in holy matrimony to Robert Rice.*

*She was also a member of the order of the Eastern Star #736 and the Welcome Union Lodge.*

*On Tuesday, September 16, 2008 at 9:00 p.m. God opened the Gates of Heaven and allowed the soul of Laster Rice to enter in and rest.*

*Elder Rice was preceded in death by her parents, thirteen siblings (eight brothers and five sisters) and one son.*

*She leaves to cherish her memories: four children: Odeais Reed, Arzinnia Rice, Dwight (Geraldine) Giles, and Audrey Rice all of Tuscaloosa, Alabama; eleven grandchildren: Sharon Rice, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Ronald Rice of Norfolk, Virginia; Reginald Wise, LaTora Wise, Tuscaloosa, Alabama; Calvin Rice of Washington, D.C.; Allen Underwood of Cincinnati, Ohio; Kim Ross, LaTonya (Erick) Jones, LaToya (Leon) Layton, Dwight Giles, Jr., Jakenda Giles, all of Tuscaloosa, Alabama; nine great grandchildren: Akya, Sakjra, Ira, Shanae, Tyler, Jamese, Xavion, Justyn, Lauryn, Jaylen, Keianthony; one cousin, Annie Hinton of Brooklyn, New York; one sister in law, Rosie Hughes of Birmingham, Alabama; host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.*

*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;  
and there  
shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,  
neither  
shall there be any  
more pain: for the former things are passed away.  
Revelation 21:4*



## *The Three Kings*

Three Kings came riding from far away,  
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;  
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,  
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,  
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large and clear,  
That all the other stars of the sky  
Became a white mist in the atmosphere,  
And by this they knew that the coming was near  
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,  
Three caskets of gold with golden keys;  
Their robes were of crimson silk with rows  
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,  
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,  
Through the dusk of the night, over hill and dell,  
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,  
And sometimes they talked, as they paused to rest,  
With the people they met at some wayside well.

“Of the child that is born, said Baltasar,  
“Good people, I pray you, tell us the news;  
For we in the East have seen his star,  
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,  
To find and worship the King of the Jews.”

And the people answered, “You ask in vain;  
We know of no King but Herod the Great!”  
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,  
As they spurred their horses across the plain,  
Like riders in haste, who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,  
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,  
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them;  
And said, “Go down unto Bethlehem,  
And bring me tidings of this new king.”

So they rode away; and the star stood still,  
The only one in the grey of morn;  
Yes, it stopped ... it stood still of its own free will,  
Right over Bethlehem on the hill  
The city of David, where Christ was born.

**And the Three Kings rode through the gate and the guard,  
Through the silent street, till their horses turned  
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;  
But the windows were closed, and the doors were barred,  
And only a light in the stable burned.**

**And cradled there in the scented hay,  
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,  
The little child in the manger lay  
The child, that would be king one day  
Of a kingdom not human, but divine.**

**His mother Mary of Nazareth  
Sat watching beside his place of rest,  
Watching the even flow of his breath,  
For the joy of life and the terror of death  
Were mingled together in her breast.**

**They laid their offerings at his feet:  
The gold was their tribute to a King,  
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,  
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,  
The myrrh for the body's burying.**

**And the mother wondered and bowed her head,  
And sat as still as a statue of stone  
Her hear was troubled yet comforted,  
Remembering what the Angel had said  
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.**

**Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,  
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;  
But they went not back to Herod the Great,  
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,  
And returned to their homes by another way.**



by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

## The Nativity

### Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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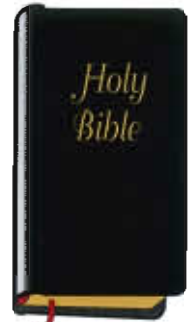
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