

Sunrise
September 21, 1916

Sunset
June 27, 2007



*Celebration
Of
Triumph
For*

Lillie Bell Franklin Alford

Tuesday, July 3, 2007

Eleven A. M.

First Baptist Church

104 Home Avenue

Hartsville, South Carolina

Ryan S. Goodroe, Pastor

Officiating Minister: Pastor Gloria Robinson

Darlington Church Of God

Celebration Service

Pastor Gloria Robinson, Officiating Minister
Darlington Church of God

Processional Hymn Mass Choir

Processional Clergy and Family

Greetings Host Church Pastor

Hymn of Faith

Reading of the Holy Word

Old Testament Pastor Juanita Doe
Bennettsville Church of God

New Testament Pastor Venoy Pearson, Sr.
Lenoir Church of God

Prayer of Comfort Minister Beverly Alford
Daughter

Musical Selection Choir

Tributes - 2 minutes please

Musical Selection

Acknowledgments Jannie Harriett

Obituary Her story will be read silently

Solo "May The Work I've Done Speak For Me" Min. Reginald Alford, Son

Spoken Word Pastor Leon Dizzley Saint
Matthews Church of God
Saint Matthews, S.C.

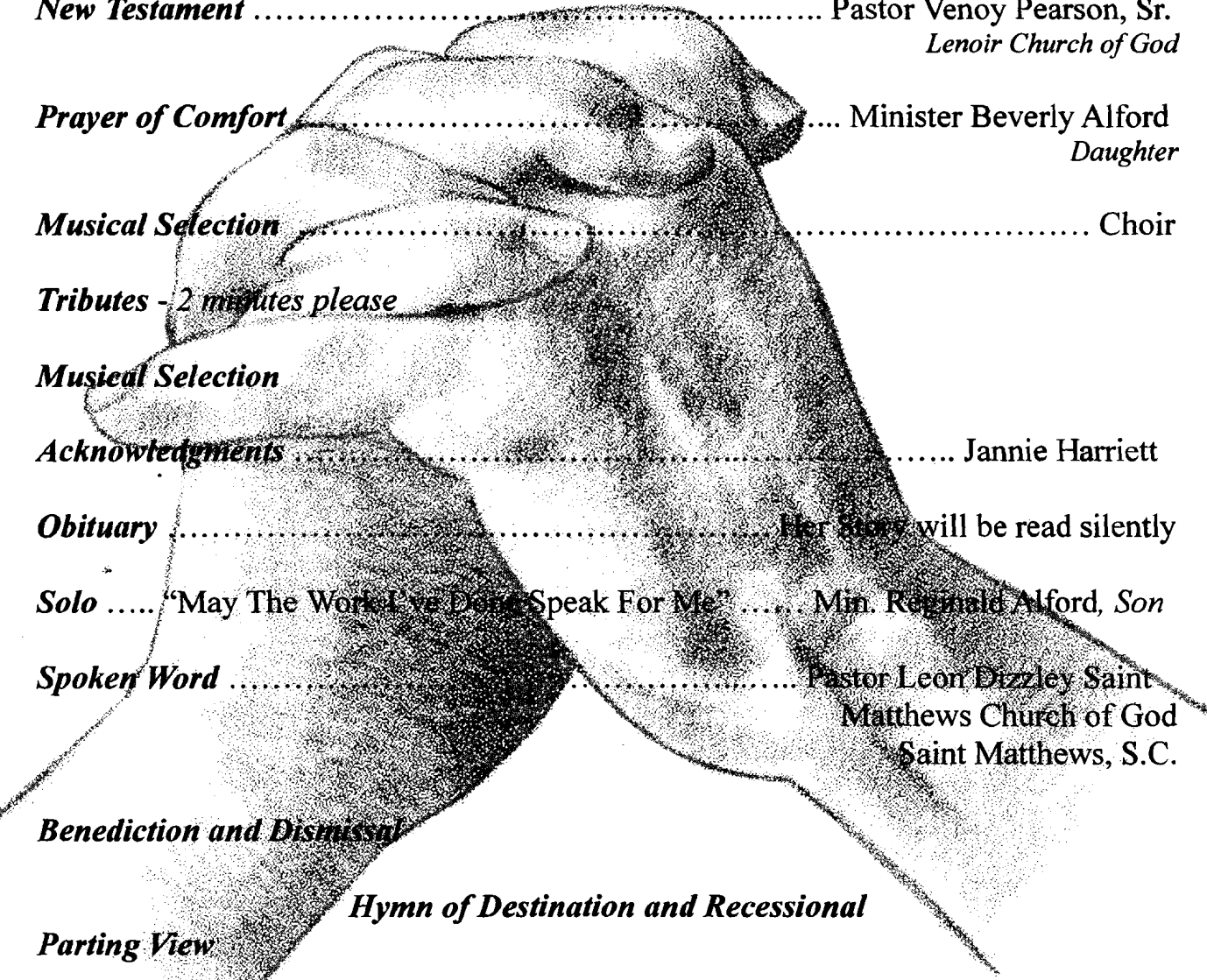
Benediction and Dismissal

Hymn of Destination and Recessional

Parting View

Committal-Interment

Greenlawn Cemetery, Hartsville, South Carolina



A Pastor's Wife

*Many think that when a Pastor is called by God
That he's the only one called, but that isn't true.
For, God also puts the calling on another one's life:
The life that belongs to you.*

*A Pastor's wife is called along with him,
For she, too, has a ministry of her own.
It is the gift of her willingness to share and to give
Of her self, her husband and her home.*

*So often, we acknowledge the work of a Pastor
And not recognize the work of his wife,
Nor the time that she spends with people in the church
In making them a part of her life.*

*Thank you so much for sacrifices you make,
For being there for him after he has been there for us:
For all of your time, your love and contributions to our church,
For your friendship, your generosity and trust.*

Melissa Hughes Miles

Oldest Grand Tribute

My Handmaiden, Daughter & Child

In your mothers womb I knew you and called you unto myself, Yes, you endured many challenges called life, weaker vessels have cracked under lesser pressure, some never could withstand the potter's hand. A piece of pottery is never as strong as it can be, until fired and tempered. This is when you became my child, knowing that you had free will was the price of being called mine, when others chose the easy road, you held to your beliefs (my will operating in your life) going beyond moral thoughts to righteous obedience, time passed, but you held to beliefs and righteous I placed into your heart, when others took the wide and crooked Blvd, you held to the straight and narrow streets. This was when you became my Daughter, when you said I do, (To Walter T. Alford) it became a lifestyle and motto. A man became more than husband and a wife was transformed to Mother, Pastor, Helpmate, and Fletcher of the weapons of spiritual warfare. By placing your will in my hands, you gave me the right to direct your path, now welcome into my rest, Handmaiden of He who is, was and forever shall be.

Other Daughter's have done well, but you have more so, than most, for you have given your life to me and I will bestow upon you and your seed, not only eternal life, but also that the fruit of both your physical and spiritual womb will call you bless, but they will never beg bread and the windows of Heaven will pour you out a blessing that your children's children will never be able to count or spend all the blessing I have and will bestow upon them.

Now you realize that you've become my Handmaiden
Rest for there are many mansions and there's one for YOU

"A Woman of Peace, Obedience and Dignity"
"A Woman of God"

I can remember when Reverend Alford would say "Lil... let's" she would say, "go to Bennettsville?" Then.. she would say "Alford, give"... he would say, " how much?" This is how I know them. "A "Legend" of Servants of God"!

To me, it seems she was able to embrace several kids at the same time and give a hug that could heal anything from a bruised knee to a broken heart. God kept her over four score and ten years because He had favor in her.

She was soft but God kept her strong! For you can't imagine what she could endure and overcome: Not only could she think! She could reason and negotiate!

I can imagine an Angel touching Mother "Lillie" Alford's cheek and saying, "Lord, she's leaking!" "She's not leaking" replied the Lord. "It's ...A...Tear"! ..."What's it for"? inquired the angel. "Tears are my daughter, Lillie's way of expressing her grief, her doubts, her love, her loneliness, her joy, her suffering and her pride"!

You see, I know Mother Alford as not only being fantastic and marvelous... but she had strengths-that amazed man. She could handle trouble and heavy burdens. She gave Godly advice to all, she smiled when she felt like screaming. She cried when she was happy and laughed when she was afraid. She stood up for what she believed. She prayed against injustice and didn't take "no" for an answer, when she saw a better solution..

Unselfishly, but willingly she was always by her husband's side; she not only prayed for herself but her family and others. She gave herself so her "husband" and family could thrive! She took from her family to give to others! She saw to it that her church members, friends' or anybody's needs were taken care of! She cried when her kids were victorious! She was happy when her friends did well! She visited them when sick and when well! She was glad when she heard of a birth or a wedding. Her heart was broken when family or a friend died! But you know what? She always found the strength to get on with life!

And I know! She loved the folk in "Bennettsville" (as well as in Hartsville, Bishopville Lamar and all over!) For she and her husband had so much love for each other, for their children, family and for everyone Throughout the "ERA" of their time they shared it "UNCONDITIONALLY"!

So Sweet Jesus, please take this message, To our "DEAR LEGENDS" up above; And tell them how we miss them, And ..give them all our Love!

Sister Dorothy Ellerbee Bennettsville First Church of God

A Proverbs 31: 10-31 kind of woman

"Who can find a virtuous woman?" was a question that Walter Alford asked long ago. Through the eyes of God, he chose Lillie Bell Alford to be his lawful wedded wife on September 18, 1931, and he knew even then that her value far exceeded the greatest vaults of emeralds or rubies. And he praised her.

She relished the trust of her husband's heart, for she longed to fulfill the call to share his life as his partner, knowing God would bless their family so that they would want for nothing. A helpmate, she stood nobly for the name and good reputation of her husband and family, even within a society that might reject her, or them. For them she cared above all others, and their happiness and success far outweighed her own desire for personal gratification. In contrast to the kind of woman referenced in Proverbs 21:9, her mission was to stand firmly and humbly at her husband's side, bringing good to his life and his name.

From farm life to city life she worked with tireless hands, beginning early in life the habit of always rising before the Sun. As a merchant, she carefully selected the wool, the flax and the food that would be brought into her home. Her refined skills in buying and selling served well not only her own household, but also many in need.

Her countenance showed her strength, and her character demonstrated her devotion to never 'let the lantern go out at night,' always keeping her home safe. She guarded her home with a watchful eye, never letting idleness become a guest there. She often worked through the night, her fingers grasping guided only by God and the soft glow of a lantern's light. She valued the good appearance of her children during all seasons, and her nocturnal efforts always ensured they would be clothed neatly and appropriately.

Her children revered her, standing to call her blessed, with her husband also. And he, too, again praised her.

Time has proven that she has passed wisdom and strength to her successors through both instruction and, most importantly, through her faith. As life's road winded toward its final destination, she only laughed, her strength and dignity solidifying her family's discipline to trust in God, and look forward to sending her to His home.

Walter's early query was answered time and again, as he took his seat among the elders of his church, and he realized that God had supported him by delivering this virtuous woman. And he praised her more.

To her beloved Walter she devoted 69 of her 91 years, rejoicing in her service to him, their offspring and the Lord. And when the latter called on June 27, 2007, she welcomed Him — and she rejoiced.

Celebration of the Life of Lillie Bell Franklin Alford

"Her Story"

"Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." Yes, says the Spirit, they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Rev. 14:13 (NIV)

Let the record show that Lillie Bell Franklin Alford was called from her earthly labor on Wednesday, June 27, 2007 at 11:09 am., at her home. With some of her children at her bedside and her heart filled with the joy of her salvation, she slipped into the presence of the Lord, peacefully. She gladly told her family and visiting friends that she was waiting for the "Gospel Train" - waiting for Jesus because she was "ready" to go home to be with the Lord. She held firm to her faith - knowing that to be absent from the body in this old world was to be present with the Lord in her long awaited celestial home in heaven. She waited with a song in her heart and praise on her lips. She made sure she kept her *spiritual bags* close to her, in her last days. She was often heard talking to the Lord as if He was standing in earshot of her sick bed, singing songs of praise and victory. In the last days, her words of encouragement to her children, neighbors, friends, family and professional caretakers came from a pure heart that was situated in the spiritual realm fixed on Jesus.

Lillie Bell Franklin Alford was a gift of God's love. She was born to Azalea Rivers [Scott] and Herbert Franklin on September 21, 1916 in Lee County, South Carolina. She grew up in the Cyprus Crossroad Community and the city of Bishopville. She had two brothers, Connie Franklin, who preceded her in death and Joseph Scott, who currently resides in Baltimore, Maryland. She was educated in the S.C. Public School System and the Boylan Haven Mather Academy located in Camden, S.C. Later, she furthered her education by taking courses in Barley Farming, Nursing, Interior Decorating and Child Psychology. All this training later paid off to her advantage in her life's chosen work.

Lillie followed a path of devotion to her family from early childhood. She was the protector and guardian of her brothers. She learned to make personal sacrifices at a very young age.. Just to make sure her brothers were safe and secure. She was the perfect "big sister"

Lillie grew up to be a beautiful young woman who was polished with social grace, moral character and strength. She was known for her no-nonsense approach to life and her diligent work ethic. While still a young teenager, she met the love of her life, Walter Thomas Alford. They were married on September 3, 1932 and established their home in Lamar, South Carolina where they also started their family. Lillie willingly let it be known that she did not know the Lord when she married Walter, but through his life of devotion to God, he led her to Christ after five years of marriage. This change in her life joined her closer to her husband. She now understood what it meant for "two to become one". As the Lord blessed their home with 10 children, out of 14 births, they were never divided in raising them. They trained them to fear the Lord by teaching them the Word of God at home first. Lillie was really devoted to her family right to the end. And, her family always included nieces, nephews, cousins, neighbors and friends of her children. She collected "people" all through her life. Everyone she met experienced her love of people.

Lillie's calling in life included her roles as a homemaker and mother, community worker and confidant, missionary, church worker, and deacon's wife, First Lady / Pastor's Wife and finally, Mother of the Church.

Homemaker - She always worked to maintain a "home" not just a clean house. She knew the importance of atmosphere in the home. It must be clean, comfortable, accommodating, nurturing; and set up to train in every aspect of life.

Mother - She would not answer if her children called her anything short of Mother, i.e. Ma, Mamma, Mom. It was Mother! As a mother she taught her children godly values, giving them wise counsel, executing stern discipline and challenging them to excellence. She always insisted on her husband being the "king" of his castle.. as she was surely the "Queen". She was indeed the Proverbs 31:10-31 mother and wife. Her story as a mother can be told by her birth children, children that she mothered from the neighborhood, children of the church, motherless children of family, friends and neighbors.

Community Worker - She could be depended upon by neighbors, school officials and local leaders, both public and private to do her part in helping to make her community a safe place to live, work and play with your family. She was a business-minded woman and was not hesitant in helping to sustain the market place in her community. She made herself available to many as a confidante and counselor.

Missionary, Church worker and deacon's wife - She was faithful in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, seeking the lost, visiting the sick, helping the homeless and sharing Christ as she journeyed through life. She would give the coat off her back, the shoes off her feet and her last dollar to anyone in need of it... and gave no thought to the sacrifice of doing it. As a church worker, she started in the D.S. Warner era of the Church of God Reformation Movement Saints. Worshipping in church buildings that had dirt or sawdust floors. Her generation helped to build the first church structures for the Church of God Movement that still stand today in parts of South Carolina. She took furniture from her home to put in the church...to make sure that the church had the best they could afford. She taught Sunday School, directed the Children's Sunbeam Choir and sang in the adult choir. She was faithful in doing whatever her hands found to do to build up the ministry of the body of Christ in her fellowship... her work in the church was tremendous. She routinely opened her home to accommodate school teachers, visiting evangelists, preachers and missionaries. Lillie stood shoulder to shoulder with her husband in his work in the church, as well. She proved to be one of his most devoted Bible students because he would often teach his lessons to her before he taught them to his classes. She was unwavering in her support of him, in all his roles in the church.

Pastor's wife/ First Lady - She learned the value of the contribution that is required of the Pastor's wife through serving the church in different roles over a long period of time... by working in partnership with her husband before he became a pastor. She had a servant spirit; she cared for the church edifice, the grounds, the people, and the ministry and allowed the Lord to use her to set an example for others to follow. Stepping into the role of First Lady was natural because the Lord had prepared her over a course of many years. She established herself as a model for other first ladies and for young women who hope to become first ladies. She demonstrated a clear understanding that the Call of a Shepherd/Pastor is a *call* placed on the entire family. She made sure her children understood that and raised them to shoulder that responsibility by working in the church as well.

Mother of the Church - She was affectionately called "Sister Alford," and she did not have a lot to say... not as a matter of routine. However, she believed in "doing what she could to make a difference... when she could". In the evening time of her life, she realized that imparting wisdom to the church leadership, the youth and the collective body of the church fellowship, was what God had for her to do. She encouraged the young pastors, the pastor's wives and gave frank, godly advice on keeping the faith before them. She pressed her way, even in her sickness, to encourage the hearts of the saints, ever reminding them that putting God first, pays. She lived out her faith because she felt that people believe what they experience in their relationship with you rather than what you "just tell them" about your relationship. It's what you do!

In the closing days of her life, as the Matriarch of her family, Lillie Bell Franklin Alford sought to prepare everyone for her pending departure. She made sure to tell everyone that she loved them and spoke God's blessings over their lives. She challenged those who knew the Lord to get closer to Him and to stay faithful. She admonished those who did not know the Lord to get right with Him, to prepare for eternity... telling them that "she wanted to see them again, in Heaven. She examined the accounts of all her personal relationships in life... offering opportunities for reconciliation and healing, pouring out assurance of her love and affection, expressing deep appreciation to those who showed her a kindness and sharing her joy in the Lord, as she waited to hear Him call her name.

Mother Alford leaves an extraordinary legacy of love for her children which will be cherished and celebrated for years to come. The beneficiaries of her legacy include: five daughters, Jessie A. Stuckey of Washington, D.C., Mary H. Yarborough of Aiken, S.C., Gradye F. Stephen of Paterson, N.J., Beverly Alford of District Heights, MD. And Linda R. Alford of Florence, S.C.; three sons, Norman L. of Arlington, TX (Carolyn), William E. of Hamlet, N.C. and Reginald D. of Hartsville; Dorothea Alford, a caring daughter-in-law, 17 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren and 11 great great grandchildren; one brother, Joseph Scott of Baltimore, MD.; four sisters in-law, Rosa Lee Hines, Lillian Alford, Alberta Mack and Minnie Lee George; one brother-in-law, Dock Blyther; a special niece, Connie Bell Franklin Morris (her brother's daughter) is listed among a host of other nieces and nephews, other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her two oldest sons, Walter T., Jr. and Willie F. Alford, and her husband, Walter T. Alford, Sr.; a devoted son-in-law, Allen Stephens.

Flower Bearers
Granddaughters

Pall Bearers
Grandsons

Together Again



Special Acknowledgment and Appreciation:

Caretakers Helen Mathis, Sharon Bacote Dubose, Registered Nurse, Phyllis Harriett, Carolyn Alford, Dorothy Alford, Christine Allen.

Encourager Dorothy Ellerbee.

Transport Service Metro South

Long Term Care Nurse on Call.

We, the Alford Family, thank God for all of you, our family, friends, and well wishers. Because of you and your prayers, we were blessed and encouraged. All acts of kindness were appreciated and will always be remembered. We pray that God will continue to bless you so that you will continue to be a blessing. Special thanks to the First Baptist Church Family and Pastor Ryan S. Goodroe for opening their doors in the time of our loss.

Repast: Hartsville High School Cafeteria
703 Lewellyn Avenue
Hartsville, South Carolina

*On behalf of Young & Young Funeral Home,
It is our aim to uphold the highest standards of professionalism,
dignity and sincerity with every family we serve. If this task has
been met, then our aim has been accomplished.*

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