



Rev. Dr. John H. Gillison

October 26, 1938 - October 21, 2015

Reverend Dr. John Harold Gillison died Wednesday, October 21st, at his residence in Columbia, SC. Funeral services will be held 10AM, Thursday, October 29th, at the Mother Emanuel AME Church 110 Calhoun Street in Charleston, SC, with Interment at Zion AME Church Cemetery located in Hendersonville SC. Rev. Dr. Gillison will be placed in the church for public viewing from 9:00 AM until the hour of service. Dr. Gillison will be available for public viewing on Wednesday from 12:00 noon until 8:00 PM at the Palmer Memorial Chapel.. The family will receive friends Wednesday, October 28t, 2015 at a visitation from 6 to 8pm, with an Alpha Phi Alpha Omega Service beginning at 6 PM also at the Palmer Memorial Chapel, 1200, Fontaine Place, Columbia SC.

Reverend Dr. John Harold Gillison grew up in a loving, nurturing family. The call to preach had been stirring the mind and warming his heart for some time prior to the moment when he received his license to preach. Many individuals in the community had detected ministerial qualities in him at a very early age. The environment that nurtured him played a unique role in molding his ministerial aspiration. His father, Reverend George Washington Gillison, was a minister in the AME Church for many years. Several of his uncles and cousins were pastors. As a boy, Reverend Gillison would come home from church and imitate his father in a creative worship service with young cousins and friends. Many of the adults frequently called him “L ittle Rev.”

Reverend Gillison was thirteen years old when his father died. However, he

was blessed with a wonderful Christian mother, Myrtis, who kept her son focused on the positive things of life. Because of her influence, sacrificial support, and appreciation of education, Reverend Gillison graduated from Allen University with a B.A. degree. He received the Master of Divinity degree from Turner Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. He studied at Emory University and the University of South Carolina. Allen University honored him with the D.D. degree in 1975. It was in Hendersonville, South Carolina at the Quarterly Conference at Zion AME Church that he was questioned and received the necessary votes to be licensed to preach. The pastor was Reverend St. Julian Heyward. The presiding elder was Dr. J. B. Jennings who served over the Beaufort District. He was ordained an itinerant deacon and elder by Bishop S. R. Higgins. Reverend Gillison distinguished himself in many endeavors. Vocationally he taught in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Allen University, in the School of Religion at Morris College in Sumter, and in the extension school at Morris College in Charleston.

In 1978, Reverend Gillison was elected President of the Christian Action Council for South Carolina, making him the first African-American to fill this prestigious position. At that time the council consisted of seventeen participating denominations. He also served on the General Board of the National Council of Churches (USA) and was a delegate to the World Methodist Conference in Nairobi, Kenya. He was also a delegate to several General Conferences of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He represented the Seventh Episcopal District on the General Board of the AME Church. Having been a life member of the NAACP for many years, Reverend Gillison had been very active in the Civil Rights Movement of our nation. One of his greatest inspirations was the opportunity to visit with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his home in Atlanta.

Reverend Gillison was a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. He was married to the former Jean Alvesta Waymer of Elloree, South Carolina. Their oldest daughter, Alfreda Gillison Miller, is married to Royce Van Miller; and

they have two sons: Royce Van Miller II and Sean Gillison Miller. Their younger daughter is Gloria Louise Gillison.

“Serving as a pastor has been a challenge and a joy,” Reverend Gillison said. Reverend Gillison served four congregations: St. Paul/Piney Grove Circuit in Dixana, South Carolina; Chappelle Memorial in Columbia, South Carolina; Mt. Pisgah in Sumter, South Carolina and Mother Emanuel in Charleston, South Carolina. Reverend Gillison served as Presiding Elder of the Edisto District for eighteen years. He then retired, after fifty-six years of active ministry.

Reverend John Harold Gillison is survived by his wife Jean Waymer Gillison, two daughters, Alfreda Gillison Miller and Gloria Louise Gillison, two grandsons, Royce Van Miller II and Sean Gillison Miller, one son-in-law, Royce Van Miller and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, host of Bodison step-siblings and friends.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **28**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223
(803) 786-6300
palmermemorialchapel@gmail.com
<https://www.palmermemorialchapel.com>

Funeral Service

OCT **29**. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Mother Emanuel AME Church
110 Calhoun Street
Charleston, SC 29401
<http://emanuelchurch.org>

Tribute Wall



“ *Palmer Memorial Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Rev. Dr. John H. Gillison*



Palmer Memorial Chapel - October 28, 2015 at 11:33 AM



“ *Rev. Dr. John H. Gillison*

October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM



“ *Rev. Peter H Pinckney lit a candle in memory of Rev. Dr. John H. Gillison*



Rev. Peter H Pinckney - October 31, 2015 at 06:15 PM

PB

“ *In my life and the lives of many others, Presiding Elder John Harold Gillison will never experience death; he is just moving to another level of living. Sister Janet joins me in expressing our sincere love and condolence to sister Jean, the lovely daughters and the entire family. Let us never forget that going home is not a period for us; it is only a comma. We believe and live in hope that we will meet a gain. Jonathan and Janet Baker*

pastor Jonathan Jerome Baker - October 29, 2015 at 08:04 PM



“ *I'm sorry to have say that the Thomas and Sarah Robinson family has lost a great light in the past week. Elder. John Gillison was a excellent exemplification of walking in the path of the Lord, being a pillar of the community in times of both prosperity and strife My condolences go out to aunt Jean His daughter's Alfreda Gloria close friends and family.*

Sonya Robinson - October 28, 2015 at 10:21 PM

JB

“ *Presiding Elder Brother Dr. John Gillison was a genuine Christian servant and teacher. H e was my instructor @ Morris College School of Religion, neighboring Pastor, fraternity brother and dear friend. Well done, good and faithful servant. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wonderful family.*

Pastor and Mrs. James Blassingame & the Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church Family, Sumter, South Carolina.

James Blassingame - October 28, 2015 at 02:21 PM

LN

“ PRESIDING ELDER GILLISON WAS A KIND, WELL MANNERED, JOVIAL BUT SINCERE SERVANT: HIS CREATIVITY WAS ALWAYS APPROPRIATE AND WELL RECEIVED WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE SPOKE : I CONSTANTLY THINK ABOUT THE EULOGY FOR MRS.LUNETTE SARTOR ROBINSON @ MT.PISGAH WHEN HE HIGHLIGHTED SPIRITUAL REFINEMENT AND GODLY SOPHISTICATION OF WHICH SHOULD BE A PRIORITY FOR ALL CHRISTIANS: REST IN PEACE
LEON & VIRGINIA RICHBURG
SUMMERTON,SOUTH CAROLINA



LEON N.RICHBURG - October 27, 2015 at 04:20 PM

CB

“ *May care and love of those around you provide comfort and peace to get you through the days ahead. We hope that our Lord brings you and your family the much needed comfort and peace during this sad time. Our condolences to you and your family.*



*Sincerely,
Carolyn & Angela Barno*

Carolyn Barno - October 27, 2015 at 03:59 PM

JJ

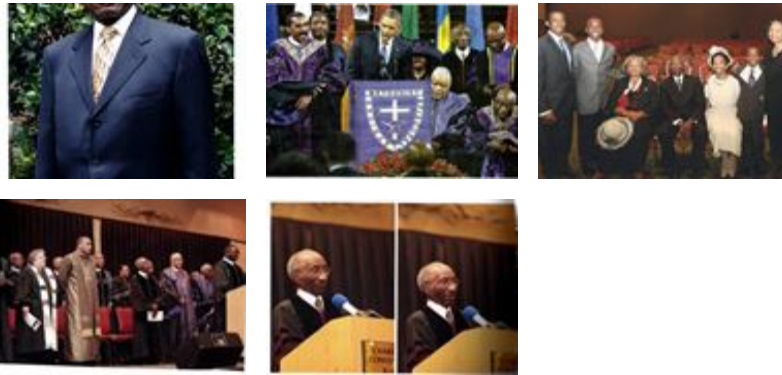
“ Jean N Forest Jones lit a candle in memory of Rev. Dr. John H. Gillison



Jean n Forest Jones - October 27, 2015 at 03:44 PM



“ 18 files added to the album Life Tributes



Palmer Memorial Chapel - October 27, 2015 at 02:37 PM

JF

“ John and Johnnie Williams and Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Rev. Dr. John H. Gillison.



John and Johnnie Williams and Family - October 27, 2015 at 01:59 PM

DG

“ DR. DANIEL AND MARY JACOBS, ATLANTA, GEORGIA purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Rev. Dr. John H. Gillison.



DR. DANIEL AND MARY JACOBS, ATLANTA, GEORGIA -
October 27, 2015 at 01:02 AM

“ I met Presiding Elder Gillison many years ago at St. Luke AME Church. I had enrolled in the seminary extension there, he took over the Homeletics class I was in after Rev. Dr. Z.L. Grady was elevated to Bishop. He told that homeletics was the art of preaching, such as the Mona Lisa being a very important piece of art so was preaching. He told us that our class was the laboratory and he was to refine us for service to the church and world. Because, we may be called upon to preach anywhere in the world. He was always serious about teaching and preaching. He had given all of us an assignment to prepare a sermon. I still remember the text: 2 Cor 8:8-9 and that sermon fought all of us until he simplified it. He was an amazing teacher and invited us his students out to Mother Emanuel AME Church. When we returned to the L.R. Nichols Extension he told us class that was a true AME worship service. Of course, I fell in love with Mother Emanuel AME Church. Presiding Elder Gillison had gifted by turned me towards him as a mentor and father figure. I would turn to him at times for advice but, he would always turn the conversation around in your favor. For example: this is what he would say: "What do you think about the situation Reverend?" "What would you do about it? Reverend, I would do the same thing." While, I was pastor at Mt. Nebo AME Church he would examine the church thoroughly. He would say walk with me Reverend and I would say yes sir. Bring a pen and paper with you as he would point out things. One in particular comes to mind. Reverend, now this wooden handicap ramp needs to go, you need a nice porch and handicap ramp with railings. Reverend, can you have it ready by next Quarterly Conference? I said, Elder I don't really know. Come on Reverend, you need to both know and learn your members. I think you can use a little psychology, and use a little GODLY judgement. Well, we had the porch ready, church painted inside and out, examined the foundation, put up safety signs in the church, and added a ministerial clause to the church insurance. I was selected to preach for him many years ago when he was running for Bishop, services were held at Emanuel AME Church in West Ashley



on Highway 61. I had one funeral at Mt. Nebo AME Church, Adams Run, S.C. where he was the officiating officer. After I gave the eulogy. he said Reverend you made an A-. I said, thank you sir. Preaching before the Presiding Elder and six other pastors was hard enough. I said, I was in the hot seat. And, recently a few months ago Presiding Elder Gillison gave me a wonderful recommendation to Luther Rice Seminary. The Dean of Admissions was very pleased with him. I owe a lot to Presiding Elder John H. Gillison. I thank GOD for his love, dedication , devotion, teaching, and kindness. He always had a kind heart for the church and the gospel. I want to say to Mrs. Gillison, his two daughters, grandsons, son in law, family and friend You have lost a great husband and father, grandfather, father in law, pastor, elder, friend, and mentor to all. May GOD grant you all peace, love, and healing. We shall see each other when we shall reach the eschatology of life , sleep Presiding Elder Gillison thank you for your kindness. I shall miss you , and the many conferences shall miss you. Love, Rev. Peter H. Pinckney, Sr. & Family!!!!!!

Rev. Peter H. Pinckbey - October 26, 2015 at 07:41 PM

MJ

“ *MRS. GILLISON AND FAMILY.*

*WE SEND OUR MOST HARTFELT
SYMPATHY TO EACH OF YOU AT THIS
TIME.*

*KNOWING GOD IS THERE IN YOUR WEAKEST MOMENT. HE
PROMISE NEVER TO LEAVE US NOR FORSAKE US.
MAY GOD CARRY YOU AS YOU TRAVEL THE MISTY HOUR OF
BEREAVEMENT.*

SINCERE LOVE,

*REV. AND MRS. WILLIAM R. JONES, ALONG WITH THE
MEMBERS OF
NEW STAINT JAMES BETHEL AME CHURCH
WADMALAW ISLAND, SC.*



MARY DICKERSON JONES - October 26, 2015 at 06:05 PM

JR

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



juanita reeves - October 26, 2015 at 11:41 AM

EP

“ I will forever be grateful to God for bringing Dr. John Gillison into my life in the 50's. What a wonderful inspiration he has been to me in a world where evil parades itself as good. His stand for right and righteousness will always inspire me to stand strong, fight the good fight and attain the victory through Jesus Christ.
Love you so much, my friend. Rest in Peace.

Rev. Evelyn C. Polite

Evelyn Polte - October 26, 2015 at 07:24 AM

DB

“ I am and will be forever grateful for meeting Dr. John H Gillison he taught me in Seminary 28 years ago. He would encourage me and all that he knew to always strive to do better in ministry. He came to hear me teach and preach the Word of God several times. I thanks him for taking time with me and having lunch at S&S cafeteria sharing wisdom with me.. He is a kind-hearted man and unselfish. I thank GOD FOR DR. JOHN H. GILLISON... The LEGACY YOU LEFT SHALL LIVE ON FOREVERMORE!!!

DR. C. H. BROWN(PASTOR)

DR. C. H. BROWN - October 25, 2015 at 10:02 PM

BT

“ Thanks for always being so kind. Rest in Peace.
Carlton and Barbara Troy
Orangeburg SC

Barbara Troy - October 25, 2015 at 06:27 PM



“ *Our prayers to the family: from The Reverend Dr. Robert C. and Mrs. Prudence Hope Wade, and the Pastors and Lay of the Camden-Trenton District. The New Jersey Conference, 1st Episcopal District, AMEC.*

Robert Wade - October 25, 2015 at 03:13 PM