



Bishop Frederick Calhoun James

April 7, 1922 - April 18, 2024

BISHOP FREDERICK CALHOUN JAMES

Ecumenical theologian, advocate for fair and decent housing, proponent of civil rights, political leader and public servant are only a few of the characteristics of Bishop Frederick Calhoun James.

Bishop Frederick Calhoun James was born on April 7, 1922, in Prosperity, South Carolina, the son of Edward and Rosa Lee Gray James. He graduated from Drayton Street High School, Newberry, South Carolina. He graduated from Bettis Junior College with an Associate of Arts Degree and earned his B.A. degree in History/English from Allen University (1943), and his Master of Divinity degree from the Howard University School of Religion (1947). He also studied at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He married Theresa Gregg on December 30, 1944.

As a champion for civil rights, Rev. James became a community and state social and political action leader. In 1960, he was elected Consultant/Director of Social Action of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In this position, he formed a close relationship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1963, he became President of the Effective Sumter Movement of Sumter, South Carolina, a historic chapter in civil rights. In 1967, as pastor of Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church, Rev. James led the sponsorship of the first 221(d) Rent Supplement Housing Project in South Carolina. In 1969, he initiated the first

221(h) Home Ownership Project in the state. He was South Carolina's first African American Congressional District member of the Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Department of Social Services. He was the first African American to serve on the Board of Directors at NBSC (National Bank of South Carolina), now SYNOVUS, the first African American member of the Greater Sumter Chamber of Commerce and the first A. M. E. Bishop elected from a South Carolina A. M. E. Church pulpit. From 1987 to 1992 he was a member of the Columbia Housing Authority and served as vice chair. He also served as Vice President of the S.C. Christian Action Council.

In 1972, he was elected to the AME Bishopric and was assigned as the Presiding Bishop of the AME Church in South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Namibia, and Mozambique. Headquartered in Cape Town, South Africa, he established schools, a publishing house, churches, and other institutions. Bishop James later was assigned bishop in Arkansas and Oklahoma (1976). He formed a lifelong friendship with then Attorney Bill Clinton. In 1984, he was assigned to the 7th Episcopal District, State of South Carolina. In each of these positions, he built housing projects, strengthened schools and led two colleges to full accreditation; Shorter College, N. Little Rock, Arkansas in 1981 and Allen University, Columbia, South Carolina in 1992. In 1992, Bishop James was assigned Ecumenical Bishop and Chaplaincy Endorsement Officer of the African Methodist Episcopal Church International. In 1993, he was given major fiscal and reconciliation duties as Bishop of the Second Episcopal District (Maryland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, and North Carolina) of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the district was stabilized in many ways.

In 1994, he was selected by President Clinton as an official member of the delegation to attend the inauguration of South African President Nelson Mandela, and in 1998 he was again chosen to accompany President and Mrs. Clinton on an official visit to South Africa.

Bishop James is a former member of the White House Advisory Board on Historical Black Colleges and Universities, the U.S. State Department's Advisory Board on Religious Freedom, and National Vice President of the Interfaith Alliance. A life member of the NAACP, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, and a 33-degree Mason, he was inducted into the South Carolina Black Hall of Fame (1991) and the Columbia Housing Authority Wall of Fame (1994). In January of 2003, Bishop James was awarded the state's highest honor, The Order of the Palmetto, for his significant contributions to South Carolina.

He retired from active duty in 1996 and he and Dr. Theresa Gregg James, Episcopal Supervisor returned to live at their home in Columbia, South Carolina.

Episcopal Supervisor Retired, Dr. Theresa Gregg James transitioned Monday, January 25, 2021, in Columbia, South Carolina. Dr. Theresa Gregg James and Bishop James had celebrated seventy-six years of wedded bliss on December 30, 2020.

- THE SERVANTS OF GOD AND HUMANKIND -

FOLLOW THE EPISCOPAL MINISTRY OF THE LEGENDARY
JAMES TEAM IN WORDS AND PHOTOS

(Click on each link below to see photos.)

Politics & Government – The State Newspaper APRIL 15, 2019

97-year-old Bishop rises from wheelchair to honor Ernest Hollings

<https://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article229274364.html>

100- and 101-Year-Old Bishop Frederick Calhoun James in the News:

Bishop Frederick C. James 100th Birthday Announcement:

<https://www.wistv.com/2022/04/07/local-faith-civil-rights-leader-celebrates-100th-birthday/>

South Carolina General Assembly, 124th Session, 2021-2022 Congratulates Bishop James on the occasion of his 100th Birthday:

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess124_2021-2022/bills/5058.htm

Seventh Episcopal District of the AME Church Host 100th Birthday Celebration:

Civil rights and AME church leader to celebrate 100th birthday -- Bishop Frederick C. James is the oldest living AME Bishop in America

https://www.carolinapanorama.com/news/civil-rights-and-ame-church-leader-to-celebrate-100th-birthday----bishop-frederick/article_5bb0c914-b761-11ec-ab18-4b3a28a0f9b8.html

Civil rights and AME church leader to celebrate 100th birthday -- Bishop Frederick C. James is the oldest living AME Bishop in America

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Local civil rights champion celebrates 101st Birthday.

COLUMBIA, S.C. (WOLO)— Today was a special one for a Midlands civil rights pioneer.

www.abccolumbia.com/2023/04/07/local-civil-rights-champion-celebrates-101st-birthday/

The Printed Words by Bishop F.C. James:

"To God Be the Glory" by Rev. Dr. Mankekolo Mahlangu-Ngcobo, brilliant Author, Teacher, Preacher

"Forward In Faith" by Bishop Frederick Calhoun James

"African Methodism in South Carolina a Bicentennial Focus" by Bishop

Frederick Calhoun James.

Memorial contributions may be made to: "The Bishop Frederick C. James & Dr. Theresa G. James Scholarship Fund". Donations can be made by one of the following methods:

1. Checks can be mailed directly to - Allen University

1530 Harden Street

Columbia, SC 29204

2. Clicking on this link - <https://allen-university.snwbll.com/bishop-frederick-c-james-scholarship-fund>

Previous Events

Public Viewing

APR 26. 1:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223

NAACP Tribute

APR 26. 6:00 PM - 6:30 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223

Alpha Phi Alpha Omega Ceremony

APR 26. 6:30 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223

Masonic Rites

APR 26. 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

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

Lie in State

APR 27. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Bethel AME Church
819 Woodrow Street
Columbia, SC 29205

Church website: <https://bethelcolumbia.org/>

A Celebration of Life

APR 27. 12:00 PM - 2:30 PM (ET)

Bethel AME Church
819 Woodrow Street
Columbia, SC 29205

Live Streaming

APR 27. 12:00 PM - 2:30 PM (ET)

Bethel AME Church
819 Woodrow Street
Columbia, SC 29205

Live Streaming will be at the following web address: <https://www.facebook.com/bethelamecolumbia> You do not need a Facebook account to visit the page. (Click on the X to close the login screen.)

Interment

APR 27. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Crescent Hill Memorial Gardens
2603 Two Notch Road
Columbia, SC 29204

Tribute Wall

MC

“ *Rest in peace. Thanks for marrying us 55 years ago. Ralph & Martha Wright Council*



Martha Wright Council - October 10, 2024 at 09:03 PM

MC

“ *Motisola and Constance purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Bishop Frederick Calhoun James.*



Motisola and Constance - April 27, 2024 at 10:09 AM

OE

“ Bishop Frederick Calhoun James, (aka family), friend, mentor, ecumenical theologian, advocate for fair and decent housing, proponent of civil rights, political leader, and public servant, your memory shall remain with us; of you reciting your favorite poems, the many holiday dinners shared at our table, tours of South Africa taken, shopping, nighty dinner meals shared in McLean Virginia restaurants, annual conference visits, of your humming hymns crossing the Bay Bridge and the many phone conversations. These memories and more we have! How privileged and blessed we were, that the “James Team” was a part of our lives!

The Average Man.”

*“So here’s to the average man, to the one
Who has labored on the tasks he has done,
Who has met as they came all the problems of life,
Who has helped us to win in the stress and the strife,
In the forefront of progress since progress began,
today we pay our tribute – and salute the average man.*

Farewell to The One Who Models Making the Average Man a Great Man!!!

Ora L. Easley (Ms. E)

Ora L. Easley - April 26, 2024 at 07:58 PM

LP

“ Bishop James served in the Palmetto District for number of years. Sleep in Peace



linda powell - April 26, 2024 at 03:27 PM

BS

“ BISHOP JAMES WAS MY BISHOP IN THE 2ND Episcopal district, I served as the North Carolina Conference YPD DIRECTOR UNDER HE AND MRS. JAMES LEADERSHIP. THEY WERE TOP-NOTCH AND BELIEVED IN DEDICATED SERVICE FOR THE LORD!

Betty Strickland - April 26, 2024 at 09:46 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bishop Frederick Calhoun James.



April 26, 2024 at 08:49 AM

DS

“ Dr. & Mrs. Marcus T. Henderson and Staff planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bishop Frederick Calhoun James.

Dr. & Mrs. Marcus T. Henderson and Staff - April 26, 2024 at 08:49 AM

TF

“ Sending our condolences and prayers to the family and relatives.



TAMMY Harrison-Edwards & Family - April 25, 2024 at 01:40 AM

MR

“ Marilyn Ragin lit a candle in memory of Frederick James



Marilyn R Ragin - April 24, 2024 at 09:17 AM

JD

“ Bishop James was a trailblazer. I appreciate his holy boldness, tenacity, and stick-to-itiveness on all matters. My boss and mentor followed him in the 2nd Episcopal District. He was concerned about following up on his many commitments, so for 6 months, every piece of mail addressed to him was sent to his South Carolina office - opened and screened by him - and where needed returned to the DC office. After that period, he called and said, you don't need to send any more, but use your discretion. That was a great trust that I value about so many social action moments.



JACQUELYN DUPONT-WALKER - April 24, 2024 at 01:43 AM

SL

Bishop James was my Episcopal Leader in the 12th Episcopal District from 1976-1984! I remember his stellar leadership! I attended my 1st General Conference under his leadership! I was honored to be able to take a picture with him at the 2016 General Conference in Philadelphia, Pa at the unveiling of The Richard Allen Statue on the grounds of Mother Bethel!

Saundra Lucas-Fields - April 25, 2024 at 06:30 PM

SL

May his soul rest eternally!

Saundra Lucas-Fields - April 25, 2024 at 06:31 PM

CH

“ I wish to send my deepest condolences to the family of Bishop Frederick C. James, my plan upon finishing my classes this semester was to try to get down to South Carolina to visit with the Bishop and thank him for believing in me. I was blessed to have Bishop James ordain me as an Itinerant Deacon and then received my final ordination under the leadership of Bishop Vinton R. Andersen. I am deeply saddened that I was unable to visit prior to his passing, however my prayers have always been with the Bishop and I have lived up to the legacy that Bishop James has set for all clergy. Bishop James' legacy forever lives in my heart and I am grateful that he understood the importance of Ministry Beyond the Sanctuary. I grieve with you all, however the blessing is Bishop made a great impact on many of us and we will carry on his legacy and traditions with the help of Almighty God through the power of the Holy Spirit. My prayers are with the family during this your time of bereavement.

Respectfully submitted,

Chaplain Glenda Jennings Harrison

Second Episcopal District

Washington Annual Conference

Allen Chapel AME Church, S.E., Washington, D.C.

Pastor Michael E. Bell, Sr.

Home Church: Campbell AME Church S.E., Washington, D.C.



Chaplain Glenda Jennings Harrison - April 23, 2024 at 05:27 PM

“T

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



“The Bishop Frederick C. James & Dr. The - April 23, 2024 at 12:23 PM



“ Piccola Washington lit a candle in memory of Frederick James



Piccola Washington - April 21, 2024 at 08:36 PM

C(

“ Bishop James and my father the 112th Bishop C. Garnett Henning, Sr. laughing together about something one day. Thank you for your light Bishop James. Blessings forever, Carma Chinyere Love (Henning)

Carma Chinyere Love (Henning) - April 21, 2024 at 06:05 PM

CW

“ To the family of Bishop James. God welcomed His servant home - a true and faithful gift and servant. History will remember Bishop James greatness in the community and his shared everlasting unselfish love depicted to everyone. We are thankful that we were a part of his life's journey. Love to his family. A. P. III and Calvernetta Beasley Williams

calvernetta williams - April 20, 2024 at 11:37 AM

LN

“ *DECENTLY DIGNIFIED ,
MAGNIFICENTLY MANNERABLE AND
SERIOUSLY APPRECIATED.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMMACULATE
LEADERSHIP:
LEON N.SR., VIRGINIA B. RICHBURG & FAMILY
SUMMERTON, SC*

LEON N.RICHBURG,SR - April 20, 2024 at 09:38 AM