



Rev. Dr. Jimmy E Gilbert Jr.

September 20, 1940 - July 28, 2024

**** Special Highlight on Presiding Elder Jimmy E Gilbert, Jr. Ministerial Career****

All of those within the CME church, and countless others from various denominations, had often heard Jim refer to himself as “Nothing but an Old Gray-headed Country Preacher”. Many people continued to hear him use that excerpt even after he became a Presiding Elder. Those who knew him on his life’s journey came to realize that this “humbling phrase” was an anchor to keep him grounded to who he was and where he came from irrespective of any titles he attained. The CME Church’s appointment of him to serve as the Presiding Elder of the Charleston - Columbia District was one of his most treasured achievements as a minister in the CME church, as well as one of the most humbling and significant experiences in his long ministerial career. As the proud Presiding Elder of the Charleston - Columbia District, he provided leadership

guidance and oversaw the spiritual guidance to thirty-nine CME church Pastors in their respective pastorates. Throughout the years of his two tenures as Elder, Jim always had a special place in his heart for Retired Ministers who had given all of themselves in service to the church.

It was out of this concern, that during his second appointment as Presiding Elder; he instituted a Special District Retired Ministers Project to show them “Thank You” with an annual financial recognition of substance. The District Project later expanded to become

The Retired Ministers/Minister’s Spouses & Widows Project. Rev. Gilbert Served a total

of twenty years as Presiding Elder over two terms. His first appointment began in 1988 and ended in 1992 and his second was from 2001 until his retirement from active pastoring

in the CME Church in 2015. Reverend Dr. Jimmy Elbert Gilbert, Jr., a beacon of faith and a pillar of the Columbia, SC community, was born into this world on September 20, 1940, to the late Jimmy Elbert Gilbert, Sr., and Mary McFadden Gilbert in Danville, VA., and was lovingly raised by his grandmother, Lenora Donnell Gilbert in Greensboro, NC. On July 28, 2024, he completed his earthly journey and was called to his heavenly home. Rev. Gilbert was joined in holy matrimony to Attorney Annie Staton Gilbert and they were married for 53 years. From this union, they were blessed with two children, a daughter Lenora Ann and a son Jimmy, III.

Rev. Gilbert was referred to as “Big Jim” by his children and affectionately as “Jim” by his wife and friends. His journey began in Greensboro, NC, where the

foundations of his education were laid within the Guilford County Public School System, culminating with his graduation from Dudley High School. His thirst for knowledge led him to Livingston College in Salisbury, NC, where he earned the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1962. Furthering his academic pursuits, he later attained a Master of Divinity Degree from Wesley Theological Seminary at American University, and a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Howard University. His scholarly achievements were matched only by his unwavering devotion to faith and community. With a deep commitment to brotherhood, he pledged Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, taking pride in the lifelong title of “Nupe.”

After completing his college education, he felt a sense of duty to serve his nation and joined the United States Army in June, 1962. His commitment saw him through the first path of his military career ending active service in March, 1985. During his active services he was assigned to the esteemed 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions. While in active service he received his calling to the ministry, embracing his role as chaplain, providing spiritual guidance to those serving with him. He received, including, the Army Service Ribbon, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal, all were symbols of his dedication, but none were so cherished as the Jump Wings—the the Parachutist Badge—a mark for his bravery and were held close to his heart. After active duty, his passion for service did not wane, leading him to join the S.C. Army National Guard, where he served from 1975 to 1990 and was called to active duty during Desert Storm, serving from August, 1990 - February, 1991, rising through the ranks to the esteemed position of Captain.

Rev. Gilbert's journey as God's faithful servant began in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, marking the start of a ministerial career that would span more than four decades. His unwavering commitment to service,

deeply rooted in a caring spirit for others, left an indelible mark on the communities he touched. His service began in the communities of Washington, DC, where he laid the foundation for ministry, nurturing the faith of his flock. He furthered this devotion in Columbia, SC, Batesburg-Leesville, SC, and Greenville, SC, extending the same love, care, and concern for the souls of his members. His ministry was not confined to the walls of the church; it reached to the community, fostering growth and development within the church setting and beyond. Rev. Gilbert's legacy as a pivotal figure in the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, starting as a staffer and Research Director, becoming the first Executive Director saw the inception of the Corporate Roundtable, all a testament to his visionary leadership. Rev. Gilbert's profound impact on the Caucus and its initiatives reflects a life dedicated to service, leadership, and the betterment of others.

Highlights of professional work experience:

- Research Consultant at the Office of the Governor in Columbia, SC, contributing to policy development and strategic initiatives, Columbia, SC.
- Educated future leaders as an Adjunct Professor at Midlands Technical College (Columbia, SC), Hood Theology Sermon School (Salisbury, NC), and Morris College -Pastoral Ministry Program (Sumter, SC).
- Advanced housing opportunities as a Staff Research/Field Representative for the Housing Opportunities Council in Metropolitan Washington, DC.
- Fostered community and youth development as Director-Coordinator of the Brentwood -Youth Center in Washington, DC.
- Championed youth empowerment through leadership as Director-Organizer of the Northwest Neighborhood Youth Organization in Washington, DC.
- Advocated for urban community improvement as a Community Organizer at the Wesley Institute for Urban Ministry in Washington, DC.
- Addressed youth gang challenges with innovative programs as a Youth Gang
- Supervisor at Wesley Institute Seminary in Washington, DC.
- Supported migrant communities as a Migrant Minister for the Pennsylvania

Council of Churches in Harrisburg, PA.

A vision birthed from his doctoral thesis; he, along with eight members of Israel Metro created a Community Development Corporation, the only faith based corporation in Greenville, SC that was established from a 501(c3), IMESA foundation was a pioneering initiative that brought valuable social services and technological advancement as a linkage between the community and church. Under his guidance, a significant partnership with the Urban League of Upstate South Carolina, First Union Bank, and the foundation exemplifies his life's work as a shining example of the extraordinary outcomes that can be achieved when compassion is coupled with action for the collective benefit.

Rev. Gilbert was recognized far and wide, earning him recommendations from the Richland County Legislative Delegation and appointments by Governor Edwards and Governor Riley to lead the Board of Columbia Area Mental Health Center, a regional agency with a staff of 130, demonstrating his exceptional administrative capabilities and his passion for mental health advocacy.

Highlights of volunteer services:

- Contact Help, Inc. Pre Release Center Advisory Committee, Columbia, SC
- Community Care, Inc., Columbia, SC
- The Killingsworth Home for Girls, Columbia, SC
- Operation PUSII, Columbia, SC
- Greater Columbia Relations Council, Columbia, SC
- Richland County Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee, Columbia, SC
- Executive Board of the Central South Carolina Council of the Boy Scouts of America, Columbia, SC
- Alston Wilkes Society
- Governor's Task Force on Highway Safety

- Christian Action Council
- United Way of the Midlands
- Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program Advisory Council
- The South Carolina Employment and Training Council
- The annual ALS Walk
- Ministerial Alliance of Columbia
- Chairman, Social Actions Committee
- Vice Chair, Midlands Housing Coalition

Awards recognition for selfless service to community:

- Outstanding Service Board Chairperson of the Columbia Area Mental Health Center
- Outstanding Service as Board Member of the Family Service Center of Columbia
- Special recognition for outstanding service and dedication service to the National -Training School for Boys
- The Lemond-Riggs Citizens Association award for outstanding service to the community
- Boys Clubs of America award for cooperation and support

His legacy of church leadership and community service will forever be cherished and remembered.

Rev. Gilbert was preceded in death by his parents, Jimmy Elbert Gilbert, Sr. and Mary Mcfadden Gilbert, and his only brother, Willie Harper. He leaves to remember his life and cherished memories: his supportive wife of 53 years, Annie Staton Gilbert, Esq., Pinteops, NC, one daughter, Lenora Ann Gilbert Ross (Dennis), Pittsboro, NC; and one son, Jimmy Elbert Gilbert, III, Pinetops, NC; three sisters, Mamie Mae Stone and Mary Lee Utsey, New York, NY; Margie Stewart, Greensboro, NC, and a host of nieces and nephews, other

relatives and friends.

The family is requesting that all
“very much appreciated “cards, letters, telegram expressions of
sympathy/condolences be sent to Palmers Memorial Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that donations be made in memory
of Rev Dr. Jimmy E. Gilbert , Jr. to the Charleston-Columbia District,
"designated" for The Retired Ministers and Ministers Spouses /Widows of the
Charleston-Columbia District.

Please make checks or money orders payable to The Charleston-Columbia
District.

2 Rebecca's Ct.

North Augusta, S.C. 29860

Previous Events

Public Viewing

AUG 16. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223

Lie in State

AUG 17. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Sidney Park CME Church
1114 Blanding Street
Columbia, SC 29201

A Celebration of Life

AUG 17. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Sidney Park CME Church
1114 Blanding Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Tribute Wall

HB

“ *Dr. Jimmy Gilbert was a bridge for me when my life was seemingly flooding. I thank God for his leadership and guidance as my Pastor. May God continue to guide and comfort his wife & children!*

Helen Brooks - September 11, 2024 at 10:19 PM

MS

“ *Thank you thank you for being the man of God that you was to me at Israel CME church in Greenville, SC. You taught me how to become a man thru your teachings thru the word and Bible study as well. I just wish I would have walked into my calling while you was still here, But God!!! Take your rest sir.*

Michael Kyle Samuels - August 25, 2024 at 09:16 PM

DM

“ *My sincere condolences to my sister Ann, niece Lenora and nephew JD. I was "Aunt Dorothy" to Jim, even before the children came along. I guess I reminded Jim of one of his aunts. I will forever appreciate the experiences Ann and Jim provided for me during my early college years. I was extremely introverted and they made it possible for me to meet interesting people and visit interesting places, allowing me to come out of my comfort zone and grow. Thank you Jim for being that kind of brother-in-law. May you rest in peace. "Aunt" Dorothy, Grady, Crystal, Ian and Shala*



Dorothy Massey - August 17, 2024 at 10:02 AM

VC

“ On Behalf of the Dunham Temple CME Church, Greenwood, SC, we express our sincere and deepest condolences to the Gilbert family. We are very saddened by the loss of this great and humble man of God. Rev. Dr. Jimmy Gilbert will be missed, at Dunham Temple as he would journey every first Sunday, for special programs and holidays to worship with us. We shall forever remember his words as Rev. McKee is preaching "make it plan Doc" or to the choir "sing me happy children." Take your rest Rev. Dr. Gilbert. We love dearly, but God loved you best.

Vanessa Frazier - Dunham Temple CME Chur - August 17, 2024 at 08:11 AM

LV

“ May God bless and comfort you and the family during this time of sorrow. Please accept our sincere condolences. Leah Staton Vines and sons, Travis, Victor and Vernon Vines

Leah S. vines - August 16, 2024 at 05:24 PM

SR

“ My sincere and heartfelt sympathy and condolences to Anne and children. Rest in peace my dear and years long friend, Dr. Jimmy Gilbert.

Shirley Robinson - August 16, 2024 at 12:43 PM

SK

“ On behalf of Rev. Curly M. Teasdell and the Martin Temple CME church family, we extend our heartfelt condolences to the family. We pray for strength as you go through your time of bereavement.



Sonia Shereen King - August 16, 2024 at 01:24 AM

DA

“ *My sincere condolences to the family of my good friend and brother am going truly miss you .Our talk and my Bible verses I been sending you everyday to the last may God forever bless your soul.*

Doris A.Bates - August 15, 2024 at 09:25 PM



“ *As I reflect on the life-living of my friend, my minister and my State Farm Insurance agent, I am going to miss our banter that occurred each time I walked my insurance envelope to his office on Assembly St. It mattered not that I may have been on my errands in between work hours and often in a hurry, he would insist that I sit & chat...and I did, even if the dime in my meter had expired. We would chat & catch up from our last conversation which was brief but covered the who, what & when. Our history went back to his years as director of the SC Legislative Black Caucus & a few of us, as college students volunteered several hours a week*

I also remember his tenure at Sidney Park CME Church. He was a prolific Minister of the Gospel. Oh how he could bring it when he stood behind the sacred desk.

I always enjoyed his sermons as the inspiring artifacts that they were my listening ears.

I'm sure I still have remnants of my notes taken during sermons I was privileged to hear him preach. I shall cherish those prophetic words that emanated from the depths of his soul.

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Gilbert was indeed, somebody's preacher. I shall miss him for our midst.

May he rest in heavenly peace and power.

My special condolences to his family and who

Marian Kohn - August 15, 2024 at 12:21 AM

TE

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



Tammy Harrison Edwards - August 13, 2024 at 06:59 AM

SK

“ On Behalf of the Missionary Society of the Charleston-Columbia District, we express our deepest condolences to the family. We are deeply saddened by the loss of this great soldier. Rev. Dr. Jimmy Gilbert will always hold a special place in our hearts.



Sonia Shereen King - August 11, 2024 at 09:30 PM

JN

“ Our sincere condolences to the Family of Rev. Dr. Jimmy E. Gilbert, Jr. Rest in Heavenly Peace, my Brother!

Jerome & Pat Noble



Jerome & Pat Noble - August 11, 2024 at 09:04 AM



“ 25 years ago U licensed me to preach and U always believed in me when others didn't and I will always remember and never forget you for that Dr. Gilbert I Love U and U will always hold a special special place in mines and my mom's heart! To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord! Get your rest!!!!

Keyon Lytes - August 09, 2024 at 10:06 PM