



Rev. Jay Arter Watkins

February 5, 1927 - May 1, 2015

WATKINS, Rev. Jay Arter - Age 88, passed away Friday, May 1, 2015 at McLaren - Flint. Family hour 10 a.m. Monday, May 11, 2015 at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, G-5443 N. Saginaw St., with funeral service commencing at 11 a.m. Bishop Neal Roberson officiating. Interment Great Lakes National Cemetery, G-4200 Belford Rd., Holly, MI. Friends and pallbearers will assemble at the church 10 a.m. Monday. Rev. Watkins will lie in state in the Chapel of Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home, 906 W. Flint Park Blvd., and may be viewed from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. with family present from 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. Sunday.

Rev. Jay Arter Watkins was born February 5, 1927 in Flint, Michigan to Rev. Ira and Elnora Pasty Watkins. He was the 4th oldest of 7 children. Rev. Watkins accepted Christ at an early age at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, under the leadership of his father, Rev. Ira Watkins. However, he was baptized by his uncle, Rev. Charlie Watkins in the Flint River. He was a 1945 graduate of Flint Northern High school and also attended Flint Junior College. In 1944, a Flint Northern, he was recognized as Flint Northern's All City Halfback, leading the team in scoring 46 points. He was awarded Most Valuable player and also Second Team Halfback All Saginaw Valley. Rev. Watkins served in the U. S. Navy in 1945 as a Seamen First Class, being Honorably Discharged on July 12, 1946. He was an outstanding Boxer. In 1946, while serving in the Navy, he received the award for the New Orleans

Naval Base Welterweight Champion. Rev. Watkins continued to box after returning home to Flint, and was awarded the Flint Golden Gloves Light weight Champion, and the State of Michigan Golden Gloves Light weight Champion. In 1947 he won 17 straight Pro fights. From 1947-1956, Rev. Watkins compiled a Pro career of 57 wins, 5 losses and 1 draw. He was one of 3 top lightweights in Michigan. Joe Magdell, manager for Rev. Watkins said, "He hits like a hammer (a big hammer that is)". Norm Bryant said, "If Watkins hit you, you are going down". On February 23, 1992 Rev. Watkins was inducted into The Greater Flint Afro-American Hall of Fame for the category of Multiple Sports. He worked at Chevrolet "Chevy in the Hole", a division of General Motors, retiring in 1981, with 31 years of service.

On March 14, 1964 Rev. Watkins married his sweetheart, Verneice Brown. They enjoyed traveling, bowling, and mentoring many young children in Verneice's Day Care. Rev. Watkins' love of children was the encouraging factor that set in motion the decision to be a Day Care provider. He was a Sunday School Teacher for more than 10 years at Macedonia, as well as the Director of the Junior Church for about 5 years. If you ever met Rev. Watkins he made sure you knew the Beatitudes (Matt 5:3-11), and how to sing, "Oh How I Love Jesus". On June 3, 1973 Rev. Watkins was "solemnly and publicly set apart and ordained to the work of THE GOSPEL MINISTRY by authority and order of the Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Rev. Clarence Knox". In 1982, he was installed as Pastor of Austin Ave. Baptist Church. He served as Pastor of Austin Ave Baptist Church for 2 years, then founded Pilgrim Rest Missionary Baptist Church. In 2002, Rev. Watkins returned to Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, his home church and remained there until his time of death. He was always encouraging others and letting them know they could do all things through Christ who strengthens them. Rev. Watkins loved to swim and was ready to swim wherever there was water especially at Berston Field House. He loved to bowl and won many trophies doing so. Whenever he was traveling and saw a bowling alley, he and

Verneice would stop and bowl. His love for children was infectious, allowing Rev. Watkins to be a kid again.

He leaves in God's care: loving wife of 51 years, Verneice; grandsons, Ryan Watkins of Ohio, Reggie (Vennise) Person of Flint, MI, and Robert Brown of Memphis, TN; great-grandchildren he helped to raise, Justin, Jaqueline and Jessica Blackwell all of Flint, MI. He was affectionately known to them as "Billy". Great-granddaughter, Simone Coleman of Atlanta, GA; great-great-grandson, Julies Blackwell of Flint, MI; many nieces and nephews; sister, MC Lavenia (Rev. Dr. Turner) Hartfield; brother, Reverends Leion (Lois) Watkins of Tulsa, OK.

Rev. Watkins was preceded in death by: daughter, Shirley Person; son, Jay Lamare Watkins; parents, Rev. Ira and Elnora Patsy Watkins; sister, Christeen (Rev. Ervin) Young; and brothers, Ivory (Geraldine), Larry and Rev. Eugeno Sylvester (Carrie) Watkins.

The family would like to give special thanks to Bishop Neal Rovberson and the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church family, Rev. Donald Hughes and the Austin Avenue Baptist Church family. Special thanks to the nurses at McLaren – Flint 8th floor, especially Dan.

GOD SAW THE ROAD

God saw the road was getting rough,
The hills were hard to climb;
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.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne
shall feed them, and shall lead them
unto living fountains of waters; and God
shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Revelation 7:17

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

G-4200 Belford Rd.
Holly, MI 48442

Previous Events

Public Viewing

MAY 10. 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home Chapel, Flint
906 W. Flint Park Blvd.
Flint, MI 48505
(810) 789-MOON (6666)
lemoonfhflint@gmail.com
<http://www.lawrenceemoonfuneralhome.com>

Family Present

MAY 10. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home Chapel, Flint
906 W. Flint Park Blvd.
Flint, MI 48505
(810) 789-MOON (6666)
lemoonfhflint@gmail.com
<http://www.lawrenceemoonfuneralhome.com>

Family hour

MAY 11. 10:00 AM (ET)

Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church
G-5443 N. Saginaw Street
Flint, MI 48505

Service

MAY 11. 11:00 AM (ET)

Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church
G-5443 N. Saginaw Street
Flint, MI 48505

Tribute Wall



“ *Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*

October 09, 2023 at 07:02 AM



“ *I'm speechless. So many memories of this man n his wife. My favorite pastor/friend/uncle of all times. Rest easy. Thanks for always being there for the "Nunn" sisters.*
Orenetta Nunn



Orenetta Nunn - October 28, 2020 at 04:16 PM



“ *Loria Corder sent a virtual gift in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Loria Corder - May 09, 2015 at 10:07 AM



“ *Tamika Harden lit a candle in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Tamika Harden - May 09, 2015 at 07:11 AM

RD

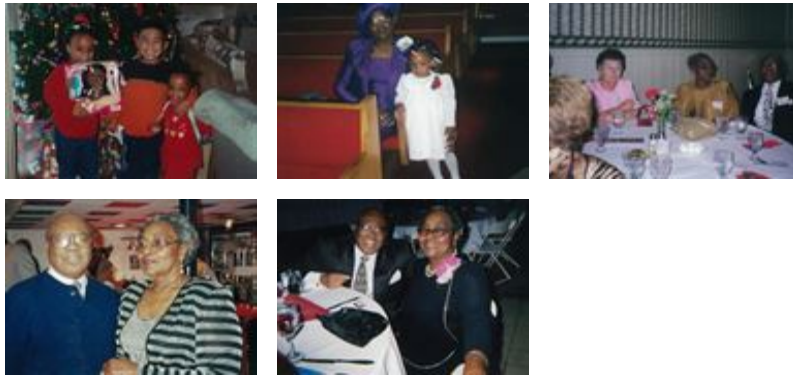
“ Rudy D.Ward lit a candle in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins



Rudy D.Ward - May 08, 2015 at 05:26 PM



“ 64 files added to the album Life Tributes



Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home - May 08, 2015 at 04:19 PM

JC

“ Sister Watkins our prayers are with you and your family. Rev Watkins and I shared a long history he was one of my first Sunday school teachers at the old church over 55 years ago.

Thank God for 88 years

Josiah & Lawrencene Curry

josiah curry - May 08, 2015 at 09:27 AM

AB

“ *Ashlee Butler lit a candle in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Ashlee Butler - May 07, 2015 at 12:12 PM

CW

“ *I remember our talks about God. When I was first called into ministry. He said never forget its only between you and God ,and the rest will fall into place. I Love you and miss you. Pastor Cynthia Watkins*

cynthia watkins - May 07, 2015 at 09:35 AM



“ *Quiet Storm sent a virtual gift in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Quiet Storm - May 06, 2015 at 10:30 AM

KC

A wonderful Man of GOD

Keith R. Champion - May 07, 2015 at 08:33 AM

WM

“ *Wilma Jones Matlock lit a candle in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Wilma Jones Matlock - May 04, 2015 at 08:47 PM



“ *Wanda Baker lit a candle in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Wanda Baker - May 04, 2015 at 05:59 PM

MW

“ *Mary A. Williams sent a virtual gift in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Mary A. Williams - May 04, 2015 at 05:32 PM



“ *Shirley Brown sent a virtual gift in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Shirley Brown - May 03, 2015 at 05:18 PM

RM

“ *Robert & Hattie McKay lit a candle in memory of Rev. Jay Arter Watkins*



Robert & Hattie McKay - May 03, 2015 at 02:48 PM

RM

Rev. Watkins was our Pastor for a few years,at Austin Avenue & Pilgrim Rest. A nicer person you could never find. Jay Watkins will truly be missed. Rest on Pastor we will see you on the other side. Bob & Hattie McKay

Robert & Hattie McKay - May 03, 2015 at 06:44 PM

CF

“ *ALTHOUGH THERE IS LITTLE WE CAN SAY AT THIS TIME WHEN SORROW HAS TOUCHED YOUR HEART, WE WANT YOU TO KNOW OUR WARMEST THOUGHTS ARE WITH YOU NOW. "BUT MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED ACCORDING TO HIS RICHES IN GLORY BY CHRIST JESUS." PHILIPPIANS 4:19.*

C. CARR & BARNES FAMILY - May 02, 2015 at 03:41 PM