

HONORING A LEGACY OF FEW MEN OF MESSIAS TEMPLE

Fathers Day 2025



Deacon Melvin Bass



The life of Melvin Bass had accomplished many deeds with his industrious hands and benevolent heart. He was born in Ypsilanti, Michigan, the eighth child of Moses and Gertrude (Walls) Bass. He attended Ypsilanti High School and served his country by entering the United States Army during World War II. He married his high school sweetheart Dorothy Foley and God blessed this union with seven children.

Aside from being a loving father and husband, Melvin, with the training and help from his father, formed a construction company that enabled him to personally renovate the house that he and his several siblings were born. He was considered a Master in the Building Trade. The skills that he obtained from the Chicago Technical Institute, assisted in his receiving a job, as the first African American Chief Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Director for the City of Ypsilanti. He retired on March 30, 1990, but continued to work part-time.

He facilitated the construction of five churches including the current Messiah Temple. His master work could also be seen in upscale National Architectural/ Home publications. He received a 50 year service award from the Bricklayers Union. He was baptized in Jesus name in 1965 at Messiah Temple Church on Monroe Street (a church that his father built). He was a devote man of God, minister of the Word and a dynamic Sunday School teacher, trustee, and deacon at Messiah Temple. He was very compassionate and demonstrated the fruit of the Holy Spirit within him. His compassion was so empowering that it had a contagious effect of warming the hearts of those around himeven those infectious tears that flowed many times during church service or conversations.

Deacon Aldonis Bond



After graduating from high school in Tennessee, Aldonis Bond enlisted in the United States Army. Following his military service, Al began working with the City of Ann Arbor Forestry Department, where he was a dedicated employee for 28 years. Upon retirement, Al found joy in working in his yard, often alongside his beloved grandchildren. He was gifted with skilled hands and a strong work ethic—talents he used generously to help others. Many people benefited from his craftsmanship and were deeply grateful for his kindness and service.

With a deep love for the outdoors, Al started his own landscaping business, through which he made many lifelong friends. He was known for his great sense of humor and his ever-welcoming, warm smile. Al also had a fondness for horses and was often seen enjoying classic Western movies.

In 1998, Al became a member of Messiah Temple Church. He proudly served on the Official Board and took great pride in maintaining the church grounds and its associated properties. His dedication to both his faith and community was evident in all he did.

Deacon Douglas Franklin



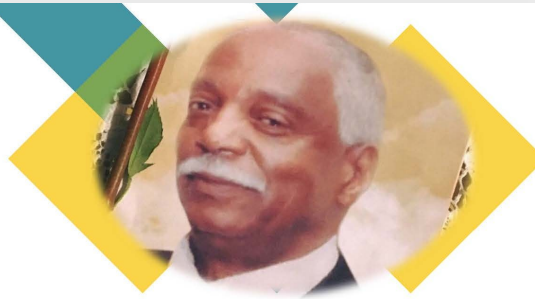
Deacon Douglas Franklin stood as one of the longest-serving and most cherished members of Messiah Temple Church. A true pillar of our congregation, he carried the role of church historian with deep pride, always ready with his camera to capture moments that would become treasured memories for generations to come.

Deacon Franklin's presence was felt in every corner of the church — faithfully supporting every ministry, never missing an opportunity to serve. Whether it was through his leadership on the Official Board, his nurturing spirit in Sunday School, or his generous heart in the Food Program, he gave his all.

He was not only a servant — he was an artist. His love for playing the guitar brought a unique and joyful spirit to our worship, often strumming melodies that uplifted our souls.

A man of unwavering faith, boundless commitment, and a heart full of love — Deacon Franklin's legacy is stitched into the very fabric of Messiah Temple. We remember him with gratitude, honor, and deep affection."

Bro. William Grayson



William Grayson was born in Ypsilanti, Michigan, to Findley and Mary Grayson. He was educated in the Ypsilanti Public School system and went on to further his education at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, where he earned an Associate's Degree. William began his career at the University of Michigan, working in the Operating Room. He later joined Ford Motor Company at the Ypsilanti Plant, where he spent the majority of his professional life. In his later years with Ford, he served as a Benefits Representative. After 38 years of dedicated service, William retired from the company.

William became a devoted member of Messiah Temple Church, where he was baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost under the pastoral leadership of his brother, Bishop Harry S. Grayson. At Messiah Temple, William was a quiet yet powerful presence—a faithful and tireless worker in the ministry. He had a deep love for both the young and the elderly and was known for his generosity, humility, and servant's heart. His commitment to the work of the Kingdom was unwavering, and he was considered a great asset to both the church and its leadership.

Among the many roles William held at Messiah Temple, one of his most impactful was serving as Coordinator of the church's Food Program. His passion and leadership helped build the program into a respected model, recognized across the state. He led this ministry faithfully for 11 years. In addition, William served as Head of the Trustee Board, a Sunday School Teacher, and contributed in various administrative capacities. Wherever there was a need, William was present—committed, dependable, and devoted to serving others.

Bro. Ralph Walton



Ralph Walton was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Wesley and Annie Maude (Reeves) Walton. He attended and graduated from Lincoln High School. Shortly after, he began his career at the University of Michigan Hospital and later went on to work for General Motors.

Ralph was a long-serving and devoted member of Messiah Temple Church in Ypsilanti, Michigan. He played a vital role in the Holy Smoke and Men's Ministry programs, served faithfully on the Usher Board, worked tirelessly in the church's Food Program, and was a loyal Trustee. His dedication to his faith and church community was unwavering.

Family was central to Ralph's life. He cherished spending quality time with his loved ones and had a passion for cooking—though he loved eating even more. He was a fan of jazz concerts and took great pride in attending his grandchildren's games and performances. Above all, Ralph found joy in caring for his lawn, tending to yard work, and keeping his car spotless—always maintained to perfection.

Bro. Rufus Williams



Rufus Williams was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to Lindsey and Nancy Williams, one of sixteen children. He often spoke with pride and affection about his large family and the time he spent working on the family farm. His strong work ethic was a legacy passed down from his father.

Following the passing of his mother, Nancy, the family moved to Ypsilanti, Michigan, in 1970. In 2002, Rufus became a devoted member of Messiah Temple Church under the leadership of Bishop Harry Grayson and Lady Grayson. There, he faithfully served as a trustee, groundskeeper, and dedicated doorkeeper, especially for the 5 a.m. prayer meetings and other services. Deacon Williams was known for his integrity, reliability, and the seriousness with which he approached every task. He was a man of his word—trustworthy and deeply respected.

Rufus led a life of hard work and purpose. He held various jobs before beginning a long and dependable career at Washtenaw Community College, where he was known for his excellent attendance and strong commitment to his work. After 20 years of dedicated service, he retired to focus on his passion—his own business, Williams Lawn Service.

For over two decades, Rufus poured his heart into his lawn care business, treating every yard with pride and every client with respect. His work extended beyond business—he was a faithful servant in all areas of life. He paid special attention to seniors, widows, individuals with disabilities, and those in need, always offering his time and talents with compassion and humility.

Bro. Theodore Wimberly



Theodore Wimberly was born in Albion, Michigan, to Thomas and Lucille Wimberly. As a young man with a spirit of adventure, he enlisted in the United States Navy, eager to see the world. He proudly served aboard the USS *Okinawa*, where he was responsible for operations both on and beneath the sea.

After his military service, Ted began working for Ford Motor Company. He was a dedicated and hardworking employee, remaining with the company until his retirement in 2000.

Ted became a pillar of his neighborhood, well known for his impeccable taste and beautifully maintained yard, which he tended to with great care and pride. His home was a reflection of his high standards and attention to detail.

When he wasn't working in his yard, attending church, or enjoying time with family and friends, Ted could often be found on the golf course. He was an avid golfer who cherished his time on the green.

Ted dedicated his life to the Lord and was filled with the Holy Ghost at Messiah Temple Church under the leadership of Bishop Harry S. Grayson. Throughout his time at Messiah Temple, he served faithfully in many capacities—including trustee, usher, food pantry volunteer, and as a member of both the Men's Ministry and the choir. His devotion to service was evident, and he gave his best in every role until his health no longer allowed him to continue.

IF I HAVE SEEN FURTHER,
IT IS BY STANDING
**ON THE SHOULDERS
OF GIANTS.**

- ISAAC NEWTON

