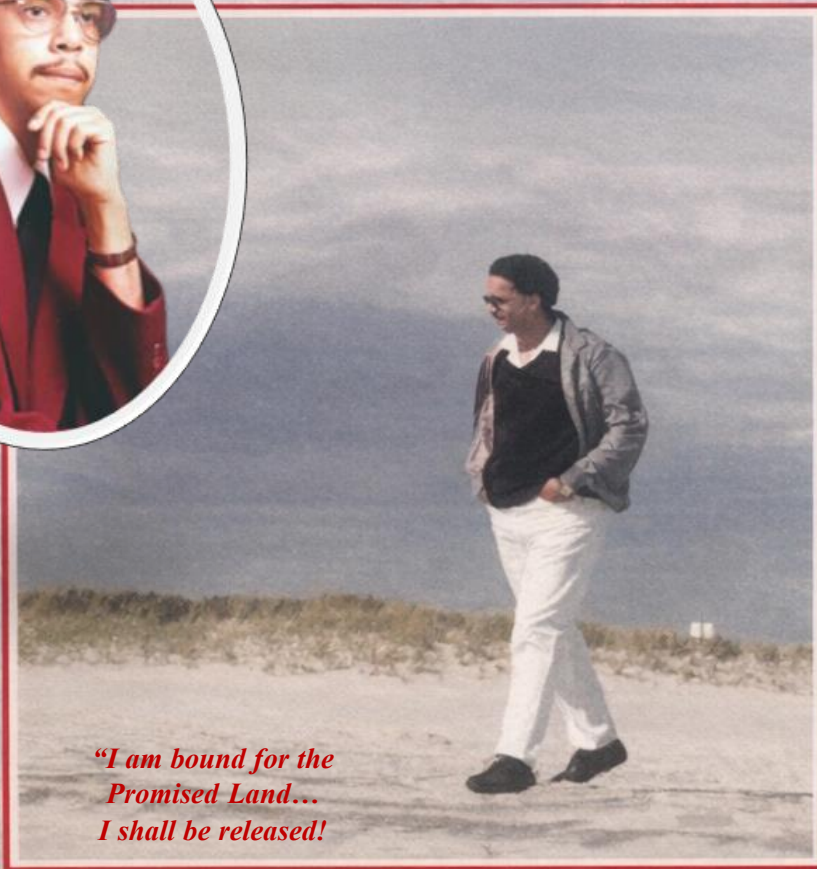




Celebration of Life

— in Loving Memory —



*"I am bound for the
Promised Land...
I shall be released!"*

James Robert Edwards

November 23, 1948 – March 10, 2026

Homegoing Service - Thursday, March 19, 2026 - 12:00 noon
Family Visitation 11:00 a.m.

Christian View Missionary Baptist Church
360 Arrowhead Circle * Spencer, VA 24148
Rev. Gregory Perkins, *Presiding*
Rev. James Houchins, *Eulogist*

Obituary

*"It's difficult to hold on sometimes-
but someday beyond our tears and all the world's wrongs,
beyond the clouds and all we can see and touch,
there will be love, compassion and justice, and we shall all understand."*

Flavia

James Robert Edwards, 77, was born in Patrick County to the late Margaret Ruth Houchins Edwards and Robert Lee Edwards, after three days of arduous labor. The small rental house located in the 'Holla" up from the community called 'NEED MO' was the home of his maternal grandparents, George Houchins, Sr. and Odessa Rucker Houchins. His paternal grandparents were the late James Wythe and Fannie "Grubus" Redd Edwards Taylor. He surrendered to the Masters call Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at Stony Brook Hospital in New York, with his son, sister and brother-in-law by his side.

In 1951 the family moved from Stuart, VA to Ridgeway, VA. James attended Richard H. Clarke and Samuel H. Hairston Elementary Schools. He graduated from George Washington Carver High School in May 1967. He went on to earn his B.S. degree in History from Hampton University in 1971. He continued his studies at the University of New York at Stony Brook, earning an M.A. in Liberal Studies in 1979. Further work was done at Long Island University – C.W. Post College, where he received a M.S. in Education in 1983.

James worked as a bagboy after school and summers at Cooper & Ratcliffe Supermarket Riverhill.

At an early age James became a member, along with his brother Michael, of First Christian Church of Stuart, VA. He served in the Usher Fellowship. Soon after arriving on Long Island in 1971, James started attending Bethel AME Church Setauket, Setauket, NY and became a member January 1972. He sang in the senior choir, served on the usher board, and a Trustee.

His teaching career began at The Stony Brook Prep School in Stony Brook, NY in the fall of 1971. Here he taught history and social studies. He also served as the work-to-job supervisor, dormitory master, campus master, and counselor. This was a time of personal growth and development. The next step in his job experience was in the Mail and Messenger Department at Stony Brook University 1977-1980.

James entered the field of Special Education at Sagamore Psychiatric Center for Children and Youth in Dix Hills, NY in 1980, where he became a teacher working with the highest functioning senior and junior high students. James retired in August 2011, with 34 years of service in NY.

James became the full-time caregiver, Steward, and patient advocate for his longtime partner, Charles M. Johnson, Jr. until his death in 2021.

James was a Life member of the NAACP, The Open Society of Long Island (an adoption advocacy group), the NY Council on Adoptable Children, officer of the Higher Ground Historical Society, member and supporter of FAHI (Fayette Area Historical Initiative) Museum of Martinsville, VA. From 1985 to 2001 he was a hotline counselor for the Long Island Association of AIDS Care.

In addition to his parents, and grandparents, he was preceded in death by his brother Michael Edwards, Sr. He leaves behind to celebrate his life one son, Arthur L. Edwards of Jersey City, NJ; one sister, Susan Edwards (Jaime) Torres of Ridgeway, VA; one Sister-in-Law, Valeria "Lybbie" Edwards of Ridgeway, VA; three (3) grandchildren, Arthur J. Edwards, Jr. of Jersey City, NJ; Breanna Edwards and Sheena Edwards of CA; two aunts, Edith Pitzer of Martinsville, and Iris Stone (Andrew) Patterson of Ridgeway; Niece and nephews Cerise (Timothy) Waiters of Stockton, CA; William (Chelsea) Torres of Ridgeway, VA; Michael W. (Ulonda) Edwards of Ridgeway, VA; Erik Torres of Ridgeway, VA and Henry Torres of CA; and a host of great nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

*"Once in a while someone touches our lives
leaving us with watercolored moments
that stay in our hearts forever...
Flavia*

IN TIMES OF DARKNESS

LOVE SEES

IN TIMES OF SILENCE

LOVE HEARS ...

IN TIMES OF DOUBT

LOVE HOPES...

IN TIMES OF SORROW

LOVE HEALS

AND IN ALL TIMES

LOVE REMEMBERS ...

-The Family

Order of Services

PROCESSIONAL Ministers & Family

Visitation Hour

11:00 a.m.

Homegoing Service

12:00 noon

OPENING SELECTION Christian View Adult Choir

“The Last Mile of the Way”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

The Shepherd Psalm / Psalm 23 Rev. Timothy Waiters
Old Testament – Job 19:23-27..... Rev. Richard Spencer
New Testament – I Thessalonians 4:14-17..... Rev. H. Douglas Scales

PRAYER OF COMFORT..... Bishop Randy Martin

SOLO MiChaela Edwards

“I Can Only Imagine”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / OBITUARY..... Valeria Edwards

SELECTION

RECOGNITION OF MINISTERS..... Rev. Kathy Thomas-Grant, Past Moderator
Piedmont District Convention - Disciples of Christ

TRIBUTE Michael Edwards, Jr. - Nephew
Cerise Waiters, Niece

REFLECTIONS Valerie Pettie, G.W. Carver of Fieldale, VA - Class of 1967
Naomi Hodge-Muse, MHC NAACP #7089
Ralph and Renee Payne, Cousins

EULOGY..... Rev. James Houchins
Associate Minister - First Christian Church (DOC) – Stuart, VA

CLOSING SELECTION..... Christian View Adult Choir
“On Jordans Stormy Bank”

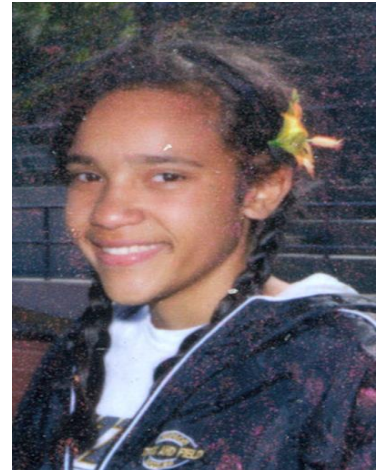
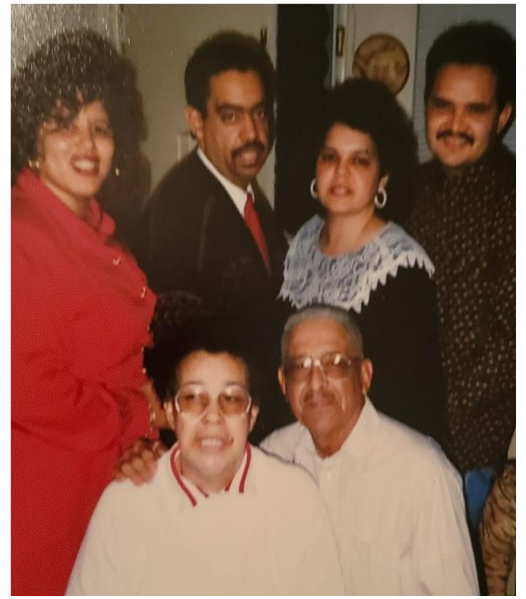
BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL

Committal & Internment

*Spencer-Redd Family Cemetery * Ridgeway, VA*

Precious Memories...





2026 - Published Author

Preface

I started collecting stories about the family from my Grandmother (*Grubus* - I couldn't pronounce Grandmother Edwards as a young child). In 1973 after the death of my Grandfather Wythe Edwards Grubbus started telling the family history (*as she knew it*) while sitting in her living room ... I started taking notes. She knew as much about the Edwards family as she knew about her family, the George Redd family. I collected information from both sides of my family. The result sometimes was like the game "Telephone". Please forgive any omissions, mistakes, or various misconceptions that are recorded here.

My Mother's family: Houchins, Rucker, Staples

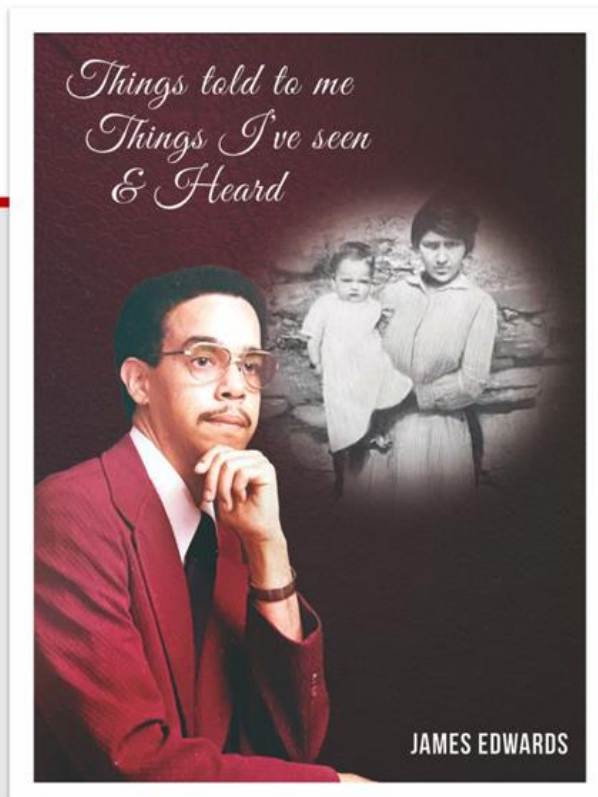
My Father's family: Edwards, Redd, Spencer

Thanks for being an inspiration and an example to the SPENCER- REDD FAMILY REUNION, the STAPLES-RUCKER- HOUCHINS FAMILY REUNION, and the FAYETTE AREA HISTORICAL INITIATIVE.

Special, special thanks to Rev. Lisa Williams for her encouragement to publish this effort. Her technical work required much time and investment.

James Edwards

**Available
soon on
Amazon!**



Flower Bearers

Nieces & Cousins

Pall Bearers

Arthur Edwards
Michael Edwards, Jr.

Moir "Chee Chee" Edwards
Percy Welch

In Appreciation:

Perhaps you sent a card or a flower, brought food or paper goods, or you may not have been there, but whispered a prayer. The family of James Robert Edwards acknowledges with sincere gratitude the expressions of sympathy, concern, prayers, and every act and token of kindness expressed during this time of his illness and this time of bereavement. Thank you Pastor Lisa Williams of Bethel AME Zion Church, E. Setauket, NY; the doctors and caring staff of Stony Brook Hospital, NY; Christian View Missionary Baptist Church and First Christian Church DOC, as well as Perry & Spencer Funeral Home for services rendered. May God Bless each one of you!

-The Family



Arrangements & Services Entrusted to:

**Perry & Spencer Funeral Home
402 Short St. * Madison, NC 27025
(336) 548-9617 * lperr01@aol.com**