

Celebrating
The Life Of
Walter Joseph Johnson Sr.

sunrise FEBRUARY 11, 1947

sunset MAY 16, 2026

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2026 | 1:00 PM

SPRINGFIELD MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

2050 BETHANY CHURCH ROAD, MADISON, GA 30650

PASTOR BISHOP KENNETH JONES, OFFICIANT | MINISTER ERIC D. THREETS, EULOGIST

THE DASH
THE LIFE, LEGACY, & JOURNEY
of
Walter Joseph Johnson Sr.

A LIFE LIVED ON HIS OWN TERMS

Today we celebrate the life of our brother, father, and grandfather, Walter Joseph Johnson, Sr. He heard his name called Saturday, May 16, 2026. He was surrounded by his sons and other family members and friends in the home of his deceased parents in Madison, Georgia.



Walter was born on February 11, 1947. He was the fourth of six children born to Mr. Freddie Douglas and Mrs. Lillie Pearl Johnson. She often shared that he was the only child she never weened. When he chose not to nurse any more, he just stopped. This became his pattern throughout his life. When he wanted to begin or end something was done on his own terms and timeframe.

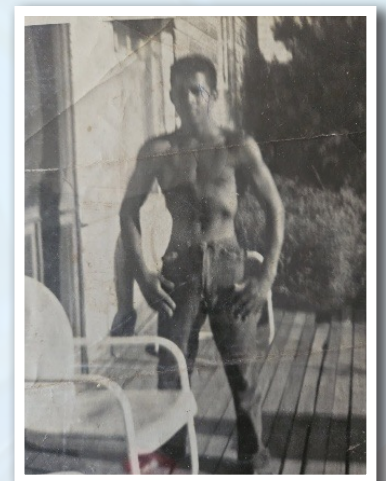


FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH, LABOR, AND SERVICE

Raised by a deacon father and a church secretary mother, Walter and his siblings were taught early on the profound importance of family, faith, and honest labor while growing up on the family farm



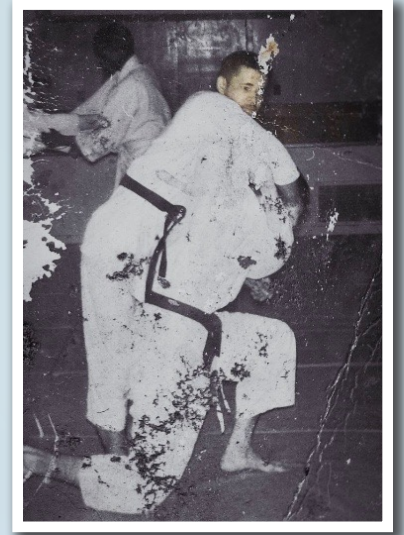
He became a member of Springfield Baptist Church at a very early age and remained a dedicated, active member throughout his entire life. In his later years, he served faithfully in the transportation ministry as a van driver and spent every Sunday upstairs in the media ministry operating the church sound system.





As a young child, Walter received his early education from Springfield Church School and later attended Pearl High School and graduated with honors in 1964 and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he served 4 years.

While serving he traveled the world, learned the art of Judo and successfully competed in bouts nationally and internationally.



THE JOURNEY HOME: ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FAMILY

After being honorably discharged from the Air Force, Walter used his GI Bill to explore what might be a proper professional fit for him. First, he enrolled in Fort Valley State and later



Paine College where he met his future wife, Louise Gardner. He lived briefly

in Atlanta, San Jose, California and Detroit, Michigan before finally returning home to Madison, getting married and starting his family right next door to his parents on the family farm. He explored careers as a policeman, long haul truck driver, postman and a few others before realizing his gift as a farmer working with his father and uncles in Madison and Eatonton and as an entrepreneur and businessman hauling chicken manure and

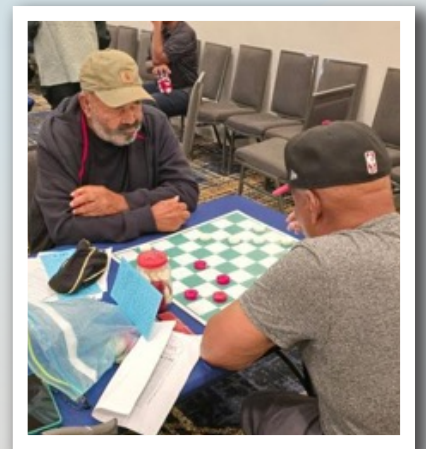
fertilizer. He often told his sons and family members, "One man's waste can be another man's wealth."

A FIERCE AND ULTIMATE COMPETITOR

Walter was a fierce competitor all of his life. Regardless of the sport or feat, he had to train, practice and compete. Top honors were the only option. Every day of his adult life he was involved in some form of competition. It could be fishing, Judo, hunting, foot racing, horseshoes, car racing, cards, or checkers.



Walter could turn anything into a competitive sport or activity. And he had to win.





THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE

Walter is preceded in death by both his parents, Freddie, Sr. (1998) and Lillie P. (2009); his brothers, Lee Howard (2017), and Freddie Jr. (2023); one sister: Doris Threats (2017); two brothers-in-laws; Joseph (Tweety) Threats (2008); Deryl G. Hunt, Sr. (2017); and his ex-wife, Louise Gardner Johnson (2023).

CHERISHING HIS MEMORIES

Walter leaves to cherish his memory his three sons: Tilman, Dwyane, and Walter (Butch) Johnson, Jr.; his five grandchildren: Ian, Leo, and Henry Johnson; Emmela and

Shelby Johnson;

his two sisters:

Lillian Hunt, Mary Etta (Larry D.) Thomas; two sisters-in-law, Lillie B. Johnson, and Charlotte Johnson; 11 nephews and nieces, and a host of other relatives and friends.

REST IN PEACE, WALTER

The chores are finished, the battle is won, and your legacy remains unbroken.



Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity. - Titus 2:7

AND IF
THE FISH

no longer bite

OR

SEEM NO LONGER

worth the fight,

BECAUSE IT'S ME

— THAT YOU ARE —

MISSIN',

don't worry be glad—



I'VE ONLY GONE

fishin'



ORDER OF SERVICE

- Processional..... Pastor & Family
- Entering Music Bo Gardner
- Musical Selection Springfield Baptist Church Choir
- Scripture Readings: Old Testament - Elder Peters
New Testament - Pastor Mayor Perriman
- Prayer Pastor W. J. Reid
- Words of Encouragement Pastor Dorsey
- Reflections (*2 minutes please*) Friends/ Family,
- Obituary Reading Memorial Tribute
- Musical Selection Springfield Baptist Church Choir
- Eulogy Minister Eric D. Threets
- Acknowledgments Bernard's Family Funeral Care Staff
- Recessional Pastor & Family

HIS LAST RIDE TO THE FISHING HOLE INTERMENT

Springfield Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery

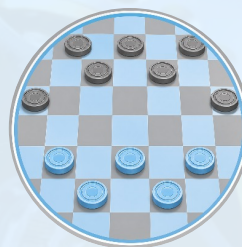
REPAST

Springfield Missionary Baptist Church Fellowship Hall



During periods of Roman persecution, early Christians used the fish as a secret sign of faith. It could be traced

in the sand, carved on doorways, or painted on tombs to identify fellow believers without drawing suspicion.



Checkerboard floor and pieces represent the journey of mankind walking through a world filled with choices, trials, temptations, and faith.

GONE FISHING

by David Ritter

If someone should ask for me,
Tell 'em fishing is where I'll be. I've finished all of my
life's chores, And now I fish on different shores.

The view is grand and the fishing's great,
But I yearn for you as I wait.
I'll save a spot on the river's bend,
For all those I call family and friend.

But for now, head out to sea
And make a cast in memory,
To all the good times that you had,
With me – your partner, your friend, your Dad
And if the fish no longer bite

Or seem no longer worth the fight,
Because it's me that you are missin',
Don't worry - be glad – I've just gone fishin'



PALLBEARERS & FLOWER LADIES

Family and Friends

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The family of Walter J. Johnson wishes to express their sincere gratitude and appreciation for every act of kindness shown during this difficult time. Your phone calls, cards, visits, comforting words, thoughts, and prayers have brought strength, comfort, and peace to our hearts throughout this season of bereavement. Your love and support have meant more than words can express and have helped carry us through the loss of our beloved father, grandfather, brother, and friend. May God richly bless each of you for your kindness, compassion, and continued prayers.

In lieu of flowers, we as a family have requested donations be made to two sources: In Memory of Walter J. Johnson, Sr., check or Money Order mailed to Pearl Burney Alumni Museum, P.O. Box 1329, Madison, Georgia 30650, or In Memory of Walter J. Johnson, Sr., check or Money order mailed to Springfield Baptist Church, 2050 Bethany Church Road, Madison, Georgia 30650.



EATONTON CHAPEL

103 Willie Bailey Street
Eatonton, Georgia 31024
Tel: 706-485-4494

MADISON CHAPEL

1086 Ward Road
Madison, GA 30650
Tel: 706-438-3210

BernardsFamilyFuneralCare.com