

# PRECIOUS MEMORIES



THE MAN | THE PREACHER | THE GIFT



BISHOP  
**ROGER**  
JAMES  
**HAIRSTON Sr.**

ALPHA SEPTEMBER 8, 1954 OMEGA MARCH 26, 2025

# HIS LIFE

THE MAN | THE PREACHER | THE GIFT

## BISHOP ROGER JAMES HAIRSTON, SR.

### The Man

Born on September 8, 1954, in Columbus, Ohio, Bishop Roger James Hairston, Sr., was a devoted servant of God, cherished father, compassionate shepherd, and extraordinarily gifted musician. He entered eternal rest on March 26, 2025, leaving behind a legacy of unwavering faith and unconditional love.

The son of Reverend Robert Franklin Hairston, Jr., and Henrietta Ellen Hairston, Roger grew up in a family deeply rooted in spiritual devotion. He matriculated through Cincinnati Public Schools and Columbus City Schools, graduating from East High School in Columbus in 1972. Roger enjoyed a dedicated career working with AT&T for over 23 years.

As the youngest of four boys, his older brothers, Richard and Robert, doted on him to the point of almost spoiling him. Roger shared an unbreakable bond with his brother Ronnie, their closeness often leading others to mistake them for twins. One of the greatest joys of his life was his role as a devoted father to Roger Jr., Ryan, Rebecca, Romero, and Rhea. Bishop Hairston often reflected fondly on the memories of his older children accompanying him everywhere, with people admiring their quiet behavior sitting on the front row of the church.

Known lovingly as "PawPaw," Bishop Hairston cherished time with family, especially cooking for them—collard greens and peach cobbler being his specialties. Family gatherings, filled with laughter and love, were his treasured moments. Bishop Hairston’s love for his family was boundless and his legacy thrives in his children, grandchildren, and all those who loved him.

### The Preacher

From an early age, Roger felt a divine call to ministry—a calling he embraced with unwavering faith and commitment. His formative Christian Walk began at the Mt. Zion Baptist church under the pastorate of his father, the late Reverend R. F. Hairston, Jr., and continued to flourish at the Rose Chapel Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. It was at Rose Chapel where he was instrumental in igniting in other young people the desire to seek the Lord through prayer. During his time in Cincinnati, Roger received the Holy Ghost at the Bibleway Church of God in Christ, pastored by his spiritual father, the late Abraham Isaac Jacob Swanson XII.

Bishop Hairston's journey was ignited by a profound connection to his faith. In June 1968, he was filled with the Holy Spirit at Prince of Peace Church of God in Christ in Columbus, Ohio. At the remarkable age of 14, he answered the call to ministry, delivering his first sermon at Rose Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. He received his license in 1972 and was ordained in 1974 by his father.

In 1975, Elder Hairston embraced his first pastorate at the Prince of Peace Church of God in Christ. In 1977, led by divine inspiration, he founded Temple of Faith Church of Deliverance in Columbus, Ohio. The early years were a testament to the church family's unwavering spirit and faith, as they faced several relocations. From 2812 Osceola Avenue to 2060 Brentnell Avenue, and finally to 2136 Cleveland Avenue at Blake, each move marked a chapter of growth and resilience.

# THE ORDER OF THE CELEBRATION OF LIFE SERVICE

(+Where indicated, Please Stand)

Bishop Norman J. Hairston, II **Officiant**  
Bishop H. Eugene Bellinger **Officiant**

- +THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN OF COMFORT.....Shantell Hankerson
- +INVOCATION .....Pastor Maria Young
- +THE READING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.....Vanessa “Mother Reader” Phillips
- +THE READING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT .....Pastor Thomas Moore
- THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC ..... Curtis Daniels
- THE TEMPLE OF FAITH EXPRESSIONS.....TOF Charter Members
- REFLECTIONS.....Bishop Mel Griffin  
Dr. J. Barnes Hooper  
Vanessa Oliver  
Anthony McMillan
- THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC.....Voices of Deliverance
- REFLECTIONS.....Bishop Hairston’s Cousins
- THE FAMILY EXPRESSIONS.....Bishop Hairston’s Children and Grandchildren
- THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC .....Elder Ronald Hairston and The Singing Pastors
- THE RESOLUTIONS .....Sis. Patrice Muller
- THE OBITUARY .....Dr. Chenelle Jones
- THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC.....Voices of Deliverance
- THE EPISCOPAL REMARKS.....Dr. Carl Whittaker  
Bishop Clarence Parks  
Bishop Larry D. Trotter  
Bishop Eric D. Garnes  
Bishop Timothy J. Clarke
- SERMONIC SELECTION .....Voices of Deliverance
- THE EULOGY .....Superintendent Brian R. Nelson, Sr.  
Jericho City COGIC
- THE BENEDICTION.....Bishop David L. Herron, Sr.
- THE RECESSIONAL.....



In November 1997, the official groundbreaking service for the new church at Brentnell & 17th was held. And Bishop Hairston's vision came to life with the construction of a beautiful new church home at 1441 Brentnell Avenue. On January 17, 1999, the congregation gathered to celebrate its dedication—a truly joyous occasion filled with praise and gratitude. What a shoutin' time we had!

Bishop Hairston's sermons, rich in biblical truth and delivered with heartfelt conviction, touched countless lives. His signature sayings included:

"All is well; the best is yet to come."

"Your life is not beyond repair."

"Holiness is still right."

"Giving up is not an option."

As Pastor and Founder of Temple of Faith Church, Bishop Hairston led his congregation for an extraordinary 47 years. Known fondly as “The Sweetest Church This Side of Heaven,” his church became a beacon of hope and spiritual enrichment. He deeply valued the commitment and loyalty of his dedicated charter members: Evangelist Bernistine McDearmon, Elder Ronnetta Ridley, Rhonda Hairston, and Toka Nesbitt-Raney.

In October 2000, Bishop Hairston was consecrated as the State Bishop of the Ohio Faith Diocese of the Church of the Living God. At the direction of the Holy Spirit, Bishop Hairston began his affiliation with the United Covenant Churches of Christ under the leadership of Bishop Larry D. Trotter in 2005. In 2015, guided by prayer and the Lord's leading, Bishop Hairston made a joyful return to the Church of God in Christ, where he was welcomed with open arms by the Ohio Central East Jurisdiction and its prelate, Bishop David L. Herron.

#### **The Gift**

Beyond his pastoral legacy, Bishop Hairston was an exceptionally gifted musician. Blessed with the ability to sing, direct, compose, and perform, his musical journey began at the age of 16 when his brother Richard anointed his hands. Without formal training, Roger mastered the organ and piano, sharing his talent with choirs and groups.

He worked with notable ensembles, including the East High School Gospel Choir and the Angelic Choir of Columbus, Ohio, recording *Something About God's Grace*. He also contributed to gospel music projects like *All Is Well* and *He's Brought Me* with the Gospel Music Workshop of America and the Church of the Living God Mass Choir.

One of the highlights of his journey was joining with Bishop Mel Griffin, Bishop Stanley Wood, Bishop Donald Washington, and Pastor Maurice Jackson to form the well-loved group, *The Singing Pastors*.

As a choirmaster, Bishop Hairston had an amazing ear for music and was serious about singing the right notes. If he gave you the “raised elbow” or “the look,” you knew right away: “Get on your note—you're flat!” And if he started chewing his tongue, it was crystal clear: “Somebody messed up.” He was a tough leader when it came to music, but his no-nonsense approach shaped choirs that were second to none.

Bishop Hairston absolutely loved working with his own church choir, the *Voices of Deliverance*, affectionately known as the “Voices” or the “VOD.” This small but mighty choir was known for its signature “Big Sound.” Through his leadership, the choir developed and mastered a unique vibrato that became their hallmark. For many years, the *Voices* toured regularly, inspiring choirs nationwide with their distinctive style.

Their musical legacy includes projects like *Look Where He's Brought Me From*, *Temple of Faith Live*, and *Bright Side*, earning awards such as the 2024 Ohio Gospel Music Award for Church Choir of the Year.

Locally, Bishop Hairston and the VOD were known throughout the city for their annual Resurrection Day concerts, which drew saints from far and wide. Countless musicians, soloists, and choir directors relished the privilege of working with the VOD. And, whenever Bishop would strike up with his signature, “Bomp, bomp, bomp, bomp, bomp, bomp...Hold on!” — everyone knew exactly what to do.

*R.S.P. Productions*

# HIS LIFE CONT...

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## BISHOP ROGER JAMES HAIRSTON, SR.

The joyous legacy of Bishop Roger J. Hairston, Sr. will forever resonate in the hearts of those he touched. His leadership, music, and unwavering faith will continue to uplift and inspire generations to come.

### The Legacy

Bishop Hairston is preceded in eternal rest by his paternal grandparents, Reverend Robert Franklin Hairston, Sr., and Mrs. Arizona Hairston; his maternal grandparents, Mr. Homer Pearl, Mrs. Helen Marie Lee, and Ms. Beulah L. Price; his parents, Reverend Robert Franklin Hairston, Jr., and Mrs. Henrietta Ellen Hairston; and his brothers, Superintendent Richard Lee Hairston, Sr. and Reverend Robert Franklin Hairston, III.

He is survived by his cherished children: Roger James (Kirston) Hairston, Jr., Ryan Nicole Hairston, Rebecca Leigh (Jonathan) Hairston Powell, Romero Maurice Hairston, and Rhea Janell Hairston, all of Columbus, Ohio. His brother, Elder Ronald Eugene Hairston, also of Columbus, honors his memory. Bishop Hairston's legacy lives on through his treasured grandchildren— JaLynn Hairston, Jaden Hairston, James Ross, Krista Dawson, Kelia Hairston, Naja (Queen) Smith, Kendall Washington, Kyah Hairston, Antron (Sir) Estes, Jr., Roziyah Hairston, and Zanai Hairston—as well as six great-grandchildren, and former spouses Co Laborers and mother of Bishop's children, Kim M. Hairston and Sonya Hairston.

Deeply mourned by a multitude of nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family, devoted church members, and countless friends, Bishop Hairston will be forever remembered for the love, leadership, and guidance he generously shared.

As a prominent figure in the Lord's Church, Bishop Roger James Hairston, Sr. left an indelible mark in ministry, steadfastly preaching, singing, praising and teaching the unapologetic and unaltered Word of God. His influence reached the corners of the world and will continue to impact the lives of believers until we all meet again in the presence of God.

## BISHOP ROGER JAMES HAIRSTON Sr.

ALPHA OMEGA  
SEPTEMBER 8, 1954 MARCH 26, 2025



## JURISDICTIONAL CELEBRATION

*The hour of Celebration has come, O Lord,  
Hear our prayer and accept our mediation, As we glorify Thy name, Amen*

(+Where indicated, Please Stand)

Bishop David L. Herron, Sr. Officiant

1st Presider – Admin. Assistant, Supt. Jerry Revish

### +THE PROCESSIONAL

HYMN OF COMFORT ~ *Great is Thy Faithfulness* .....Dr. Wendell Lowe

+INVOCATION .....Adm. Ass't Supt. Mira Daniels

+THE READING OF THE PROPHET Isaiah 40:28-31 ..... Adm. Ass't, Supt. David McKenzie

+THE READING OF THE GOSPEL John 14:1-3 ..... Adm. Ass't Supt. Melvin Howard

+THE READING OF THE EPISTLE 1 Thes 4:13-18..... Adm. Ass't Lemar McKenzie

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC ..... OCE Jurisdictional Choir

THE CHURCH FAMILY EXPRESSIONS .....CHURCH MOTHER~Mother Gracie Ruffin-Burk  
THE CHURCH BABY~ Hannah Moody

THE JURISDICTIONAL EXPRESSIONS ..... Supervisor Danielle Revish  
Mother Mattie J. Mayes  
Adm. Ass't Supt. Ace Gillems

2nd Presider - Adm. Assistant, Supt. Kartra Johnson

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC .....Pastor Robert Lyles

THE RESOLUTIONS ..... Adm. Ass't Supt. George Moore

THE OBITUARY .....(TO BE READ IN SILENCE)

THE EPISCOPAL REMARKS..... Bishop William O. Stallworth, Sr.  
Bishop Joshua Washington  
Bishop Jerome H. Ross, Sr.

SERMONIC SELECTION ..... Lady Brenda Herron  
1st Lady of Ohio Central East Jurisdiction

THE EULOGY .....Bishop David L. Herron, Sr., Prelate  
Ohio Central East Jurisdiction

THE BENEDICTION.....Adm. Ass't Supt. Jerry Herron