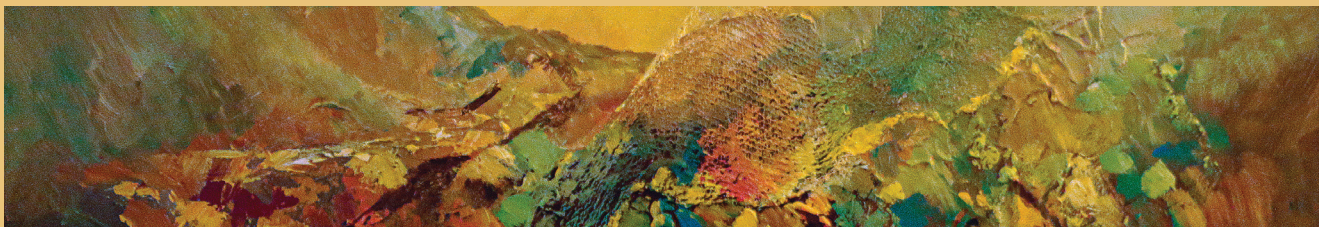


*Celebrating
the life
of...*

*“For I am already being
poured out like a drink
offering, and the time has
come for my departure.
I have fought the good
fight, I have finished
the race, I have kept the
faith. Now there is in
store for me the crown
of righteousness which
the Lord, the righteous
Judge, will award to
me on that day – and
not only to me, but also
to all who have longed
for his appearing.”
2 Timothy 4:6-8*

*Johnny Plummer
Johnson*

January 30, 1936 🌻
November 5, 2022



Shiloh
BAPTIST CHURCH (OLD SITE)

Service held at James Monroe High School

Processional “Going Up Yonder”

Welcome XAVIER RICHARDSON, presiding

Musical Selection SPECIAL ENSEMBLE (Donna Woolfolk directing,
Eric Armstead accompanying): “Rise Up and Walk”

Prayer MARK OLSON

Old Testament Scripture DEACON LENWOOD TURNER

New Testament Scripture DEACON SANDRA TURNER

Musical Selection SPECIAL ENSEMBLE: “We’ll Understand It Better By and By”

Words of Comfort REV. RITTA ARMSTEAD

Acknowledgements DEACON MARY EDWARDS

Brief Remarks

On behalf of government officials: MAYOR MARY KATHERINE GREENLAW

On behalf of the local art community: DR. DAVID JOHNSON

On behalf of Virginia State University and its alumni: CHARLYNE JACKSON-FIELDS

On behalf of the Shiloh Old Site Deacon Ministry: DEACON ROLAND MOORE

On behalf of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity: BROTHER PITMAN ROCK

On behalf of Johnny Johnson’s former students: AYOKUNLE ODELEYE

On behalf of Johnny Johnson’s family: KAILA JOHNSON

Musical Selection SPECIAL ENSEMBLE: “Amazing Grace”

Eulogy REV. AARON DOBYNES, SR., Pastor, Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site)

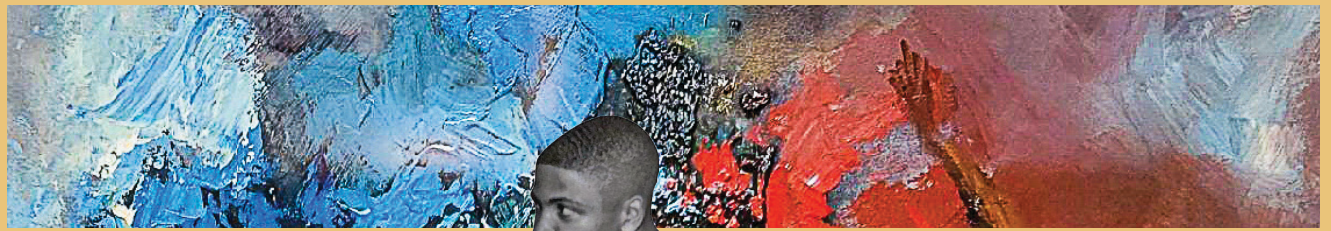
Recessional MUSICAL ENSEMBLE: “When We All Get to Heaven”

Interment (beginning promptly at 1:30 p.m.)

OAK HILL CEMETERY, 1902 William Street, Fredericksburg

Repast (limited to family and out-of-town guests)

SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH (OLD SITE), 801 Sophia Street, Fredericksburg



Johnny Plummer Johnson, 86, of Spotsylvania, passed peacefully to eternal rest on Saturday morning, November 5, 2022, at Mary Washington Hospital. Truly, his journey here on earth was a life well-lived — and well-loved.

Johnny was born on January 30, 1936, in Henderson, North Carolina. He was the youngest child of the late Johnny Plummer Johnson, Sr., and Viola Evans Johnson.

Mr. Johnson attended the then segregated schools of Henderson. He was a very proud graduate of The Henderson Institute, which he generously continued to support through its active alumni association. Over the years, he would make frequent trips to Henderson to help develop his school alma mater into an active and successful model for other similar alumni organizations. Johnny was a Charter Board Member and an active supporter of the Henderson Institute Graduates and Former Students Association, Inc.

A graduate of Virginia State College (now University), he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art in 1958. There he pledged Omega Psi Fraternity Inc. and became a member of the Nu Psi Chapter. A very proud Virginia State Trojan, he was captain of the college's basketball team. In 1994, he was elected to the school's Sports Hall of Fame as a legendary point guard. He later pursued graduate studies at Howard University, where he earned a Master's of Fine Arts. Later, he continued his studies at the Corcoran School of Art.

Johnny had often dreamed of moving to New York City, where he'd become a famous artist, but God had a different calling for him. In 1959, he moved to Fredericksburg

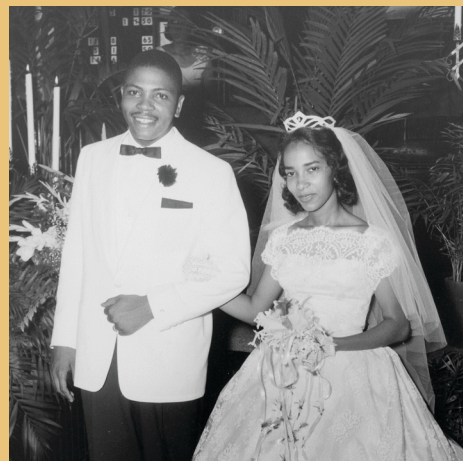


for what he originally thought would be a brief time of teaching at the segregated Walker-Grant School. Johnny quickly became immersed in the culture of the school, serving in various roles as elementary school teacher, high school art teacher, coach, and assistant principal. There he also mentored and guided many of the school's students and graduates as they proudly assumed productive roles in their respective communities across the country.

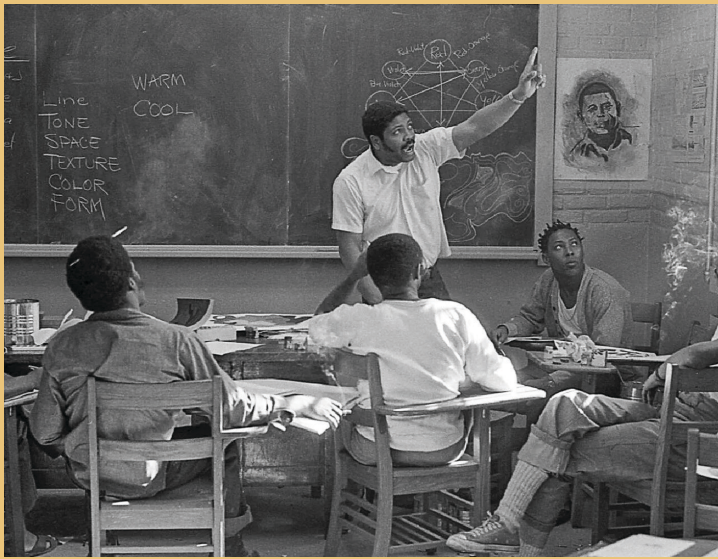
What began as a brief job evolved into a life of commitment to family, church, community, and the arts here in Fredericksburg.

It was at Walker-Grant that Johnny first met Jean Blackstock, whom he married in 1961. They were both teaching on the same floor, and as Johnny liked to say, "I walked by her room a lot!" To this beautiful union were born their devoted sons, Shelton and John Patrick. As the sons' respective families expanded, Johnny gained daughters-in-law, grandchildren, and a great granddaughter.

He was always very supportive and extremely proud of each and every one. He had a special way of making each one feel — and believe — that they were his favorite. His dedicated relationship with his family was greatly admired by all and became a model for many young peo-



Johnny with his bride, Jean



ple, especially young men without fathers in their homes. Johnny always demonstrated his belief that family was always important. For Johnny, family was in front of everything else except God.

While at Walker-Grant, Johnny and Jean joined a cadre of outstanding teachers who holistically poured themselves into the lives of their students. Although many were economically disadvantaged, they were able to thrive academically with the support and guidance of their teachers. Despite the school's unequal facilities and inadequately supported programs, students excelled. When the public schools of Fredericksburg began desegregation in 1968, he became an art teacher at James Monroe High School.

Johnny's professional life as an outstanding educator was a true calling. He taught on every level from grade school to college, including serving as the first African American member of the teaching staff at Mary Washington College and serving as a faculty member at Germanna Community College. He also conducted many workshops and community classes, too numerous to list, including classes for adults at the Dorothy Hart Community Center for over 30 years. He also taught art to young African Americans at the Harambee 360° Experimental Theatre, where he served as board member, and at



the Anne Hamrick Community House. His enthusiasm and skills as an educator were recognized by the state of Virginia as its "Teacher of the Year" in 1977. He was the first art teacher to receive this prestigious honor.

As a compassionate advocate for young people, Johnny had a profound and long-lasting impact on the many students of diverse backgrounds whom he taught, coached, and mentored over the years. He was not only the favorite teacher of thousands of his students, but he was also the source of great wisdom and accountability. Johnny was instrumental in the very smooth transition of the Fredericksburg City Public Schools from a segregated to desegregated system. Many of his students continued to maintain regular contact with him long after they left school, some for over 65 years.



Johnny with his mother

A very strong and devout Christian, Johnny joined Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site) shortly after he arrived in Fredericksburg. He assumed numerous roles over the years, including Deacon, Sunday School teacher, and Sunday School superintendent. He supported many ministries, such as the home and foreign mission committees and the Faith and Hope Club, which benefited greatly from the art works he donated to its annual fall yard sale. It

was obvious that he really loved the Lord and Shiloh Old Site.

A devoted Life Member of the Omega Psi Fraternity, Inc. for over 68 years, he served in many offices, including Basileus of the Tau Rho Chapter in Fredericksburg. Johnny was a strong

advocate and supporter of the Chapter's scholarship program. Because of his work, he received numerous accolades and honors from the Fraternity.

Johnny also served as a board member and supporter of the Rappahannock Area United Way, Rappahannock Area Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and the American Cancer Society. He was also a member of the Fredericksburg Jaycees (one of the first two African American members), Walker-Grant Alumni Association, and the Twenty Gentlemen Social Club.

A leader on social issues, Johnny had long been committed to finding common ground between diverse communities. The "first black man" in several institutions and organizations, he brought grace, good humor, and common sense to the table as he publicly expressed and defended his beliefs about the importance of equality for all. He was an active member of several human relations organizations, including the Fredericksburg Council on Human Relations (which he served as President), the Fredericksburg Area Community Relations Organization (FACRO), and the Multicultural Organization for Racial Equality (MORE). He also served on the City of Fredericksburg's Equal Opportunity Commission.

During the civil rights protests



Johnny with Mrs. Gladys Todd



Johnny Johnson with Rev. Lawrence Davies, Mrs. Marguerite Young, and Rev. Aaron Dobyne

immediately following the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., he founded the Young Men's Club to channel the energy of local young black males into constructive efforts. Johnny also served as a long-time charter member of the Harambee 360° Experimental Theatre, Inc., which was founded to instill pride in black youth. He was a major supporter of its signature initiatives, the Black Arts Festival and the Miss Black Teenage Fredericksburg Pageant. He also was a long-time member and ardent supporter of the Fredericksburg Branch NAACP.

A well-revered and respected leader in the Fredericksburg arts community, Johnny was considered to be one of its most significant figures. He was a founding member of the Art First Gallery of Fredericksburg. He participated and won numerous awards in many art shows, and his art was featured in galleries and walls across the state and nation, as well as internationally. He has mentored many young artists in this community, who greatly admired him as a peer, mentor, teacher, benefactor, and phenomenal leader.

Johnny has also contributed significantly to cultural diplomacy through participation in the U.S. Department of State's Art in Embassies Program, sharing the story of our country while



Johnny with some fellow deacons from Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site)



Jean and Johnny Johnson with the whole family

making countless friends through his paintings and endearing persona. Following a visit to Benin, West Africa, he spearheaded an Art for Africa Support group to assist struggling African artists by providing art supplies and equipment.

He also enhanced the relationship between Fredericksburg and its sister cities in Frejus, France, and Prince's Town, Ghana, through his visits and exchanges with the residents of those communities. His paintings at the official United States residence in Montenegro and his exhibit at the Mutual Art Gallery in Jamaica to celebrate Jamaica's 50th Independence received rave reviews.

As a philanthropist who contributed financially to many organizations, Johnny also donated tens of thousands of dollars of paintings for charitable and educational causes in the community, including Rappahannock United Way and Mary Washington Hospital. His paintings enabled many smaller organizations to survive and thrive, often being one of their most significant funding sources. The many paintings he donated to the Black Arts Festival for its annual live auctions ensured the continued operation of the Festival and Harambee 360° for many years. In addition to the financial support these donations provided, Johnny's efforts opened the world of art and its timeless, lasting, and transformative power for many people.

Johnny received many awards and recognitions for his outstanding service as an artist, teacher, and humanitarian. He was always very humble about receiving recognition for doing that which he was required and called to do as a Servant Leader. In the past few years, he was particularly appreciative of



Jean and Johnny Johnson

the community's salute to him for his many contributions. Especially meaningful to him was the Johnny P. Johnson Day, July 7, 2018, and Germanna Community College's 2019 Philanthropist of the Year award. Although somewhat embarrassed by these recognitions, he often remarked that he had been "given his flowers while he could still smell them."

Johnny was predeceased by his parents, Johnny Plummer Johnson, Sr., and Viola Johnson-Hicks, and his sister, Helen Johnson-Bivens.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Jean B. Johnson; his devoted sons, Shelton and John Patrick (Andrea); his loving grandchildren, Kaila, Cameron, Jordan, Brandon, and Jada; his special great granddaughter, Mela; many nieces and nephews; his cousins; and his countless friends, students, mentees, and admirers.

Interment will be at Oak Hill Cemetery, immediately following the funeral.

In lieu of flowers, **donations may be made to:**

- Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site) Foreign Missions Ministry or Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site) Home Missions Ministry, 801 Sophia Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401,
- The Johnny P. Johnson Art Scholarship of the Partnership for Academic Excellence, P.O. Box 7052, Fredericksburg, VA 22404,
- Or Virginia State University, Office of Institutional Advancement, PO Box 9027, Virginia State University, VA 23806.



With son John Patrick



With son Shelton



With fellow VSU alumni



Special Thanks

To the members of *TAU RHO CHAPTER, OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC.*, who are serving as pallbearers.

To caregiver *EDWINA COLEMAN*, whose devotion and skilled assistance was exemplary.

To those employees of Mary Washington Hospital, Encompass Health Rehab, Carriage Hill Health & Rehab, Hughes Home, and Spotsylvania Regional Hospital who extended a special measure of care.

And to all those who shared their love and support with Johnny and the family in so many tangible and meaningful ways.



Additional Resources

Scan this QR code for an expanded collection of Johnny Johnson photos and videos as well as a link for making an on-line memorial donation to Shiloh Old Site:



Jean and Johnny share a kiss



Johnny enjoys a formal occasion with sons John Patrick and Shelton



An Ode to Johnny P.

*It's just so hard to bid farewell to Johnny P., our artist, teacher, and friend.
A phenomenal man whose great legacy will span generations without end.
He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and a friend to all who came his way.
Johnny was a special man, among men, who influenced the lives of many every day.
Finding words for this monumental gentle-giant, that's not easy at all to do.
A dedicated servant of God, so kindhearted, so talented, humble, and generous, too.
He really seemed like an angel that God dispatched to roam the world at this time,
To spread love, peace, goodwill, harmony, kindness, and generosity to all mankind.
So many different titles he has earned on his journey throughout this great land;
As he traveled in other parts of the world, he was still a kind, generous man.
He was a deacon, a true servant of God, a peacemaker, who ran his race with love.
Johnny possessed so many God-given traits, indeed, which came straight from Above.
An outstanding, impeccable artist whose paintings were exquisite and debonair,
He'd take colors of a rainbow and splash them on a canvas to make them extraordinaire.
A teacher, par-excellence, who taught by example as well as academically, and more,
His living was not in vain because he showed us how to live around the world, also.
He was non-judgemental and always ready to reach across the aisle to others,
To show someone the way to treat his fellowman, as we well as his sister or brother.
He was a genuine, caring, humble man, never seeking fortune or fame along the way,
Yet his loving, generous spirit has made a great impact on so many from day to day.
As he ran his race on the battlefield, he left us a path we should all try to follow now.
His downright loving, caring, generous way can make our world much better somehow.
We'll keep his spirit alive as we remember him each day.
And we will truly try to replicate his traits all along the way.
It's so ironic that he left us in the beautiful, colorful fall season,
Because the way he had with colors was truly without reason.
But each year as the leaves begin to change colors, we'll remember him,
Reminded again that Johnny Johnson was truly a blessing, a rare gem.
So, Johnny, we bid you farewell as you start your vacation in eternity.
We are so grateful for all you did to make this a better world to live in.
We thank God for allowing us to be blessed by your life and all you have done.
We're grateful, too, for your family, sharing you with all of us here beneath the sun.
Your work is finished; you've done your best; so rest in heavenly peace.
Until we see you again, dear Johnny, our memories of you will never, ever cease.*

—Iretha R. Bumbrey

