



## Deacon Charles Fletcher

August 21, 2024 - October 8, 2024

"I am free, praise the Lord I'm free! I'm no longer bound and no more pains afflicting me! My soul is resting and it's just a blessing! I was ready to take flight and now I am free and home at last!"

Trailblazer, blessed, inspirational, family-oriented and God-fearing are all words that describe Charles Russell Fletcher, Sr., who was received by the heavens and entered into his heavenly home on the morning of Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at his residence in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, following an extended period of illness. Charles was born on August 21, 1944 to his loving parents, the late Russell Lee Fletcher and Mattie Fletcher.

Charles was a 1963 graduate of Atkins High School. Upon graduating from high school, Charles began working at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company for many years. It was in Charles' blood to work hard and to always put forth his best effort, as this is something that was instilled in him from his grandfather.

On July 1, 1965, Charles married his highschool sweetheart, Connie Beatric Kennedy Fletcher. Charles would often say that Connie was the best woman that came out of her hometown of Black Mountain, North Carolina. Charles asked Connie's father, the late Reverend E.C. Kennedy, for Connie's hand in marriage and her father said, "As long as you love and take care of her...". Charles was joined in holy matrimony with his beautiful bride by her father,

who was an AME Zion Methodist preacher, who said, “Connie, you may become a Baptist” and God made it happen.

Charles was a true man of God. As a lifetime member of Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church for over 70 years, Charles inherited a lot of skills, wisdom and knowledge particularly under the leadership of the church’s second pastor, the late Reverend Emory Lee Clark, Sr. As a child, Pastor Clark saw a lot of potential in Charles and prophesied to him saying, “God’s going to use you in a way you won’t understand until it hits you. Charles, you’ve been looking to God and He’s kept His hand on you!”. As a young boy through manhood, Charles was a proud and active member of Bethlehem, where he served on the Junior Usher Board, Junior Deacon Board, and Senior Usher Board. Under Pastor Clark’s leadership, Charles was promoted to the position of Deacon and later elevated to the position of Deacon Board Chairman, which he held for over 40 years. Charles was later bestowed with the distinguished title of Deacon Chairman Emeritus. Charles loved Bethlehem and his Bethlehem family surely loved him.

Charles loved to sing; He would sing from sun up to sun down. Charles participated in the Male Chorus at Bethlehem. Often on first Sundays after Communion was served, Charles would be asked to sing one of his signature songs, such as “Way By and By”.

As a leader, Charles took many young boys and men under his wing, mentored them and helped them to develop their faith in God. Charles led by example through faithfully studying God’s word, keeping the word close to his heart, applying the word in his daily living, and establishing a strong prayer life. As a man of great faith, oftentimes when people would come to Charles about various issues, he would recommend certain passages of scripture for them to read and/or he would encourage them to pray about their situation. As Charles often said, “Prayer can go where we can’t go”. Charles

enjoyed ushering in God's people, doing missionary work, checking in on the sick and shut-in members, and simply calling members if he hadn't seen them in a while to see if there was anything he could help them with.

Because Charles allowed the Lord to be his guide, God used him mightily with his love for ushering even beyond Bethlehem. Charles was elected to serve as the President of the Usher's Ministry of the Guilford Educational Missionary Baptist Association (GEMBA). Charles excelled in this role and was later elected and served as the President of the Usher's Ministry of the North Carolina General Baptist State Convention for eight (8) consecutive years. While serving in these capacities, with his loving wife by his side, Charles organized and facilitated many Usher Training Sessions and Workshops in many cities across the state of North Carolina. Under his leadership, the Usher's Conventions saw the highest attendance that they had ever seen at that time with 200 to 300 ushers present. Charles presented so many speeches at the Usher's Conventions that he was often addressed as Reverend Fletcher instead of President Fletcher. Charles supported GEMBA and the North Carolina General Baptist State Convention until his health declined.

Charles' life and legacy was a true inspiration and touched the lives of so many. From his own sons and grandsons walking in his footsteps and serving as ushers at Bethlehem to his young mentees growing up to become preachers and deacons, one could say his life was one worth mimicking. The many ways Charles served, led, cared, nurtured, inspired, and loved will never be forgotten.

Charles was a beloved and devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, mentor and friend.

Charles was preceded in death by his God sent wife of 59 years, Connie Beatrice Kennedy Fletcher, his parents and parent-in-laws; two (2) sisters, Wanda Fletcher Smith and Arnize F. Clark; two (2) brothers, Harvery Fletcher and Larry Fletcher; one (1) sister-in-law, Carrie Speaks; five (5) brother-in-laws, Charles Kennedy, Franklin Kennedy, William Kennedy, Samuel Kennedy and John Young.

Charles also leaves behind his four (4) heartbeats, Charles R. Fletcher Jr., Curtis R. Fletcher, Christopher R. Fletcher, and Carlos R Fletcher Sr.; one (1) daughter, Chrishaunta (Karl) Albright; one (1) bonus daughter, Cynthia Wright; fourteen (14) grandchildren, fifteen (15) great grandchildren; three (3) sisters, Pansy Young, Karen Kennedy, and Maryann (Lonnie) Blue; one (1) brother, Deacon Hessie Smith; one (1) sister, Loretta Fletcher of New York, New York; one (1) godsister, Romane Eaton; nine (9) church daughters and two (2) sisters-in-christ. Charles also leaves behind a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, and church family to cherish his memory.

We will link our broken chain back together again one day!

# Cemetery Details

## Piedmont Memorial Gardens

3663 Piedmont Memorial Dr.  
Winston Salem, NC 27107

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **19**. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Bethlehem Baptist Church  
1711 North Claremont Ave.  
Winston Salem, NC 27105

## Homegoing Service

OCT **19**. 11:30 AM (ET)

Bethlehem Baptist Church  
1711 North Claremont Ave.  
Winston Salem, NC 27105

# Tribute Wall

JB

“ *Lit A Candle For The Family.. Benjamin Brown & Joyce C Brown Co-Workers From RJR Tobacco Company*



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**joyce c brown** - October 18, 2024 at 08:12 AM

VC

“ *Deacon Fletcher was a dedicated Usher, serving his community and State. Our prayers for comfort for his family and ushers. Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal. County Line Usher's Union (Oxford).*

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**Vanessa Gregory, President CLBAUU** - October 16, 2024 at 08:46 AM

DS

“ *I'm deeply sorry to hear about the loss of your father. May you find comfort and strength in the cherished memories you shared with him. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult time. Please know that your Carver High family is here for you, offering love and support. Wishing you peace and healing.*



*Sincerely, Valerie Benton Smith (CHS Class of '88) and family*

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**Dr. Valerie Benton Smith** - October 11, 2024 at 02:46 PM

MC

“ *Madeline C Cloud lit a candle in memory of Deacon Charles Fletcher*



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**Madeline C Cloud** - October 11, 2024 at 10:56 AM

FJ

“ *Freda L Evans Johnson lit a candle in memory of Deacon Charles Fletcher*



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**Freda L Evans Johnson** - October 11, 2024 at 08:58 AM

FA

“ *So sorry for your loss. Please know you all are in my thoughts and prayers. Love, Felisha Anderson*



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**Felisha Anderson** - October 10, 2024 at 08:35 PM

LG

“ *Sending my condolences to the Fletcher family*

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**Lowlita Douthit Glenn** - October 10, 2024 at 03:53 PM

W3

“ *Sending prayers and condolences to the entire family. May God continue to strengthen your hearts. Blessings. Willie Ashford 3rd and Family*

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**Willie Ashford 3rd** - October 10, 2024 at 02:53 PM