

Acknowledgements

Pallbearers

Barry Fordham
Charles Woods
Robert Alston
Khalim Evans
Gordon Crock
Jimmy Iverson

Honorary Pallbearers

Colonel Craven Givens
Peter Adams
Frank Messiah
E.O. Smith
Noel Certain
Ron Slaymaker
Landis Franklin

Care of Our Loved One Entrusted To

H. Alfred Lewis Mortuary, Inc.
968 Jefferson Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14204

Interment

Forest Lawn Cemetery
1411 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209

Words of Thanks

The family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of love, concern and sympathy. Please keep us in your prayers and know that you will be in ours.

Special Thanks

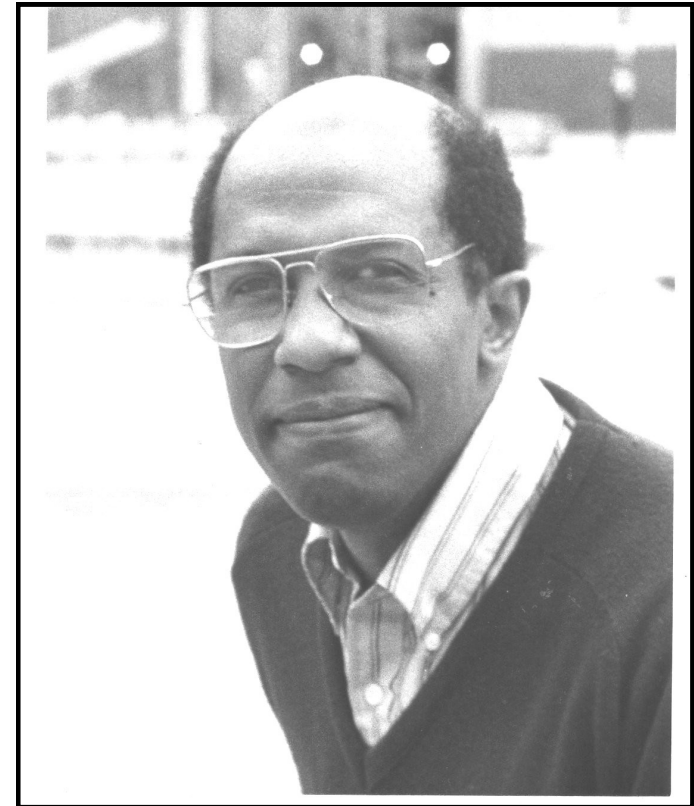
Weinberg Campus Family and Staff
Hospice at Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be sent to the following:

In Memory of Dr. Monroe Fordham

Buffalo State College Foundation
1300 Elmwood Avenue
Cleveland Hall 305
Buffalo, New York 14222

In Loving Memory of Monroe Fordham, PhD



October 11, 1939 — June 13, 2012

First Shiloh Baptist Church
15 Pine Street
Buffalo, New York 14204
Rev. Jonathan R. Staples, Senior Pastor

Monroe Fordham was born in Parrott, Georgia on October 11, 1939 to Arie Delores Oxford. He moved to Orlando, Florida in 1947. Fordham joined the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church (Orlando, Florida) in 1948 and was active in the Sunday School and BYPU. He attended the Orange County Public Schools and graduated from Jones High School in 1957. After finishing high school, he entered Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia where he received a Bachelors Degree in 1962 and a Masters Degree in 1966. While a student at Emporia, Fordham met and married his wife of fifty-two years Freddie Mae (Harris) of Kansas, City, Kansas. From that union came three children. He taught social studies in the Wichita, Kansas Public Schools for seven years and was Coordinator of Black Studies at Wichita State University for one year.

Fordham joined the history faculty at Buffalo State College in 1970. He also enrolled in a PhD program in history at the State University of New York at Buffalo and graduated in 1973. During his twenty-eight year tenure at Buffalo State College, he chaired the History Department for nine years and was Interim Associate Dean for one year. Throughout his career, Fordham pioneered a number of initiatives aimed at preserving state and regional African American historical sources. He also worked with numerous community groups in developing records management and records preservation programs.

Fordham authored two books, *Major Themes in Northern Black Religious Thought, 1800-1860* (1975), and *A History of Beth-el A.M.E. Church, Buffalo New York* (1977). From 1977 to 2008 he served as editor of *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*, and interdisciplinary journal that is published two times per year. Monroe Fordham also wrote and published numerous articles and book reviews in the field of African American history. Fordham retired from the college in 1998.

Some time ago, I was asked to microfilm a collection of African American funeral programs that belonged to a local genealogy society. The collection contained more than 3,000-printed funeral programs and obituaries. My job was to prepare an alphabetized index for the collection and then microfilm it. The task required that I examine each program for dates and other pertinent information that was to be included in the index. It proved to be a thought-provoking experience.

To me, the photographs on the front of the programs were the most powerful component of the collection. They were haunting images that projected imaginary personalities. Some of the photos were of children and young adults who had died suddenly and unexpectedly. (I was struck by what seemed, to me, an unusually large number of young people's funerals in the collection). Some of the photos were youthful images of older people, photos that were taken many years before their demise. (Most of the photos did not show people who seemed concerned about death).

There were a few photos of people who were obviously elderly or very ill at the time the photo was made. Perhaps those people were aware that the end was near. The faces of that group often reflected humility and a solemnity, which suggested that they had given some thought to the measure of their lives. They had probably contemplated the inevitability of death.

However, most of the photos on the funeral programs were images of people who were in the midst of experiencing life. There were young men with cocky smiles, there were serious faces that exuded optimism and self-confidence, there were images of "sassy" young women, there were neatly dressed and clean cut images, and there were also candid snapshots of people in their everyday faces.

Most of the images reflected "the best of times." The people in the photos were probably not conscious of the fact that they were creating the pictorial image that would represent them on their funeral program. They were not thinking about the fragile nature of life. Indeed, we seldom connect the day-to-day events and the actions of our lives to anything beyond survival and self-interest.

Reading the obituaries and the short biographical sketches of the persons pictured on the funeral programs prompted me to reflect of the brevity of life and the certainty of death. Perhaps that is the real social function of funerals. Intellectually, we know that life is fragile and uncertain, but our actions indicate that we don't take those ideas very seriously. Funerals should cause us to look inward and think about our own purpose and mortality. Funerals and funeral programs should cause us to take seriously the words that are recorded in Isaiah 40:6-8; "All men are like grass, and their glory is like the flowers of the field.... The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever." The next time you attend a funeral, take a good look at the photograph on the funeral program, then think about those words of the Prophet.

Monroe Fordham,

2002

Order of Service

June 19, 2012

Wake 11:00 AM Funeral 12:00 Noon

Quiet Music

The Sealing of the Bier

Invocation

Selection.....“God Has Smiled on Me”

Scripture Readings

Old Testament..... Isaiah 40:6-8

New Testament..... Mark 12:30 -31

Reading of Obituary

Selection.....“We Are Climbing Jacob’s Ladder”

Eulogy.....Reverend Jonathan Staples

Recessional.....”When We All Get to Heaven”

In 1993 Fordham received the Emporia State University “Outstanding Alumni Award,” and the following year, he was inducted into the Emporia State University Athletic Hall of Fame. Following his retirement, and in recognition of his work in regional and community history, Buffalo State College established the Monroe Fordham Center for Regional History (2002). In April of 2012 Monroe Fordham received the Herbert H. Lehman Prize for Distinguished Service to New York history. The award was presented by the New York Academy of History.

Monroe Fordham was guided by biblical principles throughout his entire life. He once said that while growing up he “felt loved and valued because of our strong sense of family and community...we were armed with a value system that was passed down through the church..” Fordham shared these beliefs with his wife . For over twenty years they were active members at Bethel A.M.E. Church (Buffalo, New York) where he was a long-time Sunday School teacher. During his senior years Monroe and Freddie Mae joined their daughter and grand-daughter at First Shiloh Baptist Church where he was active with the Sunday School, the History Committee, and the Laymen’s League.

Monroe Fordham was pre-deceased by his mother, Arie D. Fordham (Jack) of Orlando, FL and his brother Lawrence James Fordham of Orlando, FL. He leaves to celebrate his life and memory wife Freddie Mae Fordham; siblings, Vera Thomas of Orlando, FL, and Evelyn Williams (Russell) of Orlando, FL , Mancefield “Flat” Fordham of Orlando, FL; children Cynthia Woods (Charles) of Lansing, MI, Barry Fordham of Virginia Beach, VA, and Pamela Fordham of Buffalo, NY; grandchildren: TaNisha (Robert), Kalin (Oneka), Zoe, Josephine, Lorraine, and Zia; sister-in-law, Willie Ethel “Pudd” Dyer (Dexter) of Bethel, KS; brother-in-law, Woodrow Harris of Bethel, KS; cousin, L’oveture Carter of Hartford, CT; and a host of other beloved relatives and friends.

