

# Faith Is Action

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## Faith Tabernacle Church Reunion Weekend 2014

June 27<sup>th</sup> • June 28<sup>th</sup> • June 29<sup>th</sup>

*Remembering Our Spiritual Roots*



# FAITH TABERNACLE REUNION WEEKEND

## REMEMBERING OUR SPIRITUAL ROOTS

On June 27-29, Faith Tabernacle Church held a reunion of former and current members in a jubilant three-day celebration that proved to be inspirational, exciting, and emotionally refreshing. Old friends traveled from near and far to renew the bonds that knit us together, not only as members of the Body of Christ, but also by the unique relationship we formed through the years that we were nurtured at FTC under the ministry of founding Pastors **R.G. & Doranne Hardy**.

### “Flight F-I-N-A-L”: A Great Success

The festivities began on Friday night with the presentation of the classic gospel play *Flight F-I-N-A-L* which FTC has presented several times in the past, but not in over 30

years. Originally written in the 1965 by Evangelist Forrest McCullough when the idea was birthed in his heart while on an airplane the day following his father’s funeral, it depicts the departure of the Saints of God to the New Jerusalem. Only those with tick-





The Cast of “Flight F-I-N-A-L”

ets, whose names are written in the Book of Life, are allowed to board the plane. The potential passengers gather at the gate where they must first check in with the Recording Angel who has the Book of Life and the Book of Remembrance.

Before the Angel appears, Pauline Evangel, a special video reporter for station FAITH, reports live from the waiting area as the passengers arrive. During this time she interviews several excited people about their soon departure to the New Jerusalem. Some already have their tickets in hand and are ecstatic about seeing Jesus face to face at last. Many, however, do not have tickets, and yet they are certain they will be able to board the flight, even though they have not truly made Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior, but have lived their lives in sin and selfish pursuits.

When the Recording Angel appears, the would-be passengers are

allowed to come forward to receive their boarding passes. These include fornicators, homosexuals, drunkards, racists, as well as gossips, church players, backsliders, hypocrite preachers, and the like. When their names are not found in the Book of Life, they plead with the Angel to give them a pass, but he quotes from the authority of the Bible those particular Scriptures that they had not obeyed in their lifetimes and calls for them to be cast into eternal damnation in Hell. There is weeping and wailing as the demons of Hell lay hold on them.

For those faithful saints who have endured to the end, there is much rejoicing, shouting, dancing, and singing, with familiar songs of the church, such as *I'd Trade A Lifetime For Just One Day in Paradise & Walk Around Heaven All Day*. There is glorious applause as they are ushered onto the plane to take their Heaven-bound trip on Flight F-I-N-A-L.





**Marshal Nichols “To God Be the Glory”**

Then the Books are closed, and the plane departs for the New Jerusalem where Jesus awaits them at Heaven’s gates. There is great joy as they enter into the presence of the Lord: *“Well done, thou good and faithful servants...!”*

An invitation to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior was extended, and many came forward to the altars to pray the prayer of repentance for salvation and be filled with the Spirit of God. The play was “enjoyable”, and the audience took great delight in the wonderful portrayal the cast presented with much applause and laughter, but the greatest reward

was to see the sobriety of the truth bring sinners and backsliders forward to accept Jesus Christ.

### **The Pre-Banquet Celebration**

The Reunion Banquet held on Saturday afternoon in the remodeled FTC Dining Hall was preceded by a joyful celebration of music and tributes to the legacy of the leadership of FTC. A highlight of the musical presentation was the performance of songs that were recorded by the *R.G. Hardy Singers* in 1972. Original members Rosalyn Collins Dopson & Shirley Lawrence were joined by Rodney Walls in the soul-stirring rendition of *Souls Are Crying*, which was the theme song for the R.G. Hardy radio program for over 40 years. The anointed harmonies on this and *The Long Long Road* from the LP album by the same name brought the congregation to their feet.

We were further blessed by the music ministry of husband-wife duo Marshal & Belle Nichols, who had met as teens and then married at FTC on 828 William St. Their unique blend and mellow harmony captured our ears and our hearts. Marshall was set to sing the solo *To God Be the Glory* by Andre Crouch when the track tape broke. Undaunted, he proceeded to sing a cappella and the richness and power of his beautiful tone literally filled the sanctuary and brought us to our feet again.

Other former members who ministered in song were Sylvia Harris Hicks; always a beautiful soloist, she



**Pastors Leroy & Ann McDuffie**

has blossomed into a powerful and anointed worship leader. Her father, Richard Harris and wife Jackie Harris, former organist at FTC played and sang also. A group of former and current FTC choir members did a medley of old choir songs including: *God Cares*, *God Gave Me Song* and the all-

time favorite *Climbing Up the Mountain*, at which time there was dancing in the aisles!

This was followed by a heartwarming time of personal testimonies from former members who are now serving in the kingdom of God as pastors of their own churches. It was quite endearing to hear how God used their time at FTC to be rooted and grounded in the Word of God and how the foundation they received during those years was and is indispensable to the success of their fulfilling the call of God on their lives.

Pastor Naomi Ann McDuffie from Southern Maryland was the “oldest” member attending, having first come to the Greene Street Mission as a little girl in 1958, where Sister Hardy was her Sunday School teacher. As an adult, she and her husband came to church on William Street and then Patapsco Avenue where they raised their



**The Haslons Enjoy the Banquet**

family. During this time they were called and prepared for the ministry which has now grown to two churches, and Pastor Leroy McDuffie SR (Gospel Tabernacle of Prayer in Clements, MD) summed it up best: “Brother and Sister Hardy allowed us to cut our teeth in the ministry by letting us preach in the pulpit at FTC on Thursday nights.”

Pastors John and Tasha Haslon (Power for Life Int’l) came down from Camden, New Jersey, where they pastor a burgeoning intercity church and food pantry. The exponential growth of this ministry is remarkable, but Bro. John chuckled as he described the time he approached Bro. Hardy to tell him that he was ready to be used of God in ministry, and Bro. Hardy told him, “Good, go cut the grass”! He eventually made it to the FTC pulpit and he also received powerful prophetic words through Bro. Hardy that have come to pass. Tasha, a mighty woman of God herself, related that in the course of their pastorate, they meet many high-profile ministers, including TV “celebrities”, but none preach the sound doctrine and foundational truths like they received during their time at FTC.

## The Banquet of Love

By this time, everyone had literally worked up an appetite, and conveniently, we didn’t have far to go. The time we spent together eating and fellowshiping was priceless and a true replication of the love feasts in the Book of Acts. There was so much to

catch up on – so many stories to tell – so many victories to report, and as the hours ticked away, the many years which had separated us seemed to melt away in the warmth of the loving connections we had forged in Christ. Some who came to FTC as kids and teenagers are now grandparents, and after all these years, their unique memories of getting saved, being healed in the prayer line, riding the church bus, joining the choir, going on street meetings, sitting in Mother Hardy’s Bible class, finding a mate and getting married, raising their kids at FTC – are still written on the tablets of their hearts, because they are an integral part of who they have become in the Body of Christ. **Please know how proud Brother and Sister Hardy are to have you as their sons and daughters in the Lord.**



Sylvia Harris Hicks in Worship





**The Reunion R.G. Hardy Singers**

## **Sunday – A Blessed Day**

**Sunday morning worship** was a glorious atmosphere of heavenly communion as Shirley Lawrence led the congregation in praise, followed by Rosalyn's soulful solo *How Great is Our God*. Sylvia Harris Hicks led the FTC choir in the classic song she formerly led: *Goin' Up Yonder*. The scene was set to hear the Word of the Lord.

Sharon Hardy Knotts brought forth the exciting message *The Way to Paradise* under an explosive anointing that spilled over on the congregation in waves of inspired joy compelling the congregation to rise more than once. At the close of the service, the aisles were filled with laughter and hugging as once again former members found their way into the arms of each other to express their jubilation for such a blessed reunion.

**Sunday evening**, the House was

filled with anticipation. Three days of holy worship and anointed ministry had charged the atmosphere with the glory of God. For the second time, our spirits were captivated by the sweet harmonies of *Full of the Gospel*, the female trio of Consondra Jacobs, and sisters Radiance Harris and Patricia Palmore, who had blessed us in song on the first night. Again, the beauty of the lyrics in their original songs coupled with the purity of their voices drew us in deeper to the presence of God. Once again the "Reunion R.G. Hardy Singers" powered their way through the flagship song *Souls Are Crying & Without the Lord I Could Do Nothing*.

(Please note: The original albums recorded in 1972 have been digitally re-mastered to CDs. *The Long Long Road & God Took Away My Yesterdays*, which includes *Souls Are Crying*, are available at [www.rghardy.org](http://www.rghardy.org).

Perhaps the most fun part of the night was when all former choir members in the House were invited to come to the platform and sing one of the all-time favorites, *Stretch Out*, with Rosalyn Collins Dopson. By then the House was on Holy-Ghost fire! But because this was a genuine move of the Spirit and not just the showman-

## The Gracious Finale

Charlene Monk came to Faith Tabernacle on William Street as a little girl with her mother, brother, and sisters. Today she is a mighty woman of God who has been well educated in the art of preaching, but it is her dynamic delivery under the awesome anointing and leading of the Holy



**Andre & Gwen Samuel Moved by the Spirit**

ship of the flesh, the people were ready to follow the lead of the Spirit to settle down and hear the Word of the Lord through His handmaiden Dr. Charlene Monk of New Horizon Christian Faith Church in Mt. Ranier, MD.

Spirit that is her true calling card. In keeping with the theme of “Remembering our Spiritual Roots”, even though she had not attended the previous services, Dr. Monk ministered on the “foundation upon which Christ has built His church, and the gates of Hell





### Brother Hardy Overcome with Emotion

shall not prevail against it” from Matthew 16:18. Borrowing this analogy, she described the many churches that have been birthed out of Faith Tabernacle Church and the scores of ministries around the country whose foundations were laid through the ministry of R.G. Hardy. Hitting the nail on the head, she echoed the many testimonies already spoken in which thanks was given again and again for *the foundation of the Word of God they had received at FTC*. This was, in fact, the pervasive sentiment of most everyone.

The climax of the message was solidified when Dr. Monk called for all the pastors in the House to come forward and give their names and the names of their churches. As each pastor gave the name of his/her church, Dr. Monk quickly annexed “Taberna-

*cle*” to the end of it. The point was powerfully made that all of these churches were birthed out of FTC, and all of the pastors and the other ministers she called forward, are the spiritual sons and daughters of Brother and Sister Hardy. It was a tear-jerking moment to see Brother and Sister Hardy so overwhelmed by this outpouring of love and genuine affection bestowed upon them. And it was an apt finale to an unprecedented glorious weekend of *remembering and honoring our spiritual roots!*

*“Remembering them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow considering the end of their conversation”* (Hebrews 13:7).