

Obituary for Cleo Ingram Hale



Cleo Ingram Hale was born in Atlanta, Georgia, the eldest of three children born to the late Janist and John Ingram. She grew up in the same neighborhood as Martin Luther King, Jr. She was the wife (65 years) of the late Rev. Dr. Phale D. Hale of Columbus, Ohio and supported him as a minister's wife throughout three pastorates: First Baptist Church in LaGrange, Georgia; Union Baptist Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Union Grove Baptist Church, that extended from 1943 to 1993 when he retired and became pastor emeritus of the Union Grove Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio.

Her many involvements are as follows:

Those we hold most dear never truly leave us - they live on in the kindnesses they showed, the comfort they shared, and the love they brought into our lives.

Anonymous

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND:

Converted and baptized at the Second Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Atlanta Georgia.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Spelman College, Atlanta, GA - B.S. In Home Economics, Nutrition and Child Development

The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH - M.A. in Early Childhood Education

SORORITY:

Member, The Columbus Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Women's Day Speaker for churches throughout the United States
- South Side Day Care Center, Associated Director (1976-1984)
- Franklin County Head Start Program, Education Coordinator (1970-1976)
- Third Avenue Child Care Center, Director (1968-1970)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

- Member, National Association for the Education of Young Children (1970-present)
- Member, National Council for Black Child Development (1976-present)
- Former, Board Member, Action for Children (1978-1982)
- Member, Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children (1980-Present)
- Former Member, Project Literacy U.S. Task Force (1986-1987)
- Former Member, Advisory Committee for the Vocational Home Economics Child Care Job Training Program of Fort Hayes Career Center (1982-1984)

SERVICE TO UNION GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH:

- Member, The Scholarship Club
- Member, The Good Samaritan Club
- Chairperson, The Foreign Mission Committee of the Missionary Society
- Author, "Notes From The Parsonage," a weekly column in the church bulletin
- Chaplain for a number of clubs and auxiliaries
- Former Co-Chairperson, Annual Women's Day (1985)
- Former Chairperson for Seminar on The Black Family (1985)
- Former Chairperson, Annual Women's Day (1986)

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY:

- Member, Baptist Ministers' Wives Alliance (1950-present)
- Member, Columbus NAACP (1950-present)
- Member, National Association of Spelman Alumnae (1953-present)
- Co-Chairperson of the National Conference Committee of the Women's Convention, Auxiliary

to the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. (1956- 1993)

- Former Chairperson, Annual Workshop of the Women's Convention of the Ohio Baptist General Convention (1980)
- Volunteer, "Reach to Recovery" program of the American Cancer Society (1979-present)
- Associate Member of the Susan B. Weaver Ray
- Former Member, Centennial Board of the YWCA (1983-1984)
- Member of "Lunch Bunch", an organization of Retired Professional Women
- Former Member, Alliance of Black Women, Inc.
- Former Consultant, "In Between Women," Women's Auxiliary of The Ohio Baptist General Convention (1985-1987)
- Member, The Advisory Board of the East Side American Cancer Society Service and Information Center (1984-present)
- Former Member, Executive Committee of Franklin County Democratic Party (1986-1990)

HONORS:

- Listed in "Who's Who Among Black Women in America" published by the Women's Auxiliary of The National Baptist Convention U.S.A. Inc.
- Honored on "This is Your Life Night," by The Missionary Society of Union Grove Baptist Church (1956)

- Selected as Community Honoree for 1986 by The Metropolitan Democratic Women's Club
- Recipient of the Community Service Award of the Columbus Urban League (1989)
- Included in Dorothy Hunt's book, "Black Silhouettes," as one of twenty-seven extraordinary-ordinary African-American Women (1992)
- Honored at the MW ANA WAKE (a celebration of Black Women) sponsored by the Columbus Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women (1992)
- Recipient of the Outstanding Service Award sponsored by the Baptist Ministers' Wives and Widows Alliance of Columbus, Ohio and Vicinity

PERSONAL PROFILE:

- Has traveled throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Africa and the Middle East, including Israel and The Holy Land
- Collects autographed books written by friends and acquaintances
- Collects magazines of special interest and pictures
- Collects buttons of special interest
- Keen interest in African-American art
- Collects memorabilia and memoirs of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Maintains a room in home in his memory, which includes a bed in which he slept.
- Enjoys exercising and reading

Following her husband's retirement from the State Legislature, she served on the Executive Committee of the Franklin County Democratic Party from 1986-1990.

Cleo Hale has distinguished herself in community service, pursuing her own vision of improving the world. In addition to significant employment opportunities in the field of early childhood education, Cleo has been active in numerous other professional organizations.

The Columbus Dispatch reporter Sylvia Brooks writes the following statements as she interviewed Cleo as her husband retired from the pastorate of Union Grove Baptist Church: Cleo Ingram Hale is at her best when she talks about children. "Sometimes, I wish I had a big house, a palace or something, where I could just take in children - just as many as I could and give them love and care. "

The name Columbus has been important in their lives. Her husband was born just outside Columbus, Mississippi and she has spent 43 years in Columbus, Ohio. And, it was during a Sunday School convention in Columbus, Georgia in 1940 that she met her future husband. "My friend and I were having breakfast, " she said. "There was all this food. We were surprised at

how much there was, so much we couldn't eat it. Then my friend looked up and said, there's Phale Hale. He and a friend said hello to her friend, and we said we were glad to see them because we knew they would like to have our breakfast. My husband has changed the story over the years. He tells everybody when I saw him I was so excited I couldn't eat my breakfast." They were married in 1943. She had wanted to be a dietician. "I did not plan to marry a minister - by no means. I fell in love with a man who just happened to be a Gospel preacher," she said. She adapted well, with the help of her high energy, to the whirl of a new life.

"We were there for everybody," Mrs. Hale said. "People stopped in with their problems at all hours of the day and night. We have never had an unlisted telephone number. It didn't bother me."

In the 1970s she held down several jobs at once: Pastor's wife, mother, administrator and student. She worked full-time and obtained a Master's Degree from The Ohio State University.

During this time, each day I would say over and over Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. These words became my favorite scripture.

For Mrs. Hale, each life has a season. Now is the season for retirement and a quieter life. Retirement does not mean leaving religion or community services. "A life that counts is the life that serves," she said. "That is what God puts us here for, a life of service to glorify Him. I was always in a position of helping others. I never wanted people to honor me. I am not embarrassed by it, but I feel that what I am doing is what God expects me to do. This is what all of us should be about, bringing some joy into the lives of others."

She has tried to be a good pastor's wife. "I love the people dearly," she said. "We are a family. I believe they love me. I love people for being themselves. I like all kinds of people, the humble and the famous, people from all walks of life. God is our father, we are His children."

Pastor and Mrs. Hale gave their lives in service to others. Because in life they championed the cause of the poor and oppressed, they have requested that no flowers will be displayed at the Service of Memory. Persons desiring to give flowers may contribute to the Phale D. Hale and Cleo Ingram Hale Scholarship Fund of Union Grove Baptist Church; 266 N. Champion Ave.; Columbus, OH 43203.

Leaving to cherish her memory are Dr. Janice E. Hale, daughter; Marna A. Hale, daughter; Hilton I. Hale, son; grandchildren, Donielle Howard Burns, Phillip Howard, Richard (Marissa) Pace and Keith A. Benson, Jr.; two foster grandchildren Deandre George and Deante George; nephew, Churchill Wesley Hale; niece Vinette Grier; great nephew Christopher Hale; great niece Renee Grier; cousins Minnie B. Peek, Jacqueline Stephens, Kevin (Crystal) Stephens, Sr., Kenneth (Felicia) Stephens, Kennedy Stephens, Kevin Stephens, Jr., and numerous additional beloved extended family members. She was preceded in death by her parents, John Ingram, Janist Mosley Ingram Preston; sister Dorothy (Raymond) Grier and brother Asa (Louise) Ingram; her husband of 65 years, Rev. Dr. Phale D. Hale, Sr.; son Phale D. Hale, Jr., and nephew Ralph Young Grier.