

Obituary for the Rev. Dr. Emma J. Justes

The Rev Emma J. Justes died on August 31, 2017 at Hospice of Dayton after receiving excellent care. She had been battling pancreatic cancer diagnosed in July.

Dr. Justes, known to everyone as Emma, was born in Covington, Kentucky in 1941, to parents, Alonso and Hazel Justes. She grew up in Cherry Grove, Ohio and graduated from Anderson High School. She attended Franklin College, in Franklin, Indiana, where she attained a BA in Elementary Education. While at Franklin College she met a professor, Carolyn Burnett who became a life-long friend. The two young women took a summer trip to Europe where they biked and hiked across the continent staying in hostels. This was the first of many adventurous trips that Emma would take.

Having been called at a young age, Emma attended Colgate Rochester Divinity School, graduating in 1967, with a Masters of Divinity. While in seminary she worked at the United Church of Pittsford for her field education. She became the first woman ordained in the American Baptist Church. Her seminary education introduced her to the writing of Howard Thurman. His theological insights and a growing belief in social justice, lead to a life-long commitment to the African American community and church.

She enrolled in Princeton Theological Seminary and earned a second masters in theology while serving as assistant pastor of the Second reformed Church in Somerville, New Jersey. She then enrolled in the PhD program at Princeton in pastoral theology. While pursuing her degree she worked as a trainee, then as a staff member, at the Trinity Counseling Center where she provided individual, couples, family and group counseling. Emma also served as a teaching fellow at Princeton Theological Seminary, leading small groups that discussed cases presented by students.

Perkins School of Theology of Theology hired Rev. Justes as Associate Directory of the Intern Program and Counselor to Students in 1975. While in Dallas, she finished her dissertation and was granted in 1979 the Doctor of Philosophy in Pastoral Theology.

Dr Justes was hired by Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in 1979 as Associate Professor of Pastoral Psychology and Pastoral Care. This marked her move to the Chicago area. She influenced her field by teaching subjects that others avoided such as Sexuality, Aging and the Pastoral Care of Women. She demonstrated the importance of integrating pastoral care in other fields as she co-taught in Patristics and Homiletics. Determined to connect with professionals in Pastoral Theology, she and colleagues founded the Society for Pastoral Theology. She served on the steering committee and was the second Convener of the professional society.

It was during this time that Emma achieved one of her life goals, to own a home. She began to pursue her next important goal, to become a mother, which was not easy as a single woman. She was not afraid of adopting cross-racially. On Christmas Eve in 1985, Emma brought home her first son, Charles Isaac Kito Justes. Four years later she brought home her second son, James Micah Kamali Justes. Her greatest joy was being their mother.

In 1988, Dr. Justes was hired by Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. She taught at Northern until 2007. In 1996, Dr. Justes made a trip to South Africa to teach at the newly opened Baptist Convention College in Johannesburg. In 1999, Dr Justes joined the ministry team at St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church with a focus on women's ministry and adult bible study. After leaving Northern Baptist, she joined the United Theological Seminary faculty as the Distinguished Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Emma Toussant Chair in Pastoral Theology

Dr. Emma Justes has numerous publications including her two books, *Hearing Beyond the Words: How to Become a Listening Pastor*, and *Please Don't Tell: What to do with the Secrets People Share*.

Dr. Justes loved her profession teaching aspiring ministry students. She had a unique ability to reach into student's lives, affirm their gifts and expand their vision of themselves and their ministry. We will all miss her radiant smile, risk taking ministry and encouraging words. Her legacy will be carried out in the ministry and lives of the thousands of students, colleagues and friends whose lives she touched.