

**Service of Celebration  
For the Life Of**



**William Edison Duke Tibbetts**

6th May, 1933 – 28th April, 2025

Officiating Officer: Pastor Bubba Hooker

Ushers: Angella & Glenn Berry

Guest Book Attendant: Samantha Scott & Kelsey Dixon

*"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore, we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains  
be carried into the midst of the sea"*

*Psalms 46:1-2"*

Interment will follow at the Prospect Cemetery

## Order of Service

Prelude

Welcome & Prayer..... Pastor Bubba Hooker

Congregation Hymn..... Amazing Grace

Scripture: Psalms 91:1-10..... Cantrell Scott Sr

Life Story..... Sidney Ebanks

Musical tribute to Wife (Father, I Place into your Hands)..... Lizzette Yearwood

Tributes from Children..... Stephanie Bodden

Tribute from Nieces..... Yolande & Lizzette

Tribute from Nephews..... Asher & Alec

Tribute from Seafarers ..... Denniston Tibbetts

Slide Show

Message of Comfort ..... Pastor Bubba Hooker

Hymn ..... It is Well With My Soul

Prayer for the Family ..... Pastor Bubba Hooker

### Pallbearers

Duke Wayne Tibbetts  
Edward Howell Jr  
Cantrell Scott Sr

Asher Lopez  
Alec Lopez  
Tyler Christian

### Honorary Pallbearers

Pete Tibbetts  
Edison Lee Howell  
Matthew Howell  
Sidney Ebanks  
Naul Bodden  
Henley Scott  
Tom Tibbetts  
Michael McCurdy  
Jack Taylor  
Tyler Green  
Cantrell Scott Jr  
Peter Stilling  
Glenn Berry

Chris Lopez  
Johan Josephs  
Dale Dacres  
Burns Ruddy  
Phil Tibbetts  
Mark Arther  
Javier Howell  
Shawn Scott  
Steven Scott  
Andrew Galbraith  
Rolston Anglin  
Steve Bodden  
Calvin Blair

## Service Hymns

### Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch; like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

The Lord hath promised good to me,  
His word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun.

### It Is Well With My Soul

When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot Thou hast taught me to say,  
"It is well, it is well with my soul!"

It is well with my soul!  
It is well, it is well with my soul!

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,  
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought—  
My sin, not in part, but the whole,  
Is nailed to His Cross, and I bear it no more;  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live;  
If dark hours about me shall roll,  
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life  
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

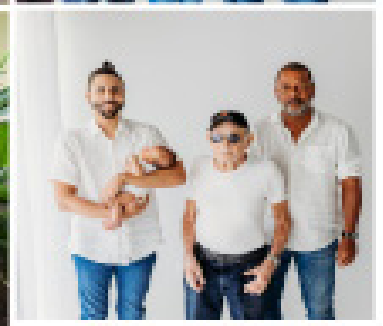
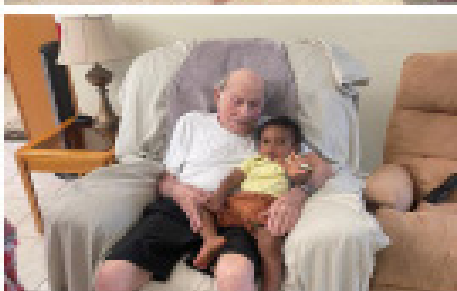
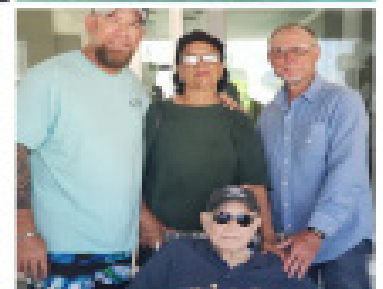
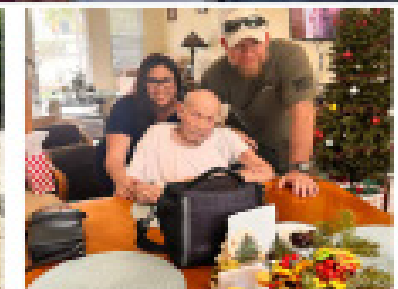
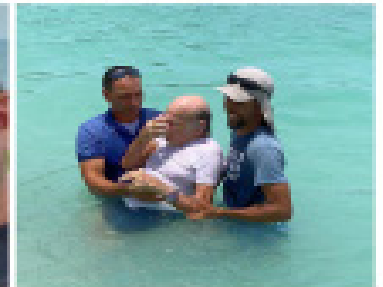
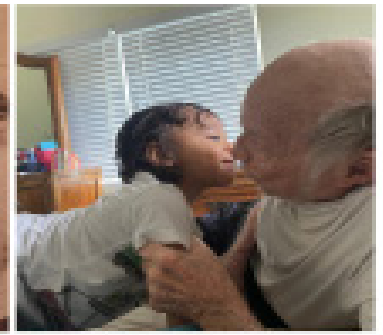
### Father, I Place into Your Hands

Father, I place into Your hands  
the things I cannot do.  
Father, I place into Your hands  
the things that I've been through.  
Father, I place into Your hands  
the way that I should go,  
for I know I always can trust You.

Father, I place into Your hands  
my friends and family.  
Father, I place into Your hands  
the things that trouble me.  
Father, I place into Your hands  
the person I would be,  
for I know I always can trust You.

Father, we love to see Your face,  
we love to hear Your voice.  
Father, we love to sing Your praise  
and in Your name rejoice.  
Father, we love to walk with You  
and in Your presence rest,  
for we know we always can trust You.

Father, I want to be with You  
and do the things You do.  
Father, I want to speak the words  
that You are speaking too.  
Father, I want to love the ones  
that You will draw to You,  
for I know that I am one with You.









## Duke's Life Story

William Duke Edison Tibbetts was born to Edison and Edna Tibbetts on 6 May 1933 in Cotton Tree Bay, Cayman Brac. He was the long-awaited brother for Jewell, Dillion, and Betty Fay. Dillion had wanted a baby brother for so long that when he was told about Duke, he said that he had waited so long he could wait longer!

Duke was born almost 6 months after the devastating 1932 Hurricane, which meant his mother was 3 months pregnant during the terrible hurricane, and Duke must have been traumatized in utero, because Duke was always so afraid of rain and thunderstorms. Even after he started school, he would run home whenever the skies darkened or thunder rolled.

At the age of 7, Duke started attending Hettie Ryan's primary school in Stake Bay, which had a total of 6 students: Burns Rutty, Pat Rutty, Christine Ryan, Vinton Ritch, and his brother, Dillon. He later attended Mr Algie Ryan's School at Cotton Tree Bay, which later moved to the Creek.

Duke loved fishing from a young age. He would go fishing before school or would sometimes skip school to go fishing and he would tell his mother to get the pot ready til he got back home because he was going to catch the ole wife he saw the day before. His passion for fishing and hunting stayed with him throughout his life. He was a skilled pond bird hunter and one of his favorite past times was walking the bay in search of nesting turtles or their eggs. During turtle nestling season there was always eggs and turtle meat at his parent's home. He was also quite the trickster as well. He used to chase his lil sister, Anita around the house trying to put green lizards down her back, knowing she was scared of them.

Duke left school and started his first job at the age of 13, working at the Government Communication station as a Radio Operator when his brother Dillion migrated to the States to get married. He had been helping Dillion deliver messages after school from the age of 9. In those days the only means of communication was through the Morse Code which was like another language. It was a combination of dashes and dots that formed words and sentences. The signals would be transmitted at 0920 each morning and then again in the afternoon, and they had to be transcribed by hand and taken to people on bicycle. He was taught the Morse Code by his brother Dillon who he referred to as "a genius".

At 20 years of age Duke joined the National Bulk Carrier like many men of the day. He returned home after several years and got married to his first wife, Corrine Bodden in 1953 shortly after the birth of their twin daughters Julieanna and Joan. Joan unfortunately died shortly after birth, and a few years later they welcomed their son Pete.

Duke was always a very hard working man and he wanted to keep his savings close by because he didn't trust the Government savings bank. He had buried his money in a tin outside his first house in Cotton Tree Bay. The tin with his savings disappeared around the same time his house tragically burnt down. His distrust of banks continued but he was finally persuaded to put his savings in the new Interbank House in Grand Cayman. He had worked for the founder Jean Doucet, and got to know and trust him. This turned out to be a bad decision as when the bank collapsed, he lost everything again that he had managed to save for several years.

After their home was tragically lost by fire, Duke moved his family to the States, where he started a painting company which he operated for about 15 years. He used to tell stories about the American Country music artist, Ronald McDowell, who started out as a painter in his company. Duke loved country music, and he authored the song "It's Just a Matter of Time" that is now a Country Hit, sung by Randy Travis.

In 1970, he and Corrine divorced, and he returned home to Grand Cayman. Shortly after he met Gweneth Bush, and two years later, they were blessed with his second son, Duke Wayne. During that time, he set up a business called Palm Grove Inn, with his friend Kent Green. He later opened a store where he made and sold black coral jewelry. During this time, he also continued to paint. He worked for his good friend, Capt. Charles Kirkonnell and did several jobs for the Government over the years, where he met Glenn Berry, whom he often referred to as “a very good man”.

In 1980, Duke married Pearl Lewis, and 14 years later, their daughter Diana was born, much to their surprise, and she became their pride and joy. Duke loved his family and took great pride in providing for them, especially while carrying out his favorite pastime of fishing. He would often meet his friend Dale Dacres early in the morning to go catch sprats and return home with fresh fish for Pearl to cook for lunch. He would often boast about how smart she was and how “good she could cook”. Pearl cared diligently for Duke until her illness started in 2016, then he did the same for her for many years until his own health declined and he could no longer do so.

He and Pearl were then joined by caretakers Irene, Crystal, and Kenisha, who became like a part of the family. He would have them in stitches, giving them jokes and critiquing their clothes and shoes. He was known as the family’s Fashion Police.

Later on in his life, he became very conscious of his vulnerability, and he would have long talks with his nephew Edward about his soul and he accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour and was baptized on July 23rd, 2021.

Duke lived his last years in anticipation of meeting Jesus, however, he was also reluctant to leave Pearl behind. He often gave instructions for exactly how to take care of her. In particular, he wanted to ensure that she didn’t sleep in the room alone after he left.

Duke’s anticipated homegoing took place on April 28, 8 days before his 92nd birthday, after saying goodbye to all the family the day before.

He was preceded in death by His parents, Edison & Edna Tibbetts, his siblings, Jewel, Dillion, Betty Fay, and Anita, and his daughters, Julie and Joan. Left to mourn are his wife Pearl, sons Pete and Duke Wayne, daughter Diana, 5 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and a host of relatives and friends.

## **Tribute from Son Pete Tibbetts**

Dear Friends and Family,

My name is Pete Tibbetts, the son of Duke Tibbetts. It is with a heavy heart that I write this tribute to my Dad. I am so sorry that I am not able to be at your service in person, due to circumstances beyond my control.

We gather here today to honor and celebrate the life of my father, Duke Tibbetts. When I think of my Dad, I think of him as a true Caymanian, the son of the soil, from a generation that truly denotes our roots and heritage. Born in Cayman Brac in 1933, he was from a generation when times were simpler, with a slower pace of life, although many hardships were encountered. I recall my dad telling me many stories of what life was like in those days, growing up in Cayman Brac, which will now just be found in the history books of the Cayman Islands.

In those days, the sea was a central part of life in the Cayman Islands, and my Dad, like many Caymanians, went to sea to support his family. He was from the last generation to take to the seas, and he has always had a deep love and respect for the sea. We spent many days fishing together, which I will always treasure.

When my wife and I came back to the Cayman Islands in the 1970s, my Dad helped me to start my own charter fishing business, Island Girl Charters, and was instrumental in the success of my business.

His legacy will live on in the values he has instilled in me. His influence in my life is who I am today and I am forever grateful for the time we shared. He was an amazing father, and his spirit lives on in all those he has touched.

Anyone can be a father, but it takes someone special to be a Dad, and that is why I call you Dad, because you are so special to me. You will remain in our hearts forever.

Thank you, Dad, for all your love and guidance you brought into our lives. We love you, Dad.

May you find safe harbor in the eternal waters, and may you have fair winds and calm seas on your final voyage.

*Of All the Special Gifts in life  
However Great or Small  
To have You as our Dad  
Was the Greatest Gift of All.*

## **A Tribute from Your Son, Duke Wayne**

Daddy,

Words cannot express how much you mean to me. You were more than just my father, you were my hero, my teacher, my fishing buddy, and my friend.

You worked hard your whole life to provide for me and to raise me right. Everything I am today is because of the values you instilled in me, the advice you gave me, and the example you set. I will carry your wisdom with me for a lifetime.

I'll always remember your deep love for country music. You didn't just listen, you sang it with soul. I guess that's why I love country music so much, too, and why I like singing: it brings me closer to you. It was our shared passion. Just like fishing.

Growing up, some of my favorite memories are the days we spent fishing together. Even as the years passed, we kept going until you couldn't anymore. It broke my heart when our fishing trips came to an end, not just because we couldn't fish, but because I missed that quiet, peaceful time spent with you. I will always cherish those moments.

Visiting you in your final days was one of the hardest things I've ever done. I would sit by your side, holding your hand, crying silently, knowing our time was short. It hurt so deeply to see you in bed, unable to do the things you loved most. But I was grateful just to be with you.

Now you're gone, and this is the hardest day of my life. But I take comfort knowing you're no longer in pain. And I know in my heart, you are with me, always.

Everything you taught me, every piece of advice you gave me, lives on in me. And one day, I know we'll be together again, listening to country music and singing along. Just like old times.

Love always and forever,  
Your son,  
Duke Wayne



## **A Tribute from Your Daughter Diana Christian**

Dear Dad,

It breaks my heart to know you're no longer with us on this earth. Sundays will never be the same. However, it's not goodbye, it's see you soon on the other side, since you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, which I'm so grateful for. That gives me confidence that I'll see you again.

I'm flooded with childhood memories of you, and I'm so thankful to have had an involved dad in my life. Thank you for giving me the island experience of fishing, even though I mostly caught lionfish and eels for some reason, and for hunting Soja crabs late at night. I remember us feeding the ducks and turtles near where I now live. I remember being at some of your paint jobs, playing around, and making friends while you worked so hard. I remember you showing me your collection of shark teeth and black coral jewelry. I remember playing cards and dominoes in bed with you and Mom and being a sore loser! I remember you surprised me with my first cat after rescuing it from the prickly bushes. I remember, after Hurricane Ivan, never leaving your side as we waded through the ocean's mess and rescued our beloved pets.

You always motivated me to work hard in life, reminding me that nothing comes free. I know I've been blessed with financial wisdom and a conservative mindset, always looking for the best deal, all thanks to you. You made sure I learned the basics of maintaining a car and how to be independent and get things done. Your traits, determination, strong will, entrepreneurial spirit, hard work ethic, being vocal, patient, and a loyal partner, you've passed down to me, and I'm forever grateful.

You were always protective of me, as a little girl, anytime I was away, and even now as a grown, married woman with children. We were always in sync. You could sense when I wasn't well or even knew I was pregnant before anyone else. I know we had our ups and downs due to the big generation gap, but looking back, I know you did your very best and made sure you were always there for me, because you love me.

Thank you for everything and all the memories. Thank you for the time you spent with my boys and for being so invested in them. I know they miss their Gramps, and I'm sad you won't be here to watch them grow up, but I know you're watching over us with Jesus by your side.

My comfort is in knowing this isn't goodbye but see you on the other side of this earthly plane. I have deep joy in that truth.

We love you so much. xx

## **Tribute to Uncle Duke from Niece Lizzette Yearwood**

Uncle Duke and Aunt Pearl became like parents to me when my own parents passed away. Our daughters, just under a year apart in age, were an added blessing, giving us even more reasons to spend time together and grow close as a family.

Everyone knew that Uncle Duke was incredibly protective of his family. So when he allowed me to take Diana and Aunt Pearl out, it wasn't something I took lightly. Of course, it came with a detailed lecture on safety, every single time, but I felt honored that he trusted me, and I always made sure to check in and reassure him that all was well.

There are so many special memories of times spent together from simple things like having Sunday lunch at their house to listening to his fish stories, to him teaching me how to tie a hook on a fishing line to ensure it didn't come off. Uncle Duke, Aunt Pearl, Diana and Duke Wayne weathered Hurricane Ivan with me in my office and then stayed at my house for a few weeks afterwards, until they found a place to rent because their house was badly damaged. Although he was in his seventies at the time, I was amazed at how Uncle Duke responded to that devastation and persevered through the cleaning up and rebuilding of their house on Old Crewe Road. His determination and resilience inspired me tremendously.

Uncle Duke was a planner, and he took his responsibility as head of the family very seriously. He would talk to me about him and Aunt Pearl "getting up in age", and soon they wouldn't be able to manage to maintain that house and the "big old yard" so he started looking for somewhere else to move to. Aunt Pearl and Diana weren't keen on this so he shared his justifications with me in the hope that I would help to convince them that this was the right decision.

My respect and admiration for Uncle Duke climaxed when Aunt Pearl started showing signs of dementia. He would share with me these symptoms, and for a long time, I explained them away, telling him that my memory was just as bad. When it became obvious that Aunt Pearl was unwell, Uncle Duke insisted on being her caregiver for many years until his own health started to wane. Although he was 18 years her senior, he would feed her, dress her and make sure she was well taken care of, but he drew the line at putting on her makeup. That he left for me to do when I was taking her out.

He believed that noni juice and moringa were the secrets to his long life. He often shared a dream he'd had, when Uncle Dillion told him to never let anyone get rid of those plants. This was years before moringa became a health trend in Cayman. He consistently took his noni juice and moringa, while trying to convince the rest of the family to join him. Ironically, he wasn't as disciplined when it came to traditional medicine, he was probably the worst patient in that regard!

Uncle Duke was truly one of a kind. As he aged, he mellowed, but never lost his sense of humor or his deep sense of responsibility. He taught me the importance of perseverance, the value of family, and that it is never too late to say, "I love you."

I will miss him more than words can express, but I am grateful for every moment we shared, and I am confident that we will see him again in Heaven!

Until then, Uncle Duke, rest in peace.

### **Tribute from Niece Yolande Lopez**

Dear Uncle Duke, as we gather today to celebrate your precious life, our hearts are filled with gratitude and tender memories. We have been so blessed to have had you with us for 91 years, one week short of your 92nd birthday, though even that doesn't feel long enough. God saw you were tired, and with tearful eyes, we watched as you peacefully returned to our Heavenly Father. "It broke my heart to lose you, but you never went alone, for a part of me went with you the day, God called you home." Your life was truly a blessing, and I will forever treasure every memory we shared. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure. You were more than an uncle, you were like a father to me and a grandfather to Asher and Alec. I cherished every conversation and every moment in your presence. Your warmth, kindness, and laughter lit up every room. The stories, the wisdom, the meaningful times we spent together, they've all left a lasting imprint on our hearts. You were a man who loved generously and gave selflessly, always putting others before yourself. You were always concerned what would happen to Aunt Pearl when God called you home. I promised you Uncle Duke, that I would be there for Aunt Pearl until God calls her home. What brings me the greatest comfort is knowing you had a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. I had the honor of witnessing your public declaration of faith through baptism on July 23, 2021. I do not doubt that you are now in the presence of our Lord, joyfully reunited with all the loved ones who went before you. I can only imagine the grand reunion, all welcoming you home with open arms. Your unwavering faith in Jesus was powerful and deeply inspiring. Uncle Duke, I will miss visiting you, hearing your voice, and simply being near you. But I will cling to the promises of Jesus and take comfort in the hope of our reunion one day in eternity. Thank you, Uncle Duke, for your love, your legacy, and your powerful example of faith. Until we meet again.

### **Tribute From Grand Nephews Asher & Alec Lopez**

Hi everyone, I'm Asher Lopez, and this is my brother Alec, we're Uncle Duke's grand-nephews. Visiting Uncle Duke always felt like walking into Splash Mountain at Disney, with the sound of old-time country music and his warm, loving spirit welcoming us in. I'll never forget how his face lit up and his eyes filled with tears each time we entered the room. Uncle Duke was full of love, care, and selflessness. In 2021, he was publicly baptized, declaring his faith in Christ. On the evening of April 27th, surrounded by family, he kept saying, "I love God." The next morning, as we arrived by his bedside, we witnessed his last breaths, as he passed peacefully into the arms of Jesus.

Though we miss him dearly, we are comforted knowing he's free from pain and full of joy in Heaven, reunited with all our loved ones. I'll always cherish those Sundays and birthdays, the many times we spent together. Though he was our grand-uncle, he felt like a grandfather, always putting others before himself. We'll never forget his hugs, his kindness, or how he used to call me his strong boy. Let this be a reminder: life is short and precious. Love one another deeply, and remember the power of God's grace. Uncle Duke, we love you and will carry you in our hearts until we meet again.

## Graveside Hymns

### What a Day That Will Be

There is coming a day,  
When no heart aches shall come,  
No more clouds in the sky,  
No more tears to dim the eye,  
All is peace forever more,  
On that happy golden shore,  
What a day, glorious day that will be.

What a day that will be,  
When my Jesus I shall see,  
And I look upon His face,  
The One who saved me by His grace;  
When He takes me by the hand,  
And leads me through the Promised Land,  
What a day, glorious day that will be.

There'll be no sorrow there,  
No more burdens to bear,  
No more sickness, no pain,  
No more parting over there;  
And forever I will be,  
With the One who died for me,  
What a day, glorious day that will be.

What a day that will be,  
When my Jesus I shall see,  
And I look upon His face,  
The One who saved me by His grace;  
When He takes me by the hand,  
And leads me through the Promised Land,  
What a day, glorious day that will be.

### Tis so Sweet to Trust in Jesus

Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
and to take him at his word;  
just to rest upon his promise,  
and to know, "Thus saith the Lord."

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him!  
How I've proved him o'er and o'er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
O for grace to trust him more!

O how sweet to trust in Jesus,  
just to trust his cleansing blood;  
and in simple faith to plunge me  
neath the healing, cleansing flood!

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,  
just from sin and self to cease;  
just from Jesus simply taking  
life and rest, and joy and peace.

I'm so glad I learned to trust thee,  
precious Jesus, Savior, friend;  
and I know that thou art with me,  
wilt be with me to the end

### When We All Get to Heaven

Sing the wondrous love of Jesus,  
Sing His mercy and His grace;  
In the mansions bright and blessed  
He'll prepare for us a place.

When we all get to heaven,  
what a day of rejoicing that will be!  
When we all see Jesus,  
we'll sing and shout the victory!

While we walk the pilgrim pathway  
Clouds will overspread the sky;  
But when trav'ling days are over  
Not a shadow, not a sigh.

Let us then be true and faithful,  
Trusting, serving ev'ry day;  
Just one glimpse of Him in glory  
Will the toils of life repay.

Onward to the prize before us!  
Soon His beauty we'll behold;  
Soon the pearly gates will open—  
We shall tread the streets of gold.

### One Day At A Time

I'm only human, I'm just a [man---woman].  
Help me believe in what I could be and all that I am.  
Show me the stairway that I have to climb.  
Lord for my sake teach me to take  
One day at a time.

One day at a time sweet Jesus.  
That's all that I'm asking from you.  
Give me the strength to do every day what I have to do.  
Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus.  
And tomorrow may never be mine.  
Lord, help me today show me the way.  
One day at a time.

Do you remember when you walked among men?  
Well Jesus you know if your looking below it's worse now than then.  
Pushing and shoving, crowding my mind.  
So for my sake Lord teach me to take  
One day at a time.

One day at a time sweet Jesus.  
That's all that I'm asking from you.  
Give me the strength to do every day what I have to do.  
Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus.  
And tomorrow may never be mine.  
Lord, help me today show me the way.  
One day at a time.  
Lord, help me today, show me the way.  
One day at a time.

## Graveside Service

Opening Prayer..... Pastor Bubba Hooker  
Committal..... Pastor Bubba Hooker  
Hymn ..... What a Day that will Be  
Hymn ..... When we All Get to Heaven  
Hymn ..... Tis so Sweet  
Hymn ..... One Day at a Time  
Prayer ..... Pastor Bubba Hooker



## Acknowledgement

*The family of the late Duke Tibbetts extends sincere appreciation to everyone for your support during the time of his illness and passing. Special thanks to his caregivers, Mrs Irene Blair, Miss Kenisha Hunter, and Miss Crystal Hunter, as well as his medical doctors, Dr Samuel Williams Rodriguez and Dr Sidney Ebanks, for their dedicated and compassionate care over the years.*

*May God bless you all.*