



## Mr. David Terry Payton

July 11, 1960 - October 4, 2011

David Terry Payton, Gospel Producer and Play Writer, had his final curtain call here on earth October 4, 2011. David was born to the late John David (Buster) and Hattie Adams Peyton on July 11, 1960 in Pitt County North Carolina. He grew up in the Simpson and Greenville communities. David learned his work ethics on a 250 acre farm owned by his parents. David started his writing career at G.R Whitfield School in Grimesland, NC. For a school assignment, he wrote an essay concerning integration about how stupid it is for people to act one way in front of others, but in private act according to their hearts. His essay "Prejudice", won the school contest and became part of the Pitt County School Handbook. David graduated from D.H Conley High School and attended St. Augustine where his theatrical skills were developed and sharpened. While attending St. Augustine, he worked with Laverne Players Theater Group and starred in the play, Slow Dance on the Killing Ground. He received substantial publicity and many awards for outstanding performance in the play. He continued his education at Johnson C. Smith University, majoring in Business and Marketing. David graduated from Carolina School of Broadcasting in Charlotte, NC.

He worked in the entertainment business until he gave his life to Christ and became an Associate Pastor of the Temple Chapel Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC. He also became a member of the Prince Hall Masons in Charlotte, NC. During this time, David developed an outreach ministry

employing Christian drama. Out of this ministry, David wrote and produced the electrifying spiritual gospel musical play, *A Good Man Is Hard To Find* in 1990. Jay Lee Freeman, an attorney who backed performances such as *David Copperfield*, *Disney on Ice* and *Sesame Street*, enabled the musical play to tour around the country to sold-out crowds in over 100 cities. In 2007, 20th Century Fox and Code Black Entertainment produced the movie, *A Good Man Is Hard To Find*, which is currently seen on national television across the United States. David received recognition by the NAACP in 1993 and the play, *A Good Man Is Hard To Find*, was nominated as Play of the Year. In 2008, in Beverly Hills, David's movie and personal appearance was a part of the annual International Black Film Festival competition where he presented a panel presentation on what it takes to write a story and then adapt it to a stage play. Since *A Good Man Is Hard To Find*, David has written, produced and directed several inspirational gospel musical stage plays, such as: *The Real Meaning of Christmas*, *Child Support*, *Ain't No Woman Like the One I Got*, *When a Woman's Fed Up*, *Tired of Being Alone*, *Train Up a Child*, *Let's Straighten It Out*, *Better Put that Woman First*, *They Said I Wouldn't Make It*, *Stand By me* and presently, *behind the Pulpit* which is touring around the Eastern United States.

David was preceded in death by his parents, J.D. (Buster) and Hattie Adams Payton; a sister, Shirley Payton Clemons and a brother, William Travis Payton. He is survived by one son, David Donnell Payton of Charlotte, NC; two daughters, Marquita Rene Payton of Charlotte, NC and Davonya Campbell Payton and her mother/companion, Annette Campbell of Greenville, NC and one god-daughter, Chamika Campbell-White; three sisters: Vera Blackwell (William) of Greenville, NC, Jacqueline Payton Simmons (Judge) of Montoursville, Pennsylvania and Linda Payton; four brothers: J.D. Payton Jr., Clinton Early Payton (Faye) all from Temple Hill, Maryland; Richard Payton (Dover) of Manassas, Maryland, David Reese of Greenville, NC; one foster brother, Marcellus Roach of Bethel, NC; one grandson, Isaiah Donnell Payton

of Beaufort, NC and one god-granddaughter, Naeem Williams. He is survived by several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

# Cemetery Details

## Homestead Memorial Gardens

4251 E. 10th Street  
Greenville, NC 27858

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **14**. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Reimage Church  
3950 Victory Lane  
Winterville, NC 28590

## Service

OCT **15**. 12:00 PM (ET)

Sycamore Hill Missionary Baptist Church  
1001 Hooker Road  
Greenville, NC 27834

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. David Terry Payton*

October 06, 2023 at 05:52 AM



“ *Lynda Renteria lit a candle in memory of Mr. David Terry Payton*



**Lynda Renteria** - October 20, 2011 at 08:28 PM



“ *Mrs. Griffin lit a candle in memory of Mr. David Terry Payton*



**Mrs. Griffin** - October 15, 2011 at 09:40 PM



“ *Shenell Taylor lit a candle in memory of Mr. David Terry Payton*



**Shenell Taylor** - October 15, 2011 at 08:31 PM

ST

*My prayers of comfort and strength are with the family. David's productions have blessed many.*

**Shenell Taylor** - October 15, 2011 at 08:33 PM

HM

“ *Hattie Mcnealy lit a candle in memory of Mr. David Terry Payton*



**Hattie Mcnealy** - October 15, 2011 at 03:50 PM

HM

*I met David in 1990. He and his wife blessed me with the opportunity to work with the Good Man Is Hard To Find production. I learned alot working with David. He was a blessing to me in my time of need. May God bless each family member and know that God is with you during these trying times.*

**Hattie Mcnealy** - October 15, 2011 at 03:53 PM

SW

“ *Sheila Willoughby lit a candle in memory of Mr. David Terry Payton*



**Sheila Willoughby** - October 15, 2011 at 03:44 PM

SW

*I had the wonderful opportunity to work with David on the "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" tour in 1991. I remember sitting at his table in Philadelphia for dinner when he asked me why I always order a cheeseburger whenever the bus made a food stop. I decided from that point forward to start trying something new whenever I go out to eat. He was a legend in his own right. RIP David. I will miss you!*

Sheila Willoughby - October 15, 2011 at 03:49 PM

LT

“ Linda Taft lit a candle in memory of Mr. David Terry Payton



Linda Taft - October 14, 2011 at 03:02 PM



“ There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than 10,000 tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.

Tonette Mobley Anthony Pullen - October 12, 2011 at 11:52 AM



“ Tonette Mobley Anthony Pullen lit a candle in memory of Mr. David Terry Payton



Tonette Mobley Anthony Pullen - October 12, 2011 at 11:44 AM

CJ

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” - A portion of the Twenty-Third Psalm in the King James Version of the Holy Bible. I am truly sorry for the loss of dear loved one. Please know that God cares about you and will help you during these difficult times. I have fond memories of David and will always remember the play that launched his career, "A Good Man is Hard to Find" in 1990. Of course this title still remain true today. With sympathy, Cleola Johnson.

Cleola Johnson - October 12, 2011 at 07:51 AM

ZL

“ I thank God that we had an opportunity to meet you as a very young man back at Clinton Chapel AME Zion Church in Charlotte, NC. My God continue to be with your family and children. Zack and Linda Little

zack little - October 12, 2011 at 07:12 AM

CA

“ My favorite memory about David is seeing him on stage before his plays were about to start and watching him come back on the stage after they ended. He had the look on his face as if his team had won the super bowl. Thanks for the memories David.



Calvin Adkins - October 12, 2011 at 12:42 AM

AK

“ "Twice born in a once born world" that was a favorite saying of David. I always found him to be a very polite and pleasant human being, a fine man. I will miss him. Rest in peace, brother...Allen K.

Allen Keen - October 11, 2011 at 09:58 AM

AC

“ My dear friend I will always treasure the moments of Faith that we share , never to forget how much we are alike and how much we both love our GOD , I am so happy knowing that I will see you once again since you are HOME and I still wait on my turn. Thank you for teaching me how and why I need a loving and caring father. My love to your child she will have to remember not to cry but to rejoice in the knowledge that her daddy is still a great man that truly loves his baby girl. He is still watching and loving you from GOD'S hands ever more. Alfredo C. GOD'S SPEED.

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**Alfredo Cruz** - October 11, 2011 at 07:25 AM



“ I had the chance to meet David, in 1992 and he gave me my first chance to travel with a National Play. David had one of the #1 Plays in the nation called, "A Good Man is Hard to Find" Your gift of writing touched the hearts of so many people. May God watch over your children and may your soul R.I.P. You are a League!!!  
God Bless, Monica L Brown

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**Monica Brown** - October 10, 2011 at 10:22 PM