



## Elvin Baker, Jr

July 5, 1923 - December 12, 2016

Sometime early in the wee hours of the morning of December 12th, 2016, Dr. Elvin Baker, Jr., a father to some, a brother and Pastor to many, heard the calling of his Savior. He answered and left this life to the one Eternal. He left behind three sons, Philip Mahat Baker of Chicago, Illinois; Dion and daughter in law Cathy, and Dennis Baker, both of Oakland, California. His grandchildren Dion, Jr., Senta, Shai, Suten, Caphir, and Georgia Hopkins of Chicago, Illinois; and a host of other relatives and friends, too numerous to name here.

Elvin Baker, Jr. was born July 5th, 1923 to Elvin, Sr. and Louvinia Baker in Lake Village, Arkansas. Younger brother of Eddie, he grew up with sisters Gracie and Marian in that beautiful lakeside community. There he learned the values of family and community in the Deep South until his high school years at Central High were interrupted by World War II.

After basic and specialist training in Georgia and Texas, Elvin was sent to England where he was prepared with millions of others for the D-Day invasion, winning a few Lindy Hopping contests while there! He landed at the Normandy beachhead just after the initial invasion, working his way through the hedgerows, though the Battle of the Bulge (shooting down an enemy plane in the process), and to the liberation of France. If you've ever seen 'Saving Private Ryan', you've seen Dr. Baker's journey through Europe.

After the war, Elvin married Mattie Lee Hopkins, also from Lake Village. Although the marriage did not last, it was fruitful: Phillip Baker still lives in the Chicago area, along with his loving grandchildren.

In 1951, Elvin Baker, Jr. married the former Jessie Mae Keys of Lake Village and soon after moved west in the Great Migration to Oakland, CA to start a new life. After working as a mechanic for several dealerships, his military experience helped him to get a job with the US Navy's Mare Island Shipyard in Vallejo, California as a warehouseman. He eventually worked his way up to Assistant Director of Material Handling at the Naval Public Works Center, NSC Oakland. Here he received numerous awards along the way, and was among the first Black supervisors in Navy Civil service on the West Coast. All the while, he ran an automotive repair business from his home. Mr. Baker worked on cars while having deep spiritual conversations with their owners. In addition, he mentored the young kids who came by to work on their hot rods. He also served as a deacon at the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, managing the construction project of this very building.

However, one morning in 1973 on a rare solo trip to work, the charismatic deacon was called to preach the Word. Pastor Arlee Hightower provided fertile ground for young preachers, and after being ordained by Rev. Alonzo Emerson at the very spot where he now lay, he soon was elected Assistant Pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church in Oakland.

Shortly afterwards, after the untimely death of his colleague and close friend, Rev. Willie Johnson, Rev. Baker was elected pastor of the Ollie Grove Baptist Church in Berkeley. At the time, the membership had fallen to less than forty; the Church had no clear spiritual direction and the building had been condemned. However, through his demonstrated faith in the great Jehovah Jireh – the Lord Who Provides – not only was the restoration completed, but the Church attendance reached over 200 members

and over 150 in Sunday School by the late 80's, and made great impact in the West Berkeley neighborhood for over 40 years.

Pastor Baker did not stop there: he served as Moderator for the East Bay Baptist Association of 110 churches; president of the Mt. Calvary Educational Congress; member of the Golden Gate Theological Seminary Extension Course Advisory Committee; and the board of the Sacramento Theological Seminary. He earned his Doctorate at the ripe young age of 88, proving that he was never too old to learn something new. His energetic spirit and effervescence overflowed in his passion for youth and the elderly. His voracious appetite for learning; and his hunger to teach as many as he could about the goodness of the Lord never dwindled in the slightest while he was with us.

Dr. Elvin Baker, Jr. mentored many pastors, ministers, deacons, families, and individuals. His legacy lives on through them, and the way they live their lives. He has left an inheritance to his children's' children, much greater than finances. In his sunset years, he spent time with his family and close friends, praising the Lord daily and being a blessing to everyone he encountered, still sharing Gods' word. He showed us how to fight well, he showed us how to live well. In the end, his soul will be everlasting with the Lord, and his spirit will live on through all he touched.

# Cemetery Details

## Rolling Hills Memorial Park

4100 Hilltop Drive  
Richmond, CA 94803

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC **21**. 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Harris Funeral Home Legacy Center  
1331 San Pablo Ave.  
Berkeley, CA 94702  
(510) 525-1331  
<http://www.harrisfuneralhomelegacycenter.com>

## Funeral Service

DEC **22**. 11:00 AM (PT)

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church  
1124 Adeline St.  
Oakland, CA 94607

# Tribute Wall



“ *Harris Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Elvin Baker, Jr*

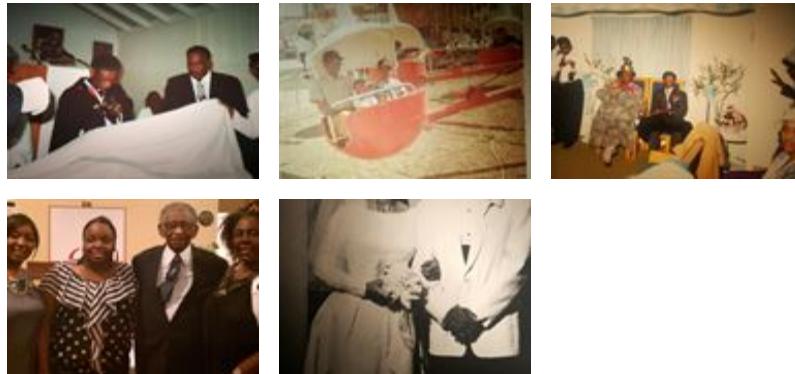


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Harris Funeral Home - January 30, 2017 at 05:23 PM



“ *115 files added to the album Life Tributes*



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Harris Funeral Home - December 21, 2016 at 05:41 PM