



## Mr. John Mabry Johnson

August 16, 1935 - December 12, 2011

John Mabry Johnson was born to Mabry Johnson and Mary Virginia Williams Johnson on August 16, 1935 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. John accepted Jesus Christ at an early age and attended Galilee Missionary Baptist Church and Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Kalamazoo. He died unexpectedly on December 12, 2011 at his home in Kalamazoo. He attended the Kalamazoo Public Schools graduating from Central High School in 1953. He was a class president and excelled in track and football. He earned a varsity letter in track and set several high school records. His track accomplishments earned him a scholarship to the University of Michigan which he attended from 1954-56. John earned a letter in track. His support for the Maize and Blue continued throughout his life. He was married to Georgia A. Lewis Johnson MD for 24 years. They lived in Lansing where they raised their three daughters: Barbara, Mary and Ruth. He worked for the State of Michigan Department of Social Services beginning in 1965, where he was instrumental in developing regulations governing adult foster care services. John subsequently relocated to Kalamazoo and lived in the house built by his maternal grandparents and where he grew up. There he lived with Iris Goodhall his companion of 30 years. John was involved with the NAACP's Labor and Industry Services and the Vine Neighborhood Association. For seven years, John worked at Goodwill Industries in a custodial fathers/prison re-entry program. John was co-chair of the Southwest Michigan Black Heritage Society and active with the Kalamazoo County Historical Society and the Kalamazoo Genealogical

Society. John had many interests and hobbies. He was studying to become a master gardener. John was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, David Johnson. John is survived by his three daughters: Barbara Johnson MD (Neal Ryan) of Pittsburgh, PA; Mary Johnson MD of Marshall; and Ruth Johnson JD of Detroit; his companion of 30 years, Iris Goodhall; three brothers: Joel (Delores) Johnson of Oakwood Village, OH; William (Theresa) Johnson of South Haven, MI; and Booker Henry (Mary) Carter of Henderson, NV; as well as his sister-in-law Susan Pinney (David). John left behind two beloved grandchildren, Patrick Mabry Ryan and Sarah Marie Ryan, and leaves behind 7 nieces and nephews: David Jordan Johnson, Jacob Mabry Pinney Johnson, and Tommie Boughman; Dana Johnson Golston and Damon Johnson; and Kelvin Johnson and Derryk Priestly. He also leaves behind many cousins, other relatives, and friends. One of the high school students who interviewed John for an oral history project said, "John Johnson. He is a book of stories waiting to be read." Although his passing represents the end of a chapter, he lead a full life, therefore there is still more to be told about John Johnson.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC **15**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Harper Funeral Home, Inc.  
521 Douglas Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
(269) 342-1000  
info@harperfuneral.com  
<https://www.harperfuneral.com>

## Visitation

DEC **16**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Mt. Zion Baptist Church  
120 Roberson Street  
kalamazoo, MI 49007-3557

## Service

DEC **16**. 11:00 PM (ET)

Mt. Zion Baptist Church  
120 Roberson Street  
kalamazoo, MI 49007-3557

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. John Mabry Johnson*

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ *Mr. John Mabry Johnson*

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ *Mr. Johnson was a warm and wonderful human being. He loved Kalamazoo and helped make it a special city. I was deeply touched by his help the past few months, and I extend my condolences to his dear family. Bob Cinabro, City Commissioner*

**Robert H. Cinabro** - December 15, 2011 at 04:53 PM



“ *Mr. Johnson faithfully served the City of Kalamazoo's Citizen's Public Safety Review and Appeals Board. His service and stories will always be remembered. The board and I thank the Johnson family for sharing him with us.*

*Warmest Regards,*

*Tim Terrentine*

**Tim Terrentine** - December 14, 2011 at 10:21 AM