

# THE Anchor NEWS

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## A LEGACY OF LOVE, STRENGTH, AND PURPOSE: THE WILLIAMS TRIO

There are some legacies that cannot be measured in wealth, titles, or recognition. They are written instead in quiet sacrifices, whispered prayers, and steadfast love. A mother's legacy is one of those rare treasures—often unseen, unappreciated, and thankless, yet unmistakably felt in the lives of her children. This Mother's Day, we honor Sister Lee Lynnette Williams, a woman whose life reflects that kind of enduring legacy—a love so deep and intentional that it has shaped not one, but two remarkable daughters, Chandler R. and Kennedy L. Williams.

Lady Lynnette, wife of Pastor E. Shaun Williams of Pleasant Olive Missionary Baptist Church in Waco, is a woman whose life has been shaped by resilience, purpose, and an unwavering commitment to her values. Through adversity, she has learned to grow,



LEE LYNNETTE WILLIAMS

to remain steadfast in her beliefs, and to walk boldly in her calling—even when faced with challenges that might have caused others to retreat. Her strength is quiet yet powerful, rooted in faith and sustained by a clear sense of who she is

and whose she is.

Those who know her best describe a woman whose greatest passion is uplifting others. Whether through a kind word, wise counsel, or a simple act of encouragement, Lady Lynnette finds joy in seeing lives strengthened and transformed. Her presence has a way of reminding others of their worth, their purpose, and their ability to rise above life's difficulties.

While her role as a mother is central to her story, it is her character that stands as one of her proudest accomplishments. She has remained true to her values, even in unfavorable situations, demonstrating integrity and grace when it mattered most. That consistency has not only defined her life but has also served as a living example for her daughter

SEE LEE, PG. 6

### NATIONAL HONOR SPOTLIGHT: SCHOLARSHIP EXCELLENCE

The Bible verse in Jeremiah 29:11 has powerfully manifested itself in the life of Kennedy L. Williams of Waco. She is the 17-year-old daughter of Pastor E. Shaun and Lynnette Williams. Kennedy has earned the designation of being a National Merit Scholar Finalist for the class of 2026.

This designation represents the top 1% of scorers across the nation who compete for about 7,500 Merit Scholarship awards. She is a graduating senior at Midway High School as well as an active member of the Pleasant Olive Missionary Baptist Church of Waco, where her father serves as Pastor. She has served on the Junior Ushers and Youth Choir for 10 years. Her first job and her passion was being a tutor for youth with Kumon Math and Reading Program.

Kennedy participates in high school programs such as the Peer Assistance & Leadership (PALs) service program. The PALs program is a service-oriented organization that fosters mentorship and community leadership for students such as touring incoming



KENNEDY L. WILLIAMS

freshmen and mentoring elementary students. She has been on the track team, Christian Fellowship of Athletes, and the HOSA Future Health Professionals. Kennedy has been accepted to multiple universities and plans to pursue a career in biological engineering.

Pastor & Lady Williams are proud of her accomplishments as well as her older sister Chandler, who is an honor student completing her sophomore year at the university. We praise God from whom all blessings flow as we "Imagine More" to the Glory of God.

### RISING ABOVE THE BLUEPRINT: HONORS STUDENT EXCELLING

In the demanding world of Civil Engineering, where precision meets creativity and theory must stand the test of reality, Ms. Chandler R. Williams, a second-year University of Houston student, is already distinguishing herself as a rising force of excellence. As an honors student, she is not only meeting expectations—but exceeding them with discipline, vision, and an unwavering commitment to growth. She's a member of the Pleasant Olive Missionary Baptist Church of Waco, where her father serves as Pastor.

Balancing a rigorous academic schedule that includes



CHANDLER R. WILLIAMS

advanced mathematics, physics, and foundational engineering design courses, she has demonstrated exceptional intellectual ability.

Civil Engineering is not merely about calculations and construction—it is about solving real-world problems. Whether analyzing structural integrity, exploring sustainable materials, or engaging in collaborative design projects, she approaches each challenge with curiosity and determination.

Beyond the classroom, she is actively preparing for a future in the field. Participating in study groups, engineer-

ing clubs, and field concepts shows a proactive mindset. She understands that excellence in Civil Engineering requires both technical skills and teamwork, and she is steadily building both.

Looking ahead, the future is promising. With aspirations to contribute to infrastructure development, sustainable de-

SEE CHANDLER, PG. 2



J.L. &amp; LINDA CRAWFORD

J.L. and Linda Crawford are co-owners of *The Anchor News*. J.L. Crawford serves as Director of Operations and is a Bible teacher and columnist writing on faith, family, and men's issues. Linda Crawford serves as Publisher and Editor, is a motivational speaker, and is the owner of Enjoy the Journey Life Coaching Services.

ENJOY THE JOURNEY: A LIFE COACHING Q&A WITH LINDA CRAWFORD—

# BREAKING THE PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK CYCLE



LINDA CRAWFORD

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

**QUESTION:** I work full time, and no matter how hard I try, I am always behind. As soon as I get paid, the money is gone with bills, groceries, and gas. I

am tired of living paycheck to paycheck. What can I do to finally get ahead?

**ANSWER:** Living paycheck to paycheck can feel exhausting and discouraging. First, know this. You are not alone, and this is not a failure. It is often the result of rising costs and real responsibilities.

The first step is to see clearly. For one week, track every

dollar you spend. Awareness gives you control. Next, begin directing your money with intention. Give every dollar an assignment before it arrives so it works for you instead of disappearing.

Start a small breathing room fund, even if it is just a few dollars at a time. This creates peace when unexpected expenses come. Also, take a

close look at your spending and ask if each expense supports the life you want.

Finally, be patient with yourself. Stability is built one decision at a time. Small wins matter more than you think.

With consistency and intention, you can move from surviving to stable and eventually to thriving.

—Coach Crawford

FROM THE EDITOR...

## LOVE PASSED DOWN: MOTHER AND DAUGHTER STORIES

Celebrate the beauty of motherhood in this special Mother's Day issue of *The Anchor News*. Featuring heartfelt mother and daughter stories, this edition highlights the love, legacy, strength, and shared

journeys that bind generations together. Each story reflects real moments of growth, sacrifice, and connection. We invite you to enjoy these inspiring features as we honor mothers and daughters everywhere.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR...

## A GRATEFUL VOICE FOR THE ANCHOR NEWS

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Crawford ,  
Your monthly publication, *The Anchor News*, has been a regular source of information in Central Texas for years focusing on positive news and events in the minority community. I have worked with *The Anchor News* to advertise my ministry events such as concerts, workshops and conferences which had had an enor-

mous impact on my ministry. *The Anchor News* is a great resource because it is reaching out to so many people. You all and your staff are very professional in the way you manage your business. Your newspaper is located in churches, businesses anywhere that people can have access. I have events coming up in 2026 and will most definitely be using it as a

source for getting the information out to the Community.

Thank you so much for the *Anchor News*.

*Jeffie Kay Sanders CEO/President; All for His Glory Productions/Promotions by JKS; P.O. Box 1342, Hewitt Texas 76643, 254-229-5755; Email: KaySanders235@yahoo.com; Website: www.JeffieKaySanders.org.*

### CHANDLER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sign, and community-focused engineering solutions, she represents the next generation of leaders in the field.

In every sense, this sec-

ond-year honors student is not just learning how to build structures—she continues to build on a legacy of excellence.

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*The Anchor News*, dedicated to serving the community and surrounding areas, focuses on positive news and accomplishments of minorities.

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Anchored on the principles of scripture, *Anchor News* will at no time publish information that is potentially libelous material or intentionally malicious, derogatory or irrelevant.

#### EDITORIAL POLICY

Signed opinion articles do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial staff. Unsigned editor-

ials reflect the opinions of the editor.

#### LETTERS & ARTICLES POLICY

The comments and opinions of our readers are welcomed. Letters and articles should be e-mailed. Letters should be no longer than 200 words and must include a name and phone number. Article submissions should be no longer than 450 words and should include an original head shot (in jpeg

format) along with your name, address and phone number. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, space, potentially libelous material and copyright infringement. We also reserve the right to refuse derogatory, irrelevant and malicious submissions.

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# ROOTED IN STRENGTH, RISING IN PURPOSE

## —DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL, D.C.—

Dr. Shamonica Trunell, D.C. is more than a mother—she is the foundation, the strength, and the heartbeat of her family. To her children, she is the living definition of resilience, grace, and unconditional love, showing through both her words and her actions what it truly means to lead with purpose.

A devoted mother who has poured into the lives of her children and countless others, Dr. Trunell has built a life centered on service, healing, and empowerment. Whether through her work, her wisdom, or her unwavering presence, she has consistently shown what it looks like to rise above challenges and turn obstacles into opportunities. Her journey has not been without sacrifice, but she has



**DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL, D.C**

carried it all with quiet strength and determination—never allowing hardship to dim her light. What sets her apart is the

way she loves—deeply, intentionally, and without limits. From the smallest daily gestures to the biggest life moments, she has always made sure her family feels seen, supported, and inspired. She teaches not just through instruction, but through example—instilling confidence, faith, and the belief that anything is possible.

“My mom is my biggest inspiration. Everything I am and everything I strive to be is because of her,” her daughter shares.

This Mother’s Day, we honor Dr. Shamonica Trunell not only for what she has done, but for who she is—a woman whose legacy is being written through the lives she continues to uplift every single day.

## —SARAI MORGAN—

Sarai Morgan is a bright and beautiful spirit whose presence brings light into every space she enters. At just 12 years old, she already carries a strength and steadiness that speaks far beyond her years. As a student at Midway Middle School, Sarai is not only growing academically, but blossoming into a young woman grounded in resilience, joy, and quiet confidence.

As her mother, I often find myself in awe of who she is becoming. Through every season—especially the ones that have tested us—Sarai has remained rooted. She stands firm, unwavering in her spirit, showing a level of strength that many adults are still learning to find. No matter what life brings, she meets it with courage, grace, and a heart full of light.

Sarai truly is my ray of sunshine. She has a way of lifting others simply by being herself—warm, kind, and full of genuine love. Whether it’s through her smile, her laughter, or her thoughtful nature, she reminds me daily that joy can



**SARAI MORGAN**

exist even in the midst of challenges. She is a quiet force, steady and sure, and she makes me proud in more ways than words can fully express.

“Sarai, your strength inspires me, and your light keeps me going. I am so proud of the young woman you are becoming.”

This Mother’s Day, I celebrate the gift of being your mother. Watching you grow, stand tall, and shine so brightly is one of my life’s greatest blessings. Your future is powerful, and your light will continue to touch the world.

## —SAMIYAH MORGAN —

Samiyah Morgan is a remarkable young woman whose journey into adulthood reflects strength, purpose, and quiet determination beyond her years. At just 19 years old, she is already carving out a path that speaks to her resilience and her commitment to becoming the best version of herself. As a sophomore at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Samiyah is embracing both the challenges and opportunities of college life with grace and focus.

As her mother, I have had the honor of watching her grow into a thoughtful, driven, and compassionate individual. She carries herself with a confidence that is both inspiring and earned, and she approaches life with a mindset rooted in growth and perseverance. Whether navigating



**SAMIYAH MORGAN**

academics, relationships, or personal goals, Samiyah continues to rise—never settling, always striving.

What makes her truly special is not just what she accomplishes,

but how she loves. She is kind, intentional, and deeply aware of the people around her. Even in her independence, she remains grounded in family, always finding ways to show up with warmth, respect, and authenticity.

Watching her evolve has been one of my greatest joys. She reminds me daily that the seeds we plant as mothers do grow—sometimes in ways even greater than we imagined.

“Samiyah, you are everything I prayed for and more. I am so proud of the woman you are becoming, and I can’t wait to see all that you will accomplish.”

This Mother’s Day, I celebrate not only the gift of being your mother, but the privilege of witnessing your journey. Your future is bright, and your story is just beginning.

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Author, Artist & Contributing writer for *The Anchor News*

“So free must be your thoughts and actions of any trace of prejudice -- racial, religious, economic, national, tribal, class, or cultural-- that even the stranger sees in you loving friends.”

Bahá'í Universal House of Justice,  
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# JOCELYN PIERCE AND DAUGHTER, JESSICA: A LIFE OF IMPACT



**JOCELYN GAIL WILLIAMS & JESSICA PIERCE**

Mrs. Jocelyn Gail Williams Pierce, a native of College Station, is a retired public school educator and administrator with more than forty-five years of experience. After retiring, she continued working with adults as an adjunct English professor at McLennan Community College.

Mrs. Pierce earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in Secondary Education from Sam Houston State University and obtained her cer-

tification in Educational Leadership from Tarleton State University. Her career focused primarily on the secondary level, where she served as a high school teacher of English, Speech, and Theatre Arts, as well as an administrator at both the high school and middle school levels. She was named Teacher of the Year three times, received an Education Excellence Award for her administrative leadership and contributions, and

was nominated as an Outstanding Administrator for the HEB Excellence Award.

Mrs. Pierce is a member of the Waco Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and served as one of the chairpersons for the sorority's 75th Anniversary Celebration. She is a past president and member of the Gamma Upsilon Chapter of National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and a past Education

Committee chairperson for the NAACP in Waco. She also serves as a member of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., Waco Club. In addition, she is a forty-plus-year member of New Hope Baptist Church, the oldest African American Baptist church in Central Texas, where she serves as church treasurer and vice president of the Women's Ministry.

Mrs. Pierce is the proud daughter of the late Joseph and Eunice Robinson Williams. She has been married to Mr. Joe Michael Pierce, an English teacher at Texas State Technical College, for forty-seven years and is the mother of Jessica Nicole Pierce, a graduate of Texas A&M University, where she earned her bachelor's degree in Biology and her master's degree in Public Health.

## —JESSICA NICOLE PIERCE—

Ms. Jessica Nicole Pierce, a native of Waco (Bellmead) Texas, is the proud daughter of Joe Michael and Jocelyn G. Pierce.

She attended public schools in LaVega ISD and graduated as the Salutatorian of her 2005 graduating class. She continued her education at the renowned Texas A&M University

and earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Master's degree in Public Health. She recently earned her Doctorate in Healthcare Administration from Virginia University of Lynchburg in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Jessica is currently employed at U.S. Dermatology Partners and serves as a clin-

ic manager in College Station. She is a member of the Brazos Valley Area Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Jessica is also a member of the New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church in Bryan, Texas under the leadership of Pastor Marie Nutall where she has fellowshiped for eighteen years.

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## A LEGACY OF LOVE, LEADERSHIP, AND LIFELONG SERVICE: ANNIE F. PETTY AND ATTORNEY DEANDREA PETTY

In Marlin, Texas, the story of Annie F. Petty and her daughter, Attorney DeAndrea Petty, is one of legacy in motion, where faith, service, and determination have shaped not only their individual journeys, but a shared commitment to uplifting others.

Annie F. Petty, a native of Marlin and proud graduate of Marlin High School's Class of 1983, has spent her life building a quiet yet powerful legacy. She continued her education at Prairie View A&M University, earning a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics in 1988. With more than 35 years of experience as a Certified Dietary Manager, Petty has dedicated her career to promoting health and wellness throughout Falls and McLennan counties. Her professional affiliations include membership in the Certified Dietary Managers Association and the Certified Food Protection Professional Association.

Beyond her career, Petty's life reflects a deep commitment to service and commu-



**ATTORNEY DEANDREA PETTY AND ANNIE F. PETTY**

nity. She is a national and local member of the Booker T. Washington Alumni Association, where she also serves as an officer in the Marlin chapter. She is a member of the Order of Eastern Star, Peace Chapter No. 232, and in the fall of 2025, she expanded her reach by joining the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.

Faith remains the cornerstone of her life. A lifelong

member of the Church of the Living God PGT in Marlin, Petty serves faithfully as financial secretary, program coordinator, and senior usher. As the daughter of the late Dorrice and Sara Petty, she carries forward a legacy of strength and devotion that is evident in every aspect of her life. Among her greatest joys is her role as a mother, a role that has had a lasting impact on the life of her daughter.

That impact is clearly seen

in the accomplishments of Attorney DeAndrea Petty, whose journey reflects both personal determination and the foundation laid by her mother. Also a native of Marlin, DeAndrea Petty earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Criminal Justice from Baylor University in 2013. She went on to receive her Juris Doctor from South Texas College of Law in 2016 and was admitted to the Texas State Bar later that year.

In October 2017, she established her own law practice, focusing on family, criminal, and juvenile law. Her passion for helping others, particularly those in need of a second chance, has been a defining force throughout her career. She believes firmly that individuals are more than their past or present circumstances, and she has worked diligently to ensure her clients are both heard and supported.

As of January 2026, Attorney Petty began a new chapter in her career as a Regional Attorney with the Department of Family and Protective Services. Her work continues to center on protecting families and advocating for those navigating complex and often challenging situations. Her commitment to keeping families together has been especially evident in her work as an Attorney Ad Litem in CPS cases, where she has played a critical role in representing the best interests of children.

Her excellence has earned widespread recognition. Over the past five years, she has been named among The National Black Lawyers Top 40 Under 40. Since 2023, she has also been recognized by Super Lawyers as one of the Top Rated Criminal Defense Attorneys in Waco, Texas. In addition, she has been honored as one of the Top Women Attorneys Rising Stars in Texas by

Texas Monthly for the past two years.

In 2019, she had the distinct honor of serving her hometown as the City Attorney for Marlin, Texas, further deepening her commitment to the community that helped shape her.

Like her mother, DeAndrea Petty is deeply engaged in service and leadership. She has been an active member of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., serving as the Waco Club's Parliamentarian since March 2022 and as Second Vice President since the fall of 2025. Her leadership extends to the regional and national levels, where she has served as South Central District Parliamentarian since August 2023. In October 2024, she was appointed as one of two National Attorneys for the organization, providing legal guidance on matters impacting the association.

She is also a national and local member and officer of the Booker T. Washington Alumni Association and, in 2025, followed in her mother's footsteps by becoming a member of the Order of Eastern Star, Peace Chapter No. 232.

Together, Annie F. Petty and Attorney DeAndrea Petty represent more than individual success stories. They embody a generational legacy built on faith, resilience, education, and service. From a mother's steady guidance to a daughter's dynamic leadership, their lives are a testament to the enduring power of family influence and the impact of women committed to making a difference.

This Mother's Day, their story stands as a reminder that the seeds planted in love, faith, and discipline will always bear fruit in purpose and achievement.

## TWO PATHS, ONE LEGACY: HOW A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER BUILT LIVES OF PURPOSE

When Stephanie Lee Tolbert was a little girl, she didn't yet have the language for "entrepreneurship." What she did have was hustle. Growing up in Roanoke, VA, she would pluck pears from a neighbor's tree, arrange them neatly in baskets, and sell them door-to-door. Long before she earned her Bachelor of Science in Applied Science from Tarleton State University in 2017, Stephanie was already shaping a life defined by initiative, creativity, and community.

That early spark grew into something bigger. In 2019, she launched Fluff Wash & Fold Pick-up and Delivery, a business that quickly became a trusted name in Waco. Her days are full, but her joy is simple: traveling with the people she loves, finding peace near the ocean, and giving back to her community. As Membership Director for the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women, Inc., Waco Club, Stephanie continues to uplift and empower others. She and her husband, An-



**STEPHANIE LEE AND JESSIKA TOLBERT**

thony, are active members of Carver Park Baptist Church. Their son, AJ, also lives in Waco.

If Stephanie is the spark, her daughter Jessika is the flame that carries the family legacy forward.

A 2020 graduate of Tarleton State University, Jessika earned her Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and stepped confidently into leadership as an Area Manager for Aqua Life Water Solutions in Fort Worth. Like her mother, she has a love for travel and a curiosity for the world—especially its food. Jessika unwinds on the golf course, in her favorite shops, or on long walks with her dog, Jody.

Together, Stephanie and Jessika represent two generations of Black women who lead with resilience, ambition, and heart. Their stories are distinct, yet intertwined—rooted in family, strengthened by education, and shaped by a shared belief that life is meant to be lived boldly.

This Mother's Day, The Anchor celebrates the Tolbert women: a mother who built opportunity from pears and possibility, and a daughter who continues the journey with her own stride, her own dreams, and her mother's example lighting the way.



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## —WILLIE L. WARFIELD—

I am honored to write this tribute to my mother, Mother Willie L. Warfield. She earned this title after over 68 years of service to the house of God. As my Sunday school teacher, she shaped me into the teacher I am. She expected the best from her students and inspired excellence.

I have listened to her stories of picking cotton in Mississippi to her migration to Fort Wayne, Indiana. My Mom could have been cast in the movie "The Help" as she worked to support our family. With a 7th-grade education, she earned a certification in nanotechnology from Magnavox Corporation. As a chef at Brooks Barbeque, the family business, she was instrumental in winning the "People's Choice Award" for ribs that made you salivate for more. As an athlete, she played on an award-winning softball team. After the introduction to the sport of bowling, she is the first Black woman to win the Indiana State Bowling Tournament with an average of 298. Regardless of accomplishments, her passion has been her work for Jesus Christ.

Under the tutelage of the late District Elder Henry Jones, Mother Warfield began spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ at



**WILLIE WARFIELD**

Christ Temple Apostolic Church. Mom was a member of the choir that uplifted spirits with the anointing of God. She continued her work as one of the 5 founding members of Zion Tabernacle Assembly of the Apostolic Faith, where her son, Suffragan Bishop Melvin Falkner, is the pastor. She sits on the Board of Trustees, has taught Sunday School, and continues to sing the songs of Zion. Although 88 years young, health challenges may have slowed her down, but her faith in God has not wavered.

I appreciate the love and sacrifices you made for our family's growth and well-being. Happy Mother's Day.

Humbly submitted by  
your daughter,  
Suzan Falkner

## —SUZAN FALKNER—

My mom, Suzan Falkner, is more than just a mother—she is the steady foundation that holds everything together. Her life is a reflection of hard work, love, and unwavering dedication. Every day, she gives her best not only to her family but also to the many students whose lives she shapes in her middle school classroom.

Being a teacher is no easy task, especially with the unique challenges of a middle school environment. Yet she approaches it with patience, creativity, and strength. She has an incredible ability to connect with her students, guiding them through both academic lessons and the ups and downs of growing up. To them, she is more than a teacher—she is a mentor, a role mod-



**SHAUNESE & SUZAN FALKNER**

el, and often a source of comfort and encouragement.

At home, she carries that

same compassion and determination into her role as a mother. She works tirelessly to ensure her family feels supported and loved. No matter how busy or tiring her day has been, she still finds the energy to listen, to care, and to give.

What makes my mom truly wonderful is her consistency. She shows up every day with purpose, balancing her responsibilities with grace. Her strength doesn't come from grand gestures but from the small, meaningful things she does over and over again.

In every sense, my mom is a superhero—quietly making a difference, inspiring others, and showing what true dedication looks like.

## —SHAUNESE FALKNER—

In 1990, I was blessed with an amazing gift, my daughter. My love grew as I nurtured her, and I taught her the attributes of Jesus Christ. Her personality shines, and her caring nature makes her unique in a world that is often cruel. She is creative, analytical, and an introvert who finds peace in time alone.

Our fondest memories are our travels together. We explored the cultures of the places we visited. I taught her how to navigate with a map, and at a young age, she could reroute our trips to road hazards. Road trips were filled with singing from cassette tapes, spelling, math challenges, and eating at McDonald's as our favorite stop.

When she was 5 years old, she captivated her school audience in a red cape dress when she sang a song from the Mississippi Mass Children's Choir. She was the youngest student ever to perform at a school as-



**SHAUNESE & SUZAN FALKNER**

sembly. Singing is her gift, and music is her muse that she is now sharing with her son and daughter. One of my proud moments was when Shaunese, under the anointing of God, directed the church choir to sing "The Blood Still Works," in her early twenties.

Shaunese has two children who are involved in volleyball, basketball, music, NAACP, Rhosebuds, and Sigma Beta Club Mom. In addition, she is pursuing a Master's degree while working a full-time job in project management. Shaunese is a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., and I am proud of her as a legacy. Her work ethic is stellar, and she has led national service events. She also gives back to the community by volunteering at local middle schools and organizing backpacks for students.

Life brought Shaunese a real challenge after the untimely death of my sister and her Auntie. The next blow was the diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. She is determined not to let the disease defeat her. She continues to serve others and lives life to the fullest. Happy Mother's Day to my gift from God!

Your Mom, Suzan Falkner

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**LEE** | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ters.

In raising Chandler and Kennedy, Lady Lynnette embraced motherhood as both a calling and a responsibility. Her greatest joy has been watching her daughters excel academically while maintaining integrity—a reflection of the principles she instilled in them from an early age. Yet, like many mothers, her journey has not been without challenges. One of the most difficult has been witnessing the inequities women continue to face in the workforce, even in the 21st century.

Still, she has used those moments as teaching opportunities, preparing her daughters to navigate the world with confidence, awareness, and strength.

Today, Chandler and Kennedy stand as living testimonies of their mother's investment. Each, in her own way, embodies excellence—not just in achievements, but in character. They carry themselves with a quiet confidence, grounded in faith and guided by values that were carefully nurtured over the years. More importantly, they understand the im-

portance of lifting other women as they rise, reflecting a mother who has always shared her blessings with others.

A mother's love is often sacrificial. It gives without keeping score. It believes even when others doubt. It hopes, prays, and perseveres. Sister Lee Lynnette Williams has not only raised successful daughters; she has raised women of substance—women who will undoubtedly impact generations to come.

And in that, her legacy speaks louder than words ever could.

# WHAT HOSPICE REALLY MEANS

BY MARGARET IVORY

Here's the truth—I didn't fully understand hospice until it came into my own life.

Right now, my husband has had a major stroke and has been placed on hospice. At the same time, two of my mom's close friends have also been placed on hospice.

When someone recently asked me, "What is hospice?"—I realized a lot of people don't really know what it means until they're standing in it.

So let me explain it the way I now understand it.

Hospice is not about giving up. That's the first thing I want to say clearly. Hospice is about changing the focus. Instead of trying to cure an illness that the body is no longer responding to, hospice focuses on comfort, peace, and dignity.

Doctors usually recommend hospice when they believe a person may have six months or less to live, if things continue the way they are. But that timeline isn't a clock—it's just a guideline. Some people are on hospice for a short time, others longer.

With my husband, hospice means making sure he is com-



MARGARET IVORY

fortable. It means managing pain, breathing, restlessness—things that matter in these moments. It's not about more procedures or more hospital runs. It's about making sure he is cared for in the most gentle and respectful way possible.

Hospice can take place at home, in a facility, in a nursing home, or even in a hospital. Many families, including mine, find comfort in having their loved one at home, where things feel more familiar.

One thing I didn't realize before is that hospice is a whole team—not just one person. You have nurses, aides, social workers, and sometimes spiritual counselors. They check in, they guide you, and they help

carry some of the weight that families feel during this time.

And let me say this—hospice is not just for the patient. It is for the family too.

They help you understand what's happening. They answer questions you didn't even know to ask. They help you prepare, emotionally and practically. And even after your loved one passes, they don't just disappear—they continue to offer support.

There are also a lot of misconceptions.

Hospice does not mean someone will pass immediately. It does not mean all care stops. It simply means the care has changed. The goal is no longer to fight the illness, but to bring comfort and peace.

What I am learning in this season is this—presence matters.

Sitting beside your loved one matters. Holding their hand matters. Speaking to them matters. Even when they don't respond, hearing is often one of the last senses to go. Your voice still reaches them.

This is not an easy road. I won't pretend that it is.

But hospice, in its own way, brings a kind of support that helps you not feel so alone while walking it.

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# FINDING HOME: MORE THAN A TRANSACTION

BY LINDA MCDONALD

In today's ever-changing housing market, real estate is about more than buying and selling property. It is about helping people find a place where life unfolds, memories are made, and futures are built. Whether you are a first-time homebuyer, an investor, or someone preparing to sell, understanding the market and your goals is essential.

For buyers, preparation is key. Before you begin touring homes, take time to review your finances, get pre-approved, and determine what you truly need versus what you want. A beautiful kitchen or large backyard may catch your eye, but location, school districts, and long-term value should guide your decision. The right home is not always the most perfect one. It is the one that fits your lifestyle and supports your future.

For sellers, presentation and pricing matter. Today's buyers are informed and selective. A well-staged home, strong curb appeal, and competitive pricing can make the difference between a quick sale and a listing that lingers. Small improvements such as fresh paint, decluttering, and minor repairs often yield a



**LINDA MCDONALD**  
REALTOR, CRS, GRI, PMN, SRS

strong return on investment. Remember, first impressions are lasting impressions.

Investors, on the other hand, must keep a close eye on trends. Interest rates, neighborhood growth, and rental demand all play a role in determining profitability. A smart investment is not just about the purchase price, but about long-term value and sustainability.

No matter your role in the process, working with a knowledgeable real estate professional can provide guidance, clarity,

and confidence. The market will always fluctuate, but the need for a place to call home remains constant.

At its heart, real estate is not just about property. It is about people, purpose, and possibility. When approached with wisdom and intention, it becomes one of the most meaningful investments you will ever make.

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# PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT

BY MONA DUNKIN

As truly as God is our Father, so truly God is our Mother. -Julian of Norwich (1343-1416)

Parenting memories run deep and long, whether infants or adult children with families, with joys and regrets. Although the rhythmic cadence of "love-marriage-baby-carriage" may seem removed from today's standard, parenting principle remains a founding truth and the position remains untarnished.

The Holy Scriptures contain two books devoted to the influence of King Samuel. This article shares the yearning for conception and the preparatory skills of his parents, Hannah, and Elkanah. Please read I Samuel, Chapters one and two for further understanding of this outline.

1. Their first priority was to God  
 § Devoted to God though there was unhappiness and strife in the home.

§ Prayer was a regular part of their lives; whether things were good or bad.

2. Their second priority was to each other

§ Hannah was concerned over not having a son to carry on Elkanah's name.

§ Elkanah asked, "Why are you so sad? Am I not better than ten sons?"

3. Their third priority was the child. Be careful not to reverse the order. Children will grow and leave home, mates are "until



MONA DUNKIN

death do us part".

§ Our gifts to God were first his gifts to us.

§ Both parents were concerned over his spiritual welfare.

§ Hannah and Elkanah were in agreement of plans for the child's future.

§ They cared for him until it was time to give him "to the Lord".

§ They continued to minister to his needs after he was on his own.

§ They looked beyond the gift and praised the giver.

4. Their household was a blended family.

§ Elkanah treated each spouse with love and respect.

§ When one person acts superior to the other, there is discord in the family.

§ Personality conflicts are inevitable but do not have to be de-

structive.

§ They kept the family together regardless of difficulties.

5. Eli's household was not in good order.

§ Eli was professionally successful and parentally a failure.

§ Eli was corrected by God for his indifference and apathy.

§ Eli recognized God's working in the situation.

§ Eli submitted to God's ways for correction.

6. Young Samuel grew, matured, and flourished though living in an ungodly atmosphere.

§ Parental influence has a long-lasting effect on a child's character.

§ Parental influence is there, even when the parent is absent.

§ Praying parents continue to protect their children with an unseen force.

A child - regardless of circumstances surrounding conception - is innocent and came from the original source of Divine Love. Whether the home produces benevolent leaders or malevolent dictators, all of us share in the propagation of light and darkness. The human condition is a complicated mix of good and evil. Correcting the slippery slope or climbing to a higher plane is all 'Thanks be to God'.

Mona Dunkin, *Motivational Speaker and Personal Success Coach*, [www.monadunkin.blogspot.com](http://www.monadunkin.blogspot.com) or [www.monadunkin.com](http://www.monadunkin.com). @SolutionsPrinciples253.

WISDOM AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MEN...

# TO MY BROTHERS: JOKING AT YOUR WIFE'S EXPENSE

BY J.L. CRAWFORD



J.L. CRAWFORD

My brothers, let me speak to you plainly from experience about something that may seem small but carries real weight. Watch what you say about your wife, especially in public and even in humor.

I have been there. I have made what I thought were harmless jokes, light comments that got a laugh in the moment. But later, I realized someone took what I said as truth. They believed I was serious. And even more important, my wife was hurt. What I meant as humor did not feel like humor to her. It felt like disrespect.

That moment stayed with me.

You must understand this. People are always listening, and not everyone knows your heart. When you speak lightly or negatively about your wife, others may take you seriously. What you intended as a joke can become someone else's perception of your marriage.

Now consider this. As a man of God, your words carry even more influence. People watch how you live, how you lead, and how you love. If they hear you belittling your wife, even casu-

ally, they may begin to question your character and your witness. Worse than that, they may form an opinion about your wife that is not accurate or fair.

Your wife deserves your protection, not your punchlines. She deserves to be honored in public just as she is loved in private. Scripture calls us to love our wives as Christ loved the church. That kind of love is not careless with words.

If you must speak about your wife, let it be with respect, gratitude, and pride. Build her up when she is not in the room.

Brothers, I learned this firsthand. Your words matter. Use them wisely.

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"I absolutely love this book! I could not put it down and read it in two days. There is so much good stuff in this book that I am reading it again. It is inspiring, encouraging and will bless you."

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"After God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine, I felt like I could take the author's response to certain circumstances and apply to my own life. Each chapter is a life learning lesson of praising God through hard times, and walking into God's plan for my life. It may appear as an easy read, because I read it in one day my first time reading it. Then I had the opportunity to re-read and breakdown each chapter week by week."

Rey

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**God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine**  
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Dr. Mia Moody-Ramirez

# MAY: MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

**BY DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL**

May is Mental Health Awareness Month—a time to recognize that caring for your mind is just as important as caring for your body. Mental health affects how we think, feel, and function each day. It influences our relationships, productivity, and overall quality of life.

In a world that often encourages us to “push through,” it’s important to remember that strength is not about ignoring your feelings—it’s about acknowledging them and seeking the support you need.

**TIPS TO SUPPORT MENTAL & EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

1. Check In with Yourself Daily

Take a few moments each day to ask yourself how you’re really feeling—physically, mentally, and emotionally. Awareness is the first step toward meaningful change.

2. Stay Connected

Human connection is essential. Spend time with supportive friends, family, or community members. Even a simple conversation can improve mood and reduce feelings of isolation.

3. Get Natural Light & Fresh Air



**DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL**

Sunlight and time outdoors can boost mood, improve sleep, and support overall mental health. Aim to spend at least a few minutes outside each day.

4. Limit Overwhelm

Break large tasks into smaller, manageable steps. Avoid overloading your schedule, and give yourself permission to rest when needed.

5. Seek Support Without Shame

If you’re feeling persistently overwhelmed, anxious, or low, talk to a healthcare provider or mental health professional. Asking for help is a sign of strength—not weakness.

**YOUR TAKEAWAY**

Mental health is not something to address only during difficult times—it’s something to nurture every day. When you prioritize your emotional well-being, you build resilience, improve your outlook, and strengthen your ability to navigate life’s challenges.

This May, remember: tak-

ing care of your mind is part of taking care of your whole self.

**MONTHLY SELF-CARE CHALLENGE**

“Care List Challenge”

Create a personal “care list” of 5 things that help you feel calm, happy, or grounded—such as listening to music, taking a walk, journaling, or

talking with a friend. Use this list whenever you feel overwhelmed.

Screening Reminder: Consider completing a mental health screening or speaking with a professional if you’ve experienced ongoing stress, anxiety, or changes in mood. Early support makes a difference.

## GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN

**BY PASTOR MATTHEW REED**

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” These were the words spoken by the heavenly host who appeared with the angel at the birth of Jesus, praising God. That host recognized the great blessing God had bestowed upon the earth.

Yet today, we do not see peace on earth because many have rejected Jesus as Savior. In Isaiah 9:6, it was prophesied that Jesus would be called the Prince of Peace.

The church today is often trying to involve Jesus in its conflicts, which is contrary to the will of God. Jesus was not sent to take sides in our disputes. He came to be a peace-



**PASTOR MATTHEW REED**

maker. As it is written in Ephesians 2:14-15, “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down

the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity... to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”

The question then becomes, why are those who profess to follow Christ advocating for war? According to these scriptures, those who call themselves disciples of Christ must repent and begin to promote peace.

I conclude with this truth: Know Jesus, know peace. No Jesus, no peace. Know Jesus, know joy. No Jesus, no joy. Know Jesus, know hope. No Jesus, no hope.

That is simply how it is.

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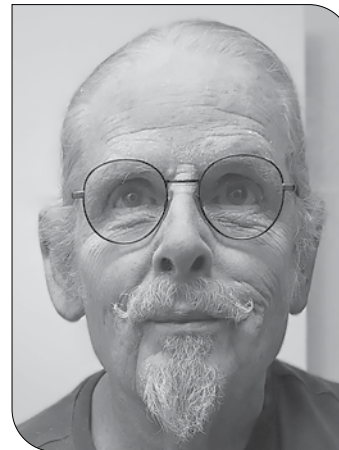
# UNITY, JUSTICE AND THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

BY MICHAEL JONES

We all need food. An empty stomach. The Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh, identified the single most important human need in all of his books and writings: Unity. He said to all humanity: “Ye are all the leaves of one tree and the drops of one ocean.”

This core Bahá'í teaching takes a step beyond the Golden Rule. That law, basic to all major religions, teaches us to treat others as we would want to be treated ourselves. But the primary principles of our Faith call us to a higher understanding – that we are all part of one unified reality, like the individual cells in all living things. When we harm others, we harm ourselves. Bahá'u'lláh compared the human race to the human body. Afflicting one part of the body can threaten the entire organism. This awareness links unity and peace with justice. In his words, “The light of men is Justice. Quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny. The purpose of justice is to establish unity among men.”

Bahá'u'lláh extended and ex-



MICHAEL JONES

panded the Golden Rule, asking us all to focus on mercy towards others, writing: “O son of man! If thine eyes be turned towards mercy, forsake the things that profit thee and cleave unto that which will profit mankind. And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbor that which thou chooseth for thyself.”

Bahá'u'lláh's teachings charge Bahá'ís everywhere to work for justice and what it must accomplish – removing the barriers of oppression, tyranny, ha-

tred, and boundaries, bringing us together as one world and one people. In one of his great works, Bahá'u'lláh wrote, “The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice, for man to free himself from idle fancy and imitation, to discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork and look into all things with a searching eye.”

“Justice hath a mighty force at its command,” he also wrote. “It is none other than reward and punishment for the deeds of men. By the power of this force, order is established throughout the world, causing the wicked to restrain their natures for fear of punishment.” This glorious ideal invokes the vision of the poets and the great prophets throughout time. For Bahá'ís, this is not just some pipe dream – we see it as a reality that we can accomplish, as the inevitable outcome of the centuries of progressive religious revelation given to humanity by God. If you'd like to learn more, please visit our local Bahá'í website at [www.wacoba-hais.net](http://www.wacoba-hais.net) or the global information site at [bahai.org/beliefs](http://bahai.org/beliefs). Our Facebook page is Bahai Faith of Waco.

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- Unlimited Plan capped at 12 visits per month, per member.
- Massage included only in Unlimited Plans.

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# MOTHERS AND MIRACLES

**BY APOSTLE FANNY MINNITT**

Celebrating Mother's Day for mothers worldwide. It is a miracle to carry a whole human being inside of you. It is something we often take for granted, something we do not thank God enough for. He trusted a woman to carry life and introduce it into this beautiful earth that He also created. It still amazes me to see my son, a grown man who is taller, bigger, and stronger than I am. I carried him, a miracle

from heaven, in my body for nine months. Mothers, you must always pray for your children, whether they are thriving or facing challenges. Do not give up. They are living miracles. God entrusted you with His creation.

It is written in Genesis 1:26 that God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth." I believe that human beings do not fully compre-



**APOSTLE FANNY MINNITT**

hend their identity. They are often unaware of the authority and power granted to them on Earth. They may also not grasp the immense love that God has for us. Among all the creations mentioned, God and His divine team specifically chose us to bear His image and likeness.

It is written in Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee." Understand that this scripture is speaking about Jeremiah, but God knew all of us before we were woven togeth-

er in our mother's womb. He knew our purpose on earth before we entered the womb. Lord God Almighty, Jesus, the Son of God, is the author and finisher of our faith. From the beginning to the end, God created us with a plan.

We just want to thank You, Lord. Thank You. We give You all the glory and all the praise. Lead us, Father, in the path of righteousness for Your name's sake. We are Your creation.

Happy Mother's Day, miracles!

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LEGACY OF LOVE:  
*Mother's Day*  
Tributes



LUBERTA LEE

*To the sweetest mom of all.  
We miss you dearly.*

Chris, Brenda, Lawrence (Beck),  
Barbara, Bob (Goose), Richard and  
all your grands and great-grands



RACHEL STEPHENS

JAN. 26, 1925 – SEPT. 15, 2005

*The epitome of love,  
strength, and kindness.  
Happy Heavenly Mother's Day.*

Henrietta Langston



MAUREEN WEBSTER  
BRIDGES

1947-2020

*We miss you dearly, but are comforted in  
knowing how you trusted in our Savior!*

Love, Delisa, Kris & Stevie Burnell



DORIS DAVISON

*Mother, thanks for model-  
ing a kind and sweet spirit.*

*Happy Mother's Day.*

Evelyn Jordan



JESSIE HALIBURTON

OCT. 15, 1939 – JUL. 11, 2023

*What a Beautiful Legacy  
you taught us, Mom.*

Pat, David, Regina & Carol



MAYOR MAE JACKSON

*Mother's Day reflects my moth-  
er's legacy of service, leadership, and  
care. Happy Heavenly Mother's Day.*

Andrea

## GROWING TOGETHER: SAMANTHA SMITH AND ARYANNA'S JOURNEY OF LOVE, PURPOSE, AND POSSIBILITY

In the rhythm of everyday life—filled with responsibilities, dreams, and the quiet in-between moments—Samantha Smith and her daughter Aryanna are building a bond that is both deeply rooted and beautifully evolving. Their relationship reflects more than the traditional roles of mother and daughter; it is a partnership grounded in love, laughter, and a shared commitment to growth.

As an Administrative Manager for the Environmental Science Department at Baylor University, Samantha Smith leads with excellence, overseeing operations while supporting faculty, staff, and students. Yet beyond her professional role, she is a visionary and community builder. As the founder of She Speaks Boldly, a women's empowerment community, she creates safe, intentional spaces where women are encouraged to grow, heal, and be fully seen and heard. Through her work, she has become known for fostering belonging and cultivating meaningful relationships, both in Waco and beyond.

Her passion for connection extends into every area of her life. Whether curating impactful events, developing in-



SAMANTHA AND  
ARYANNA SMITH

clusive programming, or sharing authentic moments as a content creator, Samantha is committed to helping others walk boldly in their purpose. That same intentionality is reflected in her approach to motherhood.

At the heart of her world is Aryanna, a young lady stepping confidently into her future. A student in the Early College High School program at La Vega High School, Ary-

anna is already laying a strong academic foundation by earning college credits while completing her high school education. Her discipline extends beyond the classroom as a freshman Varsity Cheerleader, where she demonstrates school spirit, focus, and determination.

Aryanna's journey in performance began early. Since the age of two, she has been immersed in competitive dance and cheer, participating in numerous competitions and performances that have shaped her confidence and stage presence. Today, she balances the demands of academics and extracurricular activities with grace, reflecting maturity beyond her years.

Those who know Aryanna describe her as uplifting and driven, with a positive attitude that naturally encourages those around her. She is learning not only how to succeed, but how to inspire—an attribute that mirrors the example set by her mother.

Together, Samantha and Aryanna are navigating life one moment at a time, embracing both the challenges and the joys that come with growth. Through busy schedules and intentional time together, they continue to prioritize what matters most: connection, support, and love.

Their story is one of legacy in motion—a mother guiding with purpose and a daughter rising with confidence. And as Aryanna continues to discover who she is becoming, Samantha remains right beside her, not only as a guide, but as a partner in the journey.

In every shared laugh, every late-night conversation, and every milestone reached, their bond deepens—reminding us all that the most powerful relationships are the ones that grow with us.

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