

'Mother, Mother – There's Too Many Of You Crying'

The Mother's Day tributes to Mrs. Luvean Morgan Haywood and all mothers, written by James and Russell Haywood, bring to mind Marvin Gaye's 1970 song 'What's Going On'. When I hear the song, he is saying *mama, mama*. According to the lyrics below instead he addresses *mother, mother*:

*Mother, mother
There's too many of you crying
Brother, brother, brother
There's far too many of you dying
You know we've got to find a way
To bring some loving here today, yeah
Mother, mother
Everybody thinks we're wrong
Oh, but who are they to judge us
Simply 'cause our hair is long?
Oh, you know we've got to find a way
To bring some understanding here today, oh-oh*

– **What's Goin' On by Marvin Gaye**

Then I was reminded of George Floyd's helpless, breathless call for his mama.

What are we to think, to gather, to conclude, to celebrate this Mother's Day 2022? We remember all of our mothers who are no longer with us with reverence, love and respect. We honor current mothers, those who have given birth and those who have not but still mother. Childbirth is a life changing experience from which one evolves into a new enlightenment. One's life is not the same, and the responsibilities are enormous. It is an awesome experience being a mother, yet it can be challenging, lonely and overwhelming. A mother plays the key role in rearing and nurturing a child. We in Yalobusha, in my view, have seen and are perhaps among the greatest mothers ever – many of whom were featured in this column. We have honored these women in a book, *Outstanding Black Women of Yalobusha: Their stories and contributions to a Mississippi community*, and now their stories are archived at the University of Mississippi. Their heirs can read about mama, grandmama and big momma online.

Today in 2022 we are still asking *what's goin' on?* Aren't we concerned about the escalation of crime in America, especially black on black crime, police brutality and racial terrorism? Aren't we concerned about our voting rights,



Luvean Morgan Haywood's sweet smile and pleasant disposition never wavered.

healthcare for all, books being banned, rising prices, and increased violence in our schools? Aren't we concerned about the future for our youth? Aren't we concerned about systemic racism? Aren't we concerned about the young people involved in gang violence? Aren't we concerned about the homeless, the mother-



A Tribute To My Mother – Luvean Morgan Haywood

Mother was the proud mother of seven sons and I, James Haywood, was her fifth. Thank God for blessing me with such a wonderful, loving and caring parent.

First, Mother was a godly woman who taught us godly principles and the importance of living by them. When I was quite young, she became my Sunday School teacher and taught us to say a Bible verse before each meal. She taught us to always say a prayer before going to bed at night, and many times she and Daddy were there to make sure we recited them.

Mother's highest priority was the welfare of her family, always making sure we had food to eat and clean clothes to wear. She prepared three meals a day, with the only exception being Sunday when the Sunday meal was prepared on Saturday so that the family could attend Sunday School and church services.

Since we lived on a farm, most of our activities were centered around farming and gardening, our main source of income and food. Mother would get up early in the morning to prepare breakfast for the family. Daddy was always doing farm work, and when we were not in school we were helping him. While preparing three meals a day almost every day, Mother also often helped with the farming chores. We raised most of our food, and Mother would always have us help with her gardening. She preserved most of her fruits and vegetables by canning them to make sure we had enough food to eat after the growing season was over and during the winter. This was important since we had no deep freezer to store food during the off season.

Mother also raised a lot of peas, black-eyed and purple hull. She would always freeze them for "her Boys" to take back when they came home on vaca-

tion during the summer. I thought that was always so thoughtful and sweet of her to do that for us.

Mother always made sure her family had clean clothes to wear. She washed and ironed frequently – manually in the early years of our life before we got an electric washer and dryer. And she made sure her family was always neatly dressed, noting, "You don't just go out looking any kind of way, because the way you look says a lot about who you are." I have always remembered this and have practiced that principle to this day.

Mother loved to raise chickens, and we raised a lot of them. She could prepare chicken almost any way you could imagine, and it would always be delicious. Mother would sell the eggs when we were not able to consume them all, offering them to people living in town who wanted fresh farm eggs.

Mother loved to cook. When relatives came to visit, they would always find her in the kitchen preparing food for them. When we, "her Boys," as she would say, were coming home to visit, we could count on her having a delicious meal prepared no matter what time we arrived. She was always so thrilled to have "her Boys" come home to visit. Every morning before we got out of bed, we could smell breakfast being prepared - homemade biscuits, sausage, bacon and farm grown eggs. One of the most difficult adjustments for me after she passed away was not having her meet me at the door and then preparing those delicious homemade meals.

My mother loved to go to church, and when we went to church during those days you didn't go to church in casual clothes. On Sundays Mother would be fully dressed in her matching purse, hat and gloves. That was just a part of who she was and how seriously she and the other

ladies were when dressing for church.

Mother believed in a strong, disciplined family. When we would get out of line, she would softly remind us to stop what we were doing or even discipline us herself. Or she would say, "I will tell your Daddy when he gets home," and that usually took care of the problem. We knew if we were ever disrespectful to her, she would tell him, and we would be in "Big" trouble for sure. I appreciate how they worked together to mold us into the kind of men we have become.

Finally, I must say to you Mother on this Mother's Day, I miss those times when I came home and how you and I would spend hours just talking sometimes in your room, on the porch or just riding around. It was just a joy being with each other.

At the end of a conversation, she would always say: "Mother is glad to see 'her Boys' come home. But she hated to see us go. She would end the conversation with these words: "Mother loves 'her Boys.' I always wanted a girl but the Good Lord didn't give me one. I wouldn't take a million dollars for my seven boys."

Mother, you were the ideal parent, the most caring, giving, and lovable with the most adoring personality one would ever want in a mother.

Mother, as you always said you wouldn't take a million dollars for your boys. Well your boys wouldn't take a million dollars for you because we know, and we have experienced your love and what it means to have had a mother like you. We know money can't buy the love you gave us because your love came from God, and He only made one mother like you.

Happy Mother's Day,
Your Son, James



**By Dottie
Chapman Reed**

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Reed is a native of Water Valley and graduated from Davidson High School in 1970. She published a series of articles in the North Mississippi Herald from August, 2018, through July, 2020, sharing the stories of unsung black women who made or are making a difference in Yalobusha County. This is part two of the project which features black men and women. Reed can be reached at (678) 825-2356 or reed2318@bellsouth.net

less and those in prison? Aren't we concerned about the decline in religion and church attendance? Aren't we concerned about the division in this country? Isn't there's a war going on in Ukraine? The list goes on and on. Marvin's lyrics are still relevant — too many of us crying and far too many of us dying.

What can we do this Mother's Day to celebrate in a way that might cure some of these ills or bring about positive change? Is there a young mother out there who could use a helping hand, a Mother's Day out, or a word of advice or a place to stay? Is there an older mother or grandmother who needs a call, some flowers or a hug? Is there a child who needs a mother, to be rescued or need a word of encouragement? A mother who needs her child to come back home or show some love?

According to Proverbs, motherhood is sanctifying and sweet, and mothers are encouraged to point children toward Christ not only by praying for them, but also by modeling faith and character, and training them in wisdom. Marvin said we have got to find a way to bring some loving and understanding here today.

On this Mother's Day encourage a mother by setting an example like the mother we are paying tribute to this year, Mrs. Luvean Morgan Haywood. A mother, a housewife par excellence and an outstanding black woman of Yalobusha County who raised seven boys to be successful God-fearing men and impacted the lives of many others along the way in her 90 years on earth. Born in Water Valley on August 24, 1913, she attended Davidson High School. Most who knew her called her Luvenia. Her heart gave out on October 3, 2003, and she was laid to rest at Pleasant Green Missionary Baptist Church on October 10th. She was survived at the time by five sons, Joe, Percy, James, Verdia and Russell, nine grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Two sons, Lewis and Ernest preceded her in death.

I remember her sweet smile and pleasant disposition, which never wavered.

In Honor Of Luvean Morgan Haywood By Russell, Son Number Seven

The very first thing I think of when I reflect on the life of my mother is the phrase she used: MY BOYS. She was always so proud of us. Mother did not get a high school education, but she had a lot of knowledge, wisdom, and common sense. And she was just a plain good person, woman, and mother. Mother was always a housewife who never worked a paid job. She spent all of her time taking care of her BOYS, cooking, cleaning house and a variety of other tasks.

Mother's favorite thing was cooking, and she could prepare any meal no matter what it was. During the entire time living with my mother, she never allowed us in the kitchen to cook anything. We were only allowed in to wash dishes, sweep or mop the floor, clean the table, and take out trash – absolutely no cooking. I don't think we were allowed to put away the dishes, either especially the good plates because she was afraid we might break them. I think when we finished washing and drying, we would put the dishes on the table and mother would put them away.

Mother loved to make desserts. Her favorites were cakes and pies but especially cakes. I remem-

ber at Christmas we had a glass cabinet in the kitchen with approximately ten shelves, five on each side, right and left. She filled the cabinet with cakes from top to bottom.

Mother was also very good gardener. Daddy would do most of the planting and mother would handle everything from that point. I would be willing to bet with anyone that my mother had the largest and best garden in the city of Water Valley and in Yalobusha County. She was just that good! During the growing season we always had fresh, home-grown food right out of the garden. Coming into the fall and winter months Mother would purchase Mason Jars and would cook and can foods, which we would eat during the winter months. Mother had good relationships with other ladies in the Water Valley area, and they would trade stories and ideas of how to grow and cook various foods.

Mother cooked three complete meals each and every day. There was no such thing as snacks in our house. We were served full meals for breakfast, dinner, and supper. When we were not working in the field, Mother would have us "BOYS" go to the

garden and pick the food for the meals on that day. The other thing I need to reiterate is that Mother was a "housewife." Sometimes when we were working in the field, mother packed the food and brought us dinner so we did not have to go back to the house, sit and eat, and then walk back to the field to continue our work – saving valuable production time.

Of course, my mother was active in the church and took on various roles - serving on the mother board, making assignments for where the pastor would have dinner after the 11 a.m. worship service, club captain collecting money for the offering, Sunday school teacher, and preparer of clothing and dress for baptisms.

Mother was a sharp dresser who was very picky about her clothes and her hair, which had to look the best when she went out to church or a social function.

The type of person who would always greet you with a smile, my mother was loved by many including her siblings, Willie (Will) Morgan, Emmett Morgan, Ulysses Morgan, Clarence Morgan, Viola Morgan Rogers and Roenia Morgan Folson.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lions Club Will Serve Pancakes Saturday

The Water Valley Lions Club will serve a pancake breakfast on Saturday, May 7, from 6:30 to 9 a.m. at the Casey Jones Railroad Museum. Everyone is invited to come out and enjoy the meal. The plates cost \$5 each.

Weekend Action Planned At The VFW

Bingo will be played Friday night, May 6 at VFW Post 4100. The doors open at 5 p.m. and play gets underway at 7. The weekend action continues Saturday, May 7 with the weekly dance. The doors open at 6, dancing starts at 7 and ends at 11.