



Mr. Henry Simon Jr.

February 17, 1935 - June 21, 2025

Obituary for Deacon Henry Simon, Jr. February 17, 1935 – June 21, 2025

With profound sorrow and deep gratitude for a life well lived, we announce the passing of Deacon Henry Simon, Jr., who departed this life peacefully on June 21, 2025, at the age of 90. Born on February 17, 1935, in Bishopville, South Carolina, Henry was the eldest son of the late Henry Simon, Sr. and Olena Thomas Simon.

At an early age, he was concerned that his mother Olena was working sunup to sundown as a sharecropper on a farm while also caring for the family's needs. This concern led him to sign up for the U.S. Army in 1952 at age 17 to get his mom off the farm. Throughout his tour of duty, he sent two-thirds of his Army check home to his mom and dad, enabling them to purchase a home and move off the farm. The Army also allowed Henry to take his thrill of driving off the back roads of South Carolina to the spotlight of Rodeo Driving in the Army. Back in regular life, he enjoyed driving, was a par-excellent driver, and a master of High-Low Driving at GM in Baltimore, earning bragging rights as winner of the High-Low Driving Rodeo.

In the summer of 1958, Henry Simon, Jr., a native of Bishopville, South Carolina met Betsy Ann Dinkins—born in Sumter County, South Carolina but raised in Tabor City, North Carolina. They were introduced at the home of her uncle Woodrow Dinkins in Baltimore City. Betsy and Henry were married on

April 28, 1961, in the chapel of Shiloh Baptist Church, and a modest reception followed at the home of her parents, Willie and Jessie Wiggins, on Ashburton Street. They enjoyed their honeymoon 20 years later at the Poconos.

Deacon Simon was a faithful and active member of New Psalmist Baptist Church since 1981 (on Franklin Street). He served humbly since 1984 as a Deacon and Trustee, touching countless lives with his wisdom, encouragement, and compassion. Deacon/Trustee Henry Simon, Jr. did everything he could to help the ministries and operations at New Psalmist. He was or served on Deacon/Diaconate Team 3–4, the Trustee Board, the Men's Choir, Chapel Choir, Men's Club, Usher Board, the Baptism Team, the Veterans Group, and the Older Adults Ministry. He co-chaired a Men's Unity Day, facilitated and served Wednesday lunches for the congregation, participated in discipleship and connection classes (provided weekly snacks for the connection groups), and still has a T-shirt for participating in the Bishop's 5K Fun Run/Walk. He was co-leader with Deacon Watts for a Visitation Team, did wellness checks on older Deacons, and handled all other duties/tasks seen or assigned.

He was widely known for his steady spirit, warm smile, and powerful longgg prayers at Thanksgiving—scripture he learned through Bishop's Sword Drill Sessions followed almost each line of prayer. Deacon Simon's handshakes were avoided—he did not seem to mind that the word was out that his hands were like a vice, and people quickly offered fist bumps instead. During his hospital stays, staff often commented on the size of his hands. Gilchrist Hospice Chaplain Debbie traced his hands with a message for Betsy, included in your program.

Professionally, Henry worked as a linesman, "Nickel Man" (he knew every job), and supervisor at General Motors in Baltimore and was known for his strong work ethic. Even in retirement, he treated volunteering like an unpaid

job. He and Betsy traveled locally and across the country to engage, educate, empower, and motivate older adults to access the resources available to them/us. Because of their generous giving, Henry and Betsy share the name on the Betsy D. and Henry Simon Office for Healthy Aging at the Zeta Center for Healthy and Active Aging. He “is” Vice President of BDS Healthy Aging Networks, Inc.

Henry left school in 11th grade to take over sharecropping when his father became ill. However, he later completed his education through the Baltimore City night school program while working full-time (and then some). He continued night school at Community College, majoring in Culinary Arts. My man could cook a mean turkey burger (cooking 25 or more at a time, freezing them for a quick grab later. He enjoyed reading the Bible, spending time with Betsy on the back porch, attending church services and trainings, people-watching, watching sports (most of the time), shopping, gossiping with Betsy, watching The View, the news and listening (with scriptures) to Dappy T. Keys on YouTube. He played pool and sometimes cards, but he was never serious enough for his partners. Under the radar for the past 30 years, he was Betsy’s barber/hair stylist and reluctant pedicurist (training? welllll... No, Father was a barber.).

Henry leaves to celebrate his life and legacy: his loving wife of 64 years, Betsy D. Simon; his beloved daughter, Beverly Simon-Alston; two special grandchildren, Earl "Gregg" Alston II and Henry "Alex" Alston. He also leaves nine precious great-grandchildren—Gregg’s children (oldest to youngest): Nasir, Aaliyah, Aanazhion, Amontè, Genevieve, Khaleesi, Genesis, and Arora; and Alex and Deibre’s child, Raiden. Additionally, he is survived by his brother, John E. Simon; sister-in-law, Evelyn Dixon-Simon; sister-in-law, Erma Owens; and brother-in-law, Kevin Wiggins—as well as his favorite niece and nephews: Dr. Malika Closson (husband, Dr. Forrest Closson), Windell Wiggins, and

Dawan Owens (wife, Jenny Owens); and a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, and extended family. He cherished his church family, community partners, and friends across Baltimore, D.C., South & North Carolina, New Jersey, and beyond—including the ZPB Family, Z-HAP members, the ZC 8-Ball Crew, BDS Networks® participants, Top Cat, Mustard, and Stretch.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Henry Simon Sr. and Olena Thomas Simon; sister, Mary Lee Deberry; son, James E. Small; mother-in-law (who he loved as his own), Jessie Bell Wiggins; father-in-law, Willie Wiggins; Betsy's grandparents, Robert Sr. and Inez McDuffie Dinkins; and many beloved cousins, aunts, uncles, and precious souls. Henry's legacy of love, faith, and service will continue to guide and inspire generations to come. Sample tributes included in the program booklet are just a few of those willing to bear witness to Henry's life and legacy.

Cemetery Details

Druid Ridge Cemetery

7900 Park Heights Avenue

Previous Events

Wake

JUL 11. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (est)

New Psalmist Baptist Church
6020 Mariam Dr
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 945-3000

Celebration of Life

JUL 11. 11:00 AM (est)

New Psalmist Baptist Church
6020 Marian Dr.
Baltimore, MD

Tribute Wall

BS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



BETSY D. SIMON - August 03, 2025 at 03:49 PM

BE

“ Betsy lit a candle in memory of Mr. Henry Simon Jr.



Betsy - August 02, 2025 at 06:58 PM

BE

*Deacon Henry Simon,
HENRY!! This Candle burns for You as the Love in my Heart and Soul
will FOREVER. You have been and will forever be: "The Hidden Light
that Makes Me Shine" Your Wife, BDS*

Betsy - August 02, 2025 at 07:03 PM

LB

“ I took a class with his lovely wife. He was always making sure she had everything and always had treats for the class. He was a kind spirited man. RIP Brother Simon! 🕊️

Linda B Burnette - July 08, 2025 at 11:03 AM



“ We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.

March Funeral Homes - June 28, 2025 at 09:38 AM



*Thoughts and prayers to Mrs. Simon in this time of grief. I remember the wonderful information sessions she would provide at the ZETA Center.
Mr. Simon would always be there to support and help where needed.*

Vivian Wiggins - July 09, 2025 at 01:48 AM



Prayers and condolences to Mrs. Betsy Simon and family in the loss of husband, Mr. Henry Simon, Jr.

Susie D. Lang, MOAAA - July 09, 2025 at 09:07 PM