
We Exist Series 3: Quotes

We Exist Series 3: The Black Church, Maine's
Black Residents and the Wider Community

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Faith

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Faith

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The Black Church, Maine's Black Residents and the Wider Community

Mr. James Mathews



"Well, I believe special things is that we all seem to have a bond here in this area. And I think that when you use the term African American, I believe that you're really saying something now because we have African people here as well as the people that migrated here, either from slavery or whatever, that are called African American. And I think that when we all seem to get together it's quite a joyful time. And I think most of the time that we get together is due mainly, although we all, you know, we have different faiths, but I believe the Christian aspect of our faiths is what is more telling. I think that when we get together either at Williams Temple or Green Memorial or at their church, there's so much joy in praising the Lord that it's just such a special time that we all have. And it's quite an eye-opener for me as a person to see the different customs, the different clothing, although I'd been familiar with kente cloth and stuff like that before. But to see the outfits that are around today up close and personal, it's really an eye opener."

Mr. James Mathews (age 59; born 1941 in Portland Maine; married with five children; lived in Maine all his life – lived in South Portland for over 26 years)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Mathews, James](#)

Ms. Lucille Young



"...And I sold that house, and I got a whole lot of money, and I went and paid for the one I got now. And I said I wanna thank god. Every day I thank God. I say if I had a thousand toungues, I couldn't than Him enough because I bought that house in likne '88 and I lost my job in '91. I'm living on social security and a pension now. If I hadn't bought that house I couldn't pay a mortgage today, tax, insurance. I couldn't do it; I'd be in the street. So I wanna thank God for lifting me up, to be able to work and earn money enough to take care of myself. So today I'm very happy, very happy. And I got a good church and I've got a house..."

Ms. Lucille Young (age 73; born 1928 in Jackson, Mississippi; moved to Maine in 1967)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Young, Lucille](#)

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The Black Church, Maine's Black Residents and the Wider Community

Ms. Rose Jackson



"But we're coming a long way. I still do a day's work now with people, you know. And I clean my church, I do the church. It makes me feel good to have a church home to come to. And have Christian people that you can turn to when you're in need and wanna talk to somebody. That's what it's all about. Having somebody that you could talk to. Sometime, sometime it gets so lonely. Me and my husband will sit there and he says, 'Honey, somebody should call us,' you know. 'That's okay, we got God on our side.' You know, like that. I've got a thing that I do every morning when I wake up. I say good morning. 'Good morning, Jesus; thank you for sending your angels down to wake me up.' You know, that's just something I thought doing it myself, because you really don't wake up just by yourself. The Lord and His angels wake you up. And it make you feel so good, you know. And we got this big double bed, and I look over and I see my husband still breathing, and I say, 'Thank you.' Because he had a stroke last year, but he's still doing good. Thank God."

"I could brag all day about how good God been to me. He really has. I'm 66 years old, and I have 6 children. And my first husband died; left me with 5 children. And I still didn't let it stop me. I went on. The Lord sent me this good husband I have now. Me and him had a daughter; she's 32 now, she's not a baby. And I didn't have no car or nothing to get to church with. But this wasn't the church I was going to go; this is a new church. We were going up at Green Memorial Church at the time. We'd catch the bus; go up to church. I don't care how bad it was, I always went to church on the bus. What would I have to lean on if I didn't have the Lord and the Christian peoples? It was hard, but the Lord sent me brother John Jackson. And he was from a home with 12 children, and 9 brothers. And you know what I do? I make a joke: I tell them I got the best one out of the 9. He's got two brothers as ministers. They have a church home in Auburn. I've been blessed. A lot of people say 'lucky,' but you're lucky when you win something and you're blessed when the Lord had did something for you. That's the way I put it. And God has always been there for me."

"And I'm jumping all around, but I can't help it. I can't help but to thank God for Reverend Coleman-our pastor we have here. He is a sweet young man. I have a son the same age he is. You know, we was wondering what we was gonna do for a minister; we wondered. Done had but one little room in this building here. Now you think about it now. How good God been. And he sent this young man from Louisiana to the mill...."

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Ms. Rose Jackson [continued from previous page]



"...It's Sapphi now; it used to be another name. So before Mother Williams died, she found this young man and asked him would he be our minister, because her husband was found dead out back of the church, on the ground with a heart attack-Bishop Williams. So now Reverend Coleman decides to take over there, and look what God have did for us since he took over. Fourteen years. You know."

"And I could brag all day on the Lord because a human didn't do it, the Lord did it. And he's a good man. Reverend Coleman will be there; he's there for us all the time, regardless. I say, 'Thank God he's saved because somebody call on me like that, I don't know can I do it all the time. You know. I'm there for people, though. My main thing now is visiting the older peoples that are older than I am. In nursing homes and convalescent homes, whatever.'"

"That's the worse thing in the world putting a child in the ground. I didn't know what to do; I said, 'Lord, what is I going to do?' So one day I went for a walk. And we got a seaside nursing home by the water over there and we got a big beach sitting out there. And I was sitting down. 'Lord, why did you take her?' I'm just rocking back and forth. 'Lord, why did you take her?' And God knows if I had a Bible, I'd put my hand on it. This voice come to me and said, 'My child, she wasn't yours in the beginning; I only loaned her to you.' I thought somebody was talking with me. And I looked around; I didn't see nobody. And I got all shaky like. Then I heard this other voice, 'Look around you, my child.' And you know what was behind me? A nursing home with peoples in there didn't even know their names. And I got up and I went in that nursing home, and after that day I said, 'Lord, thank you; I will never complain no more because I thank you for the 41 years you gave me with her.' If everybody could think that way, you know. Last year, my husband had a stroke in May, my oldest son was in a coma 31 days, but I kept on going. And I had a friend that looked at me. I belongs to a grange out in Westbrook, and we were there at the meeting and she kept looking at me. And I said, 'Why are you looking at me like that?' She said, 'How can you smile and talk when all this trouble, you know, like it is?' And I said, 'That's because I know the Lord.' And she said, 'I know Him, too.' 'And, but see, I serves Him. And when you serve Him, you got the best friend in the world when you got Him to talk to.' A many a day I have got in my car and just parked and read my Bible and thank Him for the thing he did..."

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Ms. Rose Jackson [continued from previous page]



"...That night that she died she was in a coma with her eyes open. Me and my husband went into this hospital room, got on our knees, and said, 'Lord if you ain't gonna make her whole again-get her up and make her whole again-take her home.' At 9:30, He took her home because he knowed that she couldn't live like that. Know what I mean? And God was good to me because the next morning I would have had to pull the pin on her; they had in these contrap-tions. I would have had to pull the pin because she didn't have a living will, you know what I mean? And God was good to me. I didn't have to pull the pin and always saying, 'I wonder did I do the right thing?' So the Lord brought her home. It's hard, it's hard, but ain't nothing too hard for the Lord when you call on Him. You know. He'll be there for you."

"What I did when my husband and son was in the hospital, I got my pillow and come over here to Williams Temple and got on a pew and laid down. And I was pretty upset and I already done give it to the Lord why should I keep plaguing Him about the same thing? And I said, 'Lord, it's your will, it's your will be done and thank you for what You already did.' And I got up and I walked out the church. And I said, 'Why was I keep plaguing Him?' But you know how, you're only human. But I could talk about Him all day-Jesus; that's who I could talk about all day."

"And I'll never forget the things that I used to love that my father would do to me. And he would pat me on the head and say, 'Your daddy's little worker, right?' I was 'yeah.' And I'd say, 'Daddy,' I say, 'don't ever leave me.' He said, 'You can't say that because whenever God get ready for me, I gonna have to go.' And he say, 'And vice versa; it could you be go first, you know.' And it took me so long to realize what he was saying about 'when the Lord get ready for me to go,' you know."

Mrs. Rose Jackson (age 66; born in Louisville, Mississippi; lives in South Portland for 39 years; married 34 years; has six children; had five children with her first husband; he died and she remarried and had a child with the current husband)

Full Length Interview: [Home is Where I Make It: Jackson, Rose](#)