

Tribute to the Memory of the late Brother Charles Gyude Bryant
Former Chairman, Board of Trustees of the Episcopal Church of Liberia, Member, Trinity
Cathedral Chapter, Monrovia, Former Chairman of the Transitional Government of Liberia,
Former Chairman, the Liberia Action Party, Distinguished Business Man and Philanthropist

Wednesday, May 13, 2014
Trinity Cathedral, Monrovia, Liberia

“Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Jesus’ love; The fellowship of Christian minds, Is like to that above. ... When we at death must part, Not like the world’s our pain; But one in Christ, and one in heart, We part to meet again. ... ” (The 1940 Hymnal).

The officers and members of the Liberian Episcopal Community in the United States of America (LECUSA) are deeply saddened by the death of Brother Charles Gyude Bryant, Former Chairman, Board of Trustees of the Episcopal Church of Liberia, Member, Trinity Cathedral Chapter, Monrovia; Former Chairman of the Transitional Government of Liberia, Former Chairman, the Liberia Action Party (LAP), distinguished business man, dedicated statesman, illustrious son of Africa, philanthropist, and faithful servant of God. During this difficult period of great loss and grief, LECUSA wish to express profound condolences to the siblings, children, Cheryl Bryant, Charles Gyude Bryant, Jr. and Charles Mleh Bryant; and the entire bereaved family of Brother Bryant. Indeed, the death of Brother Bryant is an irreparable human loss to all of us, and his passing has created a vacuum for the family, the Episcopal Church of Liberia and the Liberian nation in personal, diplomatic and international matters.

Former Board Chairman Bryant served faithfully in both church and state. During his tenure as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Episcopal Church of Liberia, he rendered valuable services to the late Right Rev. Edward W. Neufville, II, Bishop of Liberia and the Right Rev. Jonathan B. B. Hart, current Bishop of Liberia. Brother Bryant was an outstanding person of exceptional leadership capabilities, gifts, and talents, which he demonstrated in his life and contributed to church, state, and to his fellow human being. “Gyude,” as Brother Bryant was affectionately called by many Episcopalians, demonstrated his organizational skills when he ensured that both clergy and laity were appropriately cared for during Diocesan Conventions. He also helped to foster a sense of stability in the Diocese when most of the nation was engulfed in a brutal civil war. Gyude became a pillar of strength and a valuable resource person during the transition in the Diocese of Liberia after the election of Bishop Edward W. Neufville, II.

The successful organizing of several Diocesan Conventions in the mid 1990's to 2007; the tracking of valuable church assets throughout Liberia, including lands and deeds; the pursuing of the Church's outstanding debts from vendors, including the Government of Liberia; the renovation of the Church's property at the Chase Building at the corner of Ashmun and Randall Streets; are among Brother Bryant's major accomplishments during his tenure as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. In addition, he sought to advance the work and ministry of the Church wherever needed; especially toward projects of self-support of the diocese. He sought the financial and economic stability of the Diocese as well by spearheading the rallies of the Endowment Funds at the Diocesan Conventions. Such funds were secured with the Episcopal Church in the United States, the parent Church of the Episcopal Church of Liberia for future use.

"Gyude" was a man of peace, tolerance and of reconciliation. In state, when Liberia was engulfed in a bitter Civil War for fourteen years (1989-2003), it would be "Gyude", among several candidates to whom all would look up to, and who would be selected as the mediator between the several warring factions to bring an end to the protracted Liberian Civil War. At the peace talks in Accra, Ghana in October 2003, "Gyude" was chosen as Chairman of the National Transitional Government from 2003-2005. His mission was to restore peace and to prepare the country toward an elected democratic government, and he succeeded in this regard. The news media greeted "Gyude's selection affirmingly in these words: "Bryant's non-political persona was crucial in his selection as interim president. ..."he [is] politically neutral and therefore acceptable to each of the warring factions..." "Gyude" remarks at his selection in an interview to the Associated Press in 2005 affirmed his ability of a peace maker in the conflict: "I have lived there throughout all these problems, and I see myself as a healer". "Gyude" successfully saw the election and inauguration of Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in January 2006.

Brother Bryant was one of Liberia's finest businessmen. As an entrepreneur and philanthropist, he provided scholarships to many students to receive an education. He was a "people's person". He generously gave to the "person" in the street. There was never a person, who requested assistance, was denied. "Gyude" demonstrated hospitality to locals and foreigners, alike. A missionary remarked, after learning of Brother Bryant's passing, "He and Bolling are connected."

“Gyude” possessed a quiet, assertive and effective demeanor. He decried hostility and lived a peaceful life by demonstrating a forgiving spirit. Gyude showed mercy and compassion for everyone who wronged and robbed him of things intended for him. His actions in this regard may have been influenced by Romans 12:19, which says: “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.”

As we mourn the death of Brother Charles Gyude Bryant, it is our prayer that the Lord will grant him an entrance into everlasting life. Our prayers are offered for the Bryant and Carr families. May God grant you comfort and solace during this time of your bereavement. The tie of Christ’s love and gift of eternal life binds us forever in our earthly and heavenly life. We part to meet again.

May he rest in peace. May his soul and the souls of the [faithful] departed through the mercy of God rest in perfect peace and the Risen light of Christ perpetually shine upon him. Amen.

Prepared by:

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