

# Letter To The Editor: Mt. Joy Missionary Baptist Church Honors Military Personnel and Veterans in Black History Month Program

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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EDWARDSVILLE – Mt. Joy Missionary Baptist Church is proud to announce its Black History Month program, entitled “Honoring Heroes: Recognizing Our Military Legacy.” This program is scheduled for Sunday, February 18, 2024, during the morning worship services at 11 a.m.

In a Special Tribute, the Church will recognize active-duty military personnel and veterans for their dedicated service to the nation. The highlight of the program will be the acknowledgment of the church’s oldest living veteran, Mr. Burnest Orr, who will

turn 103 on May 6, 2024. “We are honored and pleased to recognize Mr. Orr for his service to his God and Country,” expressed Paul Pitts, Chair of the Church Military Affairs Committee.

Mr. Orr, a distinguished veteran, was honorably discharged from the Army Air Corps in 1946. Upon completion of his military service, he relocated to St. Louis Missouri, embarking on a remarkable 42 year-career with McDonnell Douglas (now Boeing) as a machinist. Notably, Mr. Orr played a pivotal role in machining the unique window on the Mercury Spaceship, “Friendship 7, used by Astronaut John Glenn during the historic first American orbit of the Earth in 1962.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Mr. Orr and his late wife Margaret, were married for 56 years and raised four children. He is a proud grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great grandfather. Mr. Orr is the patriarch of five generations of the Orr family.

During his incredible journey, Mr. Orr engaged in his passions, enjoying family time, carpentry, fishing, and tending to his backyard. He currently resides in Glen Carbon, IL, along with his daughter and son-in-law.

The Mt. Joy Missionary Baptist Church has been a part of the Greater Edwardsville religious community since 1869 and welcomes all.

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