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**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS FOR CLYDE AND ADDIE WYATT RETIREMENT
CHICAGO, IL
[Date TBD]**

I am so glad to join you in celebrating the careers of my good friends Claude and Addie Wyatt.

Forty-four years ago, in the garage that became the Vernon Park Church of God, Claude Wyatt said, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ... and to set at liberty to them that are bruised." For more than half a century, Claude and Addie have done just that: lifting the lives of those less fortunate, with weekly sermons, and by their community activism and involvement in the movements for labor and civil rights. Together, through hard work, spiritual guidance, and sixty years of marriage, they have accomplished so much, and brought promise and hope to so many.

Clyde, under your leadership, the Vernon Park Church has touched the lives of countless members of your congregation and your community – bringing education and training, guidance and counseling to those in economic and social despair. Addie, as a champion of labor and civil rights, you have spent a lifetime working for social change, founding the White House Women's Bureau, the National Association of Women, and the Coalition of Labor Union. You not only joined hands with Dr. Martin Luther King to fight for labor in Chicago and march for civil rights in Washington, you have carried forward his legacy.

Claude and Addie, I join those of you in Chicago, and all Americans, in thanking you for your service to your community and to our country. As you move on to the next stage of your lives, there's no doubt in my mind that the good Lord is smiling down on the two of you today. Thank you and God bless you.

Final 02/10/00 4:30pm
Gottheimer/ Silver

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November 1, 1998 Sunday, CHICAGOLAND FINAL EDITION

SECTION: METRO CHICAGO; Pg. 1; ZONE: C**LENGTH:** 686 words**HEADLINE:** ONE SMALL MOMENT IN TIME, ONE GIANT MEMORY IN A LIFE**BYLINE:** Mary Schmich.**BODY:**

Imagine that in your later years you were allowed to repeat one thrill of your youth. One thrill--a moment, a day, an experience. What would it be?

John Glenn got to fulfill that wish last week when at age 77 he rocketed into space, revisiting a thrill he'd experienced 36 years earlier.

There are thrills that can't be revisited, of course, and those you shouldn't try to make happen twice. Some thrills shrink and pale the second time around.

But if you could, would you? And which thrill would it be?

"My old boyfriend," said one woman to whom I posed this question. "I'd like to revisit that thrill a lot."

"What thrill would I want to experience again, what first fine careless rapture?" mused one fiftyish friend. "I would like to water-ski again. Isn't that shallow? It's not the birth of my children I'd like to repeat. It's water-skiing."

I hadn't mentioned anything about careless raptures, but that's how she interpreted the question. And, as I discovered when I put the question to a variety of prominent Chicagoans, from their youngish 60s and far beyond, they all interpreted it according to their own whims. Here, slightly edited, is how they answered when asked, "If you could repeat one thrill of your youth, what would it be?"

Studs Terkel, 86, author: There are some I would not want to repeat. That's what comes to my mind: mostly regrets, rueful thoughts. Or things I should have done or didn't do.

God, I don't know. I decided not to be a lawyer. My very first book, perhaps. But what's done is done.

Dawn Clark Netsch, 72, professor and 1994 Illinois gubernatorial candidate: Oh my goodness. First

of all, I probably would have married Walter earlier and run for governor earlier. I can't think of anything that's quite comparable to John Glenn. What would it be, for cripes' sake? I keep coming back to marriage, but it's a long-time thing. I guess I would repeat the thrill of that day when I announced for governor.

Milt Rosenberg, sixtyish, professor and radio host: I'd like to be back on my first visit to Paris. I'd like to be about 25 again, sitting at the Cafe Aux Deux Magots and chatting with students from the Sorbonne and watching the beautiful Parisian girls go by.

Abner Mikva, 72, professor and former federal judge: I think I would want to go back to the state legislature. (He was there from 1956 through 1966.) I wish I knew then what I know now about how the system works, and that the idea of government is not to see how many bright ideas you can come up with. I think my first session I set a record for introducing the most bills a freshman had ever put in. Fortunately, none of them passed. I was solving problems people didn't even know they had. I would love to take the experience and apply it now.

Rev. **Addie Wyatt**, 74, co-pastor of the Vernon Park Church of God: When I first became part of the organized labor movement. That was in the year of 1942. It was a thrill because I was a person that was seeking justice, equality, peace and freedom for myself, for my people. I was angry because of the racism and the discrimination against women that I faced, and when I became a part of the organized labor movement, I found a way to collectively speak against it.

Ray Meyer, 84, former DePaul basketball coach: You know, we played at Wrigley Field for the American Legion state baseball championship--we were young fellows, 12 or 13 years old--and Kenesaw Mountain Landis, the commissioner of baseball, came into our dugout. I got up and gave him my seat. So I was the only one who wasn't in the picture. If I had it to do over again, I'd have stayed seated.

Rev. Andrew Greeley, 70, priest and author, via e-mail: VJ, the end of the Second World War. Second place, Truman beating Dewey. Third place, election of JFK.

Dutchie Caray, 69, widow of Harry Caray: When the man walked on the moon, Neil Armstrong, that was pretty exciting to be down here on Earth and look up and see there was a man on the moon. And one time I met President Reagan at the ballpark, that was a kind of neat experience. That's about it. Other than marrying Harry.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: November 1, 1998

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Terms: **addie wyatt** ([Edit Search](#))*Chicago Tribune, May 26, 1995*Copyright 1995 Chicago Tribune Company
Chicago Tribune

May 26, 1995 Friday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: CHICAGOLAND; Pg. 11; ZONE: N**LENGTH:** 887 words**HEADLINE:** COUPLE HARVEST FULL LIVES FROM SEEDS OF FAITH**BYLINE:** By Jerry Thornton, Tribune Staff Writer.**BODY:**

Ask Reverends Claude S. and **Addie Wyatt Jr.** about the driving forces in their lives and you'll learn of their concern for children, their part in the civil rights movement and their work in labor reform.

But most important has been their roles as pastors of the Vernon Park Church of God, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary, and their commitment to each other over 55 years of marriage.

Their marriage and the church, at 9011 S. Stony Island Ave., have been the foundation of their lives, the couple said, and the elements of their lives upon which they continue to build.

"My wife has had a tremendous impact on my personal life and played an important part in my choice to become a minister," said Claude Wyatt, 73.

"The ministry has been and continues to be rewarding for me because I chose to follow the dictates of the Bible and what I felt a minister should be, and that is to have faith in God and to live a clean life," he said.

What also has bonded their marriage and their ministry are the ways in which they have complemented each other, **Addie Wyatt**, 72, added.

"I have always told people that when I met him, he was no dummy and had great talent and great skills," she said. "He was very attractive in so many ways. Not only in his mannerism, and the way he dressed and carried himself, but because of his faith."

They met while attending Du Sable High School on the South Side, when he was 16 and she was 15.

Among their classmates were future Mayor Harold Washington and future U.S. Rep. Ralph Metcalfe (D-Ill.).

"A friend and I were walking to school one day and I saw her," Claude Wyatt said. "I liked her, and my friend called and told her I wanted to meet her."

They married a few years later in 1940. He went to work for the post office. They soon had two sons, Renaldo and Claude III.

Addie Wyatt's parents died shortly after she married, and she and her husband took in her five younger siblings. In 1942, she started working for the United Packinghouse Workers Union as a secretary.

It was difficult at times working to support a large family, he said. But their faith made the hard times easier. That faith led Claude to seek a greater role in the church.

He was ordained at age 28 in 1949 at Englewood Church of God, 1122 W. 61st St. He spent the next years teaching at the church while working for the post office.

But it wasn't until 1955 that he gave his first sermon, at a new church called the Vernon Park Church of God, founded in a garage at 43rd Street and King Drive. He spoke about Luke 4:18.

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised; To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Claude Wyatt soon became pastor, and that verse has been the church's motto ever since.

Addie Wyatt soon saw her job at the union turn into the role of activist, working with black union leader Charlie Hayes, often traveling to various Midwestern cities where blacks and especially women faced hostile receptions.

Over the years, she became the first female vice president of the local of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen Union, rising to the post of international vice president and director of its women's and civil rights department.xx

Addie Wyatt brought her faith with her to her union work as she ministered to the needs of others. In 1968, she made that ministry permanent with her ordination at Englewood Church of God.

"As a child I was taught that it was the responsibility of every believer to minister to their families and their community," she said.

She continued her social activism, helping to found the Coalition of Labor Union Women. In 1975, she was named one of Time magazine's 12 Women of the Year.

Despite the demands of their careers, the Wyatts have always been there for each other, they said.

"Whatever he needed to be successful in fulfilling his ministry, I've been supportive," said **Addie Wyatt**, who retired from the union in 1984. "And for the many years I was a labor leader and moved around the country, he was always there for me when I needed him."

The Wyatts now spend their time at the church and with their family. One son, Claude III, 52, now is the choir director for their church of 1,100 members. They have eight grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

"I've always believed that all things are possible for me," Claude Wyatt said. "God has always provided me with the things I needed. It was not always money, but peace and joy. I've been greatly rewarded with God's blessings, and I say that with all sincerity."

Addie Wyatt agreed.

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"I thank God for bringing us through all the struggles we've gone through, the racism, the sexism, the heartaches. If I could do it all again and had my choice of having any type of skill, any type of talent or any position, I'd want just what we have now."

The Vernon Park Church has been honoring both the Wyatts' wedding anniversary and the foundation of the church this week with guest speakers at services each night. A special service will be held Sunday, and a banquet is scheduled for that evening at the Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave.

GRAPHIC: PHOTOS 2PHOTO: Reverends Claude and **Addie Wyatt** are celebrating 55 years of marriage and the 40th anniversary of their church. Tribune photo by John Kringas.; PHOTO: The Wyatts, shown in 1972, met while attending Du Sable High School on the South Side, where their classmates included Harold Washington and Ralph Metcalfe. Tribune file photo.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Rev. Claude S. Wyatt, Jr.

The Reverend Doctor Claude S. Wyatt, Jr. is the Founding Pastor of The Vernon Park Church of God, Chicago, Illinois. His pastorate was assumed in 1955 through August of 1999. With a deep concern for the social, economic and spiritual development of people, under the leadership of Rev. Wyatt the Vernon Park Church of God was formed and has grown to a significant position of leadership in the civic community. He has been married to Rev. Dr. Addie Wyatt since 1940.

Rev. Wyatt's concern for the total community has involved his ministry in education and training, social action and caring ministry which gives itself to heavy counseling and guidance service to families, marriages, youth and particularly to those who live in economic and social despair.

He has been responsible for rehabilitating alcoholics, drug addicts, working with youth gangs and juveniles in trouble.

Under the leadership of Rev. Claude S. Wyatt, Vernon Park Church of God has opened The Wyatt Community and Family Life Center, which houses programs for children, young adults and senior citizens.

VIDEO REQUEST**February 1, 2000**

☐ ACCEPT☐ REGRET☐ PENDING

TO: Stephanie Streett
Assistant to the President and Director of Scheduling and
Advance for the President

FROM: Minyon Moore 
Assistant to the President and Director of Political Affairs

REQUEST: A Video Tribute from President and Mrs. Bill Clinton and
Dr. Alexis Herman

PURPOSE: Reverends Claude and Addie Wyatt are retiring after 44
years in the ministry.

BACKGROUND: Chicago area religious leaders are sponsoring a citywide
tribute to the Wyatts.

DATE AND TIME OF EVENT: Monday, February 14, 2000

DURATION:

LOCATION OF EVENT: Apostolic Church of God

SCRIPT: Background Attached

SOURCE OF PAYMENT: Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church

CONTACT: Minyon Moore or Vincent Fry, 6-7910

ORIGIN OF THIS PROPOSAL: Janette C. Wilson
Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church
45th Place and Princeton Avenue
Chicago, IL 60609-3693
(312) 924-3232

773

Memo

To: Minyon Moore
From: Janette C. Wilson
Date: February 1, 2000
Subject: Tribute to Addie Wyatt



Reverends Claude and Addie Wyatt are retiring as co-pastors of the Vernon Park Church of God. The new pastor is Rev. January. A cross section of Chicago area religious leaders are sponsoring a citywide tribute to Reverends Claude and Addie Wyatt, Monday, February 14, 2000 at the Apostolic Church of God. We invite you to help us commemorate the lives of these two outstanding individual by sending a video tribute from President Bill Clinton and Secretary Alexis Herman. Rev. Addie Wyatt is best remembered for her work in the following areas:

- She helped to form the first White House Women's Bureau
- She is one of the founders of the National Association of Women
- She is one of the founders of the Coalition of Labor Union Women
- She is one of the founders of the National Political Congress of Black Women
- She hosted Dr. King when he made his first visit to Chicago, Illinois

The celebration is being held during African American History month as a part of the citywide celebration of living legends. The Wyatts have served more than 44 years in ministry. A video tribute that included remarks from : President and Mrs. Bill Clinton and Dr. Alexis Herman would be a special treat for the Wyatts.

The event chairs include: Rev. Clay Evans, Bishop Arthur Brazier and Mayor Richard M. Daley.

"It is no secret what God can do"

Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church

45TH PLACE AND PRINCETON AVENUE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60609-3693

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REVEREND CLAY EVANS, Founder and Pastor

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"The tragedy is the society we had hoped would come about as a result of that speech still has not materialized," he said.

'We Shall Overcome'

"King said, 'Free at last, free at last, thank God almighty, I'm free at last,' " said **Addie Wyatt**, 69, co-pastor of Vernon Baptist Church and one of the Chicago coordinators for the 1963 march on Washington.

"But that time is not now. I really thought by 1993, we'd be singing 'We Have Overcome.' But we're still singing 'We Shall Overcome.' "

Addie Wyatt first met King in 1956, when he came to Chicago to work with the United Packinghouse Workers Union, of which she was a low-ranking leader. It was the beginning of a 12-year friendship.

The last time Wyatt saw King was in 1968, when a group of civil rights leaders were returning from a trip to Jamaica. He kissed her on the cheek, shook hands with her husband, Claude, and promised they'd meet again soon in Chicago. The struggle continues, he said.

A few weeks later, a bullet turned the man into a martyr.

King is dead, but the movement didn't die with him, according to Wyatt: They got Harold Washington elected, didn't they? It just goes to show what black folks can accomplish when they're unified.

Still, as King said, the struggle continues.

But this time, the war is being waged on the economic front.

"We used to have to ride on the back of the bus," Wyatt said. "Now we can ride on the front of the bus. But you need the money to be able to ride at all."

Next: Realizing the dream.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO (color): Visitors to the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Ala., locate the inscription detailing the Aug. 28, 1963, march on Washington, D.C. Photo for the Tribune by Kevin Glackmeyer/AP.

PHOTO: Activist Timuel Black helped plan the march on Washington. "We were going forward with a hope and a dream," he said. "And we were already part of success." Tribune photo by David Klobucar.

PHOTO: Rabbi Robert Marx, holding an invitation to a rally from **Martin Luther King Jr.**, left the Washington gathering in the summer of 1963 with a renewed determination to fight racial inequalities. Tribune photo by Michael Fryer.

PHOTO: Myra Alexander took her granddaughter Melanie Blocker Reed, then 3 years old, to the 1963 march on Washington. "I got hope when **Martin Luther King** spoke," Alexander recalled. Tribune photo by Nancy Stone.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: 08-23-93

Rev., Dr. Addie L. Wyatt

Addie Wyatt began speaking at the age of three, when she gave a recitation at her Church in Brookhaven, Mississippi. In more than half a century since then, she has continued speak up in churches, in union halls, in civil rights rallies and women's forums.

> LABOR

Addie Wyatt culminated thirty years of full-time service as leader and officer in the labor movement when she took an early retirement in September, 1984, as International Vice President of the largest Union in the AFL-CIO, in United Food and Commercial Workers International Union; serving as the union's Director of the Civil Rights and Women's Rights Department.

> WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Rev. Wyatt is a founding member of CLUW (Collation of Labor Union Women) and the National Organization for Women (NOW). She continues to remain supportive in CLUW as Executive Vice President Emeritus. Appointed by President Jimmy Carter to the International Women's Year Commission, she addressed 20,000 women at the historic 1977 American Women's Conference in Houston, Texas.

> POLITICAL ACTION

Rev. Addie Wyatt is one of the most sought after persons for political support, due to her commitment to social change and her influence in the community and in a broad spectrum of community and social organizations. She has played major roles in the re-election of Ralph Metcalfe to Congress in 1976, the election of Harold Washington to Mayor, the election of Eugene Sawyer as Mayor, the election of Carol Moseley Braun as United States Senator and others.

Rev. Addie currently serves on numerous boards, to include; the RTA, Trustees of McCormick Theological Seminary and Community Advisor for Doctors Hospital (formerly known as Hyde Park Hospital) and Rainbow PUSH Coalition Board.

Rev. Addie is a wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, sister, aunt and friend to millions and a lover of the "titsy blitsy" people. She seeks to make life better for all people. She is totally committed to Christ. Her goal is to achieve social, political and community progress, with spiritual excellence.