

## Special Appreciation Issue



"A Right to Remember"

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Trinity Temple Full Gospel Church  
5415 So. Polk  
Dallas, Texas 75232  
Bishop J. Bervin Ransom - Pastor

## The Church on Denley Drive

By: deartra d. madkins



"I'll race you to the church," is the yell as we all run down the street. Renner Drive was the playground and we had some fun.

The one thing I remember most about

Renner Drive is a little wooden church at the end of the street. My brother and I walked to my god mother's house after school. We had to wait for the bus so we could go to our house. Instead of waiting at the bus stop like we were supposed to, we waited on the steps of the church (Trinity Temple Full Gospel Church.) My brother, my god sister, and I sat on the steps, talked, and played church. Yes, we played church. We were kids. I was the choir director, my brother was the preacher, and my god sister was the lead soloist.

My brother would preach a dynamic sermon and my god sister and I would sing the three member church happy. Afterwards, we all "shouted."

We were not always so nice when we played on the steps of the church. Once, we threw some rocks at the church. For some strange reason that day, we wanted to see if we could knock the church down. We got caught, of course. (Be sure your sins will find you out.) One of my god sister's siblings told on us. My godmother scolded us. I can not speak for the others, but if my god mother had not scolded us, the Lord had already

scolded me. I felt really bad for having desecrated the House of the Lord.

We solved a few of our problems on the steps of the church on Denley Drive. Why were our parents so strict? Why did we sometimes have to do without some things when other kids did not? Why did Jimmy like Sue instead of me? Why did Sally like Johnny instead of my brother? Why did my mother and father get divorced? Whose fault was it?



The last time I was on Renner Drive, I had a problem that now seems minute. I had been proposed to and I was only seventeen. I did not even like the guy, much less love him.

Everyone was so happy and excited, expect for my brother and I. I was confused. My brother was mad because no one had asked his advice on the matter. (My brother did not like the guy either. He said he did not know how to dress and he was too cheap.)

We no longer sat on the steps of the church. We stood at the bus stop. After the rock throwing incident, my god mother told us to stay away from the church. We fussed, complained, laughed, and tried to figure out what I should do. I heard a voice say, "Call your father." (It was the Lord who had spoken, although at the time I did not realize it.) That night when I got home, I told my mother, I wanted to call my

father. She let me call him. (She did not even make me call him collect.)



Before I could get anything out of my mouth, my mother told my father that I was going to get married. My dad was silent on the phone for about 5 minutes. He finally said, "Do you love the boy?" I replied, "No!" He then said, "Then you ain't getting married. Bye!" and hung up the phone. It was over. I did not get married. The guy later married someone else. He is now in jail for killing his baby. Was it that small church at the end of the street that helped to saved me from that situation?

It is years later and things have changed. My god mother and her family have moved from Renner Drive. My brother and I went on to college. I had forgotten about the church on Denley Drive. One day I walked into an elegant edifice to attend a musical. During the service, me brother whispered, "This is the same church that was down the street from Sis. Brown's house." I looked at him and said, "Boy, you need to quit lying! Ain't no way." He said, "Girl, yes it is." I looked around the church and marveled. My brother and I have since joined the church.

After one service, I reflected back to when we were children. We shouted on the steps of the church on Denley Drive and we have shouted in the church on South Polk. Could the church on Denley Drive been a vision of things to come?

My brother is now a preacher. I went on to be a choir director at two different churches. My god sister continues to be the lead soloist at her church.

I never once went in the church on Denley Drive. I never once met the pastor, Bishop J. Bervin Ransom, but the church on Denley Drive was a big part of my adolescent life. I have been in the church on South Polk Street. I have met the pastor, and now the church on South Polk Street has become a big part of my adult life.

