

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Reverend Joseph Darby

---

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Darby, Joseph, 1951-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby,
<b>Dates:</b>	February 3, 2007
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2007
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:56:28).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Pastor Reverend Joseph Darby (1951 - ) was the Senior Pastor of Morris Brown A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina; a juvenile probation counselor for thirteen years for the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice; and was involved with numerous educational, social, and religious organizations in South Carolina. Darby was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 3, 2007, in Charleston, South Carolina. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2007_043
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

---

## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Reverend Joseph Anthom Darby, Jr., was born on August 7, 1951, in Columbia, South Carolina, to Eloise and Joseph A. Darby, Sr. Darby was raised in the Wheeler Hill community of Columbia, South Carolina. An excellent student, Darby attended Booker T. Washington High School where he was in the honor society and was elected class president; he graduated in 1969 and enrolled in South Carolina State University. Darby transferred to the University of South Carolina and received his B.A. degree in sociology in 1973.

Darby held positions as an adult eligibility worker for the Department of Public Welfare and an employment counselor for a youth opportunity program. Darby was a juvenile probation counselor for thirteen years for the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice.

Darby was called to the ministry and prepared himself by attending the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary; he was a fourth generation minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1998, Darby became the Senior Pastor of Morris Brown A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina, which had the largest congregation in the Seventh Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Church. He later became the Presiding Elder of the Beaufort (SC) District of the A.M.E. Church.

Darby formerly served as President of both the Greater Columbia Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and the Greater Columbia Interfaith Clergy Association. Darby also served as a board member of the Family Court of the Ninth Judicial Circuit's Drug Court Program; a member of the State Superintendent of Education's African-American Achievement Committee; a member of the Racial Cultural Advisory Council of the South Carolina School Boards Association; and a member of the Daniel J. Jenkins Institute for Children. Darby was also a board member for the Reid House of Christian Service and was the former first Vice-President of the South Carolina Conference of Branches of the NAACP.

Darby's numerous honors and awards include a Top Achiever Award in the 1993 South Carolina Black Male Showcase, and *South Carolina Business Vision* magazine's 1997 South Carolina's 25 Most Influential African Americans Award.

Darby was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on February 3, 2007.

---

# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Reverend Joseph Darby was conducted by Denise Gines on February 3, 2007, in Charleston, South Carolina, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Pastor Reverend Joseph Darby (1951 - ) was the Senior Pastor of Morris Brown A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina; a juvenile probation counselor for thirteen years for the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice; and was involved with numerous educational, social, and religious organizations in South Carolina.

---

# Restrictions

## Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

## Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

---

# Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

---

# Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

## Persons:

Darby, Joseph, 1951-

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Darby, Joseph, 1951- --Interviews

---

African American clergy--Interviews

---

African American civic leaders--Interviews

---

Youth workers--Interviews

---

## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

---

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

---

## Occupations:

Pastor

---

## HistoryMakers® Category:

ReligionMakers

---

## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

### Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, February 3, 2007. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

---

## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the

interview.

---

## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section A2007\_043\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:56 ?

Reverend Joseph Darby was born on August 7, 1951 in Columbia, South Carolina to Eloise Janerette Darby and Joseph Darby, Sr. His father was born in Iowa to Henry Darby and Minnie Darby, farmers from Calhoun County, South Carolina. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II, and died when Darby was young. Growing up, Darby was close to his paternal aunt, Beulah Darby. Darby's mother was born near Sumter, South Carolina to textile worker Jackson Janerette and teacher Annie Janerette, who were from Eastover, South Carolina. His mother was the youngest of seven children. She earned a bachelor's degree from Columbia's Allen University, and became a teacher. After Darby's father died, his mother raised him alone in Columbia's Wheeler Hill, a close-knit African American neighborhood near the University of South Carolina. There, they belonged to St. James A.M.E. Church, where Darby also attended Vacation Bible School each summer. Darby began his education at Columbia's Florence C. Benson Elementary School.

African American clergy--Interviews.

African American civic leaders--Interviews.

Youth workers--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section A2007\_043\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:44 ?

Reverend Joseph Darby learned to give speeches at Florence C. Benson Elementary School in Columbia, South Carolina. He enjoyed reading, and often visited Richland Library Wheatley. In 1963, Darby watched the March on Washington on television. He was influenced by the deaths of Emmett Till and Malcolm X, and local figures like dentist Noble Cooper, Sr. also had an impact on his understanding of civil rights. Although Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka was decided before Darby enrolled at the all-black Booker T. Washington High School in 1965, it had little impact on his education. Many of his teachers there had graduate degrees, and Darby played clarinet under the tutelage of band director Harold June; served as the student council vice president and class president; and boycotted speeches from the all-white basketball team of the University of South Carolina. In his senior year, Darby travelled to Washington, D.C. with the NAACP to advocate lowering the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen years old.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section A2007\_043\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:35 ?

Reverend Joseph Darby met with South Carolina's U.S. Representative William Jennings Bryan Dorn during an NAACP trip to Washington, D.C., where he also visited Metropolitan A.M.E. Church. Darby became a member of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church at fourteen years old. However, he did not aspire to be a preacher, as he was exposed to conflicts in the local district through his uncles, who were ministers. While auditioning for the all-state band, Darby was noticed by Clifford Watkins, the band director at South Carolina State College in Orangeburg, who offered him a music scholarship in addition to

academic funding. Although his community discouraged him from attending a historically black college, Darby matriculated there in 1969, and pledged Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. However, his grades suffered due to his band activities. After two years, Darby transferred to the University of South Carolina in Columbia to study sociology. Darby also talks about how A.M.E. traditions have changed.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section A2007\_043\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:04 ?

Reverend Joseph Darby met his wife, Mary Bright Darby, while attending the University of South Carolina. They married three months after his graduation in 1973. He worked at the South Carolina Department of Public Welfare for three months, before joining the Employment Security Commission, where he worked directly with youth. From 1975, he served as a social worker at the Richland County Family Court for thirteen years. Darby was accepted into the African Methodist Episcopal conference in 1976; and, the next year, was assigned as a part time minister to Piney Grove A.M.E. Church in Gaston, South Carolina. In 1980, he became the pastor of Pleasant Spring A.M.E. Church in Irmo, South Carolina; and, in 1985, moved to Pine Grove A.M.E. Church in Columbia. As the church grew, Darby became a full time pastor. In 1991, he began preaching at St. Phillip A.M.E. Church in Eastover, South Carolina, a rural area where Darby established community outreach programs, including one that provided bicycles to local children.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section A2007\_043\_001\_005, TRT: 0:29:18 ?

Reverend Joseph Darby petitioned the local cable provider for increased television access in Eastover, South Carolina while pastoring St. Phillip A.M.E. Church. The day the new fiber optic cable was installed, Bishop John Hurst Adams reassigned him to Morris Brown African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Under his leadership, the church hosted meetings of the NAACP, as well as Alcoholics Anonymous and Second Chance Recovery, Inc. Darby describes the successes and failures of the African American church in responding to the AIDS crisis. For example, in Columbia, South Carolina, the Brookland Baptist Church created Balm in Gilead, an organization of African American churches addressing AIDS. Darby's own congregant, Harry Kendrick, led an AIDS education ministry. Darby also talks about the mission and history of the African Methodist Episcopal church. He reflects upon the differences between Christian denominations, and his membership in the Congress of National Black Churches.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section A2007\_043\_001\_006, TRT: 0:28:11 ?

Reverend Joseph Darby was serving his ninth year as pastor of Morris Brown African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina at the time of the interview. He was active in Charleston's NAACP chapter, as well as Pastors, Inc. and other ministerial alliances. Darby talks about the church's finances and the importance of tithing, as well as the role of women like Bishop Vashti McKenzie in the church. Darby had two sons, public relations executive Jason Darby and artist Jeremy Darby, with his wife, Mary Bright Darby, who was a teacher. He reflects upon his life, legacy and how he would like to be remembered. He also describes his concerns for the African American community, and his hopes for President Barack Obama, who was a presidential candidate when the interview was conducted.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section A2007\_043\_001\_007, TRT:

0:02:40 ?

Reverend Joseph Darby narrates his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Joseph Darby, Section  
A2007\_043\_Darby\_Joseph\_06\_MED\_WEBCLI001, TRT: