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# Reunion honors family history

# Reunion

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Gethsemane Baptist Church where the foundation of the community met the cornerstones of the family's bloodline.

Following Bun Thompson's legacy as someone who broke boundaries and strove to be a wholesome and righteous man, one of the Thompson's grandchildren, Herman Young, also became a pillar of the Fairfield community. He became the first African-American Sheriff of Fairfield County and served for 22 years. Upon his retirement, Gov. Nikki Haley bestowed upon Sheriff Young the highest honor that can be presented by the Governor's Office: The Order of the Palmetto.

The descendants of this prominent family, known for their generosity to their community, celebrated their achievements and historical breakthroughs during the

three-day reunion. It began with a Sunday church service at Gethsemane Baptist Church followed by a visit to the family cemetery adjacent to the church to remember Bun, Nancy and other family members who are buried there. They then embarked on a tour of the Thompson homestead in Blair and spent the afternoon at a cookout on Weston Lake in Columbia where they enjoyed lots of good food and entertainment by a James Brown impersonator.

The Thompson relatives spent Sunday in high spirits as they learned more about their own history and built bonds to last a lifetime. The next reunion is planned for 2018.

*Find more photos from the reunion on our Facebook page: The Independent Voice of Blythewood & Fairfield County.*



The descendants of Bun and Nancy Thompson gather on the steps of Gethsemane Baptist Church in Blair during the family's first reunion last weekend. The families of four of the Thompson's 12 children were represented: Tommy Lee Thompson, purple shirts; Bleach Thompson, red shirts; Clara Thompson Young, blue shirts and Brice Thompson, orange shirts.

food to the less fortunate and selling supplies on the open market, Fears said. Nancy Thompson organized the Women's Humble Burial Aid Society in Fairfield County to ensure families in the community had enough money for a proper funeral for their loved ones. Her husband mortgaged his

house and land to build Blair's Gethsemane Baptist Church.

"My great-grandfather [Bun] helped build that church," Fears said. So it was fitting that the descendants of Bun and Nancy Thompson first gathered at the





### **Thompsons Reunite –**

Nancy Juanita Thompson, named for her grandmother and Thompson family matriarch, Nancy Thompson, places flowers on the grave of her father, Ed Brice Thompson (one of Nancy's sons) last weekend during the first reunion of the Thompson descendants in Blair. For the full story, see page 5.

*Barbara Ball*