

# The Grand Most Ancient Matron Annual Address

Rahab Grand Court Heroines of Jericho State and  
Jurisdiction of South Carolina Prince Hall Affiliation



Heroine Claudette Hunte-Jackson  
Grand Most Ancient Matron



*Heroine Claudette Hunte-Jackson  
Grand Most Ancient Matron  
Rahab Grand Court, HOJ, SC  
Annual Address*



*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

*- 2 Timothy 1:7*

To the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State and Jurisdiction of South Carolina The Honorable Victor C. Major, 33°,

To the Grand Worthy Matron of the Prince Hall Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star & Rite of Adoption for the State of South Carolina and Jurisdiction Sister Mary M. Ennis,

To the Grand Worthy Patron of the Prince Hall Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star & Rite of Adoption for the State of South Carolina and Jurisdiction Brother Jermaine Nowlin,

To the Most Excellent Grand High Priest of the Most Excellent Prince Hall Grand Chapter Holy Royal Arch Masons, Jurisdiction of South Carolina the Most Excellent Companion Jerome Brooks,

*To the General Conference Grand Most Ancient Matron General Grand Conference of Grand Courts of Heroine of Jericho, Prince Hall Affiliation, of the United States and The Bahamas Grand Most Ancient Matron Carlotta M. Casey, To all General Conference Grand Court Officers Elected and Appointed,*

To the Grand Most Worthy Joshua of Rahab Grand Court Heroines of Jericho State and Jurisdiction of South Carolina Prince Hall Affiliation Knight Alfred R. Jean-Pierre, Jr.,

To Our Past Grand Most Ancient Matrons and Past Grand Most Worthy Joshuas, Elected and Appointed Grand Officers, PMAMs, PMWJs, MAM, MWJ, Subordinate Court Officer, Heroines and Knights,

In addition, to all other Affiliate and Adoptive Bodies of the Prince Hall family, I say good day, and may peace find you in everything you do.

I greet you in the Name of the Great “I Am” and welcome you to our 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Session but before we go any further, I would like to offer a prayer;

*As we rise to meet each new day, please let us be filled with Your spirit. Wherever we go, let us spread love, joy, peace, goodness, and faithfulness. Let us desire to become more like you and to worship you in all we do. Help us desire these things so much more than the sin that entices us. Father, thank you for all of the wonderful things that you will do here today. Thank you for your love that you have shown us; and that we are able to share together. We pray that we will continue to learn and understand the words that you have sown within our hearts today. Care for these words, protect them and help them to take root. In time, help your words grow and blossom into wonderful things. As we prepare, we thank you for always walking with us. May we always hear your word and strive to live within your love. As the events of the day continue to unfold, we seek Your clarity and Your peace. We know You are with us and for us as we gather to seek Your counsel. Scripture reminds us, the more we seek You the more we will find You. Lead our surrendered hearts to the path of Your peace today. Thank you for always going before us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

I have to give credit, where credit is due. Rahab Grand Court you are nothing short of being *Awesome*. I have learned a lot from you this past year and I am looking forward to learning even more. When it comes to my past Grand Officers, I hear you. I promise I hear you. Before I became the GMAM, I did a lot of observing and now that I am the GMAM, I asked many questions. I can honestly say that none of you has ever dismissed what I had to say. Now granted I know that I am the youngest to be elected to this position and that can be scary. Just because I am young does not mean I am not intelligent, not experienced, loving, kind, dedicated, compassionate, and above all trustworthy! Being the youngest, I am showing that we believe and have faith in our younger leaders! We are leading with our talents and intelligence. We are doing it with class and beauty! I want to say today and please let me be clear; I am not going to disappoint you....*SOUTH CAROLINA*.

To my GMWJ Alfred R. Jean-Pierre, Jr., there are no words. Please take that as a compliment. Actually, there are two words, *YOU ROCK!*

To my Elected and Appointed Officers thank you for answering the phone when you see my name. I know that I can be a handful, but please

know I appreciate everything that you do for Rahab Grand Court and me. You do know we are the best, right.

### Necrology

This is very difficult for me. As most of you know, 2023 was a horrible year personally and even harder for me as your leader. Every single month since you saw fit to elect me to lead this great organization, I received phone calls, emails, or texts stating that our Lord has called one of his Angels home. As much as we are aware that this will come to all of us, does not make it less hurtful that a loved one has gone home. We as people are selfish when it comes to the transition of a love one and that is not a bad thing. Please know that our Lord is resolute on who he wants by His side during the ultimate battle, so when our love ones work has been completed on this physical, the reward is that we and our loved ones get to be with Him. John 11:25-26 says, "Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." I cannot see a more fitting reward.

### State of the Union

What a Charlie Foxtrot of events that we got when it comes to the State of Union. I know when you come to a conference like this, you will hear, about the election in 2024, especially with November only being seven months away. You will also hear that your vote counts and it does. I am not going to stand here and advocate for one party or another. However, I will say *"THERE IS NOTHING TO BE LEARNED FROM A SECOND KICK OF A DONKEY."* Make your way to the polls in November! Continue to make sure that you are secured to vote in your precincts.

### State of the State

Unfortunately, we are mimicking the State of Union because of 45! The sheer hypocrisy is overwhelming. South Carolina, we really need to step our game up when it comes to education, equality in pay, and criminal punishments. We really need to be in the letter writing campaign again and by this, making phone calls, appointments, and emails to our leaders in government. I am not sure whom they think they are leading but it is not the people. The gun law that just passed is scary. We are ranked amongst the worst in everything that is negative (crime, equality with everything, housing, education). We need to wake up! How many of us are running in

our communities for local seats? How many of us are a part of civic organization that is advocating Africans the right to be funded in elected seats locally and within our state? Africans that are Republicans are being heard here... where is *OUR VOICE* in these matters. We must be mindful that we have a level of responsibility with our freedoms as well... no one else! Again, please make your way to the polls in November.

### State of the Organization

**WHAT A YEAR!!! WHAT A YEAR!!!! WHAT A YEAR!!!!!**

I tell you what South Carolina, that old saying, “*trial by fire*” is very real. I have been tested and retested. I had to learn to be politically correct and for those that know me, this has not been easy. I have also learned that, “it is better to keep your mouth shut and be thought of as a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.” I heard a saying that worked very well for me ...It takes 2 years to learn how to speak and 50 years to learn to be silent. I had to learn that to assist matters and to keep my mental health in check...that is important!

We need to get back to the business Heroines of Jericho. When your Grand Joshua and I were visiting the subordinate courts, it was satisfying to see and hear Heroines and Knights bringing ideas to the table. We heard questions and statements like, “I want to do workshops and not just attend the one in October”, “Can we call you for help?” When we heard these questions and statements, my heart started to beat fast! The phones calls I have received asking how can we move this Grand Court forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. My heart is really beating fast! “Grand, how can we assist you in any capacity.” My heart is now in my head SCREAMING you got this! You will never know how it made me feel to know that you love this organization and respect it enough to ask these questions of me!

We must be mindful when it comes to ritualistic vs. traditional work. It is very safe to say that if it is found in YOUR ritual, it is ritualistic and should be carry out in that manner. Traditional work is usually something that YOUR Court has done for years to commemorate an occasion/celebration. Examples of this is your anniversary, brunches, teas, etc. All I can say is I am willing to participate in all of your activities. As most of you are aware, I love doing degree work and yes, I said that aloud. I love the fact that I was able to participate in the degree work for many of the Courts within our jurisdiction. I thank you humbly for that. Let us have more of that. Always with my calendar, it is, “First come...First served basis”.

Another thing, just because it was not your idea, does not make it a bad idea! It also goes along with the way you present the idea. We need to intently listen to one another. You may not be in favor of the idea presented but as your sister and brother's keeper...give them the respect to hear them out. When it is your turn to speak, the same respect should be given to you. I believe we all have been in a situation(s) when we stopped listening to the minute that speaker got belligerent with their idea. Unfortunately, now that idea will not have the same value it could have had to push this organization forward. It takes absolutely NO energy to be kind and compassionate to each other but take a lot of energy to be mean and nasty! Your delivery is everything and although I do not have thin skin, the audience you speaking to may feel differently. *Do not be that person that people do not want to see or hear you talk. This needs to stop.*

I have been told that I am very militant. I would not necessarily say I am militant but I have been militarized. I have standards! I was raised by Heroine Frances Hunte, she did an excellent job of raising me, and I must preference this because when I turned 18 years young, I went into the military. Everything I know is from these two sources and life experiences from them both. With that being said, I was told recently that I could not hold a password to an application because it might look bad. Not that I would do anything nefarious but it was not in the cards for me to have access. Now, Claudette heard this person loud and clear but Maureen is a little crazy. I thought to myself, I held and still hold a TOP SECRET Clearance with the United States Navy. I was responsible to get classified information to over 6000 Sailors in a timely manner. I gave security briefings to my aviators that needed Military Intel. I work for the Columbia Police Department as an analyst but I cannot have a password to see who is coming to my session? This was very interesting to me... I recently went to a church service where the Pastor's message was shake it off. Yes, the church service came after this conversation. Which means God had given me an answer to this perplexity. Pastor said when people tend to throw dirt on you, *"SHAKE IT OFF."* *Fight through the nonsense and let it go and let GOD!* I am now back to being Claudette again!

To my York Rite Grands.... *WE NEED TO COME BACK TOGETHER!* We are on the right track to do this and I want to see this sooner rather than later! We do not need to wait to make this happen. *STOP* living in the past, *WE ARE THE NOW* and set the pace for the future of our organizations! We are the Grand East. *LET US MAKE THIS HAPPEN!!!*

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with an inspirational quote.

*“Sometimes when you're in a dark place, you think you have been buried, but actually you have been planted.” – Christine Caine. By being planted, our God is now able to shine his Son’s light upon you, to grow healthy and strong.*

If you did not know me before, prayerfully, this gave you a little bit of insight as to who I am. I am not one to throw the rock and hide my hand. I am very open and an open-minded person. I am very easy to get along with. I am taking care of business, and I am always looking for the next idea to move this great organization in a positive manner forward. If you do not like me after that,...it is ok because ***I STILL LOVE YOU AND THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT!***

### Recommendations

- 1) These are the only way to make financial transactions:
  - a. Cash
  - b. Check
  - c. Money Order
  - d. CashApp
  - e. Zelle
  - f. Paypal
  - g. Credit card (I know this is coming in the future)
- 2) For dues to increase by \$2 per member to be donated to the York Rite of South Carolina Foundation, Inc.
- 3) We need to have more interests meetings and spread the love that Heroines of Jericho have to offer.
- 4) Have all Elected and Appointed Grand Officers conduct workshops.

## Visitations

- Princess Eugenia Royal Grand Court, Ladies of the Circle of Perfection, Jurisdiction of SC, PHA – Columbia, SC (April 2023)
- Palmetto Grand Guilds, Heroines of the Templar Crusaders, Jurisdiction of South Carolina, PHA – Columbia, SC (April 2023)
- SC Gala Day – Myrtle Beach, South Carolina (April 2023)
- Meeting with MWGM about rules for membership- Charleston, SC (May 7, 2023)
- General Conference of Grand Court, Heroines of Jericho of the United States and Bahamas, PHA, Inc. – Louisville, Kentucky (June 30-July 5, 2023)
- Prince Hall Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern and Rite of Adoption for the State of South Carolina and Jurisdiction 115 Annual Communication (July 2023)
- Executive Board Meeting – Columbia, SC (August 2023)
- Crescent Court #143 Fall Extravaganza – Florence, SC (September 2023)
- Rahab Grand Court, HOJ, SC Mid-year Session Workshop – Columbia, SC (October 2023)
- Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of South Carolina Session – Charleston, SC (December 2023)
- Executive Board Meeting (January 2024)
- Head of Houses Meeting – Columbia, SC (January 2024)
- Harmony Court #23 Official Visitation – Orangeburg, SC (January 2024)
- L. E. Hyman Court #2 Official Visitation – Florence, SC (February 2024)
- North Carolina Grand Court Heroines of Jericho, Raleigh, NC (February 2024)
- Rahab Court #15 Official Visitation – Columbia, SC (February 2024)
- District IV, Order of the Eastern Star – Columbia, SC (March 2024)
- Clemon Court #1 Official Visitation – Charleston, SC (March 2024)
- Pride of Ridgeville #7 Official Visitation – Ridgeville, SC (March 2024)
- B. E. J. Court #19 Official Visitation – Cross, SC (March 2024)
- B. E. J. Court #19 Brunch – Eutawville, SC (March 2024)