THE LIFE, MINISTRY, AND LEGACY

Dr. Rev. Dorothy E. Hooks, PsyD

August 4, 1952 – October 31, 2026

Dr. Rev. Dorothy E. Hooks, PsyD, passed peacefully into eternal life on Saturday, October 31, 2026. A devoted woman of faith, honored military veteran, theologian, Christian counselor, author, community advocate, and visionary leader, she dedicated her life to ministry, service, education, and helping others find healing, hope, and restoration.

Faith, Ministry, and Friendship

Faith was the foundation of Dr. Hooks's life and the source of the work she did for others. Through GraceLife Ministries USA, she was licensed and ordained as an independent Christian clergy. She completed training in Christian counseling for grief and loss and participated in GriefShare through Life Changers Ministry with Pastor Helena Gammage. She continued to study scripture, share devotional reflections and daily affirmations, and encourage people through her writing, often drawing on Andrew Wommack's teachings and other Bible study resources.

A woman of deep, lifelong faith, Dr. Hooks's spiritual journey came full circle over the years. In recent years, she found great joy in fellowship and worship. She served as a dedicated affiliate of Citadel of Hope under Pastor Dannie Williams and The Word of Truth Ministries under Pastor Ulysses Johnson. She also worshipped with the New Life Ministries family, where she shared a longstanding fellowship and friendship with Pastor Joy Richardson. When visiting her daughter in Georgia, she also worshipped at Forward Church in Sharpsburg, whose pastor had been a guest speaker at LakeHaven Church. She later spent time with CWC under Pastors John and Constance Christian before returning to her beloved church family at LakeHaven Church in Eustis, Florida. Pastors Shannon and Karin Carroll and the congregation offered her spiritual support and fellowship and cherished her presence in worship.

Throughout her life, Dr. Hooks was blessed with friends who shared her heart for prayer, encouragement, and leadership. She treasured her longtime friendship with Elder Sue Graham and her fellowship with Minister Janie Church (WEPA Ministries) and Minister James Everett. Minister Janie Church served as vice president on the boards of her organizations, sharing years of annual conferences and demonstrating longstanding dedication, loyalty, and commitment to the causes they shared. The family is grateful to Minister Everett and his wife, Barbara James, for their words of appreciation, shared faith, and ten years of spiritual friendship. He revered Dr. Hooks as a friend, teacher, colleague, and mentor, remembering how she was always ready to offer a timely word of encouragement. He also described her as "a true warrior."

A Voice of Healing and Restoration

As an accomplished and visionary author, Dr. Hooks wrote several impactful books addressing domestic violence recovery, Christian faith, and personal healing. Her works include *Unholy Matrimony: Healing for the Abused Woman*; You Shall Recover "It" All: After the Abuse; *Healing the Wounds of the Past: Stepping Out of Rejection Into Wholeness*; and *After the Abuse, After the Recovery, Now What?... Moving On With Your Life*. Drawing on her faith, life experiences, and years of study and counseling, she shared practical wisdom and encouragement with people seeking healing, freedom, and a renewed sense of purpose.

A Legacy of Military and Community Service

A proud military veteran, Dr. Hooks served her country honorably in two branches of the United States Armed Forces for nearly nine years. She served in the United States Army from January 1977 to November 1979 as a Multichannel Communications Equipment Operator with the 97th Signal Battalion in Mannheim, Germany. She later served in the United States Air Force Reserve from May 1980 to June 1986 as a Medical Administrative Specialist at Homestead Air Force Base and in Key West, Florida.

Following her military service, Dr. Hooks continued her commitment to serving others through civil service, local government, and community advocacy. Her connection with the Lake County Sheriff's Office dated back to at least 2018, when she participated in the Sheriff's Citizen Academy and received a Gold Star Award. She served with the Sheriff's Office as a chaplain and supported victims and their families through her advocacy work. She also served as a volunteer chaplain with the Eustis Police Department. In her chaplain roles, she provided spiritual comfort, crisis intervention, and support to families receiving emergency and death notifications, and assisted with death warrants. Rooted in her belief in one God, she served people of every religious background with compassion and dignity during some of life's most difficult moments. Her service earned her Chaplain Volunteer of the Year honors and a separate Gold Star Award in 2023 recognizing her volunteer service. She completed additional training in PTSD and police officer suicide prevention, HIPAA, and FEMA's Incident Command System (ICS-100). She also expressed her appreciation for police officers by bringing them donuts.

Dr. Hooks was especially passionate about serving people experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable populations. Through her work with the Mid Florida Homeless Coalition, advocacy, and grant-writing, she helped people find housing, take steps toward greater stability, and secure public resources for food, blankets, toothbrushes, and other essentials. She also served on municipal and county committees, participating in budget decisions and advocating for resources to reach those most in need.

Helping others was part of how Dr. Hooks lived her faith. When she saw someone on the street who might need help, she stopped to ask how they were doing and what they needed. Sometimes that meant going to the grocery store for bread, turkey, cheese, mayonnaise, and bottled water so someone had enough to make a meal. Whether through her community work or in an ordinary moment on the street, she took the time to listen and offered what she could.

Her commitment to service extended into entrepreneurship and ministry. She was the visionary founder and Chief Executive Director of three organizations: Hands Up Homeless Ministries, Inc.; Abused Woman Ministries, Inc.; and The Lula McGrady Foundation, Inc. The latter was named in honor of her grandmother, Lula McGrady, whom she cherished deeply and spoke of with great affection.

Family

As the oldest child, Dr. Hooks carried her family's history with grace and strength.

She leaves to cherish her memory, her devoted daughter, Chandra Smith Garry (Cassius, Sr.) of Jonesboro, Georgia; her beloved grandsons, Hikeem Garry (Chyna) and Cassius Garry, Jr. (CJ); and her cherished great-grandchildren, Adonis and Azariah.

Her surviving family includes: her sister, Tonya Hooks and Tonya's family: her mother, Elnora Hooks; her sister, Annette Dukes; and her aunt, Dorothy Johnson. She also leaves the family of her late brother, Willie Fred Taylor: her nieces, Minister Deborah Nesbitt and her son, Javin Baker of Albany, Georgia, and Tameka Nesbitt and her sons, Shadtavius Nesbitt and Wartavius Nesbitt of Warner Robins, Georgia; and her first cousin, Deborah Milliner (John), of Columbia, South Carolina.

She also leaves behind her cousins: Evangelist China Bell (Travis) of Sanford, North Carolina; Evangelist Minister Mikita Hollis (Gregory) of Bonaire, Georgia, along with her sister, Sharon Thomas of Americus, Georgia; her cousins, Willie and Ardelia Hooks; and her cousin, Betty Milliner ("Aunt Betty"), wife of the late James Milliner, Sr. ("Uncle James Sr."), who lovingly cared for the historic family home on Academy

Street in Americus, where Dr. Hooks and James, Sr. grew up together and family traditions were kept alive.

A Grateful Heart

Dr. Hooks showed her love in practical ways. Over the years, she helped family and friends file their taxes and establish 501(c)(3) nonprofits. She also guided them through the VA benefits process, helping some obtain 100% disability ratings. The family is grateful to everyone who visited, prayed, and offered comfort during Dr. Hooks's final days. They extend special thanks to her cousin James Milliner, Jr. for staying by her bedside during her final hours. She was deeply grateful to her cousin, Evangelist China Bell (Travis) of Sanford, North Carolina, who visited and spoke with her often through her final days. The family thanks China for her meaningful presence and spiritual contributions. Dr. Hooks encouraged her cousin, Evangelist Minister Mikita Hollis (Gregory) of Bonaire, Georgia, to pursue her ministry license, and they remained connected over the years.

Chandra's father, Jhon "JD" Davis, and his family stayed connected with Dr. Hooks and checked on her well-being over the years. His sister, Aunt Cora Gordon Fulmore of Orlando, welcomed Dr. Hooks to Thanksgiving dinners she enjoyed and made time to visit her in the hospital after her fall. The family is grateful to Cora for her love and thoughtfulness.

She valued the help Sherhan Alkan and Alan Woodyard of Kia of Leesburg gave with her car and appointments. She cherished her connection with Nadine Graham and family.

For more than 25 years, Dr. Hooks and Emma Cooper shared a friendship woven into their everyday lives. They traded Scripture, prayers, praise reports, songs, photos, and little updates. In those daily exchanges, they shared their faith, celebrated each other's joys, and walked through life together.

She deeply valued the longtime friendship, prayers, and spiritual support of Elder Barbara Wilcher and her family, including her daughter, Tasha. She shared a special bond of mutual care with Betty Ostane and her family. The Boyds had longstanding ties with her family and helped introduce her to Leesburg. She also remembered her childhood friend Leola Carter. She was grateful for the kindness of her Water Oaks neighbors, including Hal and Marie Jarvis, and for the support of the Water Oaks staff. She was also fond of Ed Welcome, an independent handyman she trusted to care for her lawn and help around her home.

She treasured her friendship with Officer Stephen Bentley of the Eustis Police Department, her trusted buddy from day one, with whom she shared community ride-alongs and mutual encouragement. She was grateful to Stephen Signore of AdventHealth for his encouragement and support beyond his regular care duties. Her Right at Home care aides, Heidi Snow, Amber Snow, and Brittany Freed, were dear to her and provided companionship, encouragement, and friendship. Heidi kept a loving, watchful eye over Dr. Hooks and stayed by her side through the night during her first transition into hospice care. The family remembers Hunter Snow with love. Her Lake County Sheriff's Office family and church communities remained important parts of her life.

The family extends heartfelt gratitude to the physicians, medical professionals, and care teams who supported Dr. Hooks throughout her health journey; everyone who prayed for and encouraged her; and her friends at LakeHaven Church. Special thanks go to Chaplain Dr. Joshua Douglas, Director of Chaplaincy/Victim Advocate at the Lake County Sheriff's Office, whose support meant so much to Dr. Hooks and her family. The family also thanks Cornerstone Hospice in Tavares for the warmth, comfort, care, and updates they provided during Dr. Hooks's brief stay. The team honored her military service with a veteran's blanket and pin. Bonnie, a member of Dr. Hooks's church, was there and recorded the recognition on video for the family.

A Legacy That Lives On

Dr. Dorothy E. Hooks was more than the titles she held or the accomplishments she achieved. She was a woman who turned her experiences into lessons, her pain into purpose, and her faith into service. She dedicated her life to helping others find healing, hope, and restoration.

Her voice may be silent, but her teachings will continue to speak. Her hands may rest, but the work she began will continue through the lives she touched. Her journey on earth has ended, but the legacy she leaves behind will never be forgotten.

She fought, she served, she taught, she loved, and she made a difference. Her life was a testimony, her legacy is her inheritance, and her memory will live on forever.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant.