

THE CLARK FAMILY
(Interview with Mrs. Joanne Norwood Clark)

An old adage says 'There is no place like home'. For the Clark family, Method will always be 'home'. Despite the fact that my parents are now deceased, and all but one of my siblings and I live elsewhere, Method will always hold a special place in our hearts.

My parents, Walter E. and Estella Pegram Clark were from Catawba County, NC. There were nine of us children: David, Walter, me, Robert, Harlen, Alice, Ann, Betty, and Dwight. My family lived at 704 Method Road.

Growing up in Method was a wonderful experience. It was a tight-knit community where everyone knew each other and no one was afraid to leave their doors unlocked. Children could play outside into the night without fear, and the parents and elders in the community could chastise the neighborhood children without fear of retribution.

I fondly recall the days of sitting on my parents' porch talking with family and the many friends who would stop by about neighborhood happenings, politics, and the state of the world in general. Those were the good old days.

Although Method did not have sidewalks when my siblings and I were growing up and indoor plumbing was simply something to wish for, we knew that we were still truly blessed. My parents believed and trusted in God wholeheartedly, and thus, instilled that strong faith in their children.

Five of my siblings and I attended the historic Berry O'Kelly High School in the Method Community. Although we attended during the time when segregation was prevalent in every facet of society, and the social climate of the country was extremely volatile, the education that we received was excellent. The teachers cared about their students and it was simply nice to see educated blacks in positions of authority.

As my siblings and I had our own children, we wanted them, too, to experience Method. Our children played at the community center, worshipped at Oak City Baptist, shopped at the neighborhood convenience store, and learned the importance of community and family.

Time and a decaying moral structure have led to a much changed Method community today. Many of the elders in the community, including my parents, have died, drugs and real estate investors have consumed the neighborhood, and a sense of community no longer exists for many. But, even with these changes, Method will always be "home". Although my physical body may only

take me to Method a few times during the year now, my heart will always be in Method. Why? Because "there's no place like home"!