

Xelia Verba Blaine Hickson was born to Deacon Ernest and Muzzeta Ferrell Blaine. Her childhood included formal piano lessons and exposure to music, black culture, and travel prepared her for her future as an educator, entrepreneur, and community leader.

She was baptized into White Rock Baptist Church, Mountain Hill where her father was a deacon. Later in life, she became an active member of Vance Street Missionary Baptist Church. Her love for God and music afforded her the opportunity to play and teach music in various churches and schools.

After graduating Langston High School, Ms. Hickson received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Bluefield State University, a Master of Early Childhood Development from Lynchburg College, and a PhD from Jacksonville Theological Seminary. She was a music/choral teacher for 37 years, retiring from George Washington High School. After her teaching career ended, Ms. Hickson focused on ministry and started a radio show.

She served as director and founding member of the Danville Interdenominational Choir. She has served on many advisory boards in addition to her ministerial work at Vance Street Baptist. Her honors and awards are numerous, as she has served as a golden member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., a life member of the NAACP, and a platinum member of The Links, Incorporated, Danville Chapter.



**Xelia Hickson**  
**1936-2023**