

"A Son's Tribute to His Father"

By Brian Beverly

Irvin Eugene Beverly, Sr. was born on June 24, 1936, in Lusby, Maryland, the seventh child of Raymond C. and Clara M. Beverly. From his earliest days, Irvin was shaped by the powerful examples set by his parents. His mother, Clara, modeled unwavering faith and spiritual resilience—instilling in him an enduring trust in God that would guide him throughout his life. His father, Raymond, was a tireless worker and exhibited a commitment to doing every job well or not at all, gifting Irvin with the strong work ethic he is known for to this day.

Irvin was educated in the Calvert County public school system and graduated with honors from the still-segregated William Sampson Brooks High School in 1954. He went on to earn a diploma in the trade of Tailoring, Dressmaking, and Design from the Skidmore Vocational School (owned and operated by his beloved "Aunt Gertie" and "Uncle Skid") in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in June 1956. He taught tailoring and dressmaking at Skidmore for one year before returning to Lusby, where he was hired as a tailor at Tuckers Cleaners in Barstow, Maryland. He remained a full-time employee there until 1966.

In 1966, Irvin began his career at the Department of Defense at Fort George G. Meade in Odenton, MD. He started on the loading docks but, through determination and impeccable performance, worked his way up to an office position as a logistician and advancing to the highest role attainable without a college degree. His advancement was not accidental. Irvin consistently took the necessary courses, sought professional development opportunities, and polished his credentials whenever required, thereby ensuring he was always prepared for the next promotion. His rise in government service was especially significant given the social climate of the 1960s, when African-Americans across the nation continued to battle segregation, discrimination, and restricted opportunities in every facet of human existence.

A man of seemingly limitless practical skills, Irvin is a gifted handyman and craftsman. Over his lifetime, he became adept in carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, auto repair, and landscaping, among others. He also developed a unique artistry working with driftwood, finding suitors for his individually designed and fabricated sailboats from all over Southern Maryland and beyond, and becoming a fixture for many years as a vendor at the Patuxent River Appreciation Days festival. One of his most notable accomplishments is that he built the home he still lives in today with his own hands and it remains standing and structurally sound after more than 65 years. This feat was accomplished through an underappreciated and underutilized skill that Reverend Beverly has mastered - listening. By strategically questioning skilled tradesman, remaining humble, and soaking up their advice like a sponge, Irvin constructed a home that stands as a testament to his smarts, determination, and workmanship.

Irvin married the late Doris Louise Gross on May 31, 1958, and the two shared 32 years until her untimely death in 1991. Their union produced two sons: Irvin Junior and Brian Orlando, both of

whom live the values instilled in them_ by thir loving parents and apply the life lessons that were taught to them through example. In 1993, Irvin married Eilene

Wise-Bell, gaining four loving daughters-Bridgette, Tammy, Shelly, and Inez. He has always valued and prioritized family, particularly children, and is known to maintain a storehouse of toys, games, and sporting equipment for those blessed to visit. He now enjoys 11 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren in total.

Irvin is a founding member of SMILE (Service Makes Individuals' Lives Exciting), a ten-church ecumenical organization in southern Calvert County. For over 30 years, he has served on its board, fielding, vetting, and fulfilling countless requests for assistance with necessities such as rent, utilities, and other essential needs-always without judgment, mirroring Christ's declaration that "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve." He has also served multiple terms on the Hospice Board, the Habitat for Humanity Board, and has contributed many years of leadership to the East John Youth Center beginning with its organization in 1985. His penchant for community service is profound. He has received more awards "than you can shake a stick at" and has acquitted himself well in every role he has held, serving with honor and distinction.

Rev. Beverly's theological studies and ministerial training were completed through the United Methodist Church, where he was licensed to preach. A lifelong member of St. John U.M.C. in Lusby, where he served faithfully as a lay leader for many years, he answered his calling and was appointed pastor of Bethesda United Methodist Church in Valley Lee, Maryland in 2000. Under his leadership, the church has experienced growth, completed renovations, and increased its visibility and impact within the community.

Irvin is known for his quick wit and infectious sense of humor. Whether among family, close friends, or complete strangers, he has a knack for telling compelling stories, relatable anecdotes, and sidesplitting jokes - usually but not always in the best taste. Rev. Beverly's sermons are often inspired by history and real-life experiences, often resulting in the energetic self-affirmation "I know I'm right about it," or the more unassuming rhetorical question "did I say that right?" Whether through his dedication as a civil servant, his devotion as a husband, father, brother, and grandparent, or his obedience in answering the call to preach, Irvin has lived a life of service, compassion, and unshakable faith that will no doubt justify hearing "well done, thy good and faithful servant."

As Rev. Beverly concludes his season of service at Bethesda United Methodist Church, let us all extend the right hand of fellowship, a holy hug, and heartfelt congratulations on his well-earned retirement. His leadership, kindness, vision, and unwavering commitment to Christ's work have left an indelible imprint on the congregation and the wider community. We celebrate all that God has accomplished through him and pray that Bethesda U.M.C. continues to grow in strength, unity, and purpose. May the seeds Rev. Beverly has planted fall on good ground and flourish for generations to come. To God be the glory for the things He has done.

[written by Irvin Beverly's son, Brian Beverly; c2026]