

In Loving Memory Of

Theresa W. Davis

Sunrise
February 20, 1920

Sunset
June 12, 2011



Services

Monday, June 20, 2011 - 10:00 a.m.

CONVENT AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
425 West 144th Street
New York, New York 10031

Obituary

Theresa Wilder Davis was born on February 20, 1920 and loved to tell people that her birthday was “2/20/20”. She was the older of two children born to the late Lonnie Wilder and the late Mary Askew Wilder and widow of the late Howard Davis, Sr. Theresa and her younger brother Sherman lost their mother at a very young age, when Theresa was only five and her brother three. Her father was a traveling salesman for many years after that. They, however, were born into a family filled with love and they were raised by loving aunts, uncles and a grandmother who eventually buried all four of her own children. (Theresa used to comment on how “Grandma” just shed a little tear and thanked the Lord for the time she did have her children). Theresa and Sherman were instilled with a love for living life and “doing the best you can”. Theresa spent her school years in Portsmouth, Virginia with her Aunt Bird. Her Grandma Hattie’s home in Windsor, North Carolina was where she spent her summers. She started piano lessons before her seventh birthday. Her Aunt Bird eventually had her playing the piano in First Baptist Church, which was right down the street from them in Brighton, a section in Portsmouth, Virginia. Theresa’s father married Ms. Julia S. Jenkins when Theresa was seventeen. They were affectionately called “Daddy Lonnie” and “Mama Julia” by the entire family. Mrs. Julia Jenkins Wilder and her son, Charles Jenkins, Sr. enriched the family for many many years.

As a young adult, Theresa left Portsmouth, Virginia and she joined other family members in Ossining, New York. She originally cared for very young children in their homes, before she completed the course work for The Apex School of Beauty Culture and Hairdressing in New York City. While in Harlem U.S.A., she worked in various hair salons and was, during that time introduced to her future husband, Howard. They started and continued their membership at Convent Avenue Baptist Church even as they moved out of that neighborhood and began to raise, eventually, their two children. A number of years later, Theresa served the Lord as a pianist in her neighborhood at Calvary Community Baptist Church. She returned to Convent Avenue Baptist Church many years ago, and for a short time she sang in the choir and studied the piano further under Dr. Horace Mann.

Theresa always remembered her roots. Trips to Virginia, North Carolina and Washington, D.C., every year, for years were a reinforcement of the love she received during younger days. More frequent trips were made to Ossining, New York and New Jersey. Theresa also enjoyed a close knit group of friends from the projects. Theresa was especially close to her two, now deceased, sisters-in-law, Adeline L. Wilder (Sherman) and Tullie B. Jenkins (Charles, Sr.).

Theresa, at one point, started “fixing” peoples hair at home, and also began to work at Macy’s. She did this for a number of years, but wanted to accomplish more. She was encouraged by her husband and “trained” by her brother, Sherman to learn the system for sorting mail for the United States Post Office and worked there for twenty-three years before retiring. (She made several trips to her brother’s home in Washington, D.C. to learn that “scheme”). She fostered many friendships at the post office that were still evident at the time of her passing. They included her very good friend Pat Staton, who affectionately named her “T.Bird,” and Gladice Simmons, who was of great comfort and support especially during her husband’s illness and subsequent death.

Theresa spent years enjoying her retirement in New York, before it was necessary for her to relocate to California in 2002. Theresa was very appreciative of another dear post office friend, Lois White and a dear family friend, Viola “Bobby” White, they both assisted her in remaining in her home as long as she did. As, also, did a friend of Bobby’s, “Aunt Esther”.

While in Los Angeles Theresa enjoyed and received so much love from the telephone messages, cards (she loved the “ice cream money” from her cousin Iris), pictures and the numerous (many repetitive) visits from many family members and friends from the east coast. There are too many to name, they know who they are. There are, however, several heart warming stories that came out of most of those visits, just ask family or friends Brenda and Lynn, or Flo and Dee Dee, or Pat or Penola and Tanya or Gale and Oren and the Rev. and Mrs. Paul Hoggard. They will tell you she, as usual gave out as much love as she received, her humor was often evident to everyone who visited, as well as to those whom she resided with. Theresa was often heard laughing out loud as she found her own jokes, observations and recollections of the past and present to be the funniest she had ever heard.

Her humor was also often evident to those newfound family and friends in California. The family wishes to thank them, especially, for continued regular support that was beyond the norm and truly appreciated. Thank you, Arnie, Marsha, Esther and Elliott.

The family wishes to also profoundly thank Convent Avenue Baptist Church, in New York City and especially the Rev. Dr. Jesse T. Williams, Jr. Senior Pastor, for their prayers and several letters of encouragement.

As time passed, when Theresa was unable to clearly convey what was so funny, she continued to laugh. She sometimes laughed so hard she closed her eyes. If not laughing, she still kept a smile on her face, and continued to have many outbursts of laughter from her heart even as hospice first arrived.

Theresa leaves to cherish her memory: her daughter, Darlene Davis of Glendale, CA; her son, Howard Davis, Jr. of New York; a granddaughter, Tamara Darnice Davis of New York; Tamara’s daughter, Nivaha Analyze Torres; Howard’s wife, Stivalis and their son, Joshua Esai Davis; a nephew, Charles Jenkins, Jr. and his stepson, R.J.; and a host of cousins and friends.

Order of Service

Organ Prelude

Opening Sentence

Hymn “It Is Well With My Soul”

Prayer

Scriptures

Old Testament Psalm 23

New Testament John 14:1-6



Selection “Amazing Grace”

Acknowledgements Church, Friends and Family

Selection “We’ve Come This Far By Faith”

Eulogy Rev. Booker T. Morgan

Selection “Leaning On The Everlasting Arms”

Final Viewing

Committal

Recessional

Interment

Kensico Cemetery

Valhalla, New York



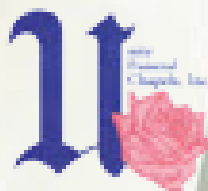
Afterglow

*I'd like the memory of me
To be a happy one,
I'd like to leave an afterglow
Of smiles when day is done.
I'd like to leave an echo
Whispering softly down the ways,
Of happy times and laughing times
And bright and sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who grieve
To dry before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave behind,
When the day is done.*

-Helen Lowrie Marshall

Acknowledgement

*The family acknowledges with deep appreciation all acts of
kindness extended to them during this bereavement hour.
God bless you for all your thoughtfulness and concern.*



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