

Service of Death and Resurrection

for

Sunrise
July 20, 1949

Sunset
April 4, 2014

Marcella Sutton Oglesby

In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places.
If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to
prepare a place for you?

- John 14:2

Wednesday, April 9, 2014 - 10:00 a.m.

MORROW MEMORIAL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

600 Ridgewood Road • Maplewood, New Jersey

Pastor Chris Heckert, Officiating

Holland Jancaitis, Organist



MARCELLA SUTTON OGLESBY

July 20, 1949 – April 4, 2014

A Dedicated Life Lived Well

Marcella Sutton Oglesby, was born to Hugh and Thelma Sutton on July 20, 1949, in the city of Richmond, Virginia. She grew up in the historic Church Hill section of the city and attended public schools where she graduated from Armstrong High School (in 1967). At Armstrong, Marcella was a member of the band and played the clarinet. She “famously” became the first female to lead the band as the Drum Major, a claim of which she remained very proud, and led the band into Richmond Stadium at the annual Armstrong-Walker Football Classic before 40,000 cheering fans. Marcella later attended Virginia State College (now University) and received the B.S. degree in Sociology in 1971.

In fall 1971, she entered Virginia Commonwealth University School of Social Work where she met future husband, Linwood Oglesby. The couple was introduced by mutual friends who still laugh about who introduced who, to whom. Either way, it became a match that endured for over 36 years. They were married in Richmond in 1977, at Good Shepherd Baptist Church, in Richmond, where she had also accepted Christ at an early age. Marcella and Linwood briefly resided in Washington, D.C., before moving to Winston-Salem, N.C. following his graduation from Howard University School of Social Work. In Winston-Salem, they quickly became immersed in the city’s arts and social communities and maintain many friends.

The couple’s two children, Akilah and Malika, were born in Winston-Salem where they resided until 1987. Marcella organized the city’s first Conference on the Black Family, which focused on issues related to parenting and mental health issues in the black community, a topic she remained committed to throughout her career. She was the first black woman to head the Forsyth County Mental Health Adult Services Unit. Later she was Executive Director of the local chapter of the American Cancer Society and a faculty member in the Winston Salem State College (University) Department of Sociology. In 1986, the couple returned to Northern Virginia where Marcella served as a school social worker for Alexandria City Schools.

When her husband became Executive Director of the American Council for the Arts (ACA) in 1991, they relocated to their present home in Maplewood, NJ. Marcella continued her commitment on behalf of the black family and urban youth in several positions at the Urban League of Essex County, New Community Corporation, and public and private schools in Jersey City, Irvington and

Newark. She began the final leg of her professional life as a school social worker with Newark Public Schools. Marcella achieved certifications by the American Council of Social Workers (ACSW); Licensed Professional Clinical Social Worker (LPCSW); Substance Abuse Councilor (SAC); among many.

Her love of working with youth from urban communities was further attested by the many youth she mentored and counseled and the continuing bond she maintained with them. Many attribute her commitment and involvement to their achievements in their own careers and professional lives. Recognizing the difficulties you face in metropolitan areas plagued by social ills, she created the Conference on Grief and Coping in 2011, to help professionals understand the huge costs of undetected depression in youth from violence, bullying, substance abuse, youth suicides and violence, and absence of parents from the home. Professionals from social work, clergy, mental health, mortuary science and education came together to learn and share best practices in working with youth to alleviate the stresses of urban life. Always proud to be a social worker, she never tired of promoting the good social workers do in our communities and families.

Marcella's indomitable, high energy, can-do personality infused everything she did and impacted everyone she touched. She shared her enthusiasm and gifts through her associations with Zonta International and her Virginia State University alumni, among many. She was a member of Metropolitan Baptist Church in Newark and attended Morrow Memorial United Methodist Church in Maplewood for over twenty years. Her boundless energy, love of people and effervescent personality drew people of all ages, diversity, and interests, to her.

Even in her final months and days, when struggling from the ravages of disease, she never, ever, gave up. She was a fighter to the very last day. Marcella's faith in God sustained her and although her battle was a tough one, she never lost faith and she trusted that God would see her through a difficult illness. Her trust in God never wavered and accepted that whatever was in store, He would be there to guide her and be her comfort. After her long journey, she transitioned to be with the Father on Friday, April 4. She will be missed by her husband, Linwood, Executive Director of the Newark Arts Council; her dear daughters, Akilah, now a stylist at Dieci Salon, in Livingston, NJ; Malika, now a pediatrician in Miami, Florida along with her fiancé, Evans; her Mother, Thelma Mallory Sutton and brothers Mandel, Reggie and Derrick (Angie). Also her loving aunts, Ardell (George C.), Mae and Delores (Robert), many nieces, nephews, devoted family in Richmond, VA; and her many, many, friends and colleagues along the way.

Order of Service

PRELUDE *Prelude in D minor* J.S. Bach
Air in A minor

WORDS OF COMFORT AND HOPE

GREETING

OPENING PRAYER Pastor Mary O. Johnson

*HYMN, UMH 474 “Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

PSALM 23 Jean O. Jennings
The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

POEM Rosemary Bittings

SOLO “We Shall Behold Him” Suzanne Ishee

*GOSPEL READING Matthew 22: 29-40 Rev. Chris Heckert

MEDITATION Rev. Chris Heckert

ANTHEM *The Shepherd Psalm* Chancel Choir

BEARING WITNESS Carol Jordan
Dennis Harvey
Regina Adesanya

SOLO “I’m Going Up Yonder” Nadiya Braham

PRAYER OF COMMENDATION

*HYMN “We’ve Come This Far By Faith”

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Air in D major* J.S. Bach

Interment
Dale Cemetery
Midlothian, Virginia

*All are welcomed to a repast in the Fellowship Hall,
immediately following the service.*

MARCELLA'S PRAYER

This is my prayer.....
Linwood, Akilah, Malika, Mom, family and friends you see.....
God saw me getting tired...and a cure was not to be.
So He said just close your eyes and "COME WITH ME".
Now I know that you cried when you saw me pass away.
But I want you to know that only this "Body" is gone.
Cause my "Spirit" will be with you everyday.
So I'll be there for "Every Mile Stone" in your life.
Linwood, I'll continue to "Love You" as I did as your wife.
Akilah I'll be with you thru every "Joy" and "Strife"
And I know that someday you'll
make a lucky man a "Wonderful Wife".
Malika, I'll be there on your "Wedding Day".....
Standing by your Father's side, When he "Gives You Away".
Mom, I love you, so please take your medicine,
cause I'll be there watching you.
And all my other family and friends, "Thank You" for your
kindness and I send You "Prayer" and "Best Wishes" too.
By Rosemary Brooks-Bittings

Acknowledgement

The family wishes to express their sincere thanks and appreciation for all acts of kindness and expressions of sympathy that was shown to them during this time of bereavement.

Professional Services by:
Whigham Funeral Home

580 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Newark, New Jersey 07102
973-622-6872

Carolyn Whigham, Director

