

Celebration of Life



Yvonne J. Thomas

Sunrise

October 23, 1929

Sunset

October 13, 2014

Service

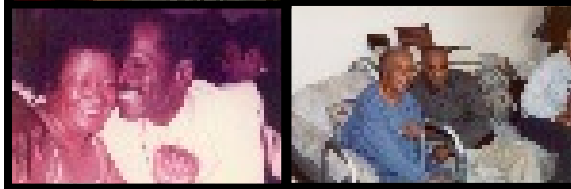
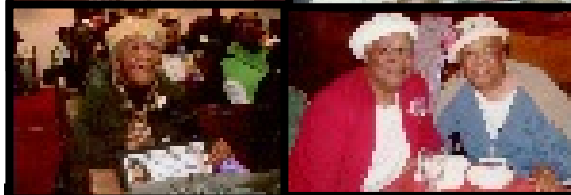
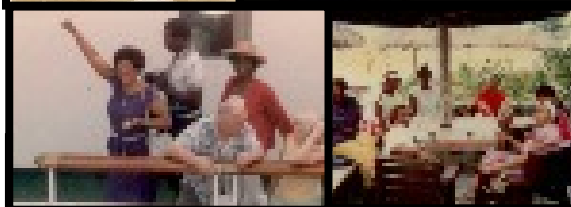
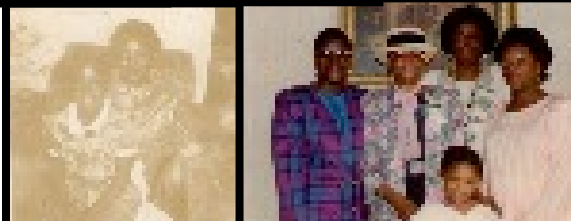
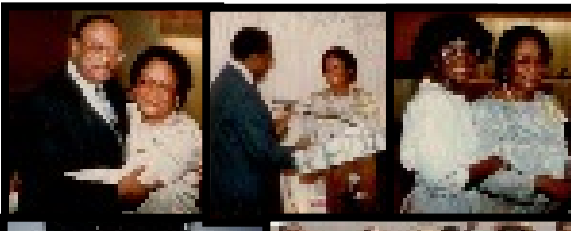
Saturday, October 18, 2014 - 10:00 a.m.

Community Baptist Church

20 Grove Street

North Plainfield, New Jersey 07060

Rev. Karen D. Scott, Officiating



Obituary

Daughter, Wife, Mother, Grandmother, Sister, Aunt, Cousin, Friend, Educator & Child Advocate

Yvonne Josephine (Cooper) Thomas, daughter of the late John L and Josephine V. Cooper was born October 23, 1929 in Plainfield, New Jersey. She departed this life peacefully at home on October 13, 2014. Yvonne started her educational journey by earning her GED as a night student at Plainfield High School. She continued her education at Kean (College) University where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Education in 1976. Shortly thereafter, she obtained her State Department of Education Group Teaching Certificate. Mrs. Thomas continued her Post-Graduate work at Kean University where she received a certification to teach children ages K-12 and a certification for Special Education for the Handicapped.

Yvonne's early years of Christian formation were spent at the historic Mount Olive Baptist Church in Plainfield, New Jersey. As an adult, she joined the Community Baptist Church in North Plainfield, New Jersey shortly after its inception where she remained in membership until her death. It was at Community Baptist that Yvonne first expressed her passion and gift for caring about children as director of the church's Youth Outreach Program. A commitment to children at church became a life-long dedication to the education and welfare of children in the greater Plainfield area for nearly forty years. In addition to serving the children, Yvonne was chairperson of the Church's anniversary and overall Church Historian for thirty-four years.

Yvonne's career path was as successful as her educational goals. She worked for 10 years in the SSYC-Plainfield Day Care where she advanced from Social Services Mobilizer, Health Coordinator to Nursery School Instructor. When the newly funded Head Start program hired staff, they selected Yvonne as it first Educational Coordinator at the SSYC location. Yvonne's commitment to children and Head Start continued until 1986 when she became the Director of the Head Start program in Irvington, New Jersey. During her time in Irvington the program served over 100 families. Eventually, she returned to Plainfield where she became the director of Plainfield Head Start. Yvonne had a creative vision for the Plainfield Head Start program. She realized that Head Start had the capacity to do much good for the children and families of the Plainfield community. In her tenure as director, Yvonne successfully

expanded Plainfield Head Start to four locations, including one center dedicated to the early childhood education of Plainfield's bi-lingual community. Yvonne's innovative hard work resulted in Plainfield Head Start's first 1million dollar operational budget.

Yvonne was a strong proponent of the Head Start philosophy. She secured benefits for employees and parents. Continuing education was a priority. If anyone worked for Head Start, it would not be long before Yvonne would approach him/her to explore their goals and aspirations. She encouraged parent involvement at the local sites and offered parents time and resources to attend Head Start parent conferences. Yvonne was known for developing well-structured programs that served children and families. Yvonne's creativity involved cooperative partnerships with health education organizations. She brought the assets of Plainfield Health Services into the Head Start programs to provide health education for the children, parents and the staff. The educational in-services were invaluable to the staff at Plainfield Head Start and its satellite sites. Collaborations continued as Yvonne spent time brainstorming with other Head Start directors for the betterment of the programs she served. Yvonne was a frequent presenter at Head Start Director's Association meetings and conferences. She retired as director in 1999.

Yvonne was involved with many organizations. She was a member the Board of Directors of the Black United Fund; American Legion Auxiliary #219; Professional Member – NJ Black Educators; New Jersey Educators; New Jersey Education Association; Council for Exceptional Children; Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.; Kenyon Chapter of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; Plainfield NAACP and the Hillside Terrace Block Association and the Black Women's Health Project.

Although her husband Charles and niece, Marla Lynn Scott preceded her in death, Yvonne leaves to mourn her daughters, Marsha Lynn Thomas and the Reverend Andréa Lelia Thomas and her nephew, William Craig Scott, all of Plainfield; grand-nieces, Beverly, Sharelle and Imani; sister, Mrs. Barbara G. Johnson of Plainfield; cousin, Mrs. Mildred Winnegan of Hampton, Virginia; sister-in-law, Mrs. Katie Luck of Plainfield; brothers-in-law, Mr. Calvin Smith of Plainfield and Mr. William Scott of Elizabeth along with a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, friends and colleagues. Her legacy as an educator and advocate for children came from the simple belief that; *“Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him.” Psalm 127:3*

Order of Service

Organ Prelude

Processional

Prayer of Comfort

*Evangelist Sharon D. Doyle, Overseer,
The Church of God and Saints of Christ Rahway, NJ*

Scripture Reading

*The Reverend Karen D. Scott,
Community Baptist Church, North Plainfield, NJ
Old Testament – Psalm 127*

*The Reverend Tracy A. Duncan,
St. Matthew United Methodist Church, Treose, Pa.
New Testament – I Corinthians 15:50-58*

Duet

*Mrs. Marine Darby,
Faith Fellowship World Outreach Ministries, South Amboy
&
Mrs. Lucille Alston, Rose of Sharon Community Church,
Plainfield, NJ*

Reflections

*The Reverend Karen D. Scott,
Community Baptist Church, North Plainfield, NJ*

Acknowledgements and Obituary

*Mrs. Patricia Harmon, Community Baptist Church, North Plainfield,
NJ*

Solo

*Jacob Johnson, Jr.
Greater Shiloh Baptist Church, Easton, PA*

Eulogy

*The Rev. James Michael Robinson, Sr.,
Senior Pastor, Community Baptist Church
North Plainfield, NJ*

Recessional

Internment

Hillside Cemetery, Scotch Plains, NJ

Repast

*Community Baptist Church,
20 Grove Street, North Plainfield, NJ*

Pallbearers

Members of Community Baptist, Family Members and Friends



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 wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation
the many expressions of love, concern and kindness shown to
their family during this hour of bereavement.*

May God Bless and Keep You!

Professional Services Provided By

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