

Celebration of Life

Shelma G. Gumbis

Sunrise: April 17, 1940

Sunset: August 29, 2026

Friday, September 11, 2026

Viewing: 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Service: 11:00 AM

Grace United Methodist Church of St. Albans

200-08 Murdock Avenue, St. Albans, NY 11412

Order of Service

Liturgist..... Sis. Hazel McIntosh
Organ PreludeRev. Patrick G. Perrin
Processional Hymn # 140, Great is Thy Faithfulness
Congregation
Greetings.....Rev. Dr. Hugh B. Hamilton
Prayer of Comfort Sis. Hazel McIntosh
Hymn of Comfort..... # 369 Blessed Assurance
Congregation
Scripture Readings:
Old Testament: Psalm 121:1-8..... Sis. Hazel McIntosh
Gospel: John 14:1-6Rev. Dr. Hugh B. Hamilton
Musical Selection.....Aldersgate Choir
Tributes & Reflections (2 minutes, please).....Valerie Weekes
Andria Martin
Sis. Cynthia Reid
Sis. Joann White
Acknowledgment & Reflection..... Paul Gumbs / Sean Gumbs
Reading of Obituary.....Karen Gumbs
Musical Selection.....# 585 This Little Light of Mine (Gospel)
Congregation
Sermon/Homily.....Rev. Dr. Hugh B. Hamilton
Closing Prayers Led by Rev. Dr. Hugh B. Hamilton
Apostle Creed
Commendation
Thanksgiving
Lord's Prayer
Remarks Funeral Director
BenedictionRev. Dr. Hugh B. Hamilton
Recessional Hymn # 733 Marching to Zion
Congregation

Interment
Nassau Knolls Cemetery

Obituary

Thelma G. Gumbs, daughter of Pearline and Henderson Hanley, was born in Nevis, British West Indies on April 17, 1940. After living with a progressive illness for many years, Thelma peacefully passed away at home on August 29, 2026.

Thelma attended both primary and high school in Nevis. She excelled in her studies and upon graduating became a primary school teacher. Thelma loved teaching but felt a calling to be of service in a different way — she aspired to be a nurse. With the blessing and support of her parents, Thelma emigrated from Nevis to Manchester, England in the late 1950s around the age of eighteen. She received her Nursing Diploma from the School of Nursing at Withington Hospital, where she was awarded a Silver Medal for her achievements. Later in 1963, Thelma received her Midwifery Diploma from the School of Midwifery at Dudley Road Hospital in Birmingham, England and became a state certified midwife. She was Nursing Supervisor of the Maternity Block at Dudley Road Hospital for three years.

Thelma did have a life outside of school and work while in Birmingham, England. She cultivated deep and meaningful life-long friendships with many strong women who would later become dear godmothers to her children. There was also a special gentleman, Gilbert F. Gumbs, from Nevis/St. Kitts who had emigrated to England sometime after Thelma. Gilbert worked on the railway and later worked in finance at a car manufacturing firm. They married in 1962 — they were regarded by family and friends as quite the power couple! In 1966 they decided to forge an entirely new path and in December 1966, Thelma, Gilbert and young daughter Karen left England aboard the RMS Queen Elizabeth for the United States to settle in Queens, New York. Within two years, Paul was born and Sean was born two years later.

After Thelma earned her New York State nursing credentials, she was a Staff Nurse in the Pediatrics nursing department at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, NY for a few years. In 1969, Thelma found a professional home at Queens Hospital Center (formerly Queens General Hospital) and she worked there until she retired in 2000. She held many roles at QHC over her 31 years of service: Staff Nurse, Assistant Head Nurse in the Surgery Department, Supervisor and Instructor of Nursing Staff Development, Quality Assurance Coordinator, and the role she held at retirement — Sr. Associate Director of Quality Management.

Thelma was a lover of learning; she always sought to further her education. While working full-time with a husband and three children she earned her Bachelor of Science in Community Health Education and Health Care Management from St. Francis College in Brooklyn, NY in 1977. In 1980 she earned her Master of Science in Community Health from Hunter College in New York, NY.

Thelma loved her faith and her church home at Grace United Methodist Church of St. Albans. An active member since the 1980s, she was not only a parishioner but was also a leader helping to establish robust health and wellness programs in the community. Thelma was highly respected in both her professional and personal life. She was a remarkable woman with remarkable presence — stately, confident, yet down-home at the same time. People were drawn to Thelma for her generous nature and giving spirit. She embraced the importance of family, friends and faith all throughout her wonderful life.

Most of you may know that Thelma was ill for quite a while. She lived with her illness with grit and with grace even after losing her beloved husband of 54 years in 2016. Thelma was blessed with wonderful, committed caregivers — also known as “The Ladies”. These angels loved and provided such extraordinary care for Thelma, they became her family. They each had their own endearing name for her: Ma Gumbs, Gumbszelle, Gumbsie, Sweetie Pie, to name a few.

Thelma leaves behind to celebrate her life: three children: Karen, Paul and Sean, Sean’s wife Melissa and their two children, Kennan and Miles; her siblings: Pertha Grant, Simoneta Drew, St. Clair Hanley, Melvin Hanley, Valerie Weekes, Beverly Norford and Kenneth Hanley. In addition, there are countless nieces, nephews, godchildren, “chosen” family and friends, and of course, her church family, to remember her with love and affection.

Dearest Family and Friends, thank you to all who called, visited and prayed with Mom during her illness. Thank you for being here with us today. Your love and prayers keep us lifted.



***Thelma G. Gumbs** was a dedicated member of Grace United Methodist Church of St. Albans for over 40 years, and the Gumbs children are proud of the ongoing use of the multi-purpose hall dedicated in honor of our parents to support youth services in the Community. Our parents were steadfast believers in the transformative power of education and would be proud to know that the Church is being served in their memory. In lieu of flowers or other gifts to the family, please donate to GUMC.*

Donations may be made to:

*Grace United Methodist Church of St. Albans
200-08 Murdock Avenue, St. Albans, NY 11412*

Thank you.

Professional Services Provided By:

Roy L. Gilmore's Funeral Home, Inc.

Angela Gilmore-Manning, *President*

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