

Celebrating
THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF

mother
ADA JEAN
KUYKENDALL

DECEMBER 4, 1929 - AUGUST 9, 2026

VISITATION:

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2026 - 6:00 - 8:00PM

EMMANUEL C.O.G.I.C
1537 W. BUCKEYE ROAD, PHOENIX, AZ

HOMEGOING SERVICE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2026

VIEWING: 9:00AM - 10:00AM

SERVICE: 10:00AM

FIRST INSTITUTIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH
1141 E. JEFFERSON STREET, PHOENIX, AZ 85034

ORDER OF SERVICE

Pastor Wesley Relf, Senior Pastor Rehoboth COGIC, Officiating

Musical Prelude

Processional Clergy and Family

Prayer of Comfort Pastor Desmond Sweet
Emmanuel COGIC

Old Testament Scripture..... Elder Bruce Relf
Rehoboth COGIC

New Testament Scripture Pastor Ezrel McCowan
Shekinah Tabernacle COGIC

Musical Selection..... Choir

Remarks Arizona COGIC Women's Dept District Missy Gwendolyn Relf
Rehoboth COGIC
Marshal Sarah Williams
Emmanuel COGIC
Marshal Christine Logan
Antioch COGIC
Mother Emma J. Bowen
Supervisor of Women
Arizona Jurisdiction COGIC

Remarks From Clergy Rev. Levada Coker
1st Institutional Baptist Church
Pastor Lawrence Powell
Agape Family Worship Center
Supt. Felton E. King Emeritus
Emmanuel COGIC
Supt. Darrell Grissum
Lilly of the Valley COGIC

Musical Selection.....Choir

Special Remarks (From Her Daughters In Christ).....Dr. Katherine Bohanan
Evangelist Angela Tibbs

Remarks (2 Minutes Please)

Reflections From Family.....Sister Jessika Baker
Sister Annette Boykins
Dr. Jean Tease
Sister Lana Kemp

Reading of the Obituary (Silently)

Resolutions.....Dr. Del Bromell

Remarks and Presentation of our Bishop.....Bishop Earl L. Newton
Prelate Nigeria Kingdom Life Jurisdiction (COGIC)

Special Remarks.....Bishop Harvey T. Young Sr.
Prelate Arizona Jurisdiction (COGIC)

Selection.....Supt. Gregory Dansby
Holy Temple COGIC

Eulogy.....Bishop Designate Jonathan E. Logan
Uganda East Africa Jurisdiction (COGIC)

Benediction.....Bishop Designate Jonathan E. Logan

Recessional.....“Let The Church Say Amen”Clergy and Family

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Eric Kemp

Elder Ronald Relf

PALLBEARERS

Christopher Romero, Jr.

Christian Romero

Anthony Munoz

Winston Tease, Jr.

Martin Tease

Kevin Bonam

Lundon Powell-Relf

Gerald Thigpen

ENTOMBMENT

Greenwood Memory Cemetery

2300 West Van Buren Street – Phoenix, Arizona 85009

Precious







The Era





Early Days



OBITUARY

A Life Rooted in Faith, Family, and Service



Rooted in Faith and Family

Ada Jean Kuykendall was born on December 4, 1929, in San Francisco, California, to Novella Taylor and Charles Cox. From the age of eighteen months, she was lovingly raised by her grandparents, Bishop J. W. Taylor and Mother Ada Taylor. She began her education at Booker T. Washington Elementary School.

Growing up in the Taylor home, Jean witnessed firsthand the meaning of salvation through the faithful example of “Papa” and “Mama” Taylor. She was saved and baptized at an early age and enjoyed traveling with her grandparents throughout the Arizona and New Mexico Jurisdiction, listening as Bishop and Mother Taylor preached, taught the gospel, and helped build churches.

During her childhood, Ada Jean met many dignitaries who stayed in the Taylor home, including numerous State Overseers, as they were called at that time. Among them were “Cousin Sam,” Bishop Samuel Crouch; Bishop S. V. Brooks; Bishop O. M. Kelly; Bishop J. O. Patterson, Sr.; Bishop L. H. Ford; Dr. Arenia Mallory; and Bishop Charles H. Mason, founder of the Church of God in Christ (COGIC). She especially enjoyed attending the National Convocation in Memphis, Tennessee.

After elementary school, Bishop Taylor sent Jean to Lexington, Mississippi, to attend Saints Academy, a COGIC religious campus. As a model student, Ada Jean often traveled with Dr. Mallory to Memphis to help highlight the school and recruit other students. One of Jean’s favorite memories of Saints Academy was the May Day celebration. She never forgot that once the train reached the Mason-Dixon Line, she was required to give up her seat and sit elsewhere on the train.

After Saints Academy, Ada Jean went to live with her uncle and aunt, Bishop W. J. Taylor and Flossie Taylor, in Los Angeles, California. There, she attended Grace Memorial COGIC, where her uncle served as pastor. She remembered the first radio service and the late Sunday night musicals held at Grace Memorial, where many gospel artists were discovered. After graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School, she returned to Phoenix and continued her education at Arizona State College, now Arizona State University.

Family, Marriage, and Public Service

In 1949, Ada Jean Taylor met and married Delmar R. Boykins, and together they moved to Waco, Texas. She helped her husband in the family business, Boykins Funeral Home. To this union, three children were born: the late Delmar R. Boykins Jr., Lana D. Boykins, and Oswald R. Boykins.

In the late 1950s, she returned to Phoenix, Arizona. Ada Jean loved her children deeply and did whatever was necessary to help them succeed. Years after her own experience in the funeral business in Texas, she proudly supported Ozzie as he established his own mortuary business.

Ada Jean later met and married Carl Sims in Phoenix. Together, they made a meaningful impact in the West Valley through fundraising, door-to-door outreach, and campaigning. Carl became one of the first Black legislators in Arizona, serving alongside Hazel B. Daniels in the early 1950s. Ada Jean enjoyed public service and held various positions in state government. Carl passed away in 1968.

As one of the eldest Taylor cousins, Ada Jean held a special place in the family. Whenever relatives came to Phoenix from California or Tucson, they first greeted their grandparents, Bishop J. W. Taylor and Mother Ada Taylor; their next stop was always Cousin Jean's home.

A Life of Grace and Hospitality

Ada Jean later met the love of her life, Edward T. Kuykendall, Sr. They were married for more than 36 years, until his passing in 2004. Ed worked for the Federal Housing Administration, and his career allowed them to live in different parts of the country before they eventually returned to Phoenix, where he retired.

Ada Jean was very proud of her husband and was deeply honored when they received an invitation to President Richard Nixon's Inaugural Ball. Having been actively involved in politics and public service herself, Jean understood what the invitation represented. For Jean and Ed, it reflected their shared commitment to public service and what they had accomplished together in that era.

Ada Jean was known for her style and elegance, qualities that were reflected in the way she entertained. She was the ultimate hostess and an exceptional cook who could prepare just about anything. Her gatherings were thoughtfully planned and impeccably presented, often with beautiful linens, fine China, Waterford crystal, and silver flatware. An invitation to one of Jean's dinners or parties was considered a special honor because guests knew the food, atmosphere, and hospitality would be unforgettable.

Her cousin Ida Mae Steele once called upon those talents when Rosa Parks was the honored guest at a special church event and needed a vegetarian meal. In true Ada Jean fashion, Jean rose to the occasion, preparing a meal worthy of the guest and the moment. For a woman who years earlier had experienced having to give up her own seat on a train, the opportunity held a significance all its own.

When Rev. James Cleveland came to Phoenix and wanted something other than hotel food, he called Ozzie with a simple request: he wanted some grits. Without hesitation, Ozzie replied, "You want my mother's grits." Jean made sure he got them. That was simply her way.

Beginning in the early 2000s, Jean, with the help of her daughter Lana, hosted the annual Taylor family Thanksgiving dinner at the Taylor home. In keeping with her love of tradition and elegant entertaining, she set the table with her grandparents' China, linens, and other treasured pieces, bringing generations of the Taylor family together around a table filled with family history.

A Life of Faithful Service

Although her life was full, Ada Jean sensed that something was missing. After previously attending Seventh-day Adventist and Methodist churches, she ultimately returned to her roots, rededicating her life to God and to COGIC.



With renewed faith and purpose, Ada Jean became deeply committed to her church and community. Her love for God, family, and service remained at the center of her life. The lessons instilled by her grandparents, along with her education, travels, and life experiences, prepared her for what would become many years of faithful service. Jean carried herself with a grace, strength, and dignity that became hallmarks of her life.

Ada Jean wasted no time becoming actively involved at Emmanuel COGIC, where Bishop Felton King served as her pastor. In many ways, her life had come full circle. Years earlier, she had served as the flower girl at Bishop King's wedding.

She was licensed as a missionary and served as Jurisdictional Secretary for the State of Arizona under Bishop King and the late Bishop Leroy Anderson. Jean was honored by the General Secretary of COGIC for her outstanding service in that role. When Bishop Anderson and his family moved from New York to Phoenix, they often looked to Ada Jean for guidance and support as they settled into their new community. From that time, a close friendship grew and continued throughout their lives.

Jean was also a member of the J. W. Taylor Scholarship Committee and served in public relations for the Women's Department of the Arizona Jurisdiction of COGIC. As a member of the Charles Harrison Mason Historical Society, she shared the rich history of COGIC and the Taylor family. Her strong belief in education was also reflected in her work recruiting students for Oral Roberts University's "Give Me a Chance" ministry.

Jean became a prominent member of the Arizona Jurisdiction and was affectionately known as one of the "Golden Girls," alongside Sister Sylvia Colter and Supervisor Emma J. Bowen. She treasured time with her spiritual sisters, whether they were talking on the phone, sharing a meal, attending church, or traveling to conventions.

A Beloved Church Mother

She was a mother figure to many, including young people, church members, ministers, pastors, and bishops. Mother Kuykendall remained a faithful member of Emmanuel COGIC, attending regularly until she could no longer drive. When Jean began staying with her daughter Lana on weekends, she attended Antioch COGIC with her. After moving in with Lana full-time, Antioch became her church home. Although Emmanuel remained dear to her heart, she felt led to join Antioch COGIC under the leadership of Pastor Jonathan Logan and Lady Christine Logan, who warmly welcomed and embraced her as a member. She dearly loved Pastor and Lady Logan and the entire Antioch family.

Ada Jean Kuykendall was preceded in death by her parents, Novella Taylor Brewer and Charles Cox; her grandparents, Bishop J. W. and Mother Ada Taylor, who raised her from the age of 1½; her son, Delmar Reginald Boykins Jr.; her sisters, Rosie Hopper, Charles Etta Dunn, Matha King, and Lily Mae Johnson; and her brothers, Willie Cox and Alonzo Brewer.

Ada Jean Kuykendall leaves to mourn her passing and cherish her memory: her daughter, Lana D. (James) Kemp; her son, Oswald R. (Lurennia) Boykins; her stepdaughters, Philomena (Lester) Slater and Mildred (Williams) Brooks; her grandchildren, Christopher (Estelle) Romero, Danita (Steve) Moore, Elizabeth (Andre) Brown, Michon Cherry-Hopkins, Annette Jaclyn Boykins, Jessika (Lee) Baker, and Terri Thompson-Boykins; her great-grandchildren, Christopher Romero Jr., Christian Romero, Carson Romero, Caden Romero, Leah Hopkins, and Kennedy Baker; and a host of members of the Taylor, Kemp, Cox, and Relf families, other beloved relatives, and dear friends.

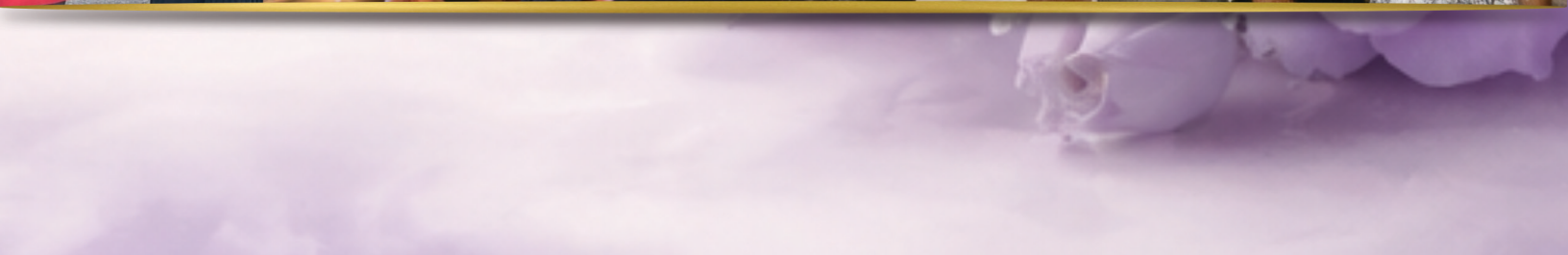
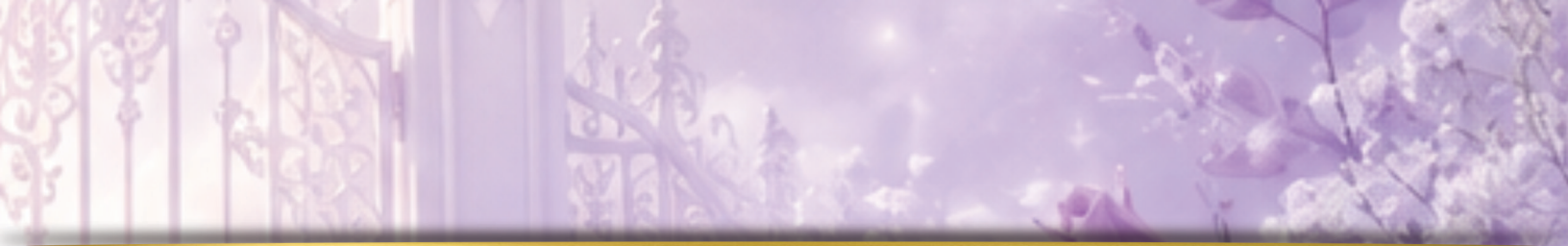
The Golden Girls

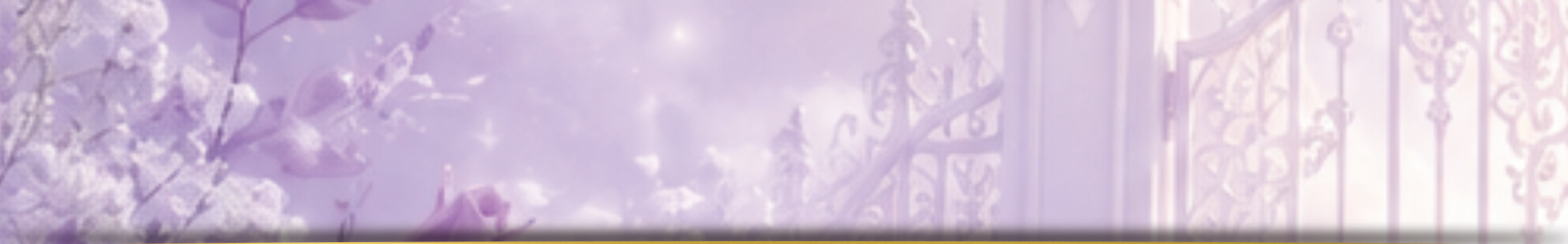


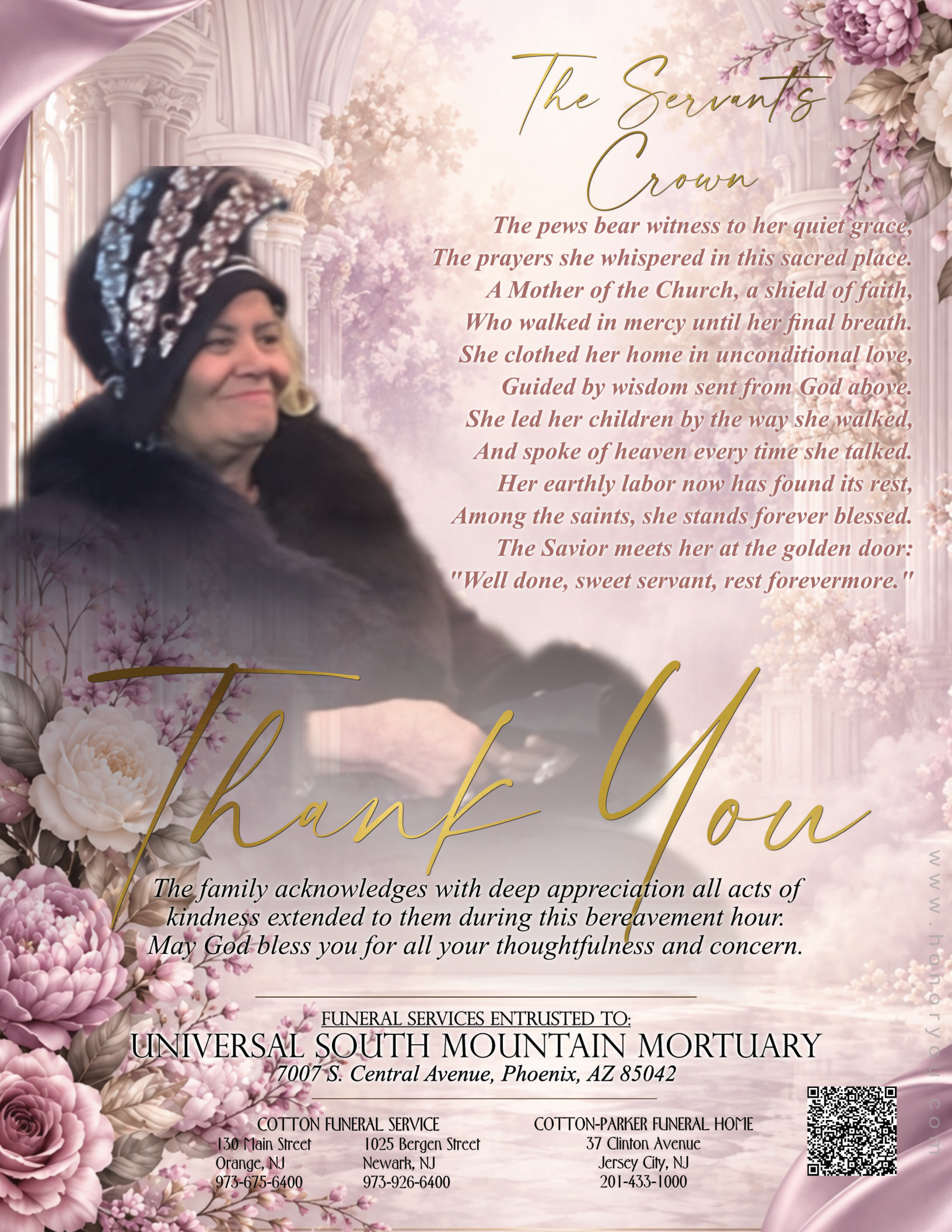
Precious Memories











The Servant's Crown

*The pews bear witness to her quiet grace,
The prayers she whispered in this sacred place.*

*A Mother of the Church, a shield of faith,
Who walked in mercy until her final breath.*

*She clothed her home in unconditional love,
Guided by wisdom sent from God above.*

*She led her children by the way she walked,
And spoke of heaven every time she talked.*

*Her earthly labor now has found its rest,
Among the saints, she stands forever blessed.*

*The Savior meets her at the golden door:
"Well done, sweet servant, rest forevermore."*

Thank You

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

FUNERAL SERVICES ENTRUSTED TO:
UNIVERSAL SOUTH MOUNTAIN MORTUARY
7007 S. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85042

COTTON FUNERAL SERVICE
130 Main Street
Orange, NJ
973-675-6400

1025 Bergen Street
Newark, NJ
973-926-6400

COTTON-PARKER FUNERAL HOME
37 Clinton Avenue
Jersey City, NJ
201-433-1000

