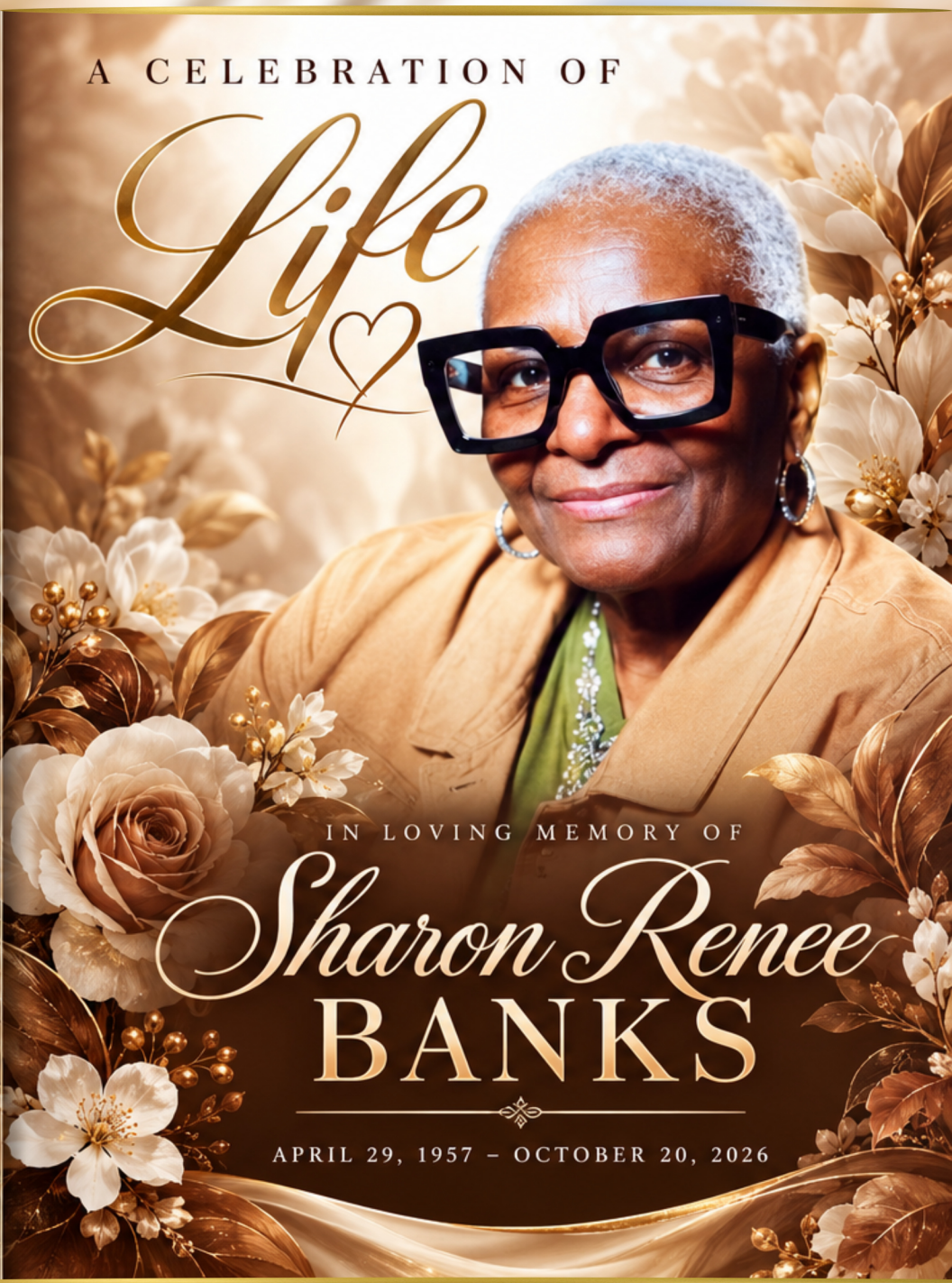
A CELEBRATION OF
Life
IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Sharon Renee
BANKS
APRIL 29, 1957 – OCTOBER 20, 2026

# HER LIFE & LEGACY

Sharon Renee Banks was born on April 29, 1957, to the late Jean and James Porter. She was raised in Newark, New Jersey, alongside her four siblings, where she experienced the rich diversity of city life and developed the values of family, friendship, and community that would remain with her throughout her life.

Affectionately known to her family and close friends as "Ree," she was a loving, devoted mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, and friend. She attended West Side High School in Newark and graduated in 1975. During those years, she formed many cherished friendships, some of which lasted a lifetime.

Sharon was a hardworking and dedicated employee. For 25 years, she worked as a manager at Muriel's Dress Shop on Main Street in Orange, New Jersey, where she was well known and respected.

Sharon had a genuine love for life and knew how to enjoy it! She delighted in laughter, family gatherings, shopping, dining out, and creating wonderful memories with the people she loved. Anyone who knew her knew she especially enjoyed a good meal!

Seafood, particularly crab legs, was among her absolute favorites. She loved visiting restaurants such as Cajun Crabs in North Plainfield and Hook & Reel Cajun Seafood in Union, New Jersey. She also enjoyed dining at Carrabba's in Green Brook. With her hearty appetite and appreciation for good food, Harold's New York Deli was another favorite. Sharing a delicious meal with family and friends was one of the many simple pleasures that brought her happiness.

Sharon also enjoyed the friendships she developed with her neighbors in the apartment building where she lived. She got along well with the other residents and considered many of them an extended family. They appreciated her and elected her Secretary of the Tenant Association. She also worked in the building's security department, where she helped keep residents safe.

Although our hearts are saddened by her passing, we find great comfort in the promises recorded in God's Word. At Matthew 5:5, Jesus said: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Similarly, Psalm 37:29 assures us: "The righteous will possess the earth, And they will live forever on it."

These beautiful promises bring us comfort and hope. We look forward with confidence to the fulfillment of God's promise of a resurrection, when death and sorrow will be things of the past, and we will have the wonderful opportunity to welcome our loved ones back to life.

During her later years, Sharon developed a deeper appreciation for God's Word and the promises it contains. Her growing faith led her to baptism and membership in the Revival Temple Center of Deliverance, reflecting how important her spiritual life had become to her.

Sharon was preceded in death by her beloved parents, Jean and James Porter; her brother, Jermaine Porter; her grandmother, Mary Banks; and her grandfather, William Banks.

She leaves to cherish her precious memory her beloved daughter, Shannon Renee Wellington Banks and June Kinley Burks; her granddaughter, Sarai McKinley Burks; her sister, Stephanie Maxwell, and brother-in-law, Timothy Maxwell; her brother, William Banks, and sister-in-law, Anna Jones; her brother, McClinton Spruill; her aunt, Joanna Arnold; and a host of other loving aunts, cousins, relatives, and dear friends whose lives were touched by her.

Sharon Renee Banks will be deeply missed, but she will never be forgotten. Her warm smile, hearty laughter, love of good food, and devotion to those she held dear will remain treasured memories in the hearts of everyone who knew her.

While we mourn her passing, we also celebrate the life she lived, the love she shared, and the beautiful memories she leaves behind.

Rest peacefully, dear Ree. You were deeply loved, and we look forward to the day when we can welcome you back with open arms.

Until we meet again, you will forever remain in our hearts.

## ORDER OF SERVICE

Thursday, October 29, 2026, at 6:00 pm

Cotton Funeral Services
1025 Bergen St. Newark, NJ 07112

Bishop Gregory Woods, Officiating Minister

Musician: Dennis Bines

Soloist: Valerie Harp

Viewing 5:00pm to 6:00pm
Service 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Crematory
Evergreen Cemetery & Crematory
1137 N Broad St., Hillside, NJ 07205

## A Letter to My Mother

I thank you, Mommy, for all that you've done for me and Sarai. Thank you for the laughs and for the tears.

I don't know how I'm going to get through this, but I will. The deep pain will pass, the calls of condolences will fade, but the love we have for each other never will.

You were more than my mother; you were my friend. I could be myself with you. You allowed me to express myself, and for that I thank you.

When I think of the bond you and Sarai have, it makes my heart so full of emotions, knowing that she will never see your smile again or physically feel your loving embrace.

Your favorite color is green, so I told Sarai that you are all around us when she sees green or see the leaves on a tree or fresh-cut grass on a sunny day.

Please remember that gammy is spiritually with you, and so is her love.

I love and miss you, Ma.

— Forever heartbroken —

# Acknowledgements

***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!***

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