

A portrait of an elderly African American woman, Catherine L. Wright, smiling. She is wearing a black beret and a dark pinstriped jacket over a white collared shirt. The background is a light green with large white daisies.

Celebration of Victory

Catherine L. Wright

April 29, 1926 - August 29, 2019

Memorial Service

Saturday, September 7, 2019 - 11:00 a.m

10:00-11:00 Visitation

Elmwood United Presbyterian Church

135 Elmwood Ave., East Orange, NJ 07018

Officiating: Rev Maria Crompton

Obituary

Catherine Lee Wright, (also known as Nanas and Suky) 93, of South Orange, New Jersey by way of Montclair, New Jersey, passed away on August 29, 2019 surrounded by family and friends. Catherine was the daughter of John and Retenner Lee was born on April 29, 1926 in Raleigh, North Carolina. She was predeceased by her husband, Charles Wright, Sr. and sons Charles Wright, Jr. and Lonnie Wright.

Catherine began her studies in a one room schoolhouse and later graduated Valedictorian from Atkins High School in Winston Salem, North Carolina, in 1945. She continued her education at Winston Salem State University (formerly known as Teachers College), and later attended Essex County College, in Newark, NJ. She went on to become a nurse and worked for the Essex County Hospital Center (Overbrook), where she retired after many years of service. She also worked as a private duty nurse throughout her storied career in healthcare.

You could never count the number of young people who called her 'Nanas'. It was a name given to her by her grandchild, Jazmine, but adopted by every young person who knew her. There was no favor too big, or too small, that she would not honor for someone she loved.

For over fifty years she was a member of Union Baptist Church in Montclair, NJ, where she served on the Nurses Ministry.

When we say Matriarch, Catherine was truly the matriarch of her family. She raised two sets of children; her biological children, and then her grandsons; Jimmy, Reggie and Dwight Branch. Catherine even returned to work after retirement age, in order to provide for her family. She was the only person in this world that truly understood her children and their friends. Her finger rested on the pulse of everything around her.

Catherine Wright could lift your chin no matter how low it had fallen with some quip, or another. She always had a joke or a funny aside and she sensed exactly when it was needed. Her love extended far and wide. Catherine Wright was a saint, and you would be hard pressed to find any one person who would disagree with that.

Nanas was the world to Jaz, and it was mutual. Jaz was like her child and she intervened on more than one occasion on Jaz's behalf. The grandsons she raised remained loyal and loving. They took care of her the way they should have, as their grandmother-mother had taken care of them. We say that people are never truly gone when they pass, and this is especially true for Catherine. Her spirit, and her stories will live on in the countless lives she touched, especially in those closest to her.

She leaves to celebrate her life her children, Gary D. Lee, Rosemary Wright, Reginald E. Lee (Dorothy), Sheila Andrews, and Johanna Wright, along with 12 grandchildren, 18 great grandchildren, and three great-great grandchildren. Catherine also leaves to celebrate her life, Stacey and Joseph Townsend, John Amos, her very special nieces/daughters Brenda Frazier, and Sylvia Douthit, and her very dear friend Jean Coehlo, and her prayer partner Anita Mack.

While at her rehabilitation center, in the weeks before her passing, Catherine became known as the Queen. She had such charisma, even in her final days, that everyone wanted to be around her. Her room was always full. We will always remember her giant heart, her generous spirit, her infectious smile and her unforgettable stories. She was the GRIOT!!

Order of Service

Prelude

Words of Welcome.....Rev. Crompton

Prayer of Comfort.....Elder Anita Mack

Opening Selection.....EUPC Choir

Scripture Readings

Old Testament - Psalm 23Dr. Cheryl Frazier

New Testament - John 14: 1-6..... Anntoinette Lee McEntyre

Musical Selection.....EUPC Choir

Remarks/Family Tribute.....John A. Amos
Jazmine Wright
Johanna Lee Wright

Acknowledgement of Resolutions.....Dr. Tonya Cook

Musical Solo - His Eye Is On The Sparrow.....Steve Lovell

Reflections.....Two Minutes!!

Reading of Obituary.....Kendal Whitlock

Musical Selection.....EUPC Choir

Eulogy.....Rev. Crompton

Benediction

Reverend Maria Crompton, M.Div
Elmwood United Presbyterian Church

Footprints

One night a woman had a dream. She dreamed she was walking along the beach with the LORD. Across the sky flashed scenes from her life. For each scene, she noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonged to her, and the other to the LORD. When the last scene of her life flashed before her, she looked back at the footprints in the sand. She noticed that many times along the path of her life there was only one set of footprints. She also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in her life. This really bothered her and she questioned the LORD about it. "LORD, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me." The LORD replied, "My precious, precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

*In Lieu of Flowers: Please send contributions
to: in the name of Catherine Wright
Elmwood United Presbyterian Church
Scholarship Fund
135 Elmwood Ave, East Orange, NJ 07018*

Acknowledgement

The family of **Catherine Wright** wishes to extend our sincere gratitude for all acts of kindness and sympathy shown to us at our time of bereavement. God bless you all for your thoughtfulness and concern.

Services Entrusted to:

MARTIN'S HOME FOR SERVICE

48 Elm Street • Montclair, NJ

