

Dear Grandma,  
 I have a lot to say that's still left unsaid.  
 It's so hard for me to wrap this around my head.  
 Since now that you aren't around, since now that you are not here.  
 You really are gone so I'll pour out this letter,  
 To the biggest and greatest grandmother I had ever.  
 I remember all she's done for me as I reminisce and sit.  
 Grandma would sometimes pick me up from school and I'd come home and have a snack.  
 I would sit and tell her about my day.  
 Grandma always had my back.  
 Homework was always done at the table.  
 Every time I came home from school,  
 Grandma didn't play. She had rules!!!!  
 Grandma used to cook my favorite meals!!!  
 But having those peanut butter and jelly thou, was the real deal.  
 Grandma was a woman of hidden talents.  
 I'm not sure how she was able to find balance.  
 Unconditionally love and so much more.  
 Oh how I love this woman I surely adore.  
 My grandma was an escape.  
 A getaway especially for me.  
 She would tell me to just let it go and let it be.  
 I'll see her later one day.  
 Hopefully not too soon.  
 I'll visit you when I can and have talks at your tomb.  
 My grandma is not suffering and feels no pain!!!  
 There are a lot of things I can say my grandmother did for me.  
 There is one thing I can say I never questioned.  
 My grandmother had unconditional love for me.  
 And that's what made her love so genuine and sweet.  
 I love my grandma with all my heart.  
 Now I can finally be at peace knowing that she is in a better place and is set FREE!!!!

### *In Appreciation*

*The family wishes to acknowledge with deep and sincere appreciation the many kind words said, expressions of sympathy, prayers of concern, and loving gestures extended to them during our time of bereavement. Whatever you did to console our hearts, we genuinely thank you.*


***In lieu of monetary donations, we ask that you give a Tribute Gift to the Parkinson's Foundation, [www.Parkinson.org](http://www.Parkinson.org), in memory of Bernice Francis.***

#### **Professional Services Provided By**

**COTTON FUNERAL SERVICE**  
 130 Main Street  
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 973-675-6400

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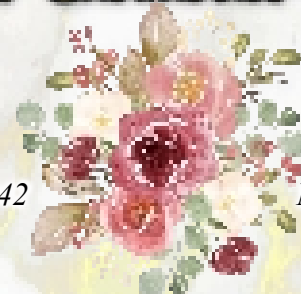
## *The Celebration of the Life of*



## *Bernice Edwards-Francis*

*Sunrise*  
 September 9, 1942

*Sunset*  
 November 15, 2019



### *Service*

*Monday, December 2, 2019 - 11:00 a.m.*

**Union Chapel AME Church**  
 209 Wainwright Ave. • Newark, New Jersey  
**Pastor Anthony Mitchell, Sr., Officiating**

# Legacy of Love

*A wife, a mother, a grandma too,  
This is the legacy we have from you.  
You taught us love and how to fight,  
You gave us strength, you gave us might.  
A stronger person would be hard to find,  
And in your heart, you were always kind.  
You fought for us all in one way or another,  
Not just as a wife not just as a mother.  
For all of us you gave your best,  
Now the time has come for you to rest.  
So go in peace, you've earned your sleep,  
Your love in our hearts, we'll eternally keep*

*(Author Unknown)*



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Processional .....Clergy & Family  
 Opening Song.....Minister Steven Hill  
 Prayer of Comfort .....Rev. Laymah Cisco  
 Holy Scripture  
     Old Testament .....Tiffany Cunningham  
         Ecclesiastes 3: 1-4  
     A Reading from the Book of Wisdom... Shayla Edwards  
         Chapter 3: 1-9  
     New Testament.....Darian Rouse  
         John 14: 1-4  
  
 Selection .....Minister Steven Hill  
 Poem.....Tiarra Edwards  
 Acknowledgements & Resolutions .....Patricia N. Smith  
 Selection .....Minister Steven Hill  
 Tribute .....Dorinda Francis-McKenzie & Dorine Francis  
 Reflection & Remarks.....Family & Friends  
     (2 minutes please)  
 Selection .....Minister Steven Hill  
 Eulogy .....Rev. Anthony Mitchell, Sr.  
 Viewing  
 Recessional

**INTERMENT**  
*Evergreen Cemetery*  
*1137 North Broad Street*  
*Hillside, NJ 07205*

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The sunrise of **Bernice** began on September 9, 1942, in Montclair, NJ. Bernice was the third-born child of the late Jonah Edwards and Ada Maynard Edwards.

A product of the Newark Public School System, Bernice attended elementary school at Morton Street School and middle school at Avon Avenue School. She then attended and graduated from Weequahic High School in 1960. For her post-secondary education, Bernice attended William Paterson University, formerly known as Paterson State Teachers College, for two years before she was awarded an opportunity to pursue a career in Social Work.

Bernice joined the Maternity and Infant Care (MIC) Department at the University of Medicine and Dentistry Hospital in the Martland Building in 1966. Although her title was limited to Social Worker, Bernice was a second-mother, nurse, mentor, and counselor for countless teenage and young adult mothers and their babies. Bernice worked tirelessly for 30 years until her retirement from MIC in the Spring of 1996.

Although Bernice did not return to college, she was an advocate of education and self-development. Bernice was also a jack of many trades. In 1986, Bernice trained to become a Certified Foster Parent where from time to time she served as an in-home child-care provider in addition to her Social Work profession. Bernice also became a certified Phlebotomist in 1990 and worked part-time at Cornell Care & Rehabilitation Center in Union, NJ. In 1995, Bernice participated in the Upward Bound College Pilot Program as well.

As a young adult Bernice often attended family get-togethers and functions. At one family event Bernice was introduced to Mortimer Francis by her Cousin Daisy Edwards-Gibson. Mortimer was drawn to Bernice's beauty, intelligence, and quiet demeanor, the opposite of Mortimer's outgoing personality. Mortimer pursued Bernice for two years before she decided that he was the one. From their union came a son, Terry C. Edwards. For 15 years Terry was the apple of Bernice's eye. Then God blessed Mortimer and Bernice with the surprising birth of twin girls, Dorine and Dorinda Francis.

On October 8, 1993, Bernice became a widow as Mortimer lost his battle to diabetes. However, Bernice did not waiver in raising her children. Her family village rallied behind her. Not only did Bernice see her son become a Staff Sergeant, an army veteran and, retired sheriff, but she also saw her twins graduate from college and graduate school.

Bernice instilled the importance of God, family, education, and hard work into her children. Bernice also promoted social justice, culture and, the arts. She loved to read, travel, take family vacations to Florida, and attend family reunions. She enjoyed going to see plays as well.

Bernice was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in 1998. But she did not allow her sickness to control her. She was a devoted member of Union Chapel AME Church. She served untiringly as a Stewardess, an Usher, and the nurse's unit until her health no longer permitted.

A well-lived, long, eventful, and blessed life came to an end on November 15, 2019. While we are deeply saddened by her passing, we are encouraged by the fact that Bernice and her beloved Mortimer are reunited. We believe that we shall see them again!

Bernice had a quiet and gentle spirit and prided herself in the accomplishments of her family. She was a very proud Mother, Grandmother, Great-Grandmother, Aunt, Great Aunt, Great-Great Aunt, Godmother, and Sister. She was supportive of all that everyone did. She taught everyone to love one another and how to live Holy before God. She was a leading light and a guiding example. She never wavered in her commitment to her family, to her church, and her faith in God. She praised God every morning and every night and always thanked Him for letting her see another day with her family.

Bernice is preceded in death by her husband, Mortimer Francis, her parents, Jonah and Ada Maynard Edwards, her oldest sister, Ora Lee Edwards, her niece Sherry Hughes, and her nephew-in-law James Byrd.

Bernice leaves behind to cherish her memories and legacy her son Terry C. Edwards (Shelia), her daughters Dorinda Francis-McKenzie (Quinzell) and Dorine Francis, her step-children Johnny Hugh Francis, Morty Francis, Jr., Hope Francis, Umar Francis, and Caswell Francis, her older sister, Florence Edwards-Hughes, her younger sister, Linda Edwards, her sister-cousin Daisy Edwards-Gibson, her grandchildren Terrance Edwards, Tiarra Edwards, Travis Baten, Shayla Edwards, Darian Rouse, Quinn McKenzie, and Darla McKenzie, her great-grandchildren Zion Dunlap Edwards, King Edwards, Cory Bryant Edwards, Cameron Edwards, Jasmine Baten, Travis Baten, Jr., and Genesis Baten, her great-niece Tiffany Cunningham (Anton), her great-great-nephew Aiden Cunningham, her brothers-in-law, Alvin Thompson and Hurley Bent, her sister-in-law, Florine Powell-Reid, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, family, friends, and loved ones.