



*In Loving  
Memory  
of*

*Brenda H. Leonard*

*Sunrise*  
*March 1, 1942*

*Sunset*  
*December 18, 2019*

*Service:*  
*Friday, December 27, 2019 ~ 1:00 PM*

**First Baptist-Englewood**  
351 W Englewood Ave, Englewood, NJ 07631  
*Sanetta D. Ponton, Officiating*  
*Rev. Schenk, Interim Pastor*

## *Obituary*

Brenda H. Leonard was born on March 1, 1942, in Norfolk, VA to the late Robert Hasselle and Emma E. M. Pitts. Brenda grew up under the Christian guidance of her grandmother, the late Cora F. Pitts. Her parents and grandmother laid the foundation for a strong Christian education and at the age of eight, Brenda joined the First Baptist Church of Berkley, Norfolk, VA.

Brenda graduated from Booker T Washington High School 1960 and from Shaw University in 1964 with a B.A. in business education. Committed to advancing her education, in 1968 Brenda earned a Master's degree in Business Education from Norfolk State University. She was employed for 32 years with the Department of Social Services and retired as the director of the Bronx Division of Adoption and Foster Care Services.

In 1968, Brenda relocated to New York City and in 1970 she met and married George Leonard, Jr. In 1971, George and Brenda joyfully welcomed their son Christopher G. Leonard. The family moved to Englewood, NJ in 1975 and soon joined the First Baptist Church of Englewood, NJ. Brenda served as an advisor to the Junior High Fellowship, secretary of the Sunday church school, and co-chairperson of the Senior Fellowship. During the winter months, she coordinated the church's efforts to care for the hungry and the homeless. Brenda loved to sing and served as a devoted member of the Inspirational, Peace and Mass Choirs. Brenda served as vice-chair of the Missionary Society where she coordinated the preparation and distribution of monthly meals for church's seniors and sick and/or shut in members. She was also the treasurer of the Chapel of Four Children Scholarship Committee and a member of the Women's Fellowship. Following her retirement in 2000, Brenda began quietly and effectively serving the Lord through the Church's Culinary Committee. Brenda later became the chair of the Culinary Committee and was charged with organizing and overseeing the use of the church kitchen, and the planning and coordinating of all meals served at the church. Each Sunday morning, fellow church members and friends would find Brenda in the church kitchen providing a friendly greeting, a big embrace, an attentive ear, as well as coffee and pastries for members who arrived early for worship service. When asked about her dedication to the Culinary Committee, Brenda would often say, "I never thought I would be doing this type of ministry, but I must remember only God knows our future. All I know is that in this short life of mine, I want to serve my fellowman and glorify God". Brenda always believed, "the longer I serve the Lord, the sweeter He grows."

Brenda departed this life on December 18, 2019 in Englewood, NJ. She will be remembered for her passion for the things of God, loving kindness, generous spirit, infectious laughter, listening ear, tireless work ethic, and her melodic soprano voice.

Brenda was predeceased by her husband, George Leonard, Jr. and her sister, Beverly Hasselle. She leaves to cherish wonderful memories her son, Christopher G. Leonard, brother, Richard S. Pitts, Sr. (Viola), niece, Rosalyn Pitts Clark (Jeremy), nephew, Richard Pitts Jr. (Jennifer), great-nephew Jeremy Laron Richard Clark, aunts Mrs. Betty Crudup and Mrs. Rosa Britton, and a host of family and friends.



## Order of Service

Processional

Invocation .....Rev. Sanetta D. Ponton

Musical Selection.....First Baptist Church

Scripture Lessons:

Old Testament .....Wilhelmenia Jackson

New Testament .....Amanda Walker-Lang

Prayer of Comfort .....Rev. Sanetta D. Ponton

Musical Selection .....First Baptist Church

Reflections:.....On Behalf of the Church -Deacon Hans Crews

On Behalf of Friends -Maiya Clark

On Behalf of the Family- Rosalyn Pitts Clark

Medley -Kevin Johnson

Acknowledgements and Obituary Yvette Roland, Church Clerk

Musical Selection .....First Baptist Church

Eulogy .....Rev. Sanetta D. Ponton

Recessional

## *To Those Whom I Love And Those Who Love Me*

When I am gone, release me, let me go  
I have so many things to see and do  
You must not tie yourself to me with tears  
Be happy that I have had so many years  
I gave you my love, you can only guess  
How much you gave me in happiness  
I thank you for the love each have shown  
But now it is time I travelled on alone  
So grieve a while for me, if grieve you must  
Then let your grief be comforted by trust  
It is only for a while that we must part  
So bless the memories in your heart  
I will not be far away, for life goes on  
So if you need me, call and I will come  
Though you cannot see or touch me, I will be near  
And if you listen with your heart, you will hear  
All of my love around you soft and clear  
Then, when you must come this way alone  
I will greet you with a smile and welcome you home.

### *Acknowledgement*

Perhaps you sent a lovely card, or sat quietly in a chair.  
Perhaps you sent those beautiful flowers, that we saw sitting there.  
Perhaps you spoke the kindest words, as any friend could say.  
Perhaps you were not there at all, just thought of us that day.  
Whatever you did to console our hearts we thank you so much for  
whatever part.

**-Leonard Family**

Professional Services by:

### **Nesbitt Funeral Home**

D. Emanuel Scott, Funeral Director  
175 West Englewood Avenue  
Englewood, NJ  
201-567-6600

