



John 14:13

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Acknowledgement

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.

Professional Services Provided By

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



Celebrating The Life and Homegoing of Dr. Elder Mary Lee Williams

Sunrise: June 13, 1931
Sunset: October 4, 2021



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2021 - 6:30 PM

Cotton Funeral Service

130 Main Street • Orange, New Jersey

Elder Barry Shumate, Officiating

Elder Carl Clark, Presiding Clergy

Joshua Nelson, Organist

www.honor-you.com

Obituary

Mary Williams was born in Plymouth, NC on June 13, 1931 to Thomas and Bertha Gaylord. Her life in the early years were spent on the family farm, which her brothers and sisters worked hard on every day, as part of their daily chores. The family owned over 60 acres of land filled with corn fields and cotton. The grounds also had animals like pigs, hogs, cows, goats, chickens and unfortunately snakes. There was plenty of work to be done for all 13 Gaylord children, including Mary. The property grounds in later years, was often used for the most unbelievable family reunions you can imagine, with plenty of Gaylord children and their offspring in attendance. There was plenty of food, games and good-ole country fun to be had by all. There were also rotating family photo sessions taken in the front yard, for good memories.

Growing up Gaylord was quite the adventure for Mary (or “sister,” as her siblings called her). There were many stories to tell from this lifestyle, and it certainly brought a great deal of notoriety around Plymouth, and neighboring towns as well. No surprise for a family with 8 boys and 5 girls living in the south, owning so much land.

Mary came up north to the big city; New York City, in the late 1940’s with 3 of her sisters. After arriving there, she later met Herman Williams, also from the south, from the state of Virginia. He was residing in the Bronx at the time. He one day approached her and asked if he could take her picture, as she was standing in front of Montefiore Hospital. They began dating. He made a dress for her along the way, and cooked for her as well. In 1950 they were married in the Bronx, New York. This was the start of an inseparable, loving union that lasted 70 years, full of life, with family and events, and good times that also produced 3 children; Martin, Gwendolyn and Steven. Mary and family lived many years on 108th street and Central Park West in Manhattan, before moving to the Borough of Queens in 1964.

She there, put everything she had into raising her 3 children with a firm, but loving hand. In fact, one of children often referred to her as “Sherlock,” (which was a reference to the fictional detective character Sherlock Holmes) as she did her best to know everything going on, in the lives of her children, by asking questions and having conversations. Through the early years in Queens, she worked mostly administrative jobs to help support the family. She later hit her stride becoming a special education teacher, working for the Board of Education for NYC. She experienced this work in different public schools throughout Queens, for over 25 years. This love she developed for teaching children, lasted right into retirement, with a pension earned for her many years of service.

In Jamaica, Queens, Mary attended church regularly at Calvary Baptist Church with her husband Herman and family. Along the way her love for God increased, and she became a “God fearing” woman and gave her life to the Lord. Mary returned to school seeking her Bachelor’s degree and studied at LaGuardia Community College and York College in Queens respectively. Her desire to know even more, and become more in the Lord, led her to continue with her education. She went on to achieve her Masters in Theology. During this time Mary changed church memberships and began attending Shiloh Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ in Harlem, on 128st and Lenox Ave, where Elder John H. Gray was the Pastor. She became active right away joining the Gospel Chorus choir and ushered as well. Her education in Theology and love of Christ led her to becoming an ordained Minister while at Shiloh. Over time, with further study and qualifying within the dioceses of the Disciples of Christ, she became an Elder earning the title; Elder Mary Williams. She assisted Elder Gray usually by preaching 5th Sundays and afternoon services at affiliate churches in the dioceses.

After serving many years at Shiloh, she joined forces with her fellow preaching-sister in Christ, Pastor Dr. Gladys Little and brother in-law Elder Kenneth Nelthropp, to serve as Elder at the Faith in God Church in Co-Op City in the Bronx. While there, she continued her studies to now earn her Doctorates and become Elder Dr. Mary Williams. This latter journey in education took her through the following schools: Tabernacle of Prayer in Jamaica, Queens, the Manhattan Bible Institute in New York City, and the Faith in God Bible Institute of Co-Op City in the Bronx. She preached many a sermons to hundreds of people in this prime time of her life.

Once again becoming a seed planter, she then joined the House of Mercy Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey with Pastor Barry Shumate, as her final destination beginning in the 1980’s to present time. There she continued to preach and serve as an Assistant Pastor. One of her most dynamic sermons was titled “Except Ye Abide in the Ship, Ye Cannot Be Saved” Mary met and worked with a lot Ministers, Pastors, Elders, and Bishops along the way who loved her, and knew her well for her knowledge, her journey and her very passionate and unique way of delivering a sermon.

Mary loved being at home, and being with family that she loved so very much. She was one of the best cooks you could ever find of soul food. She was the sole cook for family holiday meals for many years, before she decided to hang up her apron for good. She enjoyed the many family barbeques in the backyard watching her grandchildren play. She had one of the loudest and infectious laughs at times, when with the family. She was known to her neighbors, as the one always outside planting flowers, pulling weeds and sweeping her front at 6am, most mornings. She lived in two very lovely homes. One in Jamaica Queens, NY for 35 years and then in Linden, NJ for 22 more.

Elder Dr. Mary Williams, an appointed servant of God was called to her eternal rest on October 4, 2021 at the age of 90, “moving from labor to reward.” She is the last of the 13 Gaylord children. What a family; may they all rest in peace.

She fulfilled the scripture from Ecclesiastes 9:10 - “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave wither thou goest....”

Elder Dr. Mary Williams leaves to cherish her memory; her son Steven Williams of Linden, NJ, her daughter Gwendolyn Shumate and son in-law Barry Shumate of Elizabeth, NJ. She was loved by 8 grandchildren; Tanaya Ayler, Ivy Shumate, Timothy Shumate, Natasha Shumate, Jereme Shumate, Jamin Shumate, Jessica Williams and Brandon Williams, and 13 great grandchildren, a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and friends from all over the country and here locally.

She was preceded in death by her husband Herman Williams, her son Martin Williams, grandson Barry Shumate Jr. and 8 brothers: Buddy Gaylord, Utah Gaylord, Wilma Gaylord, Nathaniel Gaylord, Bill Gaylord, Harry Gaylord, Melvin Gaylord and Milton Gaylord and 4 sisters: Suzy Smith, Virginia Stevenson, Beatrice Nelthropp and Gladys Little respectively.

To this woman, who was a kind-hearted and loving person, daughter, sibling, wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, aunt, relative, preacher, co-worker, neighbor and friend, who became so educated, with great discipline and dedication and love of God; We salute you, we honor you and applaud you, we love and respect you; but most of all we will miss you.

Well done, Mary Lee Gaylord-Williams.

Order of Service

Musical Prelude

ProcessionalClergy and Family

Presiding Clergy.....Pastor Elder Carl Clark
St. Peters Church - Higher Ground Ministries
Paterson, NJ - Newark, NJ

Invocation

Selection

Scripture Reading

Old Testament - Psalms 116:15, Ps. 107:13-15
New Testament - 2 Corinthians 4(16-18)

Selection

Prayer of Comfort

Acknowledgements/Obituary.....Lady Nanette Clark

Remarks.....Clergy, Friends and Family (2Min.)

Selection

Eulogy.....Pastor Elder Barry Shumate
House of Mercy

Benediction/Closing Announcements

Entombment
Hollywood Memorial Park
Union, NJ