

Celebrating the Life of



Rev. Virginia D. Banks

SUNRISE: August 6, 1936
SUNSET: April 27, 2023

Saturday, May 20, 2023 - 11am

Paradise Baptist Church

23 Fort Washington Avenue, New York, NY 10032

Obituary

Virginia Banks was born on August 6th, 1936 in Kinston, North Carolina to Essie Mae and Earl Williams. She was called home to be with the Lord on Thursday, April 27th, 2023. Virginia grew up in a Christian home, nurtured by a very strong, God-fearing mother who admonished her to look to “God for help. Also, you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you.” At the age of three, Virginia’s God-given talent led her to begin ministering for Him through song.

Virginia relocated to New York City with her family. Her growing zeal and love for God led to her singing and directing many community choirs and groups in local churches throughout the metropolitan area and Connecticut. During her Gospel career, she joined The Gospel Hill Baptist Church, Rev. Earl Walker, Pastor, where she directed the youth choir. She later moved her membership to Paradise Baptist Church, under the pastorship of the Rev. Earnest Cooke and later Rev. Lee Arrington. At Paradise, she was the director of the Combined Choir for many years. She also co-produced the album “Living in the Last Days”, featuring the Combined Choir. During the 1960’s, Reverend Banks carried her ministry abroad, touring several European countries with Prof. Hugh Porter and the Samy Price Singers. To her musical credit, Rev. Banks recorded with Clara Walker and the Gospel Redeemers. She also starred in the Off-Broadway production of Langston Hughes’ “Jericho Jim Crow”, portraying Harriet Tubman.

In 1989, she joined New Mount Calvary Baptist Church. Rev. Banks answered God’s call to a greater ministry and was licensed to preach by the New Mt. Calvary on August 27th, 1989. Studying to show herself approved unto God, she attended the New York Theological Seminary and graduated in 1990. She was ordained to the ministry by Rev. Raymond L. Mickens of New Mt. Calvary on January 25th, 1991, where Rev. Banks’ unique style of preaching and teaching touched the hearts of many people so that they might seek, find, and trust in God. Rev. Banks lived her life by doing God’s will through the preached word and through the words of the song “If I can help somebody as I pass along, then my living will not be in vain.”

Rev. Banks is preceded in death by her husband, Professor Douglas R. Banks, Sr., her mother and father (Essie and Earl), two sisters (Lorraine and Marsha), and one brother (Leroy). She is survived by one sister (Marva Carter), several nieces and nephews whom she considered her “children”, cousins, stepchildren and a host of colleagues, church family and friends, far too many to name but equally loved.

Rev. Banks will truly be missed by all who knew her. She was a one of a kind and will remain forever in our hearts.

Order of Service

Processional

Selection

Rev. Dr. Eric B. Turner

Scripture Readings

Rev. Lee Arrington

Prayer

Rev. Lee Arrington

Selection

Rev. Dr. Eric B. Turner

Acknowledgements

Remarks

Reverend Sterling Hawkins, Pastor
Church of the Meek

Obituary

Selection

Rev. Dr. Eric B. Turner

Eulogy

Rev. Lee Arrington

Committal

Rev. Lee Arrington

Viewing

Recessional

INTERMENT:

Ferncliff Cemetery
Hartsdale, New York



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.

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