

A Celebration of Life for
Willie Mae Thomas

Sunrise
August 22, 1936

Sunset
May 12, 2015

A portrait of Willie Mae Thomas, a woman with short dark hair, smiling. She is wearing a white top and holding a bouquet of flowers. The background is a soft, light orange color. In the foreground, there are large, vibrant orange and yellow flowers.

Tuesday, May 19, 2015 - 12:00 Noon

ST. LUKE BAPTIST CHURCH
139 AM Tyler • Paterson, New Jersey
Rev. Kenneth D.R. Clayton, Officiating

Reflections of Life

Ms. Willie Mae (Kirkland) Thomas was born August 22, 1936, in Camden, SC to the late, Mary and Willie James Kirkland. She was one of seven children.

She was joined in marriage to Melvin Thomas, Jr. and was blessed with seven children. Willie Mae moved to Paterson, NJ in 1952. She was a member of Prayer of Faith Holiness Church. Willie Mae was the Mother of the Church and was awarded the Certificate of Appreciation for her longtime service. She enjoyed singing in church and truly loved our Lord. After retiring as a Domestic Worker, she became a Restaurateur of the NorthSide Social Club on North Main St. for over twelve years. Willie Mae was also the Best Foster Mother in Paterson and cared for over twenty-three foster children. She adopted one son. Ms. Thomas made all the children that entered her home feel like she was their Mom. She was best known for her words of wisdom, journal and letter writing, long talks and vivid stories about her adventurous life. She had a quick wit, comedic personality and a sharp tongue. Everyone enjoyed her infamous “shoe box” chicken and macaroni and cheese.

Ms. Thomas will always be remembered as a humble woman who truly loved God and her entire family. She devoted her life to them. Her life and legacy has blessed all of those whom ever came to know her. She will be truly missed.

Willie Mae Thomas was preceded in death by her parents Mary and Willie James Kirkland, daughter, Brenda Thomas, sons, Johnny, Stanley and Ralph Thomas, two brothers, Clarence “Buck” Holmes and Walter James Kirkland, three sisters, Mary Jane Pratt, Louise Bracey and Lorraine Kirkland.

Ms. Willie Mae (Kirkland) Thomas, affectionately known to everyone as “Big Mama” passed on to be with our Lord on Tuesday, May 12, 2015.

Willie Mae Thomas is survived by: one son, Allah “Jamil” Thomas; three daughters, Debra Ann Thomas and Cynthia Williams both of Paterson, NJ and Kym (Joel) Stuckey of Ohio; a sister Catherine (Butch) Carnell of Vallejo, CA; one nephew-in-law, Lennox Brown; four sisters-in-law, Thomasina Kirkland, Rose Holmes and Ellen McGee all of Camden, SC and Ella Kirkland of Philadelphia, PA; two daughters-in-law, Portia Paige Thomas of Passaic, NJ and Beverly Thomas of Paterson, NJ. She is also survived by seventy-three grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great grandchildren and five great-great-great-grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Order of Service

Hymn of Comfort

#217 “No, Not One”

Scripture Readings

Old Testament: Psalm 23

New Testament: John 14:1-6

The Prayer of Comfort

Guided

The Hymn of Hope and Assurance

#325 “We’ll Understand It Better By and By”

Expressions of Sympathy and Comfort

Reflections of Life

Selection

The Message of Comfort

Pastor Clayton

Recessional

#432 “I’ll Fly Away”

Interment

Arlington Cemetery

Kearny, New Jersey

A Prayer for Mother

*You can only have one mother
Patient loving and true;
No other friend in the entire world,
Will be the same to you.*

*When others forsake you,
To mother you will run,
For all her loving kindness,
She asks nothing in return.*

*As we call upon her name,
Sweet memories we can recall,
Of a face so full of sunshine,
And a lovely smile for one and all.*

*Our Lord, take this message,
To our dear mother up above;
Tell her how much we miss her,
And give her all our love.*

Acknowledgement

*We the family of **Willie Mae Thomas** wish to express our sincere thanks for the flowers and other expressions of love during our time of bereavement.*

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