

In Loving Memory of



Debra Elizabeth Smith-Penbow

Sunrise: August 8, 1959

Sunset: March 30, 2017

Service

Saturday, April 8, 2017 - 10:00 a.m.

GOODWILL BAPTIST CHURCH

642 Crotona Park South • Bronx, NY

Elder Lester Robinson, Officiating

Jamal Johnson, Organist

Obituary

Debra Elizabeth Smith-Benbow was born on August 8th, 1952 in Brooklyn, New York to Raymond Smith (Kingston, Jamaica) and Ethel Ramsey-Smith (Savannah, Georgia). After losing both her parents at an early age, Debra was raised by her maternal aunt and uncle, Mary and James Benbow.

During the earlier part of her life, she was educated in the New York City public school system, where she excelled in her studies. She actively participated in community affairs such as the Get Out the Vote initiative, local Democratic campaigns, as well as working as a poll worker every election. She was especially proud of volunteering in her late son-in-law, Kenneth Thompson's campaign during his successful run for Brooklyn District Attorney.

Debra was a loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, aunt, and dear friend to everyone she met. She was a great listener, easy going and loved life. She was also very helpful and would be the last person at a party helping to clean-up. When she wasn't taking care of others, she loved attending concerts, listening to oldies and had a lifelong crush on Smokey Robinson.

Her doors were always open, and her deep love for her own children made her a mother to everyone she met. She would go to the ends of the earth for her family. She always had an optimistic view no matter what the situation was and always found a way to have an answer for everything. She was always ready to laugh and was very out spoken. Her guidance will be treasured, her advice will be missed and her words of wisdom will carry her family forward.

On March 30th, 2017, Debra surrendered to her battle with pancreatic cancer. She leaves to mourn: six daughters, Lu-Shawn, Kawanna, Kareemah, Ayesha, Hana and Jamellah; two sons, Jermaine and Eddie Hassan; eight granddaughters, Shaquana, Briana, Destiny, Kiara, Kennedy, Haimya, La'mani and Ayden; five grandsons, Matthew, Michael, Jr., Kenneth, Jr., Jayrieyn and Hassan; two great-granddaughters, Aliyah and Amina; two sons-in-law, Michael Paynes and David Brown; one sister, Jeanette Benbow-Willis; two brothers, Jonathan and Joseph Benbow; long-time companion, James Bernard Lassiter; and a host of nieces, nephews, other loving relatives and friends.

Order of Service

Prelude

Processional

Prayer

Scripture Readings

Old Testament

New Testament

Selection

Acknowledgement of Condolences

Reading of Obituary

Selection

Reflections

Selection

Eulogy

Benediction

Recessional

Interment

*Woodlawn Cemetery
517 East 233rd Street
Bronx, New York*

*Repast to follow interment at the
Goodwill Baptist Church*

A Mother's Love

A mother's love is something that no one can explain, it is made of deep devotion and sacrifice and pain, it is endless and unselfish and enduring come what may for nothing can destroy it or take that love away... It is patient and forgiving when all others are forsaking, and it never fails or falters even though the heart is breaking... it believes beyond believing when the world around condemns, and it glows with all the beauty of the rarest, brightest gems ... It is far beyond defining, it defies all explanation, and it still remains a secret like the mysteries of creation ... a many splendor miracle man cannot understand and another wondrous evidence of God's tender guiding hand.

In Appreciation

For all who have shown our family so much love and compassion for our great loss and to all who have offered words of encouragement and prayers: We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

The Family

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