

*A Celebration Of  
the Life  
of*



*Jessie M. Johnson*

Sunrise: September 5, 1939

Sunset: April 23, 2022

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022 - 9:30 AM

**Newark Church Of Christ**

723 Clinton Avenue

Newark, New Jersey

***EDWARD MITCHELL, Officiating***

## *Obituary*

MRS. JESSIE M. JOHNSON was born September 5, 1939 in Pike County, Troy, AL. She was the third child of the late L.E. Gillis and Hester Hooten-Gillis, sister of the late Juliette Gillis, the late Nellie “Honey” G. Bristow, the late Robert Gillis, the late minister Henry Gillis, the late Peter Gillis, the late Beatrice Gillis and the late Anna G. Whitfield.

She was taught about Christ at an early age under the leadership of minister George Moody at the Bethlehem Baptist Church, in Orion, AL. While living at home, Jessie spent her early years traveling throughout Alabama and Georgia, singing praises unto our Lord Jesus Christ, with her father/manager and the Dixie Hummingbirds of Orion, AL. She, along with three siblings, a cousin, and two friends made up the gospel group, The Dixie Hummingbirds.

Jessie completed her High School education in the Pike County School System in 1960. Upon graduation, she moved to Montgomery, AL for employment, later to Newark, NJ. Jessie was employed by Sherman Williams Painting Company, Schering Plough Pharmaceutical in Union, NJ, and she retired from Federal Express several years ago.

During a Gospel Meeting at the Newark Church of Christ with the guest evangelist, K.K. Mitchell of Montgomery, AL, Jessie was baptized into Christ on September 29, 1967 under the leadership of the late minister, Dr. Eugene Lawton. She was gifted, a renowned singer and faithful member of the Newark Church of Christ, and one of the lead singers of the Exciting Enchanters. Jessie served in the following benevolent ministries: singing ministry to the Sick and Shut-In, Back-to-School Supply ministry, Sick Visitation ministry, and was a Sunday Bible Class teacher.

Jessie leaves a host of unforgettable songs for us to listen to. Jessie, her late husband, Willie Ben Johnson, her late sister, Gussie Gillis, the late brother Otis Coney, the late sister Diane Lawton and sister Everleen Wright founded the Gospel Group, The Exciting Enchanters. Additional members later added to the group were Pamela Askew, Ray Wright, Terrence Best and Portia Askew. They traveled all over the East Coast and visited other states such as Texas, Chicago, Florida, Alabama, North Carolina and many other places singing praises to the Lord.

Jessie’s signature songs were: Precious Lord; God is Good; and I’m Pressing On. She was also known for her Mac & Cheese and Collard Greens, and was a trophy winning bowler.

Jessie departed this life on the morning of Saturday, April 23, 2022 while at Saint Barnabas Hospital, Livingston, NJ. She leaves to cherish her memory: her brothers Nathan (Reneather) Gillis, Chicago, IL and Larry (Mary) Gillis, Troy, AL.; her sisters, Lee A. Cooper (Caregiver), Orange, NJ and Ethel R. Gillis, Montgomery, AL.; Sisters-in-law, Pearlie Johnson Foxx, Hattie Gillis and Barbara Gillis; Brother-in-law, Arthur J. Bristow; and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, friends and her beloved Newark Church of Christ family.

The Jessie M. Johnson Family

*Order of Service*

Song Director..... Cornelius Clark  
Newark Church of Christ

Processional..... Recording by The Exciting Enchanters

Congregational Selection..... I'll Live in Glory

Musical Selection..... Newark Adult Chorus

Bible Inspiration..... Brian Coleman

Prayer..... Weston Paton

Congregational Selection..... Chris Turner, Burlington, NJ

Acknowledgement of Condolence..... Henrietta Green

Reflections .....Ethel Gillis, Pamela Best  
Lois Carter, Brian Coleman

Musical Selection..... Johnson Singers

Eulogy .....Michael Graves, Minister  
Newark Church of Christ

Recessional .....Recording by The Exciting Enchanters

***PALLBEARERS***

*Ryan Johnson, Shakree Quinn, Emmanuel Mensah  
Luis Arias, John Robinson, Ron Love*

*Interment*

Fairmount Cemetery  
Newark, New Jersey





Exciting Enchantors









THE DIXIE HUMMING BIRDS - ORION, ALABAMA

There are no tears in Heaven  
nor grief of any kind-  
I leave this final teardrop  
To those I've left behind.  
Though absent from the body  
I'm present with the Lord-  
The joy of my salvation  
Is now my full reward.

### *Acknowledgement*

*The family of the late **Mrs. Jessie M. Johnson** wishes to express their sincere appreciation for your sympathetic generousities bestowed on us during the demise of our loved one. Please know that our period of sorrow has been lessened because of your calls, visits, prayers and other acts of kindness shown to us. We thank God for family and friends and church family like you. The Jessie M. Johnson Family*

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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  
57 Clinton Avenue  
Jersey City, NJ  
201-433-1000

