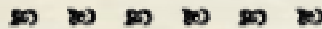




Celebrating the Life of

CECILIA ELIZABETH CUNNINGHAM

First Light: March 5, 1923 - Close of Day: May 29, 2022



Sunday, June 5, 2022

Viewing 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Celebratory Service: 5:00 p.m.

at

The Unity Funeral Chapel

2352 Frederick Douglass Boulevard, Harlem, New York 10027

Officiant

The Reverend Dr. Charles W. Young

Senior Pastor

Shaw African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Corona, New York 11369

THE OBSEQUIES

Cecilia Elizabeth Cunningham was born on March 5, 1923, in Saint Agnes Hospital, Raleigh, North Carolina. She was the youngest of two daughters of Daniel and Caroline Littlejohn Nelson. At the age of 11, Cecilia was fostered and raised by Mr. and Mrs. James Woodson of Stamford, Connecticut. She later changed her name to Cecilia Woodson.

She was educated in the public schools of Kittrell (a town in Vance County), North Carolina; New York City; and, Stamford, Connecticut. Her scholastic journey was, as follows:

- Special Student from the School of General Studies at St. John's University, Queens, New York, 1970;
- The Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York and received a certificate from the Queens Licensed Practical Nurses Association, Inc., April 14, 1973;
- The Cornell University Cooperative Extension, New York City, a Certificate of Achievement for participating in the Nutrition & Health Workshop Series, September 17, 2009.

Cecilia (affectionately called Ceil, and 'Nana' by her grandchildren), was a creative writer. She was profiled in "The New England News – Women in The News" – noting that Cecilia Woodson was a protégé of Dr. Ursula Joyce Yerwood, who was the first female African American physician in Fairfield, Connecticut, and founder of the Yerwood Center, the first community center for African Americans in Stamford, Connecticut. Dr. Yerwood devoted her 50-year career to providing quality medical care for low-income women, children, and families. The article was about Cecilia completing the first draft of a novel, which told the story of a colored nurse and her love for her wealthy white employer. The manuscript found favor with literary agents Catherine Thomas and Daniel Mead, and with Stamford Millionaire, Katherine Hogan. In the interim, Cecilia sold two short stories and was staying at Martha's Vineyard working on her first play. In 1978, a few of her poems: "My Daughter," "Selma," "Mrs. Rosa Parks," "Existing," and, "Beautiful Olive," were printed in a publication titled "New Voices in America."

Cecilia trained in the high schools of New England and Henderson Institute, North Carolina and was accepted to study Journalism at Columbia University, New York City. She was a member of the National Society of Poets, Inc.

Cecilia was a civil and human rights activist and participated in the March on Washington in 1963, for the rights of poor people; demonstrated with Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. on West 125th to integrate stores and hire Negroes for jobs; and, in California, marched for the Freedom of Angela Davis, a member of the Black Panther Party.

For 35 years, she worked for Norman Luboff, an American Music Arranger, Music Publisher and Director of the Norman Luboff Choir. She was the choir's wardrobe mistress and Mr. Luboff's personal secretary.

In the 1980s, she was an employee of the Jewish Community Council Services Commission, Inc.

Cecilia believed in charitable service to the needy. She volunteered her services to The Spellman Center; St. Clare's Hospital & Health Center; The New York City Department for the Aging Foster Grandparent Program; and, the Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center. On the 27th of March 2014, she received a Certificate of Recognition from New York State Senator Bill Perkins, 30th Senate District, on the occasion of The Canaan Senior Service Center March Birthday Senior Celebration, and Visiting Nurse Service of New York Fall Prevention Event.

Cecilia was preceded in death by her sister Dorothy Nelson; son James André Williams; and, grandsons Ronald Michael Brandenburg and Keel Holly Coleman.

She leaves to cherish her life – two daughters: Lola Carol Coleman of Bradenton, Florida and Selma Viola Brandenburg of East Elmhurst, New York; two granddaughters and two grandsons-in-law: Wilma (David) McClelland of Bradenton, Florida and Shannon (Vincent) Green of Magnolia, Delaware; great grandchildren: Christian McClelland, Jessica (Robert) Malloy, Chanel Green, Toni Monae Brisby, Justin Green, Ronald Michael Brisby, and Brandi Elise Green; great, great grandchildren: Kennedy McClelland, Elise Silva, Alanna Malloy, Cameron Green and Jayvon Green; numerous cousins, nieces and nephews; godson Lester Kelly; and, extended families of the now late Norman Luboff, Hazel and Nina Neely, who loved and supported her.

The Celebratory Service Of Cecilia Elizabeth Cunningham The Order of Service



The Organ Prelude

The Processional

The Congregational Hymn “Amazing Grace”

The Scripture Reading Mrs. Amelia A. Montgomery
Old Testament: Deuteronomy 6:4-6
New Testament: 1st Corinthians 15:51-58

The Prayer of Comfort.....Reverend Dr. Charles W. Young

The Selection

The Acknowledgement of Condolences..... Ms.Toni M. Brisby

The Obituary..... (to be read in silence)

The Special Tributes Mrs. Wilma McClelland
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Luboff
Mrs. Jessica Malloy

The Selection.....Miss Elise Silva

The Eulogy Minister Shannon Green

The Committal Reverend Dr. Charles W. Young

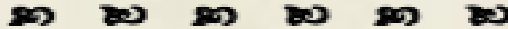
The Viewing

The BenedictionReverend Dr. Charles W. Young

The Recessional “For All the Saints”

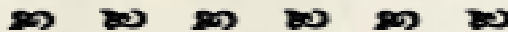
When I Must Leave You

When I must leave you for a little while
Please do not grieve and shed wild tears
And hug your sorrow to you through the years
But start out bravely with a gallant smile
And for my sake and in my name
Live on and do all things the same
Feed not your loneliness on empty days
But fill each waking hour in useful ways
Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer
And I in turn will comfort you
And hold you near
And never, never be afraid to die
For I am waiting for you in the sky!



THANK YOU

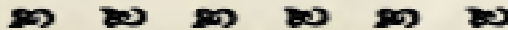
The family of Cecilia Elizabeth Cunningham wishes to extend their heartfelt appreciation for the expressions of love and kindness shown to them during this time of their bereavement. At a later date, they will acknowledge the outpouring of your love.



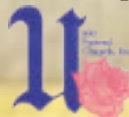
INTERMENT

**Monday, June 6, 2022
Mount Holiness Cemetery
Butler, New Jersey**

The cars will leave the Unity Funeral Chapel at 10 o'clock in the morning.



2352 8th Avenue • Manhattan, NY • (212) 666-8300
1406 Pitkin Avenue • Brooklyn, NY • (718) 774-1023
1018 Prospect Avenue • Bronx, NY • (718) 542-3833



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"Your Loved Ones Deserve The Best - Unity"

