

In Loving Memory of
Gwendolyn H. Walston



Sunrise: September 23, 1943
Sunset: December 2, 2022

Saturday, December 10, 2022 - 9:00 A.M.
Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Second Baptist Church
108 Stephens Street • Belleville, New Jersey

Obituary

Gwendolyn Hortense Smallwood Walston was born in Passaic, NJ on September 23, 1943 to Elsey Albert, Sr. and Marguerite Evelyn Smallwood. She departed this life at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center on December 2, 2022 surrounded by her immediate family in an all-out Praise Party.

Gwendo, as she was affectionately called by her mother, was educated in the Belleville Public School System. She attended Belleville School #1 and Belleville High School back when it was on Washington Avenue. She was always a very good student and she loved to type and to sing. She sang in the Bakers Dozen and the Glee Club. She was also an avid roller skater, and she played the piano very well. She and her sister, Maggie joined two of their friends and they started a singing group. They would sing many of the most popular songs of their day, harmonizing beautifully.

After her fathers untimely transition, Gwendolyn assisted her mother with taking care of her younger sisters, Marguerite and Shirley while she went to work. They were all very close and they loved to be around their family. Gwendolyn loved to eat; and she ate everything, but always remained very small. She and her sisters attended Second Baptist Church as their father had assisted with construction of the building. She sang in the Busy Bee Choir and attended Sunday School faithfully.

In 1961, Gwendolyn gave birth to a baby boy, Gordon Lindsey, and two years later, in January 1963, she married Bobby Gene Walston. From this union, three children were born, Jodi Felise, Bobbi and Bob Mark. Gwendolyn was a wonderful mother and loved her children, but she was also very stern. She just needed to look in their direction and they would straighten up. She would often take in laundry and work as a domestic to assist with the household finances. Years later, she would hold several jobs working with a hospital laundering company, as a home health aide, with the US Department of Commerce and in a women's clothing store before landing a position with the New Community Corporation (NCC). She worked with New Community for 22 years and retired in 2006. Gwendolyn called her tenure, "a journey of love and an NCC success story."

In 1976, Gwendolyn rejoined Second Baptist Church with her children. During this time, she sang in the Second Baptist Church Gospel Choir, and became a part of the Missionary Board. After Rev. H. E. Gholston retired, she became the church clerk and worked in this position until her transition. Gwendolyn also became involved in several other ministries, Official Board, Trustee Board, Women's Ministry, Pastor's Aide Ministry, Music Ministry, the Christian Education Ministry [which encompassed teaching Vacation Bible School], the Sister's Sharing Ministry, the Kitchen Committee, the Drama Ministry and the Praise Dance Ministry. She was also for a time, part of the Men's Ministry as well. Gwendolyn was even asked to facilitate the Word at Little Zion UAME Church in

Belleville for one of their Women's Day Services. With her sister, Shirley and her daughters, Jodi and Bobbi, they birthed, The Smallwood Connection. Using the gift of song, they ministered throughout New Jersey and New York. Gwen had a beautiful rich alto/contralto voice and her falsetto was angelic. But, she could also sing tenor and, if necessary, base. She was truly gifted with song.

In 2013, she became one of the Mother's of Second Baptist Church and she wore this title with honor. She let God use her in so many ways, mentoring young women, praying for the body, singing her heart out and working behind the scenes keeping things running. Whenever there was a question about what to do for this or for that, Mother Walston would be called upon for help. She had such a compassion for God's people; she really loved the Lord. When interacting with people, she would always interject something on behalf of the Lord and was quick to offer up prayer. And she was just as understanding. She never judged anyone, but she didn't mince words. You would definitely feel like "I need to change" after one of her "talks."

Gwendolyn loved to vacation; she especially loved to cruise. Over the years she had cruised across the globe. She was thrilled to take her dream cruise to Europe (Venice in particular) with her family. A phenomenal cook, Gwendolyn loved her family and would host annual Christmas Day dinner for her family and everyone else who would decide to drop in. She would always make sure she had a wrapped gift under the tree for everyone who would stop in; whether it was socks, gloves, a hat or a scarf, everyone walked out with something. She just had the heart of and for God. She also enjoyed teaching her grandchildren to cook, just as she did with her children years prior. She was just an all-around wonderful person and her presence filled the room. She will be sorely missed.

She was predeceased by her parents, her brothers, William, Elsey Albert, Jr. and George Smallwood; her sisters, Jean Freeman (William); Sylvia Davis; and Marguerite James; her grandson, Jeffrey Barber, Jr.; a God-son, Arthur Carl Harris, Jr.; and a God-daughter, Daleene Gwen Williams.

She leaves to mourn her passing, her children; Gordon Taylor, Jodi Campbell (Joseph), Bobbi Walston McCoy (Quincy), Bob Mark Walston and a spiritual son, Blair Goode (Stacey); her sister, Shirley Evelyn Harris, a spiritual sister, Sylvia Gill; a sister-in-law, Malissia Smallwood; her grandchildren, Al-jernon Ahmad Smith, Sr., Lisa Campbell, Joseph Campbell, Jr., Jared Eubanks, Gavin Farrow, Lia Willis (Greg), Quincy McCoy, Jr., Sean McCoy, Elijah McCoy, Qaadry McCoy, Albert McCoy, Jewel Simone Walston, Joshua Joseph Campbell, Jordan Xavier Taylor and Job Nehemiah Campbell; her great-grandchildren, Mordecai Wiggins, Tori Morrow-Smith, Layla Willis, Jacob Willis, Phoenix Moore-Smith, Adriana Moore-Smith, Malakhi Branch-Smith, Jasmijn Nile Eubanks, Al-jernon Ahmad Smith, Jr., and Azauri Martinez; and God-Children, Tara Cook, Gabrielle Miller and Joy Elaine James; a close friend, Dorothy Jeanne Edwards; and a host of other nieces, nephews, cousins, friends, bonus sons and daughters and her Second Baptist Church Family.

Order of Service

Bishop Hilton Rawls, Sr. Officiating
Pastor, St. Paul Life Center Church, Newark, NJ

Processional of Clergy and Family

Prayer of Comfort.....Bishop Charles W. Harris, Jr.
Pastor-Bethel Church of Love & Praise, CKMI

Hymn

Scripture

Old Testament.....Minister Patricia Williams
Ministry Lead, Second Baptist Church, Belleville, NJ

New Testament.....Elder Sandrah Hargrove
True Word Ministry

PoemTori Morrow-Smith

Selection.....SBC Music Ministry

Reflections

Selection.....SBC Music Ministry

Pictorial Review

Reading of Obituary.....Pastor Philip Gilmore
St. John's Community Baptist Church, Newark, NJ

Selection.....SBC Music Ministry

Eulogy.....Pastor Kevin Strigler
Vice Bishop Elect

Saint Luke Community Church of Christ, East Orange, NJ

Invitation to Christian Discipleship

Final Viewing

Recessional

Burial Director: Gordon L. Taylor

Interment

Glendale Cemetery
Bloomfield, NJ







Pallbearers:

Blair Goode Kevin James
Chad Harris Torrin Spann-Bell
Antwone Davis Amir Moon
Justin Riverra Jalen Saunders
Isaiah Harris Ronald Gillis

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free I'm following the path God laid for me
I took his hand when I heard Him call I turned my back and left it all.
I could not stay another day. To laugh, to love, to work or play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way, I found that peace at the close of day.
If my parting has left a void, Then fill it up with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss, Oh, yes these things I too will miss.
Be not burdened with times of sorrow, I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full, I savored much. Good friends, good times,
a loved one's touch. Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me,
God wanted me now, He set me free!

-author unknown

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.

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

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

