



Bessie M. Dawkins

June 1, 1916 - February 8, 2017

In lieu of flowers, please make a contribution to the Coppin State University Development Foundation, Inc. (CSUDF) for the Bessie M. Dawkins Scholarship Fund. Checks can be made payable to CSUDF and mailed to 2500 W. North Avenue, Baltimore, 21216 or you can click here to make a contribution online

<https://securelb.imodules.com/s/1784/gid2/interior.aspx?sid=1784&gid=2&pgid=530&cid=1282>.

Mother Bessie Mae Dawkins Born of Milly (Miley) Jones Smith and Robert Smith June 1, 1916 in Dunn, North Carolina. Mother Bessie lost her Mother at the age of about 7 years old and was raised by her grandmother Betsy who was a midwife. Betsy cared for her until her death at which time her Aunt and uncle Deaconess Lula Mae Williamson and Deacon Anderson Williamson raised her in Durham, North Carolina until she became an adult and got married.

Mother Bessie attended and finished Harnett County High school. She was an Honor roll student, sang in the Glee club and was admired for her beautiful penmanship so much that her Teacher would often ask her to put the lesson on the board. She was briefly taken from school and asked to work in the fields until The Principal insisted that she remain in school due to her great academics.

Bessie Loved to dance so much that she would say, "I would rather dance than eat", dancing was fun for her. Bessie was raised in a Pentecostal Holiness Church. She later met and married Mr. Henry Saunders about 1934 and from this marriage Mattie Lee Saunders was born. He was a bit old fashioned, while Bessie had goals she had set to accomplish and they later separated and divorced. While holding the most dignity and respect for one another they raised Mattie Lee. Bessie's Aunt Rev. Flora Ferguson's daughter Annie married and had a baby and Bessie and Annie were very close. Bessie was so happy Annie let her name the baby Jessie Mae after her.

Mother Bessie also had a niece Margie Sears of Baltimore, Md whom she loved dearly. Bessie left North Carolina in pursuit of a career and better opportunities and often took sleep in jobs to make her living and saved her money keeping her goals in mind. She belonged to the Harnett County Alumni Association. She had many high school schoolmates that she held dear all deceased, Ms Agnes Bradshaw (daughter Virginia Bradshaw), Ms. Callie and Ms. Burda daughter Sandra Burton) and more. She also had a friend closer than a Sister Mrs. Pearl McLaughlin (deceased) and learned to work a pressing machine while they worked together in Richmond, Virginia. She began attending St. Phillips Medical College for her Nurse training while in Virginia. Bessie had a moment in her life where she became sick and she remembered sending a letter for help to her father and she did not received any answer back (thinking he did not get the message) and as she cried on her sick bed and feeling all alone in the world she said to herself, I have no Mother, Father Sister or Brother and suddenly an angel appeared to her head to head and toe to toe and stated "Low I am with You" she said she never wanted for anything God did not supply. Singing the Song " He Touched me" spoke to this experience,

Bessie Finally journeyed to Baltimore, Maryland and worked at Edgewood Arsenal during the War time helping the soldiers who were injured from combat. She worked and took care of her Aunt Ila and bought a house on Thomas Avenue, Baltimore Md. put her Aunt in it and put tenants in it to help her pay the mortgage. Bessie always worked hard used her head and was able to help many people. She soon met and married Mr. David Daniel Dawkins and out of that union was born Rosalie Dawkins and she acquired his children, James Robert Dawkins (deceased), Artis Gaines (Barbara)(deceased), Bobby Sue Robinson of Greenville South Carolina, Lucille Tarrant of Greenville South Carolina.

Mother Bessie worked for the Edgewood Arsenal federal government in Nursing during the War Time (WWII) she also held a Job as a Master Presser and supervisor at Majestic Cleaners in the Roland Park Area Mother Bessie acquired Red Cross Certification training, worked for the State Government - Rosewood State Hospital as a Charge Nurse and retired from the State Of Md. She held part-time employment in the Baltimore City Schools and retired from Baltimore City. In line with her goals she sometimes worked two to three jobs at one time. She would always rent a big house and rent out the rooms to increase her income to take care of business. Bessie and David with Bessie as the facilitator purchased a large home just for the reason of making money to be sure all their debts were covered. Bessie was able to help many people as they migrated from North and South Carolina to Baltimore so that they could get jobs and get on their feet. She had a connection to Ms. White in her quest to always assist people to be able to get on their feet and become Independent. If Mrs. Dawkins had any information that would help people seeking to have a better life and buy a house of their own she would meet with them and give them the details of information needed so they could become a homeowner and productive citizens.

Mother Bessie had a magnetic smile and was filled with the Holy spirit showing Love. She believed in spreading Peace and Love and encouraged everyone to be peaceful and loving to one another. Mother Bessie had many friends as a result of her kind and friendly nature. Many friends and family have preceded her in death. With her beautiful Smile and loving kind spirit, Mother Bessie lived a great God fearing life and touched the lives of many people with her kindness down throughout the years. She loved to take trips with her friends and enjoyed playing games taking her loving and kind spirit wherever she went and often asked people "Do you know how old I am?"

June 1, 2016 Mother Bessie celebrated her 100th Birthday she celebrated it at the Centenarian celebration held the second Thursday in May/2016 at Martin's West and she sang a couple of her favorite songs "He touched me and "Through It All" and was celebrated by Family, Friends, Reverend Burns and The Rising Sun First Baptist Church Family. We all took a great picture and she was sooooo happy at this celebration getting her flowers while she was still with us.

Mother Bessie being filled with the Holy Spirit have belonged to many Churches as she spread her Love, Perkins Square Baptist Church, Whitestone Baptist Church-Rev. Thompson/Rev. Warren- sang on the Choir, New Metropolitan Baptist Church-Rev, Swinson, and sang with the Swinson Jubilees, Back to Whitestone Baptist Church, friends with Rev. and Mrs. Thompson where she sang in several Choirs, Member of Hospitality, Missionaries, and other organizations, Sang and recorded with the Evening Star Gospel Choir, Concord Baptist Church-Rev. Jones-sang with Choir and spreaded Love, Rising Sun First Baptist Church- Reverend Emmett Burns- joined and became Mother of her Church, sang on the choir, was a member of the Courtesy guild, played the piano on occasion and enjoyed praising the Lord while playing her tambourine and shouting and singing praises to the

Lord spreading more of his love chasing after God. She said “I don’t care what anybody says that Bible is right and if you live according to that Bible you will be blessed!!! Treat people right and be forgiving and Trust God!”

Mother Bessie belonged to The Forest Park Senior Center and enjoyed fellowship, food and travel and had many friends there and sometimes played the piano there as well. She visited Nursing Homes to spread love and fellowship and would sometimes say there are a lot of old people there, I would ask her “How old are you? And we would just laugh because she did not look her age all though proud of it.

Mother Bessie’s Family: Daughters: Mattie Lee Umstead (deceased) Son-In-Law John Umstead of Cleveland, Ohio, daughter Rosalie Dawkins Johnson (Michael)-Windsor Mill, Md, Alberta Fennoy (Jerome)-Randallstown, Md, Mrs Burns Daughter in Christ.

Grandchildren: Joann and Kenneth Atwater, Woodridge, Illinois, Donna and Leslie Carroll II of Indianapolis, Indiana, Candace Johnson, Mark Tomczak,-Columbia, Md, Carolyn Chinn (Kwincy)-Randallstown, Md, Beloved Michelle Johnson-Woodlawn, Md, Reginald Umstead and Robert Umstead both of Cleveland Ohio, Valerie Gaines-Turners Station, Md, Great-grands: Aaron Liles Jr., Erik Littlejohn-Woodlawn, Md, Kahliel Daughtery-Atlanta, Ga., Elizabeth Atwater-Chicago, John Atwater, Gabriel Carroll and Leslie Carroll III-Indianapolis, Reginald Umstead Jr. Rayshawn Umstead, Brandon Umstead-Cleveland, Ohio, Jordan Umstead, Pennsylvania, Whitney Liles Byrd- Columbia, Md, Tyrell Farmer-Atlanta, Ga. Great-great Grands Saibra Liles, Kaleb Liles, Joey Gaines, First cousin Annabelle Johnson-Bridgepark Nursing facility, and many nieces and nephews and friends and The Rising Sun First Baptist Church Family.

Cemetery Details

Baltimore National Cemetery

5501 Frederick Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21228

Previous Events

Public Viewing

FEB 16. 8:30 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - West Baltimore
4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Family Hour

FEB 16. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - West Baltimore
4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Wake

FEB 17. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Rising Sun 1st Baptist
2211 St. Luke lane
balto., MD 21207

Service

FEB 17. 10:30 AM (ET)

Rising Sun 1st Baptist
2211 St. Luke lane
balto., MD 21207

Tribute Wall



“ *Bessie M. Dawkins*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *This is Idell McCoy. My uncle was Uncle Henry my mothers brother. Sorry for your loss*

Idell McCoy - February 27, 2017 at 12:28 AM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Rosalie Johnson - February 18, 2017 at 07:23 AM



“ *2 files added to the tribute wall*



Les Carroll - February 15, 2017 at 09:14 AM

RJ

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Rosalie Johnson - February 15, 2017 at 06:00 AM



“ Ma Bessie's 99th and looking good!



Kenneth Williams - February 14, 2017 at 08:38 PM

DC

“ 5 files added to the album Carroll Family Memories



Donna Carroll - February 14, 2017 at 08:29 PM

RJ

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Rosalie Johnson - February 14, 2017 at 03:34 AM

RJ

Sharing Love.

Rosalie Johnson - February 14, 2017 at 03:50 AM

RJ

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Rosalie Johnson - February 14, 2017 at 03:27 AM

RJ

Taking a selfie.

Rosalie Johnson - February 14, 2017 at 03:45 AM

RJ

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Rosalie Johnson - February 14, 2017 at 03:25 AM

CJ

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Candace Johnson - February 10, 2017 at 06:56 PM

RJ

She Loved all of her Children and they loved her.

Rosalie Johnson - February 14, 2017 at 03:44 AM



“ *We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.*

March Funeral Homes - February 10, 2017 at 03:25 PM