



## Myrtle L. Ridgley

August 12, 1945 - January 31, 2018

Evangelist Myrtle Lee Clayton Ridgley, was born August 12, 1945 in Person County, North Carolina to Russey Clayton and the late Willie Lee Clayton. She was the second child of seven children and the eldest daughter. Evangelist Ridgley grew up in the segregated south, attending segregated schools. She spent much of her childhood on the expansive tobacco farm of her great-grandfather Mr. George Speed. She often recounted fond memories to her children of working on her family's farm and going to the market to sell. At one point, Mr. George Speed was the richest man in Granville County, North Carolina. Myrtle was her parent's right hand in the household, cooking, cleaning, sewing and caring for her younger siblings. She loved babies and often would aid in caregiving for other children in her neighborhood. After matriculating through the public school system, she graduated from Anne Chestnut High School in 1963. Soon after, she migrated to Havre De Grace, Maryland and met her future husband, Elder Bernard Ridgley. After dating for a brief period, they joined together in holy matrimony on March 13, 1964. To this union, six children were born.

Evangelist Ridgley was multi-talented, multi-dimensional woman. Her creative gifts were displayed in the church, in her home and in the community. She and her husband helped to build Zion Temple Church in Havre De Grace, MD. They raised their children in the beauty of holiness and faithfully served in that congregation for over twenty-five years under the leadership of the late Pastor

Clara V. Crossell and the late Pastor Dorothy V. Barnes. She served in many capacities such as: radio broadcast announcer, praise and worship leader, Willing Worker Officer, choir leader and soloist and mentor over the youth choir. In later years, they moved their membership to Highway Holiness Church and helped to expand that ministry. Evangelist Ridgley served as a praise and worship leader, and as a mentor to the Youth Department and the Youth Choir. They were members to the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc. (P.A.W) for about forty years. In December 2008, Evangelist Ridgley and Elder Ridgley joined Helping Hands Ministries in Churchville, MD where both were ordained by Pastor Rod Parsley at World Harvest Ministries Church in Columbus, Ohio. At helping Hands, she served as a minister and one of the mothers of the church. She often encouraged the young people and occasionally sang a fiery rendition of an old gospel song that would set the church ablaze.

In the home, Evangelist Ridgley was a wonderful mother to her children. She created a beautiful, comfortable home for her children, but insisted they embrace hard work ethics. She was an excellent cook, home decorator, and seamstress. While raising her children, she tailor-made the majority of their clothing including prom dresses, gowns, holiday and special occasion outfits. She even made outfits for the youth choirs at church. Evangelist Ridgley had a passion for fashion. She had an eye for unique attire and accessories. She would often bring home copies of French Vogue fashion magazines and stare at the pages with her daughters for hours. She often dreamed of going to Fashion Week in New York City and attending runway shows. She could look at an outfit and go her sewing machine and re-create it. She could remember an outfit someone had on years ago and tell you the color of the outfit, the trimming, the buttons, the style of the outfit and the shoes. She was known for her unique style of dress especially her hats and she would often encourage others to "add a little more color" to their lives. Evang. Ridgley worked as a Dietary Assistant at Harford Memorial Hospital for twenty-five years. There

she created friendships that would last her lifetime. After retirement, she always said she felt that God was calling her to go out into the community and make an impact in the lives of young Black men and boys. With the blessing of her husband, she founded The GrassRoots Steering Foundation, Inc. A non-profit, community advocacy group. With a fire in her belly, Evang. Ridgley began addressing issues of inequality in legal, prison, and educational systems. She began having meetings with judges, prosecutors and chiefs of police. She along with her daughter Tandra, took their mission to Annapolis and began community lobbying efforts. She met with Senators, Delegates, Governors, testifies on bills, and helped to create legislation. She was involved in community meetings throughout the Baltimore Metro area. She started the voter registration effort "Vote The Power" encouraging citizens to get out and vote. She went to court with families, she helped to get young men out of prison, she fought to get expelled and suspended African American children back into school. She would often tell young men to "keep their nose clean and hold their heads up" she demanded respect and when she spoke she commanded the room.

Evang. Ridgley was called home to her heavenly rest on January 31, 2018 after a lengthy illness. She passed peacefully at WellSpan York Hospital in York, Pennsylvania. Her loss is deeply felt and she be greatly missed. She leaves to cherish her memory her husband of fifty-three years, Elder Bernard Ridgley of Aberdeen, MD, six children, Dana Terence, Tandra, Dorea, Curvine and Clayton. One daughter-in-law Vetashma Ridgley. Her mother, Russey Clayton of North Carolina, one sister, Bernice Clayton-Brewington of North Carolina, brother Willie Clayton of North Carolina and a brother Isaac Clayton of Massachusetts. She also leaves to mourn, ten grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her brother Larry Clayton and Curvine Clayton.

Sweet Momma, go ahead and take your rest, lay your head on Jesus' breast.  
We loved you, but God loved you best.

Sorrowfully Submitted,  
The Ridgley and Clayton Families

# Previous Events

## viewing

FEB **9**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Helping Hands Ministries  
3237 Level Rd  
MD 21028

## Wake

FEB **10**. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Helping Hands Ministries  
3237 Level Rd  
MD 21028

## Service

FEB **10**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Helping Hands Ministries  
3237 Level Rd  
MD 21028

# Tribute Wall



“ *Myrtle L. Ridgley*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *Tandra lit a candle in memory of Myrtle L. Ridgley*



**Tandra** - January 19, 2022 at 08:06 PM



*It's been four years Momma. It's still hard to believe that you are gone. You will forever be in my heart. Until we meet again. Love, Missy*

**Tandra** - January 19, 2022 at 08:08 PM



“ *Terence lit a candle in memory of Myrtle L. Ridgley*



**Terence** - February 18, 2018 at 03:25 PM

JB

“ Jennifer & Faith Barnes lit a candle in memory of Myrtle L. Ridgley



Jennifer & Faith Barnes - February 12, 2018 at 08:30 AM

JD

“ Jacqueline Donaldson lit a candle in memory of Myrtle L. Ridgley



Jacqueline Donaldson - February 10, 2018 at 02:45 PM

DE

“ Myrtle,

*I am going to miss you. I know that it's has been sometime since I last saw you, but you where all ways in my thoughts and prayers. I can still remember when I was pregnant with my fist child, I would come to your house and set it your big chair and go fast to sleep and you did not get upset because I did not visit with you, but only come and go to sleep. That to me show that you where truly my friend. And friends are hard to fine, but you where one that I could really said Friend.*

*Love and Miss you  
Dena*

Dena - February 09, 2018 at 02:01 PM

MD

*To The Family, you all are in my PRAYERS...Luv u all much. Mrs. Lisa Dewberry-Harris SAVANNAH, GA*

Mrs.Lisa Dewberry-Harris - February 15, 2018 at 08:48 PM

DE

“ *Dena lit a candle in memory of Myrtle L. Ridgley*



Dena - February 09, 2018 at 01:54 PM

TS

“ *We send our deepest sympathy to Sis Myrtle family.. She was our church mother and community mother who always showed sincere love and attention..R.I.P. We will miss you..family may God give you the strength and understanding to conquere your grief and rejoice in the celebration of her life  
Blessing, Bro Rudy Sheppard& Sis Tee Smith*



Tersheia smith& Rudy Sheppard - February 08, 2018 at 11:57 PM

TR

“ *Mom, I will always love you!*  
  
*Missy*

Tandra Ridgley - February 07, 2018 at 12:04 AM

TR

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



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**Tandra Ridgley** - February 06, 2018 at 11:03 PM



“ *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.*

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**March Funeral Homes** - February 06, 2018 at 10:23 AM