



Rebecca F. Lacey

June 20, 1943 - September 18, 2025

Shepherd Mother Rebecca Lacey, affectionately known as "Beck", peacefully entered eternal rest on September 18, 2025. She leaves behind a rich legacy of faith, family, genuine love, and service to others. She was the eighth of eleven children born to Mother Mary Magdalene and Deacon John F. Smiling on June 20, 1943, in Dillon, South Carolina.

Rebecca was a beautiful child whose perception for extraordinary evident. Educated in South Carolina Public Schools, she established herself as an exceptional academic student, participating in extracurricular activities including the glee club, drama club, Future Homemakers of America, and the National Honor Society. Because of her poise, beauty, and charm, she competed in and earned first place in numerous competitions, including speech, debate, and beauty pageants.

Rebecca broke the "glass ceiling" to non-traditional careers long before most people heard of a "glass ceiling". She successfully passed the South Carolina School Bus Drivers Exam, normally administered to male students, earning the esteemed honor of becoming the very first female bus driver in the state of South Carolina. In 1963, she graduated from Manning Training High School in the top 10% of her senior class. After high school, she continued to excel in public speaking, reciting her spiritually powerful rendition of the civil rights activist, James Weldon Johnson's "The Creation".

Rebecca accepted Christ as her personal Savior at the tender age of 12 as a member of Bethesda Baptist Church. She served as an usher, children's Sunday school teacher, church secretary, choir member, and participated in various church activities. Upon graduating high school, Rebecca moved to Long Island, New York, to assist her uncle and aunt, the late Bishop Thomas and Elder Lillie Smiling, ultimately becoming a member of Morning Star Pentecostal Church. As an actively involved member in church work, Rebecca ultimately met the love of her life, M. Louis Lacey, who was the Minister of Music. They were married in 1966, and to this union was added three children.

In 1979, upon the leading of the Holy Spirit and the request of the late Bishop James F. Brown, Jr, the Lacey family relocated to Richmond, Virginia and became members of Jerusalem Holy Church, where her husband would serve as church organist. Rebecca worked in various capacities, including choir member, and served both the Bishop and then pastor Olive C. Brown. Outside of her service in ministry, she excelled in her professional career with the United States Postal Service for over 37 years.

In 1993, Minister Lacey became the founding Pastor of the Children of God Victory Tabernacle and Rebecca "Shepherd Mother" working, serving, and mentoring the women of the church. She remained the First Lady of COGVT and passed the mantle on to her youngest daughter when her son-in-law, Dr. Derrick L. Peterson, Sr, became her senior pastor in 2019. Shepherd Mother has always walked in courage, dignity, elegance, grace, and strength. She will FOREVER remain known for her many gifts, including singing, spoken word, sewing, mentoring, creating floral arrangements, and cooking.

Her memory will be cherished by her loving husband, Bishop M. Louis Lacey, three generations, including her children, Lacelle (Reginald) Moses, Timothy

("devoted" Ailen)Lacey, and Tania (Derrick Sr.) Peterson; grandchildren Shontia, Aiesha (Vidrell), Reginald Jr., Alexis, Derrick Jr., Timothy II, Darian (Jessica), Daniel, and Ty; and eight adorable grandchildren.

Rebecca's memory will be cherished by her beloved siblings, sister, Gardenia Sligh, and brothers, John Henry (Francis)Smiling and Pastor Albertis (Eyvonne) Smiling; and a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, and godchildren. She is preceded in eternal rest by siblings, Gedine Smiling, Ernestine Pack, E.L. Smiling, Joe Edward Smiling, Eula Mae Dozier, Viola Witherspoon, and Everlena Smiling.

Cemetery Details

Roselawn Memory Gardens

13389 Mountain Road
Glen Allen, VA 23059

Previous Events

Public Viewing

SEP 26. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Cedar Street Baptist Church of God
2301 Cedar Street
Richmond, VA 23223

Celebration of Life

SEP 26. 11:00 AM (ET)

Cedar Street Baptist Church of God
2301 Cedar Street
Richmond, VA 23223

Tribute Wall



“ *View and Download the Funeral Program*

March Funeral Homes - September 26, 2025 at 04:12 PM

RW

Hallelujah!!!

Rev. Viola Witherspoon-Fuller - September 26, 2025 at 04:41 PM

RW

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Rev. Viola Witherspoon-Fuller - September 26, 2025 at 03:51 PM

NG

“ *There are no words to express how I feel right now. Mother Shepherd! You were my mom when I needed one. You made me feel so loved and welcomed from the very first introduction. I have always admired you and love you. I will love you forever. Although life and distance has kept us apart for far too long, I always thought of you. Know Mother Shepherd how much you meant to me. I am so very saddened that I did not get a chance to see you and bring the children so you could have seen how much they have grown and the additional ones since I left Va.. My deepest sympathy and love to Pastor, Lachelle, Tonia and Tim. May our Savior grant peace and comfort during this time. Rest in eternal peace mom Sister Natasha and family.*

Natasha Grant-Dean - September 26, 2025 at 02:46 PM



“ *A precious flower has been added to God's Garden of Life*

Lucinda Hampton - September 26, 2025 at 11:38 AM



“ *Please accept my sincere condolences. I had the pleasure of working with Becky at the USPS years ago. She was truly a beautiful person inside and out. I have only pleasant memories of her. Rest in peace , you have earned your wings..🙏*



Donna Love - September 26, 2025 at 07:25 AM



“ *To Bishop Lacey and family my thoughts and prayers are with you always ,and especially during this time of grief. We will always remember Mrs Lacey 's bright smile and kind words. May the God of all grace peace and comfort be with now and the days to come . John & Loretta Richardson and family.*

John Richardson - September 25, 2025 at 11:53 PM



“ *I have fond memories of Mrs. Lacey. Sending prayers of comfort and peace to the entire family.*



Tracy LaNai - September 25, 2025 at 06:08 PM

TF

“ *The Sligh, Postell and Jones Families purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Rebecca F. Lacey.*



The Sligh, Postell and Jones Families - September 25, 2025 at 03:27 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rebecca F. Lacey.*



September 25, 2025 at 08:16 AM

CB

“ *To Pastor Lacey, Shelley and Reggie, Tim and Ailen, Tania and Derrick, and the rest of the Lacey family and COGVT family, my heart is with you all during this time. Prayers of comfort and peace for you all as you celebrate the life of Mrs. Lacey.*

Cassandra Burrell - September 24, 2025 at 06:55 PM

PR

“ *Pamela Ryals lit a candle in memory of Rebecca F. Lacey*



Pamela Ryals - September 22, 2025 at 10:56 AM

PR

Mother Shepherd was such a lovely, graceful woman of God. She had such a sweet spirit and I know her family, friends and community will miss her presence. I am praying for you all at this time and after. Love you all! The Ryals & Moss Family

Pamela Ryals - September 22, 2025 at 10:59 AM



“ *Lois Jones lit a candle in memory of Rebecca F. Lacey*



Lois Jones - September 21, 2025 at 10:13 PM

MO

“ *For Uncle Lewis (Louis) and my first cousins. Aunt Rebecca will always be remembered over here. May her sweet memories bring smiles to your faces and joy to your hearts. You are in my prayers. Love you guys, Mary D. (Molly)*



Molly - September 21, 2025 at 07:52 AM

DE

I remember with warm comfort and exquisite taste the first meal you invited me to your NYC home. You and Louis made me feel extremely welcome 🙏. Your sister Denia was wondering whether I would feel totally at peace. Because of Rebecca I felt very much welcome. I am quite sure God will welcome as you did me. My utmost condolences to the family.



Dr. J'Mauri Elliott-Hamilton - September 26, 2025 at 10:50 AM

DW

“ *In Loving Memory of My Aunt*

Today, I pause to honor the life and legacy of my dear aunt, who has gone home to be with the Lord.

She was a woman of deep and unwavering faith—a true example of grace, mercy, and unconditional love. To know her was to feel cared for, to feel seen, and to feel the gentle presence of God through her words and actions.

She loved with her whole heart—selflessly, passionately, and without limits. Whether it was through a comforting hug, a kind word, or a quiet prayer, she always made sure those around her felt the warmth of her spirit.

She lived a life anchored in Christ, and her walk with God was not just something she spoke about—it was something she lived every day.

Though our hearts are heavy, we find peace in knowing she is now in the presence of the One she served so faithfully.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” – 2 Timothy 4:7

Auntie, thank you for your love, your strength, your prayers, and your example. Your light remains with us, and your memory will never fade.

Love, Always!

Dr. Denise Witherspoon

Dr. Denise Witherspoon - September 20, 2025 at 04:17 PM

MO

Aunt Becky I love you and will miss your beautiful smile. You of all my Aunties, reminded me most of my mother. You will make an awesome angel-keep smiling down on us. 🥹❤️

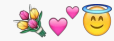
Molly - September 21, 2025 at 07:33 AM

DE

Rebecca was the older sister who without ever having met me invited me to the Lacey's home in the '60s in NYC. She gave reassurance and the comfort I needed to feel welcomed. The meal she served was second to none for a young college student. Louis partnered with and assured Denia that I was truly welcome. From this first meeting of Rebecca I am quite certain God will welcome her with gracious open arms as she enters His Kingdom.

Peace 🙏 be with you as you begin your most cherished new journey as one his best angels.

My utmost condolences to the family.



Dr. J'Mauri Elliott-Hamilton

Dr. J'Mauri Elliott-Hamilton - September 26, 2025 at 11:21 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 - September 20, 2025 at 09:58 AM