



Victoria Jackson Gray-Adams

November 5, 1926 - August 12, 2006

One of the towering figures of our nation's 1960s Civil Rights/Freedom Movement Victoria Jackson Gray Adams made transition/passed at her son's home in Baltimore, Maryland on Saturday, August 12, 2006. Mrs. Gray Adams was the first woman to run for the United States Senate from Mississippi. Along with Fannie Lou Hamer and Annie Devine, Victoria Jackson Gray Adams was one of the first three African-American women in the history of the United States to be seated as guests on the floor of the U.S. Senate (PLEASE SEE The Congressional Challenge of 1965, Hamer-Gray-Devine.). Mrs. Gray Adams, Mrs. Hamer, and Annie Devine were also the first women in the history of Mississippi to run for U.S. Congress. One of the earliest and most vigorous supporters of civil rights/human rights activity in Mississippi, Mrs. Gray Adams continued her work in spite of repeated death threats, being shot at, chased by people in cars with guns, threats to kill her family, and other attempts to end her life. She was an ardent supporter of and on the staff of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an associate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and a National Board Member of his organization, The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), during and following Dr. King's presidency. An active participant in the Mississippi Freedom Summer project of 1964, Mrs. Gray Adams was also a founder of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), Director of its National Office in Washington, D.C., and a pivotal frontline participant in the historic 1964 Challenge of the National Democratic Party in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Her

efforts helped Black people in the South gain the right to vote and be free from a vicious system of segregation and white terrorism; and Mrs. Gray Adams' efforts helped all people have more opportunity to be truly human, whole, healthy, and sane. Born 5 November 1926, in the African American village of Palmer's Crossing, in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Victoria Jackson Gray Adams began her Civil Rights/Freedom Movement work teaching voter registration and literacy classes in the early 1960s. After two weeks of increasing steadily in physical strength, with everyone expecting her to begin walking independently at any moment, Mrs. Adams walked suddenly and wonderfully from this Life into the next Life. At 5:40 PM, she flowed peacefully and victoriously into The Complete Presence of The Almighty and was received with dancing and affirmation by the Ancestors. A woman of immense bravery and immeasurable courage, Mrs. Gray Adams persevered, pushed through, and prayed through real threats and great fear; she lived her own adage: "Life shrinks or expands in direct proportion to the courage with which we live it." Mrs. Gray Adams' life journey has included teaching in public schools in rural Mississippi; being a young mother, businesswoman, and wife; participating actively in the Thai and American Women's Club while in Bangkok, Thailand; teaching in the Royal Thai Army Languages Academy, Bangkok, Thailand; founding and serving as the first president of the Afro American Women's Club (AAWC) in Bangkok, Thailand; realtor/real estate and marketing, Petersburg, Virginia; being appointed to and serving creatively for eleven years as a member of The Commonwealth/State of Virginia's Fire Services Board; being drafted into service as -- and proving to be enormously effective as -- Campus Minister at Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia; Vice President of the National Board of The Institute for Cultural Affairs/The Ecumenical Institute (North America); being a dedicated, lifetime member of — and serving on numerous local through conference level Boards and Commissions within -- The United Methodist Church; and teaching and lecturing at Harvard University, Jackson State University, Stanford University, Tougaloo College, The University of Virginia, Iliff School of Theology,

Gettysburg College, The University of Southern Mississippi, Northwood Appold Community Academy Public Charter School, Earlham College, SpiritHouse, Phillips-Exeter Academy, University of Michigan; the United Nation's Development Fund for Women; Alex Haley's Farm/The Children's Defense Fund; and hundreds of other local, state, national, and international colleges, universities, and organizations. As a result of her more than seven decades of contributions to society and the world, Mrs. Gray Adams has received awards, citations, and appreciations too numerous to list. A very brief listing includes: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Award; Wilberforce University's Distinguished Alumni Award; The United Methodist Church's highest education award, The John Wesley Award for Education; The Methodist Federation for Social Action's Bishop Leontine Kelly Peace and Justice Award; and The Fannie Lou Hamer Humanitarian Award. A local-and-global woman, with an immediate and long-term vision, Mrs. Victoria Jackson Gray Adams —with clarity and intentionality — gave her life to her family and local people, all over the globe. She was committed profoundly to empowering and elevating local people, because she wanted local people to access and enjoy greater life chances and greater life choices. Mrs. Gray Adams is featured in numerous Civil Rights films/documentaries/books — including Taylor Branch's Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Parting the Waters* and his sequel, *Pillar of Fire*; Kaye Mills' book, *This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*; and numerous other books; the documentary films *Citizen King*, *Eyes on the Prize*, and *A Century of Women*; the Academy Award nominated film, *Freedom On My Mind*, the recent film, *Standing On Our Sisters' Shoulders*, and others. Also, Mrs. Gray Adams is the face [at 37 years of age] featured on the central PR/Publicity poster for the said Academy Award nominated film, *Freedom On My Mind*; and the same photo graces the cover of the important books *Freedom Is A Constant Struggle* (edited by Susan Erenrich) and *Freedom's Daughters* (Lynne Olson). The daughter of Mack and Annie Mae Ott Jackson, Victoria Jackson graduated from Depriest

Consolidated School in Palmer's Crossing (Hattiesburg), Mississippi. She also attended Wilberforce University (Ohio), Tuskegee Institute/University (Alabama), and Jackson State College/University (Mississippi). Her first marriage was to Tony West Gray; and three children came forth during that union -- Georgie Roswitha Gray, Tony West Gray, Jr. (deceased/in transition, 1997), and Cecil Conteen Gray. Her second marriage was to Reuben Earnest Adams, Jr.; the happy couple birthed one child, Reuben Earnest Adams, III. Near the culmination of her Journey, Mrs. Jackson Gray Adams resided in Petersburg, VA with her husband Reuben; simultaneously, she resided in Baltimore, MD with her son, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter (Dr. Cecil Gray, Mrs. Sonya Hunt Gray, and Nettsaanett Victoria Gray, respectfully) and her husband Reuben. She and Reuben celebrated forty years of marriage on 20 February 2006. What a wonderful and blessed Journey! Now in transition and full of life among The Living Loving Almighty One and the Ancestors -- and therefore even more able in many ways to catalyze personal, local, national, and global justice, peace, and freedom for all people of all colors, cultures, and countries -- Mrs. Victoria Jackson Gray Adams looks forward to her legacy of bold, creative, courageous service to African American people and all people being carried on by her husband, Reuben E. Adams, Jr.; brother, Glodies C. Jackson (Catherine); daughter, Georgie Roswitha Gray Dunn Henderson; sons, Cecil Conteen Gray (Sonya) and Reuben Earnest Adams, III (Lisa); granddaughters, Lolita Dunn, Tujuana Dunn Frost, Imani Victoria Adams, Nia Lisa Adams, and Nettsaanett Amma Ruvarashe Searcy Merdie Frozene Victoria Hunt Gray; grandsons, Jerome Henderson, Tyrone Henderson, and Reuben Jelani Adams; and many other family members by blood-choice-or-chance; and uncountable friends and colleagues throughout our nation and around the globe.

Tribute Wall



“ Victoria Jackson Gray-Adams

March 25, 2023 at 10:25 AM



“ Victoria Jackson Gray-Adams

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ Hello ! Victoria's Family ! May I send my condolences to you all. Death breaks the circle of life when it hit. Ms. Victoria accomplished many things in her life time. Ms. Victoria lived to be 80 years young. The bible say at Ps.90:10 , some person will live to be 70 and others live to be 80 because of speical mightiness. The time is coming when no one will have to die again. There are so many things we would like to do in life but unforeseen things happen or illness comes and stop us. Our heavenly father will be true to his words that death will be done away with very soon Rev.21:3-5. May all the percious memories of Ms. Vicotria stay close to you all hearts. My fellow feeling, Lillian Crosby.##imported-begin##Lillian Crosby##imported-end##

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM



“ To the family and friends of Victoria. Please accept my sincere condolences during this time of your loss. Please read and find comfort in Psalms 34:18; John 5:28,29 and Rev. 21:3,4. God has promised to do away with death and the pain that it causes. May these words be of comfort to the family.##imported-begin##McNeil##imported-end##

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM



“ Please accept my sincere condolences for your loss. I too have lost loved ones in death. Even though we know that death is inevitable, it is still difficult to accept. Death was not something that God intended for us. The thought of death is always distasteful and it always will be because Jehovah God has created within us the keen desire to live forever. We never get used to it. We feel deep down in our hearts that this should not happen because, “Even time indefinite he (God) has put in their heart,” says Ecclesiastes 3:11. One of the wonderful parts of his plan is the hope of the resurrection of dead loved ones. (John 5:25, 28, 29). Please be assured that Jehovah God loves us and wants the best for us. Take comfort in the promise that he has given us at Rev. 21: 3-5 of a new earth where there will be no more death##imported-begin##Senita Swann##imported-end##

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM



“ Our lives are always touched by the legacy of those who traveled before us. God Bless you and your family. Until the Next Moon, Coach Robyn##imported-begin##Coach Robyn Gray##imported-end##

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM



“ That second scripture that I referred to is found at John 11:25. May that be of much comfort to you in the days ahead.##imported-begin##Sharon Hill##imported-end##

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM



“ Please accept my sincere condolences for the loss of Mrs. Gray. When such a person is a positive force it makes our lives so much better. When these ones are no longer with us we experience a void in our lives. It won't always be this way. First Corinthians 15:26 tells us that "enemy death" will be done away with. There is hope for our dead loved ones- .."even though he dies, will come to life". May you receive much comfort and strength as you ponder over this loving hope found in the Bible.###imported-begin###Sharon Hill###imported-end###

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM



“ I extend my deepest sympathy to the family of Victoria Jackson Gray-Adams. Mrs. Adams, as I referred to her, was such a mother figure to me and I admired her fortitude, strength and wisdom - I will certainly miss her. Just recently I drove past the house located on Dunlop street to visit; however, it appeared that no one home. I wish I had made the visit earlier. I met Mrs. Adams when I needed a place to live when I moved to Petersburg to attend graduate school at Virginia State University in 1995. She rented a room to me at her property located at 304 S. Dunlop Street and I thank God for allowing our paths to cross. She made such an impact on me that I will forever carry the rest of my life. Mr. Adams - your were life a father to me and I thank you also for your contribution to my life - God Bless you.###imported-begin###Calvin Stansbury###imported-end###

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM



“ I would like to give my condolences to the family and friends of Mrs. Victoria Jackson Gray Adams. She was such a phenomenal and courageous woman. My daughter (Dr. Breniya) is currently a 2nd grade student at NACA and have since adopted the "I AM" foundations that have been passed on by the legendary Mrs. Vickie Gray Adams. I would just like to thank God for lending us a great woman as Mrs. Adams. Her legacy will forever live on and she will be dearly missed. God Bless!###imported-begin##Angela Winder##imported-end##

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM