

In Loving Memory
of
Mrs. Thelma Newton McKay

Sunrise
June 13, 1926



Sunset
March 13, 2023

Saturday, March 25, 2023

Viewing: Eleven O'clock in the Morning

Services: Twelve Noon

South End Presbyterian Church (USA)

335 Freeland Lane

Charlotte, North Carolina

Reverend Alyce Kelly, Pastor

Obituary

Mrs. Thelma Newton McKoy was born on June 13, 1926 in Scotland County, Laurinburg, NC. She was the seventh child born to the late Peter Frank and Lola McLaughlin Newton and the wife of the late James Edward McKoy. After ninety-six years, she passed away peacefully on March 13, 2023.

Raised in a strong Christian home, Thelma attended Silver Hill Presbyterian Church in Marston, NC. In 1944, she attended North Carolina Central University (formerly North Carolina College for Negroes) and graduated with a B.A. Degree in History. Her first teaching position was in Mullins, SC, and in the years that followed, she taught in several cities across North Carolina.

In 1955, James and Thelma gave birth to a daughter, Susie, and lived in Fayetteville, NC. Thelma continued her education at A&T College, Fayetteville State College, and Michigan State University, as she renewed her teacher's certification.

Her teaching career ended in 1978 following a car accident, which led her to write a book about her harrowing experience with the legal system entitled *Trapped in the Lawyers' Den with Bloodsuckers*. Her book tour included speaking engagements at media stations, UNC Charlotte, Duke University, Johnson C. Smith University, and various legal reform organizations.

Encouraged to find opportunities where her talents could be used to empower communities, she initiated a Juneteenth historical celebration and founded the Carolina Advocates for Legal Reform. She joined the Charlotte Equal Rights Congress, where she served as the executive director. She was also a member of the Gamma Phi Delta Sorority (Basileus of Beta Eta Chapter), Help Abolish Legal Tyranny (HALT), International Black Writers (IBWC), National Council for Negro Women (NCNW), and the N.C. Association of Educators (NCAE).

As a storyteller rooted in strong Christian values and her deep love for family, Thelma sought to impart her wisdom to others. In 1995, she won the National Legacies Contest for her short story titled *Strengthening the Family the Old-fashioned Way—By Example*, and later wrote, *The ABCs of Instilling Good Moral Values Across Generations*. She was a regular at family reunions and funerals, and she hosted the 1985 Newton Family Reunion in Charlotte.

Thelma now rejoins her family of thirteen who preceded her (*in death order*): her parents, Peter Frank (1965) and Lola (1950), and her ten siblings, Josie (1922), Leonard (1971), Fairley (1976), Cosie (1995), Henry (1998), Bruce (2001), Anise (2002), Willie (2005), Laura (2014), and Leon (2016)—all thirteen home together again.

She leaves to cherish her memories: a daughter, Susie Williams (Ryan) of Durham; three grandchildren, Steven Simpson (Brandi) of Charlotte, Lamont Simpson (Paula) of Charlotte, and Sydney Williams of Durham; five great grandchildren, De'Jour Simpson, Victoria Washburn, Laila Simpson, Maddox Simpson, and Mia Simpson, all of Charlotte; a sister-in-law, Lillian Newton of New Jersey; a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.