



Edith Lucille Harris

June 26, 1938 - April 22, 2020

Edith Lucille Harris was born on June 26, 1938 in Selma, North Carolina, to her late parents Marie (Tinsley) of Wayne County, N.C., and Johnnie L. Raiford of Johnston County, N.C. Edith was the youngest of four siblings; her brother and sisters—Bettye Lucinda Tracey (d. 1991), Robert L. Raiford (d. 2014) and Helen Beatrice Moultrie (d.2007) preceded her in death.

Edith graduated with Honors from Richard B. Harrison High School in Selma, N.C., in 1956. She was voted best dancer and noted as helpful in the class undertakings. She aspired to be an entrepreneur, and her hobby was collecting cosmetics.

In 1960, Edith relocated to Washington, D.C., with her two eldest children, Gwendolyn Faye Raiford and the late Gregory Eugene Raiford Sr. (d. 1996). Jamil Rasheed and Collette M. Dawud would follow later.

Edith joined her beloved Southern Baptist Church of Washington, D.C., in 1961. She continued to nurture her relationship with the Lord and fellowship with the saints that had begun when, at age 7, she accepted Christ at the First Baptist Church of Selma, N .C.

Edith graduated from the Atlantic Business College in 1967, and soon embarked upon a decades-long career in civil service. She began working as a Clerk/Stenographer with the U.S. Department of Interior in 1972. During her tenure, she was recognized as an outstanding employee under the Carter Administration; she was recognized as a standout member of the Division of Foreign Activities—Bureau of Reclamation. She retired in 1992 as a Library

Technician with the Department of Defense.

In 1977, she married her life partner, Thurman A. Harris of Bedford, Virginia. They resided at 1639 V Street NW for 45 yrs. Edith loved Thurman's four son's (Keith Harris, Thurman Jr.(deceased), Jeffrey Harris and Leslie Harris (deceased) just as her own. Their relationship was truly a light-hearted romantic comedy from a time gone by.

In her 81yrs of life, Edith never possessed a driver's license—nor did she need one. Her sidekick, Thurman, was always ready to drive her wherever she needed to go. She was definitely licensed in giving orders and directions on exactly how you should be driving. They were virtually inseparable. And in the moments when she would drag him out of the house in service of her needs (like keeping her hair appointment on his 80th birthday LOL), he would wait patiently for his beloved while reading the Bible to pass time. Edith often knew the answer to Thurman's questions before he would ask, and could anticipate his needs without him even mentioning them. They had a finely tuned partnership filled with laughter, secret day trips to get away, and their shared love of Jesus Christ.

There wasn't a household on the block that wasn't familiar with and fond of the Harris'. She was the living embodiment of community, organizing block parties, being of service to her elderly or disabled neighbors, and offering meals to the police officers working across the street from her home. She would cook and feed everyone, sending care packages of good home cooked meals. Everything that she made was delicious, but her potato salad and sweet potato pies are the stuff of legend.

Momma Harris, as she was affectionately known, was a faithful and trusted member of Southern Baptist Church Praise & Worship Center. Over her many years there, she demonstrated what it means to be devoted to ministry. At one time or another, she was active with the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Conventions, the Pastoral Care Ministry, the board of ushers, Martha's Ministry, and the Concert Choir. She served as secretary of the Trustee Ministry, Vice President of the Missionary Society, and for 15 years, she

served as the armor bearer for First Lady Eleanor Doom. All the while, was a faithful participant in Sunday School because she believed in keeping her priorities in proper order. In 2002, she was acknowledged as Mother of the Year.

Looking to expand her capacity to turn ministry into an action verb, she earned a Professional Food Manager Certification. She could regularly be found in the church's kitchen, leading a team preparing for every church function that involved feeding people. Momma Harris became Deaconess Harris in 1994, officially consecrated in 2011 ..and continued to perform a myriad of duties at the church until she recently fell ill and was hospitalized. But her legacy was already secure. Southern Baptist is a beloved part of her family, and she had done her best (through her words, and most importantly, through her deeds) to introduce all her relatives to Christ.

Edith's Christian values and feminine grace were always on display. She took special pride in her granddaughter Maleka (Me-Me). They shared a special bond, as Maleka was, for many years, Edith's only girl grandchild. Sixteen years later, Edith would be gifted with another female grandchild, Pasia. But in the intervening years, she doted on Maleka. Among their countless memorable moments were their weekly trips downtown to Woodward & Lothrop on Saturdays, getting shoes and then promptly going across the street to Lerner's to get stockings for the next day's church service. Edith modeled elegance for her granddaughter; she took pride in her appearance, insisting on appropriate attire and making sure that her nails were always polished and her hair coiffed. When you were with her, she spared no expense as she always wanted you to have the best, because that's how she rolled.

She was a "GRAND"mother in the truest sense of the word. After her retirement in 1992, Edith showed the love and compassion of Christ as a foster parent. She provided childcare not only for her children, but also for

relatives and a few officers from the Third District Police Department who had become fond of her. During her time as a foster mom, she was given three additional gifts that she was unable to part with. She and Thurman loved, and raised Robert, Angel, and Devin, each from just a few days old. In 2007, she was recognized by Children's National Medical Center for her work with and care of children, significantly contributing to the welfare of others.

Once you crossed her threshold, you knew that you were entering a space overflowing with love. She was going to tell you her true thoughts whether they were solicited or not. And then, after correcting you with love, she would pat you up and make everything better. If you ever worked in the kitchen with her, you know that she didn't play when it came to being clean and organized. She took her cooking very seriously; she passed down her methods, recipes, and techniques to her daughters, Gwen and Angel, as well as granddaughter Maleka. She was delighted to come and lend a hand in anyone's kitchen and she was extremely proud when she was able to help with her granddaughter's catering company.

Edith's passing marks the end of a special era. The legacy that was started by the children of Marie and Johnnie Raiford is now passed on to the family that remains. Our final matriarch has been called home to be with her sisters and brother.

Edith leaves to cherish and excel in her memory: a devoted and beloved Husband of 42 years, Thurman Harris; three sisters-in-love, Leiza Raiford, Merlyn Raiford, and Ruth Darby (John); one brother-in-love, Eugene Payne; three daughters, Gwendolyn Raiford, Colette Dawud (Lynwood), Angel Levi-Harris; three sons, Jamil Rasheed, Robert Harris, and Devin Cunningham-Harris; two daughters-in-love, Yolanda Henderson and Ligia Raiford;

Fifteen grandchildren, Sharnell Raiford (Erica), Maleka "Me-Me" Lenzy, Jonathan Raiford, Gregory Raiford Jr., David Raiford, Trevon Henderson, Jahaan Rasheed, Jihad Rasheed, Teren Dickson, Cameron Dickson, Pasia Dickson, Adiya McAroy-Gray, Amira MacAroy-Gray, Saara

Alaowi and Nora Alaowi;

Seven great-grandchildren, Shanica Raiford, Sharnaye Raiford, Keyshawn Raiford, Stephon Hansborough, Tristan Jeru Dickson, Nazii Johnson, and Nyzir Johnson;

Beloved best friends, Pastor Eleanor Doom and Gladys Palmer; godchildren, Jalissa Ithomas, Desiree Deshawnta Doom-Thomas and Corinthia Harley (Cookie); cousins, Diane Raiford and Wanda Fraizer

A host of nieces, nephews, devoted nephew Charles Tracey Jr.(Marla), great-nieces, great-nephews, 12 adopted grandchildren, other relatives, friends, and her beloved church family at Southern Baptist.

She has been reunited with her parents Marie & Johnnie Raiford, son Gregory Raiford Sr, her three siblings, special daughter Shirley-Marie McAroy-Gray, niece Brenda Waters and other loved ones that have preceded her in death.

Edith set a standard by which we are to live, give, and worship the Lord. We rejoice in knowing that God has called her home and that her work here on Earth was completed in excellence. May the moments that we will surely miss her in the physical, become opportunities to allow her spirit to shine through each of us via good and kind deeds. We will miss her elegance, grace, directness, good cooking, and loving spirit. We are truly thankful that God saw fit to grace us all with her presence.

Cemetery Details

Cedar Hill Cemetery

4111 Pennsylvania Ave
Suitland, MD 20746

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 29. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Marshall-March Funeral Homes - Prince George's County
4308 Suitland Road
Suitland, MD 20746
(301) 736-1616
info@marchfh.com
<https://www.marshallmarchfh.com>

Service

MAY 29. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

MARSHALL-MARCH FUNERAL HOME OF MD
4308 SUITLAND ROAD SUITLAND MARYLAND 20746
SUITLAND, MD 20746

Tribute Wall



“ To View the Webcast of the Funeral for Edith Lucille Harris, Please Click the Link below.



Marshall-March Funeral Homes - May 26, 2020 at 10:49 AM



“ My sisters grave is beside hers and I seen that Thurman had no death year n went to see how I can help smh I spend a lot of time here with my sister so I hope Ms Edith is with me too I love everyone here 🙏🏾 100

justice - March 11, 2025 at 05:36 PM



“ *Edith Lucille Harris*

October 23, 2023 at 08:15 AM



“ *Praying for you and your family*

*Ms. Jean Washington
Washington,DC*

Jean Washington - May 29, 2020 at 09:12 AM

CH

“ I thank God for mother Harris that I had the honor to know for 37 years she has always looked out for me gave me encouraging words she like a second mother to me everytime I would call her or see her she would say hey Pooh how are you doing continue to rest in Jesus I will see you again always in my heart and memories.
Love Corinthia Harley

Corinthia Harley - May 28, 2020 at 12:17 PM

MB

“ Praying that your family be surrounded by God's comforting love and peace during this time of loss...

Sis. Mary Brown

Mary Brown - May 27, 2020 at 10:28 AM

CP

Edith was a wonderful friend of mines. I meet Edith at the Department of Defense where we worked together for many years. She would also try to get me to visit her church. At that time she knew I had backslide. She is the one who introduced me to Christ again, she was the reason I join The Southern Baptist Church at that time. I will miss her. I pray that God will give the Family Peace and Comfort . Carolyn Pierce

Carolyn Pierce - May 29, 2020 at 09:00 AM

DT

“ *To the Harris Family,*

During this time of loss, you can be assured of the comfort and guidance that await you at gentle hand of our Heavenly Father. God's blessing to you and your family.

With heartfelt sympathy,

Delphine Taylor & family

Delphine Taylor - May 27, 2020 at 10:19 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Edith Lucille Harris.*



May 26, 2020 at 02:05 PM

TW

“ *Sorry For Your Loss
Jesus Christ Loves Me
We Love You*



Thomas Widgeon - May 21, 2020 at 06:01 AM

AH

“ *You will be forever remembered
Love,
Angela & Mario Horton*

Angela Horton - May 20, 2020 at 01:03 PM

EF

“ We know this must be a very difficult and demanding time for your family. May you draw comfort from God as he help you to cope with the heavy weight of your loss. Thinking of you all.

Evans family - May 20, 2020 at 12:16 PM

LS

“ Sending my love, prayers and condolences to the family of Mrs. Edith L. Harris. May God bless you all and bring you strength and comfort during this difficult time.

Liz Stewart (Milwaukee, WI)

Liz Stewart - May 20, 2020 at 10:01 AM



“ We the March Family and Marshall-March 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.

Marshall-March Funeral Homes - May 19, 2020 at 05:11 PM