

*Celebrating the Life and Legacy of*  
**OUR BELOVED MOTHER**



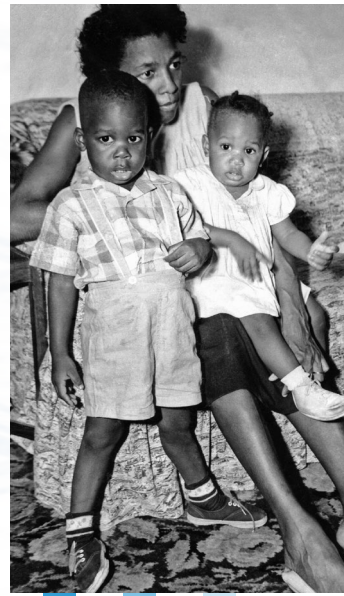
*Bettye Jo Graham*

SUNRISE – September 25, 1926

•

SUNSET – January 13, 2025





# A LEGACY™

*a heritage: character qualities, memoirs . . .*

Our beloved **Bettye Jo Graham**, affectionately known as “BJ,” was born on September 25, 1926, in Crescent City, Florida, to her loving parents, the late Daisy and Willie Mack. She was the youngest of ten children and the last to survive. Bettye Jo was raised in Crescent City, where she attended the public schools of Putnam County, which nurtured her strong passion for learning.

After graduating from high school, Bettye Jo went on to attend Bethune-Cookman College, where she excelled academically, played basketball, and was proud to be known as one of “Ms. Bethune’s Girls.” She graduated with a degree and teaching credentials, marking the beginning of a distinguished career in education.

Her first teaching assignment was as the principal of Popular Springs School in the Douglass Cross Community of Walden County, Florida. The school consisted of a single small building that housed grades 1 through 3, with Ms. Graham teaching the 2nd and 3rd grades. She poured her heart into her work, loving every moment of it, until the school closed in 1955.

Bettye Jo later relocated to DeFuniak Springs, Florida, where she met and married her husband, William Franklin “Bubba” Graham, a proud member of the United States Air Force. The two fell in love and married in 1949, and were blessed with three children during their 60-year marriage, which lasted until his death in 2009. BJ loved being a wife and mother, and she fully supported her husband’s military career, which led the family to live in Tampa, Orlando, San Antonio, Wichita Falls, Germany, South Dakota, and finally back to Orlando after his retirement from the Air Force following 25 years of honorable service.

Throughout her life, Bettye Jo remained deeply committed to education. She served with Orange County Public Schools for many years as a substitute teacher, sharing her love of learning and positively impacting the lives of countless students. Her passion for education was driven not only by her joy in helping others grow but also by the strong relationships she built with the educators she worked alongside.

Bettye Jo accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Savior at an early age, and throughout her 98 years, she remained a kind, generous, and loving woman with a heart of gold. In 1965, she joined Hurst Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Orlando, where she remained an active and faithful member for the rest of her life. She participated in Bible study, served as Church Mother, and held numerous roles, including Sunday School Teacher, Sunday School Superintendent, Deaconess, Stewardess, Class Leader, and Choir Member. Her dedication to the church was unwavering—whenever the church doors were open, Bettye Jo was there, ready to serve with a spirit of gratitude and joy.

At home, Bettye Jo was a devoted and loving mother and grandmother. She took great pride in raising and nurturing her family, instilling in her children and grandchildren a deep sense of love, wisdom, a thirst for education, and Christian values. She understood her role as the matriarch of the family and embraced it fully, always keeping the family united. In addition to her family, BJ enjoyed several hobbies, including spending time with her El Claudia Allen Seniors group, playing Bingo twice a week, traveling, and keeping her mind sharp with Word Search puzzles.

Our beloved Bettye Jo loved the Lord with all her heart, soul, and mind, and was faithful to all He called her to. Her presence will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.

Bettye Jo was preceded in death by her **husband**, William F. Graham (2009), their **daughter**, Karen E. Clayton, and all 9 of her siblings.

She leaves behind to cherish her memory: **son** – Zachary (Lucy) Graham; **daughter** – Gail Cosby; twelve **grandchildren** – Felicia (Vernon) Gibson of Orlando, Jana Graham of Orlando, Andre Graham of Orlando, Antwyne (Taracha ) Graham of Orlando, Laconda Graham from Rochester, NY, Lathadius Graham from Rochester, NY, Kionas Allen of Orlando, Daniel Bivens of Orlando, Jonathan Cihal from Pasley, Florida, Allen Graham of Orlando, Asya (Mario) Evans from Leesburg, Florida, and Jarian Truss of Orlando;

**24 great grandchildren**; **11 great-great grandchildren**; and a host of **nieces, nephews, cousins, Godchildren**, and many **friends**.



## Hurst Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church

901 Bentley Street, Orlando, FL 32805 • Officiating – Rev. Michael E. Kennedy, Pastor • Eulogist – Rev. Jiles J. Smith, Rt. A.M.E. Pastor

*Music Provided By Asia & Mario Evans, and Allan Graham [Grandchildren]*

### ORDER OF SERVICE

Friday, January 24, 2025 • 1:00pm

**Processional** – “*I Shall Wear a Crown*” .....Officiants & Family

**Invocation** ..... Rt. Presiding Elder Henry L. Postell

**Scripture Readings**

Old Testament – *Psalm 27* ..... Rev. Rhonda McIntyre  
*Mt. Zion AME Church – Oakland, FL*

New Testament – *1 Thess. 4:13-18* .....Rev. Michael Smith, Pastor  
*Abundant Life Disciple Center – Orlando FL*

**Music Selection** – “*How Great is Our God / How Great Thou Art*”

**Reflections** (*limit your remarks to 2 minutes each, please*)

As a Friend – Mary Ryan

As a Church Member – Lillie P. Williams

As a Neighbor – Tracy White

As an Aunt – Joyce Moorehead [Niece]

**Musical Tribute**..... Jarian Truss [Great Grandson]

**Resolutions & Acknowledgments** ..... Postell’s Mortuary

**Visual Memories Slide Presentation**

[Created by Karolyn Sanders & Audrey Matthews – Nieces]

**Musical Selection** – “*Walk with Me, Lord*”... Pastor Michael E. Kennedy

**Eulogy** ..... Rev. Jiles J. Smith, Rt. Pastor / Hurst Chapel AME Church

**Instructions**..... Postell’s Mortuary

**Recessional** – “*Soon and Very Soon*” ..... Officiants and Family

### REPAST

Immediately following the service, a repast will be held at the Family Home – 604 Cookman Ave., Orlando, FL.



*Yet we have this assurance: Those who belong to God will live; their bodies will rise again! Those who sleep in the earth will rise up and sing for joy!*

– Isaiah 26:19 NLT

### INTERMENT

**Bushnell National Cemetery** – Monday, January 27, 2025 – 11:00am





*"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."*

– Revelation 21:4

**Pall Bearers**  
Grandsons

**Flower Attendants**  
Church Members and  
Friends of the Family

**Interment**  
**Florida National Cemetery**  
6502 SW 102nd Avenue  
Bushnell, FL 33513

**Livestream**  
**Postell's Mortuary**  
Orlando, Florida



## In Appreciation

The family of Bettye Jo Graham wishes to extend genuine gratitude and appreciation to all who found so many comforting ways to convey condolences, acts of love, heartfelt sympathy, uplifting words, supporting prayers, or whatever acts of kindheartedness you expressed during this time.

Please accept our sincere gratitude and know that your love and support have meant more to us than mere words could ever express. May God's blessings rain upon each of you! We take solace in 1 Corinthians 2:9.....

*"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."*

– The Family

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This will also allow you to zoom in on the photos.



Rev. Henry L. Postell, II  
Lic. Funeral Director  
and Embalmer



Beverly Postell  
General Manager  
Notary Public

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Orlando, Florida 32818 • (407) 295-3857

Rt. Rev. Samuel Green, Sr.  
Lic. Funeral  
Director

Anita Lemon  
Lic. Funeral  
Director

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