



*Celebrating the Life and Legacy of*



*Thelma L. Allen*

**Alfred Street Baptist Church**

301 S. Alfred Street – Alexandria, Virginia 22314

*Officiating – Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley, Senior Pastor*





*To precious in our hearts...*



# Order of Service

Officiating  
**Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley, Pastor**  
Alfred Street Baptist Church – Alexandria, Virginia

11:00 am • Friday, December 5, 2025



**Prelude** .....Musical Tribute by Maestro Ralph Herndon

**Invocation** ..... Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

**Hymn of Rejoicing** – “*Blessed Assurance Medley*”  
Maestro Ralph Herndon and Congregation

**Scripture Readings**  
Old Testament – *Psalms 121* ..... Aunt Sara Carter  
New Testament – *John 14:1-6* ..... siSTAR Yvette Irving  
Epistle – *1 Thessalonians 4:13-18* ..... siSTAR Audrey Bullock

**Prayer of Comfort** ..... Rev. Dr. James A. Nuckles [cousin]

**Musical Selection** – “*Jesus is the Best Thing!*” ... Maestro Ralph Herndon

**Acknowledgments** ..... Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

**Tributes / Reflections**  
“*A Letter to my Girl*” from Anne Wallace ..... READ BY Jan A. Peters  
**Open to Family and Friends**  
(limit your remarks to 2 minutes each, please)

**Presentation of Gratitude** ..... Tammi Allen Campbell

**Musical Selection**..... Maestro Ralph Herndon

**Eulogy**.....Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

**Closing Prayer and Benediction** .....Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

**Recessional** – “*Total Praise Medley*”  
Led by Maestro Ralph Herndon

## REPAST

Immediately following the service, please join the Family for a time of Refreshment and Reflection here at Alfred Street Baptist Church.



“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







# A Legacy™

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

“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.”  
– Psalm 116:15

## THE LIFE, LOVE, AND LEGACY OF

# Thelma L. Allen

### The EARLY YEARS

**Thelma Louise Allen**, the second daughter of Jesse James and Carrie Lee James, raised in a proud family of 7 children, was born in Eufaula, Alabama on September 2, 1938. At an early age, her maternal grandmother, Alice Walton, moved the entire family north and played a dominant role in raising Thelma and at that time, her only sibling, her sister Ruby Jean, in Washington, DC. Grandma Alice worked diligently to provide a better life for the entire family.

In Washington, Thelma attended Randall Jr. High School and later graduated from Cardoza High School.

Always the entrepreneur, she went on to graduate from the Hawaii Beauty and Cultural School of Cosmetology. While honing her skills and flair for hair and fashion, she also worked as a receptionist for OK 100 Radio Station where she met many of her clientele.

While living in Alabama, she'd watched many times as her favorite uncle, James “JD” Walton, played basketball with neighborhood boys and relatives. What a surprise to Thelma when years later, one of those young boys, now a handsome young man, in uniform and enlisted in the U.S. Army, came to Washington, DC to visit her Uncle JD, and now “formally” met the beautiful Thelma L. James. Tyree T. Allen, Jr, was that handsome young man.

In June 1958, she went on to marry Tyree, and the Army began to have them travel. They moved to Chicago, Illinois, (yes, the South Side!) where Tyree thrived as an aspiring Electrical Engineer for the Army, and Thelma obtained an Operator position with AT&T (then called Ma Bell). In Chicago, she worked for and became great friends with now one of her dearest girlfriends of 60+ years, Sara Carter. (present today). She also worked as a beautician at Dez Beauty Box and Alsna Beauty Shop for many years.

Tyree and Thelma began their family with the birth of their first born, Tammi Kim Allen (Campbell), in Chicago. The budding young family was then stationed in El Paso, Texas for a few years before settling in Norfolk, VA, where they remained for over 20 years. It was here they also added 2 sons to the family, Domingo Lynn Allen, and Tyree T. Allen, III.

### The “MERMAID CITY” YEARS

In Norfolk, VA, Thelma grew into being the most devoted wife & mother while continuing to cultivate friendships that have lasted to this day. Because the Allen family was always traveling and away from their families, the Simpkins family adopted them. It was also in Norfolk, where she became known as “Cookie”, a nickname only those from Norfolk call her by to this day. Yvonne Simpkins-Watkins, (present today), babysat Cookie's children as a teenager, and over 6 decades, grew a strong bond with Cookie. As of 2025, they talked or texted each other, and laughed EVERY NIGHT, until the wee hours of each morning.



Thelma was a stay-at-home mother until her children began school, then she went to work for Norfolk Community Hospital as a receptionist, while continuing to nurture the lasting relationships she was blessed by. At the hospital she met Gloria (and Joe) Cooper, (present today) who are amongst friendships that have lasted 60+ years.

As “girl moms” & budding newlyweds, Katie B. Catalon (present today) and Thelma, bonded over being married to military men and raising children in VA. Again, a 65+ year bond – an endearing relationship that also bonded their daughters & granddaughters. Three generations of wonderful women were produced.

Birds of a feather: Bonita White (67 + years of friendship, present today) and Thelma grew a friendship built on “laughter”, love of the HAMPTON jazz music festivals, and loving trust. Belly laughs while raising their children were the great times! Holding the hand of Thelma and her son, while he underwent chemo, takes a friendship to another level. That is beautiful Bonita.

While visiting her mother in Washington, DC, Thelma met one of her closest friends, Annie Wallace (60+ years, present today). And with enthusiasm, Anne was always with Thelma as she coordinated and planned cultural bus trips to Broadway, Disney World, and Atlantic City for 40+ years. In true Anne fashion, along with her daughters, Anne held Thelma's hand during her last few weeks of her life.

In Norfolk, Thelma attended Old Dominion University and was later promoted to Medical Transcriptionist in the Radiology Department. After 12 years at Community Hospital, she took pride in pivoting to an administrative position with the first Black bank opened in Norfolk, VA, Atlantic National Bank of Norfolk.

### MOVING BACK UP! NOVA (Northern Virginia)

In 1979, Tyree was last stationed at Ft. Belvoir, VA and moved his wife and 3 teenagers to Lorton, VA. Thelma was elated to be back in the DMV (DC/MD/VA area) and continued her professional career with Fairfax County Public Schools.

Being a “social butterfly”, she and Tyree became members of “The Mr. & Mrs. Social Club” where 12 couples, each took turns hosting an elaborate social event throughout the year. Thelma and Tyree chose December and became known for their Festive Christmas Feasts and dazzling attire. This is



where 12 Mr. & Mrs. couples met and conducted business, then dined and danced the night away, for decades. Jeannette Turner – (present today), a friend for 60+ years, encouraged Thelma & Tyree to participate, and all the couples became family. As of today, Sara Carter and Jeanette Turner, both friends of Thelma's 60+ years, are the last 2 lights representing the bright living legacy of “THE Mr. and Mrs. Social Club”.

The NOVA years brought great joy as each child graduated and moved up in the world. It also brought great struggle, as Thelma and Tyree's eldest son was diagnosed with Leukemia. Domingo fought a hard battle, and the family rallied together, moving temporarily across country to Seattle, WA to seek treatment. But in the end, the Lord in His infinite wisdom called His angel home – a hardship no couple wants to face.

After the children graduated and moved away from home, Thelma and Tyree went on to retire. Thelma spent 19 years with Fairfax County PS, and she and Tyree built their dream retirement home in Woodbridge, VA where they enjoyed decades of entertaining & traveling. Thelma also became one of Northern Virginia's most sought-after Wedding Planners and continued her now famous weekend excursions to Broadway!

She and Tyree celebrated 54 years of wedded unity in NOVA with many, many friends by their side. In 2010, the Lord called home His soldier, Master Sergeant Tyree T. Allen, Jr. Though apart, their love never wavered and their love legacy lives on.

### LET'S STAY TOGETHER (The Orlando Experience)

Thelma was not fond of the South as a place to live, not even to retire. But as always, keeping her family together was most important. So, just as COVID began to lessen, she decided it was best to all be together. She and Tyree 3 (her primary home caregiver whom she adored) joined her daughter Tammi and son-in-love Barrington in moving to Kissimmee, FL, an Orlando suburb. It was here she began her famous texting (yes, “texting at then 83”) in the middle of the night to all her Northern friends & family.

She made sure to stay connected to her beloved Alfred Street Baptist Church family on YouTube every Sunday, and continued to pray with her Membership Group. And, every evening, as she went to bed, she'd select sermon after sermon by Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley and listen in comfort. She often shared links for different sermons to her friends as she thought his message would carry them through.

In Florida, she cultivated several new relationships and shared her “direct” motherly wisdom, with LOVE.

### END OF AN ERA

In September 2025, Thelma celebrated her 87th birthday (oops, her 3 x 29th birthday), entertaining with laughter and love. She would laugh sooo hard, often she could not finish her story, or it was inaudible through the tears of laughter.

In late September, though she never complained of any pain, she was diagnosed with gallstones, which led to a swift deterioration of several organs. The Lord tested her and tested her family. The family prayed, just as she had prayed and prayed and asked for prayers the entire year of 2025 for her daughter's cure from Stage 4 cancer.

God listened. He answered Thelma's prayers and the prayers of all those she asked to pray. And in August, Tammi received a miraculous remission of ALL cancer. TO GOD BE THE GLORY! Thelma cried and THANKED EVERYONE she'd texted, with LARGE LETTERS, because she'd learned that LARGE LETTERS meant you're shouting. And she was shouting! PRAISING GOD LOUDLY and thanking all of those who prayed with her!

And then, peacefully and quietly in the early morning of October 28, 2025, God, in His infinite wisdom, called His child Thelma L. Allen home, peacefully, to be with Him. HIS will is done.

### GOING HOME

Going home before her were her **parents**, Carrie and Jesse James, her ever-loving **grandmother**, Alice Walton, her beloved **husband**, Tyree T. Allen, Jr, her **son**, Domingo L. Allen, **Aunt** Beatrice Walton, her favorite “**Uncle Shelly**” – James JD Walton (Ruth), and **siblings**, Ruby Williams (Pastor A.D. Williams), Jesse James, Jr., Loretta Bates (Louis Bates), Robert Andre James, David Russell James.

Thelma leaves to cherish special memories with her: her **sister** – Alice Williams, her **son** Tyree T. Allen, III, her **daughter** Tammi Allen Campbell (her favorite **son-in-love**, Barrington Campbell, two **grandchildren** Nyah Campbell and Barrington Campbell, II & the Campbell family);

Adoring **nieces** – Vanessa Allen Young, Patricia Powell, Antoinette Q. Brown, Demetria Williams & their **children**; Uncle JD's one and only **daughter** – Loretta Walton, special **great niece** – Tierra Jefferson; God-sent **daughter**; Jan Peters & her **family**;

Loved **nephews** – Patrick “Chip” Allen, Eric Williams, Stephen Little (Shannon Little), Brandon Bates & their **children**;

And a huge village of extended & adopted **daughters, sons, families**, and **special friends** (especially the 60+ years of friendship ladies, and their families). To God be the Glory!





*“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

Keon Odum  
Stephen Little  
David Giddens  
Kyle Irving  
Barrington Campbell, II  
Patrick “Chip” Allen  
Reginald Grant

## Honorary Pall Bearers

Joseph Campbell  
Tyree T. Allen, III

## Interment

Arlington National Cemetery • Arlington, Virginia 22211  
A private interment will take place at a later date.

## In Appreciation

All of your cards, calls, gifts, messages, prayers, e-mails, texts and visits to see Mom have meant the world to us.

Thank you for all of your support and for being there.  
Your outpouring of love and support have blessed us more than you’ll ever know. May God bless you all!

We take comfort 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



TYRA BAKER-THOMPSON  
FAMILY FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATION SERVICE

Services Entrusted To:

**Tyra Baker-Thompson**

FAMILY FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATION SERVICE

*“Honoring Lives for Generations”*

814 Upshur Street Northwest – Washington DC 20011

(571) 238-1426

Services By:

**Marvin C. Zanders Funeral Home, Inc.**

*“The People’s Choice”*

Established  
— 1960 —

232 West Michael Gladden Blvd. – Apopka, Florida 32703

(407) 886-3388

more than a program by **jab designs** orlando (407) 381-9339  
© 2025

[jabdesigns.com](http://jabdesigns.com)

For a digital version of this program, you may scan this QR-code. This also allows you to zoom in closer to photos.

