

# THE LIFE & LEGACY OF *Fredericka* SIMMONS BROWN

Fredericka Odessa Simmons Brown was born on June 22, 1931, in Coconut Grove, Florida, to the late Charles A. Simmons and Margaret E. Simmons. She and her twin brother, Frederick, were the youngest of the Simmons children.

Fredericka was raised in a Christian home, and at an early age, she accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior. She was a faithful member of Christ Episcopal Church for over 90 years.

While growing up in Coconut Grove, Fredericka received her early education at George Washington Carver. She attended high school at Booker T. Washington Senior High School, where she graduated with honors, Class of 1950. After graduating from high school, Fredericka understood that opportunities for higher education were limited due to segregation, but she also recognized the importance of being educated—a value that had been instilled in her since birth.

Fredericka matriculated to Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Florida, majoring in elementary education. While attending Bethune-Cookman, she formed a special bond with the founder and president of the college, Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune. So much so that Fredericka was one of the students Mrs. Bethune entrusted to take her grandson, Albert, to church each Sunday. Fredericka's relationship with Mrs. Bethune also reinforced her desire to become an educator and ignited her commitment to community activism.

Upon returning home to Miami, Fredericka reconnected with a schoolmate from Booker T. Washington Senior High School, and the two formed a bond. Fredericka married Wellington Brown in 1958, and from this union, four children were born. After receiving her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, Fredericka returned to Miami to begin her journey as an educator. Segregation did not stop Fredericka in her quest to teach. She began her career at A.L. Lewis Elementary School, a school established for African American students in the Homestead and Florida City area. Fredericka continued her career at Olinda Elementary School in Miami, Florida.







Desiring to enhance her career, she joined the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated/Alpha Delta Chapter over fifty years ago. During her many years as a member, she faithfully served on several committees, participated and supported programs and activities, and demonstrated her love for the sorority by holding various leadership positions. She enthusiastically held the place of leading songstress for chapter meetings.

After 33 years of loyal and committed service to her students and her community, Fredericka retired from the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system. As a retiree, Fredericka's work was not done— from 1992 until her passing, she worked fervently in her community.

Fredericka volunteered extensively and received numerous accolades for her involvement on various boards and committees, including but not limited to the Coconut Grove Community Action Agency, Miami-Dade Community Action Agency, Coconut Grove Local Development Corporation, Miami-Dade Juvenile Justice Court, Affirmative Asian Group at the Church of the Ascension, Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry, Miami Bahamas Goombay Festival Committee, Christ Church Retirees, Episcopal Church Women (ECW), Daughters of the King, Saint Cecilia Guild, and as both Sunday School Superintendent and Sunday School Teacher.

On Monday, June 30th, 2025, Fredericka was called to her heavenly home. Fredericka's legacy will live on in those who loved, treasured and held her in high esteem. She leaves an illustrious legacy in her loving children: Parnice Lee (Gregory), Darnice Brown, Eldrick Brown, Marci Brown Covington (Karlton). Grandchildren: Tarian Lee, Tanice Lee, Tajuan Gibbs, Tayana Gibbs, Mikeya Brown, Kelni Brown, Kennedy Covington and Kaylin Covington. Great grandchildren: Shamaira Dukes, Ernest Mims, Tarian Lee Jr., Le'Ron Dukes, Keauria Gary, Shakyra Sweet, Roniya Dukes, Shani Brown, Kemuaria Gary, Riyana Dukes, Tarria Lee, Anaya Gibbs, Da'moni Robbins, Keilon Gary, Salam Sonny, Tahir Lee and Cali Edgecomb. Brother-in-Law: Benjamin Brown (Linda). Sisters-in-Law: Delores Brown Barksdale, Willie Mae Brown. Nephews and Nieces: William Hayes, Preston Hayes, Margaret Hayes, Brenda Thompson, Mariea Broomfield, Henry Mae Thomas and Ronnie Thomas. A host of other relatives and lifelong friends.