

Pallbearers

Edward Spencer
Greg Johnson
Lester Scott

Emmitt Glover
Ronnie Nelson
William Luse

Honorary Pallbearers

Clarence Kendricks
Future Production Musicians
Keith Washington

Flower Bearers
Friends of the Family

Wendy Moten Band
Hubba – Bubba Band
Barry Eastmond Band

Interment
Grand Lawn Cemetery
23501 Grand River
Detroit, MI 48219

Arrangements Entrusted To

Eastside Chapel
527 Owen Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313) 875-1589



Northwest Chapel
17500 Fenkell Ave.
Detroit, MI
(313) 837-4440

Wilson-Akin Funeral Homes
David W. Akins, CFSP, Director

Acknowledgement

Perhaps you sent a lovely card, or sat quietly in a chair;
Perhaps you sent a floral piece, if so we saw it there.
Perhaps you spoke the kindest words, as any a friend could say;
Perhaps you were not there at all, just thought of us that day.
Whatever you did to console our hearts.
We thank you so much — Whatever the part.

The Ridgeway Family

Special Thanks

Those Family and Friends who stood by Us during this time of need!
Rev. Lawrence K. London and The New Jerusalem Temple Baptist Church Family
Rev. Edward L. Branch and The Third New Hope Baptist church Family
Rev. Wilma R. Johnson and The New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church Family
Rev. Edgar L. Vann, Jr. and The Second Ebenezer Baptist Church Family
Bishop Andre Woods and The Revival Tabernacle Church Family

Linda "Lulu" Brown
Shawn Gear
Garzelle McMurray
Sharon London
Sandra West
William Townley
Dorie Franklin
George McKenney
Niecey Williams

Simone Brown
Monique Montgomery
Anita Baker Bridgeforth
Lillie White
David Akins
Jean Foshee
Mike Brown
Dr. Leisen
Pam Nobel Robinson

Eve Ellerbee
Barbara and India Watson
Rita Griffin
Kenneth & Cathy Finny
Lajooyce Hughes
Debra Smith Pollard
Calester Arnold
Ramonda Jean Hollenquest
Dr. Jewel Hamner

Jeri Gurley
Edward Spencer
Cheryl London
Janine Williams
"T V"

Donations to the Scleroderma Foundation can be made through the :

Scleroderma Foundation, 300 Rosewood Drive, Suite 105, Danvers, MA 01923
Phone: 978-463-5843 (8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday), Fax: 978-463-5809
Toll-free: 800-722-HOPE (4673)

<http://www.scleroderma.org/foundation.shtm>





June 16, 1957

April 19, 2006

Celebrating The Life Of



Gracie Mae Ridgeway

Services to be held

Musical Memorial Service

Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 6:00 P.M.
Third New Hope Baptist Church
12850 Plymouth Road - Detroit, MI

Home Going Service

Saturday, April 29, 2006 - 10:00 A.M.
Third New Hope Baptist Church
12850 Plymouth Road - Detroit, MI

Bishop Andre Woods
Pastor Dora Scott
Officiating

Rev. Edward L. Branch
Host Pastor

Rev. Lawrence J. London
Rev. Mother Norma Jean Pender
Officiating

Obituary

One of God's special gifts to the world was Gracie Mae Ridgeway, who started her life journey on June 16, 1957 in Detroit. Gracie was the third of four children born to adoring parents, Ilene and the late Tommie Ridgeway, Sr.

Gracie was baptized by Rev. Ray at Beulah Baptist Church, where she enjoyed a happy wholesome prayerful childhood. Gracie's early years at Beulah Baptist was a nurturing experience and a key factor in development of her signature vocal talent. Gracie's singing career began at the age of six, along with her sisters; she would often delight their church congregation as they displayed their extraordinary vocal prowess.

Gracie and siblings, brother Tommie, Jr., sister Gloria and Esther were raised in the church, and their spiritual convictions cultivated lovingly by strong parental guidance. Mother Ridgeway would sing in the choir, and Daddy Ridgeway sang in the Gospel Quartet along with teaching Sunday school. On those rare occasions when the family could not attend worship service at church, Daddy insisted the whole family kneel down at the sofa and pray together, by two song selections ending with "Home" Sunday school, where the brood learns the importance of feeding the spirit by going to church. Thus, little Gloria, Gracie, and Esther believed Daddy Ridgeway was a personal friend of Jesus.

With loads of energy Gracie earned "tomboy" status in her family, when it was noted, she could not keep her Sunday clothes clean long enough for Mother and Daddy Ridgeway get dressed after making sure their brood was faultlessly clad.

Wisdom beyond her years, young Gracie was known in the neighborhood for seeking to dialogue with the "Seniors". Very inquisitive and bright, she would hold lengthy conversations, often asking "Why" for what some say, seemed like a thousand times. She was also known to be very patient with the "Old Timers", as she would listen intently to many long stories of past glory days.

Gracie's strong work ethic evolved rapidly. At age ten she started a neighborhood babysitting service, announcing she wanted to make and save money on her own, however her earnings were usually quickly spent on purchases for "Baby Wendy", the apple of her eye.

Gracie started her education at MacCulloch Elementary School; she would excel in math, completing her secondary studies at Central High School in 1975. As a young adult Gracie studied and became a licensed Beautician, however decided not to pursue a career in cosmetology, later joking about her decision. She gave up on the idea when it became apparent she would have no chance of making any money, because too many family members and friends wanted their hair done for free!

Never wanting to be far from church, as a young adult Gracie, joined the Greater New Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, Rev. Benjamin Hooks, Pastor, where she remained for many years. Later in the mid eighties, she became a member of New Jerusalem Temple Missionary Baptist Church, Rev. Lawrence J. London, Pastor, where she met and joined friends for life in the church auxiliary "Sisterhood".

As the years flew by, her tenacious spirit, and caring heart evolved, as did her wonderful soprano voice. Gracie grew into a bright-eyed brown exceptional beauty, with a radiant smile that would set a room aglow, when she entered. Unspoiled by popularity, celebrity status and good looks, Gracie remained humble, keeping God at the head of her life.

A lover of speed, Gracie was always in a rush when driving, but had no sense of direction. When reminded of her inabilities, she would wisecrack, "So! I'm just in a hurry to get lost, I guess!"

Gracie enjoyed sending post cards from around the world, bringing gifts from exotic places, as a constant testament of her true devotion for her family and those lucky enough to be considered friends. Another example of her special giving heart, Gracie would send donations for relief efforts in third world countries, often even handpicking and purchasing individual toys for those disadvantaged youngsters.

Nobody could put kindness into words or caring into action the way she did, her concern was genuine. She made "you" feel special, there was no doubt, she was prepared to go the distance for, or with you. She was a bona fide "I'm going to help you see-it-through person", no matter how difficult the task. No worries when Gracie had your back!

Gracie possessed the face of an angel, the heart of a lioness, the "faith of Job", the will and courage of a warrior, and an undisputed love for her family. Gracie enjoyed an exceptional, extraordinary, incomparable, close bond with her sisters, which others can only hope for.

She was the protector, planner, organizer, and most of all, the time keeper. "The Organizer" of the family, Gracie was strong-willed, fun-loving and extremely meticulous. Her punctuality is renowned, a trait she would never let her sisters forget, don't dare be late! You might not be able to live it down. Ask Sister Gloria, who was often exposed, "Lovingly", as the reason "The Ridgeway Sisters" were late... (smiles)

Using her voice and her faith as her spiritual advantage, Gracie found time to fellowship, help her sisters bring their miraculous musical ministry to worship services, the sick, shut-ins, and bereaved around the country, whenever called.

Even in the last hours of her life, after enduring many near fatal operations and suffering excruciating pain, she was still smiling and exhibiting that phenomenal faith and caring heart, writing copious notes when she could no longer speak. She would write "I am blessed and highly favored, "Let's pray", "By His stripes I'm healed", "How is Ms., . . . tell her I'm praying for her". To the end she was seeing about her extended family, those related not by blood, but connected by faith through an invisible sacred cord, from her heart to their hearts.

God called Gracie home early Wednesday morning April 19, after a long battle with Scleroderma. Gracie's legacy is a tenacious spirit, a caring heart, an undeniable faith and total absolute, unshakable love for her family.

She was preceded in death by her father Tommie Ridgeway, Sr. and brother Tommie Ridgeway, Jr., and sister Esther Lene Ridgeway.

Gracie leaves to cherish her memory, her mother Ilene; sister Gloria; Sister-in law Bernadette; two nieces; Wendy Bellamy and Danielle Ridgeway; one nephew Ridafen Ridgeway; two great nieces; Brittany Bellamy, Rayquel Ridgeway, two Great-Nephews Ridafen Ridgeway, Jr., Eric Bellamy; God Mother Alberta Neeley, five God Children, Brittany Bellamy, Lawrence London III, Samantha Murdock, India Bradley, Alexis Canady. Extended loved ones and family Alvin Franklin, Sr. and Jr., Ted White Family, and favorite Uncle Levon Ridgeway.

Home Going Service
For

Gracie Mae Ridgeway

Officiating

Rev. Lawrence J. London, Pastor

Rev. Mother Norma Jean Pender, Assistant Pastor

New Jerusalem Temple Missionary Baptist Church

Musical Prelude.....Musicians

Processional.....Clergy/Dignitaries/Family

Scripture Reading

The Old Testament..... *23 Psalm* Clergy

The New Testament *Bishop Keith Farmer 2Cor. 5:1-8* Clergy

Prayer of Comfort *Pastor Tellis Chapman* Clergy

Musical Tributes

Frankie Darcell - Introduction

Mass Choir

Poem: "Look Up Now" - By: Brenda Perryman

Skip Pruitt

Lisa Page Brooks

Remarks Rev. Edward L. Branch, Host Pastor - Representation
Dr. Liesen • Fred Wright • Lillie White • Tyrone Studemire

Card Condolences, The Obituary.....Ramonda Jean Hollenquest

Musical Tributes

The Craig Brothers

Vanessa Bell Armstrong

Rev. Dr. Tellis J. Chapman, Pastor

(Galilee Baptist Church)

Eulogy.....**Rev. Lawrence J. London, Pastor**
New Jerusalem Temple Missionary Baptist Church

Recessional....."In My New Home"

Musical Memorial Service
For

Gracie Mae Ridgeway

Officiating

Bishop Andre Woods, Pastor

Rev. Dora Scott, Pastor

Word Restoration Center

Processional.....Clergy/Dignitaries/Family

Scripture.....Clergy

Invocation.....Clergy

Musical Tributes

Mass Choir

Pastor Ortheia Barnes Kenerly

Poem: "With A Song In Her Heart" - By: Debra Ridgeway

Curtis And Herschel Boone

Millie Scott

Poem: "How Many Times" - By: Evelyn M. Bingham

Ali Woodson

Remarks

Musical Tribute

"Enchantment"

Instrumental Tribute

Vernon Fails Ron Otis

Dave McMurray Al Turner

Final Remarks

Rev. Lawrence J. London, Pastor

New Jerusalem Temple Missionary Baptist Church

Processional.....Clergy/Dignitaries/Family

Recessional....."New Mercies"