



Evangelist Onetia Cokley

August 30, 1939 - November 24, 2019

The beloved Evangelist Onetia McKnight Cokley, 80, daughter of the late Rufus and Inetha Nesmith McKnight, was the first-born child out of ten born children and two additional on August 30, 1939 in Nesmith, SC. She departed this life on November 24, 2019 in love surrounded by her family and close friend at home in Middletown, CT. Onetia accepted Christ at an early age and was a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Andrews, SC. She was educated in the Battery Park Public School System, and during that era, she had spent many hours working in the field picking cotton and tobacco. As a young child, she learned how to cook from her mother so that she could help lighten the load and care for her family. That is where Onetia gained her techniques for making chicken and rice, collard greens, and her “famous homemade biscuits,” which she had to make three times a day for family meals. She spent countless hours making biscuits with her nieces and sharing her words of wisdom with each of them.

Onetia relocated to Connecticut in 1962 and became a member of Zion First Baptist Church in Middletown, CT. She then relocated to Newark, NJ in 1965. The moment that changed her life forever was on February 11, 1968 with the birth of her son Rufus McKnight. No one will know the sacrifices that Onetia had to make to provide for her baby. She held positions as a Cook at Sylvia’s Restaurant and Home Health Aide for Unified Vailsburg Services for over 20 years. Onetia was named the UVSO Employee of the Year for her

unparalleled commitment to the sick and infirm of the Vailsburg neighborhood as a UVSO Home Friend for over twenty years, and for the abiding lessons of sacrifice, service, caring and love that she had gifted to those she served and worked with. Onetia received her license as a Missionary on December 13, 1987 from Holy Dove Christian Fellowship, Inc. Anyone who met her could feel her radiant spirit as her soul resonates as pure truth, light, beauty, and love. Onetia also received her license as an Evangelist in 2010. She was a faithful member of a few churches, but her last church home before leaving New Jersey in February 2019 was Spiritual Way Missionary Baptist Church in Newark NJ, under Rev. Dr. Julie Brogan.

She was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents Beamer and Mary Graham McKnight, maternal grandparents Henry and Jannie Nesmith, parents Rufus and Inetha Nesmith McKnight, sister Sadie (Elonzie) Nesmith, brother Lewis McKnight, brothers-in-law James Lee and Solomon Brunson and sister-in-law Betty McKnight.

Onetia leaves to cherish her precious memories her only son Rufus (Reber) McKnight of Hillside, NJ, twin grandchildren Patrick and Patrice Carrington of Hillside, NJ, siblings Annie (Mayous) Curry of Hartford, CT, Willie D. McKnight of Middletown, CT, Gennes (Willie) Hayes of Middletown, CT, Bessie (George) White of Middletown, CT, Bernard Pressley, NC, Ruby Brunson of Meriden, CT, Margaret (Willis) Brown of Middletown, CT, Josephine Lee of Middletown, CT, Mary (Leevern) Burroughs of Nesmith, SC, sister-in-law Cala Mae McKnight Hartsville, SC, adopted daughter/cousin Pastor Alice Baylor Hill, adopted daughter Bishop Florence Plummer, former husband/friend Henry Cokley, sisters Katie Taylor and Alma Swoop, three aunts, two uncles, a host of nephews, nieces, great-nephews, great-nieces, cousins, relatives, co-workers, neighbors and many dear friends.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Calling Hours

DEC 3. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Zion Baptist Church
16 James A Moses Ave
Middletown, CT 06457

Funeral Service

DEC 3. 11:00 AM (ET)

Zion Baptist Church
16 James A Moses Ave
Middletown, CT 06457

Tribute Wall



“ *Evangelist Onetia Cokley*

October 09, 2023 at 06:14 AM



“ *Sis. Jackie Black lit a candle in memory of Evangelist Onetia Cokley*



Sis. Jackie Black - December 03, 2019 at 09:18 AM



“ *Robert and Catherine Barr...also Celia Ellerbe purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Evangelist Onetia Cokley.*



Robert and Catherine Barr...also Celia Ellerbe - November 30, 2019 at 03:39 PM



“ *Ruby M. Brunson. Sister lit a candle in memory of Evangelist Onetia Cokley*



Ruby M. Brunson. Sister - November 30, 2019 at 09:28 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Evangelist Onetia Cokley.*



November 29, 2019 at 06:12 PM



“ *Evangelist Onetia Cokely I met her in my office at UVSO. She wasn't please about the service her friends were recieving. After her complaint I offer her the job. Over the next 34 years we became friends and I was her daughter. Gone but I will never forget her warm and loving kindness toward me. Bishop Florence Plummer*

Bishop Florence Plummer - November 28, 2019 at 04:38 PM