



Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis

July 4, 1930 - December 12, 2020

Statesboro, GA

Mrs. Alethia M. Simmons Lewis departed this life peacefully on Saturday, December 12, 2020, at her residence in Statesboro, Georgia. She was born on July 4, 1930 in Waynesville, Georgia to the late Reverend Vanderbilt Beecher, Sr. and Sarah Smith Simmons.

Alethia graduated in 1948 from Beach High School in Savannah, Georgia. She attended Savannah State College (University) but, later graduated from the Madame Freeman School of Cosmetology in Savannah, Georgia.

Alethia was joined in holy matrimony on June 3, 1949 to the late Charlie Lewis, Sr. They were married for 64 years. In this union, eight children were born. Their family resided in Chattanooga, Tennessee for two years and moved to Statesboro, Georgia. They chose Brannen Chapel United Methodist Church as their place of worship and soon joined.

Alethia owned and operated Lewis Beauty Shop. She was very active in many civic and political organizations as well as organizing the Statesboro Beauty League and serving as President.

Alethia and her husband were prominent and industrious business owners. In

1955, she and her husband established Lewis Van Lines, the first African American moving company in Statesboro. In 1967, the Lewis Mart and Carousel Drive-In came into existence. This led them to becoming proud owners of Lewis Auto Used Cars and Garage, Lewis Health Food Store, Lewis Public Self-Storage and Lewis Rental Apartments. Their businesses served the community for 56 years while employing many young men and women encouraging them to complete their education and become successful entrepreneurs.

1970 was a momentous era in her lifetime. Alethia (along with Mrs. Ruth Payton Alexis and Mrs. Exlee Nunnally) led the effort of recruiting 32 black students to integrate all-white schools in Bulloch County after two federal integration court orders. Three of her children were students who integrated the all-white schools.

Alethia fought for Julia P. Bryant Elementary School to retain its historical name and continued her service in the education arena as a member of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) where she served as PTA Treasurer for Statesboro High and Marvin Pittman Laboratory Schools and PTA President at William James High School. She also served on the Statesboro District Superintendent Board and was a substitute teacher for several years.

Alethia was a Lifetime Member of the National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP). She is credited for reestablishing the local Bulloch County Branch where she served in various positions such as President for 12 years and six years as the Georgia State Treasurer. Because of her outstanding leadership, two additional NAACP Chapters were established: the Bulloch County Youth Chapter and the Georgia Southern University Chapter. As a visionary leader, she recognized the importance of introducing the local Bulloch County Branch to the Georgia State Level of the NAACP. This led to hosting the NAACP State Conferences in 1972, 1973 and

1996 in Statesboro.

Alethia was influential in calling for equality in governmental representation through redistricting efforts related to the 1990 United States Census. In addition, she was instrumental in campaigning for black city council members, school board members and county commissioners which all resulted in historic elections. During her tenure as president of the NAACP, she was able to launch the City of Statesboro's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration and Parade. Alethia also served as president of the American Legion Auxiliary Post 90 as well as the president and founder of the Tripolette Social Club. In recognition of her community service, she received the Deen Day Smith Service to Mankind Award in 2001 and the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004.

Alethia was an active member of Brannen Chapel United Methodist Church, where she served as Lay Leader, Chairperson of the Administrative Board, Worship Coordinator, President of the Usher Board and United Methodist Women. Honoring her 31 years of service, Brannen Chapel United Methodist Church declared December 8, 1996 as "Alethia M. Simmons Lewis Day." One of her favorite hobbies was hosting a weekly WWNS radio show.

She was preceded in death by her husband Charlie Lewis, Sr., her daughter, Wanda F. Hendrix and her siblings, Rev. Essie C. Simmons, Arlee (Albert Sr.) Morris, Vanderbilt (Mary) Simmons Jr., and Samuel Simmons. A son-in-law, Horace W. Buggs, Jr. of District Heights, MD, preceded her in death.

She leaves to continue her legacy four daughters: Le'Ontyne Buggs and Charlene Lewis, Clinton, MD, Reta Jo Lewis, Washington, D.C., and Sharma D. Lewis, Richmond, VA, one son, Charlie Lewis, Jr., New York, NY and one son-in-law, Bernard Hendrix Jr., Statesboro, GA, four grandchildren: Rudolph

Daniels, Jr., Ellenwood, GA, Chatyne S. Hendrix, Statesboro, GA, Bernard (Amber)Hendrix, III, Atlanta, GA and Horace W. (Matia) Buggs III, Mitchellville, MD, five great grand-children: Lauren Daniels, Waldorf, MD, Chatanesia L. Hendrix, Statesboro, GA, Delancey Daniels, Memphis, TN, Devin Parker, Humble, TX and Bernard Hendrix, IV, Atlanta, GA, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, relatives and friends.

There will be a public viewing for Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis on Friday, December 18, 2020 from the hours of 12 noon until 8 p.m. at Hill's Mortuary. The Lewis family will receive visitors from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Please be advised that all social distancing guidelines will be enforced.

The services commemorating the life of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis will be held 12 Noon on Saturday, December 19, 2020 at the Brannen Chapel United Methodist Church with the Rev. Kenneth Griffin, pastor, presiding and the Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr., eulogist. Interment will follow at Bulloch Memorial Gardens.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, services will be limited to immediate family and worship participants (ONLY).

Services may be viewed via live stream at our Facebook page at Hill's Mortuary, Inc. or www.GriceConnect.com

Floral tributes may be made through www.hillsmortuaryinc.com.

All other contributions may be made in honor of Mrs. Alethia M. Simmons Lewis to:

The Bulloch County Branch of the NAACP: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/>

BullochCountyNAACP or Bulloch County NAACP, P.O. Box 1323 Statesboro,
GA 30459

Feed the Boro at <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/FeedTheBoro>

Final rites have been entrusted to Hill's Mortuary, Inc.

Tribute Wall



“ *Hill's Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis*



Hill's Mortuary, Inc. - December 18, 2020 at 08:15 PM

BL

Awesome memories, Sis.

Bernice M. Lewis - December 19, 2020 at 09:45 AM

QM

Peace, comfort and love to each of you as you continue to reflect the beautiful life of your dear mother. Scott and I are still praying for you.

Queen Mahone - December 19, 2020 at 11:06 AM

PH

*To the family of Sister Lewis;
My thoughts and prayers are with you today. What a wonderful legacy you have the life your mother !!! Reflect on those memories, and stand on her shoulders.
Prayerfully With Much Love and sympathy,
Phyllis Bronson*

Phyllis Harris-Bronson - December 19, 2020 at 12:05 PM

BH

What a lady !

*God is good.
God is great.
We thank him for everything.*

Bonnie Hall - December 19, 2020 at 01:09 PM

DT

Great Memories that will last forever. Yet Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis will live in the hearts of ALL!! Prayers to the FAMILY!!! - Dr. Helen B. Edwards Thomas and Family

Dr. Helen B. Thomas - December 19, 2020 at 02:31 PM

EM

To Bishop Sharma Lewis & Family

My thoughts and prayers are with you today. What a wonderful legacy you have the life your mom. Praying for you and family. Great vdeo and I am proud to see this great lady in action.

Eloise Miller-Bonner, Kelley Chapel UMC, Decatur, GA

Eloise P Miller-Bonner - December 19, 2020 at 03:37 PM



*To the family
Prayers and sincere condolences.
Cobb Sheriff-elect Craig Owens & Family.*

Sharon Owens - December 19, 2020 at 04:09 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.*



December 19, 2020 at 09:24 AM

MC

“ *Margaret Cone lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis*



margaret cone - December 18, 2020 at 11:20 PM

BW

“ Keeping each of you lifted in prayer. May you find comfort in your many cherished memories and your nearness to our loving God.



Bryon and Josefa Bethea Wall - December 18, 2020 at 07:52 PM

AP

“ Arnold Perkins lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis



Arnold Perkins - December 18, 2020 at 03:50 PM

BC

“ Bulloch County NAACP Youth Council purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



Bulloch County NAACP Youth Council - December 18, 2020 at 12:32 PM

SJ

“ Saba and Renata Jallow purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



Saba and Renata Jallow - December 18, 2020 at 12:11 PM

ER

“ *Eva Rivers lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis*

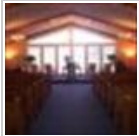


Eva Rivers - December 18, 2020 at 11:15 AM

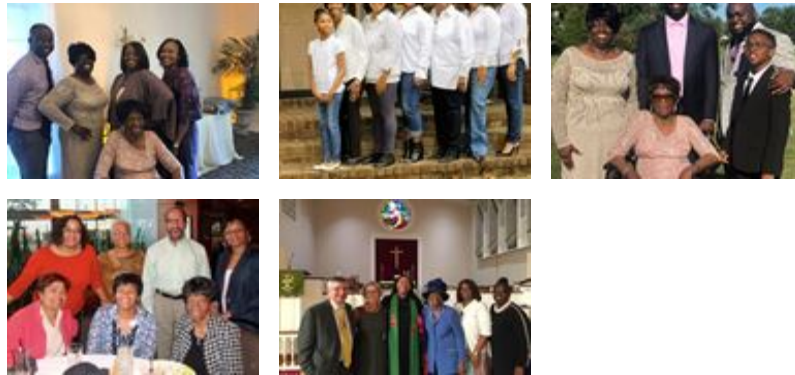
ER

Sending Prayers And condolences To the families from our family. May God Comfort and strengthen you.

Eva Rivers - December 18, 2020 at 11:18 AM



“ *53 files added to the album LifeTributes*



Hill's Mortuary, Inc. - December 18, 2020 at 11:10 AM

LW

“ *Lynette Wilcox lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis*



Lynette Wilcox - December 17, 2020 at 07:28 PM

LU

“ Lee Utsey purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



Lee Utsey - December 17, 2020 at 06:42 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



December 17, 2020 at 05:55 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



December 17, 2020 at 02:11 PM

LR

“ With deepest sympathy 🙏
Linda Ramey and the Whitfield Family

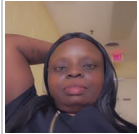


Linda Ramey - December 17, 2020 at 08:56 AM

GW

“ Thank you Mrs. Lewis. You were the foundation of change. You made a difference in the lives of many. Your living was not in vain. May God rest your soul. Well done. Deepest Sympathy to the Lewis Family.

Glenda Washington - December 17, 2020 at 06:00 AM



“ Charlene Coleman lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis



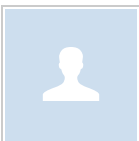
Charlene Coleman - December 16, 2020 at 09:02 PM

RC

“ Wonderful lady! She was a friend to everyone., and a role model .



Ronald E Campbell - December 16, 2020 at 07:07 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



December 16, 2020 at 04:34 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



December 16, 2020 at 02:35 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



December 16, 2020 at 12:55 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* was purchased for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.



December 16, 2020 at 10:46 AM



“ *MarilynChilders&Family* lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis



MarilynChilders&Family - December 16, 2020 at 02:50 AM

CE

“ *Christine, Cynthia and Ethan purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis.*



Christine, Cynthia and Ethan - December 15, 2020 at 11:57 PM

ER

“ *Eva Rivers lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Alethia M. Lewis*



Eva Rivers - December 15, 2020 at 09:12 PM