



## Loretta S. Lewis

January 1, 1921 - April 6, 2019

Loretta Salome Alexander Lewis was born to Sylvia Elizabeth Witherspoon Alexander and State Alexander, Sr. on January 23, 1921, in Mayesville, South Carolina, County of Sumter; the seventh of eight children: Robert Isaac, Susan Virginia, Carl, Julia Viola, State, Gladys, Loretta, and John.

Loretta attended and graduated from Mayesville Institute, Mayesville, South Carolina. Upon graduation from high school, she attended and graduated from Morris College, in Sumter. She relocated to Brooklyn, New York, where she earned a degree in Cosmetology from New York City Cosmetology School. Loretta married the love of her life, Mr. John Phillip Lewis on December 24, 1946, and they remained devoted in love and marriage for sixty-one years until John's death in June, 2006.

Loretta was a talented Cosmetologist, and she worked as an independent business woman and entrepreneur for many years. Later, she was employed by the New York City Board of Education Division of Special Education until she retired in May of 1984.

Loretta and John relocated to Sumter, South Carolina to spend their retirement years among family and friends. They re-affiliated with St. Luke AME Church and rarely missed services as long as their health permitted. Whenever family or other visitors came, she spoke with love and gratitude of how her St. Luke church family supported, visited and prayed with and for her. Loretta never complained as health challenges forced her to lose her independence and to rely more on others. She was always grateful and

pleasant. She loved to sing praises to God, and even in her final days, when she struggled to speak, she sang, "Jesus Loves Me" and "Come by Here, Lord" along with visiting nieces and nephews. She never lost faith that God would never leave or forsake her.

Loretta was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, John and six of her eight siblings: Robert Isaac, Susan Virginia, Carl, Julia Viola, State, and John. She was also preceded in death by a loving cousin and caregiver, Samuel James Pringle of Sumter, who was like a son.

Those left to cherish precious memories are; one sister, Gladys Bates of Upper Marlboro, Maryland; sisters- in- law, Rosa Lee (Rev. George) Manigo of Bamberg, SC, Eunice Lewis of Garner, NC and Marie Wilson of Sumter, SC; brothers- in-law, James Lewis of Richmond, VA, Rev. W. T. (Effie) Lewis of Spartanburg, SC, and Robert (Barbara) Lewis of Jersey City, NJ; nieces, Carmen Bates of Washington, DC, Loretta Bates, of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, who affectionately referred to her as "Other Mama"; nephews, Lawrence Bates of Sumter, Rev. Robert Alexander of Islip, New York, Carl Alexander of Brooklyn, New York, Dr. State W. (Carol) Alexander, III and Gary Alexander both of Charlotte, North Carolina, John Alexander of Atlanta, Georgia, and a host of other great nieces, great nephews, cousins, other relatives and dear friends.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Loretta S. Lewis*

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October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM