



Ruth Bradley James

July 15, 1927 - April 27, 2021

Ruth Bradley James departed this life and entered eternal rest on Tuesday, April 27, 2021 in Columbia, SC. She was born on July 15, 1927 in Lynchburg, South Carolina to the late Lafayette Bradley, Sr. and Dora Toney. Mrs. James was the youngest of ten children. Using her characteristically dry humor, Mrs. James would often joke that she wanted to live to be older than her last living brother, who died at the age of 92. She did just that—passing at the young age of 93!

After the death of her mother, Mrs. James had the fortune of developing a special and lasting bond with her stepmother, Helena Smith Bradley. Helena eventually moved to Columbia to live with Mrs. James until her death. Mrs. James was the loving wife of Herman James, who preceded her in death. Mrs. James graduated from high school in Darlington, SC and then set her sights on a career as a nurse. She attended and received formal training from Good Samaritan-Waverly Hospital, one of the only training facilities built exclusively for Black nurses in Columbia and celebrated today on the National Register of Historic Places. Mrs. James' start in such a prestigious place was definitely a model for a long and rewarding career as a caregiver and professional nurse in Columbia's African American community. After graduation, Mrs. James worked for two years as a graduate nurse at the State Park Tuberculosis Sanatorium. After passing the SC state board exam for nurses, she was awarded a degree as a Registered Nurse (RN).

Mrs. James left her childhood home of South Carolina to gain valuable

experience as a nurse in Newark, NJ. Working in a small hospital in a much larger city gave her more insight into the world around her and was no doubt the beginning of a life-long love of travel. When Mrs. James started to get homesick for the warmth of her family and that characteristic South Carolina sunshine, she returned to Columbia and Waverly Hospital. Mrs. James spent the next 30 years at Crafts-Farrow State Hospital and retired before the age of 60, after achieving the professional height of her career as a nurse supervisor. Once retired, Mrs. James was free to pursue her other passions. Her extensive travels took her as far as Ireland and as close as the various creeks and rivers of South Carolina for fishing. She also loved gardening, and continued her role as caregiver by sharing her baking, sewing, knitting and crochet talents with all those in need (or want)!

Mrs. James was a devout Christian and was raised in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. As a long-time resident of Columbia's Greenview Community, Mrs. James and her family put down their roots at Reid Chapel AME Church. Throughout her many years of faithful service, Mrs. James served on the Senior Usher board, Pulpit Aid, Lay Organization, Missionary Society and Senior Citizens Club. She tirelessly gave of her time, money, and baked goods to support her church family. The Bradley family's proudest moment was supporting Mrs. James as "Queen of the Senior Usher board," after she single-handedly raised over \$2,000 of the Usher board's total \$7,000 donation to purchase a piano for the Sunday school.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her brothers: Elzworth Bradley, Joe Nathan, Lafayette Bradley, Jr., Foster Bradley, and her twin Nehemiah (Pee Wee) Bradley and sisters—Jessie Bell Bradley Alford, Laverne Bradley, Mary Bradley, and Martha Bradley.

Mrs. James is survived by one aunt, Estell Elizabeth Livingston, seven nieces: Gwenevere Bradley Benjamin (Eugene), Marsha Wilson, Deborah Black, Barbara Elom (Robert), Sandra Bradley, Christine Bradley, Judi Haynesworth (George); six nephews—Ralph Bradley (Jeanette), Alexander Bradley, Laverne Alford (Darlene), Marvin Alford, Clayton Alford, Robert Gilbert

(Sarah); great nieces—Kardesha Bradley, Gabrielle Benjamin, Ashley Benjamin, Nikkiea Wilson; great nephews—Carl Black, Michael Black, and a host of other great nieces, great nephews, and cousins. In addition to loving family and friends, she leaves behind love, wisdom,

To view the livestream of the service:

Go to Facebook; go to the Palmer Memorial Chapel page; like the page and you will see the notification for the live video.

Cemetery Details

Memorial Gardens of Columbia

Previous Events

Public Viewing

MAY 4. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223
(803) 786-6300
palmermemorialchapel@gmail.com
<https://www.palmermemorialchapel.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Ruth Bradley James*

October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM



“ *Sending my condolences to the family of Mrs. Ruth Bradley James. My prayers are with you during this time.*
Jakiya N. Middleton

Jakiya (Noble) Middleton - May 15, 2021 at 10:31 PM



“ *Aunt Bessie, Joyce & Marion purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Ruth Bradley James.*



Aunt Bessie, Joyce & Marion - May 04, 2021 at 02:49 PM



“ *Kimberly Gathers lit a candle in memory of Ruth Bradley James*



Kimberly Gathers - May 04, 2021 at 09:59 AM

B(

“ *Barbara Elom (niece) lit a candle in memory of Ruth Bradley James*



Barbara Elom (niece) - May 03, 2021 at 09:45 PM

RE

“ *Robin Eaddy lit a candle in memory of Ruth Bradley James*



Robin Eaddy - May 02, 2021 at 08:44 PM

MJ

“ *So sorry to hear about the passing of Mrs. James. My condolences to her family.*

Minnie Henry Johnson - April 30, 2021 at 09:03 PM

VA

“ *Mrs. Ruth James was a friend of my mother, who was also a nurse. Mrs. James with her quiet dignity will forever be remembered by me. God bless her family and my family will be praying for you.*

valencia anderson - April 29, 2021 at 09:44 AM

RE

Beautiful life! Beautiful woman! To the Bradley, James and Benjamin family, you are in my thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

Robin Eaddy - May 02, 2021 at 08:45 PM

MW

I met Mrs. James via one of her neighbors. She told me that I was the first baby that she delivered. I grew up in the Greenview Community not far from where she lived. I pray comfort and peace upon the entire family during this time of transition.

Mrs. Joice Middleton Watson

Mrs. Joice Middleton Watson - May 03, 2021 at 09:47 PM

JM

Mrs. James knew me from birth. Her step mother, was my cousin Helena, whom we cherished. My grandfather Rev. Robert L. McBryde Sr., was cousin Helenas uncle. Cousin Ruth would always begin our conversation, telling me of my family history as far back as I can remember. With the assurance I'd never forget our legacy. I didn't realize it that time, now I appreciate those hours we shared on the phone. There was never a time we spoke that she was in a hurry, or was feeling ill that we could not hold a conversation.

I thank God for Cousin Ruth's mentoring on life's lessons that must be passed on to those who have not heard the story.

She has received her wings and is now free, more than ever before.

James Ernest McGill - May 05, 2021 at 11:55 AM