

Pallbearers

Deacons of Second Calvary Baptist Church

Floral Bearers

Deaconesses of Second Calvary Baptist Church

*Expression of Gratitude*

Please accept our heartfelt gratitude for the outpouring of love and kindness extended during this difficult time. Your prayers, calls, texts, cards, flowers and offers of service have warmed our hearts. May God bless each of you.

~The Family~

As Bert was a lifelong educator committed to the development of young minds, the family asks that in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to:

Jeff and Minnie Williams Reading Program  
Wesley United Methodist Church  
110 West Jefferson Street  
York, SC 29745

To donate online:  
Wesleyumcyork.org  
(Click on "More", then "Donate", then "General Fund")

Services Entrusted To:

**CONTACT US:**  
Taylor Street Chapel  
803-771-7799

Lower Richland Chapel  
803-776-6922

WWW.LEEVY.COM

**I. S. Leevy Johnson**  
-Owner-

Services Entrusted To:

**Leevy's**  
Chris Leevy Johnson  
-Managing Director-

SIGN THE ONLINE REGISTRY:



**Leverette A. Williams, II**  
-General Manager-

*Celebrating*  
THE LIFE OF  
*Mrs. Bertha Williams Stewart*



Saturday, July 19, 2025

3:00 p.m.

Leevy's Funeral Home Chapel

1831 Taylor Street  
Columbia, South Carolina

Reverend Joseph H. Hood, Sr.

-Officiant-

## Obituary

Bertha Sidney Williams Stewart embodied love and service. Born in York, South Carolina, on August 27, 1925 to Jeff and Minnie Robinson Williams, she was the youngest of 10 children. In this tight-knit community, she learned at an early age the importance of caring for others. Her family owned a grocery store in York's East End where they ensured people were fed—many times for free if they were unable to pay. She could often be found delivering food, prepared by her mother, to ladies who were homebound after childbirth or facing other challenges.

Upon graduating from York's Jefferson School as valedictorian in 1943, "Bert" entered Barber-Scotia College in Concord, North Carolina. There she graduated cum laude in 1947 with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a minor in English. She matriculated in a master's program at Columbia University in New York City for a year before returning South to accept a teaching position at Celia Dial Saxon Elementary School in Columbia, South Carolina. After teaching at Saxon for 12 years, she moved to William H. Burton Elementary and then to Sarah Nance Elementary, where she was selected Teacher of the Year in 1975 and rose to the position of assistant principal. She further honed her craft with additional studies at the University of South Carolina, Benedict College, and Columbia College.

Then there was love! In 1953, during her time at Saxon Elementary, Bert met and married Claude Ceazar Stewart, Jr., a firefighter with the Columbia Fire Department who retired as the department's first Black assistant chief. They were married for 46 years until Claude's death in 1999. To their union, two children were born: Claude David in 1960 (he preceded them both in death) and Evva Claudette in 1962.

Bert retired from teaching in 1980 after 36 years, 5 months, and 14 days of dedicated service. Somewhere along the way, she learned Bunka (Japanese embroidery), crocheting, knitting, became a Girl Scout leader, and learned to love line dancing and exercise. Healthy living was her mantra. An avid gardener, she perfected "garden to table" meals and shared her garden's bounty freely. She continued her exercise classes three times a week at Greenview Park well into her early 90s.

Born a Methodist, Bert grew up in Wesley United Methodist Church in York, a church where her father was a founder. She continued her support for Wesley until her death, most recently upgrading their music system and funding the initiation of the Jeff and Minnie Robinson Williams Reading Program, a program created to increase below-grade-level reading test scores and build critical reading and comprehension skills for community children.

After her marriage, she followed her husband to his church, Second Calvary Baptist Church in Columbia, SC, where he served as a Deacon. She was an active member of the Pulpit Aid Ministry and the Golden Eagles, was a dedicated Vacation Bible School volunteer, led the Baptism Committee, and worked with other deaconesses to prepare first Sunday Communion. She continued her membership on Second Calvary's Deaconess Board through her death.

In 2017, Bert relocated to North Carolina to live with her daughter and son-in-law. In advance of her move, she was presented with a Resolution from the South Carolina House of Representatives, with her prestigious award presented by her former student, Representative Leon Howard, at a State House ceremony.

In addition to her roles as an amazing wife and mother, Bert was the proud grandmother of Terrance Claude Hampton, a loving mother-in-law to Roger Anthony Parham, a dedicated aunt to her nieces and nephews, and a loyal and loving friend to many. She and her "Golden Girl" besties, Mrs. Alma Gipson and Mrs. Thelma Rogers, stayed in touch regularly—often daily. Her great-niece, Angela Muriel Williams, loved, supported, and kept her laughing, keeping her beautiful silver strands perfectly coiffed. Her caregiver, Elaina Jones, was a constant source of tender loving care and comfort over the past several years, as were Cerina Heyward, Zenobia Hunter, and Cheryl Singleton who joined her care team over the last several months and provided exceptional support for their adopted "Grandma."

Let Me Go

When I come to the end of the road  
And the sun has set for me  
I want no rites in a gloom filled room  
Why cry for a soul set free?  
  
Miss me a little, but not for long  
And not with your head bowed low  
Remember the love that once we shared  
Miss me, but let me go.

For this is a journey we all must take  
And each must go alone.  
It's all part of the master plan  
A step on the road to home.

When you are lonely and sick at heart  
Go to the friends we know.  
Laugh at all the things we used to do  
Miss me, but let me go.

~Christina Rossetti~

# Memories



# Order of Service

Prelude.....“Take Me to The King”  
Recording by: Tamela Mann

Processional

Viewing.....Funeral Directors

Scripture Readings.....Reverend Dr. Bobby Cunningham, Second Calvary Baptist Church  
Old Testament - Psalm 23  
New Testament - I Corinthians 15:50-58

Prayer of Comfort.....Deacon Sandra Garrick, Second Calvary Baptist Church

Musical Selection.....“Order My Step”.....Second Calvary Baptist Church Choir

Remarks.....Representative Leon Howard, South Carolina House District 76  
Deaconess April Ashe, Second Calvary Baptist Church  
Mr. Terrance Claude Hampton, Grandson

Poem.....Mrs. Rachel Phelps, Family Friend

Musical Selection.....“I’m Free”.....Second Calvary Baptist Church Choir

Words of Comfort .....Reverend Joseph H. Hood, Sr., Second Calvary Baptist Church

Recessional.....“Total Praise”  
Recording by: Richard Smallwood

Postlude



# Committal, Benediction, and Interment

**Palmetto Cemetery  
5050 Fairfield Road  
Columbia, South Carolina**

*Memories*



*Memories*

