

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Lois M. Hall

OCT 29, 1936 — JUN 27, 2026



THURSDAY, JULY 09, 2026

WAKE: 11:00 AM – FUNERAL: 11:30 AM

**TRUE VINE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
711 EAST 105TH STREET, CLEVELAND, OH 44108**

Celebration of Life Service

Musical Prelude.....

Processional..... The Family

Family Visitation..... 11:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Scripture

OLD TESTAMENT..... MIN. DAMAN FLETCHER

NEW TESTAMENTMIN. KEVIN SKIPPER

Prayer.....Min. Michael McGhee

Solo.....Mrs. Lucretia Bolden

Selections.....St. Timothy MBC Choir

Celebration Story ReadingPLEASE READ SILENTLY

AcknowledgementsMs. Tonia Pugh

Solo.....Pastor Edward McGhee

Special Tribute.....Bishop Merton L. Clark,

TRUTH REVEALED INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

Eulogy.....Pastor Edward McGhee

Recessional.....Family & Friends

WHEN WE ALL GET TO HEAVEN

INTERMENT

LAKE VIEW CEMETERY

12316 EUCLID AVE – CLEVELAND, OH 44106

PALLBEARERS

Family & Friends

DORIS JEAN GARY (SISTER):

TO MY BEAUTIFUL SISTER,

I don't even know how to begin saying goodbye to the person who has been by my side since the very beginning. From our earliest childhood secrets to the quiet comfort of our later years, you have been the one constant in my life. We didn't just share a family; we shared a lifetime of moments that only the two of us will ever truly understand. You knew my history because you lived it with me. I knew your history because I lived it with you. You knew my heart because you helped shape it. It feels completely impossible to imagine a world where I can't call you or hear your laugh. A part of me has gone with you, because we were never truly separate.

Thank you for a lifetime of unconditional love, shared secrets, and unbreakable friendship. You were my first friend and my best friend. Though my heart is completely broken, I promise to carry your memory in my heart forever. Rest easy, my sweet sister. You are wrapped in my love forever.

YOUR ALWAYS SISTER, DORIS

ACQUANETTA PENICK (DAUGHTER):

My mom took a fall down the driveway and broke her right ankle. The doctors sent her home in a plaster cast with crutches, strict orders: no driving, no work for at least five or six days. She followed up with an orthopedist, who fitted her with a hard cast and gave her the same advice — don't drive. But if you know my mom, you know she had to keep moving. So she drove anyway, propping her right ankle on the passenger seat and working the brake and gas with her left foot. She went to work, made it to choir practice, cooked and never complained. Church was her joy. Music was her heartbeat. She was the best mother.

LEANGELA (MICHELLE) STOREY AITKEN (DAUGHTER):

My fondest memories are all filled with seasons of life. You loved "your baby" girl with pride and an example of grace. As a young woman moving into a young adult, you taught me to present myself with respect because I was representing you wherever I go. You taught me how to be a good mother, a friend and protector of my family. And then, the most gracious season of all, these last few years we had together, you taught me "stick-to-it-ness." I'm so honored and blessed God chose me to pour back into you all your teachings and example; to present you with respect, to be a good daughter, friend and protector for you. I enjoyed learned so much more about your personality that was outside of being my mom. You were so much fun to be around and hang out with. I'm looking forward to seeing you again. We're going to have a really good time.

ERICA PENICK (GRANDDAUGHTER):

Every night, I've said the same words over my children: I believe in you. God loves you. I love you. Have a good night. I learned this from my grandmother, "Dear."

In Alabama, we shared her house. I'd close the bedroom door, sure everyone slept — until giggles down the hallway proved otherwise. Dear and Abu, sneaking my kids off for snacks and midnight fun. "I'll bring them in when they get tired," she'd say. She made room for joy on purpose.

She made room for people, too. When my son cried for her, I said she was busy. She stopped everything, sat with him, then told me: "When a child calls for you, stop and acknowledge them. Five minutes won't derail my day, but it will empower them for life." I still live that lesson.

Dear taught us love through action — showing, not telling.

AARON AITKEN (GRANDSON):

Dear's hands seemed to be able to accomplish anything. I remember fried chicken, white rice and cornbread for breakfast. I remember 5-year-old me peeing in an empty water bottle just 5 minutes into a 12 hour drive from Cleveland to Birmingham; driving up a hill on a dead-end road to the seemingly biggest house ever with a ton of stairs. Ringing a door bell and my grandmother showing up smiling; her beard rubbing against my face; her perfect home and den and washer and dryer and piano and wooden garage stairs and Abu shooting BB guns with my brother and all of my grandmother's different white vans. From taking my first steps at her house to her last day here there are so many loving memories to share.

CELEBRATING LOIS M. HALL

Gifted. Blessed. Loved.

Her parents, Ernest McGhee Sr. and Mattie Lacey McGhee, welcomed baby Lois Bernice McGhee into the world on October 29, 1936. She grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, a city that would shape her and that she, in turn, would help shape. Long before anyone called her "Dear," she was a girl walking the halls of Hudson Elementary School and later graduating from Carver High School, already carrying the discipline and grace that would define nearly nine decades of living.

Early in life, she knew exactly what she wanted. Teaching and playing piano were her passions, and she never wavered from either - she spent a lifetime sharpening both gifts. She married Lee Andrew Storey, and while raising three children - Acquanetta Storey Penick, Ernest LaRoy (whose wife is Yvonne), and LeAngela Storey Aitken - she earned her bachelor's degree in education from Miles College. She didn't stop there. She went on to the University of Alabama at Birmingham to earn a Master's and Advanced Studies degrees in Education, building her credentials even as she built a career and a family. In time, the family grew to include grandchildren Erica Penick, Antione Aitken and Aaron Aitken, great-grandchildren, Karanja R. Williams Jr., Karan'Ja C. Williams and Chandler Aitken, and great-great-grandchildren, Eliana C. Williams and K'aidyn C. Simmons - four generations she poured herself into and adored with a love beyond explanation.

Lois had a fierce love for her siblings, three whom preceded her in death, Edna McGhee, Ernest McGhee Jr, and James McGhee and still here to celebrate her life, Doris Jean Gary (her best friend), Pastor Edward McGhee and Boyce Michael McGhee (whose wife is Jan).

Education was her calling long before it was her title. She began as a classroom teacher, and within a few years advanced to guidance counselor, then reading specialist, then assistant principal - each step a testament to a woman who never stopped growing and never stopped lifting others. And, she rarely held just one job at a time. She tutored privately in the evenings and worked in the reading lab at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, helping students who weren't yet reading at college level find their footing. She was an educator who never clocked out.

After retirement, Miles College - her alma mater - called her back to help incoming freshmen who needed remedial reading support. She built a program that worked so well that it grew into a new department, Freshman Studies, giving every entering student a real path to success in college.

A season, her path took her north to Cleveland, Ohio, where she played piano for the choir at St. Timothy Missionary Baptist Church. It was there she first crossed paths with Joseph J. Hall, who sang in the male chorus. Many years passed before they'd have a chance to meet again - but when they were both free, love found its way. A long-distance courtship began, he in Ohio, she in Alabama, phone calls and visits carrying a love that had waited patiently for its moment. They married and were blessed with twenty years of true love, a devotion that lasted until his passing in 2007. It was a second chapter she never expected and never took for granted.

Wherever she lived, music followed her, or maybe she followed it. She sat at the piano for Bethel Baptist Church for 50 years and Payne Chapel AME Church 49. She played at least one afternoon service (sometimes two) every Sunday throughout the city, services that often stretched past her own congregation's until nine at night. She played for special choir occasions wherever she was needed, never turning down an invitation to lead praise and worship. Church was her joy. Music was her heartbeat. When she played, it wasn't performance - it was devotion.

She was, above all else, a forever learner - and a forever teacher. To be in her presence was to receive something: encouragement when you needed lifting, admonition when you needed correcting, an educational challenge when you needed stretching. She loved children fiercely and specifically, and she insisted - insisted - that her grandchildren spend their summers with her. She took them to swimming lessons and poured into them not just as their grandmother but as the educator and elder she had always been.

Lois Bernice McGhee Hall passed away on Saturday, June 27, 2026, leaving a legacy of unconditional love and fingerprints in every space she occupied. She has poured intentionally into her work, her church, her friend group, her community of students, her choir members, and anyone else in her presence in a way that leaves a mark. She often used to say, "When I'm gone I want you to miss me." Well done, Dear! Because we do.

*Lovingly Submitted,
The Family*

ANTIONE AITKEN (GRANDSON):

I remember Dear getting really mad at the boys (there were 5 of us with her for the summer). Abu bought us BB rifles and we started shooting squirrels in the back yard. When she found out she was so mad at us and Abu.

KARANJA WILLIAMS (GREAT-GRANDSON):

I remember when I was little, Dear bought me a few dump trucks. Dump trucks obviously need some sand. Well I couldn't find any sand in the house so I had to make my own. On Dear's desk were these pills that had little beads in them. Perfect for sand. I emptied about 20 pills. Well Dear walked in and saw my "sand" and knew immediately what I had done. The infamous rope that hung in the kitchen was a deep warning for all who crossed her. Well, she went for the rope and proclaimed I was going to get it. I don't know how but I went 31 years and never received that much deserved butt whooping.

KARAN'JA WILLIAMS (GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER):

I shared the piano bench with Dear at church. She played for Abu and the men's choir, filling the room up with sound; I was right there beside her playing along, singing, and watching Dear be as happy as she ever was. I remember swim class, and the day I decided I wasn't ready to get out of that pool. Dear got Karanja in the Cadillac and pulled off, circled back and gave me five minutes to think about it. I grabbed one flip-flop and threw it in the creek; I was crying, sure I'd been left behind. Dear looked at me, picked up the other shoe and threw it in the creek too. "Get in the car." Lesson learned for good: when the driver says it's time to go, it is time to go.

ANTHONY GARY (NEPHEW):

Auntie Lois you always had a way of turning ordinary moments into a show whether it was making everyone laugh or somehow being right about it all. I'll miss your voice, your jokes and your "I Told You So". Rest well auntie Lois you'll be missed and remembered with "BIG LOVE" & a lot of smiles.

JAY GARY (NEPHEW):

Exactly ten years ago on June 7, 2016, Auntie Lois sent me a message on Facebook and this is what it read ... "You will never know how proud of you I am. Every day I read your posts, they bring tears of joy from way ... down in my heart. Just keep on traveling your paths, it's evidence God is leading you. I pray for you and will always love you. You are blood of my blood and one of heart. God Bless. Auntie Lois"

VICKY GARY (NIECE):

One of my fondest memories is whenever we came over for the family fish fry Friday's or for a family Sunday dinner. She would be in there banging skillets and pots and pans so fast and dinner would be done in minutes. Then she'll say "OK y'all come on eat. Everything is ready. "Then she'll say. "OK y'all I gotta run down here to the shopping center right quick. I'll be right back. " or " OK y'all I've gotta run down here to this male chorus rehearsal. I'll be right back. "She was the fastest cook in the world. But she could fry that fish tho!

JARRELL GARY (GREAT NEPHEW)

To my beautiful Auntie Lois, AKA "Dear"—thank you for being one of the sweetest souls God ever placed in my life. Every time I came around, you'd say, "Look at this sexy chocolate man right here!" Those words and those hugs will stay with me forever. One thing nobody can ever take away from you — you could play that piano like nobody's business. And when you got on that organ at church... whew! You didn't just play music — you made people feel it. Thank you for every hug, every laugh, every lesson, every meal, every song, and every memory.

FELICIA JORDAN (NIECE):

When Aunt Lois would come to Cleveland to visit many many years ago, we were little kids like 8 or 9 years old, she would take us to church for Bible study. I can remember mama getting us all shiny and pretty for Aunt Lois.

FATIMA DOYLE (NIECE):

Dad passed before he could finish doing some of the walls in the family house in Birmingham. Mama was already there and I came down to finish the repairs. Aunt Lois came by and saw that I was repairing the wall and stuccoing which is a wall design and she gave me the most beautiful compliment that I truly had talent like my dad and that he taught me well.

TONIA PUGH (NIECE):

Aunt Lois impacted my life by demonstrating in a quiet strength RESILIENCE in the times of storms, figuratively and literally.

LAGINA WHITE (NIECE):

Dear was not only an example of grace and poise during trying times in my earlier years but a constant ray of sunshine, encouragement and inspiration throughout my life.

IRENE AARON (COUSIN):

Hey I remember when Lois come to Cleveland in the summer time Make that home made ice cream and that butter yummy I love you will miss you cousin Lois Denise

SHERAN DENISE DAVIS (COUSIN):

"Give Me A Clean Heart" was the first song I ever led in church. I was so afraid but, My sweet Lois said I could do it. The Sunday I sang I thought I truly messed up and after church I apologized to her. She smiled at me and said baby girl you were great you sung to the Lord and that's all that matters. The whole time I was singing she never took her eyes from me. She encouraged me to keep singing and not be afraid without saying a word.

HALEY FITCH (FAMILY FRIEND):

With Dear's passing, my mind goes straight to my absolute favorite memory of her: the moment Karanja placed our daughter, Eliana, gently into her arms. As Dear's eyes settled on her first great-great granddaughter, the fog of age cleared entirely, replaced by a look of such pure, radiant love. It was a silent, beautiful blessing from his family's matriarch to its newest little life. I will hold that look of unconditional love in my heart for the rest of my days.

FANITA KIRKLAND LEWIS (FRIEND & COLLEAGUE):

My dear Lois, from the moment you walked into my office, your elegance was more than just how you moved through the world; it was a grace that flowed directly from your beautiful, generous heart. You possessed a rare and quiet majesty that made every moment in your presence feel safe, special, and deeply cherished. I am so grateful, for the honor of your friendship and for the beautiful mark you left, I will forever cherish. The memories of you will live on in my heart forever. Rest peacefully, my elegant friend.

PHYLLIS WEEDEN-OLIVER (CHURCH FAMILY MEMBER):

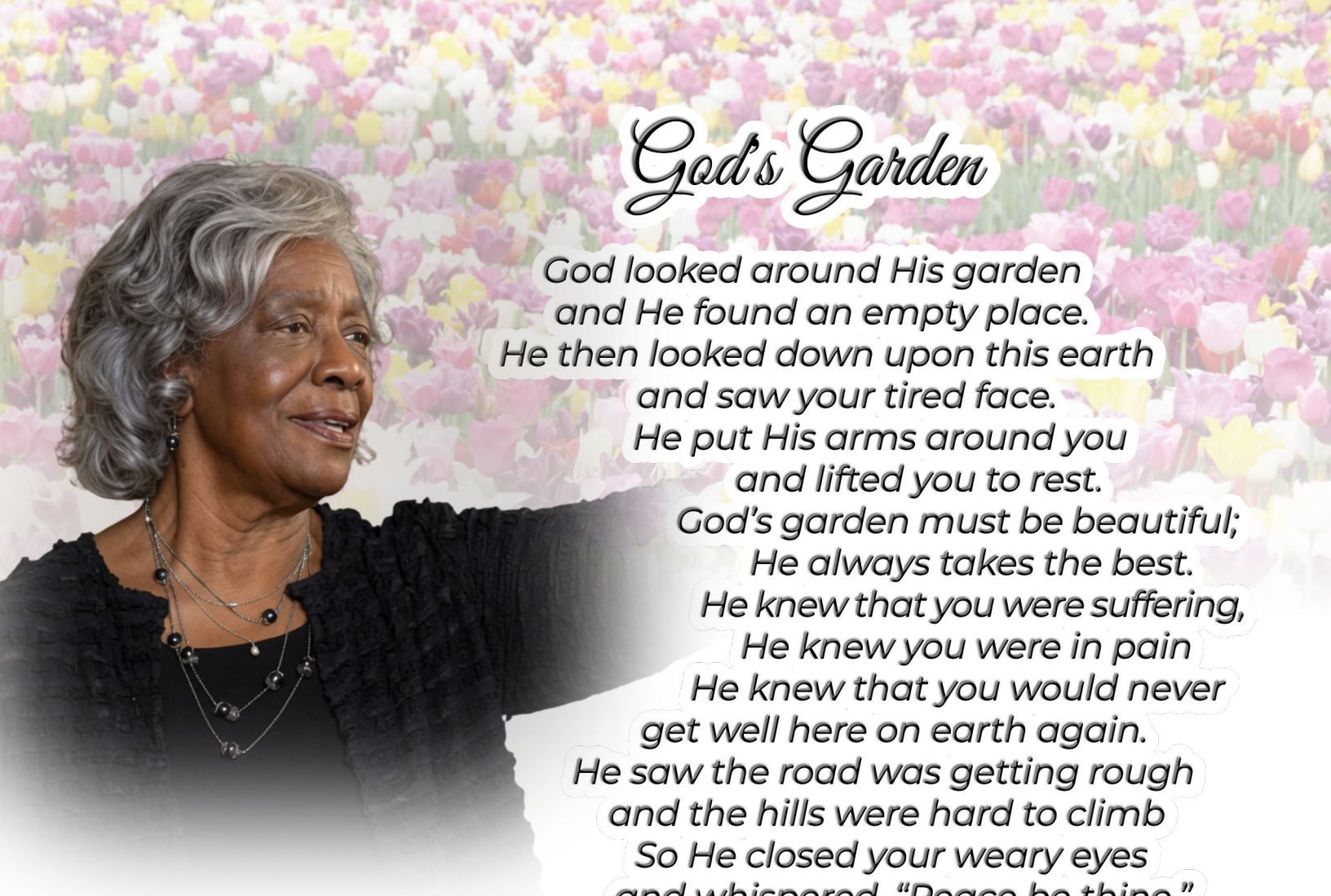
Lord have mercy, My sincere prayers and condolences to the whole family!

Many Years ago, Lois visited St Timothy, sang and played "I Won't Complain." That was the first time I had heard it, and from that day on, I listened to the lyrics, which ministered to me, learned them, and I have sung that many times because of her.

Thank you, dear heart. Soo sweet! Loved you! RIH

PASTOR SEBRENA CLARK, TRUTH REVEALED INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES (FORMER PASTOR)

May she rest in peace, God bless her soul. Love and peace sent your way.



God's Garden

God looked around His garden
and He found an empty place.
He then looked down upon this earth
and saw your tired face.
He put His arms around you
and lifted you to rest.

God's garden must be beautiful;
He always takes the best.
He knew that you were suffering,
He knew you were in pain
He knew that you would never
get well here on earth again.
He saw the road was getting rough
and the hills were hard to climb
So He closed your weary eyes
and whispered, "Peace be thine."
It broke our hearts to lose you,
but you didn't go alone.
For part of us went with you,
the day God called you home.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Family sincerely appreciates all acts of kindness shown during this time of bereavement. We thank you for your prayers, comforting words, personal visits and calls. We ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers. May God Bless and forever comfort you.

SERVICES OF COMFORT ENTRUSTED TO

Watson's Funeral Home

www.WatsonsFuneralHome.com

10913 SUPERIOR AVE. – CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106

TELEPHONE (216) 721-0066

