

# *Celebration of Life*



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DEACONESS  
LORETTA BYRD

JANUARY 28, 1937 - OCTOBER 17, 2025





## *The Obituary*

Loretta Byrd was born a coal miner's daughter in the mountains of Maybeury, West Virginia. She was the second of five children born to the late Willie and Willie Mae Mitchell. Loretta accepted Christ as her Savior at a young age and was an active member of Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church.

Many of her most cherished childhood memories were rooted in church life. She especially enjoyed being the lead singer of the group, The Gospel Stars, where she worshiped joyfully alongside her beloved sister, Bernice. Loretta graduated from Elkhorn High School and went on to attend Bluefield State College before relocating to Pennsylvania.

A devoted wife to Deacon Theodore R. Byrd, Jr., "Lo" and "Ted" shared 59 years of a loving and fruitful marriage. Together, they were active and dedicated members of Second Baptist Church in Wayne, PA. Loretta served faithfully as a Deaconess and, at one time as President of the Deaconess Board. She was also a faithful member of the Missionary Board. Before joining Second Baptist alongside her husband, she was a faithful member of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Ardmore, PA, where she served as a soloist in the Senior Choir.





Loretta's professional journey as a licensed practical nurse and nursery school teacher reflected her deep commitment to nurturing and caring for others. After retiring from St. Mary's Day Care Center, she founded Ms. Byrdie's Daycare in 1995; initially to support her grandchildren. This home daycare transcended into a child development center where the children became family for life. Ms. Byrdie maintained strong bonds with many of the children well into their adulthood.

Beyond her career, Loretta was a beloved pillar of the Ardmore community. For more than 55 years, she cared for generations of neighborhood children alongside dear friends Mary Shippen, Irene Hayward, Gail Handy, Anita Jones, and Josephine Lonesome. To the families on her street, she was more than a neighbor.

Loretta was known for her quick wit, humor, and her memorable one-liners that would keep you laughing. She also had a serious side, often saying things like, "I have that right," "If you would accept this from me...", and "Somebody needs to..." (while looking directly at you so that you knew you were the 'somebody' in reference), and "Just keep living!". You could always count on her to share the truth of her heart, sometimes with unfiltered honesty!



Loretta loved music, especially gospel, Christmas tunes, and James Brown. She proudly supported her grandchildren at their school programs and sporting events, often decked out in matching school gear. She was a passionate Philadelphia 76ers fan with the ability to analyze the game, and could have easily been drafted as an honorary coach. She enjoyed retail therapy and tending to her plants and garden. Loretta's amazing southern cooking was her love language that you could taste in every bite! Remember the homemade rolls, collard greens, potato salad, deviled eggs, brisket, beef vegetable soup, and yams that brought comfort and filled your soul?

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Loretta was a wife, mother, grand and great-grandmother, sister, and friend. At Bryn Mawr Hospital, while surrounded by her family, she departed this life peacefully on Friday, October 17, 2025, at the age of 88. She was preceded in death by her grandson, Donavon Bryant; siblings, Bernice Hoover, Jean Groce, Joe Mitchell, Woodrow Mitchell; sister-in-law, Gladys Reed; brother-in-law, Kenneth Byrd; and daughter-in-law, Michelle Byrd.

Loretta leaves a legacy of cherished memories to her beloved husband, Deacon Theodore R. Byrd, Jr. of Ardmore, PA; three daughters, Sharon Bryant of Ardmore, PA, Karen Byrd of Atlanta, GA, and Keya Byrd of Ardmore, PA; one son, Rev. Howard Byrd of Mt. Holly, NC; grandchildren, R. Malachi Hall (Elizabeth), Micah Byrd, Najhala Hall, Mikaela Byrd, William Byrd, Laila Newborn;

great-grandchildren, Ariyana Bryant, Malachi Hall, Abel Hall, Sarai Hall; sister-in-laws, Margaret Mitchell of Columbus, OH, Ressie Dodson (Paul) of Berwyn, PA, and Carol Byrd of Paoli, PA; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Loretta's legacy of love, humor, hospitality, and faith will forever be in the hearts of all who knew her.

Sorrowfully Submitted,  
The Family





# Order of Service

Rev. Richard Johnson Waller, Jr., Officiating

## Processional

**Music Prelude** ..... Bro. Jeff Adams

## Final Viewing

**Opening Hymn** ..... "Blessed Assurance"

## Scripture Readings

*Old Testament- Psalm 118:8-9...* Sis. Christine Hill, Missionary Ministry

*New Testament- John 11:25-26* ..... Deaconess Kim Waller

**Prayer of Comfort** ..... Deacon Lorenzo Burch

**Music Selection** ..... Deaconess Kimberly Muse

## Reading of Cards, Resolutions

**& the Obituary.** ..... Sis. Sharon Pannell, Church Clerk

**Reflections (2 Minutes)** ..... Rev. Albert G. Davis

*Natasha Jarbah & Henrietta Johnson, Dede Jones*

*& Kiyim Ward, Joe Mitchell, Grandchildren*

**Words of Comfort** ..... Deacon Emmanuel Clarke

*Deacon Lester Ellis*

**Music Selection** ..... "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

**Eulogy** ..... Rev. Howard R. Byrd, Pastor

## Benediction

**Remarks** ..... Ventnor T. Wright, Funeral Director

**Recessional** ..... Clergy and Family

## **CELEBRATION OF LIFE**

Friday, October 31, 2025

9:00 AM Viewing

11:00 AM Service

## **SERVICE LOCATION**

Second Baptist Church

246 Highland Avenue

Wayne, Pennsylvania

Rev. Richard J. Waller, Jr., Pastor

## **COMMITTAL & INTERMENT**

9:30 AM Monday, November 3, 2025

Washington Crossing National Cemetery

830 Highland Road

Newtown, Pennsylvania 18940

## **PALLBEARERS**

Malachi Hall

Micah Byrd

William Byrd

Muhammad Harrison

Gante Jarbah

Alan Pecher

## **HONORARY PALLBEARERS**

Great-Grandsons & Nephews

## **FLOWER BEARERS**

Granddaughters & Nieces

## **NOTE OF THANKS**

*Thank you with sincere gratitude for your care and concern shown during our time of bereavement. Thank you all for your support and love. May God bless you.*

*Sincerely, The Family*



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*Ventnor T. Wright, Funeral Director, Supervisor*