

SPECIAL EDITION

A CELEBRATION HER MUSIC OF LIFE



GWENDOLYN NEWTON JOHNSON

OCTOBER 15, 1946 - FEBRUARY 19, 2026

March 4, 2026 11:00 A.M.

Collins Northside Chapel

461 W. Northside Drive Jackson, MS 39206

Pastor Vinson Gibbs, Officiant

The Celebration Service

Prelude

Processional

Prayer.....Robert Hays

Scripture Readings

Old Testament.....Donnell Greene

New Testament.....Donnell Greene

Musical Selection.....Mandy Strong-White

Reading of Obituary.....Read Silently)

Words of Love.....Phyllis Ellis
Crystal Newton
Lavel "Shoes" Johnson

Musical Selection.....Donnell Greene

Lighting of Memorial Candles.....Jessalyn Greene Dorsey

Words of Comfort.....Phyllis Ellis

Acknowledgements.....Phyllis Ellis

Musical Selection.....Mandy Strong-White

Celebration Eulogy.....Pastor Vinson Gibbs

Recessional

Interment

Repast - Piccadilly Cafeteria located at 4800 I-55, Jackson, MS 39211

The Gwendolyn Newton Johnson Family requests that in lieu of flowers,
memorial contributions be made to the MIND Center at University of Mississippi
Medical Center (UMMC), 2500 N. State Street, Jackson, MS 39216

The Roots of the Queen

"Every great symphony begins with a single, steady note. Her journey started in [City/State], born into a legacy of [Family Trait, e.g., Strength/Faith/Grace]. These are the roots that held her firm, the soil that nurtured her spirit, and the beginning of a life that would eventually move the world."

On February 19, 2026, Gwendolyn Newton Johnson peacefully departed this life. She was born on October 15, 1946, in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, to the late Annie and Clifton Newton. She was the youngest of nine children. She was preceded in death by her 8 siblings – F. M. Newton, Elizabeth Diggs, Clifton N. Greene, Mariella N. Wells, Leroy Newton, Marguerite N. Smith, Lee Esther N. McDade, Leon Newton, and husband Fred Johnson.

Gwendolyn accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized at Jerusalem Baptist Church in Humphreys County, Mississippi. At the age of eleven, her family relocated to Jackson, Mississippi, where they became faithful members of Cherry Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

Gwendolyn was a proud 1964 graduate of Lanier High School in Jackson, Mississippi. She later attended and graduated from Jackson State University, affectionately known as "Thee I Love" (JSU), in Jackson, Mississippi. After completing her studies, she moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where she began her professional career. While in Omaha, she taught junior high school and worked part-time at Sears Roebuck. After several years of enduring Nebraska's cold, snowy winters, she returned to her beloved hometown of Jackson, Mississippi.

Upon her return, Gwendolyn began working at her alma mater, Jackson State University, where she faithfully served for many years as Switchboard Director. She also continued her part-time work with Sears Roebuck and Avon.

Gwendolyn was united in holy matrimony to Fred Johnson, the love of her life. Their marriage was a beautiful testament to devotion, companionship, and enduring love. Although they did not have children of their own, they wholeheartedly embraced their nieces and nephews with love, laughter and gentleness. Together, they poured their time, affection, guidance, and unwavering support into the lives of the children they cherished so dearly.



The Roots of the Queen

Affectionately known throughout the community as the “Avon Lady,” she was especially cherished by her nieces as their “Avon Aunt.” Each month, she delighted them with the newest Avon book, inviting them to circle their favorite items and special wishes. Without fail, she lovingly delivered their selections, along with a fresh catalog for the next month. She was the glamorous aunt who taught them how to polish their nails, apply makeup, dress with style, and always carry themselves with confidence and poise. As the youngest aunt, she created countless cherished memories filled with laughter and joy for her nieces and nephews.

We shared a special love of flowers, crafting, and music. Many evenings before bedtime, we would play our favorite songs—some classic oldies and some current upbeat dance tunes for “Aunt Low.” Those nightly concerts deepened not only our shared love of music but also the beautiful bond between aunt and niece. She left this earthly world with grace and peace, having listened to some of her favorite gospel songs the evening before her passing.

She loved cooking and expressed her love most tenderly through her kitchen. Gwendolyn was well known for her delicious fried chicken, perfectly seasoned lima beans, and homemade sweet potato pie and chocolate cake that brought comfort and joy to every family gathering. Her meals were prepared with care, laughter, and just the right touch of love that could be tasted in every bite.

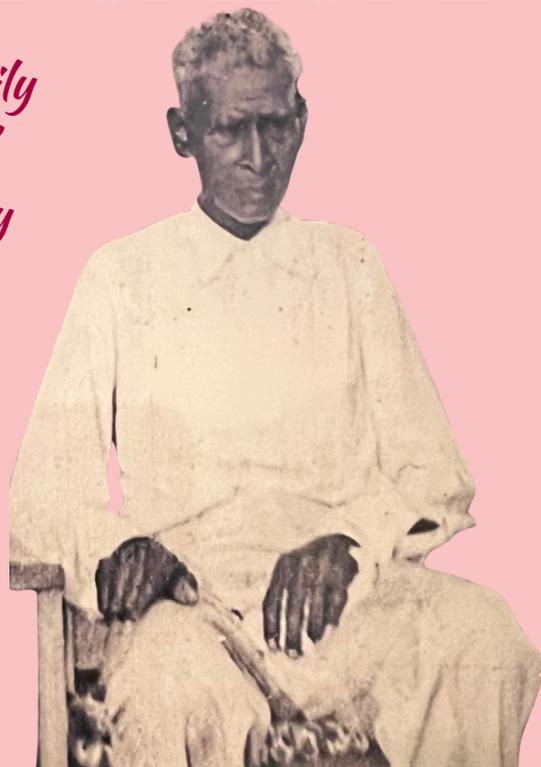
Christmas was her favorite time of year. It was a season she embraced with excitement and style. One of our most treasured traditions was dressing alike during the holidays—coordinating outfits that reflected her flair for fashion and her love of togetherness. Those moments were filled with smiles, pictures, and memories that will forever warm our hearts.

Gwendolyn leaves to cherish her precious memories a loving family who will forever honor her legacy of faith, elegance, generosity, and love. She was a devoted wife, sister, aunt, relative, and friend whose presence brought warmth and joy to every room she entered. Though she is no longer with us in body, her spirit lives on in the lives she touched, the traditions she created, the lessons she taught, and the unconditional love she so freely gave. Her memory will forever be treasured and carried in our hearts.



A LEGACY of HOPE and LOVE

*"The Foundation of family
-is where it all begins."
Jessalyn Greene Dorsey*



*"Families are like branches on a tree, we grow in different
directions yet our roots remain as one." Unknown*



family



Fearless, Fierce, and Fabulous



MY AUNTIE
is my
Bestie



Love
YOU
Forever



*Remember,
Remember.*

The Director's Duo A Tribute

Today, is for celebrating my Aunt Low
Grateful for precious times she did impart
May I always carry them in my heart
And stories to tell, with light and love to show

Angels came to guide her with tender care,
And now she dwells with the Almighty above.
In the heavenly home, thus He did prepare
Sharing her jovial spirit with infinite love

For seven years, we shared the stage,
You were a wonderful masterclass in grace.
Through your journey of seasons, every age,
I learned to keep your joyous pace.

You taught me how a Queen should stand,
With lipstick, poise, joy, and pride.
To lead with an unwavering hand,
With faith, kindness and laughter as our guide.

We ran the show, as you often said , "it's just you and me,"
Over the years, we created a rhythm all our own.
From walks, hotel hallways, dances, trips, and green tea
We had a Aunt-Niece loyalty rarely known.

You called me "Boss Lady" when strength was due,
To guard your health, peace, and light.
But I always knew the true crown belonged to you—
My Queen, by legacy and royal right.

I see your face, smile and can still here your voice
With me i shall carry the memories of your love,
For those I give thanks to the Almighty, I rejoice!
Have faith that you're with Almighty God above.

The music is still playing even though the curtain is drawn,
The hotel's "Check-Out" time is sadly here.
But though the leading lady "The Queen" is gone,
Your sweet hum and voice is all I hear.

Love Always, Jessalyn "Jess"





ARCHITECTS OF JOY

“To the dedicated ones who embraced and matched Gwendolyn’s “Gwen or Low” warmth, spirit of kindness, and love with such perfect timing: your presence and/or phone calls were melodies in her life. Whether for a season or a specific milestone, you provided a sanctuary of laughter and respite when it was needed most. Thank you for the conversations, the humor, the songs, the music, the dances, the miles traveled, and the favorite meals shared or given to her with love. You ensured that even in the quietest hours, the Queen’s world remained vibrant, upbeat, full of laughter, peace, and light. Your positive kindness created a lifetime of smiles and joy.”

- **The Gift of Song, Dance, and Spirit**
Lavel, Phyllis E., Larry, Tina, Dwight, Yachi, Catherine, Mandy, Monica, Tiffany, Randy, Crystal, and Dyeuson

- **The Joy of the Journey**
Lavel, Phyllis E., Frank, and Randy

- **The Conversations & Laughter**
Lavel, Phyllis E., Rufus, Kynneddy, Jack, Tina, Ernestine, Dwight, Yachi, Dyeuson, Crystal, Bendarius, Larry, Phyllis M., Vamous, Catherine, Monica, Tiffany, Sheree, and Danielle

- **The Comfort of Home**
Phyllis E., Rufus, Crystal, Phyllis M., Dwight Yachi, and Thomasinia

- **The Nutritious and Delicious Cuisines**
Lavel, Frank, Phyllis E., Rufus, Tracey, Jack, Crystal, Phyllis M., Tina, Ernestine, Dwightt, Yachi, Larry, Mandy, Catherine, Harwell, Randy, Robert, Wallace, Loni, and Eddie

- **The Presence of Peace - Care & Connection**
Phyllis E., Lavel, Tina, Crystal, Mary, Phyllis M., Catherine, Sheree, and Danielle

- **The Respite & Radiant Smiles**
Lavel, Phyllis E., Rufus, Kynneddy, Susie, Tina, Crystal, Phyllis M., Dyeuson, Bendarius, Benarus, Dwight, Yachi, Larry, Harwell, Tiffany, and Monica

To the world, she was just Gwendolyn “Gwen or Low;” to me, she was my Aunt-Sister-Friend “Queen.” Being her companion, caregiver, and advocate for the last 7 years has been the highest honor of my life. Though we told each other ‘ I love you’ every single day and lived the truth in every shared gesture - let it be recorded here: Being by her side was never a duty. It was a sacred privelege.

To have shared, talked, laughed, dined, traveled, sang, and danced with her - and to have stood watch in that quiet, divine moment as she spoke her final peaceful request to me ‘Just let me sleep’ - is my greatest legacy. I am eternally grateful to her compassionate nurse, Danielle, who held her hand, providing a gentle bridge of comfort as I kept my 7-year vigil at the foot of her bed. Together, we witnessed her graceful transition to her heavenly home.

**Peace and Love Always
Jessalyn “Jess”**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The family of Gwendolyn Newton Johnson wishes to extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the medical teams at St. Dominics Family Medicine, the University of Mississippi Medical Center and Heart of Hospice. To the clinicians: thank you for your skilled hands and your tender spirits. You provided more than medical care; you provided the dignity and comfort that allowed Gwendolyn's light to shine until the very end.

To our family and close circle of friends: your kindness was the rhythm that sustained us. Whether it was the warmth of a shared meal, the gift of your time for respite, or the quiet strength of your presence, you were the true definition of community. You didn't just show up; you stood in the gap, and for that, we are eternally grateful.

We are truly grateful for your support and kindness during this difficult time. May God bless each of you for sharing in our sorrow and for helping us celebrate the life and legacy of our beloved Gwendolyn.

Thank You



THE NEWTON JOHNSON FAMILY

If you're reading this, then I've slipped quietly into the next great adventure. Don't picture me in stillness. That was never my way. Picture me where the music never fades and the dance floor is always open.

You know how I loved a good song – how my feet would start tapping before my mind even decided to move. Music was my joy, my comfort, my celebration, and sometimes my medicine. When life felt heavy, I turned up the volume. When life felt beautiful, I danced even harder. I hope you do the same.

Please don't remember me only in quiet tears. Remember me in the kitchen when your favorite song comes on. Remember me at weddings, at birthdays, in living rooms when no one is watching and you decide to spin around anyway. Dance a little extra for me. Laugh loudly. Sing off-key if you must – I certainly did.

I have been so blessed by dear friends who filled my life with laughter. If I leave behind any legacy at all, I hope it's one of joy, kindness, and the courage to celebrate life wholeheartedly. Life is shorter than we think, but oh, how sweet it is when we let ourselves truly live it. Hold each other close. Forgive quickly. Celebrate often. And never wait for a "special occasion" to dance.

Whenever you hear a melody that makes your heart lift, that's where I'll be – in the rhythm, in the joy, in the movement.

With all my love, always
Your Aunt ❤️



“Who of you by worrying can add a single hour of his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing why do you worry about the rest?” Luke 12:25-

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18