

# Order of Service

Pastor Anthony Webster, Presiding  
*Peace MBC*

Processional and Viewing

Selection

Choir

Scripture Reading:  
Old Testament

Rev. Tommy Downer  
*Peace MBC*

New Testament

Rev. Thermon Tutson  
*True Word International Ministries*

Invocation

Rev. Mack C. Green, Sr.  
*First Thessalonians Baptist Church*

Selection

Choir

Silent Reading of Obituary

Resolutions

Patricia Hope Drayton

Reflections (Two Minutes Please)

Acknowledgements

Denise Thomas

Selection

Choir

Words of Comfort

Pastor Clarence E. Hester  
*Greater New Mount Lilla MBC*

Recessional

## Death Came Quietly

*Death came quietly and gave me a gentle sleep  
To those that I leave behind, please don't weep  
The good Lord giveth and at times, He takes away  
Nothing on His earth is forever here to stay:  
Rejoice now and celebrate the life He gave to me,  
All things that happen are surely meant to be,  
When I was alive, you were all so dear,  
If you just remember the good times, you'll feel that I am near;  
It's times like these that weigh heavy on the heart,  
Put a smile on your face, and make a brand-new start  
Family and friends, I loved, please don't weep  
Death came quietly and gave me gentle sleep.*

## Interment

Restlawn North Memorial Park  
2600 Ribault Scenic Drive  
Jacksonville, Florida 32208

## Acknowledgement

The family of Bessie Mae Tutson Thomas would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who attended her funeral services and supported the family during this difficult time. Your presence, kind words, prayers, visits, phone calls, flowers, cards, and thoughtful gestures have provided great comfort, and we are truly touched by the outpouring of love. Thank you for sharing in her memory and for surrounding us with your support and care. It means more to us than words can express.

Thank you to the nurses, caregivers, social workers, and the Chaplain of VITAS Hospice that assisted in the comfort of Ma Bessie during her time of need.

**Q.L. DOUGLAS**  
FUNERAL HOME

QUINTON L. DOUGLAS, L.F.D.I.C.

MIXON TOWN CHAPEL  
2403 EDISON AVENUE | JACKSONVILLE, FL 32204  
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CELEBRATION OF LIFE  
FOR



**BESSIE MAE  
TUTSON THOMAS**

*Earthly Home*  
October 5, 1925

*Heavenly Home*  
November 25, 2025

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025 | 11:00AM  
EMANUEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

2407 Rev S. L. Badger Jr. Circle  
Jacksonville, Florida 32209



# Life Story

Bessie Mae Tutson Thomas, known to so many of us simply and lovingly as **Ma Bessie**, was born on Monday, October 5, 1925, in Tutson Lane, Jacksonville, Florida to Frank Tutson and Bessie Brandon Tutson. She was one of 7 siblings. She received Christ at an early age and served many years as an usher at Mt. Ararat Baptist Church and then Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church. Ma Bessie was a domestic worker before becoming a custodian at Duval County Public Schools where she retired after 30 years of employment.

Bessie married Ernest Thomas in 1942 and remained married for sixty-three years until his demise in 2005. Together, they had six daughters, Ernestine Holmes, Richardine Maffett, Elizabeth Manning, Olester Pat Williams, Shirley Thomas, and Darlene Rivers. This legacy has grown into six generations including nineteen grands, thirty-eight great-grands, fifty-three great-great-grands, and three great-great-great-grands. She also leaves behind many nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of friends to cherish her memory. Ma Bessie's legacy stretches far and wide, not just through her bloodlines, but through the values she instilled in her family: faith, resilience, kindness, and the power of family.

Ms. Bessie loved to travel. She took cruises often, visiting many locations in the Eastern and Western Caribbean. She visited Germany; South of France, Nice, Cannes; Paris; Monaco; San Juan, Puerto Rico, and climbed Dunn's Fall in Ocho Rios, Jamaica. She also visited many states in the U.S., including Alabama, Alaska, California, Georgia, New Jersey, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and many cities in Florida.

Ms. Bessie was very creative. Whatever she wanted to learn to do, she would take a class and do it. Most of us have a ceramic animal in our home made by her. She also did macramé, crocheted dollies, grew healthy plants, and created and sold beautiful hand-made jewelry all while in her 90's.

Ms. Bessie was preceded in death by her loving husband: Ernest Thomas; daughter: Ernestine Holmes; parents: Frank and Bessie Tutson; sisters: Francina Febles, Margaret Young and Elizabeth Hicks; brothers: Willie Frank Tutson, George Tutson and John Henry Tutson; grandchildren: Harriet Holmes, Vincent Thomas, Sherri Whitfield and Trevis Thomas and great-grandson: Jon Dantzler, III.

Many of you attended Ma Bessie's 100th birthday celebration on October 5, 2025, and she was grateful for the opportunity to fellowship with you all. Reaching the 100th milestone is a testament to her strength and resilience and God's love. Very few people are blessed to witness a hundred years of life — and even fewer do so while being surrounded by the love and admiration of so many.

Ma Bessie touched countless lives with her warm smile, her words of wisdom, her gentle hand, and her fierce spirit whenever that was needed. She has been our example, our encourager, our storyteller, and our safe place. A life well lived.

A special **THANK YOU** to Olester Pat Williams and Shirley Thomas for being mom's full-time caregivers for more than ten years. Although a very difficult job, they cared for her with love and patience and made sure she never wanted for anything. And to the grandchildren who showed up every day to help lift and care for mom. Job well done!

Revelation 21:4 "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the former things have passed away."

