



Birdie Lee Stewart

January 25, 1929 - June 5, 2019

Birdie Lee Stewart was born January 25, 1929 to Cornevie and Sylvestia Greer Bishop in Jackson, TN. She attended Merry High School and graduated from Denmark High School. She married her high school sweetheart, John “Jack” Stewart on January 25, 1947. The family relocated from Jackson, TN to Richmond, CA and later to Oakland, CA in 1951. After attending classes at Laney College, she and Jack opened a dry cleaning, tailoring and dress-making business in 1962. After working many years in the family business, she continued utilizing her fashion skills working at various fabric stores. In 1971, she became the first black manager at New York Fabrics in their 32-year history. She was the fabric consultant to many prominent Bay Area entertainment personalities. She later entered the field of child development and worked as an Early Childhood Instructor in the Social Services Department with the City of Oakland.

Birdie was a remarkable wife and mother who exemplified the characteristics of the Proverbs 31 woman. Not only was she a wonderful businesswoman, but she was a woman of great faith. She trained up five daughters, three sons and later raised her young grandson and taught them all to be kind and respectful of one another. Most importantly she taught her children to love and fear the Lord.

Birdie was a prominent, long time member of North Oakland Missionary Baptist Church where she served in numerous capacities. She was a member of the Training Union and as a member of the Solace Committee, she worked with bereaved families. She also served on the Trustee Board, was Assistant Superintendent of Sunday School and worked as Senior Usher and Trainer for the Adult and Youth Usher Boards.

Birdie was also blessed from God with the spiritual gift of giving and was generously kind and never missed an opportunity to help someone in need.

Sis Birdie will be sorely missed but her family is comforted in knowing she is in the arms of the Lord. She is preceded in death by John “Jack” Stewart; her parents Cornevie and Sylviestia Greer Bishop, her brothers Rev. William Daly Bishop, Henry Cornevie Bishop, Billy T. Bishop, and her sister Sallie Bishop Rogers; her daughter Marilyn Stewart and her grandson Jerin Simmons

She leaves to cherish her precious memory three sisters: Elizabeth Leach of Jackson, TN; Louise(John) Walker of Denmark, TN; Ella Gary of Jackson, TN; two brothers: John

Bishop of Oakland, CA; George(Janet) Bishop of South Carolina; Four Daughters: Sylvia (David) Montgomery of Castro Valley, CA; Joan (Jerry) Simmons of San Leandro, CA; Barbara (Mathieu) Worthington of San Leandro, CA; Leslie Jackson, Austell, GA; Four sons: John Stewart, Jr. of Richmond, CA; Donald Stewart of Hayward, CA; Gary (Chris) Stewart of Orinda, CA; Marlin

Wilson, Richmond, Ca; 10 grandchildren; 13 great grandchildren; and 15 great-great grandchildren, and a host of nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.