

The Dash Poem

by Linda Ellis

I read of a man who stood to speak
At the funeral of a friend
From the beginning to the end
He noted that first came the date of her birth
And spoke the following date with tears,
But he said what mattered most of all
Was *the dash* between those years
For *that dash* represents all the time
That she spent alive on earth.
And now only those who loved her
Know what that little line is worth.
For it matters not how much we own;
The cars, the house, the cash,
What matters is how we live and love
And how we spend *our dash*.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We, the family of Mrs. Gracie Seabrook Floyd, are appreciative of your many expressions during this time of bereavement. Though we cannot mourn together, side by side, we are unified by the love of Christ, through our love for our Mother and your love for your friend and Councilwoman. Thank you for your kindness and support, now and in the days to come.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

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HONORING THE LIFE, LEGACY AND SERVICE OF

Mrs. Gracie Seabrook Floyd

ALPHA OMEGA
JUNE 3, 1945 — JANUARY 15, 2021

*Work for a Cause, Not for Applause.
Live life to express, not to impress.*

Don't strive to make your presence noticed, just make your absence felt.

Saturday, January 23, 2021
2:00 PM

Greenlawn Memorial Park
Columbia, SC 29209



Live a Life that Matters

Ready or not, some day it will come to an end.
There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours or days
All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten
will pass to someone else

Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance
It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed
Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies
will finally disappear

So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans, and to-do lists will expire
The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade away

It won't matter where you came from
It won't matter whether you were beautiful or brilliant
Even your gender and skin color will be irrelevant
So what will matter?

What will matter is not what you bought, but what you built

Not what you got, but what you gave

What will matter is not your success, but your significance

What will matter is not what you learned, but what you taught

What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage
or sacrifice that enriched, empowered or encouraged others
to emulate your example

What will matter is not your competence, but your character

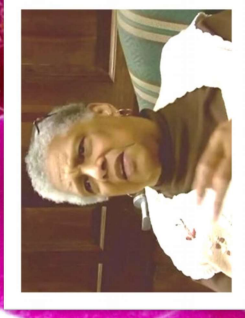
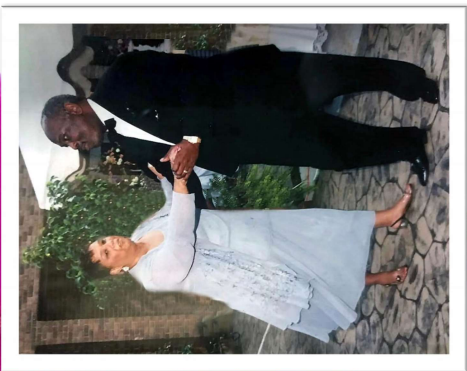
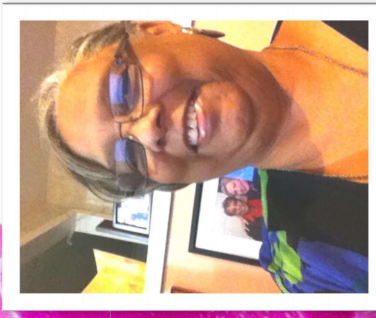
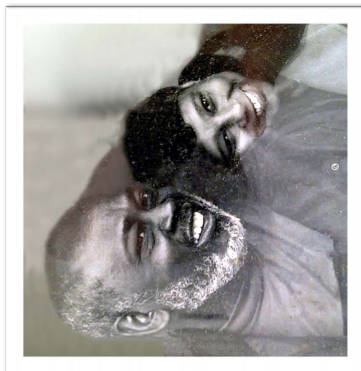
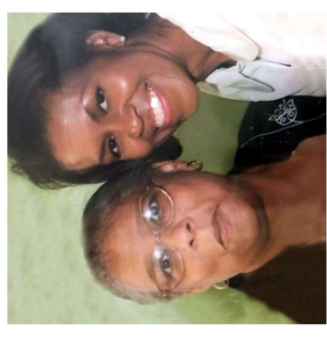
What will matter is not how many people you knew
but how many will feel a lasting loss when you're gone

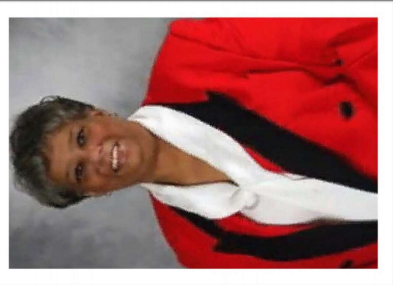
What will matter is not your memories
but the memories that live on in those who loved you

What will matter is how long you will be remembered and for what

Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident

It happens by choice...





OBITUARY

Ms. Gracie Seabrook Floyd, of Anderson, South Carolina passed away on January 15, 2021, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at 75 years of age from complications related to COVID-19.

She was born June 3, 1945, in the historically black Waverly Community of Columbia, South Carolina, though her childhood street is now known as part of the "Historic MLK District." She was the daughter of Ms. Maria Williams of Columbia, SC and the sister of both Ms. Pearl Fuller of Atlanta, GA and the late Ms. Cookie Sims. She was also the sister-in-law of: James (Barbara) Floyd of Simpsonville, SC, Dr. Jerry (Claire) Floyd, MD of Bethesda, MD, John Floyd of Laurens, SC, Joseph (Mildred) Floyd of Greenville, SC, Dr. Michael (Monica) Floyd of Tegram, TN and Claire Floyd Porter of Columbia, SC. Ms. Gracie was the proud mother of two sons, Gregory William Floyd, a principal designer, and Kenneth Wayne Floyd, a professional musician. She was also the devoted wife to the late William Floyd, former Anderson County Council Chairman, born in Laurens County as the son of a share-cropper and glassblower, who grew up attending segregated schools. Her departed husband, whom she lovingly referred to as "Floyd," made history as the first African-American to serve on Anderson County Council and as the Anderson County Council Chair. Gracie also made history as the first and only African-American woman to serve as an Anderson County Councilmember and Chair.

Ms. Gracie attended and graduated from the segregated Booker T. Washington High School in Columbia, SC, and as a young teenager, participated in the Civil Rights Movement, particularly leading in the integration of Columbia's city parks. As an activist, Gracie was profoundly influenced by Columbia area Civil Rights leader Modjeska Simkins, especially for her courage and focus on individual and community empowerment. Gracie earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Allen University. She later completed a Master's Degree in Education, certification for Secondary School Guidance Counselor, and certification for Secondary School Administration from Clemson University. In an interview in May of 2019, Ms. Floyd quipped that all her education and life experiences led her to work in local government, something she had not previously sought or desired (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99npxPPz8k>).

As an educator for thirty years, "Ms. Gracie," as she was fondly called, taught grades two through technical college, including adult education. As two of the first African American teachers in School District Five at the time of integration, the Floyds were part of a heroic generation of educators who shepherded the Anderson community into a brighter and more equitable era. Later, she served as an assistant principal at Honea Path Middle School before accepting a position as principal at Wright Middle School in Abbeville, SC.

While in Abbeville, Gracie directed the First Steps Parenting Program for three years. Her distinguished employment history also includes eight years with South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation as an employment evaluator and a drug and alcohol abuse counselor.

When Ms. Gracie's husband died suddenly on May 13, 1999, only days after his death, people rallied around her and encouraged her to run for the vacant County Council seat. A strong woman of faith, Ms. Gracie did *not* want to run and put the decision in God's hands, urging Him to give her a sign that she should do so.

After rebuffing the thought and repeatedly saying in prayer that she did *not* want to run for Council, she was shown the sign she so craved from her God. She fell to her knees, wept, and accepted His Divine Will, agreeing to run for the seat and serve, with His help. She was successfully elected to complete her deceased husband's Council term and has been re-elected ever since, including in the most recent November 2020 election.

Realizing the magnitude of her office and the good she could accomplish, in 2000, Gracie retired as the Director of Public Support for Senior Solutions in Anderson, South Carolina to devote more time as a County Council member.

Gracie served as Council District Two's representative for 21 years. She holds the record as the longest serving member and was the only Democrat to hold an elected office in Anderson County at the time of her death.

During her 21-year tenure on County Council, Gracie had many distinguished accomplishments, including:

- Creating more than 12 community-based organizations in Council District Two
- Starting a gang task force to collaborate with local law enforcement, civic organizations, and government and community agencies
- Helping to secure funding eliminating sub-standard housing
- Serving as the catalyst compelling county, state, university and federal officials to implement a county/regional bus transportation system providing transportation from the City of Anderson to Tri-County Technical College and Clemson University. In October of 2010, working with the City of Anderson, Gracie secured a bus line to the Homeland Park area. In an interview in May of 2019, Ms. Floyd called this outside-the-box regional bus system one of her proudest accomplishments.
- Spearheading the construction of the new recreation center at McFalls Landing at Broadway Lake. Ms. Floyd saw Broadway Lake as a "diamond in the rough" that only needed "a little polishing up." She noted that getting this project accomplished was "hard" but proudly believed, "If God be for you, who can be against you?" Today, the site is typically booked a year in advance by Anderson County's citizens and remains one of the most affordable and beautiful event venues in the County.
- Initiating and collaborating to secure more than \$400,000 in grants to assist with the cleanup of old mill sites (aka "Brown Fields") across Anderson County
- Serving as a member of the Anderson Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
- Serving for many years as President of the South Carolina Coalition of Black County Elected Officials, where she strongly increased the organization's membership, treasury, and influence

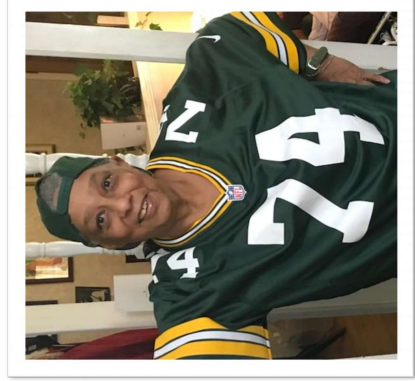
Ms. Gracie was a member of Royal Baptist Church and also attended New Broadmouth Baptist Church in Honea Path, and the South Main Chapel and Mercy Center. Her greatest joy in life was her two sons, Gregory and Kenny. She often said her favorite job was being "Greg and Kenny's Mom" and "Coach Floyd's wife."

Always looking forward, Ms. Floyd firmly believed in progress and opposed the notion "if it was good enough for Grandpa, it's good enough for me." She believed both we and our children deserve better and laughed while stating, "It is not a secret that I am very outspoken."

Gracie would humbly say, "I am Gracie Floyd. I am a child of God. I will keep on working until he tells me, 'Ok, Gracie, you can go now and find you a nice place to live and go fishing.'" She loved fishing, gardening, playing cards with old friends, and watching westerns, especially the TV show "Gunsmoke" and the mini-series, "Lonesome Dove." When she was younger, she enjoyed and excelled at tennis and golf.

Ms. Floyd is also survived by her granddog, Jay as well as an entire community that loved and appreciated her for her work on behalf of the citizens of Anderson County, especially low-income and disenfranchised folks. She will be sorely missed and forever remembered for her tireless efforts to make Anderson County the greatest place to live and raise a family.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to The William A. Floyd Foundation for Continuing Education c/o Charles R. Watkins, 200 Pisgah Dr., Anderson, South Carolina 29624.



A Mother's Crown

Heaven lit up with a mighty presence
as the Angels all looked down...
Today the Lord was placing the jewels
into my mother's crown.

He held up a golden crown
as my darling mother looked on...
He said in His gentle voice
"I will now explain each one."

"The first gem," He said, "is a Ruby
and it's for endurance alone.
For all the nights you waited up
for your children to come home."
For all the nights by their bedside
you stayed till the fever went down...
For nursing every little wound
I add this ruby to your crown."

"An emerald, I'll place by the ruby
for leading your children in the right way...
For teaching them the lessons,
that made them who they are today."

"For always being right there
through all life's important events
I give you a sapphire stone
for the time and love you spent."

For untying the strings that held them
when they grew up and left home...
I give you this one for courage."
Then the Lord added a garnet stone.

"I'll place a stone of amethyst," He said
"for all the times you spent on your knees...
When you asked if I'd take care of your children
and then for having faith in Me."

I have a pearl for every little sacrifice
that you made without them knowing...
For all the times you went without
to keep them happy, healthy and growing."

"And last of all I have a diamond,
the greatest one of all...
For sharing unconditional love
whether they were big or small."

"It was your love that helped them grow
feeling safe and happy and proud...
A love so strong and pure
it could shift the darkest cloud."

After the Lord placed the last jewel in
He said, Your crown is now complete...
You've earned your place in Heaven
with your children at your feet.

Our Mother kept a garden.

A garden of the heart;
She planted all the good things,
That gave our life it's start.

She turned us to the sunshine,
And encouraged us to dream:
Fostering and nurturing
The seeds of self-esteem.

And when the winds and rains came,
She protected us enough;
But not too much, she knew we'd need
To stand up strong and tough.

Her constant good example,
Always taught us right from wrong;
Walkers for our pathway
To last our whole life long.

We are our Mother's garden,
We are her legacy.
And we hope today she feels the love,
Reflected back from us.

God Hand-Picked My Mother

God hand-picked my mother
Like a flower from above...
He used her for His services
As a vessel of His love.

Like a rose, she was soft and gentle,
Like a lilac, she was sweet...
Like a daisy, she was sunshine
To everyone she meets.

God hand-picked my mother
And she radiated His grace...
You could see the love within her
When you looked upon her face.

A sweet bouquet of beauty
A loving work of art...
God blessed my special mother,
The flower of my heart.

Order of Service Private Graveside Service

Greenlawn Memorial Park
Columbia, South Carolina
January 23, 2021

Opening Prayer

Kurt Stutler

Scripture Reading and Brief Remarks

Kurt Stutler

Scripture Reading and Brief Remarks

Mike Cunningham

Scripture Reading and Brief Remarks

Joey Oppermann

REFLECTION AND SONGS

"Precious Lord" (Gracie's favorite song)

"Jesus Is The Best Thing" by Reverend James Cleveland

Scripture Reading and Reflection

Kenny Floyd (Youngest Son)

Scripture Reading and Reflection

Greg Floyd (Oldest Son)

Committal Rites, Closing Prayer and Benediction

