



## Mrs. Madeline Lemon Wilson

February 15, 1926 - October 1, 2018

On Monday, October 1, 2018, Madeline Lemon Wilson made a peaceful transition to eternal rest. Madeline Lemon was born on February 15, 1926 in the Falling Springs Valley near Hot Springs, Virginia. She was the eighth of ten children of Grace and Warren Lemon, and she joyously recounted stories of growing up in her large and loving family. Madeline would become the first of her siblings to attend college when she attended Virginia State College from 1943 to 1947. While attending Virginia State she became a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and she established many life-long friendships.

Upon graduation from Virginia State, Madeline moved to Washington DC where her sisters Margorie (Peaches) Randal, Virginia (Gin) Davis and her beloved brother Harry Lemon already lived. She lived with her sister Peaches while working in her first teaching job at the Garden of Children, which was established by Dorothy Howard in 1929 as the first African American Nursery School chartered by the District of Columbia.

During this time period Madeline met Willis "Joe" Wilson, and they married at her family home, surrounded by family and friends in Hot Springs, Virginia. They lived in Washington DC and in 1952 Willis "Joey" Wilson Jr. was born. With Joey in tow, Madeline and "Big Joe" temporarily moved to Big Joe's hometown of Keysville, Virginia in order to build a home for his mother and his sister Edith. During that period Larry was born in 1954 and Michael was born in 1955 in near-by South Boston, Virginia. In 1956, now, with Joey, Larry and Michael in-tow, Madeline and Big Joe moved back to Washington, and Madeline began teaching in the still segregation Prince Georges County school system. She taught home economics at Fairmount Heights High School and Mary Mcleod Bethune Junior High School. A young lady who attended Fairmount Heights once said that she remembered her as the teacher who called everyone sugar lump, honey bun and sweetie pie.

When Prince Georges County schools were finally integrated in the latter half of the 1960's, Madeline was assigned to formerly segregated Roger B. Taney Jr. high school, where the cultural prejudices of Prince Georges County and of this country were reflective of the attitudes at Roger B. Taney. But her warm and loving way allowed her to establish

quality relationships among the staff and students. During this same period Madeline was pursuing a masters degree in education, but institutional and cultural obstructions made an already challenging course of study that much more difficult. But she persevered, and in 1969, after what seemed like a million tuna casseroles, her family proudly watched her cross the stage to receive a Masters Degree in Education from American University.

In the summer of 1973 Madeline was selected to join a multidisciplinary State Department team to develop curriculum at the University of Nepal at Katmandu. This two month adventure in Nepal was the personal and professional opportunity of a lifetime, and as anyone who knows her, knows that she had the pictures to prove it.

When Madeline returned from Nepal she began to serve in Prince Georges County as a home economics and consumer education consultant, training teachers to effectively teach techniques and activities in home economics as well as concepts in consumer education. During this time she began experiencing significant health challenges which were difficult and painful, but she continued to work until approximately 1979 when her health required that she retire. She devoted her retirement years to her family, her many devoted friends and to Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Madeline loved God. She loved life. She loved people, and people loved her. She would say that she had joy, and that joy came from the love of Christ. She exuded that joy to everyone in her life. She had a perpetually positive attitude and a quiet strength that allowed her to withstand her own health issues as well as to provide that gentle strength that her youngest son Michael needed as he battled sickle cell all of his life. That same positive attitude and gentle strength allowed her to be the rock of the family when her beloved Big Joe passed away in 1986. She would say that “as long as we talk about and laugh about times we had with him, he would live on forever.” As Michael’s health gradually deteriorated she cared for, and encouraged him, but in 2001 he lost his battle with Sickle Cell, and her amazing strength was on display. As everyone tried to care for her emotional needs, she was trying to care for theirs.

Through all of her challenges she never lost her joy, and her classic response of “Never Better” was a testament to that. When Madeline moved to Collington Senior Living Center she gained a whole new life of devoted friends among the residents and staff. She was always creative, but the art classes at Collington provided her the opportunity to create these beautiful painting before you. As she aged and her condition changed, she moved through the levels of care at Collington, but her friends never left her. And by the time she was in hospice care for seven weeks when her body could take no food nor water, her family friends, her Collington friends, nieces and nephews, her grandsons, her sons and

daughters in law visited her, talked to her, sang to her and prayed over her so that she hear how much everyone loved her.

Madeline leaves to cherish a life of wonderful memories, her sons: Willis J Wilson Jr. (Carolyn), Larry K. Wilson (Dianna); two sisters: Doris Hairston and Joan Lay; sister-in-law: Arminta Wood; brother-in-law: James Henderson; grandsons: Joseph, Aaron, Houston and Mason; granddaughter: Kenya; 11 great grand children; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends with whom she will live on in their memories.

# Events

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**OCT**   **Visitation**                      10:00AM - 11:00AM

**11**

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Ebenezer AME Church

7707 Allentown Road, Ft. Washington, MD, US, 20744

**OCT**   **Memorial Service**    11:00AM

**11**

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Ebenezer AME Church

7707 Allentown Road, Ft. Washington, MD, US, 20744

# Comments

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“ Miss Madeline, you will be greatly missed by the Blackwell clan. You always made each of the Blackwell children feel special with your loving hugs and kisses. I'll always remember your sweet voice, beautiful smile and joyful heart. You were, indeed, a second mother to Harold & Elaine's 5 squirrels, as Daddy used to call us. :-)

I too was heartbroken to learn in late January that you passed 4 months ago. I am comforted by the fact that you are resting peacefully with your beloved Joe and Michael in heaven.

Our prayers and deepest sympathy to the family. Eternal rest grant unto you, Miss Madeline, and may God's perpetual light shine upon you.

Love always,  
Andrea Blackwell Williams



**Andrea Blackwell Williams** - February 01 at 11:40 AM

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“ Miss Madeline we will miss you. Your kindness, generosity, love and sweet as honey personality will never be forgotten. When I met you as a little girl I always loved seeing and being around you. You were like another mother to mommy's and daddy's five children.

How heartbreaking it was to hear in late January of the passing of our beloved Miss Madeline. So many loving and fond memories of an amazing woman and human being will live on forever.

We will keep the family in our prayers.

Goodbye, Miss Madeline, we love you! You were the best!

Karen Blackwell-Mitchell



Karen Blackwell-Mitchell - February 01 at 07:07 AM

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“ I loved her. I'll miss her. So blessed to have known her.



Joyce C Page - October 14, 2018 at 08:36 PM

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“ Wanda Kincaid lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Madeline Lemon Wilson



Wanda Kincaid - October 11, 2018 at 01:37 AM

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“ I will always remember Mom-Wilson response to "Hru doing?" ..... "Never Better My Love!!"..  
..also, let's not forget that SCRUMPTIOUS HMEMADE POUND CAKE...TOO ☐ !!  
Thank you so very much for sharing such a SWEET & LOVING MOM with  
me!!....PEACE & BLESSINGS TO YOU ALL!!.....Wanda

Wanda Kincaid - October 11, 2018 at 01:27 AM

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“ 82 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Phillip Bell Sr. and Winona Morrissette-** - October 08, 2018 at 05:00 PM