



## Mrs. Thelma Penn Giles

September 27, 1934 - October 20, 2019

Thelma Agnes Penn Giles went home to the Lord on Sunday evening October 20, 2019. She was 85 years old. She resided with her youngest daughter Lili Spain Daniely and her son-in-law Reverend Dr. James Daniely in Alexandria, Virginia.

Thelma was born on August 27, 1934 to Lorenzo Penn and Thelma Rogers Penn in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There was always some question about the evening Thelma came into the world. The doctor who did the delivery said that she came after midnight, but her mother swore that it was before midnight making her actual birthdate August 26, 1934. It did not matter to Thelma, she simply celebrated her birthday on both days! Her father taught her and her siblings about art and poetry. This was her foundation for her profound love of going to museums, collecting art and reciting poems of her favorite authors.

Thelma grew up to be a very smart young girl. She loved living in Philadelphia and it's surrounding suburb King of Prussia. She lived there for over 40 years. She excelled in her accounting and business classes in high school. At 18 years old she married Lonnie Spain. They had 3 little girls, Lorene, Lynnell and Lili. When the marriage dissolved, Thelma found herself without a job and 3 daughters to raise on her own. She was able to secure a secretarial position at the corporate headquarters of Gino's Inc. a fast food restaurant chain. She moved up quickly in the ranks and became an administrator of training and

development. Later she became a management consultant for INA Insurance Company, Colonial Penn Insurance Company and ARA services.

Thelma wanted to have more education behind her to further her career. She applied at Antioch University in Philadelphia in the bachelor's program in business administration. The university accepted her in their Master of business administration program. The admissions office told her that her impressive work experience was equal to their undergraduate degree. After completing that degree, she was asked to teach a course there. During that time, she fell in love with Dr. Waldron Giles. They married in 1982 and became a blended family. Mrs. Thelma Penn Giles' dream came true. She always wanted a son and found one in her beloved son Gregory.

Thelma and Waldron decided to use their acute business skills by buying an electrical lighting company Mattes Electric and a tree service in Wilmington, Delaware. Their move to Wilmington was a good one. While acting as chief financial officer of two companies, Thelma was extremely active in her community. She was a part of such organizations such as Wilmington Women in Business, Girls Inc., Literacy Volunteers and Weight Watchers. She also sat on the board of Artisans' Savings Bank and Wesley College. Thelma was also an excellent seamstress, baker and interior decorator. Her love for plants prompted her to add a small greenhouse to her home so her plants would not die in the winter. After 30 years of being business owners, Dr. and Mrs. Giles sold the companies and retired in 2000.

In 2001, Thelma suffered a massive stroke. The nurses at Christiana Hospital said that she was their "miracle patient". The medical staff could not believe she survived. Although, Thelma was paralyzed on her right side, she still was as strong as an ox! She loved to do word search puzzles, spend time with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and ride in her big Beemer.

Thelma Penn Giles precedes in death her sisters Joyce Randolph and Gloria Penn Easton as well as her daughters Lorene Espeland (Olav Espeland son in law), Lynnell Spain, Lili Spain Daniely (James Daniely, son in law), son Gregory Giles, grand-daughters Lelanie Spain and Kristen Evans, great grandchildren, Joredan Brown, Jermonte Brown, Iriana Anderson and Tenye Martin.

Thelma loved her friends and her family. She loved her Roberts Memorial United Methodist church family. She was known for her love of champagne and good food. Her supportive presence, kindness and generosity was without measure. She will be deeply missed by her family, friends and many others.

The family of Thelma Agnes Penn Giles would like to thank all of you for the outpouring of support, cards, gifts and love. We would also like to thank all of our mother's caregivers Vicki, Stephanie and Tanya. We are very appreciative of Rev. Dr. Daniely and the entire congregation of Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church. Our mother always felt loved and welcomed whenever she came church. You will never know how much it means to this family as we mourn the loss of someone we loved so much. God bless you all!

## Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### Memorial

NOV **25**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church  
606 A South Washington St.  
Alexandria, VA 22314

# Tribute Wall



“ 54 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



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**Phillip Bell Sr. and Winona Morrissette** - November 24, 2019 at 12:15 PM