

*A Celebration of Life*

OUR GIFT  
July 15, 1927

God's Gift  
January 2, 2023

*Sister Rosie Mae*  
**FORTSON-GATHAN**

Saturday, January 14th, 2023  
Twelve O'clock Noon

**Berean Missionary Baptist Church**  
11114 Cullen Boulevard • Houston, TX 77047  
Reverend Jer'ald Whittaker, Officiating  
Pastor Bruce Washington, Eulogy

II Timothy 4:7 "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith"



# Her Loving Journey

Rosie Mae Solomon was born on July 15, 1927 in Houston, Texas to Rozelia Faultry and Johnnie Solomon. She was the eldest of four girls, which meant being big sister and helper to her parents, Mamma and Poppa Vivven Collier. Her parents ran a small farm, deeded by her maternal grandfather Richard, a railroad worker located in Arcola Texas. Rosie tried but picking cotton was not in her future, instead as a young Spelling Bee Champion her teachers encouraged her to pursue her education. Rosie, affectionately known as Rose to family and friends, grew into a conscientious young woman receiving an education at Yates High School, while living with her father in Houston. Leaving school early, she put her educational goal to complete college on hold and started her career as a silk presser in the dry cleaning business.



In Houston, she met Lorenzo Fortson, a WWII veteran. They married and lovingly parented Mildred, Brenda, Jeanette (from prior marriage relationships), and Vanessa (born from their union). The latter three daughters became Texas Southern University alumna as did Rosie, who began at a courageous age of 40, obtaining degrees in Early Childhood Education and Black History Studies. She worked in Crosby ISD, and at Eighth Avenue (HISD) schools, while traveling weekends to study and obtain a Masters in Education from Prairie View University.



Rosie and Lorenzo attended Mt. Vernon Methodist Church in 5th Ward. She enjoyed fishing and hunting in San Luis Pass, and Centerville, TX respectively with her sisters, cousins, and neighbors. In her early years, she was an avid crocheter, quilter, seamstress, and an excellent cook of fricasseed chicken, seafood gumbo, pies, and cakes. After Lo's death, she joined her neighbors at Mount Moriah Baptist Church to study and extend her Christian fellowship.

Rosie married Thurman at the age of 75 years, and began a new chapter at Berean Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor Washington. Welcomed by a loving family congregation who guided her to a world of life's pleasure through cruises, church outings and participation in plays. She worked diligently as a mission teacher, deaconess, Sunday school teacher, senior mission choir, and was very active in BTU. She would be blessed with two God daughters, Sue English (Larry) and Dorothy Phoenix, affectionately calling her Momma Gathan.

Rosie leaves to cherish her memory, daughters Vanessa Fortson Otway (Gene), Brenda Fortson Houston (Bobby), grandsons Gibran and Khalil Fortson Otway, granddaughters Veronica Wren (Ernest), Allison Williams (Cedric), Raina Bajuk, bonus son Michael Gathan, and a host of great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. She is preceded in death by her parents, Husbands: Lorenzo Fortson, Thurman Gathan; Sisters: Katherine Rattler, Vivian Latson, and Vennie Fields.

A WOMAN OF COURAGE, FAITH, AND STRENGTH



# Order of Service

Musical Prelude.....(Soft Music)

Processional.....Ministers, Pallbearers, Family

Song of Praise.....Berean Church Choir

## Reading of the Holy Scripture:

The Old Testament.....Reverend Bryson Smith

The New Testament.....Reverend Daniel Ve'an

Prayer of Comfort.....Reverend Jer'ald Whitaker

## Choir Selection

Resolutions/Acknowledgements.....Berean M.B.C

## The Obituary Read Silently

Reflections.....Pastor Kenneth Wells (Nephew)

Pastoral Remarks.....Pastor Robert Ve'an

Solo.....Joann Graves

Eulogy.....Pastor Bruce Washington

## Funeral Directors In Charge

Recessional.....Clergy and Family

“May The Works I’ve Done Speak For Me”

ROSIE MAE FORTSON-GATHAN



# EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE

## A LOVING MOTHER

Dear Mama

When God made you Mama, He had a purpose and plan for your good. Whatever came your way, into your life, He branded with His love and so you are Love. You showed us all encouragement even when we made mistakes, you told us "that is why pencils have erasers". I am sure God is delighted in who you became, and how you shared Unconditional Love. So today and always I celebrate His beautiful gift to me and our family. Thank you for being you.

Love, Vanessa

Nothing in the world will ever separate us from the love of God Romans 8:38

## OUR GRANDMOTHER

Grandma Rosie,

I thank our Heavenly Father for you and the amount of love and compassion you have given throughout your life. I am reminded of Phil. 2:4, that speaks of "not thinking of yourself but taking interest in others." This is the life you lived. You spoke truth, you sacrificed, you gave of yourself, and you were there. What a good example you set and a legacy for us to live by.

Thank you Grandma, Rosie.

You are not as far as some might think... hearts are eternally joined.

Love always. Your granddaughter, Veronica

Dear Granny,

We just want you to know that in moments of distress, we often think of the peaceful times we share getting together for summers, and holidays, a home filled with love and tradition. And, in later years playing puzzle games and watching Family Feud and Wheel of Fortune. We are so fortunate to have a loving and caring grandmother, as an example of love to us and all of our friends. Love you always

Granny. Your grandsons Gibran and Khalil

## OUR AUNT

Aunt Rosie,

Thank you for being the best big sister to all your sisters and supporting the family. Thank you for treating me like an Angel and making me feel so special.

Love you dearly, Dr. Katrell "Your Baby"

Aunt Rosie,

I will definitely miss your encouraging words, your laughter, hugs, and kisses, and most of all your beautiful smile.

Love you, Angie

"GONE FROM OUR PRESENCE BUT NEVER OUR HEARTS"













## “DON'T THINK OF ME AS GONE AWAY”

*By Ellen Brenneman*

Family, My journey has just begun; life holds so many facets, this earth is only one.

Just think of me as resting from the sorrows and the tears  
in a place of warmth and comfort where there are no days and years.

Think how I must be wishing that you could know today.

How nothing but your sadness can really pass away.

And think of me as living in the hearts of those I touched.

For nothing loved is ever lost....and I know I was loved so much.

“Don't think of me as gone away”

“Blessed is the 95 year old woman who dies with her business in order”



“A LIFE WELL LIVED – SAFE IN THE MASTER’S ARMS”



## *Active Pallbearers*

Deacon Charlie Tennon      Deacon Larry English  
Deacon Emanuel Gillis      Deacon Otis Adams  
Deacon Ondra Rountree      Deacon Tristan Washington  
Deacon Eric Hardy      Deacon Curtis Whittaker  
Deacon Frank English

## *Honorary Pallbearers*

Berean Mid Day Service Members — Pastor Ve'an Teacher  
Berean Deaconess & Ministers' Wives

## *Our Sincerest Appreciation...*

The family of Rosie Fortson-Gathan gracefully acknowledges the many acts of love, words of comfort, telephone calls, text messages, cards, flowers, plants, food and other sentiments offered during the illness and death of Mama. We thank you for covering us with daily prayers and words of love, comfort, and encouragement.

Special thanks to the medical and nursing staff of Memorial Hermann Home Care, Hospice, and Senior Helpers- Pearland through life's journey.  
- The Family -

## *And She Shall Rest at*

Houston Memorial Cemetery  
2426 Cullen Blvd. • Pearland, Texas 77581

## *Services Lovingly Entrusted by*

### **McCoy & Harrison** **FUNERAL HOME, INC.**

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**"NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP – PEACE"**