



*Home going celebration will be held on Monday January 3, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. at 34th Street Church of God, 3000 N. 34th, Street, Tampa, Florida with Bishop Thomas Scott, Officiating. Entombment will follow at Hillsboro Memorial Gardens, Brandon, Florida.*

*Mrs. Ila W. Kennedy passed away to be with the Lord early Christmas morning, December 25, 2021. Dedicated to sharing the gifts God gave her, Ila's love for Christ was shown through her dedication serving God and her community.*

*Ila was born to John and Julia Wilson on August 6, 1937, in Cartersville, South Carolina. The tenth of twelve children, Ila grew up in Timmonsville, South Carolina, where she graduated from the first graduating class at Johnson High School and then matriculated to Benedict College, Columbia, South Carolina, where she received a Bachelor's Degree in Education. At Benedict, she met her sweetheart Frank Kennedy, whom she married and moved to Tampa, Florida.*

*Ila taught in various Hillsborough County School District schools for over 35 years where she touched the lives of many students. Her teaching experiences began in the mid 1960's at Booker T. Washington; Young Junior High School where she directed the majorettes; 1970's Van Buren Junior High, also serving as head Track Coach and Basketball Coach winning consecutive District Championships and named Coach of the Year; 1980's, and 90's Brandon High School; Young Middle School and retired from Benito Middle School, under the leadership of Dr. Lewis Brinson.*

*The Lord provided numerous opportunities for her gifts of giving, serving, and leadership to be used in various facets of the Church of God - locally, statewide, and nationally. She provided more than 55 years of dedicated service to enriching the lives of others.*

*During her early years of membership at the 22nd Street Church of God, she served as Sunday School Superintendent, oversaw the Culinary Program as the Chairperson of the Kitchen Committee and served as a member of the Building Fund Campaign which focused on building a new edifice which is now the 34th Street Church of God. At 34th Street she continued to grow deeper in her service and use of educational talents. Affectionately known as Sis. Kennedy, she contributed to the organization of the administration and physical requirements for operating and opening The King's Kids Learning and Developmental Center. Her gift and education background allowed her to serve as the Board of Christian Education Chairperson and Sunday School*

Superintendent. She initiated the first scholarship drive for the 34th Street Church of God high school seniors to attend college, which became an annual drive to support the youth. Illa also served as the Women of the Church of God (WCG) President. Her love for music and singing allowed her to oversee the Youth Choir for many years. The 22nd Street Mass Choir was her love and she continued to sing with the 34th Street Mass Choir and lead the Senior Choir. As the Church Beautification chairperson, she enhanced the edifice with interior decorating throughout the year, especially Christmas, which brought us much joy and pride.

Her contributions continued with the Florida State Association of the Church of God where she served as the State Director for the Board of Christian Education and as the State Sunday School Superintendent. During her tenure she organized the first FL State Bible Bowl Competition for children and youth, which connected Church of God youth over the state to deepen their understanding and knowledge of the Bible. She organized the Florida State Association of the Church of God Youth State Summer Camp, and trained Sunday School Superintendents and teachers on developing an effective Sunday School Ministry.

Under the direction of Dr. Joseph Cookston, The National Board of Christian Education Director, Anderson Indiana, Illa developed workshops and trained Sunday School Teachers throughout the states of Florida and South Carolina. In addition, she presented workshops at the National Church of God Conventions in Anderson, Indiana for numerous years.

She was preceded in death by her parents, John and Julia Wilson; her siblings, 5 sisters, Alberta Woods, Thomasena Mason, Maxine Wright, Louise Chaplin, Madgree Addison; 5 brothers, Woodrow Wilson, T J Wilson, Walter Wilson, James Wilson, and John Wilson, Jr.

She leaves behind three children, Jacqueline Kennedy Haynes, (Anthony), Franklin Kennedy, and Travis Kennedy; seven grandchildren, Arielle Haynes, Anthony Haynes II, Franquise Kennedy, Jaadon Kennedy, Tysen Kennedy, Julianna Kennedy, and Arbundy Pernell; great grandchild, baby Burnette; godchildren, Belinda Rose Young and Marcus Scott, Jr. To cherish her most precious memories, she leaves behind sister, Juliette Wilson. There is nothing like a sister's love and Illa was always most happy when her baby sister Juliette was around. Thank you Aunt Juliette for your presence during mom's most difficult times. As her baby sister and caregiver, who stood by our mother's side this entire year, you gave unselfishly and with a willing

*heart. Your prayers, love and caregiving you provided, not just to mom but for all of your siblings is an amazing gift from God. We love you.*

*A special thank you to her beloved nieces, who constantly showered her with love and care, and to a host of wonderful nephews, and other family members. Thank you to her special friends, Bernard Mitchell and Ora Lee Chester, as*

*There will be a viewing on Sunday January 2, 2022 at Wilson Funeral Home, 3000 N. 29th Street, Tampa, Florida from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Due to the current CDC restrictions; we are asking that you use the visitation as an opportunity to pay your final respect. For your convenience and safety, we have extended our visitation hours.*

