



Maequay B. (Byers) McKinley

May 13, 1927 - April 7, 2024

Maequay McKinley Obituary

The Celebration of Life and Legacy of

Maequay Byers McKinley was the oldest of six children born on May 13, 1927, to the late Roosevelt Byers and Ilene Bishop Byers in Water Valley, Mississippi.

She accepted Christ at an early age in Water Valley, and after relocating to Cleveland, Ohio she joined Olivet Intuitional Baptist Church under the pastorate of Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr. and continued her service under Rev. Dr. Jawanza Karriem Colvin, over forty years of service. Maequay was a member of the Ruth Missionary Circle, May Birth Month Ministry, and was very active with the Sustainable Ministry where she was active in working the harvest of Olivet's 90th Street Garden.

Maequay received her early education in Water Valley, and she later joined her younger brother, Homer, at Mississippi Industrial College ("MI") in Holly Springs, Mississippi. She later relocated to her new and final home Cleveland, Ohio. She first worked as a waitress before joining Cuyahoga County Services for the next 20 years before retiring. Maequay was fortunate to find two loves during her lifetime. Her first marriage was to the late George White, and to this union one child was born, who predeceased them. Her second marriage was

to the late Robert McKinley.

Even though Maequay settled in Cleveland, she never forgot her roots and family located in Water Valley and Holly Springs, Mississippi, where she regularly journeyed to visit and reconnect with her family and attend the family reunions. She maintained contact with her brother Homer and his family in Holly Springs, and aunts and cousins as if they lived nearby. She often stayed for a lengthy time to ensure that she connected to all her relatives in the surrounding area. Of course, she consistently stayed connected with her brother David and his family for holiday gatherings in Cleveland, and visits with her sister Mildred and family in Davenport, Iowa. Many if not all of her family visits included her sister Louise.

After retirement Maequay opened her home and served as a caregiver for more than ten years, which epitomized her love for helping others. She had a heart of gold, believed in God, and loved her family, church family and friends. She never met a stranger and was always positive regardless of the circumstances in her life. Her love and care for others was gifted to the children of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church where she cared for children, including Gwendolyn Carter, Katie Evans (Ewatis), and Stanley Jones, who she treated as her own. They will miss her dearly.

Maequay made her transition on Sunday, April 7, 2024, at Slovene Home for the Aged in Cleveland. She is survived by her youngest sister, Louise Smith, who cared for her while she healed at home until she moved to Slovene Home for the Aged; nieces, Attorney Shirley C. Byers of Holly Springs, Mississippi, Brenda Byers Gipson of Collierville, Tennessee, Cassandra Byers Mason of Memphis, Tennessee, and Kimberly Byers-Thomas of Cleveland, Ohio; nephews, Kenneth Byers, Carl Byers, and Clark Byers of Cleveland, Ohio; and many great and great-great nieces and nephews, cousins, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Roosevelt and Ilene Byers; one sibling who transitioned during birth with her mother; husband, George White, and one child; husband, Robert McKinney; her brothers and sisters-in-law Homer W. Byers, Sr. (Estelle) and David W. Byers (Adell); sister and brother-in-law, Mildred Mills (Johnny); two nephews, Homer W. Byers, Jr. and Curtis L. Byers, Sr.; two nieces, Patricia Mills and Karen Byers-Jones.

And the dust returns to the earth as it was,

And the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Ecclesiastes 12:7

Humbly submitted,

The Family

To send flowers
to the family or plant a tree
in memory of Maequay B. (Byers) McKinley, please visit our floral store.

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Tribute Wall

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“ *A Memorial Tree was planted for Maequay B. McKinley
We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ the staff at E. F. Boyd & Son
Funeral Home, Inc.
Join in honoring their life - plant a memorial tree*

A Memorial Tree was planted for Maequay B. McKinley - April 21, 2025 at 03:17 PM