

CELEBRATING
THE LIFE OF

M

MARGARET N. WILLIAMS

DECEMBER 24, 1938 ~ NOVEMBER 7, 2015

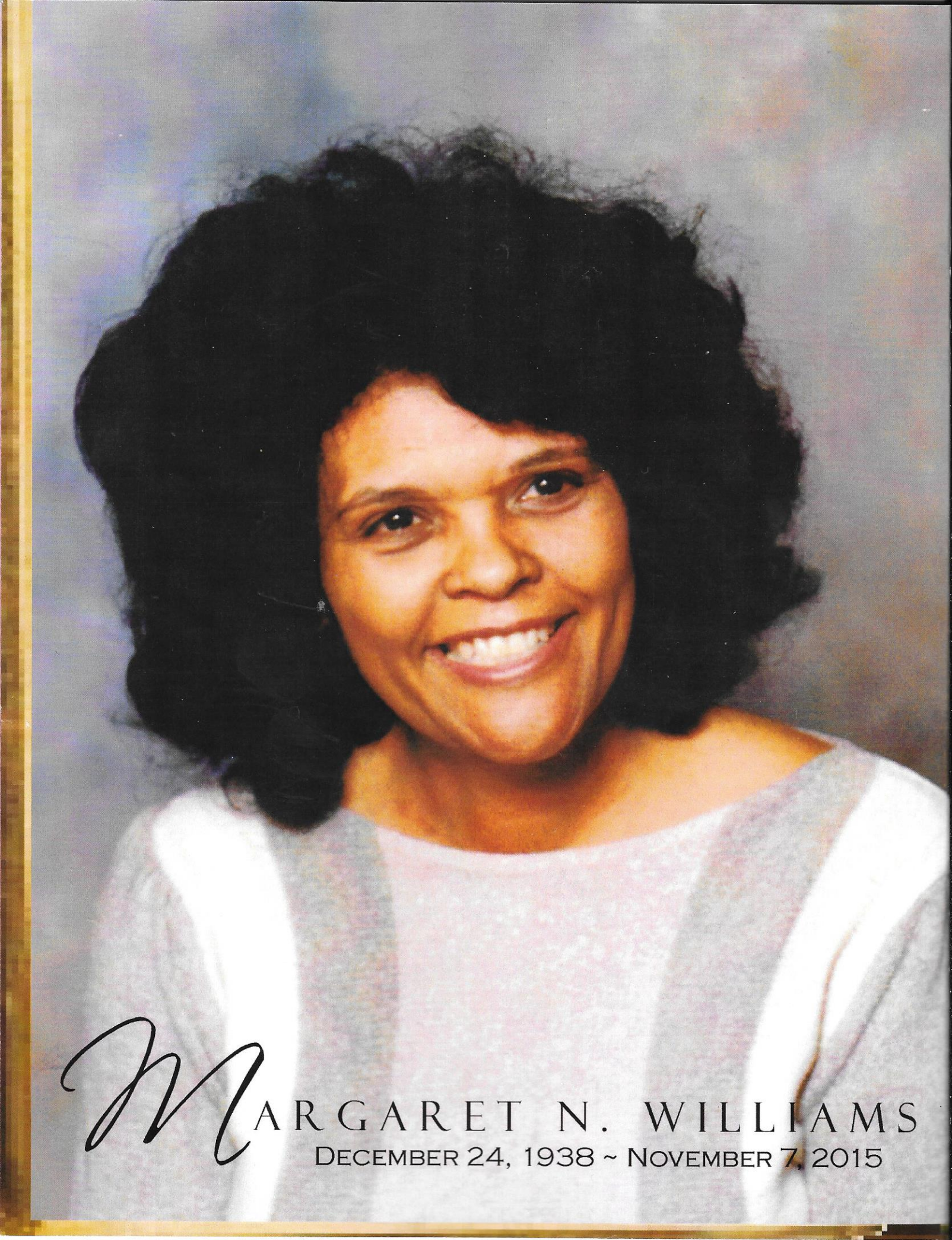


SABBATH EVENING

Saturday, December 5, 2015

EMMANUEL - BRINKLOW

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

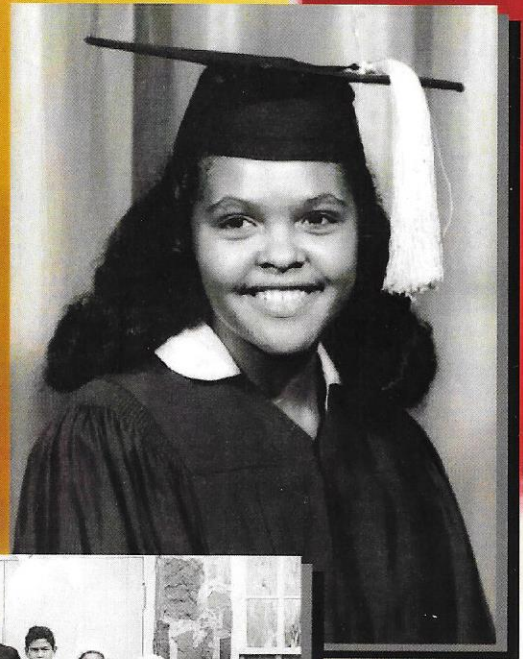
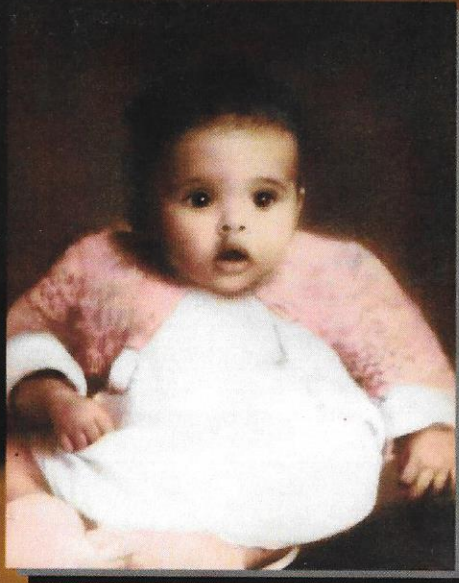


M

MARGARET N. WILLIAMS

DECEMBER 24, 1938 ~ NOVEMBER 7, 2015

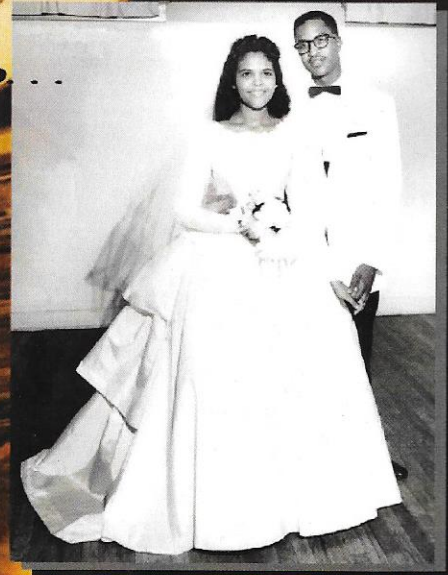
To every thing there is a season, and
a time to every purpose under the heaven:



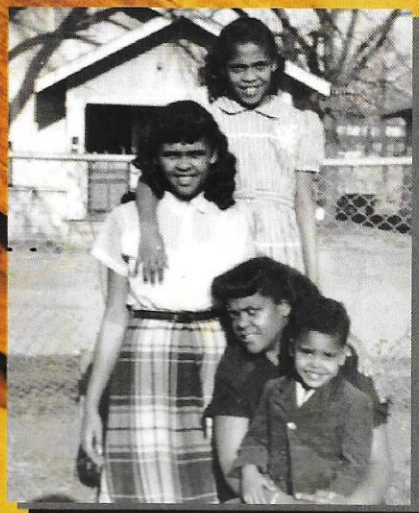
A Time To Be Born...



A Time To Build Up...



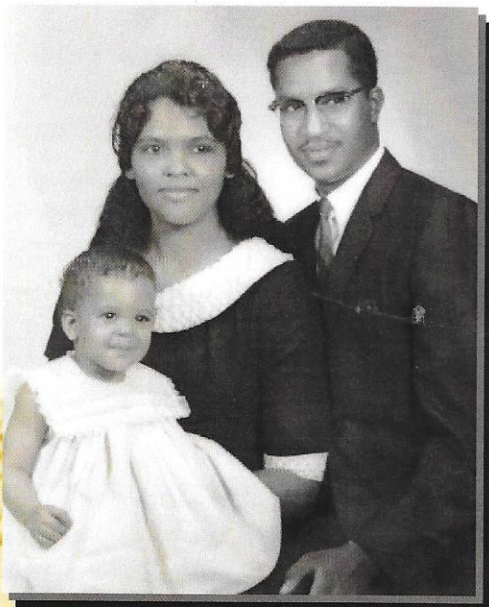
A Time To Laugh...



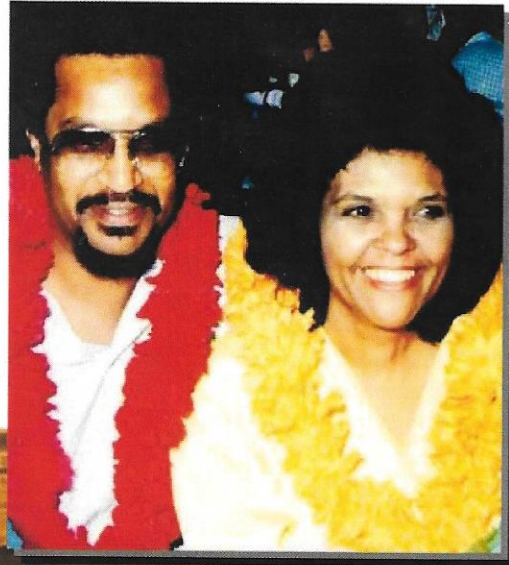
A Time To Love



A Time of Peace...



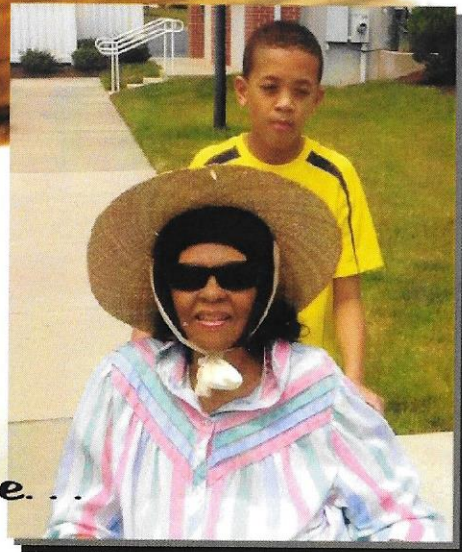
A Time To Embrace...



A Time To Keep...



A Time To Dance...



Order of Service

DR. ANTHONY A. MEDLEY, OFFICIATING

Processional		Platform Participants and Family
Opening Prayer		Elder Dennis Keith <i>Assoc. Treasurer, GC retired</i>
Scripture		Chaplain Paul Anderson <i>NAD Chaplaincy Ministry</i>
	Old Testament: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	
Pastoral Remarks		Dr. Anthony Medley <i>Senior Pastor, Emmanuel-Brinklow</i>
Musical Selection	"It Is Well"	Anika Sampson-Anderson
Acknowledgments		Christine Hill <i>Church Elder and Family Friend</i>
Reflections/Tributes:		Rocky Twyman <i>Former student Pine Forge Academy</i> Clara Sanders Felder, M.A. M.Ed. <i>Family Friend and Maryland teacher</i> Ursula Kennedy <i>Neighbor/Victoria Falls Condo Board 2 President</i>
Musical Selection	"A Better Day"	Lauri and Randy Preston
Reflections/Tributes:		Tom and Phyllis Morris <i>Co-Workers Oklahoma Family friends</i> Dr. Ella Smith Simmons <i>Family Friend</i> <i>General Conference Vice-President</i> Bernadette Allen <i>American Embassy, Ambassador retired</i>
Praise Song	"We Have This Hope"	Congregation Rocky Twyman, <i>Organist</i>
Reflections/Tributes:		Elder Bernice DeShay <i>Family Friend/Neighbor</i> Muriel Wray <i>College roommate/Best-friend</i> Darnella Williams Deitric and Cedric Chapman <i>Children</i> Neil Michael Chapman <i>Grandson</i>
Musical Selection	"By and BY"	Mrs. Sherry Fordham <i>Family Friend</i>
Eulogy		Pastor Henry J. Fordham, III <i>President, Allegheny East Conference</i>
Sanctuary Choir	"Total Praise"	Valerie Dizzard <i>Director</i>
Benediction		Pastor Anthony Medley

1938

Her Journey

2015

Margaret Nelda Norman entered this world on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24, 1938. She was born in the little town of Byrd, TX, the oldest child of James and Emily Norman. Her sister, Pearl, arrived two years after and her brother, James Jr., graced the family a decade later. This small family enjoyed lots of laughter, hugs and fishing on weekends and in the summer.

The family were devout Catholics and Margaret attended Catholic schools for the early grades. She admired the Sisters for their love of scripture and strict discipline and she looked forward to becoming a nun.

The normal life of the Normans was interrupted by a significant event. Mrs. Norman had promised to take her children to a movie but when she arrived at the theater, she discovered that the film was not suitable for children. She stopped at a large, crowded tent that had been pitched nearby the theater. The children were excited when they saw pictures being shown on a large screen at the front of this Bible Pavilion tent. It made sense to Mother Norman to please the children and go inside. Besides, her feet were hurting.

The children were satisfied by the Bible songs and pictures. The Bible workers secured their address, visited them, and gave them Bible studies. The entire family was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church by Elder W. W. Fordham and attended the Dallas City Temple. Margaret attended that church school for two years then attended a public high school. In 1958, she graduated valedictorian of Lincoln High School and received several scholarships to colleges and universities in Texas.

Her new pastor convinced her mother that Margaret should attend an Adventist college. She forfeited the scholarships and instead drove to Huntsville, AL to attend Oakwood, a historically black Adventist college. The year before, a skinny young man from Philadelphia, DeWitt Williams, had matriculated at Oakwood College. He was immediately attracted to the young Texan for her stunning beauty and her grace and humility. Others thought she was gracious and she would later be voted "Miss Oakwood." She dated the studious ministerial student during her four years there. They both graduated with honors in May, 1962 and their love story continued when they were married August 26, 1962 in Dallas, TX. For the rest of her life, Margaret would dedicate her life, home and habits to the Lord.

Margaret was called by Elder Charles Lee Brooks to be the business, typing and English teacher at Pine Forge Academy in Pottstown, PA. The couple set up their first household on the second floor of a little house nicknamed the "snake house" next to the boys' dormitory. Pioneer workers Elder and Mrs. W. H. Sebastian lived on the first floor. Mrs. Williams taught at Pine Forge for just one year before leaving to accompany her husband when he enrolled in Andrews University Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, MI. (They moved eighteen times during the first ten years). Margaret taught at Benton Harbor, MI until her husband received a call to the ministry in Oklahoma City. The Williams' first child, Deitric Eileen Williams, was born in 1966 in Oklahoma City and this precious bundle was their pride and joy. While her husband pastored three churches, Margaret kept up an unbelievable schedule, attending Oklahoma University in the evenings, teaching business and English during the day AND managing to squeeze out time to be a Bible worker, church leader, pastor's wife and wonderful mother.

Sister Williams was instrumental in leading the congregation to raise money and the young couple guided the members in building a beautiful new sanctuary (Tenth Street Seventh-day Adventist Church). Right after the church was completed and dedicated they received a call to be missionaries in Lubumbashi, Congo, Africa. Before going there, the family of three travelled to Neuchâtel, Switzerland to study French. Their second child, Darnella Elaine Williams, was born in Lubumbashi, Congo, Africa in 1969. The family then moved to Kinshasa, Zaire where Mrs. Williams taught at the American Embassy and the Congo public schools, and continued to be a loving wife and mother.

After five years in Africa, the family returned to America. Mrs. Williams was finally awarded her Masters of Education degree while her husband received his doctorate at Indiana University. Mrs. Williams became employed in Washington D. C. by the DuPont Park School where she taught and also served as principal of the elementary school. The family was called once again to go to Africa, this time to Bujumbura, Burundi. The girls needed to learn French so on the journey back overseas, they paused for five months in Brussels, Belgium. After three years, the family returned to America. Margaret would teach middle school language arts in the Baltimore City public school system for the next twenty years.

Mrs. Williams was a strict disciplinarian. She spent the first weeks of each school session establishing a code of behavior. The children knew that although she was firm, she genuinely loved every child in her classroom and her students loved her AND learned their lessons. Other classes might be disorderly, but never hers. She also was a mentor to young teachers, a summer school coach and captain of her teaching team.

Margaret loved everything that had to deal with Texas--the Dallas Cowboys, pecans, yellow roses and later in life she enjoyed watching old Cowboy movies.

In 1993, while her husband was traveling, she suffered her first fall-down the steps in her home and broke her left ankle. The falls increased and in 1997 her teaching career ended when she fell down the concrete steps at Canton Middle School and broke her right ankle.

No one was able to pin down the exact cause of these falls. Margaret discovered that her brother and sister were also having some issues with walking, getting up and falling. Whatever they had was genetic.

In 2000 her husband took her in to Johns Hopkins Medical Center and also to a hospital in Canada to have her analyzed. There was nothing wrong with her nerves. Something was wrong with her muscles and she was given the diagnosis of late adult onset Muscular Dystrophy (MD).

Despite this scary diagnosis, Margaret maintained a positive disposition. As her health declined, her spiritual convictions soared. She put her energies into her children and called often to motivate her daughters to excel educationally. She was thrilled when her older daughter became a family physician. Although her youngest child became somewhat distracted on her career path, Mrs. Williams prayed with Darnella to get her priorities in order. When Darnella got a Masters' Degree in Educational and Developmental Psychology, she beamed with pride.

Her greatest pride and joy came through her precious grandson, Neil. Neil and his grandmother shared a special relationship. By the time he was four, his grandmother was almost wheelchair bound. Neil had no memory of her walking freely. As he grew up, his grandmother became weaker and weaker from the effects of MD. Neil spent the summers with his G-Mom and drew pictures or ate snacks with her. He made sure he was the main person who pushed her wheelchair on her daily outings. G-Mom would tell Neil every day that he was a smart boy and a good boy and her eyes would light up whenever they looked at him.

The last five years of Margaret's life might seem depressing to the average person but her soul was anchored in the Lord. Her husband retired after 46 years of service working for the Adventist Church and her youngest daughter was laid off at this exact time. Mrs. Williams said "it was God that allowed you both to stop your lives to care for me".

Elder DeWitt and Margaret continued their love affair until the end. They woke up and immediately began each day with prayer. Before getting Mrs. Williams dressed, with Darnella, they sang the comforting words of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus".

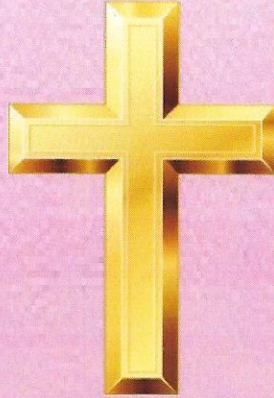
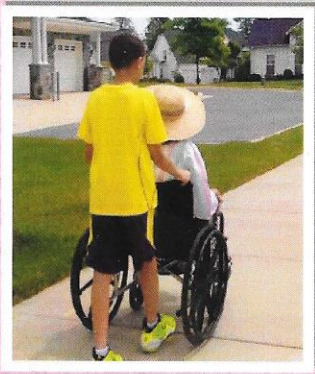
For most of her life Margaret was a supportive preacher's wife. Her quiet strength allowed her to support her husband's ministry throughout all of their many travels and relocations. From one job transfer to the next, Margaret made beautiful homes for her family. Now it was the family's turn to give back. And they did so faithfully. Towards the end, Margaret called her husband and daughter often because she had become fully bed-ridden. With pride, the two can say they tended to her every cry. Neighbors would see Elder Williams pushing his wife everyday throughout the neighborhood in her wheelchair. She waved at passing cars and stopped to talk to pedestrians. A stranger would not know how ill Margaret had really become because she did not complain. She would listen to somebody else's sad story but she would not complain about her plight.

Margaret Williams took her last breath surrounded by her husband and both daughters on Sabbath, November 7 at 12:24 (ironically she was born on Saturday, 12/24/38). She will be greatly, greatly missed. The family has the hope that God will raise His sleeping child and reunite her with her entire family in a healthy new body. What a sweet day that will be!!



Still Smiling To The End

The sequel to this book will be written at the resurrection.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DONATIONS

Dearest family and friends: The Williams and Chapman families wish to express our gratitude for the outpouring of love and support you have shown. Your cards, flowers and care; your meals, messages and prayers; your telephone calls, hugs and visits brought great comfort to us. Thank you for blessing us with your time, compassion and love.

We are passing out green muscular dystrophy (MD) pins in honor and respect of Margaret Williams and the fight that she fought against this disease. We have set up a Margaret N. Williams Scholarship Fund at Oakwood University to help students with disabilities and those who want to go into the teaching professions. Please send contributions in her name to The Committee of 100 for Oakwood University, Inc., 7000 Adventist Boulevard, Box C-100, Huntsville, AL 35896-0001.

"Life is like a book. Each year is a chapter. No matter how much you like a book you will eventually get to the last page and it will end. Once you read the last words, you'll realize how good the book is."

Programs by:
The Program Director
CHRISTOPHER ALSTON
(240) 547-7724
THEPROGRAMDIRECTOR.CPA@GMAIL.COM