



*Mother*  
**STELLA ANN BANKSTON**

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OCTOBER 21, 1943 – AUGUST 28, 2024

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Friday, September 13, 2024  
Memorial Service  
11:00 A.M.

Second Baptist Church  
500 W Madison Avenue  
Las Vegas, NV 89106

Clayton D. Moore, Pastor  
Rev. Kenneth Williams, Officiant





# REFLECTIONS OF LIFE

## When I've Gone the Last Mile of the Way

Stella Ann Carter, was born on October 21, 1943, to Frenchie Mae Morgan and Irving Carter in Los Angeles, California. She was raised in a loving household by her grandparents, Leta and George Bowie, alongside her mother, Frenchie. As the eldest of eight children, she took on a nurturing role early in life, caring deeply for her siblings.

Stella attended school in Los Angeles, California. Her education commenced at 92nd Street Elementary where she excelled in mathematics. She attended Markham Junior High and graduated from Jordan High School. She attended Compton Community College and earned her certification as a licensed child care provider. Stella demonstrated an entrepreneurial spirit early in life. She owned and operated a home day care center for over 15 years. Stella was a fashionista. She put her love for shopping to good use and became a professional personal fashion shopper for women. She believed in supporting her community and was an advocate for civil rights. She demonstrated this by participating as an active member of the National Council of Negro Women and the NAACP. Stella also served as a Custody Specialist with the San Bernardino Sheriff Department and as a customer service representative with the Southern California Gas Company.

At the age of 10, Stella was baptized at the 92nd Street Church under the late Rev. Arnold, marking the beginning of her lifelong devotion to faith. She was a passionate choir singer, lending her voice to True Faith Baptist Church under the leadership of Rev. Wilbert Wade. In 1972, she joined Citizens of Zion Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor B.T. Newman. After moving to Hesperia, California in 1995, she became a member of First Missionary Baptist Church. She reunited with Citizens of Zion, where six generations of her family had worshipped. Even while living in Hesperia, she remained active in her faith community, joining Emmanuel Temple under the watchful care of Pastor James E. Markham. In 2017, Stella relocated to Las Vegas Nevada with her daughter and son-in-law. She united with Second Baptist Church and continued to serve in ministry.

Stella served the Lord as a missionary throughout her life. She served as a Sunday School Teacher, Wedding Coordinator, Teacher and Supervisor for the Young Ladies Auxiliary, providing food and clothing to those in need -Keepers of the Storehouse and volunteer counseling with the California Department of Corrections and Gang Awareness. She actively participated in the Mission Circle, and a host of other ministries, including the Mothers', Women's, Sunday School, Music and Ageless Wonders.

Stella transitioned from her earthly life into her eternal life on Wednesday, August 28, 2024. She is preceded in death by her father, Irving Carter; her mother, Frenchie Andrews; her grandmother, Leta Henry and grandfather, Walter Bowie; her brothers Walter Grier and Willie Andrews.

Stella was a woman defined by her love for others. She cherished her family deeply. She is survived by her two children, Sonja Renee Bankston-Cullen (William Bernard) and Anthony George Bankston, two grandsons, William Cullen II and Aaron Cullen, who were the pride and joy of her life. Her siblings, Loleta Bell, Frances Andrews, Donald Andrews, Cynthia Andrews and Belinda Andrews; her sister-in-laws, Frankie Andrews, Jewel Rodgers, Jennifer Allen, Yolanda Grimes, Angela Bankston, and Mattie Grier, as well as a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family and friends.

Stella's legacy is one of service, compassion, and unwavering faith. She sought to help others at every turn, offering words of encouragement, a song to lift the spirit, or simply her time and talents. She believed that if even one person was touched or uplifted by her efforts, then her life had not been in vain. Stella dedicated her life to being a vessel for God's work—not perfect, but always striving to be of service. She was profoundly grateful for God's mercy and felt blessed to know He loved her, every day of her life.

In her final act of giving, Stella donated her body to science, ensuring that even in death, she could contribute to the well-being of others. Her soul now rests with God and her spirit remains with those who knew her. She leaves us with a message of gratitude and a call to remember the good, forgive the bad, and trust in the promise of reunion in that great morning to come. Until then, she asks that God be with you all.

# ORDER OF CELEBRATION

## Video & Musical Interlude

Processional.....	Clergy & Family
Opening Hymn.....	Deacon Clifton Bluitt
Old Testament Scripture Reading Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.....	Rev. Isaac Green
New Testament Scripture Reading II Corinthians 5:1 & Acts 17:24-28.....	Minister Annette Garrison Keys
Prayer of Consultation.....	Rev. Dr. Charles Bilberry
Liturgical Dance.....	Sis. Sandra Shackelford Sis. Monik Jones Sis. DeeAnn Williams
Reflections of Life.....	William Cullen II
Selection.....	Deacon Willie Abernathy Jr.
Acknowledgements/Resolutions.....	JeVaughn White
Selection.....	Aaron Cullen
Expressions...(2 minutes Please).....	Family & Friends
Selection.....	Second Baptist Mass Choir
Words of Comfort .....	Pastor Clayton D. Moore
Serenaded Send-Off....."God Will Take Care of You" .....	Mother Stella A. Bankston
Recessional.....	Clergy & Family

## Repast Immediately Following Service in the Fellowship Hall

### For Whom the Bell Tolls

No man is an island,  
Entire of itself.  
Each is a piece of the continent,  
A part of the main.  
If a clod be washed away by the sea,  
Europe is the less.  
As well as if a promontory were.  
As well as if a manor of thine own  
Or of thine friend's were.  
Each man's death diminishes me,  
For I am involved in mankind.  
Therefore, send not to know  
For whom the bell tolls,  
It tolls for thee.  
-John Donne













# TRIBUTES

## *Letters to Mother Stella Ann Bankston*

Mom...the matriarch of our clan...the woman who loved unconditionally, corrected and disciplined lovingly, sacrificed so much to ensure that Anthony and I always had our needs and most of our wants met. You made us attend Sunday School, morning, afternoon, and evening worship services, including BTU every Sunday. You made sure we served at the shelters and nursing homes. You guided us in developing our talents and gifts to use in ministry and in my career. You also ensured that we were not only biblically educated, but were highly successful academically. You ensured that we understood the level of empowerment you obtain by having a servant heart. Thank you for being that example. And even when there were times that challenged you as a parent, you persevered, stayed committed and inspired us to always do our best and let our lights shine. My dearest Mom, I not only LOVE YOU, I admire you for everything YOU exemplify because it balances me. I'm so glad God allowed me to be your daughter. Thank you for being the best mom for me and becoming my BEST FRIEND. See you in the morning...

Love from Your Wildflower, Sonja



God Prepares...

Monday, August 26th, you listened to me say I'm so glad you're my mom and I love you.

And you said I love you baby, bye-bye.

Tuesday, August 27th, Sonja let me listen to you breathe as you slept. Wednesday, August 28th, I called about 1:30 p.m. hoping that I could speak to you, but our Lord said

Momma continue to sleep. Thursday,

August 29th, I called hoping to speak to you and Sonja said you transitioned on at

4:17 p.m. yesterday. Friday, August 30th,

I talked to Belinda, Loleta, Sonja, Bernard,

William and Aaron and I was treated to

your voice singing God Will Take Care of You.

Momma it's Saturday, August 31st, I initialed and signed your Science Care wishes.

It's 9:48 p.m. and the Brother's Johnson are singing I'll Be Good to You and as my day unwinds, I thought this would be a good time to share this brief chronology of

heartfelt events that will always remind me of you.

Love forever, Anthony George



Precious Memories of my sister, Stella A. Bankston

Memories that I will always cherish of my sister Stella begin with her Sweet Sixteen celebration.

I was two at the time and I remember the joy that permeated through our family as we prepared for this day of celebration for you. Precious memories how they linger, remembering you leading

songs in the Choir at True Faith MBC, Citizens of Zion MBC, (The Song Bird) and other occasions throughout your life. Many of the songs you sung mirrored your relationship with the

Lord, such as "Walk on by Faith", "God will take care of you", "Wake up in Jesus arms", of course I could go on and on. A "Virtuous Women" who Loved the Lord and willingly was God's

servant as shown in your involvement in many ministries at church and within the community.

Ensuring that the grace and mercy bestowed to you from the Lord was shared with others.

Precious memories, yes you will always be my "Big Sister". The tears I shed were needed to

allow me to begin to accept your leaving. Yet, I could not bear to see you suffer any longer. But as

Nonie and Mama always showed us to Trust in the Lord, knowing that the Lord's will would be

done. Rest Stella, your battles are over, your journey is complete, I know you are waking up Safe

in his Arms, "Wearing your Crown". Love you, forever and always, Belinda your Baby Sis.



# TRIBUTES

## *Letters to Mother Stella Ann Bankston*

My Aunt Stella had a smile to brighten anyone's day and her heart was as big as her smile. She was the Aunt I looked up to the most, the aunt I could depend on to always have my back, especially after the passing of my father. We had such a close bond; I could tell her anything and I knew she would keep it in confidence.

She was a very loving and kind women. She would often call to check on me, my mother Frankie and my sister Ronda, just to make sure we were doing well. Whether in good times, bad times or in any kind of emergency that came about, Aunt Stella was there to offer her support.

Some of the memories I will cherish the most were the times she and I spent traveling to California to visit with my cousin, her son Anthony.

She had a talent for letting me know that she loved me and the impact that had on my life continues to this day.

There are Aunts to look up to

Aunts who are wise

Those who are good friends

Those who advise....

There are Aunts who are lovable

Aunts who are fun

And then there was my beautiful Aunt Stella

Who was all of these in one."

She was loved beyond words and will be dearly missed.

Loving Niece,

Carol R. Andrews



### **I Have Just Gone To Sleep**

I was tired of life here and all of its cares,  
The many trials, the burdens, all of the snares  
I wanted to be free from all of life's sorrow  
And looked forward to my home of tomorrow  
So I went to sleep.

I couldn't get around like I did years ago,  
For tomorrow is not promised and this we all know  
I didn't care to stay in bed all the time,  
But wanted to go home with my friend so divine  
And I just went to sleep.

Don't weep, don't mourn, don't grieve for me at all,  
I have just gone to answer my Savior's call.  
Just meet me in the morning up in that city so fair  
I have just gone to sleep.

I know you will miss me, but my time was out  
Longing to see Jesus and with the saints shout  
Forever with Jesus, you children meet me there  
We will reign with Christ and the saints everywhere  
I have just gone to sleep.  
-Anonymous



My mother-in-law loved the Lord and we loved each other. She never called me by my name, it was always "Mr. B" and I called her "Grandma". She got a true laugh introducing me by saying this is my son-in-law, Mr. B. She was beautiful, benevolent, caring, dedicated, devoted and a fashion queen. God gave us 39 years to enjoy, celebrate, love and laugh together. I will never forget you, Loving you,  
Mr. B

Auntie I will miss your voice that could calm any spirit in torment. You always had a wise word to give. You taught me to put God first in all things. Even now I can hear you telling me to pray on it. Your prayers have saved me many times I know. I love you for all that you have done for me in my lifetime. From my prom dress to comforting when I was ill. I didn't want you to go but it was God's will. I know you are safe and comfortable in the Lord's arms. On my behalf, job well done. Rest well in the glory of Christ. Love you much.

-LaDonna







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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Family of Stella Ann Bankston would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude for all prayers and acts of kindness we received during this very difficult time. Your calls, cards and assistance have been a source of great comfort to each of us and we are deeply grateful and blessed to have you in our lives.

We also want to especially thank all the medical professionals who supported my mom and assisted us through her health challenges.

### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ENTRUSTED TO:



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