

Pallbearers

Eaton Mitchell (Son) Leroy Mitchell (Son)

Richard Mitchell (Son) Newton Mitchell (Son)

Andrew Mitchell (Son) Gerard McDonald (Son-In-Law)

Acknowledgments

The family of the late Reta Mitchell wishes to thank everyone for their love and support, for your visits, prayers, phone calls, words of comfort, and for being here today. We extend a special thank you to mom's dear and caring friend Janice Wiltshire, Mary Curtis and Shernet Smith, who provided exceptional in-home care and comfort to our mom in our dire time of need, and Mr. and Mrs. Maine for being her personal shopper and for assisting with many other errands. May the Lord bless you all.

Repast

St. Mary's Primitive Baptist Church
2855 Orchid Drive, Haines City, FL 33844

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Celebrating

THE LIFE OF



Reta Iona Mitchell

Sunrise: June 14, 1936
Clarendon, Jamaica

Sunset: February 15, 2024
Poinciana, Florida

Friday, March 1, 2024 11:00 a.m.

First Baptist Poinciana Church
601 Walnut Street, Poinciana, FL 34759

Officiating: Pastor Dr. Wayne Harrell

Eulogy of Reta Iona Mitchell

Written By Her Children

What is a Mother?

Strength and honor are her clothing; she is confident about the future. Her mouth is full of wisdom; kindly teaching is on her tongue. She is vigilant over the activities of her household; she does not eat the food of laziness. Proverbs 31:25-27

As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you. Isaiah 66:13

On June 14, 1936, Reta Iona Mitchell (affectionately known as Miss Rete) was born to Jonathan Saa and Lavina Alexandra Saa in Paxey, Jamaica. She was the 3rd child of a total of 16-children. In 1948, at the age of 11, her family moved to Kellits. Mom attended Ginger Ridge school in St. Catherine, Crofts Hill School and Kellits School both in Clarendon. She began her work-life in a material and grocery store called Peaches in Kellits. At the age of 18, she moved to Kingston and lived with cousins while working as a babysitter. In 1957, she emigrated to England, only after our dad had written to ask her parents for her hand in marriage, she married Ethelbert (Tony) Mitchell on the 26th of July, 1958, in Nottingham, England. In 1959, with her husband and first-born, she relocated to the town of Dudley, in the West Midlands, where she settled for many years. Her life in Dudley consisted of working at the Good Year Company and Burton Road Hospital.

In 1974, she decided to seek better opportunities for herself and her family by moving to the U.S. on January 27th. Upon arriving in the U.S., she resided in the Bronx borough of New York and worked as an au pair. In 1979, with her family, she moved to Waterbury, Connecticut. It was at this point that her education and career took several transitions and she eventually found her calling and passion. In 1982, she got her CNA license and worked as a certified nurse's aide from 1981 until she retired in 2002. While working as a nurse's aide, mom went back to school to obtain her High School Diploma, and later obtained her cosmetology license from the Waterbury School of Hairdressing in 1984. Mom would often go into work early and before commencing her nurse's aide duties, she would style the patients hair when they wanted to look coiffed or would be celebrating a special birthday or other family occasion. In 1989, she got remarried to Derbert Bennett. Finally, her transitions culminated in July of 2009, when she moved to Florida and made Kissimmee her final abode.

Mom loved attending First Baptist Church Poinciana, reading her Bible, and playing her gospel music loudly throughout her home. Mom was a strong, independent, and self-reliant woman. She was kind and always ready to share gifts and special deeds with others. And for many, many years as a single mother of six-children, she worked tirelessly to provide all that she could for them.

Our mom enjoyed many pastimes. Her two favorite games to play were bingo and dominoes. When playing dominoes, she took great delight in showing others whom she played with that she was one of the better players, as her ultimate goal was to not be beaten. She loved dancing, gardening, doing word puzzles, and cooking. Especially fried dumplings, curry chicken, and making carrot juice. Her favorite foods were yam & banana, avocados, mangoes, sugar cane, roast breadfruit, and ackee & saltfish. She loved watching General Hospital, One Life to Live, Jeopardy, and America Says. She also loved to travel and visited many countries in Europe, went on several cruises to the Caribbean, and when her children took her on a special surprise birthday cruise to Bermuda. Her favorite scripture readings were Psalm 23 and the Book of Job, and favorite hymnals were "Just as I am" and "I am thine oh Lord." Mom will be remembered for the fact that she rarely left home without having a stylish hat on her head. Queen Elizabeth II was no competition when it came to the assortment of hats that mom owned and wore. She was also known as the "candy lady," as each handbag held an assortment of hard candies ready and willing to share.

Mom was predeceased by her parents Jonathan and Lavina Saa, a baby sibling, a brother Everoy, her sister Gloria, beloved brother Glen, and her cherished niece Doreen.

Mom has departed this life leaving her six precious children: Eaton, Leroy (Colin), Richard (Quaker), Janet, Newton and Andrew; her son-in-law Gerard (aka Gee Gee or Uncle Gee); her daughters-in-law: Sharon, Yvonne, Melissa, and Violet; her eight grandchildren, Richard (Junior), Sean, Joshua, Raymond, Rochelle, Cassandra (Cassie), Jonathan, and Mariah; and her eight great-grandchildren: Rashaun, Pierce, Tessa, Rahmya, Levi, Davin, Calina, and Arionna. Her beloved cat Patsy, Richard and Yvonne's dog Chip, her traveling partners - her sisters Levene and Joan, her special brother George and his family, her devoted sister-in-law Briselee and her family, 8-sisters, 3-brothers, cousins, nieces and nephews, her church family, Sarah Young, and numerous special friends and neighbors, who are too many to mention here, but you each know who you are.

The Bible says, love suffers long and is kind, love does not envy, love does not parade itself, is not puffed up, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth, bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Mom our hearts are broken but your memory will live on forever. We are so blessed that God gave us the opportunity to tell you, until the very end, how much we love you. Rest in eternal peace, our beautiful mother.

Order of Service

Welcome & Opening Prayer:
Pastor Dr. Wayne Harrell

Congregational Hymn:
Blessed Assurance

Scripture Reading:
Rev. 21:1-4 Read by Josette James
(Niece)

Tributes from England:
Read by Violet Mitchell (Daughter-in-law)
Read by Wendy Saa (Niece-in-law)

Video Tribute from Canada:
Joan Saa Modeste (Sister)

Daughter's Tribute:
Read by April Mitchell (Grandson's wife)

Family Tributes:
Levene Tulloch (Sister)
Sean Mitchell (Grandson)
Mariah Mitchell (Granddaughter)

Eulogy:
By Sharon Mitchell (Daughter-in-law)

Open Tributes of Reflection

Congregational Hymn:
How Great Thou Art

Sermon & Closing Prayer:
Pastor Dr. Wayne Harrell

Recessional Hymn:
When We All Get To Heaven



Tributes from Children & Family Members



Colin's Tribute to His Mom

Mom I am going to miss your calls on the phone. I am also going to miss the times when you were still driving and would take me driving with you as I sat in the passenger seat instructing you to run here or turn there... In my head I keep saying to myself that I feel you should still be here, but only God knows why. I thank God for the times I was able to see you and able to talk with you after you became ill. I will cherish these remaining moments that God gave us. I love you mom. Rest in eternal peace, Colin.



Richard's Tribute to His Mom

Mommy I accept that you know now just how much I love you as actions speak louder than words. So, I am comforted knowing you saw my love. I pray that the Lord has opened the gate to let you in. As I said to you, I'll do my best to see you there! Love you mommy!!!

An Only Daughter's Tribute to Her Precious Mother

There are so many things I want to say, but there will never be a vessel large enough to hold all of my words. First of all, let me begin by saying, "Thank you mom for all that you did for me." You taught me how to be independent, to be self-reliant, to be a hard worker, to overcome the struggles of this life, how to defend myself, trained this child in the way she should go and through it came to accept the Lord, and how to keep pressing on. You taught me how to budget and save and allowed me to teach you about credit and how to use it wisely.

You were there for my graduations from high school, college, and graduate school. You were the one who came shopping with me to buy my wedding dress. We made a day trip of it from Connecticut to New York on the train. On the ride home after picking my dress, I started to feel uncertain. So, I said, "I want to go back again to make sure that the dress I picked is the one." But I told you that when we go back, I want to pretend that we had not made a selection and to begin the shopping process all over again. You did not grumble, you agreed, and the following weekend we trekked back to New York City. I later mailed you a card to say thank you mom for coming with me. I ended up selecting the dress that you fell in love with, and after putting it on for the second time, I knew it was the dress for me.

I remember quite vividly, the day I introduced my husband Gee to my mom. I knew she would be leaving for work around 2:15 p.m. So, I told Gee, we will go see mom at 1:15 p.m. This will give you an hour with mom, which is not enough time for her to interrogate you. Sure enough, when mom realized that there would not be enough time for an interrogation, she sternly told Gee that he would need to come back soon so she could find out his intentions. I think poor Gee's heart skipped several beats. Mom grew to love my husband dearly and created a nickname for him. It was either "Gee Gee" or "Uncle Gee." His simple sweet name for her was "mom." When you read his tribute, you will see how he made this name into an acronym. On weekends, we would pick her up, take her out for the day shopping or a movie, grab a bite to eat or a movie, and drop her back home later in the evening. These days were fun!

Mom and I would regularly talk on my ride home from work to the point that mom became my GPS navigator all the way from inside her home in Florida. "Where are you now, have you passed the reservoir, are you going up the hill, you should be pulling into your driveway by now..." We shared so many stories and so much laughter. Oh, how I wish that you were still here. I prayed for more time, but God called you home after blessing you with 87 years of life in this world. As I continue through life without you, I will stand firm on God's promise that I will see you again beyond God's heavenly gates. Rest in eternal peace, mom... I will always love you. Your daughter, Janet



Newton's Tribute to His Mom

One thing I will miss with my mom is playing dominoes. The game will never be the same again. She was my number one adversary. Mom I hope you remember the score from the last game we played. It was 4 for me and 2 for you. So, remember, we have unfinished business. Until we meet again, R.I.P. I LOVE YOU MOM.

Your Baby Andrew's Tribute to His Mom

They say someone is never truly gone until you stop remembering them. I think there is truth to this. When you left this earth a great part of me went missing but I think you left some of yourself behind for me to find. When you left this earth I gathered your things and held them close, I close my eyes and for a moment it felt like you were here with me again. When you left this earth I went through my pictures. I studied your face harder than I ever had. And for a moment those pictures brought you to life once more. When you left this earth I found as many reasons I could talk about you. I tell stories about you and for a moment we are living in those memories again. Every day I find as many reasons as I can to remember you. I find as many reasons as I can to not let the rest of you leave this earth. And everyday it brings me peace to know that as long as I remember you, a part of you will always be here. I will forever hold you in my heart and will love you for the rest of my life!



A Son-in-law's Tribute to His Mom

My wife and I dated for a while before I met her family. My wife wanted to make sure I was perfect or as close to perfect as I could be before meeting her mom. I wondered to myself, how was I going to address her mom for the first time. I eventually settled on Mrs. Mitchell. By our second meeting, I felt comfortable enough to call her mom, For me, that word became an acronym for "my other mother." Mom believed that no matter your age, you could and should go to school, obtain your diploma, certificate, license, etc. Use the knowledge gained to improve your situation. This belief is evident in how late in life mom obtained her driver's license, her GED, CNA license, and cosmetology license. She was a tremendous example to others and to me. Mom grew so very close to my own mother and would talk regularly on the phone. The bond between them grew stronger as time went by because they had so much in common. I could go on. Mom I love you, I miss you, R.I.E.P until we meet again. Love Gee Gee aka Uncle Gee

A Tribute To My Dear Sister Reta

Brother George, wife Florence, and their children Dorette, Fixi, Dalton, Sara, and their extended families here in England, send their love and condolences to our Niece Janet, Nephews Eaton, Colin, Richard, Newton, Andrew, and their extended families on this very sad occasion. Reta/Aunty Reta was a very loving, caring, considerate person and who always made you feel welcomed. She truly loved her family. We all had a special connection with Reta. We always looked forward to her many trips across the seas to see her brother George, late brother Glen, and their families. One trip that was memorable, was when we celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary and George's 90th birthday. Reta, along with siblings Joan and Levene, and some of Reta's children came to England to celebrate with us. We were so grateful. We shared some good times together, and though it is hard to say goodbye to someone so dearly loved, we will cherish our memories with happiness helping to heal the sadness. Children be strong, be of good courage. Reta, you will be in our thoughts and in our hearts forever. God bless you. Rest in peace my beloved sister Reta until we meet again. She will be dearly missed.



Tribute From Niece Sara

I remember visiting aunty when she lived in Connecticut, just before she moved to Florida. I was leaving to travel to New York to visit with some other family members. Aunty got up early and made me a packed lunch (unbeknownst to me). When I got on the train and looked inside my bag, there was fish and bread, cutlery, a drink, and even a wet napkin to wipe my mouth and fingers for when I finished eating. She thought of everything. It made me smile to myself. How considerate was that? Aunty you will never be forgotten.

Tribute From Sister Levene (Pinkie)

Greetings everyone...

To those in person and online, to my siblings, nephews, nieces, and great-nieces, and great-nephews, other relatives and friends. The heart is never ready....The time is never right to say goodbye to my mother-figure, sister, and friend... Memories grow even more precious when those we've loved live within our hearts. Miss Reta migrated to England and then moved to America where we reunited in 1976 at our first family reunion in Connecticut. We had such a good time together. We bonded instantly and that was the beginning of a great sister relationship. Since then, whenever I visited Connecticut she would make sure I got to see everyone and grew closer to them. We were taught to respect our older siblings, and she made sure this respect was given to her, being the older sister. We could not say Reta. She would say, "Who you call Reta." It had to be either Miss Reta or Auntie Reta. When she decided to move to Florida, I was like the chicken behind the mother hen. We went house hunting together a few times which turned into a fun activity until finally she found one. After she moved there, I would go every year to spend time with her and help in whatever way I could. Until Covid kept us apart. When she decided it was time for us to get closer to family in England. The phone call went like this. "You going to England." I laughed and said, "Just like that eh," and she said, "Yes, I will make my reservation and let you know so you can make yours." The boss of me! We met in London and so this was the beginning of another great family reunion which was followed by many more trips to England with only fond memories. She called and I would jump!

I thank God for my sister, the many years from 1976 until now. The special bond. The joy, fun, and secrets we shared. I had the counsel of an older sister. In her own way, she had the gift of love. She often said, "No matter how we fight as sisters and brothers, we come together like vultures if anything or anyone try to come between us. Life is beautiful! One day one hour and one minute will not come again in your life. So, avoid fights, anger, and hatred, at all costs. Be kind to everyone and thank God for everything. May the gift of love, peace, hope forgiveness, happiness and the gift of God's blessings be ours today and always!

Rest well my sister! Love, Pinkie



A Tribute from Sister-in-law Briselee and Daughters

As my beloved sister-in-law, you hold a special place in my heart as you were like a sister to me. When I first came to England, you introduced me to a new culture which I will never forget. The joyous times we spent together leaves me with precious memories that I will always cherish. Your unwavering love for my late husband, your brother Glen, and my children will always be remembered. You have fought a good fight and it pleases the Lord to have called you home. I will always love you. May you rest in peace my dear sister-in-law Reta.

A Tribute from Niece Sonia

As your nieces, Doreen and myself were blessed to have your unconditional love and guidance in our lives from early childhood to adulthood. We will miss your jovial personality, kindness, and lovely smile which radiated nothing but love. I will always remember your high pitched voice and distinctive dance moves, which created much laughter. Thank you for your welfare calls, always checking on us and praying with us. May you rest in peace until we meet again in the sweet bye and bye.

A Tribute from Niece Joan

Aunty, you were very special to my children and myself. We have beautiful memories of the wonderful times we spent together. We are forever grateful for the closeness we shared and still have with your children, our dear cousins; without your loving nature this would not have been possible. RIEP aunty. We will always love you.



Tribute from Daughter-in-law Sharon

My Mother-in-law Mrs. Mitchell gone too soon! I remember her as being a strong woman that wanted us all to excel. Mother Reta welcomed me into her home and was always kind to me. My son and I grew to love her feisty personality, especially when she would crack jokes; you could only laugh or cry. Mama Reta would always tell it like it is! She was a warrior on the outside but was a sweetheart to those who took the time to understand her. We are going to miss you. Mama Reta you did well! Rest in peace, Sharon.

Daughter-in-law Yvonne's Tribute To Mommie

I have been privileged for the last 12 years to have not only had Miss Reta (Mommie) as my Mother-in-law but also as a true friend and confidante. From the first time I met you, we formed a friendship that grew stronger over the years. The stories you shared, reminiscent of your younger days, your life as a child/young girl in Jamaica, the births of your children, laughter, tears, struggles. You were such a caring person, always concerned with the well-being of your family. You loved your church and always made the extra effort to look debonair when attending. You never missed a night of reading your Bible; the scriptures meant the world to you and brought you such comfort. Your kitchen was always open to whomever turned up, no one would leave hungry, and your beautiful plants/garden were the talk of the neighborhood. No words can ever describe what you meant to me and the void that you leave behind, so I will not even try. I have my cherished memories that I will forever hold in my heart. I love you. Rest peacefully in the house of the Lord.





Tribute From Niece Josette

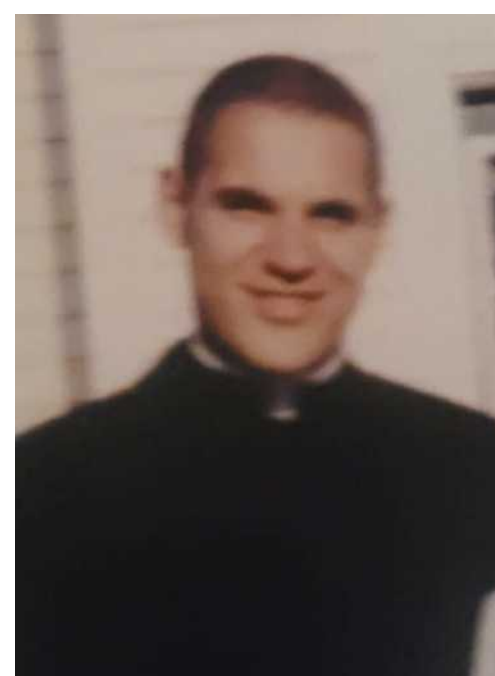
My dear Aunty Reta's heart was immense. She was caring, compassionate, and gave generously not only to me but also countless others. She was known to cook a whole heap a delicious Jamaican food; She wanted to be sure my family and I had seconds and thirds and on top a dat, packed us up with lots to take home!! And we betta not refuse! In addition, she would be sure that each one of us got a little 'something ' that she called "ice cream money"

She always made me feel loved and valued. I vividly recall when there existed a challenging season within my family and my dear Aunty Reta supported us with kindness, love, and prayers through it all; More importantly, she also lovingly directed us to our heavenly Father. The times when we spoke over the phone or I would visit, she always sincerely would say , "I love you and God bless you."

It is so difficult to know that I won't see or hear her voice anymore. I am heartbroken, yet grateful for the years with her. I will forever cherish the wonderful memories along with her unconditional love.

A Tribute from Father James Cadman - Great-Nephew

A reading from the book of Wisdom: The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God, no torment shall ever touch them. In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die, their going looked like a disaster, their leaving us, like annihilation; but they are in peace. If they experienced punishment as men see it, their hope was rich with immortality; slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be. God has put them to the test and proved them worthy to be with him; he has tested them like gold in a furnace, and accepted them as a holocaust. They who trust in him will understand the truth, those who are faithful will live with him in love; for grace and mercy await those he has chosen. I have found memories of Aunty Reta from my childhood during visits to England. I can still picture aunty with Grandpa Glen. They're now united. Aunt Reta will be forever held in our hearts. May the consolation of God's word renew our faith and trust. She is now in the hands of God.
Rest in peace beloved Aunt, Father James Cadman and Family.



Grandchildren



Great Grandchildren



