

Celebrating the Life of

*Deborah Regina Olds-Shell*



October 17, 1957 ~ February 22, 2025

**TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025**

10:00 A.M. VIEWING | 11:00 A.M. SERVICE

FROM THE HEART CHURCH MINISTRIES®  
5055 ALLENTOWN ROAD | SUITLAND, MARYLAND 20746  
BISHOP JOHN A. CHERRY, II - PASTOR



# Obituary

**Deborah Regina Olds-Shell**, 67 years old, passed away on Saturday, February 22, 2025. She was born on October 17, 1957, to the late Julius Butler Olds and Melbert Olds Johnson in Norfolk, Virginia. She was the third of eight children in a blended family.

She grew up in Norfolk and Washington D.C. and was educated in the Virginia and D.C. Public Schools, graduating from Ballou High School. Deborah attended Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Massachusetts, majoring in business. She completed her studies at Washington School for Secretaries.

She spent her emerging adulthood summers working as a cashier for American Rescue Workers. During her governance internship she gained real world experience and made connections leading to employment. Deborah worked for several federal government agencies, namely the U.S. Departments of Energy, Agriculture, Interior, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Deborah was married to the late Joe Shell, the love of her life, and from their union a son, Jamaal Olds-Shell, was born. Additionally, she co-parented her stepsons, Joe Shell and Jaison Shell.

Deborah was a humorous woman with an infectious laugh. Everyone that was blessed to know her had a comical story about her antics and perpetual quick wit. Her family laughed for years as they reminisced about Deborah and her friends pulling a college prank by turning all the books around in the Nease Library.

Deborah had many hobbies such as walking, traveling, reading, watching classic cinema, cooking, genealogy, singing karaoke and playing mobile games. Initially she was a flag girl then advanced as an unofficial street racer named Lady Shifter.

Deborah was dedicated and committed to family. She loved attending cookouts, birthday parties and graduations. Whether near or far she always was enthusiastic about road trips. Deborah was often referred to as the family Washington Post. She would announce “news release news release” as she shared whereabouts and accomplishments of relatives. She consistently offered reassuring words and hugs of encouragement.

Deborah was a member of Church of the Nazarene where she participated in the teen acapella and drama groups. She accepted Jesus Christ as her personal savior at a young age and would always say, “Heaven will be my home.” In 2022, she recommitted her life to Christ and joined From the Heart Church Ministries during her brother Julius’ homegoing service.

Deborah will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her. She leaves to cherish her memory, her son, Jamaal Olds-Shell and his fiancée, Chanel Jackson; mother, Melbert Olds Johnson; stepsons, Joe (Renee) Shell, and Jaison (Ninat) Shell; sisters: Sharon (Dewey) Watkins, Dawn (Stephen) Reney, and Wendy (Michael) Zuber, stepbrother, Paul Johnson; sisters-in-law: Josie Shell-Brown, Joan Rice, Aretha Mack, Barbara Shell, and Betty Dixon, and a host of other relatives, neighbors, and friends.

Deborah was preceded in death by her husband, Joe N. Shell; stepfather, William Johnson; grandmother, Varie Lee Pritchard; brothers: Larry Olds, James Olds, Julius Olds, and LeVerne Olds; niece, Tamika Olds; stepbrother, Richard Johnson; father-in-law, Joe Shell; mother-in-law, Mattie Shell; brothers-in-law: Avon Shell, Nathaniel Shell, Darryle Shell, Cedrick Shell, Ronnie Brown, and Herbert Rice; as well as sisters-in-law, Bernadette Daniels and Sandra Shell.

# Order of Service

**Invocation**

**Congregational Hymn** ..... "Blessed Assurance"

**Scripture Reading**

*Old Testament: Psalm 23*  
*New Testament: II Timothy 4:6-8*

**Prayer of Comfort**

**Selection**.....Sister Linda Gray

**Acknowledgements**

**Remarks**

*Ms. Anne Marie Reney, Niece*  
*Mrs. Wendy Zuber, Sister*  
*Mr. Jaison Shell, Son*

**Obituary (Read Silently)**

**Song of Preparation** .....Sister Linda Gray

**Message of Hope** .....Pastor Clarissa W. Cook  
*From the Heart Church Ministries of Cincinnati*

**Call to Christ**

**Recessional**

**Interment**

*Quantico National Cemetery*  
*18424 Joplin Road, Triangle, Virginia 22172*



A decorative border of purple flowers and green leaves surrounds the text. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The leaves are simple and pointed.

# Family Sentiments

**To My Dearest Sister,**

*As my older sister, you told me many stories about my birth. The initial one being how sad you were to know that you would no longer be the only girl, but as time grew, you loved me more and more. And as I grew up, I cherished you as my older sister and desired to be just like you. I literally wanted everything you had, from your clothes to your shoes. Later, I enjoyed playing in your makeup. Sister, you taught me so much about being a young girl and to always remember to look my best before leaving the house—I didn't always do that, but I had good intentions. I remember wearing your ill-fitting shoes to school and the pain my poor feet endured. Well, at least I looked good for three hours before leaving school early and walking home barefoot with the goal of arriving there before you realized what I had done. I learned a very valuable lesson that day. I also remember you and mother pushing me to finish my master's degree and then pursue a PhD. You always wanted the best for me. In fact, you committed to talking to me on the phone every night as I drove home after class. You kept that commitment until I finished.*

*I will cherish the intimate, heart to heart, sister to sister conversations we had, and how we both desired to be more like Jesus Christ and overcome the challenges we faced in our individual lives. We knew that with God all things were possible, and we had the Holy Spirit to help us. Although our christian walk measured differently, it was okay as long as we kept moving in the right direction. I was glad when you recently told me that you started reading the Bible more, but we never got a chance to discuss it.*

*Above all and more importantly, I thank God that he orchestrated us spending time together hours before you transitioned that evening. It was just the two of us, me and you, talking and praying together! I still remember that tear in your left eye as you promised to see me later. You kept that promise in your own way, but I do see you in my heart. I will never forget that last day! I will remember you always and will cherish the moments I had with you, my dearest big sister.*

**Love Always,**

**Your Sister, Sharon**




# *Family Sentiments*

---

## *A Laughter Shared*

*Oh, the laughter and the cheer,  
My funny aunt, forever near,  
From silly tales to harmless pranks,  
A life of laughter, love, and thanks.  
Her humor, a treasure, a gift she'd share,  
With everyone, everywhere,  
We'll miss the laughter, her jokes, her fun,  
But cherish the moments, one by one.  
For in our hearts, she'll always stay,  
A laughter shared, in memory's play,  
Our dear aunt, forever near,  
A love eternal, undying, clear.*

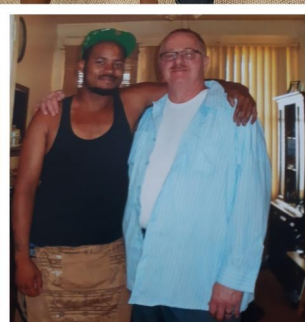
---













# CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

## *Blessed Assurance*

*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.*

### **CHORUS**

*This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long, this is my story,  
this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.*

*Perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
angels descending, bring from above, echoes of mercy, whispers of love.*

### **CHORUS**

*Perfect submission, all is at rest, I in my Savior am happy and blest, watching and waiting,  
looking above, filled with His goodness, lost in His love*

### **CHORUS**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*The family of Deborah Olds-Shell acknowledges with deep appreciation every act of kindness and  
expression of love shown to us during our time of bereavement.  
May God richly bless you. We love you all.*

## **PALLBEARERS**

*Family and Friends*

## **FLOWER BEARERS**

*Family and Friends*

## **SERVICES ENTRUSTED TO:**

*Hodges and Edwards Funeral Home  
3910 Silver Hill Road | Suitland, Maryland 20746*