



Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston

August 6, 1940 - July 18, 2022

UTICA – Elizabeth “Liz” Bowens Preston, age 81, went home to Heaven and her Lord on Monday, July 18, 2022 with her loving family by her side.

Born in Clayton, Alabama on August 6, 1940 to the late James and Lealer Bell (Herring) Bowens, at a young age, she relocated with her parents to Utica to be close to family. She spent the remainder of her childhood in the area, attending Bagg and Kernan Elementary Schools, and graduated from Utica Free Academy in 1958. She was also the first Black Cotillion Queen. In 1973, she married William Preston.

Elizabeth began her career in 1958 with the New York Bell Telephone Company where she ascended to the position of telephone operator supervisor. She was recognized as an amazing asset to the organization, steadfast and always committed in her work, and was justly regarded very well by those she worked alongside. She never once missed a beat, and, she always took the utmost pride in her responsibilities to her job. In 1991, after 33 years of faithful service, she retired from the company, which was then known as AT&T.

In addition to her accomplishments in her professional career, she was a prime example of motherhood. By her example, she taught her daughters the core values they needed to succeed. Whether it was being true to themselves, excelling in their education and work, or balancing their home life, her children learned how to properly manage these skills from her. The best word to describe her personality is “tenacity,” and she will be remembered as a multi-

faceted spirit.

Elizabeth drew the most joy from her family and friends – yet clearly her brothers took the title for her favorite people in the world. They all have special memories of her goodness, kindness, and unyielding love. Her siblings will remember her as “the caretaker” of the bunch, and she extended that love and care to the next generations of kids that came along. It became a regular occasion for her younger siblings to gather at her house, where they’d listen to her vast record collection and learned the newest dances. She reflected her own mother’s kindness and loving spirit to the rest of her family.

Elizabeth gained a reputation for her generosity and love of others. She made a lasting impression on other people, had an animated sense of humor, and much like her father James, she’d tell it like it was, always being direct! Over her life, she gained the affection of so many who looked to her for love. She was truly a remarkable and unforgettable woman and will be so missed.

Holiday dinners were the occasions she made some of her best memories. She also considered annual family reunions and picnics at Verona State Park a must, to attend. Liz could truly be described as a people person, as she loved getting together with special friends and family. She was the queen of macaroni salad and made the best rum sweet potato pies.

A woman of many talents, at one time her skill as a vocalist earned her an offer of a full scholarship to the Boston Conservatory at Berklee School of Music, which she declined. Yet, she never let music slip out of her life. She used her incredible gift to provide entertainment for her family and to sing at both Hope Chapel and St. Paul’s Baptist Church. Elizabeth also sang jazz at the Birdland, a black jazz club, located on Bagg Square in Utica. One could say that music was part of her DNA as her entire family is gifted in the area of music. Her talents were in demand in the community as she also sang at many local Catholic weddings.

Elizabeth stayed active and had an athletic and competitive spirit. An avid bowler, she bowled regularly in local leagues, with her sister cousins, and often competed in tournaments. She also excelled in basketball, volleyball,

and softball. Her love of sports began when she was in school and continued well into adulthood in community-based leagues.

A faithful and active worshipper, Elizabeth cultivated a beautiful relationship with the Lord. Her faith never wavered, only blossomed and grew. She especially loved to share the vocal talents He gave her, by singing in the choirs at church. She faithfully did all the work the Lord planned for her, and she now has a home waiting for her in Heaven. Liz was a member of St. Paul's Baptist Church.

Elizabeth leaves behind her "pearls," Tracy J. Bowens (Larry), and Melanie L. Preston. She was also loving grandmother to Teylor, Basia, and Demetrius. She also held dear the memory of her grandson, James Henry Bowens IV, who passed away in 1987. She leaves behind her siblings, John, James (Brenda), Michael (Shirley), Evelyn, Steve (Chenno), Sandra (Ted), Kenneth (Melinda), Cheryl, Bruce (Craig), Doris, Lealer, Edwina, Phillip (Robyn), and Larry (Flatcher) Beavers. She was predeceased by her brother, Harvey Lee Bowens; her beloved sisters, Arlene McFadden, and infant Betty Lou Bowens; and her cherished sister-in-law, Oreatha Bowens. Her memory will live on with a host of nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins and friends. Her sister-cousins were such a huge part of her life, and they did just about everything together: Robbie Jean Dancy, Dosier Grant, Minnie Warmack, Mary Alice Wells, Ann Warmack Washington, and Pauline Bright. She is now back with the beloved sister-cousins who went before her: Arnette Jefferson, Ella Mae King, Lizzie Washington, Eula Jackson, and Annie Ruth Bell. She was also predeceased by her brother-in-law, Larry Preston.

The family would like to give a special thank you to Dr. Brian Chase, as well as her special caretakers at MVHS Rehabilitation and Nursing Center: Roshan Harrison, Lejuana Bradshaw, Trish Brown, Ieshia Jordan, Joanne Hammonds, Shavelle Hayward, Doreen Thomas, Robin Kelly, Audrey Pearson, Katrina Boykin, and Vicky Washington. These beautiful women cared for Elizabeth like their own mom. They were totally invested in her

wellbeing and were amazing with their priceless love and care.

A Memorial Gathering in Elizabeth's honor will be held on Saturday, July 30, 2022 from 11:00-12:00 pm at St. Paul's Baptist Church, 219 Leah St., Utica.

Elizabeth's Home Going Memorial Service and Celebration of Life will commence at 12:00 pm immediately upon the conclusion of the gathering.

Contributions in Elizabeth's honor may be considered to the Alzheimer's Association online at www.alz.org/donate; envelopes will also be available at the service. Those unable to attend may view Elizabeth's services on Zoom, ID: 83563895256, Passcode: 179797.

Previous Events

Memorial Gathering

JUL 30. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul's Baptist Church
219 Leah Street
Utica, NY

Home Going Service

JUL 30. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul's Baptist Church
219 Leah Street
Utica, NY

Tribute Wall

LB

“ *Lonnie Brown lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston*



Lonnie Brown - August 30, 2022 at 11:54 AM

PJ

“ *Praying For Our Family RIP 🧡🙏🏻 Cuz U Will Be Be Missed The Jacksons, Prince, Workman Families*



Prince Workman Jackson - July 30, 2022 at 10:33 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



July 29, 2022 at 03:52 AM

LN

“ *LRoy Newton purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



LRoy Newton - July 28, 2022 at 09:28 PM

TF

“ *The Henderson & Boykin Family purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



The Henderson & Boykin Family - July 27, 2022 at 06:52 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



July 27, 2022 at 10:59 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



July 26, 2022 at 09:43 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



July 26, 2022 at 01:54 PM



“ *California Grandeur Wine and Gourmet Gift Basket was purchased for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



July 26, 2022 at 12:16 PM



“ *Flossie Bell Lomax lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston*



Flossie Bell Lomax - July 25, 2022 at 03:56 PM



“ *Ted/Sandra Howard and family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.*



Ted/Sandra Howard and family - July 25, 2022 at 11:33 AM



“ *Sincere condolences to Tracy and the Bowen family. Sending prayers of comfort and healing 🙏❤️🙏*



Dawn.winston - July 23, 2022 at 03:36 PM

PJ

“ Patricia Parrish Jackson lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston



Patricia Parrish Jackson - July 23, 2022 at 03:03 PM

PJ

“ Dearest Tracy and family. Please accept my sincere condolences on the loss of such a beautiful soul. May God keep you with strength during your time of mourning and celebration of her life. I'm so sorry I cannot attend the memorial, I will not be in town on the 30th. Once again, my condolences. May Liz rest in glorious peace.



Patricia Parrish Jackson - July 23, 2022 at 03:02 PM

DK

“ So sorry to hear of cousin Liz's passing, she was a sweetheart, may she rest in peace 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

Darlene Trombetta King - July 23, 2022 at 12:17 PM

EJ

“ Very sorry to receive word of your loss. After reading part of Liz's Life Story, and those who were fortunate enough to share in it, I realized the most cherished gift she leaves behind will be the fond memories that will continue to resonate in the mind of those who knew her, and connect the hearts of those who love her. Growing up together, with so many ties that bind, makes us more than friends...it makes us Family!! Again, sending my condolence for your loss, and my joy for the memories.

Ernest Jones,
Syracuse, NY

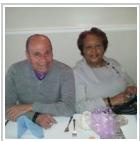
Ernest Jones - July 23, 2022 at 09:54 AM



“ My Condolences to the Bowens family,



Salimah Rahman - July 23, 2022 at 09:26 AM



“ Our sincere prayers and condolences to the Bowens family on the loss of your sister and our dear cousin Liz. On many occasions we had wonderful conversations. We still have the photo of her singing at our wedding. She will be truly missed. Love always. Mary and Bobby. 🙏😊



Mary Wells - July 22, 2022 at 08:06 PM

BF

“ *My condolences to Bowens family* ❤️



Brenda Fudge - July 22, 2022 at 11:12 AM

TB

Thank you so much!❤️

Tracy bowens - July 22, 2022 at 11:56 AM

SW

“ *My sincere and deepest condolences to the family.*



Sherisse Wells - July 22, 2022 at 11:07 AM

TB

Thank you so much!❤️

Tracy bowens - July 22, 2022 at 11:56 AM

RS

“ *Tracy & Melanie and family so sorry for the loss of your mother. Rose Pearson-Simmons & family*



Rose Simmons - July 22, 2022 at 10:56 AM

TB

Thank you so much!❤️

Tracy bowens - July 22, 2022 at 11:56 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.



July 22, 2022 at 10:13 AM

TL

“ T Lewis lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston



T Lewis - July 21, 2022 at 09:39 PM

TB

Thank you so much!❤️

Tracy bowens - July 22, 2022 at 11:56 AM



liz and i had a wonderful friendship we were favorite cousins love and prayers to all frankie lewis and family

Frankie Lewis - July 30, 2022 at 11:08 AM



“ Liz and i had a very close and wonderful friendship growing up favorite cousins

Frankie Lewis - July 21, 2022 at 06:56 PM

TB

Thank you so much!❤️

Tracy bowens - July 22, 2022 at 11:54 AM

FF

“ Frankie Lewis and Family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston.



Frankie Lewis and Family - July 21, 2022 at 06:46 PM

IJ

“ Thank you Liz for always greeting me with that wonderful smile and hug. I can still hear you saying "is that my boy LC". Yes it was me and what a Joy it was to always see you. You will be sorely missed. Love you Tracey and all of the Bowens family. I spent more time in your yard than my own. Liz. May you rest in Peace.

Isaac Moody Jr. - July 21, 2022 at 04:22 PM

TB

Thank you so much!❤️

Tracy bowens - July 22, 2022 at 11:55 AM

RW

“ Rhonda M Wells lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth "Liz" Bowens Preston



Rhonda M Wells - July 21, 2022 at 04:18 PM

TB

Thank you so much!❤️

Tracy bowens - July 22, 2022 at 11:55 AM

DC

“ *Deepest sympathy to the family. Liz was my mom’s roommate a couple years back and always shared some good family stories. I envied that huge family and the bonds that were shared. Be at peace sweet Liz... you sure held your own!*

Dena Carlomusto

Dena Carlomusto - July 21, 2022 at 02:05 PM



Thanks so much!

Tracy Goodman - July 21, 2022 at 03:22 PM

EM

“ *Our deepest condolences and prayers to the family.*

*Edna Liggins Martin
Lyndon Martin*



Edna Liggins Martin - July 21, 2022 at 12:38 AM



Thanks so much ❤️

Tracy Goodman - July 21, 2022 at 03:22 PM