

Deaconess Estella Howard was born on June 7, 1931, in Leslie, Sumter County, Georgia, to the late Mr. Wash Girven and the late Mrs. Rosie Lee Hooks Girven. She received her education in the Sumter County public school system.

Estella devoted her life to caring for others. She worked for many years as a nurse in the Mercy Hospital District of South Miami, Florida, and also served as a private duty nurse, providing compassionate care to elderly patients in their homes.

She and her husband, Henry Howard, built a beautiful life together and created a lasting legacy that now spans three generations. Their union was blessed with nine children—five sons and four daughters—followed by a loving lineage of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.

Estella was a gifted cook and baker, widely known for her delicious cakes and pies. She also had a great love for shopping; those who knew her best would say it was her favorite pastime outside of caring for her family.

A devoted servant of Christ, Estella was an active member of Shady Grove Baptist Church, where she served faithfully as a deaconess alongside her husband. Affectionately known by her childhood nickname, “Sugerlump,” she was cherished for her gentle spirit and generous heart. Estella consistently put others before herself. She was not the typical wife and mother—she was loyal, steadfast, and unwavering in her commitment to her family and her faith. She encouraged everyone around her to take care of themselves and to remain uplifted, even when life became challenging. She was also known for her elegant and sophisticated style.

She is preceded in death by her children: Leon Howard, Rose Elaine Howard, and Cary Lamar Howard; her grandchildren: Brittany Y. Howard, Shaina R. Small and Gabriel Howard; one great grandchild, Elijah J. Fields; and her siblings: Gertrude Girven, Wash Girven, Jr., Louise Girven-Wilson, and Melvin Girven, Sr.

Left to cherish her memories are her children: Lawrence K. Howard, Clarence Howard, Pamela Howard (Timothy) Martin, Anthony Howard, Kimberly (Kelvin) Hugley, and Sherri (Devon) Gayle; her grandchildren: Lawrence K. Howard, Franchel (Lysa) Swain, Tavarious (Tiffany) Williams, Laquinta (Michael) Rogers, Keiwan (Eboni) Howard, Sherrell Howard, Tomasina (Jessie) Liverman, Marquita McClain, Niketia Fudge, Tia (Larry) Bynum, Staria Howard, Terron (Brittney) Small, Shakira Howard, Shacory (Marisa) Fudge, Valdis Howard, Leon Howard, Jr., Trinnard Fudge, Simone Howard, Leah (Marques) Trice, Keion Hugley, Shekinah Howard, Kelea Gayle, Deante Willis, Zaniel Howard, Patrice Hugley, Savannah Howard, Delana Gayle, Devon J. Gayle, Josiah Gayle, Travarus Foster, Cary Howard, Jr., Lashe Howard and Kelvin Hugley, Jr.; along with a host of great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, and friends.