

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF

# CHRISTINE EVELYN PRESBERRY TOLBERT



**JULY 3, 1935 - JANUARY 5, 2025**

**OFFICIANT: REV. LAURETTA HALSTEAD  
EULOGIST: REV. MARLON TILGHMAN**

**AMES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
BEL AIR, MD**

# ORDER OF SERVICE

<b>IVY BEYOND THE WALL</b>	<i>Xi Delta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.</i>
<b>MUSICAL PRELUDE</b>	<i>Ames Combined Choir</i>
<b>PROCESSIONAL</b>	<i>Clergy / Family</i>
<b>GREETING</b>	<i>Rev. Laretta Halstead</i>
<b>PRAYER OF COMFORT</b>	<i>Elder Elyse Murray</i>
<b>OPENING HYMN</b>	<i>Ames Combined Choir</i>
<b>SCRIPTURE READINGS</b> PSALM 27:1-4, 13-14 PHILIPPIANS 4: 6-8	<i>Lisa Tolbert</i>
<b>THANKS/OBITUARY</b>	<i>Sylvia Jacobs</i>
<b>A LOOK BACK</b>	<i>The Tolbert Family</i>
<b>MUSICAL SELECTION</b> "LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH"	<i>The Harris Singers</i>
<b>REFLECTIONS</b>	<i>Jim Thornton Constance Beims Michelle Tolbert-Plant (Granddaughter) Ashley Tolbert (Granddaughter)</i>
<b>MUSICAL SELECTION</b> "I'LL FLY AWAY"	<i>The Harris Singers</i>
<b>EULOGY</b>	<i>Rev. Marlon Tilghman</i>
<b>RECESSIONAL</b>	<i>Ames Combined Choir</i>

## REST IN PEACE CHRISTINE



A LIFE WELL LIVED!!!



## OBITUARY

### EARLY LIFE

Christine Evelyn Presberry Tolbert, a pioneering educator, historian, activist and preservationist, passed away on January 5, 2025, in Wyncote, Pennsylvania. She was 89 years old.

Born on July 3, 1935, in Darlington, Maryland, Christine began her educational journey at the Hosanna School—the same institution she would later work tirelessly to preserve. A gifted student, she graduated from Central Consolidated High School at just 16 years old. She went on to attend Bowie State Teachers College and later earned her master's degree from Loyola University.

Her remarkable career in education began during a pivotal moment in American history, as she was among the first Black teachers to teach in previously all-white schools on the first day of integration. This courage and dedication to education would define her professional life, as she went on to serve both Baltimore City and Harford County Schools, ultimately retiring as Supervisor of Elementary Schools in Harford County.





## OBITUARY

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### HER PASSION

Christine's passion for education extended far beyond the classroom. Following her retirement from the school system, she served on congressional panels selecting candidates for U.S. military academies, continuing her commitment to shaping young minds and futures. Her dedication to preserving history led her to co-authoring "A Journey through Berkeley" with Constance Biems, leaving an indelible mark on the local historical documentation.

Perhaps her most significant legacy lies in her tireless work with the Hosanna School Museum. Before its renovation and later as its executive director for approximately 35 years, Christine spearheaded the restoration efforts of this historic institution and founded the museum, ensuring that vital pieces of local history would be preserved for future generations. In recognition of her efforts, throughout her life Christine received many local and national awards, commendations and citations for her work in education, preservation and community involvement.



## OBITUARY

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### SOCIAL LIFE

Christine's love for her community ran deep, particularly for Maryland, Harford County, and Berkeley. Her spiritual journey led her to worship at various local churches, including Hosanna, St. Margarets, and St. Joan of Arc, before finding her permanent church home at Ames United Methodist Church. Christine was member of Alpha Kappa Alpha and a life member of the NAACP, as well as participating numerous other organizations.



An entrepreneur at heart, Christine pursued several ventures throughout her life. She baked wedding cakes with her mother and worked as a Century 21 real estate agent. She also dedicated time to Open Doors Career Center, helping women re-enter the workforce. Her passion for travel took her across the globe, with adventures spanning Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and the Middle East. Known for her sharp eye for quality and value, she delighted in finding bargains on fine merchandise and gadgets.



## OBITUARY

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### FAMILY

Above all, Christine was devoted to her family and maintained lasting connections with her former students and colleagues. She was preceded in death by her former husband, Carlton Tolbert, Sr. She is survived by her friend and partner Milton West, her son Carlton (Robin) Tolbert Jr., adopted son Bobby Ray McCormick, granddaughters Michelle (Will) Tolbert-Plant and Ashley Tolbert, great-grandchildren Isabella Campbell, Catherine Plant, and William Plant, and numerous beloved nieces, nephews and cousins. She also leaves behind countless former students who, touched by her nurturing spirit and guidance, continued to refer to her as "My Mom" throughout her life.

Even in her final act, Christine continued her lifelong mission of helping others. For over 40 years, she participated in the Baltimore Longitudinal Study on Aging, and in her final gift to mankind, donated her brain to research at Johns Hopkins, hoping to advance our understanding and treatment of dementia.



EDUCATOR. HISTORIAN. PRESERVATIONIST.  
ACTIVIST. AUTHOR. MATRIARCH. TRUE FRIEND

**"I AM FINE, AS FINE AS FROGS HAIR..  
THAT'S MIGHTY FINE ISN'T IT"**