



## Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely

November 5, 1928 - May 16, 2021

In Loving Memory Of:

Grace Ethelyn Blakely, born on November 5, 1928, in Jefferson City, Missouri, was the 5th daughter born to two educators, Arthur and Violet Hammons. She was educated in Jefferson City at Washington Elementary School, Lincoln University High School, and Lincoln University.

In 1952, Grace married James F. Blakely and from this union were born two sons, James Jr. (who preceded her in death), Jonathan, and one daughter, Tracy. Her husband, James, also preceded her in death. Raised in a Christian home, Grace accepted Christ at an early age. She joined St. John's Presbyterian Church, in Detroit, MI in 1952. She was an ordained Elder and a Deacon. She also served as a member on the Stewardship Committee, and Altar Guild.

Grace was compassionate and mild-mannered and had many friends. She was eager to help others and did many things just to bring smiles to their faces. She volunteered her time at the Mother Waddles social services agency called the 'Perpetual Mission' in the 1960s. Other community affiliations were the Presbyterian Neighborhood Services Board of Directors, Martin Luther King Jr. High School Advisory Council, and the Lincoln University Alumni Association.

Grace was employed by the Detroit Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Labor. She worked for the Department of Labor for twenty-one years and nine months from which she retired in 1993. She was well-liked and

received numerous commendations from the department. She also received a note of congratulations for dedicated service from President Bill Clinton. Her coworkers became friends and many remained in touch with her on a regular basis.

Grace had an appreciation for all types of music and loved to sing. She also loved art and photography. After the death of her husband, she became involved with the Luella Hannan Center, an organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of life for seniors. It was there where Grace spent almost 20 years flourishing in the arts. She was a member of the Hannan Choir, performing for special occasions at Hannan, singing at nursing homes, the annual Noel Night, and other venues.

She was an actor in the Hannan Players Theatre Group, where she performed in various plays at Hannan, the Charles Wright Museum of African American History, and other community events. Through Senior Voice, another Hannan Foundation program, Grace produced several award-winning Town Hall Meeting events. She was also a talk show co-host on an Internet podcast. Grace continued learning by taking writing classes that inspired collaboration between seniors and students in middle school, high school, and college. Grace was very creative and expressed her talent through her beautiful paintings and ceramic pieces. She was a participant of the Friday Fine Arts Class and some of her work was on display at the Detroit Institute of Arts and Carr Center. Her paintings won awards at the Michigan State Fair, one of which included a blue ribbon! Her work was also on exhibit at various galleries and art shows throughout the Detroit metropolitan area.

In 2017, the Hannan Foundation hosted their inaugural 70 Over 70 Impact Awards program. It reflects the diverse interest and accomplishments and lifestyles of older adults in metro Detroit. Grace was bestowed the Lifetime Learning Award, exemplifying her never-ending pursuit of knowledge at the age of 89. Throughout her 92 years, Grace touched and left a positive impact on many lives.

She leaves to cherish her memory: her son, Jonathan Blakely (Anita), and her

daughter, Rev. Dr. Tracy Thompson (Rev. Dr. Bill Thompson); grandsons LaMont Suggs (Sarah), James Sweet, and Jonathan Blakely II; granddaughter, Kristin Blakely Davis (Ryan); great-grandsons, Jordan Sweet, Juwante Sweet, James Sweet, Jukari Sweet, and Ryan Davis; great-granddaughters, Kamaria Suggs, Kalea Suggs, and Keira Suggs; and a host of other relatives and dear friends.

# Cemetery Details

## Grand Lawn Cemetery

23501 Grand River  
Detroit, MI 48219

# Previous Events

## Family Hour

Monday, May **24**. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John's Presbyterian Church  
1961 E. Lafayette  
Detroit, MI 48207  
(313) 567-0213  
[webmaster@stjohnspresbyterianchurch.org](mailto:webmaster@stjohnspresbyterianchurch.org)  
<http://stjohnspresbyterianchurch.org>

## Funeral Service

Monday, May **24**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John's Presbyterian Church  
1961 E. Lafayette  
Detroit, MI 48207  
(313) 567-0213  
[webmaster@stjohnspresbyterianchurch.org](mailto:webmaster@stjohnspresbyterianchurch.org)  
<http://stjohnspresbyterianchurch.org>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely*

January 21, 2023 at 09:34 PM

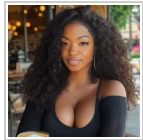


“ *Rev. Thompson and Family,*

*My deepest sympathy to you and your family in the passing of your beautiful mother, Mrs. Grace E. Blakely. You are in my thoughts and prayers. RIH, Mrs. Blakely!!*



**Juanita R Roye** - May 26, 2021 at 07:01 PM



“ *To the Family of Mrs Grace*

*Prayers goes out to My Family Tracy and John stay strong text me if want*

*Love y'all Glenda* 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏💕💕

**Glenda Thomas** - May 24, 2021 at 03:57 PM



“ *Sweet memories of art class and phone calls. Miss you Grace.*

**Charlene Whittle** - May 24, 2021 at 10:34 AM

LA

“ *Letha Adams lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely*



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**Letha Adams** - May 22, 2021 at 03:16 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely.*



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May 22, 2021 at 03:14 PM

SC

“ *May your memories bring you comfort in the loss of your love one. May the precious memories of your love one be a comfort to you now and may it help to know that many thoughts are with you in your time of sorrow We will miss hearing your mom's lovely voice and will remember her forever.*  
*Love and comfort,*

*Edna and Sam Comer, Nashville, TN*

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**sammy Comer** - May 22, 2021 at 11:37 AM

VV

“ I loved my Aunt Grace. As a little girl, about 12 years old, she was given the responsibility of announcing my birth to my father. She remained proud of that and shared it with me in my adult life. She and I shared a bond and frequent contact for the rest of her life. She became my surrogate mother after my mother, her sister, passed into glory. - Violet Vaughnes

Violet Vaughnes - May 20, 2021 at 01:51 PM

YW

“ Your Texas Family, Arthur & Doretha Williams purchased the Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant for the family of Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely.



Your Texas Family, Arthur & Doretha Williams - May 20, 2021 at 10:35 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely.



May 19, 2021 at 09:12 PM

NJ

“ Niece Rachel Rausch-Johnson/Eric Johnson purchased the Sweet Solace Spray for the family of Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely.



Niece Rachel Rausch-Johnson/Eric Johnson - May 19, 2021 at 06:15 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mrs. Grace Ethelyn Blakely.*



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May 19, 2021 at 03:33 PM



“ *An amazing woman with amazing children. I'd always admired Aunt Grace's close family relationship and how beautifully her children took care of her every need. I'd also admired her sharp mind and continued involvement in life through her church, community, the arts, entertainment, etc. Even when health problems began to encroach in later years, she never complained and never let that stop her from enjoying each day God would grant her. After my husband (her nephew) passed away, Aunt Grace checked in on me every few weeks or so. I will miss our every-several-weeks phone conversations. Rest in peace, Aunt Grace.*

*Donna M. Stine*

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**Donna Stine** - May 19, 2021 at 03:20 PM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



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**% Zak Frieling** - May 19, 2021 at 01:10 PM

ZA

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



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**Zak** - May 19, 2021 at 01:08 PM

CW

*We were members in an art class. Whenever Grace came to class she was always lively and smiling. I enjoyed our classes and phone calls together. Missing you Grace.*

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**Charlene Whittle** - May 24, 2021 at 10:25 AM

MD

*My Dear Dear Grace ... Had not heard from you in a while because we were Email Buddies. Just today, July 2, 2021 I mailed you a card to please call or email me. Grace she share the November Birth Sign you November 5th ME November 3rd. We became friend at Senior Voice and our friendship continued. Grace Rest In Peace; I shall Miss you. Mildred 'E'*

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**Mildred E. Dixon** - July 02, 2021 at 05:27 PM