

CELEBRATING
the Life of



Norma
Claire Goodlett, Ph.D.

SUNRISE **OCTOBER 22, 1940** | SUNSET **OCTOBER 9, 2025**

METROPOLITAN SDA CHURCH

6307 Riggs Road, Hyattsville, MD 20773
NOVEMBER 9, 2025

Order of Service

Video Presentation

Musical Prelude

Adrian T. Westney, Jr., Family Friend

Processional

Family

Welcome

Pastor Patrick O'Mara, Officiating Minister and Family Friend

Prayer of Comfort

Pastor Patrick O'Mara

Norma's Favorites - Musical Tribute

"How Great Thou Art"

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

Black National Anthem - "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

Adrian T. Westney, Jr., Family Friend

Scripture Reading

Jeremiah 29:11-13

Symonne Francis, Granddaughter

Reflections

Dr. Glenn Phillips, Friend

Barbara Griffiths Philpotts-Kerr, Friend

Raymond Goodlett, Nephew

Musical Selection

Bishop-Hall Trio

Eulogy

Pastor Patrick O'Mara

Reflections from Granddaughters

Noelle, Symonne, and Gabrielle Francis

Howard University Resolution

Dr. Grace Jennings, Director of International Operations, PACE Center, College of Pharmacy, Howard University

Musical Selection

"My Way"

David Griffiths, Family Friend

Life Sketch

Acknowledgments

Angella Dixon Watson, Friend

The Family's Response

Anthea Francis, Daughter

Musical Selection

"Edelweiss"

Gabrielle Francis, Granddaughter

Prayer of Hope and Benediction

Pastor Patrick O'Mara

Video Presentation

Recessional

Tribute to My Mother

June 7th, 1977, Eighth-grade Graduation

Mrs. Norma Bowen,

Mom, life for us hasn't always been a crystal stair,
but though it hasn't, you've remained a considerate,
unselfish, and loving mother.

You helped me-when I needed advice
You understood me-the way no one else could
You disciplined me-where I was wrong
You supplied your intellect and common sense-
where I lacked it.

Most of all, however, you've loved me, and I'd like to take
the time to thank you for being that special "parent" throughout the
13 years of my life. I also want you to know that whatever success I
make of myself I owe it all to you, for behind every successful
daughter, there has to be a perfect mother and I haven't found
anyone, nor will I, who has fit that role as well as you. (And I'm
not being prejudiced either.) Thanks Mommy, I really love you.

Love, your brute

Anthea
Anthea



Life Sketch

A Life Woven in Love, Friendship, and Family

From her first breath, Norma Claire Goodlett's life was marked by love—love that nurtured, taught, and inspired everyone around her. Born on October 22, 1940, in Kingston, Jamaica, to Hubert Samuel Goodlett and Agatha Johnson, she was their firstborn and only daughter. Friends would teasingly remind her that her birthday was the date of "The Great Disappointment" in Seventh-day Adventist history. Norma's spirited reply never changed: *"I am no disappointment!"* Norma had two maternal brothers, Ronald Morgan and Keith Bowen and two paternal brothers, Rackham "Hugh" Goodlett and Richard Goodlett.

Norma's childhood was shaped by strong women and deep family bonds. She spent her early years in Kingston with her mother, then moved at age four to live with her grandmother, Josephine "Grandma Jo" Goodlett, in Elderslie, St. Elizabeth. Grandma Jo's gentle care anchored her, while visits to her mother helped Norma develop the homemaking, baking, and sewing skills that became her hallmark. When her grandmother could no longer care for her, Norma's father placed her with loving aunts, especially Vida "Aunt Vie" Harvey, whom she cherished as a second mother. She also gained a "baby brother," Robert Martin, Aunt Vie's son, expanding her circle of affection even further.

In 1959, Norma began a new chapter at West Indian Training College (WITC) in Mandeville under the guidance of Mrs. Lucille "Aunt Lûs" Walters. Those years shaped her character and her lifelong friendships. At WITC, she was known for her grace, warmth, and hospitality—so much so that her friends jokingly nicknamed her "Martha Stewart." She went on to earn her teaching certificate there, a B.A. in Elementary Education from Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts, and later, both a master's in Reading (1975) and a Ph.D. in Human Communication (1991) from Howard University. In 1961, Norma married Logan Bowen at Ephesus SDA Church in New York City. Their union was blessed with a daughter, Anthea Vernet, born in Chicago, IL. Though the marriage ended, Norma met life's challenges with courage and devotion. She and Anthea settled in Rochester, New York, where Norma taught in the public school system. She later moved to Washington D.C. to work for Random House Publishing. As a single mother, she created a nurturing world for her daughter—filled with love, learning, music lessons, and opportunity.

Norma's greatest joy was watching Anthea grow into a capable, compassionate woman. When Anthea married Floyd Maxwell "Max" Francis in 1992, Norma proudly walked her down the aisle and from that day on called Max her son. Her prayers for their happiness were answered when she lived to see them celebrate 33 years of marriage in 2025.

Norma's professional life reflected her brilliance and dedication. While completing her master's, she joined the faculty at Howard University, where she served for 23 years. She began in the Center for Academic Reinforcement, later founding the Computer-Assisted Instruction program and training faculty in emerging technology. After earning her Ph.D., she taught in the School of Communications, mentoring students, publishing research, and presenting at conferences. Her professionalism, warmth, and generosity made her not only a respected educator but also a beloved colleague and friend.

Life Sketch cont.

A special joy of Norma's Howard years was working alongside her brother, Hugh Goodlett, a mathematics professor. Though they discovered their sibling connection as adults, their bond was instant and profound. They were inseparable on campus—sharing meals, attending meetings, and proudly marching side by side at university events. Her pride in her family deepened when her daughter, granddaughter Gabrielle, and son-in-law Max also became Howard alumni.

After retirement, Norma returned to Jamaica, fulfilling her dream to live once again among her island roots. She served in a leadership position for MIND and would later serve as a lecturer at the University of Technology, conducting workshops on communication, and became known as a dynamic educator and mentor. She also poured her creativity into transforming her home into a bed-and-breakfast she called *Cresthaven*. It became both a haven of peace and a reflection of her love for family—especially her three granddaughters.

Her granddaughters were her world: Noelle Alexandra ("Grandmommy's Little Sweetheart"), Symonne Arielle ("Grandmommy's Little Darling"), and Gabrielle Alysse ("Grandmommy's Little Woman"). She even named the rooms at *Cresthaven* after their middle names—*The Alexandra*, *The Arielle*, and *The Alysse*. Though she lived in Jamaica for much of their early childhood, she never missed an important event. She traveled for graduations, recitals, and holidays, and even babysat so Anthea and Max could celebrate their anniversary—joking later that the "souvenir" from that trip was her youngest granddaughter, Gabrielle.

In 2012, Norma returned to the U.S. and settled in Silver Spring, Maryland. She briefly accepted a position at Washington Adventist University, but after a fall on her first day, she retired. This new season allowed her to spend precious time with her granddaughters, sharing stories, laughter, and faith. For the last seven years of her life, she lived with Anthea and her family—surrounded by the love she had so freely given.

Norma was a friend in the truest sense: loyal, thoughtful, and generous. She was the one who called to check in, who listened without judgment, who always found a song to match the moment and sang it with joy. Her faith and friendship ran deep, and her compassion left lasting marks on everyone she met.

On the morning of October 9, 2025, Norma Claire Goodlett passed peacefully into rest, leaving a legacy woven from love, friendship, and family. She was 84 years old.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her beloved brothers, Hugh, Ronald, Richard and Robert. She leaves to cherish her memory her devoted daughter, Anthea Bowen Francis (Max); her adored granddaughters, Noelle, Symonne, and Gabrielle; sisters-in-law Jascinta Goodlett and Sharon Martin; nieces, nephews, godchildren, extended relatives, and countless friends.

Norma's life was a song of love—each verse filled with kindness, laughter, and faith. Her melody continues in the hearts of all who knew her, reminding us that a life lived in love is never truly gone.

Memories





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Acknowledgments

We are deeply grateful to our devoted caregivers - Bernice Beckford, Michelle Green, Tracy Green, Raquel Myles, and Joyce Walters - for their excellent, loving, and personal care of our beloved "Grandmommy." Raquel lovingly assumed care during a difficult transition and tended both grandmothers with grace and devotion. Michelle generously trained caregivers in elder-care equipment, filled in when needed, and provided valuable resources and referrals.

Our heartfelt thanks to the Bereavement Committee of the Metropolitan SDA Church for their guidance, compassion, and steady support during this time. To our faithful friends and family who have called, visited, and checked in on "Norma" over the years - your love and constancy have meant more than words can express.

We extend special appreciation to Kornerstone Productions for their creative and professional excellence in providing the audiovisual presentation, memorial website, and livestream. Sincere gratitude is also offered to Howard University, which played a vital role in Dr. Goodlett's educational and professional journey. In keeping with her wishes and lifelong dedication to learning, her body was donated to the Howard University College of Medicine to educate future physicians. We thank Dr. Vilroy McBean and Capitol Mortuary for facilitating her final request.

A special thank-you to our cousin Monique Nelson Riviere for her loving coordination of this memorial weekend, and to all family and friends - near and far, in person or online - whose prayers, talents, and contributions made this celebration of "Mommy's" life so beautiful.

*With love and gratitude,
Anthea, Max, Noelle, Symonne, and Gabby*



Please visit
<https://dmvmemorials.com/obituary/normagoodlett/>
to watch the memorial service and share your tributes.