



## Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins

April 26, 1957 - December 20, 2025

Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins, a cherished pillar of the historic Jimtown community and a legendary voice in gospel music, passed away peacefully on December 20, 2025, at the age of 68, after a brief illness.

Born in Lexington, Kentucky, to the late Lou Jesse Edwards and Alene Rankins Warfield Edwards, Gloria's life was defined by her unwavering faith, her devotion to family, and a musical gift that resonated across the Commonwealth for more than six decades.

A lifelong resident of Jimtown, Gloria was a dedicated member of the Jimtown Baptist Church, where she accepted Christ in April, 1966, under Pastor Joseph Jones. As a dedicated member, she held numerous roles in the church, such as being the youngest Sunday School teacher, Trustee, Missionary member and President, finance officer, and Choir President. Her musical journey was deeply rooted in her heritage; she often credited her aunt, Sarah Edwards, for "schooling" her in the art of song. For over 60 years, Gloria was a cornerstone of the world-renowned Edwards Sisters gospel group. Her powerful harmonies graced stages alongside gospel icons such as Shirley Caesar, Rev. James Cleveland, and John P. Kee, leaving an indelible mark on the American gospel tradition. Gloria was a featured gospel singer in the 1983 Lexington, Kentucky, production of "Mahalia," written by Trent Tucker, a play celebrating the life of legendary gospel singer Mahalia Jackson. She was one of three women who shared the lead role as "The Mahalias" in

the original 1983 cast. Gloria's love for singing led her to involvement in local pageants, Ms. CNO (Council of Neighborhood Organization) in 1973, and Ms. Ebony Expo in 1974, where she was crowned Queen! She was honored with being a Kentucky Colonel, along with many other accolades individually, and as a member of the Edwards Sisters.

Gloria was a proud graduate of Bryan Station High School and continued her education in Business at the University of Kentucky and Law Enforcement at Eastern Kentucky University. She was heavily involved with her 1975 graduating class of Bryan Station, and the 50th Year Class Reunion just recently celebrated.

Gloria was joined in holy matrimony to Samuel L. Tompkins on December 23rd, 1978, which led her relocating to Madrid, Spain due to his stationing in the United States Air Force. To this union, a daughter, Tamara, was born in 1981. Though in a foreign country, her ambition to work and her love for singing continued. While in Madrid, she was employed by a local golf course, the Audio Photo Club, and as the secretary for the Base Commander. She sang in an R&B group called Onyx, who often played at the local NCO club, and a gospel group The Gospel Messengers, who sang and toured all over Europe with sponsorship by the United States Embassy.

She started working for Fayette County Public Schools in 1983 at the print shop at the district offices. From there, she became the Administrative Assistant at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, where she developed many lifelong relationships with staff and students for 21 years. She retired in 2011 to help care for her grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents Lou Jesse and Alene Edwards, brothers Michael Edwards and Bert Edwards, sisters Delores Edwards, Anna Sue Edwards Murrell, and Wanda Edwards Jones.

She is survived by her beloved husband, Rev. Samuel Tompkins, her daughter Tamara (Robert) Jones; brothers Joseph (Tonya) Edwards (Columbus, OH) and Walter (Jo Carolyn) Edwards, sister Bertha Edwards Stewart (Lexington, KY); three granddaughters, Reagan, Ryleigh, and Rian Jones; uncle Bert Warfield, and aunt Corrine Warfield; brother-in-laws George June (Doris) Jackson (Waldorf, MD) and David Tompkins (Hampton, VA) and sister-in-laws Elaine Taylor Lee (Dallas, TX), Charlotte Lee, and Teresa Engles (Lexington, KY); daughters-in-love Earlene Jackson and Tesha Livingston, and a massive host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends whom she adored.

# Cemetery Details

## Camp Nelson National Cemetery

6980 Danville RD  
Nicholasville, KY

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC **26**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Jimtown Baptist Church  
2236 Jimtown Ln  
Lexington, KY 40511

*There will be a special Musical Celebration from 6pm-8pm to celebrate the musical legacy of Mrs. Gloria Edwards Tompkins on December 26, 2025. \*\*\*\*ALL RESOLUTIONS FROM CHURCHES AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE READ DURING THIS CELEBRATION\*\*\*\* Please email to [taylor632@gmail.com](mailto:taylor632@gmail.com)*

## Visitation

DEC **27**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Jimtown Baptist Church  
2236 Jimtown Ln  
Lexington, KY 40511

## Funeral Service

DEC 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

Jimtown Baptist Church  
2236 Jimtown Ln  
Lexington, KY 40511

*Burial will be Monday, December 29, 2025 11:00AM at Camp Nelson National Cemetery*

# Tribute Wall

KG

“ Karen Guarnieri lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins



Karen Guarnieri - January 14 at 09:23 PM

BJ

“ Billie Jackson-Goldsmith lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins



Billie Jackson-Goldsmith - January 02 at 01:03 PM

WD

“ My condolences and prayers to Gloria's family, and the Jimtown community in the loss of another special angel. Gloria's beautiful, genuine angelic smile, and anointed voice will certainly be missed. May she rest safe in the arms of her Lord and Savior!

Wanda Davis - December 29, 2025 at 08:03 PM

AC

“ Alicia Clay sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins



Alicia Clay - December 27, 2025 at 03:50 PM

AC

“ *Fondest memories of you, my love.*



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**Alicia Clay** - December 27, 2025 at 03:49 PM

SB

“ *Sharon B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins.*

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**Sharon B.** - December 27, 2025 at 08:31 AM

LS

“ *Lynn Slates lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins*



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**Lynn Slates** - December 27, 2025 at 07:04 AM

CL

“ *A beautiful soul! So glad I was able to go on the family cruise this past summer with Gloria and the fam. You will be missed 🙏*

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**Carla Lindsay** - December 26, 2025 at 08:40 PM

LF

“ *Latarika Young & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins.*

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**Latarika Young & Family** - December 26, 2025 at 03:00 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins.



December 26, 2025 at 03:00 PM



“ Jon and Lyn Akers planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins.

Jon and Lyn Akers - December 26, 2025 at 02:34 PM



“ Jon and Lyn Akers purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins.



Jon and Lyn Akers - December 26, 2025 at 02:34 PM



“ Betty Duke Ross lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins



Betty Duke Ross - December 26, 2025 at 11:02 AM

FT

*You was one of the sweetest people I've ever met You will be missed by many.May God watch over your love ones Fraser Thurman*

**Fraser Thurman** - December 26, 2025 at 08:36 PM

JM

*Gloria, a beautiful and talented soul who will truly be missed.*

**Jerome McDaniel** - December 27, 2025 at 09:34 AM

JB

“ *Joyce Brown lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins*



**Joyce Brown** - December 26, 2025 at 09:14 AM

ML

“ *Michele Booker - Leach lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins*



**Michele Booker - Leach** - December 26, 2025 at 05:00 AM

TC

“ *One of my favorite people..... remembering you from the good ole Bryan Station days and Harambee Choir!!! Over the years as you worked in the school system you were always so helpful....we loved you Miss Gloria!  
Phillip & Tava Clay*

**Tava Clay** - December 25, 2025 at 11:17 PM

PD

*Remember the days at school singing your heart out you will truly be missed*

Pat Davis - December 27, 2025 at 06:48 AM

AN

“ Anna lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins



Anna - December 25, 2025 at 02:10 PM

DT

“ Derrick & DeNeia Thomas lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Gloria Jean Edwards Tompkins



Derrick & DeNeia Thomas - December 24, 2025 at 02:58 PM

LJ

“ I was saddened to learn of the passing of Mrs. Gloria Tompkins. She was truly a woman of God with a sweet spirit and such a lovely voice. I will miss her whenever I visit the Jimtown Baptist Church. My condolences and love to the family. The bible says to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. I am certain Gloria is resting in God's arms.

Lenora (Lea) Jones - December 24, 2025 at 11:37 AM



“ *Condolences to Rev. Sam Tompkins, daughter Tamara, and granddaughters. I will miss my cousin. A memory that stands out is how Uncle Jesse, Aunt Alene, and Gloria came to visit us every Saturday. Jean remembered that her Dad always called Mama C-Bird. The Heavenly Choir has gained another voice. Family, though you are saddened now, keep your faith and remain prayerful. These condolences are extended on behalf of the Botts Siblings: Sandra, Edward, Frank, and Francene.*

Francene Botts - December 24, 2025 at 11:26 AM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Kathy Ginn - December 24, 2025 at 09:03 AM



“ *3 files added to the tribute wall*



Kathy Ginn - December 24, 2025 at 08:59 AM

TD

“ REST IN HEAVEN GLO(AKA LIL ARETHA)!!!#33 🙏🙏 🗄️ 🙏🙏 🙏🙏 🌸



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**Tyrone Dunn** - December 23, 2025 at 10:52 PM