



## Mrs. Viola Davis Brown

April 8, 1936 - December 22, 2017

Viola Davis Brown, the widow of Percy Hunter Brown, was born on April 8, 1936 and went home to be with the Lord on Friday, December 22, 2017 at the age of 81. A native of Lexington, Kentucky, she was a daughter of the late Donnie Davis, Sr. and Mable Davis. Viola joined the Historic Pleasant Green Missionary Baptist Church at 7 years of age where she sang in various choirs and served as a Sunday School Teacher, President and Instructor of the Forty-Year Christians Group, Married Couples Club Counselor, Trustee, Member of the Health Ministries Auxiliary, and Vice-President of the Ministers, Deacons, Trustee Wives and Widows Auxiliary. Viola loved her church family and was a mentor and teacher to Young Adult and Co-ed Sunday School students for more than 44 years. She desired that students would come to learn, then go teach others about the good news of Jesus Christ.

Viola was a graduate of Dunbar High School, Nazareth School of Nursing, and the UK College of Medicine Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program. In 1955, she became the first African-American admitted to a school of professional nursing in Lexington, KY, and in 1960, was promoted to Supervisor of Nursing Services at St. Joseph Hospital. In 1970, Viola was employed by The Hunter Foundation, Kentucky's first licensed HMO, and in 1980 was appointed as the Executive Director of the State Office of Public Health Nursing by Governor John Y. Brown, Jr. She became the first African-American State Director of Public Health Nursing in the United States. During her administration the number of nurses practicing across Kentucky's 120

health departments grew from 350 to 1400. She retired in 1999 after serving at the pleasure of five Kentucky Governors and three Commissioners of Health.

A Registered Nurse for over 58 years, Viola was also certified as a Physician Assistant and Family Nurse Practitioner. She was elected President of the Kentucky Public Health Association, inducted into the University of Kentucky's College Of Public Health Hall of Fame, a Kentucky Colonel, and a member of Chi Eta Phi Nursing Sorority, Inc.

Viola was preceded in death by siblings Alphonzo Davis, Donnie Davis, Jr. and Shirley Davis Dawson.

A loving and devoted wife, mother, grand-mother, sister, aunt and friend, Viola leaves to cherish her memory, five children: Clarence, Michael, and Bonnie Brown, Lexington, KY, Donna (Winston) Lansden, Lexington, KY and Linda Brown, of Bowie, MD; sister Josephine Robinson, Houston, Texas; five grandchildren, Evan and Constance Brown, Briana, Zion, and Josiah Lansden; two great-grandchildren, A'Nya and Joelle Lansden, sisters-in-law, Barbara Davis and Evelyn Lucille Brown; brother-in-law, Jesse E. Brown; cousins, nieces, nephews and friends. Viola loved the lazy days of summer surrounded by family and friends on the sun porch, Christmas gatherings, Triennial Family Reunions, and vacations with old friends. Most of all, she was thankful for God's special blessings: the gift of eternal life, and the joy of growing old with her husband of fifty-seven years and seven months. She would often say, "God is a Good God!"

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 29. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

HISTORIC PLEASANT GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH  
540 W. MAXWELL ST  
LEXINGTON, KY

## Service

DEC 29. 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM (ET)

HISTORIC PLEASANT GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH  
540 W. MAXWELL ST  
LEXINGTON, KY