



Jacqueline Smith-Jenkins

September 20, 1943 - February 12, 2026

A Time to Be Born Jacqueline “Jackie” Smith-Jenkins was born in Itta Bena, Mississippi on September 20, 1943, to Lula Bee Little and John Henry Taylor Sr. She was the third of six children born to Lula Bee.

A Time to Love In 1962, Jacqueline met Leonard Lucas, her high school sweetheart, and to this union, Virgil L. Winters was born. Jacqueline went on to meet and marry Harold V. Smith in 1967, and to this union Deborah D. Smith was born. Although no longer husband and wife, Jackie and Harold remained close friends until his death in 2014. Jacqueline later married Larry Jenkins, a longtime friend, in 1994. Her husband Larry preceded her in death in 2018.

A Time to Live Jacqueline grew up on the West Side of Chicago, arriving as a toddler from Mississippi. Her family eventually settled on the Near West Side at Taylor and Racine in the Jane Addams Rowhouses. She attended Riis Elementary School and Robert T. Crane High School, where she excelled in bookkeeping, graduating in 1964.

After graduating, Jackie began working and training, eventually landing positions at the U.S. Postal Service, Cook County, the Illinois Department of Public Aid, and later the Illinois Department of Human Services. Jackie was a lifelong learner. Her family often joked that she spent as much time at college

as she did at home and work. She proudly carried a full course load while raising a family and working full-time. That dedication and hard work paid off when Jackie earned her Master's degree in Community Counseling. Her yearning for learning later led her to pursue a Doctorate of Theology, which she successfully completed, becoming an Apostle in the Pentecostal church. As a licensed professional counselor, Jacqueline was passionate about helping people and she did so with Illinois state agencies for 45 years until her retirement in 2018.

Jacqueline was not only book smart, but also deeply creative, actively engaging in arts and crafts. Always fashion-forward, she learned to sew at a very early age. She was known for coming home from work, cutting out a pattern, sewing it up overnight, and wearing it to work the next day. She was that skilled—much to the playful disdain of her children, who did not always appreciate being dressed in their mother's tailor-made creations. In addition to sewing, she was an avid knitter, crocheter, cook, and gardener with an undeniable green thumb. She also trained as a nail technician and jewelry maker, embracing every opportunity to learn and create.

Jackie was an avid reader with enough books to fill a small library. She wielded her library card like it was a weapon. She made certain that each of her grandchildren had library cards and faithfully took them to the library to explore new books. Always eager to immerse herself in culture, she traveled abroad to Africa multiple times and secured an educational visa to Cuba before it was opened for tourism—a feat she was particularly proud of. Jacqueline, at the end of the day, was the quintessential Renaissance woman.

She was especially devoted to her children and grandchildren, supporting them in their passions, pursuits, and hobbies. She loved to celebrate their accomplishments, no matter how big or small.

A Time for Faith Jacqueline confessed her love of the Lord at an early age. She began her spiritual journey as a member of Providence Missionary Baptist Church under the direction of Reverend Frisco, where she worshiped for over 20 years. Longing for a deeper connection to God, she later joined Revival Tabernacle under the leadership of Bishop A.C. Richards and remained a faithful member for more than 22 years. Jacqueline most recently joined the First Church of Jesus Christ in North Chicago under the direction of Reverend Gino Jenkins and was an active member at the time of her passing.

A Time to Rest Jacqueline passed away in her home at the age of 82. She loved deeply and lived fully, and after receiving her dementia diagnosis in 2023, she fought hard to hold on to the memories of her life.

A Time to Mourn Jacqueline leaves behind a devoted family to cherish her memory. She is beloved and remembered by her children, Virgil (Monica) and Deborah; her ten grandchildren, Jessica, Joshua (Janay), Justin (Zneita), Jeremy, Joanna, Joseph, Jacob, Veronica, Vance, and Nigil; and her five great-grandchildren, Johara, Dallas, Jordan, Jiannis, and Jamie.

She was preceded in death by her parents and Jack Winters. Her siblings also preceded her in death: James Stringfellow, Richard Thomas, Arlene Gray, Minoso Winters, Renard Winters, and James Henry Taylor, Jr.

She will also be missed by her Aunt Ophelia Winters; her dear lifelong friend Luberta Texas Graham; Sister Mary Johnson of Mississippi; family friend Keith Strickland of Brookport, IL; and a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, friends, and her church family.

Cemetery Details

Restvale Cemetery

11700 S Laramie Ave
Alsip, IL 60803

Previous Events

Public Viewing

FEB **24**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Calahan Funeral Home - Legacy Center
7046 S. Halsted
Chicago, IL 60621

Visitation

FEB **25**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Calahan Funeral Home - Legacy Center
7046 S. Halsted
Chicago, IL 60621

Funeral Service

FEB **25**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Calahan Funeral Home - Legacy Center
7046 S. Halsted
Chicago, IL 60621

Burial/Interment

FEB **25**. 1:00 PM - 1:15 PM (CT)

Restvale Cemetery
11700 S Laramie Ave
Alsip, IL 60803

Tribute Wall

DT

“ *Delores A. Thomas purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Jacqueline Smith-Jenkins.*



Delores A. Thomas - February 23 at 08:52 AM