



First Lady Emerita Ruth M. Butler

August 18, 1941 - November 5, 2025

Ruth Marie Butler was born on August 18th 1941 to James and Juliette Robinson. She was the second child and first daughter. (She had an older brother James Jr.) No one knew on that warm summer day that a few months later,(Dec.7) the United States would be plunged into World War 2. Her birth proved to be fortuitous because it kept her father out of the draft. (Men with two children were exempted). Her father worked in one of the Defense Plants instead.

Four more children were added to the Robinson family. Timothy, Harold, Carmena and finally Elizabeth Ann. That made an even six, three girls and three boys.

Ruth or “Baby Sister” as she was affectionally called, enjoyed her position in the family. She considered herself to be her Mother’s right hand assistant. She took it upon herself to keep her younger brothers in line. She nurtured and cared for her younger sisters, often taking them places and bringing them treats as well. That nurturing support and love remained a lifelong habit.

She accepted Christ at an early age. In her case, that statement is more than a cliché that is printed in just about every obituary. She not only accepted Christ and was baptized-- she served Him for a lifetime. She was an active member of Lilydale First Baptist Church.

She was a graduate of Calumet High School and attended Wright Junior College.

Eventually she met James Butler who was also a member of Lilydale First Baptist Church and lived in the same neighborhood, Princeton Park, on Chicago's Southside. James was first ordained a deacon, and then accepted the call to preach. He was licensed and ordained in June of 1960.

After their courtship they married on June 4, 1961. To that union were born three children Linda (Leonard) Howard (Kim) and Stephen (Roshanda)

When the children were older, she was employed at Chicago State University. She decided to take advantage of the opportunity to enroll there and eventually earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education. Later, she received her Masters Degree in Instructional Leadership from Concordia University.

Her natural nurturing tendencies and the fact that she had a playful side as well stood her in good stead as she was a Chicago Public school teacher for many years.

Ruth was a dedicated and loving wife. She was always by her husband's side during his years of pastoring the following churches: Pioneer M.B. Church, Peoples' Community Baptist Church, Combined Faith Baptist Church, Greater Shiloh Baptist Church and finally, New Rose Of Sharon Baptist Church.

During her years as "First Lady," she became actively involved in the Christian Education ministries of the church. She taught Vacation Bible School, Sunday School and taught several courses with Antioch Baptist District Association.

Ruth was also an active member of the Metropolitan Ministers' Wives for many years.

On May 30, 2017, the Lord called her beloved husband Pastor James Butler home to Glory. Immediately following this event, Ruth was diagnosed with dementia. Ruth was moved to the Cottages of New Lenox and later to Arden Courts Memory Care Of South Holland.

Jesus promises us in His Word that "He will never leave us or forsake us." There was always a calming presence around Ruth and the staff at both places claimed that Ruth was their favorite resident.

Around 2:30am on Wednesday morning, November 5th, Ruth slipped quietly and peacefully away into the hands of her Savior.

She leaves to cherish her memories one daughter, Linda (Leonard), two sons, James Howard (Kim) and Stephen (Roshanda); one grandson, Stephen Warren; one brother, Timothy (Ruth Lenore) two sisters, Carmena (Gerard Sr.); Elizabeth Ann; a host of nieces, nephews, and great nieces and nephews; her best friend since kindergarten, Mrs. Sandra Berry; New Rose Of Sharon Baptist Church Family Her parents, James & Juliette Robinson, brothers, James Jr., and Harold along with her husband, Rev. James Butler all preceded her in death.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Hope Cemetery

11500 S. Fairfield Ave
Chicago, IL 60655

Previous Events

Public Viewing

NOV **13**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Calahan Funeral Home Landmark Chapel
7030 S. Halsted
Chicago, IL 60621

Visitation

NOV **14**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

New Rose of Sharon Missionary Baptist Church
5844 S Rockwell St
Chicago, IL 60629

Funeral Service

NOV **14**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

New Rose of Sharon Missionary Baptist Church
5844 S Rockwell St
Chicago, IL 60629

Tribute Wall

NI

“ Summers in Chicago were always exciting for us as California kids. Especially knowing we got to spend time with our cousins at Auntie Ruth Butler's house. In hindsight the best education about them Chicago streets was from Auntie Ruth Butler, because that was our first introduction into the etiquette of being aware of your presentation and not giving anyone the impression that you were a "hoodlum." Also remembering how Auntie Ruth Butler would always engage us with thinking ahead to what we wanted to be in life and always steered us in the way of faith and education. Auntie Ruth Butler knew she was guiding us to be our best selves. Thank you, Auntie, we love you. The California kids Harold, Chris, and Nicole, and the late, late addition Jumoke' James.

Nicole - November 14, 2025 at 11:00 AM

HJ

“ Harold, Chris, Nicole & Jumoke purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of First Lady Emerita Ruth M. Butler.



Harold, Chris, Nicole & Jumoke - November 14, 2025 at 10:20 AM

HJ

“ Harold, Chris, Nicole & Jumoke planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of First Lady Emerita Ruth M. Butler.

Harold, Chris, Nicole & Jumoke - November 14, 2025 at 10:20 AM

NF

“ *New Rose of Sharon Church Family purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of First Lady Emerita Ruth M. Butler.*



New Rose of Sharon Church Family - November 10, 2025 at 03:35 PM

NF

“ *New Rose of Sharon Church Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of First Lady Emerita Ruth M. Butler.*

New Rose of Sharon Church Family - November 10, 2025 at 03:35 PM

RS

“ *I never met First Lady Butler but I know her daughter Linda. The First Last had to have been a wonderful lady because Linda is a very special, sweet believer, that loves the Lord. The branch do not fall from the tree!*

Rev. Cornelius Anthony Sr - November 07, 2025 at 06:42 AM

PR

Our Prayers n Deepest Sympathies to the Family, New. Rose of Sharon Church Family

Pastor E C Redmond - November 07, 2025 at 10:57 AM