



## Theresa Elaine Butler

March 4, 1949 - October 31, 2021

**BOLD. FAITHFUL. DYNAMIC. PERSONABLE. CARING.**

On Friday, March 4, 1949, in Washington, DC, a beautiful little girl was born to Clyde and Corine Smith. She was born at home because there had been cases of babies being stolen from hospitals and her mother did not want to take the chance of someone stealing her child. They named the baby Theresa Elaine Smith, but she would come to be known to most people as “Tee.”

She spent her young years matriculating through District of Columbia public schools, ultimately graduating from Spingarn Senior High School.

On April 27, 1968, Tee married the love of her life, Joseph Melvin Butler (known to most as Melvin). To this union was born one son, Anthony Ronald Butler. They celebrated their 50th anniversary with friends on a Hawaiian Cruise in 2018.

Tee worked as a bank teller, clerk at C&P Telephone Company, and with the Metropolitan Police Department. She faithfully served her community as a civilian clerk and later as a police officer in the seventh district. She was a member of the very first large class of female recruits. Her boldness served her well when one day, she arrested a rather large man with no backup, but she was not intimidated. She knew she was on her own. She looked at the man and told warned him that if he tried anything, she would turn him from a rooster to a hen. The man apparently believed her because she had no problems from him! She retired from the police department after being injured in an on-duty accident. She went on to work at the State Department, and HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development) in Washington, DC. She later transferred to HUD in Florida and retired. After retiring, she worked as a Housing Inspector for the insurance industry.

Tee loved to travel. Her motto was “Have bag will travel!” She was always ready to go! She took every opportunity to visit explore “God’s Handiwork,” as she would say. Cruising with family and friends was her favorite mode of travel. She and Melvin took several cruises to the Caribbean, the Panama Canal, Alaska, Hawaii, and New England. Tee was

a friendly person with a ready smile and magnetic personality. She never met a stranger and in fact met a few celebrities during her journeys, including Eddie Levert of the O'Jays, The Four Tops, and Harvey Fuqua of the Moonglows. She also became friends with the personal bodyguard of the Temptations and Frankie Beverly's assistant.

Tee was a gifted, creative soul who did not hesitate to share her gift of creativity with loved ones. Over the years, she would design treasured pieces for countless birthdays, graduations, weddings, baby showers and other various occasions. She could design such beauty with paper, and made the most exquisite, intricate holiday cards for friends and family. From tiny paper purses to 3-D pop-up cards of houses, onesies, or anything else, she could make it. When asked where did you come up with this design? She would often say, "God gave it to me." Her cards were so unique and special that they have become collector items for many.

Tee was baptized as a child at the First Baptist Church of Deanwood in Washington, DC. She was a member of the Children's Choir and later a member of the Choraliers. When she moved to Florida, she joined Faith Assembly of God, where she sang in the choir. She later moved to Faith World / Judah Church. At Judah Church, she served in the Greeter Ministry where she let her warm, friendly personality shine. Many mornings, there was a long line at Tee's door as she greeted people with a personal touch.

At her core, Tee was a woman of unshakeable faith. She encouraged and uplifted those around her. Daily, she would tirelessly spend hours sending out text messages of the Word to over 200 people. One by one, she sent these messages personally, not as a group text, an effort which would take hours. She did it even up to her very last days, so strong and resolute was her dedication to share and bless others with the Word of God. For more than 15 years, Tee has been founder and CEO of A2Z School Supplies. This is an organization that gives school supplies to low-income elementary schools in the area.

She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband of over 53 years, Joseph Melvin Butler; her son Anthony Ronald Butler (Eunice Thomas); her granddaughter, Felicity Corine Butler, her sister Irene Gardner (Ernest); 3 Sisters-in-law, Helen Butler, Margaret Butler and Minerva Butler. There are many nieces and nephews, down to the fifth generation, and a host of dearly loved family and friends.

Tee was a beautiful soul who lived her life savoring joy and laughter, making memories, and leaving an irreplaceable impact of love and encouragement to others all around her. She will be dearly missed.



# Previous Events

## Public Visitation

NOV 7. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory - Maitland Chapel  
9001 N. Orlando Avenue  
Maitland, FL 32751  
todd@degusipe.com  
<https://www.degusipefuneralhome.com>

## Facebook Live Streaming

NOV 7. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory Facebook Live Stream  
<https://www.facebook.com/DeGusipeFH/>

## Funeral Service

NOV 7. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory - Maitland Chapel  
9001 N. Orlando Avenue  
Maitland, FL 32751  
todd@degusipe.com  
<https://www.degusipefuneralhome.com>

## Reception

NOV 7. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

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# Tribute Wall

CS

“ I'm so glad that we reconnected. God bless, keep and comfort you. Keeping you in prayer, with much love Celeste (Knox) Smith



Celeste (Knox) Smith - November 07, 2021 at 02:11 PM



“ Momma Tee is what we named her! We are going to miss you dearly. Thanks for all of the cards that you made us. Thanks for sending me a daily WORD text. I thank you most for always checking on me and being part of each place that I traveled to even though it was for work; Momma Tee always told me to "have a good time for yourself." You poured a lot into me and I'm so GRATEFUL and THANKFUL to God for you being in our lives. Thanks for my Scrapple :-> RIH

Al Sonja Ricks - November 07, 2021 at 01:12 PM

LS

“ Aunt Tee, you will be sorely missed. Uncle Melvin and Tiny my prayers are with you during this difficult time. I love you both and I'm just a phone call away.. 💔💔💔  
🙏

Linda Scroggins - November 07, 2021 at 12:26 PM

YS

“ Melvin, Anthony, Irene & family my sincere & deepest condolences in the loss of Tee! Please take pleasure in knowing that she was always a bright spot in so many lives as she greeted & welcomed us at the doors of our church. She always took the time to ask about our families as well as our individual lives, for this was truly a blessing! She is definitely missed as well as her daily communications, sense of humor & loving spirit! My prayers are with you as we all mourn such a great loss!



RIH our "Sweet Tee"!

Yvonne Scott

Yvonne Scott - November 05, 2021 at 05:37 PM

CC

“ We will miss the conversation and laughter, thanks again for the times you and Melvin had stop by to visit with us when in the Maryland area.

*You will be truly missed Love always!!*

Cordell Coates - November 05, 2021 at 01:37 PM

CM

“ Cordell & Michele Coates - Bowie Md. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Theresa Elaine Butler.



Cordell & Michele Coates - Bowie Md. - November 05, 2021 at 01:06 PM



“ Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Theresa Elaine Butler.



November 05, 2021 at 11:50 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Theresa Elaine Butler.



November 04, 2021 at 01:57 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Theresa Elaine Butler.



November 04, 2021 at 05:58 AM