A portrait of Renée Strong-Terry, a woman with short, dark hair, wearing a white jacket and a necklace. She is smiling and looking directly at the camera. The background is a soft, light-colored floral pattern.

Celebrating
THE LIFE
OF

Renée
STRONG-TERRY

NOVEMBER 23, 1952 - APRIL 4, 2023

Service to be held

Monday, April 17, 2023

10:30 A.M. Family Hour • 11:00 A.M. Funeral

Plymouth United Church of Christ
600 E. Warren Ave. • Detroit, MI 48235
Rev. Dr. Nicholas Hood, III, Senior Pastor

OBITUARY

Renée Strong-Terry's journey of life began on November 23, 1952, in Detroit, Michigan. She was the second of three daughters born to the union of loving and nurturing parents, Charles Ray Strong and Adelena Stergios Strong.

Renée completed her education within the Detroit Public Schools, graduating from Cass Technical High School in 1970 and enrolled in Michigan State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Fashion Merchandising with a minor in Accounting in 1974. Renée was initiated into Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., at Michigan State University, Epsilon Epsilon Chapter, November 21, 1971, as a member of the Elegant Eleven. During her undergraduate studies, Renée was selected for a coveted internship in Textiles and Merchandising at J.L. Hudson's department store. After graduation, she taught a Textiles and Sewing adult education course for the Detroit Public Schools.

In 1978, Renée entered the workforce as an Accountant with the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. During her twenty-seven years of service to the City of Detroit, Renée held various positions in finance and rose through the ranks as she was promoted to General Manager of Finance for the Detroit Housing Commission where she worked for several years. Most notably, she was appointed General Manager of the Detroit Wayne Joint Building Authority from which she retired in 2005. Renée was the first woman to hold this position and was responsible for overseeing all day-to-day building operations for the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center.

With a commitment to perfection and a superior work ethic, she earned several professional recognitions including: Certificates of Recognition from the City of Detroit, Wayne County Commission, Detroit City Clerk and as a part of the 2005 List of Most Influential Women in Metro Detroit from the Women's Informal Network (W.I.N.). Renée shared her knowledge, time, and resources in helping others reach their professional goals. She also served on several professional and civic committees, serving as three term Treasurer, and life member, of the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society. Her involvement with FHWGS stemmed from her family's rich historical roots as a close descendant of nineteenth century abolitionist William T. Webb.

While working for the City of Detroit, Renée met and later married Shafter Terry, III. This union was blessed with the joys of her life, daughters Alexis Joslyn and Amanda Francesca. Renée was proud of her children's many personal and professional accomplishments. Her daughters followed in their parent's footsteps, attending their alma mater, Michigan State University, and her stepson, Jermahl, attending the University of Michigan. Renée's life reflected a strong commitment to family and friends. She was a consummate caregiver for many loved ones and cared for her beloved husband Shafter until his untimely passing in 2008. She was a devoted mother, and Nonna to Jacob, Jordan, Torri, and Jiselle. Renée loved being a grandmother and took great pride in helping to care for Torri Renée.

She was full of life, witty, feisty, outgoing, artistic, loving, intelligent, compassionate, and made friends everywhere she went. There wasn't a room that Renée walked into where she did not know several people. She built genuine connections with many she encountered, including developing lifelong friendships with several colleagues.

Renée's sisters, Leslie (Chrys) and Victoria, were her first best friends and their strong relationship lasted throughout her lifetime. Renée could not have asked for better stepbrothers than John, Gary and Lloyd. She also shared a special connection with her sister-in-law, Norene Terry-Hassel. Renée had an unbreakable bond with her mother Adelena, sharing laughs on their daily calls.

Renée was multi-talented and loved being creative. She had several outstanding skills which she generously shared with others. She was an accomplished seamstress from an early age. She made her own prom dress as well as the prom dresses for her sisters, daughters, family members and friends. Renée had a plethora of hobbies that she easily mastered including jewelry making, furniture design, carpentry, pottery, cake decorating, handbag designing and many more. Renée started a small business, Amaxis Designs, selling her many creations. She was also an amazing cook, hosting annual holiday dinners and special gatherings, her mac and cheese and dirty rice were all-time favorites. Renée and Shafter were the life of the party, having a great love for music and dance. They were known for clearing the dance floor with their smooth ballroom dancing.

On April 4, 2023, Renée unexpectedly passed away after recovering from a brief illness. Renée was preceded in death by her husband, Shafter Terry III; father, Charles Ray Strong; stepfathers, John Reynolds, Jr. and Gilbert Maddox, Ph.D.; stepbrother, Gary Reynolds; father-in-law, Shafter Terry, II; mother-in-law, Madge Terry and sister-in-law, Joya Terry-Taylor.

The legacy of Renée's dedication to family and her loving spirit will live on in the hearts of her two daughters, Alexis Joslyn Terry and Amanda Francesca Terry, PhD, and stepson, Jermahl Gray (Chinyere); Loving mother, Adelena S. Maddox; sisters, Leslie Williams (Victor) and Victoria Syphax (Gregory); stepbrothers, John Reynolds III and Lloyd Reynolds (Shawn); sister-in-law, Norene Terry-Hassel, MD; Beloved grandchildren: Jacob Gray, Jordan Gray, Torri Renée Peterson, and Jiselle Gray; nieces: Lauren Williams, Candice Miles (Eric), Caitlyn Reynolds, Kymberly Walton (Brian); nephews: Colin Syphax (Kranthi) and Marc Syphax; great nieces: Regan Miles and Burke Syphax; great nephews: Ryan Miles and Matthew Walton; godson, Martel Legrone; bonus children: Clifford Peterson, Ryan Lee James, PhD, and Shannon Jenkins-Luke. Renée also leaves many close relatives, extended family and lifelong friends to treasure her memory.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Processional Rev. Dr. Nicholas Hood III

Selection Soloist

Scripture Rev. Dr. Nicholas Hood III

Prayer Rev. Dr. Nicholas Hood III

Remarks / Reflections Family and Friends

Acknowledgment of Expressions of Sympathy Tiffany Sims

Obituary Ryan Lee James, PhD

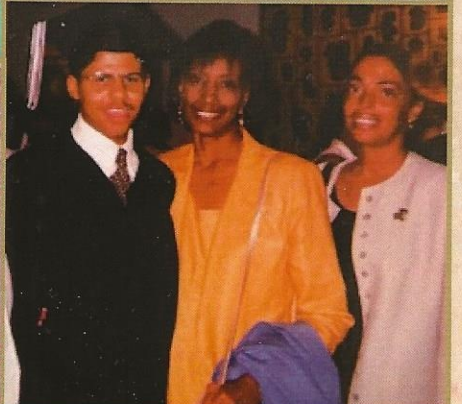
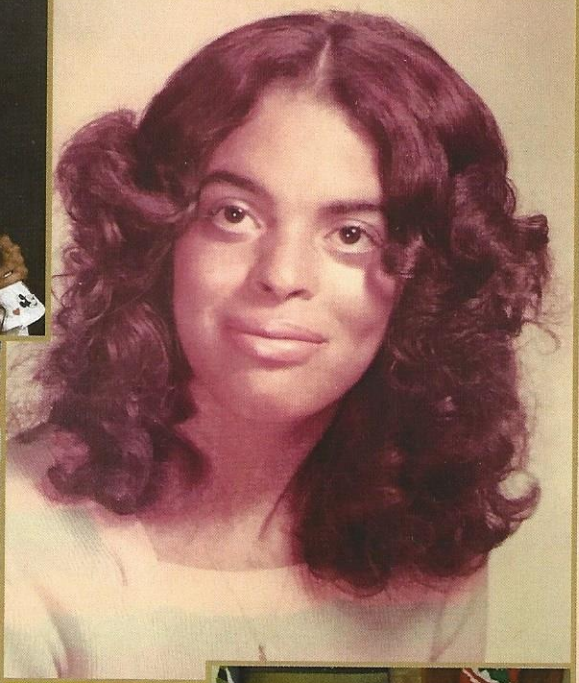
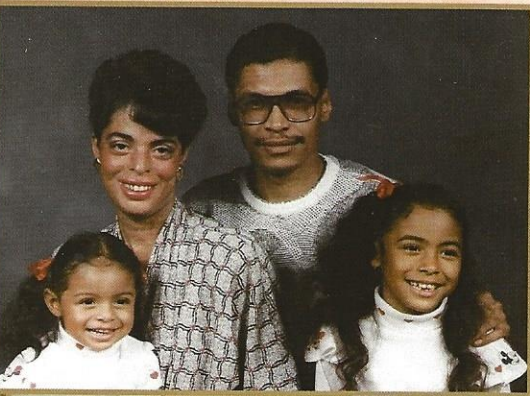
Selection Soloist

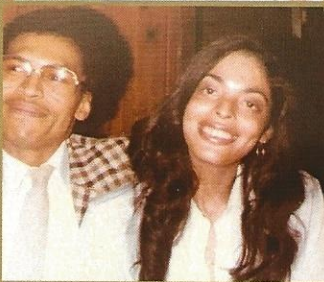
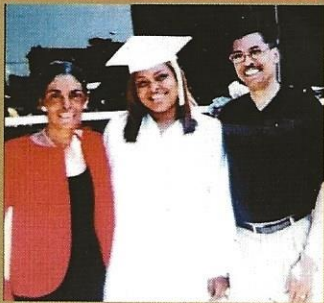
Eulogy Rev. Dr. Nicholas Hood III

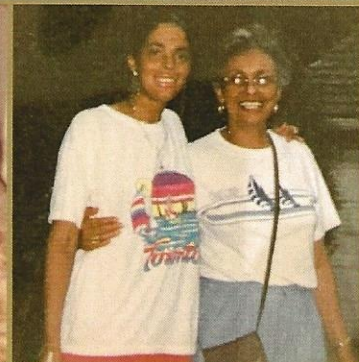
Recessional Rev. Dr. Nicholas Hood III

Organ Postlude

*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead,
yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.
St. John 11:25-26*







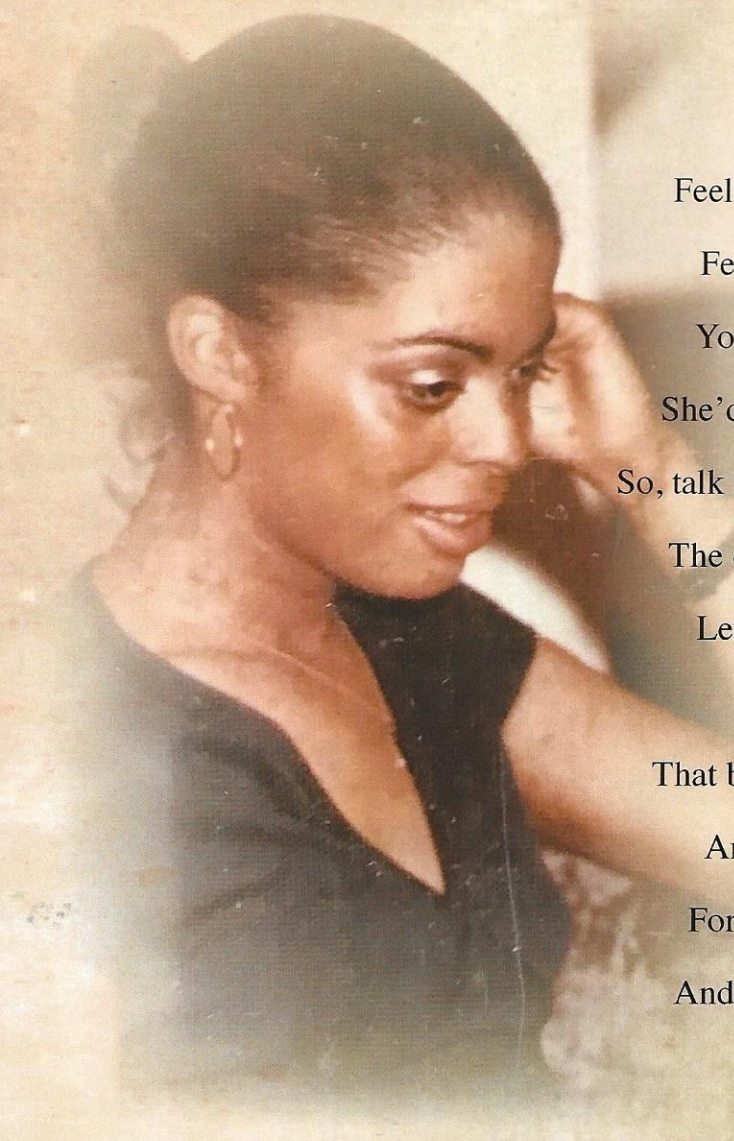
I'm Free

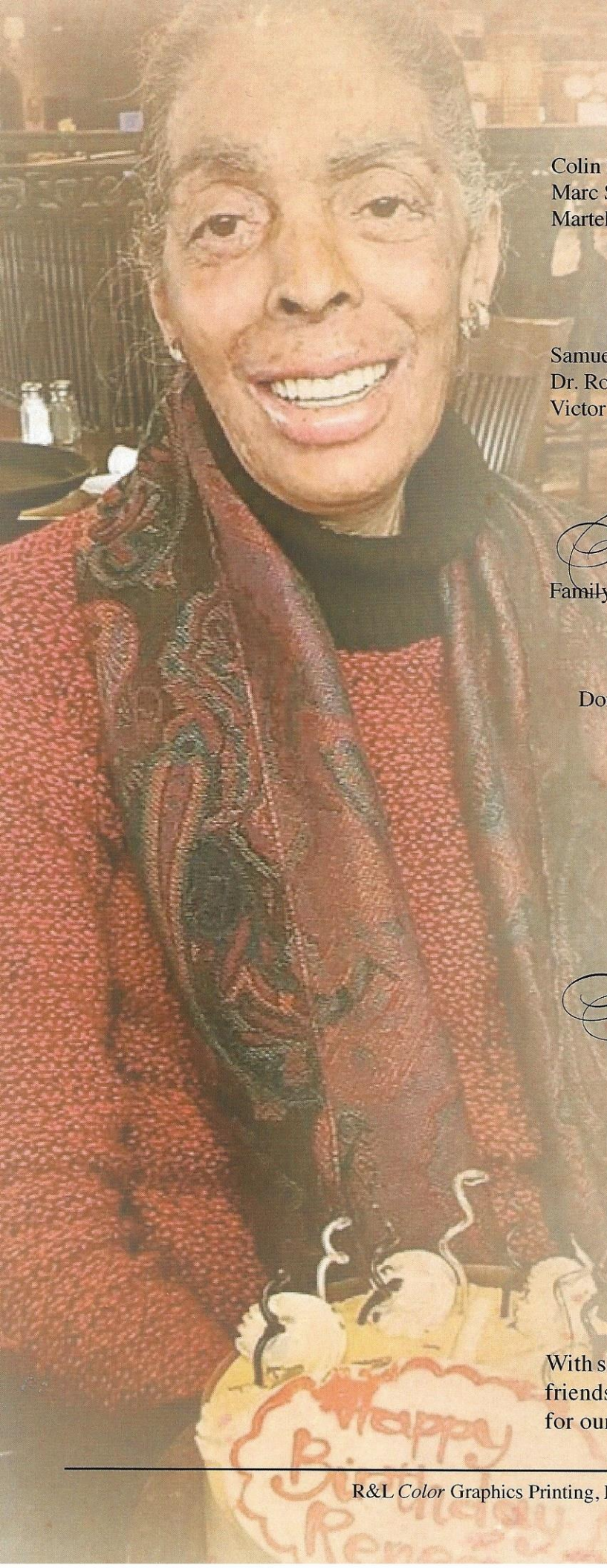
Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free, I'm following the path God laid for me. I took His hand when I heard Him call, I turned my back and left it all. I could not stay another day to laugh, to love, to work or play. Tasks left undone must stay that way, I found that peace at the close of the day. If my parting has left a void, then fill it with remembered joy, a friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss, oh yes, these things I too will miss. Be not burdened with times of sorrow, I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow. My life's been full, I savored much, good friends, good times, a loved one's touch. Perhaps my time seemed all too brief, don't lengthen it now with undue grief. Lift up your heart and share with me; God wanted me now – He Set Me Free.



FEEL NO GUILT

Feel no guilt in laughter, she'd know how much you care.
Feel no sorrow in a smile that she is not here to share.
You cannot grieve forever; she would not want you to.
She'd hope that you could carry on the way you always do.
So, talk about the good times and the way you showed you cared,
The days you spent together, all the happiness you shared,
Let memories surround you, a word someone may say
Will suddenly recapture a time, an hour, a day,
That brings her back as clearly as though she were still here,
And fills you with the feeling that she is always near.
For if you keep those moments, you will never be apart
And she will live forever locked safely within your heart.





Pallbearers

Colin Syphax
Marc Syphax
Martel Legrone

Jermahl Gray
Jacob Gray
Clifford Peterson

Honorary Pallbearers

Samuel Reginald Cox
Dr. Romeo E. Phillips
Victor S. Williams

Dr. Gerald E. Craft
Gregory C. Syphax

Flower Bearers Interment

Family and Friends

Elmwood Cemetery
1200 Elmwood
Detroit, Michigan

Donations can be made in Renee's name to her late husband's scholarship fund:

NASP Detroit – Shafter Terry III Scholarship

Flowers provided by
Anniwrap & Flowers
22171 Coolidge Hwy.
Oak Park, MI 48237
248-632-9115

Arrangements Entrusted To

James H. Cole Home For Funerals, Inc.

16100 Schaefer Hwy. • Detroit, Michigan

(313) 835-3997

www.jameshcole.com

Acknowledgment Of Appreciation

With sincere appreciation, we wish to thank our many family and friends for their expressions of kindness during our bereavement for our loved one. May God bless each of you.

- THE FAMILY