



Sarah McDonald

April 26, 1944 - December 11, 2022

Sarah Margaret Conner McDonald was born on April 8, 1944, in Swainsboro, Georgia, though her birth certificate reflects April 26th. This was so because the county only registered births in her community once a month. Sarah was the youngest girl of 11 children born to parents she described as "a jokester," Willie Conner and "a quiet woman," Josie Birch Conner, her mother who passed away when she was 12 years old.

Though her father, a young widower, planned to place the children in different family members' homes, a young Sarah pleaded with her dad that if he kept the family together, she would cook the meals and care for her younger siblings, which she did. The 12 Conner children remained close-knit, throughout adulthood, but she maintained a special bond with her oldest sister, Cilar Hunter, who became more of a mother figure to her. There was nothing she would not do for her sister, Cilar.

Early on, Sarah developed a maturity and spirituality she would carry throughout her life. Her family moved to Oslo, Florida in 1956 where she attended elementary and middle school. By all accounts she was very beautiful inside and out. A story she shared with her sons was how proud she was when her peers voted for her to become the Mayday Queen, winning against a popular cheerleader.

As was custom in her day, she married at age 16 to her high-school sweetheart George Bartee. The couple had two sons, George C. Bartee, II and Patrick Fitzgerald Bartee. Though they divorced, the two remained friends and she was always remembered in the Bartee family as a beloved sister in law. A tree Gifford, FL still bears the carving "George Loves Sarah."

Throughout her life, Sarah was a devoted churchgoer. While serving as an usher at Zion Orthodox Primitive Baptist Church in Cocoa, FL, she caught the eye of Reverend O.R. Smith, a Bahamian pastor who, after seeing her on vacation in the Bahamas, recognized the pretty woman in the Bahamas as the usher who served in his stateside church and he asked her on a date from the pulpit. They would marry soon thereafter. They left Zion Orthodox Primitive Baptist Church and together they built Mt. Tabor Primitive Baptist Church in Merritt, Island, FL, where her name is on the cornerstone.

To their union a son, Ogard Roland Smith, was born. Tragedy struck and Ogard Roland Smith preceded her in death in 1999. She was very strong through this loss and eulogized her young son. "I thank God for lending Ogard to me for 28 years. I have nothing to cry about because he wasn't mine he was just loaned to me," she said. A year later in 2000, she lost her beloved sister Cilar. "I'm going to act the same, but I'll never be the same. Half of my heart is gone," she said upon losing Cilar.

"Remember who you are," Sarah McDonald would tell her children- and others' children, too.. Sarah was a devoted and loving mother, a stern disciplinarian of few words, but what she said she meant. Sarah instilled gentlemanly conduct in her sons. She was direct, honest and you never wondered where you stood with her.

Sarah was an encourager and an exhorter who embodied the fruits of the spirit, especially lovingkindness. Her children, family and friends reflect that

she always had an uplifting and encouraging word for each person she encountered Sarah practiced fitness in practical ways and valued her body temple. She never took an elevator, and insisted on taking the stairs. Sarah also packed a pistol, a lesson she learned from Cilar.

Mahalia Jackson and Lou Rawls were her favorite singers. And she enjoyed quilting. Through quilting with her son Patrick, she discovered his talent for singing.

Sarah Conner McDonald was a virtuous woman who opened her home to relatives and friends in need. She read, knew and lived the Bible's tenets. She was known for sharing mints and some people called her "The Peppermint Lady..

When her husband Reverend O.R. Smith passed in 1978 she vowed she wouldn't marry when the boys were young, but love came calling again when she met Deacon Johnny McDonald, Sr. He preceded her in death in 2019.

When her husband took ill, she had served as a first lady and housewife. She began working for a wealthy beachside couple in Daytona Beach, FL. Through that experience, she began working as the first black salesperson at two exclusive beachside boutiques in Daytona Beach, Angies and Sussman's on Seabreeze Boulevard. Upon Angie's death, the store was bequeathed to Sarah and she became the first Black owner of a beachside boutique. She ran the store until her retirement at age 50.

Sarah Margaret's love for God, for family and for people made her life one that was filled with beauty and overcoming. She leaves that example for each of us.

Her final church home was Shady Grove Primitive Baptist Church in

Daytona Beach, Florida.

Sarah Margaret McDonald leaves to cherish her memory her sons: George Barte, II and Patrick Fitzgerald Barte; a grandson, Odragon Roschlolin "Lil O"Smith; goddaughter, Joanne Williams and adopted daughters Gracie Walker and Shawn Killins-Black.

While we who love Sarah Margaret Connor Barte Smith McDonald will act the same, we will never be the same. Half of our hearts are gone.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

DEC **22**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church
580 George W. Engram Blvd.
Daytona Beach, FL 32114

Tribute Wall



“ *Sarah McDonald*

October 22, 2023 at 05:49 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Sarah McDonald.*



December 18, 2022 at 04:56 PM



“ *Dearest Patrick and Family, Please accept my sincerest sympathies in the passing of your dear mother. Her warm smile and sincere kindness made her a pleasure to be around. “A moment lasts all of a second, but the memory lives on forever. When someone you love becomes a memory, that memory becomes a treasure.” Treasure the time and memories you shared. May the love of Christ comfort and console you during these challenging times.*

*Love and Prayers,
Araminta Lake & Family*

Araminta Lake - December 14, 2022 at 11:05 PM