**Viola Holloway Philpott**


DURHAM -- It was Valentine's Day, 1920 when the late John and Leora Holloway welcomed Minnie Viola, the seventh of their 11 children. She was destined to be a "special" person. At age 10 an attack of appendicitis almost claimed her life. However, her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whom she accepted at age 10, at Mt. Zoar Baptist Church, had work for her to do. She began using her spiritual gifts and never swayed even in the face of tragedy and adversity. She served in many ways at the church including as a mother, missionary, usher and choir and Sunday School member. She was also an exciting public speaker at religious gatherings throughout Durham.

As a young girl, she helped her brothers, sisters and parents in the home as well as on their 105-acre farm. She loved to sew and often sewed for the family even when she was a student at Little River High School where she graduated in 1938. Her wisdom greatly exceeded her formal education. She became an excellent cook known for her cakes and potato pies.

Viola married the late Oscar Samuel Philpott in 1940 and they were blessed with seven children. Five mourn her passing but rejoice in her home going. Her daughters Peggy Sue and Angela Renee, along with husband Sunny, have now welcomed her to the heavenly kingdom.

She was a very active member of the Merrick-Moore, Alston Heights and Durham community. She served on the Board of Directors for United Durham, Inc. for many years and was active in the struggle for equal rights.

She was a friend to all, who helped others and asked nothing in return. She knew her reward would be in heaven.

"Vi", as she was affectionately called, had a special love for children. When she retired from Duke University she worked for Triangle and Wee Wonders Day Care Centers. She was the grandmother that all the kids loved to visit. She was also a mother figure for many who affectionately referred to her as "Mama Vi".

Cherishing her memory are daughters, Barbara Hood (Lenward), Fort Washington, Md., Sandra Philpott-Burke (William), Detroit, Mich., and Gwendolyn Philpott-Brunson, Lansing, Mich.; and sons, William (Olivia) and Calvin (Donna), Durham. Also cherishing her memory are siblings, Mary Holman, Baltimore, Md., Reefus Richmond and the Rev. Ralph Holloway, Durham. She was preceded in death by siblings, James, William, Thomas, Fannie, George, Annie and Beadie. Other survivors include sisters-in-law, Hazel Holloway, New York, N.Y., Jennie and Effie Holloway, Durham; 15 grandchildren; nine great grandchildren; and scores of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, September 24, 2010 at 12 p.m. at Union Baptist Church, 904 North Roxboro Street. The family will receive friends during the family visitation on Thursday, September 23, 2010 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Mt. Zoar Missionary Baptist Church, 2400 Cheek Road, Durham.

Arrangements entrusted to Holloway Memorial Funeral Home.

Read more: [The Herald-Sun - Trusted & Essential](http://www.heraldsun.com/pages/obituaries#ixzz10LvY2wd8)