

### **PALLBEARERS**

James Johnson, Nathaniel Starks,  
Marcus A.C. Jeffries Sr., Michael Bray Jr., Charles  
Wesley Morgan, Scottie Haskins &  
St. John Missionary Baptist Church Deacons, Honorary

### **FLOWER BEARERS**

St. John Missionary Baptist Church Deaconess &  
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

### **INTERMENT**

Trice Hill Cemetery  
5101 N. Coltrane, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73121

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The family of Mary Lou Miles wishes to say thanks to everyone for all the outpouring of love and prayers. We would like to express our most sincere appreciation to all members of her care giving team, with a special thanks to : OU Physicians Family Medicine, Gerontology, and Neurology. Thanks to the extended in-home care giving team, Crossroads Hospice staff, Comfort Care Home Health staff, Affordable Care, and Frontline Home Health staff. If in our preparation we have forgotten anyone who should be listed here, we give our sincerest apologies and thank you for all that was provided and done for Memo.

With Love,  
The Family

**SERVICES UNDER THE DIRECTION OF**  
Temple and Sons Funeral Directors, Inc.

**FLORAL SERVICES**  
Penpoint Floral Services



*Celebration of Life*

**MARY LOU MILES**

*February 2, 1921 - May 26, 2019*

Friday, June 7, 2019  
St. John Missionary Baptist Church  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma





## PROCESSIONAL

Ministers, Funeral Directors & Family

## READING FROM THE RECORD

Old Testament, Pastor Marcus Jeffrey  
Sr., Pastor, Eastside  
Baptist Church, Okmulgee, OK

New Testament, Rev. Lawrence Kirk  
St. John Missionary Baptist Church

## PRAYER

Rev. William Nyles  
St. John Missionary Baptist Church

## EXPRESSIONS

Mr. Marcellus Jones, Former Student

## RESOLUTIONS

Ms. Vernetta Johnson  
Church Clerk,  
St. John Missionary Baptist Church

Dr. Glenda Glover  
International President,  
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

## SPECIAL REMARKS

The Family

## SELECTION

St. John Church Choir

## WORDS OF COMFORT

Dr. M. L. Jemison  
Sr. Pastor, St. John Missionary  
Baptist Church

## A LIFE WELL LIVED

Video Presentation

## A GLIMPSE 'TIL GLORY

Temple & Son Funeral Director's

## RECESSIONAL

Ministers, Funeral Directors & Family



## MARY LOU GREENARD MILES

**February 2, 1921 - May 26, 2019**

Mary Lou Greenard Miles was born February 2, 1921 in the small, segregated town of Buford, Georgia. She was the sixth of seven children to Charles and Mary Lou Witt Greenard. Her mother was a homemaker and her father was one of the only *negro* foremen at the Bona Allen Company. This tannery became the nation's largest producer of hand-tooled leather goods such as saddles, bridles, horse collars, and shoes. The company also secured a contract to supply sporting equipment giant, Spalding, with raw material for the manufacture of baseballs and baseball mitts. As industries folded during the Great Depression, Mary Lou's father worked for a company that experienced an economic upturn as farmers turned from unaffordable tractors back to horses, which increased demand for saddles, collars, and other related goods. Despite both parents lacking formal education, all seven children were well educated. Since *negro* children could not attend school in Buford after the 8th grade, her parents sent Mary and her siblings to Stillman Institute--a boarding school for *negro* children in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She graduated from the Stillman College Junior College program in 1939 with her older brother, Sidney Greenard.

At the age of 18, Mary entered the historically black college, Clark College (*now known as Clark Atlanta University*) in Atlanta, Georgia. There she had the opportunity to be taught by world-renowned author and civil rights activist, Dr. W.E.B. DeBois. In 1941, due in part to her high scholarly reputation, she was invited for membership into Alpha Pi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. In 1942, she graduated with honors *cum laude* in three years with a major in English and a minor in Education.

During Mary's education career, she taught for over three decades in the Georgia and Oklahoma Public Schools systems: (1942-44) at Macon County Training School in Montezuma, Georgia; (1944-45) as a clerk-typist for the Department of Defense in Washington, D.C.; (1945-1952) as a high school English teacher in Gainesville, Georgia, where she met (by an incorrect date request at the hands of a student), the love of her life, Charles C. Miles. Charles, a U.S. Navy WWII veteran and educator from Oklahoma, was sent to Gainesville to "teach a trade to *colored* Veterans". Although Charles intended his request for another young teacher, he was flattered and amused by Mary Lou's acceptance to go on a date and took her out instead. The two subsequently courted, fell in love, and were married on December 7, 1948. They gave birth to their oldest daughter, Gayle Patrice, in 1950, shortly before moving to Charles's home state of Oklahoma.

In the midst of the age of *Jim Crowism*, which prevailed throughout Oklahoma's higher education system, and the city of Norman being a *sundown town* for *colored* people, Charles and Mary both embarked on advanced degrees in education at the University of Oklahoma. During this time, they gave birth to their youngest daughter, Vicki Lynn in 1953. In lock-step, Charles earned his Master's Degree in 1954, in Industrial Education, followed by Mary in 1955, with a Master's Degree in English Education. She continued her teaching career (1955-1976) for Oklahoma City Public Schools District, as a kindergarten and intermediate grade school teacher, even serving as kindergarten teacher for both of her own girls. Charles started in the district as a middle and high school shop teacher, was promoted to the role of assistant principal at various locations during desegregation of OKC Public Schools, and retired as a local high school principal.

Mary Lou Greenard Miles was a pioneer African-American professional at the Oklahoma State Department of Education. In 1976, she became the Human Relations Coordinator, and ultimately, the Administrator who planned, organized, and directed the Technical Assistance Program pursuant to federal and state laws and regulations. Mary's human relations expertise touched Oklahoma's school districts, administrators, classroom teachers, students, and rural communities. She was intricately involved in the evaluation of education programs in school districts throughout Oklahoma, which were operating under Plans of Desegregation. She also designed, coordinated, and implemented in-service activities and curriculum. She served until her retirement in 1984.

Since relocating to Oklahoma City in 1952, Mary was an active member of Beta Sigma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Within the half-century, old two-hundred-member-plus chapter of college educated women, she has served as Treasurer, Fine Arts Committee Chairman, and *Assault on Illiteracy* Chairman, providing civic support and

enrichment across the Northeast Oklahoma City Community. She actively served in many professional and trade associations. She was also affiliated with the Eastern Stars, Lilly of the Valley, Chapter #7, OES, PHA, and Oklahoma Jurisdiction. Until her death, she served to be the oldest and longest running member of her local lodge.

Mary was a 67-year member of St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Oklahoma City and devout Christian. She was the original chairperson of the Scholarship Committee, taught Sunday School *Class Esther*, and was active in the Women's Missionary Union for many years. Until age 94, she continued to serve as a Deaconess-- respected church elder.

In her retiree years, in addition to active roles within her church and sorority, she spent time with her husband, Charles, enjoying the fruit of their labor through hobbies and invested time with their family-traveling to visit her siblings and their families. There was always constant *Memo care* for her granddaughters--teaching lessons at home, chauffeuring between their many activities, encouraging proper English, and always reminding them they're loved. She never missed any awards, presentations, or special celebration for her Charles, daughters, granddaughters, or extended family members. As her family expanded, she was also blessed in getting to dote on the husbands of her granddaughters and her six great grandchildren-- always reminding them of how central God should be in their life. Family and sisterhood continued to be paramount to Mary even at age 81, as she continued to provide care for her ailing and last-living sister, Georgia Carpenter, by driving to her senior living facility to check on her needs and talk with her multiple times each day until she passed away in 2002. Mary loved to can her garden-grown veggies and cook as any true Southern Bell would, having a fresh baked pie or jello mold prepared multiple times each week. She loved to listen to blues music and recount her younger years of dancing with Charles. She was an avid gardener of roses and tomatoes and stayed active by walking and attending water aerobics until the age of 91. She continued to attend sorority chapter meetings and national conferences through age 97. In 2016, she was given the ultimate international honor of being part of a select group through her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., designated as a *Diamond* member--one who has had membership for 75 years or greater. During this seven-decade span, regardless of her geographic location, she never took a break in serving her surrounding community. One of her favorite pastimes, up to the final year of her life, continued to be, reading- - autobiographies and countless daily meditations and scriptures focused on the Word of God.

Mary Lou Greenard Miles was molded by the depth of her family and faith, the dignity of her work, the value of her education, and her character that was anchored in God. She was modeled grace and love for her family, and never lost her spit-fire personality. She remained truly devoted to the education of young people. "A teacher affects eternity. You never know where her influence begins." The year 2007 marked the beginning of the endowment of the Charles C. & Mary Lou Miles Scholarship Fund perpetuated through the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.

Charles and Mary celebrated 63 years of marriage unity before he departed peacefully on May 27, 2012 at the age of 88. Mary missed him dearly, but continued to cherish their memories. She blessed her family and community with her wit, smiles, laughter, and love until she was called home on May 28, 2019.

Her survivors include daughters, Gayle Miles-Scott and the Honorable Vicki Miles-LaGrange; granddaughters, Brittany Couch (Sean) and Johnna Watts (Jimmie); great-granddaughters, Samantha, Cheyenne, Maysen, and Soledad; great-grandsons, Terrance, Atticus, and Magnus; nieces, Marilyn Powers, Rochester, NY, Greenard Powers, Buffalo, NY and Stephanie Miles, Kansas City, MO; nephews, Jimmy Miles and Hycle Miles, Kansas City, MO; and many other relatives and friends. In lieu of flowers, a tax deductible contribution may be made to the Charles C. & Mary Lou Miles Scholarship Fund, Oklahoma City Community Foundation: P.O. Box 1146, Oklahoma City, OK 73101, (405) 235-5603. Visit: <http://bit.ly/2WRt6ah> for a digital memory album and video of Mary Lou Miles, "A Life Well Lived."