

*Homegoing Service*  
*A Celebration of the Life*  
*of*  
*Olivia Johnson Snipes*

*April 27, 1935 to June 14, 2014*



*Saturday, June 21, 2014*

*2:00pm*

*Wesley Chapel Christian Fellowship Church  
11449 US Highway 64 West  
Siler City, NC 27344  
919-742-5519*

*Bishop William Goins,  
Officiating Minister*

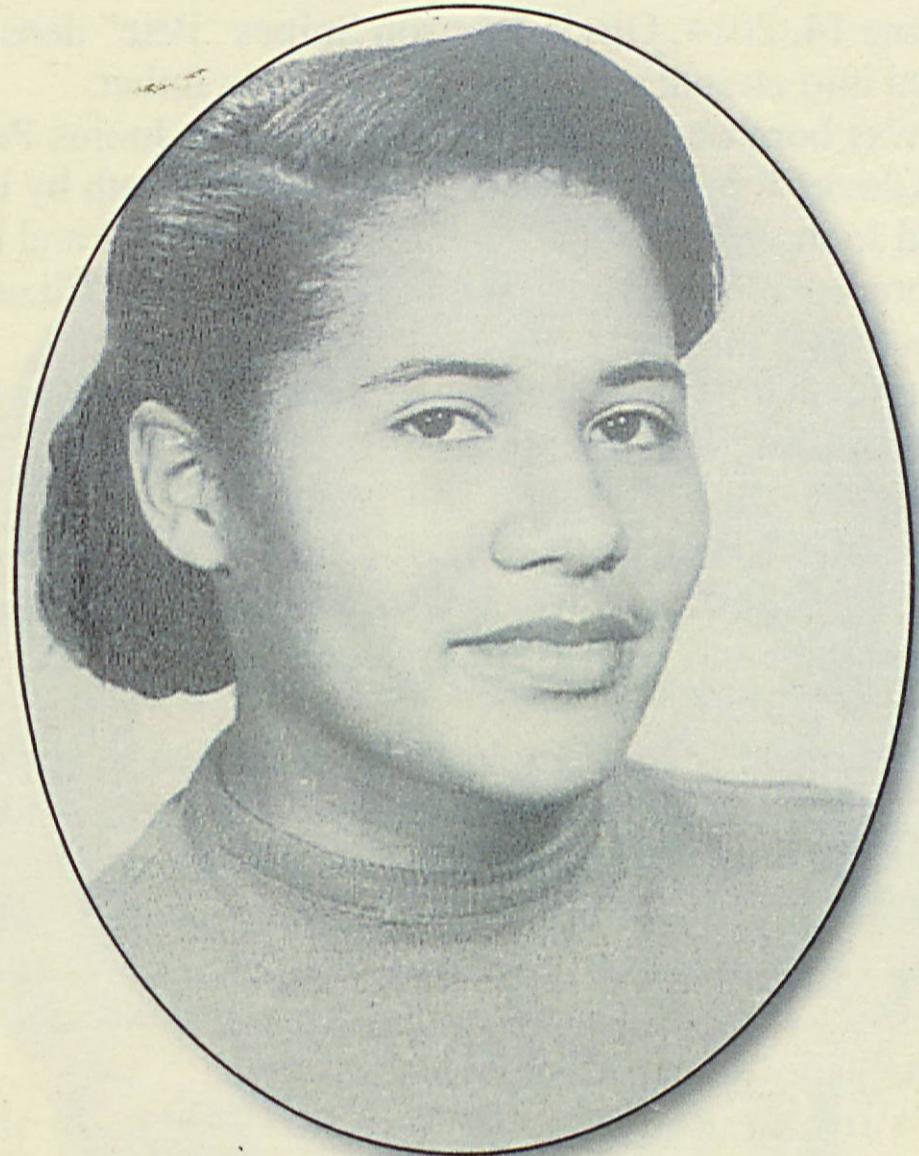
## *Order of Service*

Musical Selection .....	Choir
Processional	
Scripture Readings.....	Reverend George Dark
Psalms 118:5-14	
John 14:15-26	
Musical Selection .....	Choir
Prayer of Comfort.....	Reverend George Dark
Musical Selection .....	Mr. Roy Hanner
Acknowledgements	
Musical Selection .....	Mr. Roy Hanner
Obituary .....	(Read Silently)
Eulogy.....	Bishop William Goins
Recessional Selection .....	Mr. Ronnie Eubanks
	<i>“Going Up Yonder” (Instrumental)</i>



*Now also when I am old and gray headed,  
O God, do not forsake me;  
Until I declare your strength to this generation,  
Your power to everyone who is to come.*

*Psalms 71:18*



*Lord, I am no hero. I have been careless,  
cowardly, sometimes all but mutinous.  
Punishment I have deserved, I deny it not.  
But a traitor I have never been.  
I have tried to fight on Thy side  
in Thy battle against evil.  
I have tried to do the duty  
which lay nearest me,  
and to leave whatever Thou didst commit  
to my charge a little better than I found it.  
I have not been good,  
but I have at least tried to do good.  
Take the will for the deed, good Lord.  
Strike not my unworthy name off the  
roll-call of the noble and victorious army,  
which is the blessed company of all faithful people.  
Let me, too be found written in the Book of Life,  
even though I stand the lowest and last upon its list.*

*Amen*

*Olivia Snipes*  
*(adapted from C. Kingsley)*



*No star is ever lost we once have seen,  
we always may be what we might have been.  
Since good, though only thought,  
has life and breath;  
God's life - can always be redeemed from death;  
And evil, in its nature, is decay,  
and any hour can blot it all away;  
The hopes that lost in some far distant seem,  
may be the truer life, and this the dream.*

*A.A. Proctor*

# *Obituary*

On June 14, 2014, Olivia Johnson Snipes "Pete" departed this life and entered into eternal rest with our heavenly father.

Pete was born on April 27, 1935 to the late Junius Pearl Johnson and Iona Glover Johnson. She was preceded in death by her brothers: Carson and Johnnie; and her sisters: Arzalia, Christine and Brenda. She was also preceded in death by her beloved daughter, Elizabeth, whose memory is truly cherished.

Pete graduated from Chatham County Training School in 1953. She married the late Herbert Lynn Snipes in the same year and relocated to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. To that union, she bore six children. She worked at the Belk Factory and a Nursing Home. She graduated from nursing school and worked as a nurse. Later, she attended Business College and with Herb, operated several family businesses over a 17 year period.

Pete returned to Siler City in 1970 where she worked at Textured Fibers in Liberty, and later wrote insurance with Reserve Life Insurance Company. She studied general secretarial work at Chatham County Technical Institute in Sanford, NC. Upon completion, Pete worked as a Teletype Operator until she was laid off in 1974. She ended her professional career as a Human Resources Aide for Orange-Person-Chatham County Mental Health.

Pete's life took a dramatic turn in 1989 when she survived a massive heart attack and triple-bypass surgery. In 1993, she returned to Upper Darby, Pennsylvania and later moved to Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. Pete was an active member of Sharon Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa. She strongly encouraged seeking the Lord in every aspect of her and her family's life. Being a "Woman of God" was first and foremost in her heart.

Pete loved to write about her life. During the 50th anniversary of the "Brown vs Board of Education," the AARP Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the Library of Congress solicited articles about the civil rights era. Pete's writing of her experience was among those selected to be archived in Washington, D.C. Those photographs and artifacts of the civil rights movement will be permanently housed at the Library of Congress.

Pete is survived by her remaining children: Herbert (Winnie) Snipes of Whitehall, Pennsylvania, Marian Regina Snipes of Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, Stephen Snipes of Manson, North Carolina, Felicia (Will) Dixon of Durham, North Carolina and Christopher (Betty) Snipes of Rocky Mount, North Carolina; and son-in-law, Jimmy Burnette of Raleigh, North Carolina. She shared special relationships with each of her ten grandchildren: Casey and Corinne Snipes of Whitehall, Pennsylvania, Stephen Degraffenreidt of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Timothy Snipes-Scott, Tyler and Shiamier Snipes of Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, Willie and Christopher Dixon and Logan Snipes of Durham, North Carolina, and Joshua Snipes of High Falls, North Carolina. Pete lived to welcome her only great-granddaughter, Syncere Degraffenreidt of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is survived by sisters: Cornelia and Sandra (Bobby) as well as her beloved sister-in-law, Gwennette Johnson all of Siler City, North Carolina. She also leaves a host of extended family, friends and loved ones who will truly miss her.

# Realizing what her place truly is

As part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the "Brown v. Board of Education" decision, the AARP, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, and the Library of Congress are compiling an archive of personal stories and oral histories, photographs and artifacts of the civil-rights movement that will be permanently housed at the Library of Congress. The following story is among those contributed to the project by people from Southeastern Pennsylvania. For information on the project, or to contribute your story, visit [www.voicesofcivilrights.org](http://www.voicesofcivilrights.org).

## Olivia Snipes Upper Darby

I am a black woman, 68 years of age, who was born in Chatham County, N.C. My grandmother was a midwife who delivered most of the babies in the county, made medicine, and tended the sick, both black and white people. This gave her a measure of respect; thus circumstances were eased in some cases. But being born on the heels of slavery as it were, there was already a matrix in which to live.

On occasion, one was reminded

of one's place, but for the most part, everyone knew the rules, the roles, and how the game was played. My mother told us, "Stay in your place," meaning you go along to get along. Having a white man on your side, someone who liked you if you were a "good nigger" (not overbearing, as they liked to say), meant survival was possible. My father was often accused of being overbearing.

My mother knew how to prosper in her despair. She knew the value of having a white man speak for you if ever there was trouble with

creditors, or any legal problems, for that matter. Back then, his word was good with other white men.

So we forged ahead. When I was in my adolescence, we sharecropped with some very good people. It was my first experience with that kind of kindness. Our large family did well; my brother and brother-in-law learned to slaughter and cut meat for the store that the Wrights owned in Burlington, N.C. My older sister lived and worked as a maid. And we worked in the cotton fields, sharing the proceeds. I remember

See AARP on L5

AARP from L1

visiting Mrs. Wright often, and we would listen to radio soap operas together.

I remember accompanying my older brother to a doctor's visit in Greensboro when he broke his arm. I was so excited about my first ride on a Greyhound bus that I didn't mind that we had to sit in the back, even though the bus was not crowded. We lived in accepted conditions. There were no choices. We went in the back doors always. We stood in back of the line. We never were waited on in a store until all white people were helped. This continued in Siler City until 10 years ago, and still occurs at times. The farther South one went, the worse it got. We would hear about killings of blacks, false imprisonment, and the ongoing rape of black women, but there was nothing to be done.

When I was about 14, we moved to town. This was convenient in many ways. We lived near the school, downtown was in walking distance, and part-time jobs were to be had. No matter how poor whites were, they never did their own work. One cafe downtown sold us food through a little window in the back alley. The hot dogs were so good that we didn't mind that. We were "colored" then and used to the signs.

But by the time I was in high school, I started feeling different. Always giving the right of way when walking on the street, sitting upstairs in the movies, and never getting to sit in the drugstore after school like the white kids did started to wear on me. My cone of ice cream was always to go. And it always ran out about five blocks away at the white Baptist church. I resented it. I wasn't good enough. None of us were good enough. Still, we held our peace and definitely our tongues.

When Rosa Parks was arrested, I was married with children and living in Philadelphia. I rejoiced for her stand — our stand — and cried for her pain — our pain. First tears. For when one is in a confined situation, one just perseveres, at least I do. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. took his first step in the first march, I took that step with him and cried some more. When the four young men refused to move

from the lunch counter in Greensboro, N.C., I rejoiced and cried.

Through the church bombing, the hangings, and the pain and suffering, I cried and prayed. When Dr. King came to Philadelphia, I made sure that I would see him speak. Finally, a voice of clarity, a voice from the Lord. A voice about right and wrong. A voice of hope.



The Philadelphia Inquirer

SUNDAY, MAY 23, 2004

Only then did I truly feel the depth of my suffering and confront the shame, the humiliation, the worthlessness, the degradation, and inferiority that had been placed on my people. Only then did I realize our contribution to society, our beauty, and our strengths. I know that the struggles continue, but our hope is in the Lord. And, yes, I continue to cry.

*Olivia Snipes*

*Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, I pray:  
Bless my children today with strength  
to bear this separation from me.  
And comfort them to know that  
you loved them first.  
Thank you, Father, I love you  
and bless your name.*

*Amen*

## *Floral Bearers*

Granddaughters and Nieces

## *Pall Bearers*

Grandsons and Nephews

## *Acknowledgements:*

*The family deeply appreciates all expressions of love and sympathy during the passing of our loved one. Thank you.*

*- The Family -*

*I REST beneath the Almighty shade,  
My griefs expire, my troubles cease;  
Thou, Lord, on whom my soul is stayed,  
Wilt keep me still in perfect peace.*

*C. Wesley*

*Professional Service Entrusted to:*

**KNOTTS and SON FUNERAL SERVICES**

**W.H. "Chip" Knotts, Jr.**

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