



# Life Reflections

Lola Jacqueline Umstead Crenshaw was born to Virgil Lewis Jonas Umstead, Sr. and Lola Katherine Jordan Umstead on November 4, 1947 in Saint Louis, Missouri. "Loodie", as she was affectionately known to her close family and childhood friends, was a precocious and spirited child. With five older siblings - John, Donald, Virgil Jr., James, and Charlotte - it was inevitable that she would be outgoing and formidable in her efforts to remind the family of her presence amidst sibling rumpus.

As a child, Lola attended The Historic All Saints Episcopal Church under the pastorate of Reverend Joseph William Nicholson, PhD., and was confirmed as a member of the Episcopal Church of Missouri. During her years at All Saints, she regularly attended Sunday School, participated in Girl Scouts, and sang in the youth choir. She later continued her service to God and the All Saints church family as an adult through membership in the choir and Saint Ann's Guild. Also, her spiritual belief system was expanded and influenced by the constant presence of her God-fearing grandmother, Hester R. Davis, a devout elder in the Pentecostal church.

During her childhood, Loodie cultivated a love for crafting as a hobby. This love followed her into her adulthood. She was a gifted creative. She would naturally construct grand creations with minimal resources.

Raised in a household where obtaining an education was a supreme value, Lola attended Riddick Elementary School. The summers of her youth were spent alternating from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma with paternal grandparents, Linnie and David Dyer, or in Enid, Oklahoma in the care of her grandparents, Professor Lewis Jonas and Mary Umstead. The Umsteads were pioneering educators for Black youth in the state of Oklahoma. So, using proper grammar, clear articulation in speech and practicing appropriate etiquette were hallmarks of her childhood experience. Loodie later matriculated to The Charles Sumner High School in the Greater Ville neighborhood. At Sumner, she sang in the Girls Glee Club and could be found on the sidelines at football games serving as a cheerleader for the indomitable Sumner Bulldogs.

Since she had older siblings, who started their own families while she was in her teen years, she also became lovingly known as Auntie Beav early adolescence. Her youthful energy and newly acquired status as an aunt immediately positioned her to establish deep, loving relationships with nephews and nieces. She was a favorite and fun auntie who always had a "word of wisdom" to share. She deeply valued authenticity and branded herself as a truth-teller for younger generations.

Upon graduation from Sumner in 1965 and a brief stint working as a Teacher Assistant in the Saint Louis Public Schools, Lola launched a lifelong career with the State of Missouri Government. Initially working at the Missouri Department of Employment Security, she continued to serve over 30 years as a Case Manager with the Missouri Division of Family Services. During this time, she also worked as a part-time evening receptionist supporting her sister and brother-in-law's business, Ted Foster, Sr. & Sons Funeral Home. Upon her retirement from the State of Missouri, she found great pleasure in serving as a Medical Assistant in the medical pediatric office of Dr. Hulda Blamoville.

Lola explored many of life's offerings as she matured into womanhood. Although she was very close to her mother and her Saint Louis community, Lola ventured to explore life in: Enid, Oklahoma; Chicago, Illinois; and San Jose, California. Lola was blessed to unite in Holy Matrimony and experience a deep and abiding love through her daughters, Lauren, Erika and Heather. No barrier was too strong to deter her from providing her daughters with the best life that she could. She ensured that they had rich experiences that exposed them to the many possibilities that life has to offer. From private school and college education, elaborate birthday parties, family outings, dance classes, art classes, and travel adventures, to her made-with-love home-cooked meals. She loved expressing her love through the preparation of her chicken and noodle casserole, stewed neckbones, rum cakes, specialty punch and her infamous New Year's Day Seafood Feast. Lola was a devoted mother. To ensure her success as a mother, she gave them the best of which she knew. So, she raised her daughters in the family church which had nurtured and shaped her, and even in the same house in which she was reared. She endeavored to create a sense of family by insisting that her girls looked out and cared for each other. Her love and commitment to family grew deeper with the arrival of each of her eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. They were the heartbeats that gave her life true meaning. She will be known to them for her candor, great hugs and vivacious laugh. She loved them abundantly. Whenever you encountered Lola, she had a child or grandchild with her; or would be proudly speaking of their recent accomplishments. She was also blessed with many enduring friendships throughout her life's journey.

Lola leaves to cherish her memory: three daughters ~ Lauren Nicole, Erika Monique and Heather Natrice; eight grandchildren ~ Joëll, Raniya, Kenyaè, Kennedy, Arianna, Amaiya, Aaliyah and Avah; a stepson ~ Lance; two great-grandchildren ~ Kaiden and Kaisee; a step-grandson ~ Lance Jr.; one sister ~ Charlotte; sisters-in-law ~ Susie and Jeanette; brother-in-law ~ Ted Foster, Sr.; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family members and friends.

# Order of Service

## MUSICAL PRELUDE SELECTION

## ANTHEMS (BCP\*)

THE REV. RENEE L. FENNER

## OPENING PRAYER

THE REV. RENEE L. FENNER

## SCRIPTURES READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT: ISAIAH 61:1-3  
PSALM 23

CAROL DANCY

NEW TESTAMENT: REVELATION 21:2-7

## GOSPEL READING

THE REV. RENEE L. FENNER  
JOHN 11:21-27

## MUSIC SELECTION

LARRY JOHNSON

## LIFE REFLECTIONS

(READ SILENTLY)

## HOMILY

THE REV. RENEE L. FENNER

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## MUSIC SELECTION

LARRY JOHNSON

## REFLECTIONS/CONDOLENCES

## FINAL PRAYERS

THE REV. RENEE L. FENNER

FINAL VIEWING AUSTIN LAYNE FUNERAL DIRECTORS (SOFT MUSIC)

## FINAL BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

THE REV. RENEE L. FENNER

## CLOSING MUSIC SELECTION

\*ANTHEMS AND PRAYERS ARE TAKEN FROM THE EPISCOPAL BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

## Interment

### ST. PETER'S CEMETERY

2101 LUCAS AND HUNT ROAD ♦ SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

## Repast

YMCA

5555 PAGE BOULEVARD ♦ ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63112

# Meme

God looked around His garden  
And He found an empty place,  
He then looked down upon this Earth

And saw your tired face.

He put His arms around you  
And lifted you to rest,  
God's garden must be beautiful,  
He always takes the best.

He knew that you were suffering,  
He knew you were in pain,  
He knew that you would never  
Get well on earth again.

He saw the road was getting rough,  
And the hills were hard to climb,  
So He closed your weary eyelids,  
and whispered "Peace be thine."

It broke our hearts to lose you  
But you didn't go alone,  
For part of us went with you,  
The day God called you home.

Forever in our Hearts,  
Joëll, Raniya, Kenyaè, Kennedy, Arianna, Amaiya,  
Aaliyah, Avah, Kaiden, & Kaisee