



## hazel merricks

"AKA" "The Baby, Sis, Ducie, Auntie Ducie, Gal, Momma, Granny, Ms. Hazel, Ms. Merricks Hazel was born to the late Osgood and Hannah Merricks in Providence, Florida on May 21, 1939. Hannah was 40 when she gave birth to Hazel, so Hazel's seven brothers and sisters (Theodore, Nathaniel, Clara Mae, Albert, Annie Mae, Joseph, and Hannah) all played a role in helping raise and take care of "The Baby". Hazel graduated from Mebane High School in Alachua, Florida in 1958. She attended Florida A& M University for two years, but left prior to graduating when a total loss by fire to her parents' home motivated her to leave college and assist with her parents' care. She briefly lived in Daytona Beach, Florida with her sister Clara Mae, prior to moving to Orlando, Florida in 1962. In 1964, Hazel completed her certificate in general business as Clerk-Typist from Mid-Florida Technical College. She also purchased her own home in 1964, which was a great accomplishment for a single black female in the 1960's, and in doing so became a lifetime member of the Tangelo Park Community Family. Hazel worked a variety of jobs over the years, including employment with Martin Marietta, Walt Disney World, Belk Lindsey department stores and BJ's Wholesale Club. She gave birth to her daughter, Tonya Catina, in July of 1972, and in 1984 met the love of her life, David Richard Lancaster. Hazel understood what was really important in life, and therefore her greatest happiness came from her relationships. Whether it was with her parents, her daughter Tonya, her partner David, her grandchildren, her siblings, her nieces and nephews, or her friends, it was the

relationships in life that she treasured the most. Hazel was most proud of her willingness and ability to assist with her parents' care until they both moved on to meet the Lord, of her daughter Tonya's accomplishments, and of her grandbabies. Her best friends in this life included her siblings, her nieces and nephews, her partner David, her beloved friend Connie, and most recently her four legged baby "Snuggles". Hazel was an avid reader, enjoyed writing poetry and short stories, and loved watching television. She often swapped books with her friends- especially James Patterson novels and discussed with loved ones their favorite television programs. Hazel was known for her tremendous faith in God and belief in Jesus Christ. She is remembered for her sweet disposition and for how she made others feel special and cared for. She enjoyed cooking, and if she knew your favorite dish, she would make it special just for you and awaited your praise in return. Hazel left this earth completely ready for the journey ahead of her. She shared with many that she was prepared to meet her Lord face-to-face. She anticipated with joy the day she would be reunited with her parents, her daughter who passed away at birth (Deondra Tamara), her siblings who have gone before her, and her many other family members and friends. Hazel did not want her loved ones to feel sad, but to be proud of the life she lived and to be happy in knowing they can see her again if they too accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. She wanted everyone to focus on The Creator so they will all one day hear the words she personally longed to hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant..." Today we celebrate Hazel for a life "Well done". Matthew 25:23- "His master replied, "well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"