



Mrs. Bella E. Cousette

October 20, 1946 - April 17, 2026

Honoring the Memory of a Faithful Servant

With hearts full of love and gratitude, we celebrate the life and legacy of Bella Elaine Cousette, a devoted Evangelist, loving mother, and beautiful soul whose name—Bella, meaning “beautiful”—perfectly reflected both her spirit and her calling in Christ.

Born on October 20, 1946, in Charleston, South Carolina, Bella, affectionately also known as “B” was the cherished daughter of Catherine Naomi Smalls Mazyck Turner and Isaiah “Ben” Turner Sr. She was the second eldest of thirteen children, raised in a home richly rooted in faith, love, and tradition. Growing up in a proud Gullah Geechee community, Bella embraced a vibrant cultural heritage that shaped her life. Alongside her family, she helped preserve treasured traditions such as sweetgrass basket weaving, fishing, and farming. While tending to livestock was not her favorite—often recalling her father’s lighthearted words, “If you had to farm for a living, you would starve”—she found joy in planting and harvesting.

After graduating high school, Bella stepped out on faith and journeyed to New York City. Though she left behind family and childhood friends, they were never far from her heart—always connected through visits, love, and frequent conversations. In New York, she met and married Robert L. Cousette. Though

the marriage did not endure, Bella remained steadfast in her faith, with God's Word as her sure foundation.

Bella began working with Bell Atlantic in 1967, where she faithfully served until her retirement in 1999. During these years, she also embraced her greatest calling—motherhood. She was blessed with two daughters, Belinda and Janis. Belinda, though born prematurely, was nurtured with extraordinary love and raised to know the Lord deeply. Later came Janis, another precious blessing, who was also grounded in the Word of God and taught to walk in obedience and purpose.

Through every season, Bella continued to work, raise her daughters, and remain deeply connected to her family and friends. Her in-laws became an extended blessing, maintaining a loving and supportive bond with her and her girls. Bella's faith never wavered; it was her anchor and her guide.

In time, Bella demonstrated extraordinary strength and compassion as a caregiver. She lovingly cared for her beloved daughter Belinda as her health declined, and later made room in her life to care for her ailing mother. After Belinda was called home to be with the Lord, Bella, though carrying an aching heart, made the courageous decision to return to the South to care for her mother. With tenacity, grace, and unwavering love, she poured herself into caregiving—not only for her mother, but also for her brother and anyone in need of encouragement, a warm meal, physical care, or heartfelt prayer.

Bella was able to make this transition knowing that her daughter Janis will be okay as she remained in NYC. She knew Janis would stand strong—be self-reliant, independent, and firmly rooted in the faith Bella had so faithfully modeled. Indeed, Bella had deposited strength, dignity, and a deep love for God into her daughter's life.

Affectionately known by many as a Prayer Warrior, Bella lived a life marked by intercession, compassion, and service. After the passing of her mother, she eventually settled back in Charleston—home. There, she embraced life with renewed joy, traveling with her church, family, and friends, and continuing to bless others through her many gifts.

Bella was a dedicated member of Community House of Prayer, where she served faithfully as a Sunday School Teacher. She was also a member of Greater Goodwill AME Church. Her service extended beyond the church walls—she was active in Seniors on the Move, served as a spokesperson for the Sweetgrass Association, participated in an international prayer group, joined the Christian Cultural Center prayer line, and faithfully sent daily motivational messages to uplift and encourage others.

Her talents were many. Bella had a gift for cooking, delighting loved ones with traditional Lowcountry cuisine—especially her beloved fried fish. She also enjoyed sewing and, upon returning to Charleston, established herself as a handwoven sweetgrass basket artist, beautifully honoring her Gullah Geechee heritage. Her artistry gained distinguished recognition, with her sweetgrass basket designs placed in the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art and the McKissick Museum in Columbia, South Carolina—a lasting testament to her skill, heritage, and creative legacy.

Bella leaves to cherish her precious memory her loving daughter, Janis; her siblings Sammie Turner and Thomas Turner; a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family, and dear friends whose lives were touched by her faith, kindness, and steadfast love...

Today, we rejoice in knowing that Bella Elaine Cousette is at peace with the Prince of Peace. This faithful Evangelist and Prayer Warrior has been ushered

by angels into her eternal home, reunited with loved ones who have gone before her. And above all, we celebrate that she has heard those glorious words:

“Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Her life was beautiful. Her faith was unwavering. Her legacy is everlasting.

Thursday, April 30, 2026

Public Viewing 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

The Rev. Bryan McNeal, Sr. Memorial Chapel

4129 Highway 17 N. - Awendaw, SC

Friday, May 1, 2026

Celebration of Life Service - 11:00 AM

Greater Goodwill AME Church

2818 N. Highway 17 - Mt. Pleasant, SC

Interment:

Church Cemetery

The Service will be LIVE-STREAMED via the Smith-McNeal FACEBOOK PAGE!

Cemetery Details

Greater Goodwill AME Church Cemetery

2818 Highway 17 North
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

MAY 1. 11:00 AM (ET)

Greater Goodwill AME Church
2818 Highway 17 N.
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466

LIVE STREAM VIEWING

MAY 1. 11:00 AM.

Smith-McNeal - FACEBOOK PAGE

Tribute Wall

LE

“ Aunt Bella was a great woman and a great cook who made the best banana nut bread. You will be missed, Jan will carry on you legacy proudly!!

Lee - May 02 at 12:01 AM

CT

“ Jan I'm so sorry for your lost. I know your Mom was a special lady because she was born on the same day as Cheyla. You are in our prayers. Love Resie

Charisse Turner - May 01 at 06:27 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.



April 30 at 10:50 AM

C6

“ Class of 65 purchased the Simply Elegant Spathi phyllum for the family of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.



Class of 65 - April 29 at 08:55 PM

C6

“ Class of 65 planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.

Class of 65 - April 29 at 08:55 PM

TD

“ It is with sincere sympathy that we the members of Laing Class of 1965 express our heartfelt condolences to the family of our classmate and friend , Mrs. Bella Smalls Cousette. Bella was an integral member of our class and has always been very supportive of all of our activities.

We are grateful to have celebrated our 60th class reunion in January with her. We are thankful for the role she played on our celebratory program by doing what she loved to do, offering the prayer. Her beautiful smile, will always be remembered. A link in our chain has been broken but we will continue to cherish her memory. She was an incredibly amazing, spiritual mentor and wonderful classmate. We will forever cherish her memory.

We pray that God will strengthen, comfort and provide peace for her family as you maneuver through this difficult season.

With deepest sympathy,
The members of Laing Class of 1965

Trudie Dukes - April 29 at 08:48 PM

MT

“ Mary and Shoshana Tyson purchased the Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses for the family of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.



Mary and Shoshana Tyson - April 27 at 10:14 PM

DM

“ Donald and Janet Morris. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.

Donald and Janet Morris. - April 26 at 06:39 PM

DM

“ Donald and Janet Morris. purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.



Donald and Janet Morris. - April 26 at 06:39 PM



“ Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.



April 25 at 05:27 PM

SF

“ Smith - Meeks & Cooper family purchased the Pure Heart for the family of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.



Smith - Meeks & Cooper family - April 23 at 02:40 PM

SF

“ Smith - Meeks & Cooper family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Bella E. Cousette.

Smith - Meeks & Cooper family - April 23 at 02:40 PM

FS

“ Those we Love don't go away, they fly beside us every day! You left us beautiful memories, your love is still our guide, although we can not see you, you're always at our side! ❤️❤️

Mrs. Bella don't worry my mom and I will look after Jan!

Francine Smith - Meeks

Francine Smith - April 23 at 01:58 PM

EB

“ Hey Bella! I just want to say Thanks for giving me two of the very best friends a young boy needed. Your Daughters, Belinda, Jan and I shared beautiful times together and it's because of You. You already know Jan is going to be fine, that woman is loved by all of us here, she's strong with a beautiful Soul. I'm very Proud to call her my Sister. Definitely gonna Miss you and how you say name with that gorgeous southern accent. Love You Mama and rest peacefully.

Elias Barreto - April 22 at 07:50 PM

CW

“ I offer my deepest sympathy for the loss of Miss Bella. May the happy memories shared together stay with you forever. It is my prayer that God will comfort the family during this sad time. May He richly Bless you as you mourn and may His presence be a continual source of consolation. God Bless 🙏

Claudette Waul - April 21 at 04:12 PM