



Celebrating
the Life of

Sail
ANN DOWDELL

AUGUST 22, 1950 - OCTOBER 22, 2025

Saturday November 29, 2025 11:00 AM

St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church

1301 37th Street South St. Petersburg, FL 33711.

Obituary

Gail Ann Moore Dowdell was born on August 22, 1950, in Gainesville, Florida, to the late Robert and Oreatha Moore. She was the fourth of their children, joining her elder siblings Robert Jr., Oreatha, and Johnie, and later welcoming Gwen and Patricia. Her parents and her brother Johnie preceded her in death.

Gail was baptized at an early age at the 4th Avenue Church of Christ, where her faith became the foundation of her life. She attended Duval Elementary School and graduated from Lincoln High School in 1969. After graduation, she moved to St. Petersburg, Florida, where she studied fashion at Gibbs Junior College. It was there she met the love of her life, Robert James Dowdell. The two shared a beautiful bond rooted in love, faith, and community and were united in marriage on September 3, 1971. They enjoyed 54 wonderful years together before Robert's passing. They had a love story that lasted a lifetime.

During her years in Gainesville and St. Petersburg, Gail was an active participant in the Civil Rights Movement, standing boldly for justice and equality. She also poured her heart into celebrating Juneteenth, a holiday she and Robert cherished deeply. Together in the 1990s with the "Dynamic Dowdell's of St. Pete," they worked tirelessly to help make the St. Petersburg Juneteenth Festival a success.

Her home was always filled with laughter, food, and love. Gail and Rob proudly hosted two Moore Family Reunions in St. Petersburg, creating memories that strengthened family bonds for generations. Gail had a deep love for her family and carried a wealth of knowledge about their history and heritage.

Known for her amazing cooking and baking skills, she could turn nothing into something special as easily as most people put on socks and shoes. Her kitchen was legendary—fried chicken and collard greens, fried fish, "the sauce," chicken and yellow rice, her famous pig feet and baked beans, cobblers, holiday cookies (especially those cowboy cookies), and her beloved sour cream pound cake. But more than the food, it was the joy of blessing someone that mattered most to her.

Gail was proud of her lifelong commitment to hard work, often saying she had "worked all her life." From her early days working at the University of Florida cafeterias, and later through long tenures at BellSouth, JCPenney, and Dillard's, she always gave her best. It was at JCPenney and Dillard's that she found her true calling in retail sales. She loved it, thrived in it, and earned many accolades along the way—known for her rare ability to help people find exactly what they needed, even when they didn't know how to ask.

Her work deepened her love for St. Petersburg's vibrant, diverse community. At Tyrone Square Mall, she met, helped, laughed with, and cried with people from all walks of life. Over the years, she worked her way from the cash register through nearly every department, eventually moving into management and consultative roles. Her countless stories—funny, touching, and triumphant—showed that for Gail, it was never just a job; it was her way of contributing to the world.

Known for her impeccable style and grace—traits she inherited from her mother—Gail was affectionately called “Mrs. Beauty Queen” and “the fine one.” Her presence was always the talk of the town. Whether wearing hats and gloves or carrying her favorite designer purse, she always looked as though she had just stepped out of the pages of Ebony magazine.

Gail loved spending time with her son, Maurice, his wife, Toni, and her precious grandchildren, Caleb, Cody, Eve, and Camille, whom she cherished “to the moon and back.” Visiting them in California was among her happiest moments—soaking up the sunshine, cooking family favorites, sharing stories, and creating memories filled with laughter and love. More than anything, though, Gail loved God, trusted in God, and—particularly after her beloved Rob left this world—she sought God more than ever before.

She was blessed to have an amazing circle of friends—Evelyn, Beverly, Mattie, Mary, Jet, Diane, Mrs. Packard, and Juanita (to name a few)—who, along with her faithful siblings, prayed for her, supported her, and lifted her hands when she was down. Through it all, she turned to her faith, she drew closer to God, reading her Bible more and more. Then, on, July 6th, after a conversation with her grandson, Gail asked to be baptized again in the name of Jesus. And then, ten years to the day that her beloved Rob, her quiet giant, left this world—on October 22nd—she too left this world behind.

Gail Ann Dowdell leaves to cherish her memory her devoted son, Maurice, and her daughter-in-love, Toni; her beloved grandchildren, Caleb Elisha, Cody Joseph, Eve Solana Roxane, and Camille Elisabeth Dowdell; her brother, Robert Moore (Rolean) of Detroit, MI; her sisters, Oreatha Moore Walker and Gwendolyn Moore Ford of Gainesville, FL; and Patricia Moore-Hartley (Walter) of New Market, AL. She is also lovingly remembered by a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws, and dear friends who will forever carry her beauty, kindness, laughter, and strength in their hearts.







From Cody:

Food was Grandma's love language. The last food Grandma made for me was a pound cake, glazed with a sweet icing. The cake was thick as a brick and soft as a marshmallow. The whole family may have enjoyed it, but she cut the first piece just for me and drizzled it herself with icing. It was a massive piece, still hot from the oven, and covered with fresh, flowing icing that dripped over the sides. My Grandma loved me and I loved her.

From Eve:

Prov 31 (NKJV)

15 She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants.

22 She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.

Just like the Proverb 31 Woman, Grandma Gail could throw down and dress to the nines.

I will forever treasure my memories of her and the dream that Jesus gave me the night before she passed. In the dream, I laid hands on Grandma's belly, as God led me. Suddenly, Grandma was filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit of God gave utterance.

From Toni:

Grandma was a character. She was one of the most sensitive, compassionate, and vibrant women I have ever known. Her witty humor set her apart, which added to her individuality. She loved her family about as much as she loved doting on them. It was always a delight to hear her fond memories of growing up, meeting Grandpa, and participating in Florida 4-H. She was excited that her grandkids similarly embraced their own passions and thrived in the California 4-H programs. She would emphasize how much she also enjoyed cooking, agriculture, drawing, sewing, and fashion design. It is no surprise that she ended up in fashion retail - she loved making her own clothes, looking good, and helping others look and feel good, too. She got excited about the simplest things and was always up for one of our unpredictable excursions----two things we clearly had in common. One of her favorite pastimes was visiting the stinkiest cheese factories and my friends' farms. I am going to miss her tender-heart, her warm smile, her beautifully hand-drawn personalized cards, her late night "tea-talks", her chuckles, and her many many jokes. I would love to hear her say, one last time, "One mo, one mo, BIG one, big one!"

From Robert and Rolean:

Proverbs 31:14–25, so perfectly describes our beloved Gail:

“She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household... She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. Strength and honor are her clothing, and she laughs at the days to come.”

Gail was the living embodiment of this scripture. She was our inspiration — a virtuous woman whose heart was filled with love, laughter, and service. She'd call us early in the morning, full of energy, talking about yellow rice, collard greens, and chicken legs and thighs — and somehow make us laugh before sunrise. Her joy was contagious. She was always upbeat, cracking jokes, and reminding us that laughter really is the best medicine.

And let's not forget her baking—those delicious cookies and cakes she'd send were her way of wrapping us in love from miles away. Gail, you will forever be missed, but your spirit, your laughter, and your love will live on in all of us. Gail walked with grace. Her laughter was light, her kindness a lesson, and her love a legacy. Though she may be gone from our sight, her spirit remains — a Proverbs 31 woman through and through.

Forever in our hearts, Gail, you will truly be missed.

A smiling woman with curly hair is the background of the page. The image is faded and has a blue tint. The text is centered over her face and chest.

ORDER OF *Service*

Processional

Opening Prayer

Praise & Worship

Welcome & Acknowledgements

Scripture Reading

Song Selection

Reflections (limit to 2 mins please)

Obituary/ Eulogy

Video Tribute

Parting Words

Recessional



Acknowledgements of Appreciation

The family of Gail Ann Dowdell acknowledges with sincere appreciation, your prayers and the many acts of kindness extended to us during our time of bereavement. We sincerely thank you for the comforting messages, floral tributes, and other expressions of love and concern. We cannot begin to express how grateful our family is for your generous support that has helped to comfort and sustain us during this difficult time.

Let the love of God endure.

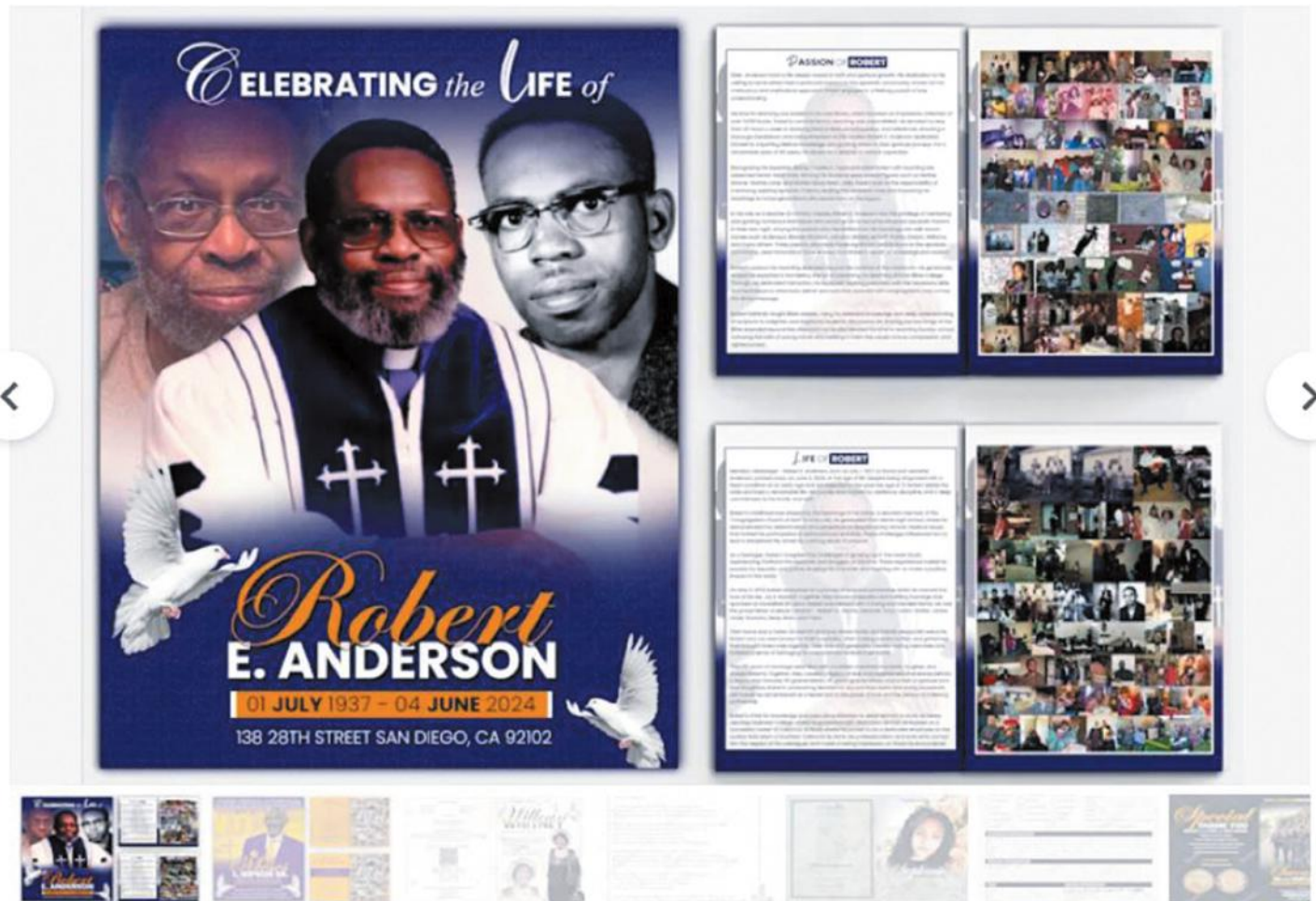
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