

# Hope Pearson Swaby



## EULOGY

### The Story of a Life Well Lived

Ladies and gentlemen, we gather here today to celebrate the remarkable life of a truly special individual, Mrs. Hope Hillary Pearson Swaby, affectionately known as "Hopie" to her beloved family and friends. Hopie's life journey began on February 13, 1967, in the tranquil farming district of Flagstaff Maroon Town, St. James. She was the fourth child born to her loving parents, Dennis and Mavis Pearson. From these humble beginnings, she embarked on a path that would touch the lives of many and leave an indelible mark on our hearts.

During her formative years in Georges Valley, Hopie embodied the spirit of hard work and determination that was a hallmark of rural Jamaican life. She lent her hand to her parents' farm, and her culinary skills were showcased in the delicious patties, coco bread, and bulla she helped create for the family's small business. These early experiences taught her the value of diligence and perseverance.

However, it was within the walls of the church that Hopie found her true calling. Church was her cornerstone for socialization and spiritual growth, a place where she was immersed in the Christian way of life from infancy. Her commitment to her faith led her to actively participate in Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, and various other church activities. At the tender age of eight, Hopie was baptized and became a devoted member of the Flagstaff New Testament Church of God, where she faithfully worshipped until God called her home.

Her educational journey commenced at Miss Jolly's Basic School and continued at Shaw Castle Primary School. At Shaw Castle, her teachers took immense pride in her quiet determination and unwavering dedication to excellence. Hopie's exceptional performance in the Common Entrance Examination opened the doors to the prestigious Mount Alvernia High School in Montego Bay, this was a moment of immense pride and joy for her family.

After successfully completing her high school education, Hopie pursued a short course in Business Administration at Stony Hill Heart Academy, which paved the way for her first job as a salesclerk at a Distribution Company in Montego Bay. Little did she know that it was at this juncture in her life that she would meet the love of her life, Windsor Lloyd Swaby, whom she later married in February 1996. Tragically, Windsor passed away in 2003, leaving a void in her heart that she carried for two decades.

Although she found fulfilment in her sales and distribution job, Hopie harboured a deeper aspiration: to become a nurse. Her unwavering determination led her to enrol at the Kingston School of Nursing, where she embarked on the journey towards her ultimate goal as a Registered Nurse. Graduating with distinction, she was soon employed at the Kingston Public Hospital before transferring to Cornwall Regional Hospital after relocating to Montego Bay.

While at Cornwall Regional Hospital, Hopie's dedication to her profession shone brightly. She pursued numerous courses, becoming qualified as a midwife and a special care nurse. Her dedication and exceptional skills were rewarded with multiple promotions, eventually culminating in her appointment as Ward Sister or Ward Manager. In this role, she assumed responsibility for the supervision of nurses, setting an example that resonated throughout her career.

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"Sister Swaby" was her moniker among co-workers, a testament to her gentle and humble nature. She was soft-spoken, caring, and deeply spiritual. Her role extended beyond her nursing duties as she took on the mantle of worship leader for the hospital's Christian community. Whenever the hospital family faced the loss of a loved one, Hope was the steadfast organizer of memorial services, leading the choir and the congregation in song.

Beyond the hospital, Hopie's love for music was evident. She was a choir director and worship leader at the Faith Deliverance Church of God in Rock Hall, St. Andrew, where she resided for a while. She also served as a praise and worship leader at Flagstaff Church. Her dedication to her spiritual callings reflected her deep-rooted faith and commitment to her community.

In October 2011, the church recognized Hopie's unwavering dedication with a glowing citation, acknowledging her as a role model and an individual of unwavering honesty, dependability, and ardour. Her contributions to Sunday School, choir direction, youth fellowship, and more, exemplified her commitment to serving others.

The Rosevale Community, where Hopie lived, felt her absence deeply. Neighbours on Nancy Close united to honour her memory with a touching memorial and Candle Lighting Ceremony. They remembered her as a quiet, generous soul with a beautiful voice who nurtured her garden with the same care she extended to her community. She loved flowers so her spare time was spent planting different varieties as well as cash crops which shared with her co-workers and friends.

Although Hopie did not have biological children, she embraced her role as a mother wholeheartedly. She cared for her stepdaughters, Sancare and Tavare, as if they were her own, and her love extended to her three step-grandchildren. Countless other children in her community and church felt her nurturing presence, as did those she brought into the world as a midwife. She really loved children.

In July 2022, Hopie faced a formidable challenge—a major heart surgery. With unwavering faith and indomitable will, she conquered this adversity, returning to work to the astonishment of her colleagues. She believed that to cease working would be a dereliction of her duties, and her dedication was nothing short of inspiring.

On July 25, 2023, the life of our dear friend, sister, and confidant came to an end after a prolonged illness. As we gather here today to celebrate her life of service and love, let us not weep as those who have no hope. Instead, let us rejoice with confidence, knowing that Hopie now rests in the arms of sweet deliverance, joining the heavenly choir led by Angel Gabriel himself.

In the memory of Mrs. Hope Hillary Pearson Swaby, we find inspiration, strength, and a lasting legacy of unwavering faith, selflessness, and love for others. May her spirit continue to live on in our hearts and guide us towards lives of purpose and service.