

*Celebration  
of  
A life well  
lived.*

**OLIVIA K. AYIKU**

**2005 - 2026**

# *Officiating Ministers*

Apostle Joseph Gyamfi  
Church of Pentecost U.S.A. Inc.  
Chicago Area Head

Reverend Mark Twumasi- Agyemang  
Church of Pentecost U.S.A. Inc.  
Chicago District Pastor

We acknowledge and appreciate all other Clergy and Rev.  
Ministers

## *Order of service*

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OPENING PRAYER

OPENING HYMN - WHEN PEACE, LIKE A RIVER

PURPOSE OF GATHERING & INTRODUCTION

FIRST FILE PAST - SONGS BY PIWC PRAISE/WORSHIP TEAM

SCRIPTURE READING (1 COR 15:41-58)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

SOLO/DUET

EULOGY/BIOGRAPHY

HYMN - TO GOD BE THE GLORY

TESTIMONIES AND TRIBUTES:

FAMILY, FRIENDS, SCHOOL, CHURCH

SCRIPTURE READING (EPH. 5:15-16)

WORD OF EXHORTATION

PRAYER FOR THE BEREAVED FAMILY

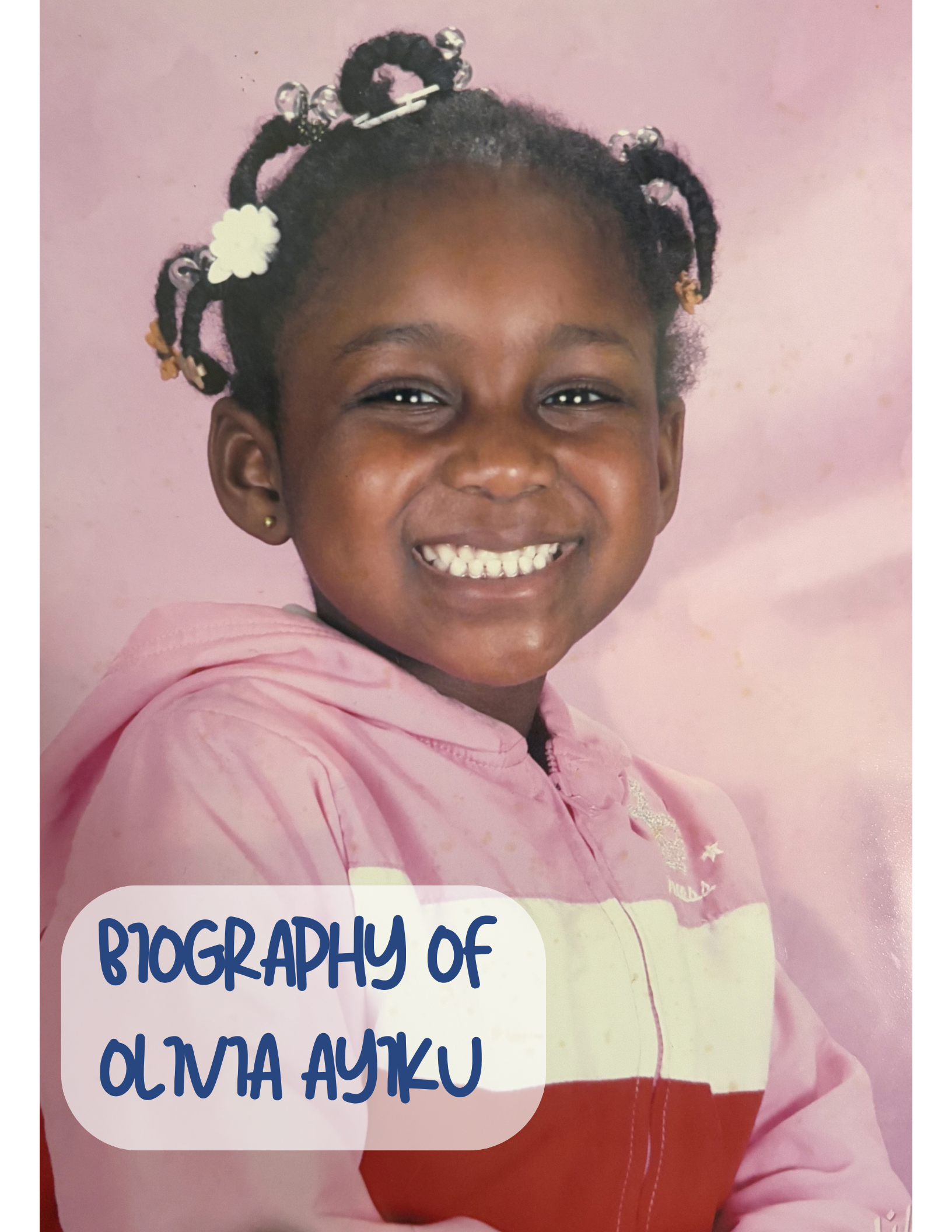
VOTE OF THANKS

ANNOUNCEMENTS - MC

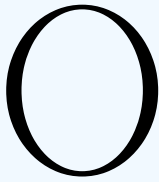
HYMN - SOON AND VERY SOON

PRAYER/BENEDICTION

FINAL FILE PAST - PIWC



**BIOGRAPHY OF  
OLIVIA AYIKU**



Olivia Korkor Ayiku was born on June 3, 2005, in Dolton, IL to John and Esther Ayiku. From the beginning, she was a cute, chubby baby with a bold, vibrant personality, embodying independence, brilliance, and determination.



Growing up in Dolton, IL, Olivia developed a love for reading, public speaking, and fashion, cultivating an eye for the finer things in life.

Oli, as we fondly call her at home, started her educational pursuit at Roosevelt Elementary School, where she completed kindergarten through sixth grade, always aiming to achieve perfect attendance and make the Honor Roll. After graduating from Roosevelt Elementary School, she attended Roosevelt Junior High School, where she completed 7th and 8th grade and graduated as valedictorian of her class. While attending Roosevelt Junior High School, she played volleyball and clarinet in the school's band. Her brother remembers going to watch her perform and recalls that in everything Olivia did, she aimed to do it with excellence.

Olivia continued her education at Thornton Township High School, setting her personal goal to graduate as valedictorian. She joined the speech team as a freshman, encouraged by her teacher and speech coach, Mr. Brad Ablin, whose classroom happened to be across the hall from her locker. This decision completely changed her life. Olivia also completed the rigorous two-year International Baccalaureate program, designed to challenge high-achieving students. Reflecting on her junior year, Olivia said,

**My junior year might've been my prime year in high school. I was discovering my identity, my fashion sense was improving, and I finished my year winning the IHSA Regional, Sectional, and State Championship in Speech. I ended my year knowing I was ranked number one in my graduating class, so I was looking forward to an easy, calm senior year. During the summer of my junior year, I began working as a pharmacy technician after getting my license at the age of 16."**

True to her industrious nature, she applied to every Walgreens in town and was hired on the spot at the South Holland location.

Olivia graduated valedictorian from Thornton Township High School, earning the Mielle Scholarship and other awards. She was admitted to the prestigious Duke University to study Global Health and Public Policy, an achievement she worked tirelessly for, giving her academics her very best and maintaining good grades until the very end.

Olivia was a devout Christian. Born into the Church of Pentecost in Chicago, she gave her life to Christ and served Him diligently. God blessed her with a powerful voice. She sang praises and worship from the depths of her heart and with the understanding that she had a calling on her life. The church family loved and nurtured her from the beginning until she took her last breath.

In March 2024, at age 17, Olivia was diagnosed with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), Ulcerative Colitis (UC), and Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC), chronic liver conditions with no curative treatments. Despite this, she began her freshman year at Duke in August 2023, determined to start the college life she had worked so hard to earn. That fall, she joined ROTC in the Air Force Division. Though often nauseous and fatigued during its physically demanding training, she pushed herself relentlessly, at times completing a mile even after vomiting mid-run. Her commitment and determination were unwavering. She even continued to pursue her pilot's license, refusing to let her diagnosis limit her dreams. Unfortunately, she had to stop ROTC in December 2024, when she was diagnosed with cholangiocarcinoma, a cancer of the bile duct.

Even amid these life-altering challenges, Olivia remained resolute in her goal to finish her degree at Duke University. She attended classes while fatigued, swollen, and often sleepless from treatments, chemotherapy, and infusions. Through undeniable grit and resilience, she kept up with her coursework, collaborating with professors, administrators, and peers to ensure she could meet her obligations. She maintained a high GPA, embraced every opportunity, and, as the perfectionist she was, sometimes felt frustrated that she could not always show up as she wished, but she never failed to give it her all.

Olivia was a recipient of the \$10,000 Live Más Scholarship, where she shared her journey living with a rare, invisible disease and her passion for advocacy. She began working with the Chronic Disease Coalition and the American Liver Foundation as an ambassador, driven by her belief that patients are often “fighting their body while fighting to be heard.” With a background in Global Health & Public Policy, she was committed to empowering others and said she hoped to be the advocate for others that she needed the most. Beyond her academic and advocacy work, Olivia pursued creative opportunities that reflected her confidence and communication skills, including appearing in the Sun Belt Conference Rising commercial in 2023, drawing from her passion and talents developed through speech. She was a truly well-rounded individual who embraced every opportunity with determination, carrying countless hopes and dreams she was committed to achieve.

Family was the center of Olivia’s world. She shared a deeply special bond with her siblings, Emmanuel and Rebecca Ayiku. Their weekly Sunday FaceTime calls became a cherished ritual, a time to laugh, catch up, and encourage one another as they pursued their individual dreams. Despite the physical distance between them, their connection remained strong and unwavering.

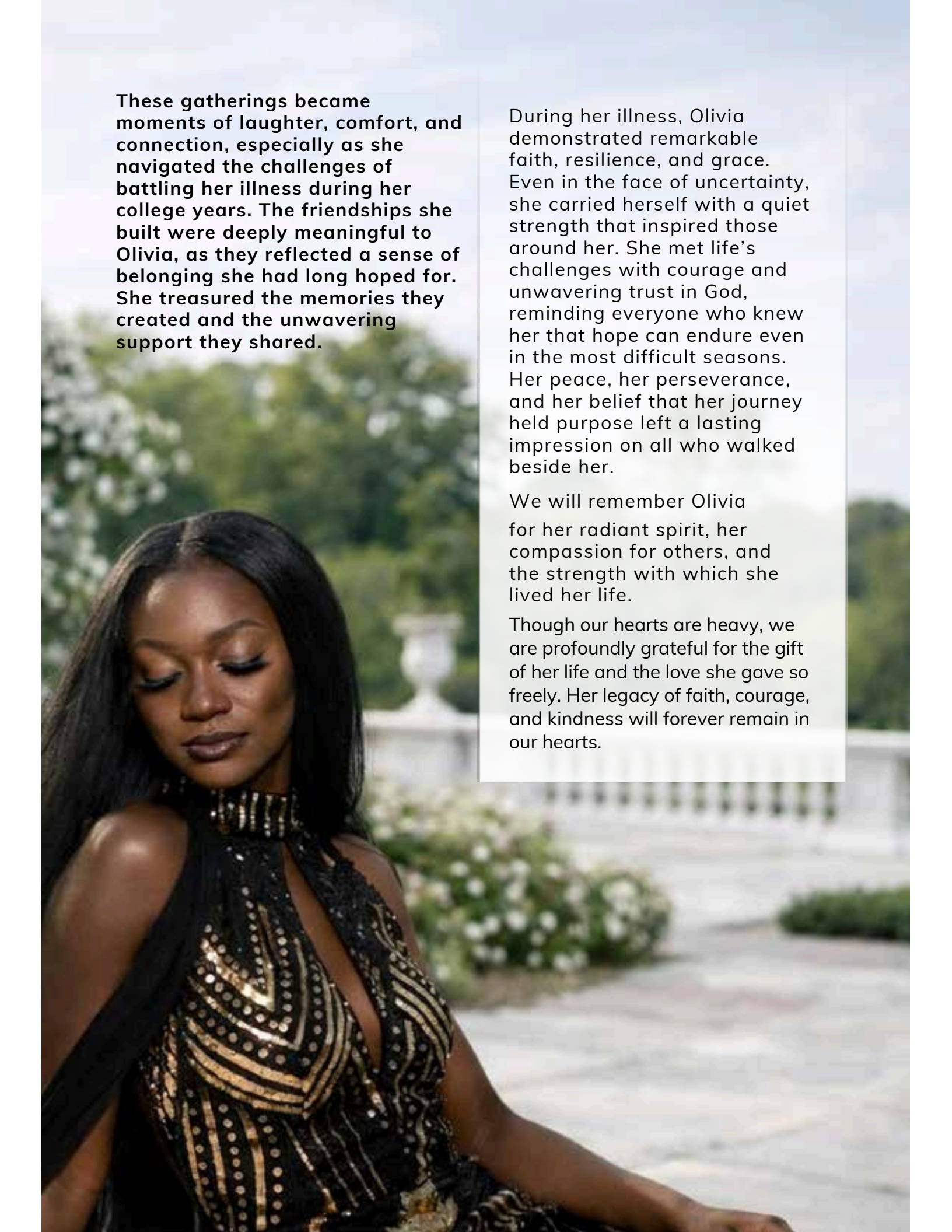
From a very young age, Olivia’s parents instilled in her a strong faith, which remained a guiding force throughout her life.

Olivia also held a close and loving relationship with her cousins, Queenster, Deborah, and Kingsley MacCarthy. Having grown up together from childhood, they shared a bond rooted in both family and friendship. During Olivia’s initial rounds of chemotherapy and radiation, they were a constant source of comfort and companionship, as the University of Chicago, where she initially received treatment, was just minutes from their home. She also grew close to her cousin Charles during his stay with the family, and his presence brought her additional support and joy.

She was equally adored by her younger cousins, Theophilus, Grace, Mercy, and Cornelius. Olivia took great joy in caring for them, watching them grow, and guiding them with patience and love. To them, she was not only family but a role model whose strength, warmth, and example left a lasting imprint. Olivia also cultivated a family away from home during her time at Duke. She often opened her home to close friends, hosting dinners where she joyfully prepared elaborate meals. These gatherings became moments of laughter, comfort, and connection, especially as she navigated the challenges of battling her illness during her college years. The friendships she built were deeply meaningful to Olivia, as they reflected a sense of belonging she had long hoped for. She treasured the memories they created and the unwavering support they shared.

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During her illness, Olivia demonstrated remarkable faith, resilience, and grace. Even in the face of uncertainty, she carried herself with a quiet strength that inspired those around her. She met life's challenges with courage and unwavering trust in God, reminding everyone who knew her that hope can endure even in the most difficult seasons. Her peace, her perseverance, and her belief that her journey held purpose left a lasting impression on all who walked beside her.

We will remember Olivia for her radiant spirit, her compassion for others, and the strength with which she lived her life.

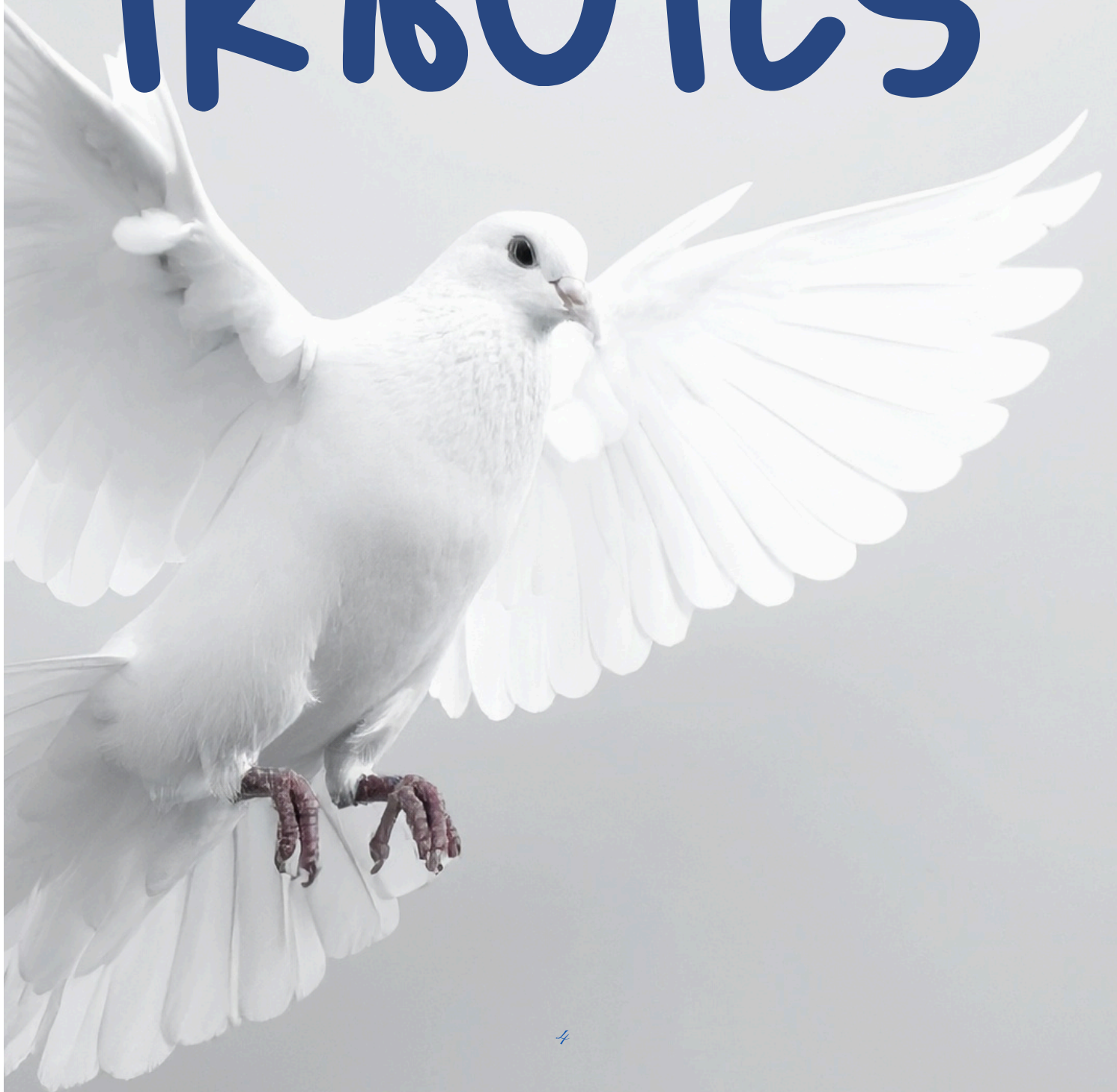
Though our hearts are heavy, we are profoundly grateful for the gift of her life and the love she gave so freely. Her legacy of faith, courage, and kindness will forever remain in our hearts.



**Duality illustrates the balance experienced between two opposing forces. It represents the ability to accept where you've been while living in the truth of who you are, giving you courage to work towards the person you are capable of becoming**

**Olivia Ayiku 2023**

# TRIBUTES



# TRIBUTE BY PARENTS

MOM - ESTHER AYIKU

Olivia my daughter! Hmmm. Oli Oli my Olive..... Oli had so much faith in God. From when she was a child she was very independent and wanted to do things by herself. She is a loving girl, caring, helpful and nice to all. Everyone loved her at school, at church and everywhere she went. She was my friend. She knew what I want and would get it for me.

My pretty girl Oli. She had so many dreams, and she said one day she will buy me a big house. She had dreams and they came to pass. Elders and pastors and apostles prophesied about her and all of it will come to pass. Just like Jesus after He left at a young age He is still remembered and celebrated for His impact even in that short time.

Olivia was a great leader; from a young age she will gather her friends and lead them in prayer and bible study. Time will not permit me to tell of who my daughter was she was very appreciative. I thank God for giving her to me.

I thank God for Emma and Becky and Noellie. Pray for me. It is well.

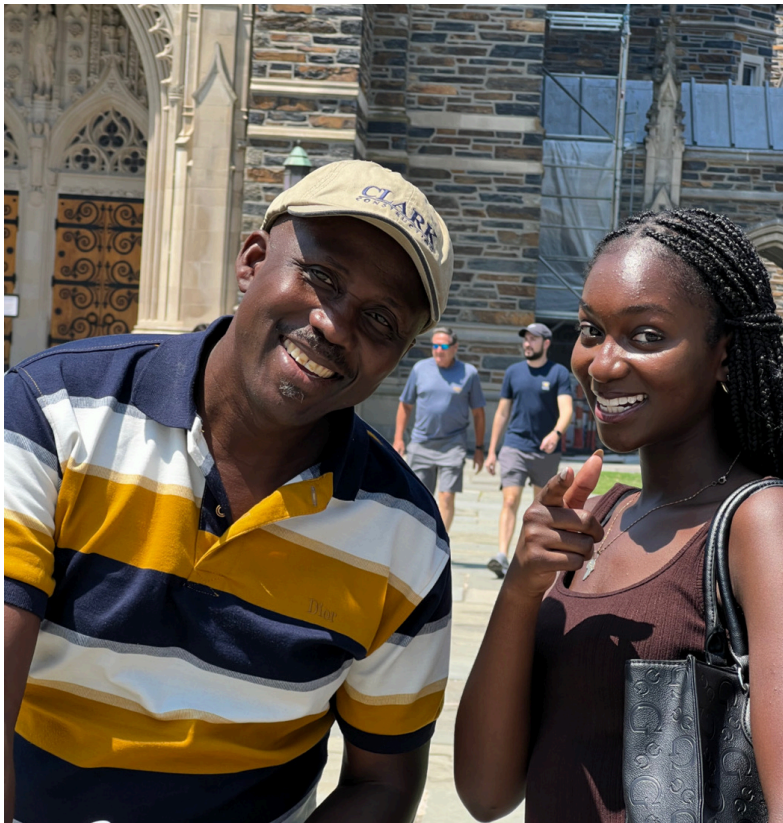


# TRIBUTE BY PARENTS

## DAD - JOHN AYIKU

My daughter, my last born. Growing up I love the way she presses on to do what she sets her mind to do. I remember when we traveled. I took her to London, Germany, and Ghana and we had so much fun. She enjoyed the horse ride, the boat rides and everything we did. Even though she was sick, but she persevered. She and I will have long talks. My one on one with Oli during our travels are some of my favorite moments that I always cherish. She does all my computer and phone and bank account transactions for me. Very smart girl.

I love her enthusiasm. I remember when we had to go to her speech competition in Pretoria and how she needed my support. I was so proud of her. I thank God I was there. She told me she felt like she had a dad. I miss Olivia and she's always with me till we meet again in Heaven. I love you Olivia.



# TRIBUTE BY SIBLINGS

EMMANUEL



I remember when my mom told me they were going to name my little sister Olivia. I wondered what the name meant. Google said “olive tree,” but my mom said it meant, “The Anointed One.”

At the time, I didn’t understand the power of a name. All I knew was that I had a little sister, and I was responsible for her.

But growing up with Olivia was never a burden. Watching her grow was a delight.

Teaching her how to ride her bike. Watching Lion King 2 when our parents left for work. Playing lava in the living room. Even her getting on my nerves when I wanted silence. All of it was a delight.

Somewhere along the way, the little girl I taught how to ride a bike started running on her own. She didn’t need me to carry her anymore. She just needed my presence — and what a privilege it was to have front-row seats to her life.

I remember her smile when I surprised her by driving from Missouri to Illinois during a summer internship just to watch her graduate as valedictorian — first from junior high school and then from high school. The first in our family to do it.

I loved showing up for her when she played in the band in junior high. I loved showing up for her because Olivia was always doing something new — something I didn’t think of or dare to do. I played life safe. She took risks. And that is what made her extraordinary in my eyes. But today, I don’t want to list her achievements. Her biography does that.

I want to share one of my most cherished recent memories — Summer 2024. Olivia came to spend the whole summer with me. Not as someone fighting a disease. Just my little sister.

That summer, we spent time with dear friends in Charleston, Illinois. We went to Kentucky for a retreat and spent a few days in Houston, Texas. We laughed. We explored. We just lived.

Some of my favorite moments weren’t on the road at all. They were late at night — either watching the sunset or sitting in my office talking, instrumentals playing softly in the background. She would sit across from me and pour her heart out.

One night, she said something that stopped me.

She said, “People ask God to leave His fingerprint on their heart.” “But fingerprints aren’t light impressions — they’re engraved. When you look at caves, you know history was there because something was carved into the walls. That’s what God wants — His evidence engraved in you. But in order to engrave Himself in you, He has to take you as a broken vessel and soften you because life, not God, has hardened our hearts. God cannot write on a broken heart. He needs to be engraved to a state where it can be engraved. God wants to touch what He has made -He doesn’t just want to heal you. ”

You may be wondering how I remember that so clearly. I recorded moments like that because hearing my little sister speak was like reading a book.

I asked myself, How could someone so young have that much depth?

Olivia didn’t speak from books. She spoke from experience. And that is what gave her words weight.

During that summer, she would make exotic meals, and I would wonder — is this the same Aldi I’ve been shopping at? When she cooked, I would ask if I could help, and she would say no — this was her safe space. She would put her earphones in and create a dish based on how she felt.



One time she made something with salmon, eggs, and beef sausage. I asked her for the recipe. She told me she didn't have one — she just created it from instinct. She had the ability to take something ordinary and bring it to life. While some of us need a recipe book Olivia created. She joined me at the gym every morning at 5 a.m. Not to compete with me, but just to spend more time together — and to get the “capital P” she always said she wanted. Even while facing cancer, her presence never weakened. Though her body grew weaker, her spirit did not. Though she was my little sister, she stood eye to eye with me. She spoke like someone who had lived many lifetimes. I learned that in her ability to feel others' pain — through listening and through her own life experience — she was able to extract wisdom that strengthened her to keep fighting. She was a book I never grew tired of reading. Even until the end. My sister lived a life of purpose — even in pain. She showed us that broken crayons still color.

Olivia, I don't know why life tried to crush you. But before you left, you anointed each of us with your words, your courage, and the reminder that our current circumstances do not define our future. Kiddo, I will miss you. I will miss your voice, your laughter, and your wisdom. I will miss being amazed by you. But most of all, I will miss showing you how much I love you.

Though my heart is broken, and the chamber you occupied now feels closed to protect the memories we shared, I will always hold you near and dear.

You are resting in peace, Kiddo. You fought a good fight. And you fought it with grace.

You were the hand the Lord used to leave His fingerprint on my heart.

And that print will never fade.

Thank you for allowing me to experience the anointing you carried. I promise not to let the imprint you left on my heart fade.

**I love you.**

**Today.**

**Tomorrow.**

**Forever.**

**Olivia.**

**My Anointed One**



# TRIBUTE BY SIBLINGS

REBECCA

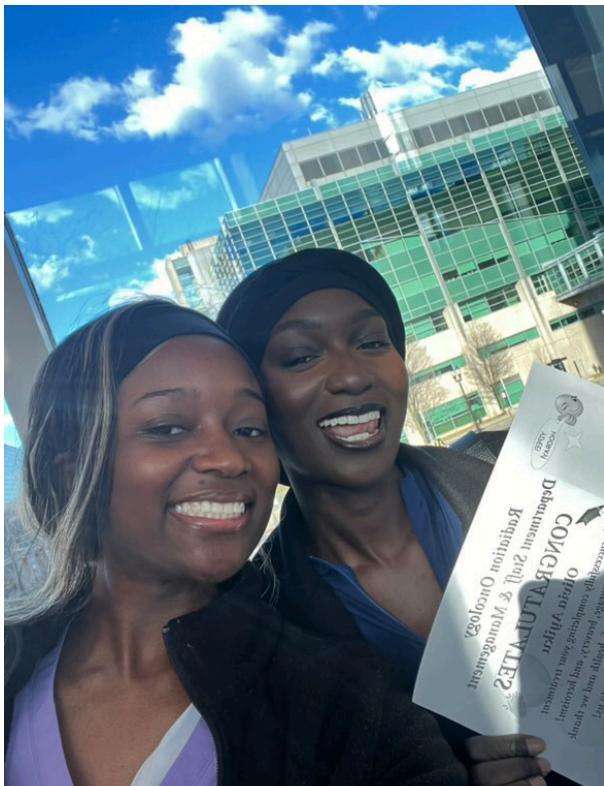


Are you really an older sister if your younger sister isn't taller than you? If people don't assume you're the youngest when they see you all together? I start this off lighthearted because it reflects who Olivia was. No matter the situation she was always able to lighten the mood of the room simply by being her. Whether it was saying an off-hand joke, singing a new song word for word that we would soon get hooked to over the next week, or doing a random dance, Olivia was always entertaining those around her. Her infectious smile and hearty laugh was contagious and it was hard not to join in her antics even if you weren't in the mood for jokes, being around her made you want to just laugh and smile.

Olivia and I are five years apart. For some siblings the age gap may be too big to create a deep bond. However, that was never the case for us. From a young age we spent so much time together. My mom used to dress us up in the same church outfits as if we were twins. I don't have the best memory of our younger years together, but I'm so grateful for the bond we created as we both got older. Covid-19 was a pivotal point in our relationship that strengthened our bond by bringing us back under the same roof once again since I had left for college. She taught me how to do my makeup, my mini Masterchef would make the most extravagant meals. We would often stay up late braiding each other's hair, dancing, singing, always finding new ways to pass time. Olivia was my sister but by the end of that year she became my best friend. I always say Olivia is the most unserious person I know because she was truly all jokes, but when it came to pursuing her goals, she was very serious. Olivia's dedication to her academics and personal pursuits was truly inspiring. From endlessly practicing for her speech tournaments, being active in school clubs, working as a pharmacy tech, being valedictorian in both elementary and high school; Olivia truly achieved everything she put her mind to. Even when she became ill, her discipline and determination to continue pursuing her Bachelor's at Duke is beyond commendable. Olivia still showed up to class while doing chemotherapy and going to weekly hospital appointments, despite dealing with many side effects and living in constant pain.

She did not allow her diagnosis and physical ailments to hold her back from pursuing her goals and I will forever cherish and admire that about her. I know she was tired of people telling her she was so strong because she had no option but to be strong. She truly is the strongest person I know. As her older sister and best friend, it always pained me to see her go through the pain and suffering she endured. Olivia wanted to be a dermatologist but after experiencing the downfalls of our healthcare system as a patient, she grew a new passion for patient advocacy. Even in her pain she was thinking of ways that she could help others.





When I got the opportunity to be her live liver donor, I was so excited that I could finally do something to help her. Giving her a part of me was truly the least that I could do. We were devastated when the transplant was aborted due to finding a new tumor in her lymph node. I remember crying as the doctors told me the news, but I was told that Olivia didn't even cry when she found out. I was always the crier between the two of us. The emotional one. Olivia would often just sit there laughing at me and singing while I cried. She often told us not to cry for her when she's gone. Olivia may be gone but her light and legacy will live on with us forever. I hope to carry the same strength, positivity, and determination that she held. Olivia deserved more than 20 years on this earth, but I am proud that she made it her daily responsibility to make good use of the time she had here. She always had a message for someone. Something to pick up their spirits even when hers was down.

I'll always remember watching her fight daily and encouraging others to do the same. Being in the hospital for weeks, then going on about her life like nothing happened. I remember noticing obvious physical declines in her body, but her mind remained strong. As we honor the life of Olivia, remember to keep your mind strong even when your spirit feels weak, because it is at that point of weakness that your true inner strength reveals itself. Olivia made sure every individual saw that inner strength within themselves. She reminded me that life was about getting strong to then become a source of strength. Nothing she did was self serving. Olivia is one of the most intentional individuals that I know. She knew what she wanted out of life and was willing to do any and everything to become the visionary that she was. There was no challenge that she was not ready to take on. Even when life got exhausting, she'd bounce back and say, "Life keeps playing with me, but it doesn't know I'm a tough player." Olivia's instagram bio is the epitome of the life she lived. "Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile." I hope we can all find peace knowing that she is smiling down on us, pain free. In the words of Olivia, "Impact lasts, nothing else does; not the pain, and certainly not the pleasure, so even if you can't change the world, make it your responsibility to change your world, and LIV!



# TRIBUTE

## BY NOELLIE

Proverbs 4:18 says The path of the just is as a shining light that shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. This was our scripture and as long as you lived you were that shining light and even now your life shines brighter. Our devotions and prayers this past year especially in the last 14 days of you being with us reverberate so deeply in my heart.

God's baby girl. My gentle giant, my baby! Thank you for turning the heat up immediately you got to heaven. I guess the joke's on me now but like we agreed, I'm going to Liv it up. I'm glad we recorded all those voice notes and wrote down all those thoughts and tasks when we did. Ever so intentional and very meticulous



I am glad we laughed and danced and I videoed all of it. I'm glad we continued with worship nights even when we were so tired. I'm glad we stayed up and talked on our all-night calls because those conversations, our prayers, your stories and deep questions now mean so much more. My junior colleague in public policy, always eager to learn. I'm glad we had all those intellectual discourses. I'm glad we did all that makeup work. I'm so glad we did our cuddles and snuggles. Your tenacity, resilience and faith in the midst of turmoil and chaos is unmatched. My gentle giant. I know the angels are having so much fun with you and now you have your much needed rest, no pain, no struggles, no restlessness.

Everyone is here like you said. I've put faces to some of the names now and I laugh because they are doing exactly as you predicted. Thank you, for the honor of being your confidant and personal doctor on call. We're working on finishing your book, and it looks like Power Behind Potential and 6305 will kick off soon. It will be beautiful like you envisaged.

**I hold on dearly to your last words to me and as always, if you ever need anything - holla at your girl.**

# TRIBUTE BY COUSINS

## QUEENSTAR

Olivia. A name that declares life whenever you mention it. Your name symbolized your purpose. Your purpose to live. You chose life even when yours tried to give you every reason not to. And you chose life because you knew you chose a higher cause above your own. I will never forget when you told me that in middle school, you told God that you would choose him. You told him to do whatever was needed to keep your faith strong in him, but the one thing you told him was please, not cancer. But even in that pain, even in that uncertainty, you still chose him. You chose a call greater than yourself, and because you chose him, you knew you never had to carry life on your own. You gained a trust strong enough to carry anything that came your way, because he was always your source. You let go of your cross so you could carry his, but he carried it with you. You always said, regardless of what happened, his will would be done in your life.

At the time, I didn't understand that because I thought faith just meant trusting God to deliver you. That one day, God would give you healing. But for you, faith wasn't just about what we want; it was about accepting the will of God, even when it meant facing the things that we are afraid to say out loud. Olivia, I can't say that this is not hard. I can't say that this isn't painful. But what I can say is that you never hid your pain. You used your pain to give life. You used your pain to show me how to use mine. Not to hide it. Not to be ashamed of it. Not to forget it. Not to run from it. But to use it to connect. To use it to heal. To use it to inspire. To relate. To influence. To give. To be a light. You became the light at the end of the tunnel for us. Because instead of always hoping for light at the end of the tunnel, sometimes you are the light you've been waiting for.

**You still have value, no matter how messed up your life has been, because broken crayons still color.”- Olivia Ayiku.**

We were brought together by family, but it was love that held us together. So, Oli, I want to thank you for who you are. For being not just my cousin, but a little sister and a friend. For being life. Thank you for pouring into my cup even when yours was low. Thank you for lighting every room with your beautiful smile. Thank you for making space for others' pain, even when yours was heavy. Thank you for gracing people with words that only you knew how to put together that would stick forever. Thank you for using your crayons to color my life, even when yours were broken, because you turned brokenness into beauty. I have never met anyone like you. Please give me the strength to take the picture you've colored in my heart, to honor you, and to use it to color the world. I love you so much, and I promise to LIVITUP.



## DEBORAH



Dear Oli,

I want start off by saying thank you. Thank you for not only being family but a friend. Thank you for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself. Thank you for advising me and encouraging me when I felt so defeated. Thank you for being unapologetically you no matter what. I am truly sorry that this happened to you Oli, But even through all the pain you endured you handled it with such grace and most importantly kept your faith through it all . I will always be in awe of you. I remember when we had our convos you would always tell me that I better make it and to follow my dreams and I promise to do just that. I promise to live it up to the fullest, to love unconditionally, and to laugh no matter what life throws at me. If not for me for you I owe you that much. I love you forever and always Oli.

## KINGSLEY



So that's it ?

Sometimes when you are in the reality of things you don't tend to appreciate things while it's present. Sometimes it's when we're not in contact with things or people and start to reminisce about all the memories you had with them. Sometimes people always say it's a "see you later" not a goodbye and in this case it was the opposite. Normally people would say God why? But I was always a person who never question him so I always say "I understand" Hi I'm Kingsley and I was her cousin her name is Olivia . Olivia was always my favorite cousin because we always had and shared a lot of similarities . Majority of times although me and Olivia weren't always on the phone the moments we were it was unforgettable especially when we used to call each other or dance on the phone for the fun of it . Olivia was always a sweet and generous soul to others and even though sometimes she doubted herself I always reminded her that she's special gem because of the ways she carried herself in a lot of situations she didn't deserve. Even though there were some people who always wasn't on the same page as her I was and we always shared the same thoughts .

Dear cancer I don't know how and why you decided to take my cousin life but I'm not mad at you at all. Sometimes people who are put in this situation doesn't handle it amazingly as My cousin did . Olivia always held up and was an optimist during these time always seeing the good in bad times and still pushing hard knowing that although life is a gamble and nobody get to pick how you live. I will always remember how you smiled in situations like this which to me signified a bandage to every scar you didn't deserve you stood up for yourself and was you . As always Olivia would ask me why am I crying if she was here right now because this is life and we all knows what happens but not when. Olivia knowing that you're not suffering anymore is a huge relief but the plan was to stay here as we discussed late at night sometimes . Olivia I love you and you will forever be in my heart as you always sing "we all gotta leave some day and that's the scariest thing" I'll never hear the song the same now . Love you oli !❤

Olivia,

Words fail me even now. I still find myself hoping that somehow this isn't real, that this is just a terrible dream I will wake up from. It's so hard to accept that you are no longer here with us. You were more than a cousin to me. "Family" feels too small a word to hold what you truly were in my life. You were my sister, my friend, my safe place. Your smile had a way of lifting the weight off any room, bringing warmth and light even on the heaviest days. There was something so rare and beautiful about your spirit, something that can never be replaced. The pain isn't just in your absence, because sometimes life separates us for weeks or months. The pain is in knowing that we won't share our dreams, our laughter, our plans, and our quiet moments ever again. It's in knowing that there will be no new memories made with you only the ones I now hold onto more tightly than ever.

In losing you, you have taught me a lesson I never wanted to learn, that we never truly understand the value of someone until their presence becomes a memory. Your life, your love, and your kindness have left a mark on my heart forever. For that, I will always be grateful. I pray that you are resting peacefully now, embraced in God's loving arms. May He grant you eternal rest and surround you with the same light you brought into our lives.

You will always live in our hearts, Olivia. You will always be loved. You will always be missed.

Rest in perfect peace.



## CHARLES

# TRIBUTE BY COUSINS

## THEOPHILUS, GRACE, MERCY & CORNELIUS

Today, we honor our cousin Olivia, though many of us knew her as a sister, daughter, niece, friend, or something else. But no matter what we called you, you were the same person at your core. You were kind, smart, funny, and always ready to make things feel lighter, even when life was heavy.

You weren't just our cousin. You were someone who helped raise us. When things were serious, you knew how to make us laugh. When my siblings and I were younger, you played with us, made slime with us, helped with homework, and created memories we still talk about.

Even when you were really sick, you still wanted to spend time with us. Less than a week before you passed, you were trying to make more memories, like playing games with us. You never stopped loving us, even when your body was tired.

We're sorry you didn't get to see us grow up and become the people you believed we could be. We wish you had more time. You died too soon, and that hurts.

But we're also grateful that your suffering is over. You fought so hard for so long, and now you are finally at peace.

We will always love you. We will always remember you. And we will carry the pieces of you that you gave us, the laughter, the memories, and the love, for the rest of our lives.

May Olivia rest in peace. ❤️



# TRIBUTE BY COUSINS

LILY



There are a million things I could say about my cousin Olivia, she was intelligent, kind, funny, she articulated herself so well but the thing I would say that inspired me the most was her strength. Despite everything she went back to school and was determined to finish because that's the type of person she is- a fighter. I'll never forget the first time I came to Chicago and we met, we made jokes about being twins- she was the American version and I was the UK one. I don't think I've ever clicked with someone the way I first clicked with her staying up all night eating Cheetos laughing our heads off. Even when we were miles away our efforts remained, I looked forward to our check in FaceTimes (she tended to remind me more of course), whether it was just a catch up, or she had news for me, but I think my favourite FaceTime memory was when we did a Spotify jam and just sang worshiping and praising our maker. Apart of me will always wish we had more time, I keep looking back at our chats and something that stood out was a TikTok I sent her about cousin friendships hitting different and that will always be true and as she said in response to that, Olivia I will always love me some you too. As much as we all love you, God loves you more and your suffering needed to come to an end. I will always be grateful for the memories that we made, you've touched my life in a way that I can never forget and I know that is the case for so many people. I love you forever sis, rest in perfect peace♥

JASON

Olivia was such an inspirational young lady, I will remember her strength, resilience and her determination to strive for excellence. I remember when she came to visit us a couple of years ago the summer before she started university. There was one night we drove to get dessert and she was so excited about starting university and was telling us about everything she was planning to do when she got there. We were all so excited for her and we kept shouting out Duke throughout the event. Even in the U.K, we understood what it meant for her to get a scholarship to a school like Duke and we were extremely proud of her. Even in her hardest battles, she kept spreading joy and light. We all followed her journey and felt inspired by her outlook on life. She has had a huge impact on many of us and has showed us how to live: work hard and chase your dreams. God may have called you home but you will forever be in our hearts. Rest in peace

RAPHAEL

Olivia showed me what it is to love God despite trials and tribulations; she showed a strength and a courage I have never seen before, her joyful spirit was so contagious. I would talk to her to encourage her, and I would be the one leaving encouraged which just highlight even more the love and care she had for others. I know her light will never be dimmed. Olivia you will be truly missed!  
Rest in peace.



# TRIBUTE

## BY THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

Writing these words after the passing of Olivia feels surreal — unbelievable, really — but I'll do my best to express who she was to me, and I think, to many others. Olivia was truly one of the most extraordinary students — and human beings — I have ever had the privilege to coach and teach. I had the immense privilege of teaching and coaching her throughout her four years at Thornton.

Her accomplishments alone would have set her apart. She was the valedictorian of the Class of 2023. She was a double state champion in speech in 2022. She went on to attend Duke University. Those are the kinds of achievements most people spend a lifetime chasing. It was her never-ending drive and passion that led her to those accomplishments. She achieved so much in so little time.

But if you knew Olivia, you know that her résumé doesn't even begin to capture who she was.

“But if you knew Olivia, you know that her résumé doesn't even begin to capture who she was.” ”

What I will remember most are the conversations. The long talks in my office about everything and anything — politics, justice, faith, the future, the world as it is and the world as it should be. Olivia always wanted to know why. Why are things the way they are? Why do people accept what's broken? And more importantly — how do we fix it? How do we make it better?



While I often didn't have the answers, and even when I did she often disagreed, I will cherish those conversations for the rest of my life. She challenged me. Not in a confrontational way, but in a way that made me sharper, more thoughtful, more accountable. She made me a better teacher. She made me a better coach. She made me a better person. There aren't many students — let alone people — you can say that about, but that was Olivia.

After she graduated, we stayed in touch. And what strikes me now — what humbles me — is that every single time we connected, she began the same way: "How are you? How's your family?" She asked about me and my life. All the while, she was fighting cancer. She was taking classes. She was enduring treatments. She was carrying a burden no young person should ever have to carry.

And yet she led with care. With curiosity. With love. She carried herself with a deep belief that whatever was to happen, she would be okay — in this life or in death. And in her own way, she was right. She is at peace now. The rest of us will be hurting for a long time. That's who she was.

Over the past few months, I am grateful that I had the chance to tell

her what she meant to me. To let her know that the impact she made on me was real and lasting. To tell her that I loved her. While my heart is broken by her passing, I am thankful she is no longer suffering. There is peace in knowing her pain has ended, even as ours continues.

In high school, Olivia often spoke about changing the world. She had big dreams — the kind that matched her intellect and her drive. She may not have had the chance to change the world on the grand stage she deserved but make no mistake: she changed it. She changed it in classrooms. In speech rounds. In late-afternoon conversations. In the lives of her friends, her teachers, her teammates, and her family. She changed it for me. And if you were fortunate enough to know her — even just a little — she changed it for you too.

Rest in peace, Olivia. Thank you for your brilliance, your drive, your courage, your relentless questions, and your heart. I am grateful that you came into my life. I will carry you with me always. I will love you forever.

**BRAD ABLIN, TEACHER. COACH. FRIEND**



# TRIBUTE BY MEMBERS OF THE DUKE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Olivia Ayiku was a gift of a human. To see her smile and the spirit that radiated through her eyes was to know peace. Her name could not have been more appropriate, since the name Olive is associated with peace and wisdom. Although I was assigned as her “advisor,” she was more of a counsel by example to me and to most other adults through her unflinching grace and will to live fully. I feel so grateful to be able to write these words and know they will be read because I believe the world needs more Olivias.

While cancer was doing everything in its power to quell her life, her light shone brighter. Olivia lived the values that Duke University expressly seeks to inculcate. She could have taught her own class on humility, connections, and curiosity. With humble confidence, Olivia greeted each day ready to take on whatever challenges. Dr. Maya Angelou might as well have been foreseeing a future Olivia Ayiku whose ability to connect with others brought to life Dr. Angelou’s words: “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Olivia’s curiosity about the world and her place in it was limited only by time.

How much Olivia accomplished in a short time on this Earth is evident in how loved she was by her family and friends and those of us who only got to know her for what feels like a fraction of a second.



Thank you so very much to Olivia and her family for kindly welcoming me to spend time with them, to smile with them, and to talk with them about faith. I will never forget the peace Olivia shared with me, and I will work each day to share that peace forward. She lit a fire of hope and determination in so many of us. That is a life well lived.

**GINNY RAMIREZ-DEL TORO, PH.D.**  
SENIOR QUAD ADVISOR, FOCUS PROGRAM  
INSTRUCTOR, TRINITY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND  
SCIENCES

# TRIBUTE BY MEMBERS OF THE DUKE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Olivia had a radiant smile—one that shone even in the midst of profound pain, and the weight of more than most of us will ever have to carry. She was the embodiment of courage and tenacity. Her strength was not loud, but steady. It was present in her self-advocacy, in her unwavering commitment to her education, and in her determination to press forward for as long and as far as she could. She fought with dignity and she persevered with purpose. Olivia, you will always be remembered and admired by many.

FAYE HORGOOD  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, TIME AWAY OFFICE

Throughout everything Olivia faced, she consistently put the well-being of others before her own. She rarely asked for anything for herself; instead, she offered support, care, and kindness to those around her. Her selflessness was truly at the core of who she was. Just as she was devoted to supporting others, Olivia was equally committed to her academics. Despite the challenges she endured, she remained focused on continuing her studies at Duke and earning her degree. Her dedication to her education was unwavering and deeply inspiring.

JORDAN BUJE. COORDINATOR FOR APARTMENT  
COMMUNITIES, DUKE STUDENT AFFAIRS

When I think of Olivia, I can't help but think of her bright smile and contagious laugh. She always remained so hopeful and positive, even with all the battles she was fighting behind the scenes. What I admired most about her was her strength and determination to stay committed to her studies and involved in the Duke community throughout her treatment.

She showed us what resilience truly looks like, and even on the hardest days, she carried herself with grace and an unwavering spirit that inspired everyone around her.

BRE BARRETT  
DUKE UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2025

# TRIBUTE

## BY DR & MRS ALBERT OSEI

The Earth is one precious soul less without Ollie  
But Heaven has gained one saint more  
Her memory forever in our hearts remain  
The pain of her departure, the balm of gratitude, the cure.  
What we can't change, we can overcome with the memories of her beautiful life.  
We don't say it was too brief, for her donation immense.  
She was given by the Lord; we received with gratitude.  
Ollie was taken; from the Lord came grace to bear

Ollie was not just a congregant but had become to us a daughter. We had known her since her childhood but more so during the years she battled illness. What impressed us about Ollie was her extraordinarily faith, fortitude and perseverance. This had to be the grace of God. It was unexpected for her age. She didn't give up when most adults would have done so

We're shocked when she decided to return to school this semester. She looked frail then, but her spirit was never broken. When in school, we had a routine to speak and pray with her every Sunday. She would go over her progress with her treatment and education and talked about the Sunday dinner time with her group of friends. Amazingly, she continued with her schoolwork religiously despite her physical limitations. Her speech was always full of faith, hope and optimism. She believed till the end, that she could overcome her health condition and complete her education.

Indeed, Ollie challenged all of us on how a believer should handle adversities; including debilitating illness and death. She trusted in the unfailing love and faithfulness of God the father, the resurrection power of the Lord Jesus Christ and the assuring presence of the Holy Spirit.

We asked the gracious Lord to bless all those who contributed in diverse ways in her journey – healthcare team, students and faculty of Duke University, Church family, friends, and the hospice team  
May the God of all grace, send help and comfort to Elder Isaiah, Deaconess Esther, Minister Emmanuel, Noellie and Becky.

# TRIBUTE BY FRIENDS

NIKKI, DUKE UNIVERSITY

Olivia,

Loving you and being loved by you has been one of the greatest gifts of my life. I really believe we came into each other's lives at the perfect time. We used to say that all the time, and I still hold onto it. I'm so thankful God let our paths cross when He did. I always called you my yellow. To me, a "yellow friend" is someone who brings warmth, happiness, and a kind of sunshine into your life. That was who you were. You brightened rooms without trying. You made heavy days feel lighter. Even when you were fighting your own battles, you still found a way to be a light for everyone else. I'll always think about our late-night drives with the music blasting or the way we could turn an ordinary Sunday dinner into something that felt special just by being there together. Those simple moments meant more than you probably ever knew.

You were one of the most selfless people I've known. You showed up. You listened. You cared deeply. And you were so ambitious. Everyone knew when you set your mind to something, you went after it. I admired that about you.



You had drive and heart, and even when life got hard, you carried yourself with so much strength. You made me want to be a better friend, a better person, just by the way you loved people so deeply. When I think about Proverbs 27:9, "A sweet friendship refreshes the soul," I don't think of it as just a verse. I think of you. Your friendship truly refreshed my soul. Of course I wish we had more time. I think I always will. But I'm so grateful for the time we did have. It changed me. I hope you know how deeply you are loved. You will always be my yellow. And I will carry your light with me for the rest of my life.

# TRIBUTE

## BY CHURCH OF PENTECOST USA INC. CHICAGO

Tribute to sister Olivia Ayiku

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of mankind do, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14.

No words can express our grief at the physical parting with our sister Olivia, but no argument can dissuade us from the firm belief and hope of our eternal reunion.

Olivia had been a “child” of the Church of Pentecost. She was born, dedicated and baptized in the Church.

We observed with admiration her childhood, adolescent, teenage and young adult years. She was active in Sunday School and participated in programs such as praise dancing.

She became a member of the praise and worship team as a teenager and participated with passion in all their activities. Immediately, her gift as a worship leader became evident. When Olivia led worship, it was never the expected routine. She prepared and waited on God to use her. The power, passion and anointing in the room was indisputable and lifted the congregation to the highest level of worship.

Olivia was gifted with oratory and periodically shared words of encouragement in the form of poems. She had a unique talent of putting words and phrases together to communicate powerful truths of scripture to encourage all. She came to services to offer her full worship; in how she dressed, sang, danced and spoke. Olivia had a joyous personality—always smiling, albeit shy. She respected and honored all she interacted with, irrespective of age and position

Through her protracted illness, Olivia never wavered in her faith. Despite dealing with significant discomfort, she remained polite and joyful. She encouraged many on social media with her courage and openness about the struggles with her illness.



She fought bravely to the end and kept the faith. Extraordinarily, and unexpected for her age, she showed her maturity in how she prepared family and friends for her departure. Today, we are gathered to say goodbye to our dear sister, daughter and friend. The brief physical separation is difficult, but we are comforted that she is resting peaceful in the loving embrace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

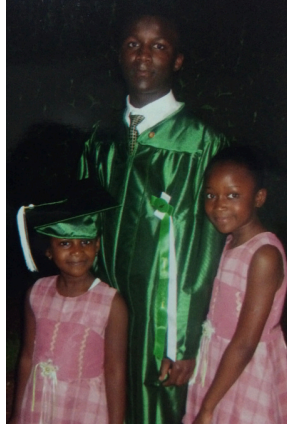
May the Lord comfort and strengthen Elder John, Deaconess Esther, Emmanuel, Noellie, Becky and all family, friends and loved ones.

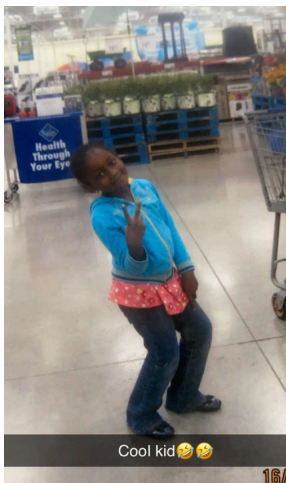


# TREASURED MEMORIES

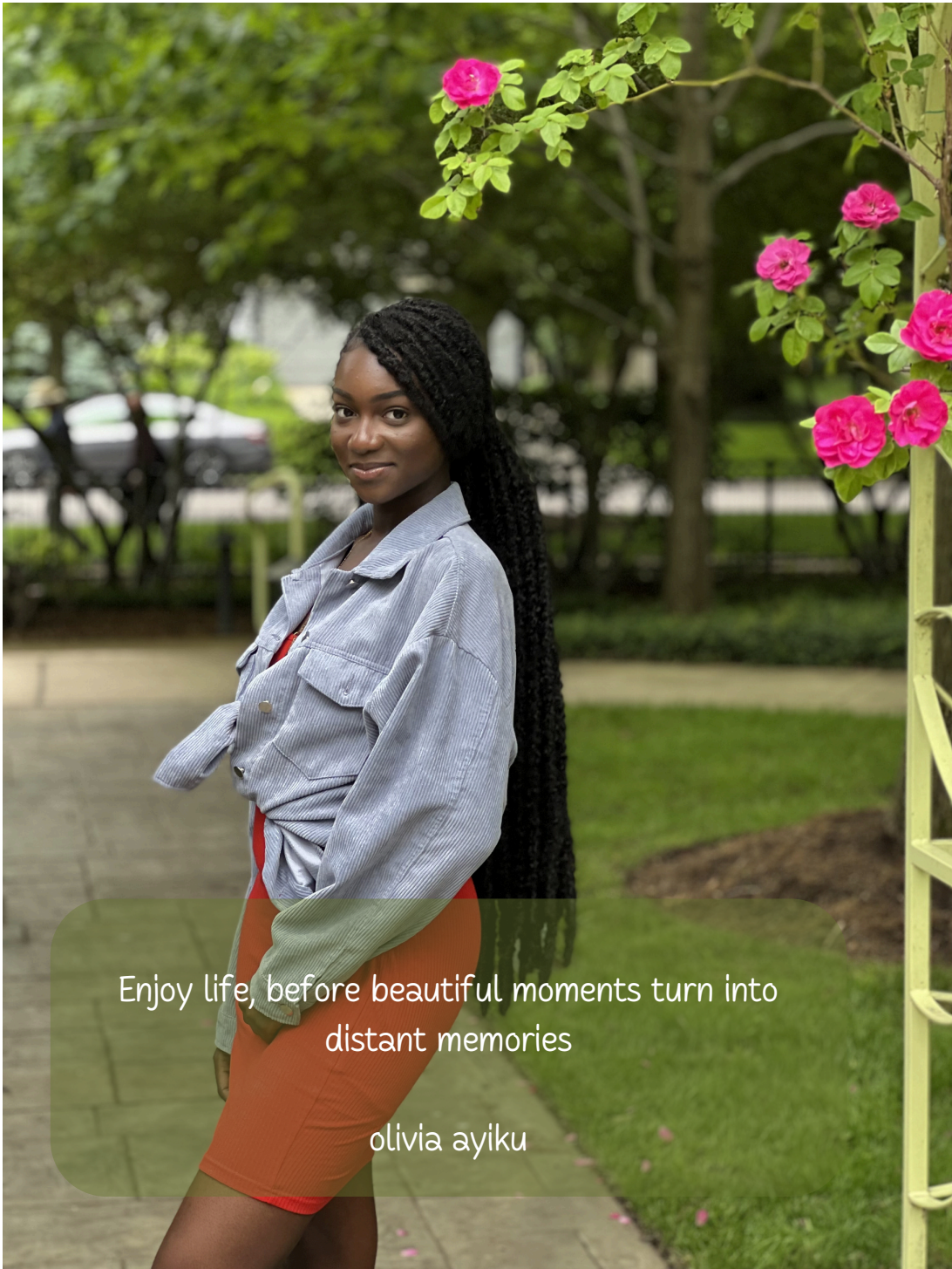
FAMILY & FRIENDS











Enjoy life, before beautiful moments turn into  
distant memories

olivia ayiku

# HYMNS

## HYMN #1 TO GOD BE THE GLORY

1 To God be the glory, great things He hath done,  
so loved He the world that He gave us His Son,  
who yielded His life an atonement for sin,  
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

Refrain:

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
let the earth hear His voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,  
and give Him the glory, great things He hath done.

2 O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,  
to ev'ry believer the promise of God;  
the vilest offender who truly believes,  
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives. [Refrain]

3 Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,  
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;  
but purer, and higher, and greater will be  
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see. [Refrain]

## HYMN #2 SOON & VERY SOON

1 Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
we are goin' to see the King!

2 No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
we are goin' to see the King!

3 No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
we are goin' to see the King!

4 Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
we're are goin' to see the King!  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

# THANK You

The Ayiku and allied families and the Church of Pentecost USA Inc. Chicago express our immense gratitude to family, friends, loved ones from far and near, who stood with Olivia throughout her journey.

Thank you for your prayers and support in diverse ways during our period of bereavement.

We are extremely grateful. Our prayer is that God richly bless and replenish you always.