

Celebrating a Beautiful Life
Honoring a Cherished Legacy



Dr. La Barbara Gragg Chenault

August 21, 1934 - March 18, 2026

Saturday, April 25, 2026, Palm City Presbyterian Church
2700 SW Martin Hwy, Palm City, FL 34990

Obituary

Dr. La Barbara Gragg Chenault was born on August 21, 1934, in Chicago, Illinois, to John Boston and Margrett Elizabeth Conn. Educated in the Chicago Public Schools, she attended Roosevelt University alongside her sister, Dorothea Conn Harrington, where she earned both her Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts degrees. During this time, she became a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, beginning a lifelong commitment to service, leadership, and sisterhood.

On a visit to Detroit, she met and married her first great love, Judge James Robert “Bobby” Gragg Jr. A devoted wife, mother, and gifted educator, La Barbara went on to earn her Doctorate in Education from Wayne State University. She began her career as a substitute teacher in the Detroit Public Schools and rose steadily through the ranks to Assistant Superintendent. In time, she made history as the first woman to serve as General Superintendent of Schools in Pontiac, Michigan, a role she carried with distinction, vision, and unwavering strength.

Her influence extended far beyond the classroom. As an international educational consultant and Chairman of the William Glasser Institute for Choice Theory and Quality Management, she helped shape leaders across education, business, nonprofit, government, and healthcare sectors. Her work challenged individuals and institutions alike to lead with accountability, purpose, and compassion. Her public service was extensive. She served as President of the Detroit and Wayne County Family Services Agency, National President of the Girl Scouts of the USA, President of the National Barristers’ Wives, and led the Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. In every role, she brought clarity, conviction, and a standard of excellence that elevated those around her.

Bobby Gragg passed away in 1990, and she relocated to Florida, where she met Eugene Chenault. After a long and loving courtship, they married, beginning a new chapter marked by companionship, joy, service, and faith. She served as President of Habitat for Humanity of Martin County and as a board member of United Way. She remained active in her beloved sorority and served as President of The Links, Incorporated, Treasure Coast (FL) Chapter.

Someone once described La Barbara as the soul of Palm City Presbyterian Church, a reflection of the depth of her presence and the sincerity of her spirit. She served faithfully as an elder, liturgist, and devoted prayer warrior. She was joyfully engaged in women’s Bible study and steadfast in her commitment to Bible Study Fellowship. Her faith was not simply something she professed; it was something she lived daily and without compromise.

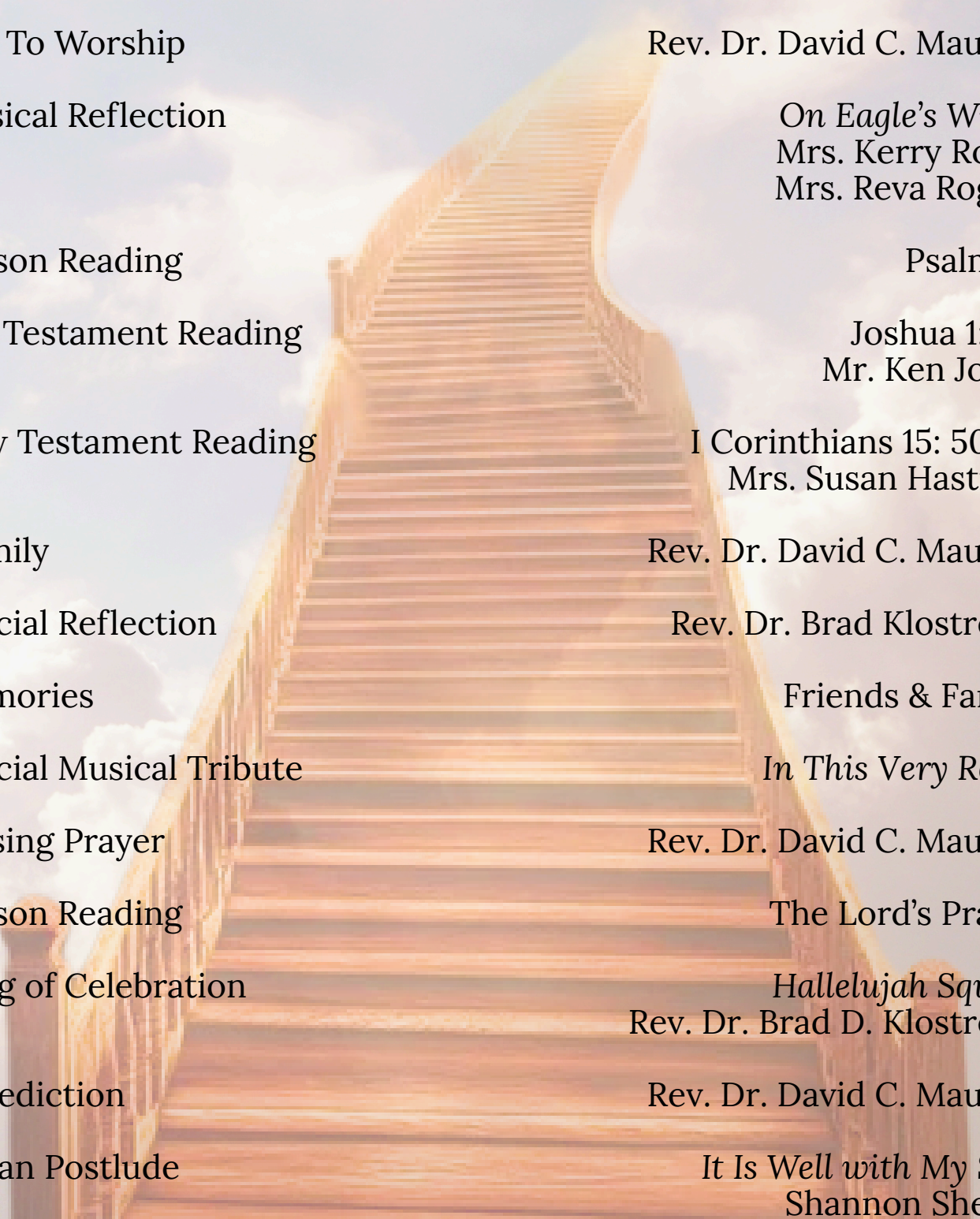
Her accomplishments were many, but they cannot fully define the reach of her life. She was a woman of presence, of principle, and of lasting impact. To know her was to be strengthened, challenged, and championed. She pursued growth with intention so that others might grow and, in turn, lift those who followed. The ripples of her wisdom and example will endure, carried forward in the lives she shaped and the people she so profoundly loved.

Dr. La Barbara Gragg Chenault is survived by her daughters, LaNita Gragg Jennings (Richard) and Lauren Gragg; her grandson, James Jennings; her great-granddaughter, Layla Stewart; her stepchildren, Sheree Chenault Peters (Michael), Raymond (Michelle), and Ronald Chenault; and her beloved nephew, John Harrington.

To know her was to experience strength wrapped in grace, wisdom guided by faith, and love without limits. Hers was a life fully lived and a God faithfully served.

Well done, La Barbara. Well done.

Honoring the Life and Legacy of *Dr. La Barbara Gragg Chenault*



| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Organ Prelude | How Great Thou Art Shannon Shelley |
| Call To Worship | Rev. Dr. David C. Mauldin |
| Musical Reflection | <i>On Eagle's Wings</i> Mrs. Kerry Rocks Mrs. Reva Rogers |
| Unison Reading | Psalm 23 |
| Old Testament Reading | Joshua 1: 1-9 Mr. Ken Johns |
| New Testament Reading | I Corinthians 15: 50-58 Mrs. Susan Hastings |
| Homily | Rev. Dr. David C. Mauldin |
| Special Reflection | Rev. Dr. Brad Klostreich |
| Memories | Friends & Family |
| Special Musical Tribute | <i>In This Very Room</i> |
| Closing Prayer | Rev. Dr. David C. Mauldin |
| Unison Reading | The Lord's Prayer |
| Song of Celebration | <i>Hallelujah Square</i> Rev. Dr. Brad D. Klostreich |
| Benediction | Rev. Dr. David C. Mauldin |
| Organ Postlude | <i>It Is Well with My Soul</i> Shannon Shelley |

We invite you to join us in the Memorial Garden for a brief inurnment ceremony. Reception to Immediately follow in Langill Hall.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.