

Mother Mary P. Patterson, 'Tireless Crusader' for Preserving COGIC Heritage, Dies at 83

Mother Mary P. Patterson, widow of the Church of God in Christ's first presiding bishop and a woman with a passion for preserving the denomination's history, died on June 24 at age 83 in Memphis, Tennessee.

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COGIC announced her death via a Facebook post, describing her as a "tireless crusader" for the preservation of its heritage:

A retired real estate agent who headed her own travel agency, Patterson founded the Pentecostal Heritage Connection, dedicated to planting historical markers honoring COGIC leaders across the South.

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In 1999, she ran for vice chairman of COGIC General Assembly but was unsuccessful in her bid. "I believe that as a woman of God, I am especially capable of fulfilling these requirements," she said in a campaign brochure.

Patterson had been diagnosed with cancer and was under hospice care, Darrin Rodgers, director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center in Springfield, Missouri, told Religion News Service. In 2012, she presented the papers of her late husband, Bishop J.O. Patterson Sr., to the center, which is

the world's largest Pentecostal archive.

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