



City of Chicago



R2019-105

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	3/13/2019
Sponsor(s):	Austin (34)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Congratulations extended to Loretta J. Oliver on 85th birthday
Committee(s) Assignment:	

**CONGRATULATIONS EXTENDED TO LORETTA J. OLIVER
ON HER 85th BIRTHDAY**

WHEREAS, On February 16, 2019, Loretta J. Oliver will celebrate her 85th birthday in the loving company of her family and many friends; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of this milestone in Loretta's life by the Honorable Carrie M. Austin, Alderman of the 34th Ward and Chairman of the Committee on Budget and Government Operations; and

WHEREAS, On February 16, 1934, Loretta Oliver was born to loving parents, Mauris and Maudell Oliver, the fifth child in what eventually became a family of ten siblings; and

WHEREAS, The Oliver family enjoyed membership at Robert's Temple Church of God in Christ, at 4021 S. State Street in Chicago, a church famous for its history in having hosted the 1955 funeral of Emmett Till, which helped spark the civil rights movement; and, three decades earlier, for launching the career of Sister Rosetta Tharpe, known as the godmother of rock 'n' roll; and

WHEREAS, Sister Oliver and all of her siblings were encouraged to partake in the wonderful musical traditions of their church by singing in the church as soon as they were able to stand by themselves; and

WHEREAS, Sister Oliver is gifted with an extremely melodious voice. As a young woman she used this gift often to sing praises to God as a member of the Church choir and as one of the lead singers for a group called the *Duncanaires*, who billed themselves as "The Gospel Wonders of the Midwest". Sister Loretta could be frequently heard singing with the group on Robert Temples' weekly radio broadcast; and

WHEREAS, Sister Oliver's musical career is lengthy and well documented. There are many videos depicting her singing both individually, and with choirs; and

WHEREAS, Sister Oliver, along with her sister Vernon, is recognized in the books: *Alive Again*, by Bishop Lorenzo L. Kelly; and, *Gonna Do Great Things: the Life of Sammy Davis Jr.* by Gary Fishgall; and

WHEREAS, Sister Oliver also became a member of the renowned Thompson Community Singers and has been the featured soloist with the Jesse Dixon Singers, the Operation Breadbasket Choir, and the Rainbow PUSH Choir. She has shared stages and pulpits with such Gospel Legends as Reverend James Cleveland, Pastor Shirley Caesar, Albertina Walker, Dorothy Norwood, Inez Andrews, and so many others; and

WHEREAS, For thirty-two years, Sister Oliver was a member of the famed Fellowship "Is No Secret What God Can Do," Missionary Baptist Church, pastored by Reverend Charles Jenkins and founded by Reverend Dr. Clay Evans. She was a lead singer for the Fellowship Choir, as well as for the former AARC "African-American Religious Connection" Choir; and

WHEREAS, From time to time, you may hear Sister Oliver on the radio invoking memories of those by-gone days as she sings "It Is No Secret What God Can Do", the theme song of the weekly radio broadcast, "What a Fellowship Hour". You may also hear her declaring in song "I'm On My Way to Heaven" as well as "I'm So Glad He Took My Sins Away," "I'm Determined," "I've Got Power," "He Included Me." "Give Me A Clean Heart" and that very, very special rendition of "Something About God's Grace." All of these songs and others are now documented with the ministry and music of Reverend Dr. Clay Evans

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and can be found in the archives of the Harold Washington Library in Chicago and at the Baylor University in Texas; and

WHEREAS, Now retired, Sister Oliver devotes more of her time using her gift to promote the Kingdom of God. She recently sang in Los Angeles, California, at a concert sponsored by her nephew, Mr. Louis Price, which also featured her sister, Mrs. Vernon Oliver Price, a well-renown singer in her own right; and

WHEREAS, Sister Oliver has spent a lifetime sharing her heavenly voice to spread the word of God, and she is now a member of the Greater Tabernacle Cathedral Church of God In Christ where she uses her gift on most Sundays to sing the "Sermonic Selection" for the service;

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this thirteenth day of March, 2019, do hereby extend to Sister Loretta J. Oliver our best and happiest wishes upon the occasion of her eighty-fifth birthday and our gratitude for the joy of music and spirit she has shared with so many people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to Sister Loretta J. Oliver.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carrie M. Austin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

CARRIE M. AUSTIN
Alderman, 34th Ward