



Bishop Dr Willa Grant Battle

September 30, 1924 - January 24, 2026

Obituary for Bishop Dr. Willa Grant Battle

Bishop Dr. Willa Grant Battle, a pioneering pastor, educator, missionary, and community leader, peacefully entered eternal rest at her home in Minneapolis, Minnesota at the age of 101 on Saturday, January 24th, 2026. Her extraordinary life was marked by unwavering faith, lifelong service, and a global ministry that transformed countless lives.

Willa Lee Grant was born in the state of Mississippi, where she attended public schools and later Saints Junior College in Lexington, Mississippi. At the age of 10, she was led to the Lord by Mother Fanny Beck, a state mother of the Church of God In Christ. At age 15, she embraced the Pentecostal experience, receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit—an encounter that became the cornerstone of her ministry and calling.

On July 4th, 1941, while others celebrated the independence of the nation, Willa Grant united in holy matrimony with Rev. Dr. Walter Leroy Battle, beginning a lifelong journey of love, faith, and partnership that spanned 54 years and five months, until his passing on December 14th, 1995. In 1946, Minnesota became home to the Battle family, opening doors for continued education and expanding ministry.

A passionate advocate for education, Dr. Battle enrolled at Northwestern College, majoring in Theology and graduating in 1956. She continued her studies at the University of Minnesota, earning her bachelor's degree with honors (cum laude), majoring in American Studies with a minor in Afro-

American History and Music History. Graduate studies at the University of Minnesota led to a Master of Arts in American Studies. Committed to theological scholarship, she later entered Trinity Seminary in Newburg, Indiana, where on August 7th, 1982, she earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Religion. Her dissertation focused on Black Churches in Minneapolis, reflecting her deep commitment to faith and community. She received an Honorary Doctorate from St. Cloud State University.

Dr. Battle's leadership extended across religious, educational, and civic spheres. She held membership in the American Association of University Women, the American Association of University Professors, the National Council of Negro Women, Christian Educators, Executive Women, and the Ministerial Alliance of Minneapolis. She was a life member of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association and the NAACP, served on the Stairstep Foundation Community Reclamation Project Council of Elders, and was a former board member of Twin Cities Opportunities Industrialization Center (TCOIC). Her name was honored in the 15th edition of Who's Who Among American Women. She also served on the board of Cedar Riverside People, supporting initiatives including a medical clinic, veterinary clinic, Way to Grow, and Senior Citizens programs.

Dr. Battle was the co-founder and pastor of Grace Temple Deliverance Center, and president of Willa Grant Battle Center and Grace Temple Ministries, all base in Minneapolis. She also co-founded Gospel Temple in St. Paul, MN. Her vision extended far beyond U.S. borders. She was the founder of the House of Refuge Missions in Haiti, West Indies, where she established numerous churches and schools. Through her tireless missionary work of 70 years in Haiti, she built and completed the Doris Akers Memorial High School, Willa Grant Battle Elementary School, a kindergarten, mission home, and the Good Samaritan Hospital, which opened on July 1st, 2002, on the Willa Grant Battle Campus in Boutillier, Haiti. The hospital provides free services in a remote area of the country.

Dr. Battle's life was a living sermon—one of faith in action, scholarship with

purpose, and love without borders. Her legacy endures through the churches she founded, the institutions she built, the leaders she mentored, and the countless lives she uplifted.

She is survived by her daughter, Rev. Glarushia Davis of St. Paul. Two grandchildren, Walter L. Davis of Minneapolis, and Willi Davis Martin of Lawrenceville, GA. Six great grandchildren: Ashley Wall, Westly Davis, DeMico Davis, Justin Martin, Walter Davis Jr., and Jaylen Martin. Sister-in-law, Bessie Battle, brother-in-law, Bishop Bob Battle (Wilma), Sister-in-law, Evangelist-Missionary Louella Pittman, and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

A true soldier of the cross. To God be all the glory.

SERVICES

Celebration of Life

Monday February 16th, and Tuesday 17th, 2026

3pm to 7pm CST

Memorial Service

Wednesday, February 18th, 2026

10am to 2pm CST

Location For Each Service

Grace Temple

1908 4th Ave. South

Minneapolis, MN 55404

Interment

Lakewood Cemetery

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Dr. Willa Grant Battle's mission in Haiti, founded over 70 years ago in obedience to God's call to serve. Through

this ministry, she brought healing, education and the Gospel to the people of Boutillier. Your gift will help ensure that her servants heart and God-given mission and ensure her legacy of service endures.

Donations made be made through Cash App \$willagbattlle or mail them to Grace Temple Deliverance Center 1908 4th Ave S Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Cemetery Details

Lakewood Cemetery

3600 Hennepin Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Previous Events

Wake

FEB 16. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Grace Temple Ministries
1908 S 4th Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Wake

FEB 17. 3:00 PM - 9:00 PM (CT)

Grace Temple Ministries
1908 S 4th Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Celebration of Life

FEB 18. 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Grace Temple Ministries
1908 S 4th Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Tribute Wall

ST

“ Mom Battle, you will never be forgotten. Thank you so much for the love you had for the Haitian people, and the country of Haiti. 🇧🇩 I have great memories of you as my pastor in Haiti, I shall never forget you. I love you! 🕯️

Matthew 25:23 KJV

His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Saintanne Tipton

Saintanne Tipton - February 13 at 10:21 PM

BH

Honoring the ministry, passion, dedication and legacy of Mom Battle! She was a giant in the Spirit and General of Generals in the Body of Christ! My Dad Tom Tipton sang for the church often! I remember the power of her sermons and the Glory of the Lord Falling!!

May she Rest Well in the Arms of the Lord!

Beverly Tipton Hammond

Beverly Tipton Hammond - February 16 at 10:25 PM

CJ

“ Cousins Rose Ward and Ramona Johnson purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Bishop Dr Willa Grant Battle.



Cousins Rose Ward and Ramona Johnson - February 08 at 07:31 PM

CJ

“ Cousins Rose Ward and Ramona Johnson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bishop Dr Willa Grant Battle.

Cousins Rose Ward and Ramona Johnson - February 08 at 07:31 PM

MS

“ Dr. Willa Battle you will be dearly missed down here on earth. I know you are resting in His arms. Sympathy goes out to the family and the body of Christ. She was truly a warrior and a lioness. RIP!
Min. Sybil Lang from Maple Grove, MN

Min. Sybil - January 29 at 10:50 AM