



Debra Higgins

OCT 27, 1955 - FEB 5, 2026



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Debra Higgins

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Debra Nadine Johnson Higgins

Debra Nadine Johnson Higgins, age 70, passed peacefully on February 5, 2026, surrounded by love. She was born on October 27, 1955, in Lakeland, Florida. Her life was a beautiful testimony of faith, devotion, and grace.

Debra was the beloved wife of Bishop James Higgins, with whom she shared 51 years of marriage and a life rooted in love, laughter, and unwavering commitment. Her first and greatest love was for Jesus. Family was the joy of her heart, and she especially loved birthdays and Christmas—any occasion that gathered her family together. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother whose nurturing spirit and gentle, honest strength shaped countless lives and will continue to influence generations to come.

A woman of deep and abiding faith, Debra loved the Lord and lived her life in service to Him and to others. She faithfully served alongside her husband for 45 years in ministry. She was a worshiper who cherished nothing more than being in the presence of her Savior. She was a prayer warrior, singer and songwriter, teacher, administrator, and spiritual caregiver to multitudes throughout her lifetime. She was a faithful member of Tabernacle of Praise Tampa Bay, where her kindness, prayers, and encouragement touched countless lives. Her faith was not only spoken—it



Obituary

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was lived daily through compassion, generosity, and steadfast love.

Those who knew Debra will remember her warm smile, her quiet strength, and her unique ability to make others feel seen and deeply cherished. She was well known for her red velvet cake, blonde brownies, and roast, and she lovingly crocheted blankets for her family as treasured keepsakes. She carried grace through both joyful seasons and difficult ones, and her life consistently reflected hope, even in the face of adversity.

She is survived by her loving husband of 51 years, Bishop James Higgins; her daughter, Jami Higgins Thompson; son-in-law, Thomas Thompson; granddaughter, Trinity Thompson (Kevin); great-grandchildren, Bayne and Birdie; and grandson, Jarin Thompson.

She is also survived by her sons: Jeremy James Higgins (Mia) and their sons, Jayce and Jayden, who is already in heaven; Joshua Aaron Higgins (Jenny) and their children, Jocelyn, Raquel, Leon, Miles, and Waylon; Jesse Amyas Higgins (Rebecca) and their children, Memphis and McKinley; and Jariah Michael Higgins (Katie) and their sons, Jackson and Riley.

She is further survived by her brother, Larry Johnson (Barbara); her sister, Kandi Johnson; and many dear relatives and friends who loved her deeply.

A celebration of Debra's life will be held Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at Sunset Memorial Gardens, 11005 N. US Highway 301, Thonotosassa, FL 33592. Visitation will be held at 12 noon. A Celebration of a Life Well Lived at 1pm. Interment will follow at Sunset Memorial Gardens.



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Though our hearts are heavy, we rejoice in the promise that she is now at peace in the presence of the Lord she loved so dearly. Her legacy of faith, love, and devotion will live on in all who were blessed to know her.

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness...”

—2 Timothy 4:7–8 (KJV)

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the family.

<https://gofund.me/8dfaa91d8>




Events


Debra Higgins

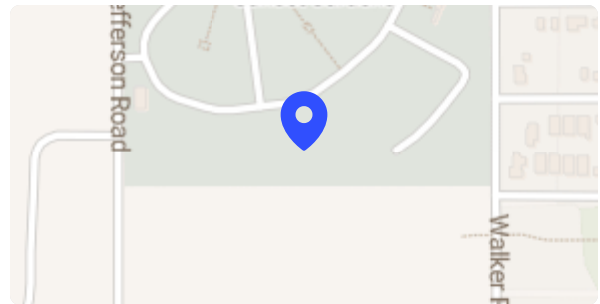
OCT 27, 1955 - FEB 5, 2026

Visitation


 **Tuesday**, February 17, 2026

 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM ET


 **Sunset Funeral Home**
11005 N US Highway 301, Thonotosassa FL
33592

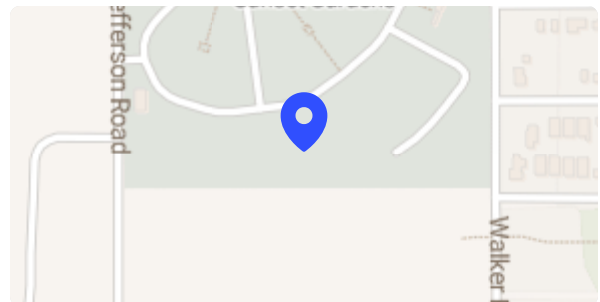


Funeral Service

 **Tuesday**, February 17, 2026


 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM ET


 **Sunset Funeral Home**
11005 N US Highway 301, Thonotosassa FL
33592

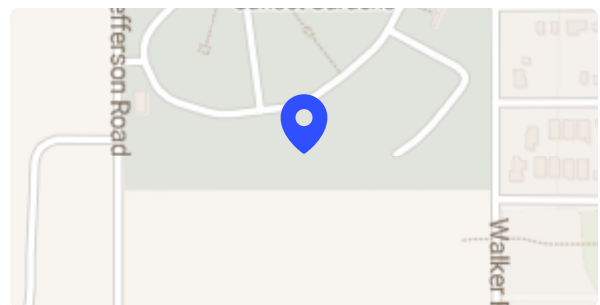


Graveside Service

 **Tuesday**, February 17, 2026

 3:00 PM ET

 **Sunset Memory Gardens**
11005 N US Highway 301, Thonotosassa FL
33592





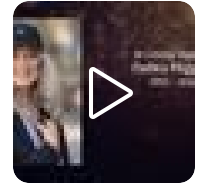
Tribute Wall

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Sunset Funeral Home & Memory Gardens shared a **Video**.



February 17 at 9:15 AM



Pastor Hector Gomez posted:

Sister Debbie, We had many good times together in the seven years we spent together at New Life Christian Center, and will always have fond memories of fellowships together. Have to say, you always made great Potato Soup. May You Rest In Peace. Love you always, Hector & Evelyn Gomez & Family

February 17 at 12:15 AM



Debi Lynn Phillips Official lit a candle in honor of Debra.

I did not have the pleasure of meeting Debra, or her Husband, but just knowing her wonderful Son Joshua, and his beautiful wife Jenny, and sharing the works of them & Jariah, it is clear that the legacy she leaves behind with all of her children, & husband, has truly been, and shall be, an everlasting blessing & treasure! Their children are so gifted; and the genuine love that they share with others is such a great blessing! God tells us to train our children in the way they should go & when they are old they will not depart from it! (Proverbs 22.6) Well done, Faithful Servant, Debra! You are a blessing indeed! In loving memory always....



February 16 at 2:54 AM



Debi Lynn Phillips Official posted:

I did not have the pleasure of meeting Debra, or her Husband, but just knowing her wonderful Son Joshua, and his beautiful wife Jenny, and sharing the works of them & Jariah, it is clear that the legacy she leaves behind with all of her children, & husband, has truly been, and shall be, an everlasting blessing & treasure! Their children are so gifted; and the genuine love that they share with others is such a great blessing! God tells us to train our children in the way they should go & when they are old they will not depart from it! (Proverbs 22.6) Well done, Faithful Servant, Debra! You are a blessing indeed! In loving memory always....

February 16 at 2:50 AM



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Matt, Amanda, Ava & Anna Thomas sent a Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet to the Higgins family.

February 14 at 11:47 AM



Anonymous planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Debra.

February 12 at 2:51 PM



Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Higgins family.

February 12 at 2:51 PM



Bren Cash posted:

Many memories of Pastor Debbie. So in shock. When she came out to sing at new life I was so happy. I grabbed her one time and wouldn't let her go. Love you pastor Debbie. Sing for Jesus we, ll be there soon

February 11 at 4:31 PM



Anonymous sent an Arrive in Style to the Higgins family.

February 11 at 10:38 AM



Darren & Shannon Tyler. Conduit Church planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Debra.

February 11 at 10:38 AM





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Jerry Lopez posted:

Remember the "Little Cubans" I made when the Bucs won there 1st Superbowl, that day was so much fun with yall!!

February 11 at 1:44 AM



Jerry Lopez posted:

I love all of yall so much!! I'm sorry for this great loss!! My heart is with yall thru this tough time!! I know Pastor Debbie and my late wife Janette are partying and worshipping GOD in heaven, no more cancer pain because there is none there!! Amen!!!

February 11 at 1:41 AM



Ahna Harris shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.



February 10 at 1:34 PM



Media

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February 17 at 9:15 AM





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Ahna Harris shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

February 10 at 1:34 PM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Debra by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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