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S.C. SUPREME COURT



Irma Ruth Brooks

Passed 03/29/2026

Columbia, SC

Irma Ruth Brooks, beloved wife, mother, daughter, attorney, educator, tennis enthusiast, and woman of unwavering faith, passed away on March 29, 2026 at the age of 57, following a courageous and faith-filled battle with cancer. Fittingly, she was called home on Palm Sunday—a day symbolizing victory, promise, and peace.

Family Visitation will be held 3PM til 6PM Friday, April 3, 2026 at Hayes F. Samuels, Sr. Memorial

Chapel, 114 N. Church St., Manning, SC.

**Memorial services will be held 1PM Saturday,
April 4, 2026 at Manning High School
Gymnasium, 2155 Paxville Hwy., Manning, SC.**

Born on October 12, 1968, Irma was the second eldest daughter of Ruth Thelma Williams Ratchford and John Lucious Ratchford, Jr. and the cherished granddaughter of Lena Esther King Williams and Henry Williams. She was raised in Clarendon County, South Carolina where she received her early education and graduated from Manning High School, Class of 1986. From an early age, there was a quiet strength about Irma—a sense that her life was destined to reach beyond boundaries. That calling shaped her into a leader within both her family and community.

A true trailblazer, Irma became the first in her immediate family to graduate from college. With courage and determination, she pursued higher education at the University of South Carolina, earning a degree in Journalism before continuing on to law school. In 1995, she began a legal career that would span more than three decades.

Irma was a force in every space she entered. As a prosecutor, mediator, guardian ad litem, and

advocate for justice—especially for children—she carried herself with integrity, excellence, and purpose. Her presence in the courtroom was commanding, yet her approach remained deeply rooted in compassion and respect for others. She understood that behind every case was a human story, and she never lost sight of that truth.

Throughout her career, she built lasting connections across legal, educational, church, and community spaces, leaving an indelible mark on all who encountered her.

Her passion for learning and service extended beyond the courtroom. Irma later earned a Master's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Phoenix, reflecting her deep love for children and commitment to shaping future generations. Whether homeschooling her children or leading educational initiatives, she poured into others with intention, joy, and an unshakable belief that anything was possible through faith.

Irma was married to Charles Thomas Brooks, III, and together they built a life grounded in love, faith, and family. She was a proud and devoted mother to four children: Lena Elizabeth Pringle, Charles "Chase" Thomas Brooks, IV, Julia Victoria Brooks, and Jada Kathleen Brooks. Of all her accomplishments, motherhood was her most

cherished calling. To her children, she was their protector, their greatest supporter, and their living example of strength, grace, and unconditional love.

Irma lived life with beauty, intention, and joy. She expressed love through gathering, thoughtful gestures, and meaningful connection, creating spaces filled with warmth, laughter, and belonging.

She found peace in nature, horseback riding, tending to plants, flowers, and the quiet beauty of the outdoors, and she carried a deep appreciation for style, elegance, and the essence of a true Southern woman.

She also embraced her passions wholeheartedly.

Irma had a deep love for tennis—not only as a player, but as a mentor and advocate. She became a certified USTA official and dedicated herself to growing the game, particularly by offering free and reduced lessons to children from underserved communities. She was an active member of several tennis clubs and traveled to major tournaments, including the U.S. Open, Indian Wells and Cincinnati Open.

She was also known as an exceptional doubles partner—someone who uplifted those around her with both her knowledge of the game and her genuine encouragement. She had a unique ability

to lift the spirits of her partners, even in difficult moments, and everyone who shared the court with her valued not just her skill, but her heart.

Above all, Irma was a woman of steadfast and unshakable faith. She often reminded others that “revelation is golden,” encouraging them to seek God deeply and trust fully in His plan. Her life was a testament to that belief. Even in her most difficult moments, her faith never wavered.

In her final chapter, Irma demonstrated extraordinary strength and resilience, enduring nearly two years of treatment with courage, grace, and unwavering belief. Though given limited time more than once, she continued to fight, love, and stand in faith. Her life became a living testimony of perseverance and the power of trusting God through every season.

As written in Psalm 23, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want...”—these were not just words to Irma, but the foundation upon which she lived.

She leaves behind a legacy that cannot be measured—one of faith, perseverance, love, and impact. In addition to her husband and four children, she is survived by her siblings; Sandra V. Ratchford Woods (Pastor David Jr), John L.

Ratchford, III and Dr. Shawanda Ratchford Matthews (Michael Singleton, Sr), aunts; Willie Mae Williams, Dorothy Williams, Inez McMillan (Gus), a host of nieces and nephews and a large and loving extended family, dear friends across many communities, and her beloved pets, Peaches and Ace.

Irma Ruth Brooks lived a life of purpose and poured into others without hesitation. She was a light, a force, and a vessel of love.

Though her absence is deeply felt, her legacy will continue to speak for generations to come.

“Well done, thy good and faithful servant.”

In lieu of flowers, the Brooks Family asks that you donate to “The Irma Brooks Foundation” which will fund equine therapy, tennis scholarships to support young people, publish her children’s books series she started, and support ongoing advocacy efforts. You can also donate to causes that are near and dear to Irma’s heart including: The Kidney Foundation, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, and Literacy Council.