



Aretha Washington

October 16, 1932 - September 9, 2023

Her Life Story

A LIFE WELL LIVED

Rev. Aretha B. Washington

In the tapestry of life, there are threads of resilience, faith, and love that weave together to create an extraordinary story. Aretha Buckhannan was born to the late Jack Buckhannan and

Willie Mae Paulk on October 16, 1932, in Douglas, Georgia, and was a shining example of a life lived with purpose and devotion.

Aretha, the eldest among 17 siblings, was entrusted with great responsibility from a young age.

Her grandmother, a midwife, instilled in her the values of patience, strength, endurance, and

integrity. As she cared for other children, while her grandmother worked, Aretha's character was forged, preparing her for the remarkable journey that lay ahead.

At the age of 16, Aretha's life took a profound turn when she received the precious gift of the

Holy Spirit during a neighborhood gathering that taught about Jesus.

However, she faced

pressure from opposition, which led her to temporarily step away from her faith.

In adulthood, Aretha became a loving mother to two boys, Billy Burton, and Ollie Burton, Jr.

Tragically, she experienced the heart-wrenching loss of her youngest son, at the tender age of

34. The pain of losing a child is a burden like no other, yet Aretha transformed her sorrow into

a boundless love that she showered upon others, becoming a mother to the nations.

Life eventually led her to Pompano Beach, FL, in 1955 where Elisha Washington became her

husband. She embarked on a career as a Cosmetologist, despite her initial aspiration to become

a nurse. Financial constraints and time limitations redirected her path, but she excelled in her

chosen trade. When her family moved to New York, God's hand became evident in her life

once again. Aretha obtained her New York Cosmetology license and thrived in her profession,

even having to turn away clients due to high demand.

However, it was in New York, that God's calling took a new dimension. Co-founding the Free

Church of Deliverance with Minister Pierce, Aretha's profound love for God led her to a

ministry she had initially envisioned. Despite facing numerous obstacles in societal opposition

in the 1980's, she was among the pioneering women who paved the way for female preachers.

In 1980, Pastor Washington founded Little Church by the Wayside for Jesus, Inc. with only

eight members in a small house. Her cousin Dottie's offer to use part of her shop as a place for church services was a divine opportunity. The church's growth was astounding, eventually culminating in the construction of a new church at 2500 NW. 14th St., Fort Lauderdale, FL in 1985.

With unwavering faith and a mere \$6,000, Aretha's next project, the Washington Faith Outreach Center, became a reality. This two-story building houses Apple of My Eye Childcare and Learning Center, along with a multipurpose facility, both completely debt-free.

The Vision

Aretha's vision was fast and encompassing:

- She aimed to educate and empower young girls to become responsible adults.
- Her ministry embraces all, teaching the young at heart, and emphasizing the importance of men leading their household.
- She tirelessly spread the message of God's love for all mankind.
- In her presence, everybody was somebody.

Travels

Aretha's life was enriched by her travels to various revival crusades, where she sought spiritual inspiration and growth. She attended gatherings led by renowned evangelists such as Katheryn Kuhlman, Morris Cerullo, and countless others. Her journey took her to destinations such as New York, California, Hawaii, and the Bahama Islands, each destination

experience added a new layer to her spiritual tapestry.

In addition to her spiritual pursuits, Aretha was also a devoted learner in the realm of Cosmetology. She attended various hair shows, where she eagerly absorbed the latest trends in hair styling and hair care, continuously seeking to improve her craft.

Work of the Gospel

Aretha's life was a symphony of unwavering dedication to the Gospel, a melody that touched hearts and transformed lives. Her commitment to spreading the message of Christ's love and grace knew no bounds. Through her powerful preaching, earnest witnessing, and the profound impact she had on the lives of countless individuals, she became a beacon of light in a world often shrouded in darkness.

Within the tapestry of her ministry, Aretha assumed a role far beyond that of a pastor. She was a nurturing and guiding force, a spiritual mother to many who sought her wisdom and warmth.

Her son, Elder Billy Burton, recognized the call to support her mission, and in 1994, he and his family made the profound move from Clewiston, FL to join her in ministry.

Alongside him,

Aretha's nephews, Deacon Jess Temple, and Elder Roger Patrick, were assigned to assist in her ministry as she gracefully matured in age.

It was foretold, both through prophecy and the whisper of family bonds, that Jess and Roger had a unique destiny intertwined with their beloved aunt's mission. Jess

received a prophetic calling from a young age, guiding their later years. Similarly, Roger's mother, before her passing, entrusted him with a sacred purpose - to stand alongside his aunt and continue the sacred work of spreading the Gospel.

In this remarkable union of family and faith, Aretha's legacy lives on not only in the lives she touched directly but also in the future generations who carry forth the torch of her ministry.

Her impact will forever resonate, a testament to the enduring power of faith and the bonds of family united in service to the Lord.

Family

She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Elisha Washington: her sons Ollie Burton

Jr. and Billy Burton; her sisters, Debra Buckhannan, Hazel Buckhannan Terry, and Betty

Buckhannan Wells; her brothers, Malcy Buckhannan, Roosevelt Buckhannan, William D.

Patrick, Donnie Buckhannan and Willie James Buckhannan. Her stepsiblings: Mary Francis

Taylor and Lonnie Smith.

Aretha's legacy lives on through her beloved daughters-in-law: Mary Burton and Patrina

Rutledge, three dear sisters, Valerie Terry (Richard), Ella Gallimore, and Annie Ruth Jones.

Four devoted brothers: Morris Cal Buckhannan (Mae), Terry Lee Buckhannan, Curtis

Buckhannan, and John Rush. Four caring stepsiblings: Bobbie Smith, Betty Smith, Helen

Jones, and Margaret Smith. Six grandchildren: Luther Burton (Willette), Cynthia Vaughn, Tangie Burroughs (Jonathan), QwaTonya Burton Seipp (Mark), Ollie Burton, Kerri Burton.

Twelve Great-Grandchildren: Artavius Edmond, Aquera Johnson (Gerard), Major Thornton III, Jada Blue, Zandy Noel Buchholz (Chris), Loni Burton, Jay Poole, Tommy Poole, Kai Burton, Tavis Burton, Luther Leonard Burton, and Ontenerria Burton. Four Great-Great Grandchildren: Yanara Buchholz, Zyra Johnson, Zoriah Johnson, and Alayah Johnson.

Godsons: David Smith and Marvin Hightower. Spiritual Daughters/Sons: Mother Fran Dennis, Pastor Tawanda Sweeting-Anderson, Minister Kimberly Watson, Deacon Melvin Watson, Pastor Lucius Harris, numerous nieces, nephews, and an extensive circle of relatives, friends, spiritual children, and her extensive circle of loved ones. She shared a special bond with her dedicated caregivers, (former caregiver Sister Delores Harris-Glenn) Sister Susie McMillian and Minister Linda Wamley; Respite Care was provided by her sister Valerie Terry and her granddaughter QwaTonya Seipp; Special members of the clergy: Apostle Dr. R.G. Williams, Minister Dorothy Bryant, and Dr. Queen McCormick.

There are four out of the eight remaining members, Sister Helen Smith and Deacon Willie Anderson remain lifelong members of Little Church by the Wayside for Jesus.

Pastor Tom

Bryant and Minister Dorothy Bryant have followed the paths that originated by branching out

and continuing to preach the gospel.

On Saturday morning, September 9, 2023, Aretha embarked on a new journey, one filled with

love, serenity, and joy. Her life was a testament to unwavering faith, boundless love, and

tireless service. As we bid farewell to this faithful servant, we say "Well Done, Thy Good and

Faithful Servant! Job Well Done!"

Cemetery Details

Sunset Memorial Gardens

3201 NW 19th street
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **22**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Little Church By The Wayside For Jesus
2500 NW 14th Street
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

Service

SEP **23**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Little Church By The Wayside For Jesus
2500 NW 14th Street
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

Tribute Wall



“ *Aretha Washington*

September 27, 2023 at 05:27 AM



“ *OUR DEEPEST SYMPHANY TO THE ENTIRE FAMILY. HER MEMORY WILL FOREVER BE IN OUR HEARTS*

*FROM
MILLS INCOME TAX & FINANCIAL SERVICES FAMILY AND
STAFF*

MILLS FINANCIAL SERVICES - September 24, 2023 at 07:56 AM



“ *MILLS FINANCIAL SERVICES lit a candle in memory of Aretha Washington*



MILLS FINANCIAL SERVICES - September 24, 2023 at 07:52 AM



“ *MILLS TAX & FINANCIAL SERVICES lit a candle in memory of Aretha Washington*



MILLS TAX & FINANCIAL SERVICES - September 24, 2023 at 07:51 AM

RM

“ REETA MILLS lit a candle in memory of Aretha Washington



REETA MILLS - September 24, 2023 at 07:50 AM

BM

“ Thank you for speaking life over me 26 years ago, you shall and not die! Sharing phone calls and encouraging me to maintain my growth in Christ. It's has been a such a blessing on my life. I will forever holds those memories with much LOVE!❤️❤�



Brylene Moss - September 23, 2023 at 02:17 AM

TB

“ Even at 90 years of age, I guess I was foolish to think maybe you had another 90 years left in you. You were so full of life and your faith never wavered. Coming to the church in 1987 as a young kid, it was fun. Over the years, it became routine that we would check on each other regularly. I earned the title “Your Deacon.” I guess it was honorary, because I sure didn’t earn it (lol). I’ll miss our phone calls and me just stopping in and having casual conversations with you. I enjoyed everything you’ve ever done for me and my family over these 36 years of knowing you. Our talks in the garage while you sat in your car, or the sitting at your kitchen table or in your bedroom where you were comfortable at. Missing you is hard but I made sure I spent plenty of time with you, I have no regrets about that. You kept the faith and you did things on your terms. I’m forever grateful for the years we had with you. You will surely be missed. Love, your deacon Tavares.

Tavares Blake - September 22, 2023 at 11:06 PM



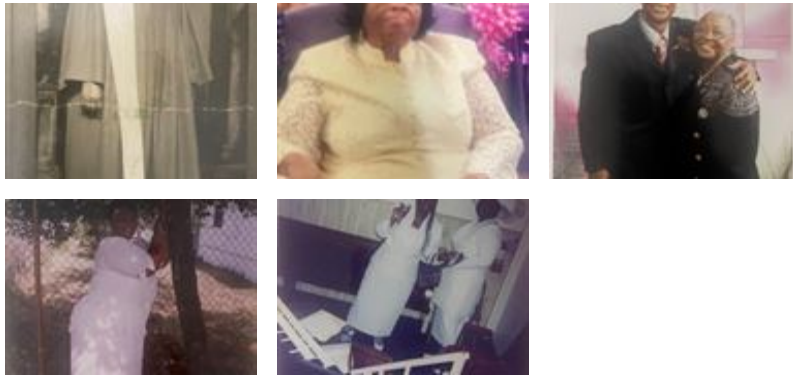
“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Aretha Washington.*



September 22, 2023 at 10:48 AM



“ *189 files added to the album LifeTributes*



L.C. Poitier Funeral Home - September 22, 2023 at 09:34 AM



“ *In honor of my dear Aunt Reather. Recalling with depth of hair appointments in your home as a young girl. Your eternal smile, touch, and love. Your example of a strong virtuous woman, helped to model your determination and spiritual commitment. Thanks for showing me undying love. I'll see her on the other side.*

Jackie Washington Mills Smith, Niece - September 21, 2023 at 09:37 AM



“ 11 files added to the album Memories Album



L.C. Poitier Funeral Home - September 20, 2023 at 01:47 PM



“ I miss you so much, spending our lunch time under a tree eating and talking about the goodness of God, Love you so much ❤️❤️❤️



Susie Mcmillian - September 20, 2023 at 07:02 AM



“ Your niece Val loves you



Miracle Baker - September 19, 2023 at 07:22 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



L.C. Poitier Funeral Home - September 19, 2023 at 11:49 AM



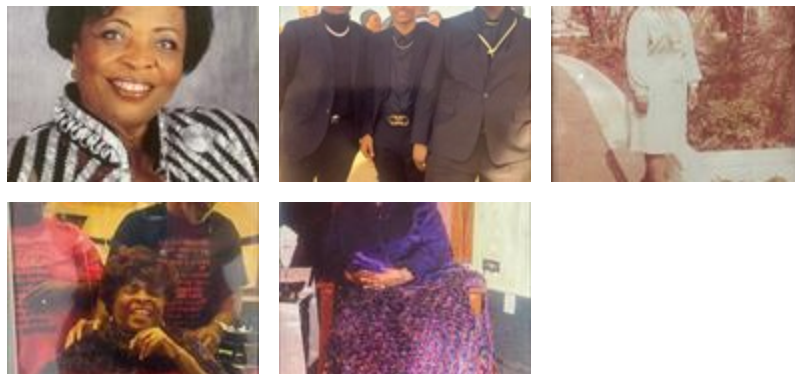
“ 8 files added to the album Memories Album



L.C. Poitier Funeral Home - September 19, 2023 at 09:44 AM



“ 176 files added to the album Memories Album



L.C. Poitier Funeral Home - September 18, 2023 at 06:50 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



L.C. Poitier Funeral Home - September 14, 2023 at 09:06 PM

KS

“ You'll always be missed auntie lovely from your nephew *Kenny Shelly*

Kenneth Shelly - September 13, 2023 at 07:15 PM

CH

“ *Cyneria G Howard lit a candle in memory of Aretha Washington*



Cyneria G Howard - September 11, 2023 at 09:48 AM

VO

“ *Vanester Osborne lit a candle in memory of Aretha Washington*



Vanester Osborne - September 10, 2023 at 08:19 AM

VO

May condolences to the family 💔 rest in the Peace of God, Pastor Washington 🙏❤️

Vanester Osborne - September 10, 2023 at 08:21 AM

DJ

“ There was and is no one like you on this Earth! You did God’s work with all of us! You were loved and we will Miss you!

Dr. Rasheda Jackson - September 09, 2023 at 11:53 AM

MI

“ I love you Auntie and I will miss you dearly. Your hazel eyed twin - Miracle

Miracle - September 09, 2023 at 11:49 AM