



Order of Service

Pastor Marvin E. Harris, Presiding
Pastor Darren Croft, Presiding

- Organ Prelude.....Organist
- Processional.....Clergy, Officials, and Family
- Final Farewell.....The Family
- Song of Praise.....St. Phillips Baptist Church Choir
- Prayer of Comfort.....Apostle Gilbert Coleman
Transforming the Minds of Men
- Scripture Reading.....Pastor Kristopher Reese
Grace Baptist Church
Old Testament: Psalms 27:1-4
New Testament: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10
- Song of Praise.....Voices of Praise
- Acknowledgment of Cards and Telegrams.....Shereena Grierson and Desmond King
- Obituary.....Shereena Grierson
- Song of Praise.....Voices of Praise
- Remarks.....Pastor Dennis Pennick, Liberty Baptist Church
Pastor Stanton Drinks, Golden Star Baptist
Bishop Robert Williams, Christian Tabernacle Baptist Church
Pastor Joseph E. Daniels
Pastor Paul Lee, Jones Memorial Baptist Church
Pastor D. Tyrone Brandon, First Calvary Baptist Church
- Song of Praise.....Voices of Praise
- Remarks.....Bishop George E. Gibson, The Love Nation
Pastor Antonio McAllister, Second Shiloh Baptist Church
Deacon Rodney Allen
Deacon Melvin Calhoun
Pastor Marvin Harris Sr., St. Phillips Baptist Church
Bishop Keith Reed, Sharon Baptist Church
- Song of Praise.....Voices of Praise
- Family Tribute.....Willie's nephews and nieces - William Nelson
Willie's Sister- Rose Sykes
Willie's Children
- Song of Praise.....Voices of Praise
- Eulogistic Tribute.....Pastor Damone B. Jones
Bible Way Baptist Church
- Benediction.....
- Recessional.....Clergy, Officials, and Family
- Organ Postlude



Don't Cry For Me

*Don't cry for me.
I will be okay.
Heaven is my home now,
and this is where I'll stay.*

*Don't cry for me.
I'm where I belong.
I want you to be happy
and try to stay strong.*

*Don't cry for me.
It was just my time,
but I will see you someday
on the other side.*

*Don't cry for me.
I am not alone.
The angels are with me
to welcome me home.*

*Don't cry for me,
for I have no fear.
All my pain is gone,
and Jesus took my tears.*

*Don't cry for me.
This is not the end.
I'll be waiting here for you
when we meet again.*

Pallbearers & Flower Bearers

Family and Friends

Interment

Washington Crossing National Cemetery
830 Highland Road
Newtown, PA 18940

In Appreciation

The family would like to express their sincerest gratitude to everyone for their condolences, prayers, and outreach during their time of bereavement. We are truly appreciative. May God bless you all.

Special thanks to Sharon Baptist Church, St. Phillips Baptist Church and G. Choice Funeral Chapel.



Professional Services Entrusted To:
G. CHOICE FUNERAL CHAPEL INC.
2530 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19132
215-227-0100 Office | 215-225-1256 Fax
www.gchoicefc.com | Britni' Choice - Cartwright, Supervisor

PASTOR

Emeritus



Willie

I. GRAVES, SR.

JUNE 29, 1951 — JUNE 14, 2024

Celebration of Life
Wednesday, June 26, 2024

VIEWING: 9:00AM | SERVICE: 11:00AM

Sharon Baptist Church

3955 CONSHOCKEN AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19131
BISHOP KEITH REED SR., HOST PASTOR

WELL DONE, THY GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT...



His Story

Willie Irvin Graves Sr., affectionately known to his family and friends as Will, Willie I, or just "Graves," was born on June 29, 1951, to Reverend George Levi Graves and Annie Mae Graves. He transitioned peacefully to the loving arms of our Lord on Friday, June 14, 2024.

Willie, the youngest of three brothers and four sisters, was a proud graduate of Germantown High School, where he excelled in Sports and Music. His dedication to service led him to the U.S. Air Force, where he served in Virginia and South Vietnam. His two years of honorable service, which culminated in an Honorable Discharge on January 13, 1972, stand as a testament to his commitment and bravery.

Willie met the former Lillian R. Boyd in 1968, and he was smitten by her. They dated for five years before they were married on August 18, 1973; from this union, they were blessed with three daughters and one son: Tiffany, Lillian, Willie Jr., and Lynet.

Willie's faith was a cornerstone of his life. He became very active in his home church and served on the Deacon Board as Co-Chairman for two years. The Lord called him into the ministry that same year. After a period of indecision, he preached his trial sermon in August of 1975, titled 'Here Am I, Send Me'. In January of 1976, Graves was called to pastor his home church, Ala Branch Missionary Baptist Church, and remained the Pastor for four years. In 1980, the Lord continued to guide Willie, and he was called to Pastor St. Phillip's Baptist Church. He preached his first sermon as Pastor on Sunday, October 5, 1980, where he remained the Senior Pastor until his retirement in 2021, after which he became Pastor Emeritus. Willie was a phenomenal preacher and teacher who approached every preaching moment seriously. His mission was to ensure every time he had the opportunity to preach and teach, he gave his all, and prepared people to know God personally and have to the tools to face life's challenges. Willie had a unique gift for using his life experiences and humor to draw listeners into his messages, making his teachings both relatable and impactful.

Pastor Graves was the longest-standing pastor in the history of Saint Phillips, and his ministry extended to many churches in the city of Philadelphia and across the country, where he gained many friends in the ministry. Some of his most notable ministry relationships were with the Greater Philadelphia Fellowship of Christian Churches, where he served as President, Lighthouse Marriage Ministries, PEKBA, Eastern Region Conference, and the National Baptist Association.

One of Willie's Gravisms was, "You can't grow if you don't know." He dedicated many hours of study to perfecting his calling as Pastor/Teacher, which compelled him to seek higher education. Willie attended the Manna Bible Institute for two and one-half years, as well as The Philadelphia College of Bible, where he majored in Pastoral Studies and received his Bachelor of Science Degree in May 1983. After 31 years of being out of the classroom, he decided to go back to school as an encouragement to his children and others that it is never too late to finish what you started. He attended the Reformed Episcopal Seminary located in Blue Bell, PA, where he earned awards in Pastoral Theology and the Alumni Association Award for character and service awards. On June 3, 2017, Willie received his Masters of Divinity Degree from Reformed Episcopal Seminary.



Willie's love for music was a part of his soul. He came from a musical family, and in his youth, he sang with The Illusions and was the lead on their hit song "Shake Your Mini." He also was part of the gospel group The Violinaires, where he enjoyed traveling and spreading the gospel. Naturally, his love for music flowed through his ministry, and he was keen on any choir or group singing to the Lord in excellence.

Willie was a loving father and husband who loved spending time with his family, playing video and board games, going to the movies, and having life conversations with loved ones. Willie was a foodie and enjoyed going out to restaurants, where he would routinely order all the appetizers off the menu. He loved hosting large gatherings, especially during the holidays. In the summer, he would take trips to locations such as Virginia, Florida, Punta Cana, and Wildwood, to name a few. Willie's deep love for others extended beyond his family. He was a mentor and father figure to many. One of the most memorable moments was his participation in the Union League's annual Father-Daughter Dance, where he consistently had the largest table of daughters. Willie lived a full life, filled with love and honor. Reflecting on his journey, he once said, "I have loved and been loved. I have been used by God across the country. What more can I ask for?"

Willie was preceded in death by his father, George Levi Graves, and mother, Annie Mae Graves; his sisters, Mary Ellen "Dolly," Hilda, and Kathleen Earnestine; and his brothers, James Levi, John Henry, and George Daniel.

Left behind to further his legacy are his loving and devoted wife, Lillian Robena Graves, and children: Sean Ivryn, Tiffany Blythe (Darren), Lillian Laurine, Willie Ivryn (Erica), and Lynet Latoya, as well as his adopted daughter Shereena Pearline. He also leaves his grandchildren: Kaiyn Sarai, Anna Karen, Sean Corbin, and the light of his life Arden Noelle. His oldest sister, Rose Dora Sykes (Frank), a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, adopted sons and daughters, and friends are left to cherish the memories of his life and legacy.

Lovingly Submitted,

The Family

