

A Celebration of Life for

Geraldine Riggins Washington

*Sunrise:
August 18, 1947*



*Sunset:
June 2, 2024*

Thursday, June 20, 2024

Viewing: 10:00 a.m. | Service: 11:00 a.m.

From the Heart Church Ministries®
5055 Allentown Road | Suitland, Maryland 20746
Bishop John A. Cherry, II - Pastor

Obituary

On August 18, 1947, a beautiful baby girl named Geraldine was born to the late Reverend Arthur and Geneva Chambers Riggins in Havana, Florida. "Gerrie," as she was affectionately called, was the second oldest child of nine born to her parents. She was raised in a home where she and her siblings were taught about the Lord and the biblical principles of Jesus Christ.

Gerrie graduated as an honor student from the former Northside High School (currently Havana Northside High School) in 1965. After graduating high school, she continued her love for learning at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and Georgetown University respectively, while pursuing a career within the Federal Government.

Gerrie met and was joined in holy matrimony to Nathaniel S. Washington, Jr. and from this union was blessed with loving daughters, Natalie Sonjanette Washington and Danielle Nicole Washington. The family traveled and lived in various states and eventually settled in Oxon Hill, Maryland.

Gerrie started her career with the Federal Government in 1977 at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Immigration Naturalization Service where she worked as a Clerk of the Court until 1983. In February of 1983, Gerrie began working as a Program Analyst with the Department of Justice's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR). While at OPR, Gerrie assisted with internal investigations and helped Department attorneys perform their duties in accordance with the highest professional standards. She retired from the government after 30 years of dedicated service.

In 1986, Gerrie and her girls joined From the Heart Church Ministries® where she served faithfully. From 2001 to 2013, she served on the Board of Trustees under the leadership of Dr. John A. Cherry. She was a dedicated member of the Intercessory Prayer Counsel and volunteered in the Intercessory Prayer Ministry. Gerrie also attended the Women of God Lifegivers fellowships and annual retreats.

Gerrie was the family's historian who had recollection of past ancestral happenings. She remembered the origins of her family's roots and recited past anecdotes, painting vivid pictures for all listeners. Gerrie had a love for the English language, spoken and written, and she would often entertain others with tales peppered with details that only a lover of a good story could appreciate.

She lovingly wrote letters of encouragement and comfort to loved ones far and near. Gerrie expressed her love for most in her beautifully crafted and designed "Love Letters." She was a wordsmith who wielded and weaved the sword of the Lord in all the letters she wrote to family, friends, colleagues and even strangers. Gerrie's letters made people imagine being an eyewitness to the stories and experiences she described. Her letters and storytelling provided spiritual insight and answers to questions that had been unspoken. She often ended her letters with, "Love you, from my heart to your heart." In 2024, Gerrie was a contributing author to "Hope In the Waiting," a collection of 40 reflections and prayers for the Lent season.

Gerrie loved to pray, and she spent a considerable amount of time "in her prayer closet" with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Her prayer life was a testament to her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His mighty power as she often proclaimed one of her favorite scriptures, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). Gerrie participated in a weekly Bible study group while at DOJ and continued during retirement. In 2020, she became a frequent prayer participant in a weekly virtual-national prayer group known as "Upper Zoom." The Lord used Gerrie to help individuals develop a strong prayer life as she modeled how to seek justice, love mercifully, and walk humbly with God.

Gerrie will be remembered for being steadfastly determined to glorify God in all her ways. On Sunday, June 2, 2024, Gerrie transitioned peacefully and was received up to Glory surrounded by family. She will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Gerrie leaves to cherish her wonderful memory, her daughters, Natalie Sonjanette and Danielle Nicole; granddaughter, Briana Natasha; great-grandchildren: Jeremiah, Reagan, Nova, and Xavier Jr.; siblings: Annie Chandler, Helen Jones, Cornell (Audrey) Riggins, Kenneth (Cynthia) Riggins, Gwendolyn Crisp, Chappella Riggins, Vann (Shulamith) Riggins, JoAnn Smith, Lester Riggins and Ronnie Riggins; sister-in-law, Sandra Riggins; and a host of extended family members and friends who love her dearly.

Gerrie was preceded in death by her brothers, Dale and John Henry, and brother-in-law, Charles Crisp and other relatives.

Order of Service

Invocation

Congregational Hymn "O How I Love Jesus"

Scripture Reading

Old Testament: Psalm 91:1-7
New Testament: II Corinthians 5:1-8

Prayer of Comfort

Selection *FTH Adult Choir*

Acknowledgements

Remarks

Ms. Danielle Washington, Daughter
Ms. Gwendolyn Crisp, Sister
Pastor George Henderson, U.S. Department of Justice - Bible Study Group
Ms. Barbara Hollace, Upper Zoom Prayer Group
Ms. Lynn Brown, Sister-in-Christ

Obituary (*Read Silently*)

Song of Preparation *FTH Adult Choir*

Message of Hope *Bishop John A. Cherry, II - Pastor*

Call to Christ

Recessional

Interment

National Harmony Memorial Park Cemetery
7101 Sherriff Road, Hyattsville, Maryland 20785

Today's Prayer by *Geraldine Riggins Washington*

My prayer and praise to God is to thank Him. For You have taken note of my journey through life, caught each of my tears in Your bottle. I am bound by Your promise, O God. My life is my offering of thanksgiving to You. "For You have saved my soul from the darkness of death, steadied my feet from stumbling so I might continue to walk before God embraced in the light of the living" (Psalm 56:13 VOICE).

As a child I was taught the holy scriptures, to trust in the Lord with all my heart, to hold on to God's unchanging hand. When I was tempted to hold on to doubt and fear, my dad would remind me of the Word of God, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." (John 6:68 NIV).

The Lord is our Rock, our great high tower.

Father, you are with me and will never leave me. "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." (Psalm 119:105 NIV). Lord, every day I wake up is a gift from You. Thank you for joy!

The Mighty God, the Eternal God of past, present, and future has blessed us, He has redeemed us and sealed us by His Spirit. To Him be all glory, honor, domination, power, and majesty forever and ever, amen.



Words of Love

Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. Forever in our hearts.
~ **Vann, Shula, Solon, Seth and Sariah**

Auntie Momma! Thank you for the many prayers, written messages and showing us what a warrior looks like. You've blessed us in so many ways and you will be forever remembered for your charisma. I can only imagine you in your two piece suits, white linen clothing and shades to show just how HAPPY you are with the Savior.
~ **Love, Ranston**

Sissy, because of your diligence in studying God's word and your faithfulness in prayer, you were a wellspring of encouragement to Belen and me. I will miss our countless hours of exegeting scriptures as we built ourselves up in the faith while praying for family members and humanity at large. Your radiant smile, generosity, prayer life and genuine love for people will echo in my heart forever. I miss you.
~ **Love You Always, Gwen**

"Hey Sis" is how we greeted each other, because she was more than my sister-in-law, she truly was my sister. Her love, kindness, encouragement, and support throughout the years will be remembered forever. She was an amazing woman, and I'm grateful that God placed her in my life.
~ **Love, Cindy**

Auntie, I miss you dearly. Thank you for all of your love and support over the years. I will always cherish our time together, and I look forward to being reunited again one day.
~ **Love, Belen**

*Gerrie,
Thank you for guiding me from childhood to adulthood, always being a tremendous big sister. Your love, wisdom, and support have shaped me into who I am today. I will miss you deeply on this earth until we meet again. ~ **Love you and miss you always, Helen "Holly" Riggins Jones***

Auntie Gerrie,

Thank you for your prayers and wisdom throughout our lives. We will miss your prayers, conversations, and the beautiful texts that made us feel so special. Though you slipped away without a chance for good-bye, we know we will see you again.

*~ Love you, **The Williams Family***

Dear Nina, we miss you. Me, mommy, daddy, Reagan and Jeremiah are very sad.

*~ Love, **Nova Bean***

To Nina:

*Nina, we will always miss you in our hearts. We are very sad that you left us but we wish you a good time with the Lord. ~ Love, your great granddaughter **Reagan***

Dear Nina,

*Nova, Reagan and I are very sad. I have been with MiMi keeping her company and I have been visiting DeDe. We will miss you. ~ Love, **Jeremiah***

Mommy,

*I enjoyed 53 years with you, but the last three were the absolute BEST!!! I will miss your beautiful smile, your hugs good night, your early morning thumbs up letting me know that it was going to be a good day. The days we spent talking about the Bible and you explaining it was awesome. We had plans to walk through the community for daily exercise. Mommy I wanted more days with you, but God had other plans. I will cherish our wonderful memories. ~ Love, **Nikki***

A Friendship of Bouquet

*Friends are like flowers
All colors, scents and shapes
Some bloom early
And some bloom late*

*Our friendship grew
Nurtured with patience, faith and love
We were destined for sisterhood (Florida Ladies)
A gift from God above*

*We were like flowers
Distinctly different in many ways
But when placed in a vase
Such a beautiful friendship bouquet*

I don't know who will prepare those good meals that you cooked; your awesome sweet potato pie; our shopping outings; and last but not least – our big moments of trying to tell each other what to do – which by the way neither of us paid any attention to. You know, just like when we were given a 2 p.m. curfew from your girls! Ha!! It has been quite a journey to see the faithfulness of God in your life! Prayer warrior, author, chef, encourager, advisor, mother, grandmother and to me best friend. Thank you, my friend, for always being there for me and my family! Someone so special will never be forgotten. I love you! I am stronger and wiser because of the gifts that you freely gave to me.

*~ Your Bestie, **Sister Erma***



GERALDINE RIGGINS





Congregational Hymn

O HOW I LOVE JESUS

There is a Name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth; It sounds like music in my ear, The sweetest Name on earth.

Chorus

O, how I love Jesus, O, how I love Jesus, O, how I love Jesus, Because He first loved me!

It tells me of a Savior's love, Who died to set me free; It tells me of His precious blood, The sinner's perfect plea.

Chorus

It tells me what my Father hath in store for every day, And though I tread a darksome path, Yields sunshine all the way.

Chorus

It tells of One whose loving heart can feel my deepest woe, Who in each sorrow bears a part, That none can bear below.

Chorus

Acknowledgement

The family of Geraldine Riggins Washington extends heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your many acts of kindness, love and appreciation shown to us during this process. Gerrie was a cherished member of our family and will be forever etched in our hearts. We are immensely thankful for the support of numerous church members, friends and former coworkers during this difficult time. May God continue to bless you eternally!

Pallbearers

Cedric Chandler, Ranston Chandler, Troy Crisp, Caleb Riggins, Vann Riggins, and David Rustin

Honorary Pallbearers

Anthony Adams and Richard Dixon

Flower Bearers

From the Heart Church Family

Services Entrusted to:

*Hodges and Edwards Funeral Home
3910 Silver Hill Road
Hillcrest Heights, Maryland 20746*