

*In Loving Memory of*



*Eartha Lee Heatley*

*Sunrise*

September 25, 1925

*Sunset*

April 21, 2012

Service

Friday, April 27, 2012 - 11:00 a.m.

**GREATER UNIVERSAL BAPTIST CHURCH**

253 East 153rd Street • New York, New York

*Pastor Daniel Dupree, Officiating*

# Obituary

*“It was a clear beautiful day, everyone was having a great time, we bar-b-queed, ate, laughed, and told stories. Kenny and Omar began choosing people to be on their baseball team neither one of them wanted mom on their team because they thought she couldn’t play. I forgot which team mom ended up on, but I tell you when she went up to bat, boy o boy to everybody’s surprise she hit that ball out of the park. Once mom started playing everybody wanted her on their team. That’s how mom was about life, everything she took on, she tried her hardest to hit the ball out of the park.”*

- Brenda Scaife

Eartha Lee Mitchell was born September 25, 1925 in Orangeburg, South Carolina to William Mitchell and Mary Wright Mitchell. She had four brothers and two sisters Frederick, Theodore, William, Louis Mitchell Jr., Mary Lou and Ruth. At 9 years old Eartha’s parents passed away and Eartha had to live with her cousins, James Lula and Mozell Jamison. She attended school in Orangeburg, South Carolina until the 9th grade. At 18 years old Eartha married Silas Heatley and gave birth to Evelyn Heatley.

Eartha Lee moved from Orangeburg, South Carolina to Harlem, New York in 1944 to join her sister Mary Lou Mitchell at the age of 19. Eartha later married Fred Shands and had five additional children; Salahadulan, Edward, Omar, Kenny, and Brenda.

In 1966 Eartha was hired as a chamber maid at the Plaza Hotel and settled down in the Bronx with her six children.

As a devout woman of God, Eartha found solace in her church the Universal Baptist Church; in 1957 the church would later be known as the Greater Universal Baptist Church, to which she dedicated her life and remained faithful. As a founding member of the Greater Universal Baptist Church in the Mott Haven section of the Bronx, Eartha raised her children and grand children in the church even when she couldn’t be there she made sure her kids got to church. She shared many friendships and remained a dedicated participating member of her church congregation under the leadership of Pastor Robert Woolbrite, Pastor William T. Fox, and Pastor Daniel Dupree. Eartha actively served on the Woman’s Board, the Usher Board, and the Woman’s Choir. On any given Sunday, you could find Eartha in the sanctuary of the church or hand in hand with one of her children, or grandchildren. The church was her rock and she was determined to raise her family with the Christian values she held so dear. When Eartha was under the weather, she watched The Bobby Jones Gospel show and would read the Bible all the time. She hummed the hymns of “We are Soldiers in the Army”, “Marching up To Zion”, and Mahalia Jackson’s “Upper Room”.

Eartha worked at the Plaza Hotel as a chamber housekeeping supervisor for 26 years until retiring in 1992. At retirement, Eartha Lee realized that her job was not done. Her life was just beginning to unfold when she decided to become a mother to her great grandson Aaron Michael Heatley. Newborn at the time, she adopted Aaron and decided that she would provide him with the love, shelter, and fundamentals of life as she had given to her own children. She firmly believed in the family structure and wanted to provide that foundation for Aaron.

After battling with 12 years of complicated illnesses, Eartha peacefully went home on the early afternoon of April 21, 2012. Eartha Lee Heatley loved her family she did everything she could to keep her family together and encouraged all of her children to do the same mainly because she lost her parents at such an early age. Despite being estranged from her ancestral roots, she managed to create a strong family lineage of her own that remains connected through the loving bonds and family values to which she became the root. Eartha Lee Heatley was the embodiment of the strong supportive black woman who was steady in faith. She instilled love and provided all the tools necessary for her children to have a strong relationship with God. Eartha leaves a legacy of 5 children, 17 grandchildren, 16 great grand children, and 4 great-great grand children who will all miss her dearly.

**Sons and Daughters:** Evelyn Heatley (deceased) Salahuddin Rasul (formally Stanley Marshall), Edward Heatley, Omar Rasul (formally Albert Shands), Kenneth Shands Heatley and Brenda Rasul Scaife

**Sons and Daughters in Law:** Gwen Rasul, Diane Heatley, Bernice Rasul, Florence Rasul, Camille Heatley, Edward Scaife

**Grandchildren,** Cheryl Heatley-Nicholas, Darlene Heatley, Furdonna Wilson, Unique Rasul, Omar Rasul, Jasmin Heatley, Mecca Heatley, Ashanti Walker, Malcolm Rasul, Tariqua Heatley- Millhouse, Janelle Heatley, Sharif Rasul, Azure Anderson, Asia Scaife, Tarik Heatley, Malik Rasul, and Amber Scaife,

**Great Grandchildren:** Sadiqua Unique Loving, Aaron Michael Heatley, Hassaan Peters, Adia Peters, Brittney Wilson, Brandon Wilson, Dwight Heatley, Jeffrey Walker, Jada Walker, Cilque Jones, Noah Rasul, Nia Jones, Wesley Anderson, Kailey Anderson, Jayden Millhouse- Heatley and Jordan Millhouse-Heatley,

**Great Great Grandchildren:** Jacob Sumlin, London Sumlin, Landon Peters, Giovanni Otho Jr.

**Nieces, Nephews, and other family members:** Melvin Johnson, Marvin Johnson, Moya Johnson, Natasha Johnson, Tony Johnson, Hattie Lou Mitchell-Whitmire, Monica Hanes, David Hanes, Valeriw Hanes and Miriam Rickenbacker. And a countless number of extended family members and friends.

# *Order of Service*

Processional

Invocation .....Pastor Daniel Dupree

Musical Selection ..... “Marching Up to Zion”

Scripture

Old Testament

New Testament

Musical Selection ..... “His Eye Is on the Sparrow”

Prayer of Consolation

Obituary

Musical Selection ..... “Precious Lord”

Reflections..... Family Members

Musical Selection

Eulogy ..... Pastor Daniel Dupree

Musical Selection

Recessional

**Interment**

Mt. Rest Cemetery  
Butler, New Jersey

# *I'm Free*

*Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free  
I'm following the path God laid for me  
I took his hand when I heard Him call  
I turned my back and left it all.*

*I could not stay another day.*

*To laugh, to love, to work or play.  
Tasks left undone must stay that way,  
I found that peace at the close of day.*

*If my parting has left a void,  
Then fill it up with remembered joy.  
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,  
Oh, yes these things I too will miss.  
Be not burdened with times of sorrow,  
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.*

*My life's been full, I savored much.  
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.  
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,  
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.  
Lift up your heart and share with me,  
God wanted me now, He set me free!*

*-author unknown*

## *Acknowledgement*

The family wishes to thank everyone for their condolences  
and best wishes during our time of bereavement.



**2352 8th Avenue • Manhattan, NY • (212) 666-8300**  
**1406 Pitkin Avenue • Brooklyn, NY • (718) 774-1023**  
**1018 Prospect Avenue • Bronx, NY • (718) 542-3833**

*Clifford V. James, President & CEO*  
www.unityfuneralchapels.com  
email: unityfc@aol.com

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