



*Celebrating the Life  
of  
Russell Martin*

January 31, 1961 - August 18, 2026



**Memorial Service**

**Tuesday | August 25th, 2026 | 4:30PM-6PM**

**UNITY FUNERAL CHAPELS, INC.**

2352 8th Avenue • New York, NY 10027

**Pastor Stephon McKinney, Officiating**

**Pastor Raleigh Spruill, Organist**

# Obituary

**Russell Martin** was born on January 31, 1961, at Harlem Hospital in New York City, the third child of Juanita Holden and William Martin. From the very beginning, Russell carried a warmth, energy, and spirit that would leave a lasting impression on everyone fortunate enough to know him.

Russell was educated in the New York City Public School system and attended I.S. 74. After earning his GED, he continued his education at Bronx Community College, where he obtained HVAC certifications. Never one to limit himself to only one passion, Russell's love for food and cooking also inspired him to pursue culinary arts. He found joy in working with his hands, and sharing the things he loved with others.

For a time, Russell worked as an elevator operator at 1441 Broadway alongside his cousin Darryl. Whether in the neighborhood or surrounded by family, seeing Russell out and about was a natural and familiar occurrence. He was a true people person, well known throughout the Bronx and Harlem, and he never met a stranger. Russell had a way of making people feel seen, welcomed, and at ease. His smile could light up any room, and his presence left a mark wherever he went. Never shy, Russell was always camera-ready.

Russell loved life and embraced it fully. He loved music, dancing, laughter, and having a good time with the people he cherished. He could cut up on the dance floor, enjoy time on the basketball court, and cruise behind the wheel with unmistakable style. Above all, he loved being surrounded by friends and family, creating memories through laughter, music, and his love of seafood.

Russell shares a daughter and bonus daughter with Kim Johnson who has been his rock throughout the years.

Family was at the center of Russell's heart. He was especially close to his brother from another mother, Clarence Jackson, affectionately known as Freddie. Their bond reflected Russell's capacity for loyalty, friendship, and love beyond blood.

Russell was preceded in death by his parents, Juanita Holden and William Martin; his brothers, Dwayne, Kevin, William "Billy," William, and Keith; and his sister, Kim.

He leaves to cherish his memory his sister, Denise; his children, Vaughn Sincere Russell Martin; Turquoise Juanita Martin and Melody Johnson (mother, Kim Johnson); and his bonus children, Taneshia Ervin & Diamond Irving Hammond. He also leaves behind his beloved grandchildren, Elisha Martin and Nadine Martin; along with nieces, nephews, cousins, and a host of family and friends who loved him dearly.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to his care support team: Dr. Laura Newman and Patrice Goode-Moore for their patience, kindness and authentic care throughout the years.

Russell Martin will be remembered for his unforgettable smile, his loving spirit, his laughter, his love of music and dancing, and the way he made every gathering brighter simply by being there. Though he will be deeply missed, the joy he gave, the love he shared, and the memories he created will continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

# Order of Service

## **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Stephon McKinney

## **Song Selection**

Shana Hill

Pastor Raleigh Spruill

## **Reflection**

by Turquoise Juanita Martin

## **\*Reflections**

2 minutes

## **Obituary**

read by Elisha Martin

## **Song Selection**

Shana Hill

Pastor Raleigh Spruill

## **Eulogy**

Pastor Stephon McKinney

## **Benediction**

**\*Balloon Release to immediately follow after the service**  
*(Carolina blue, silver, and white)*

## *Repass*

Location: 2177 Frederick Douglass Blvd

New York, NY 10026

Time: 6PM-9PM

DJ - Playlist

# 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 his call,  
I turned my back and left it all.  
I could not stay another day,  
To laugh, to love, to work, to play.  
Tasks left undone must stay that way,  
I've found that peace at the close of the day.  
If my parting has left a void,  
Then fill it with remembered joy.  
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,  
Ah 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 savoured 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.

## Acknowledgement

***The family acknowledges with deep appreciation all acts of kindness extended to them during this bereavement hour.  
May God bless you for all your thoughtfulness and concern.***

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*For*