

A portrait of Pastor Walter James Miller, an African American man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a bright blue sky with a large, glowing white cross. The text "Celebrating the Life of" is written in a cursive font in the upper right corner.

*Celebrating
the Life
of*

Pastor Walter James Miller

Sunrise
December 20, 1948

Sunset
August 2, 2020

Thursday, August 13, 2020 -10am

UNITY FUNERAL CHAPELS, INC.
2352 8th Avenue • New York, NY 10027

Obituary

Walter James Miller was the firstborn son of the late Leonard McNeal, Jr. and Ophelia McNeal. He was born on December 20, 1948 in Mobile, Alabama and was called home to Glory on August 2, 2020 in New York City.

Pastor Miller was educated in the Marengo County, Alabama School system. He relocated to New York City in the early 1960's. He met and later married Annie Marie Houston in 1971. He gained employment at Hensley Spirit and worked as a superintendent from 1975 until his retirement in 2003. During this time, in 1980, Pastor Miller gave his life to the Lord.

2 Peter 3:18 states: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . . ." In obedience to the Word of God and in his personal desire to know more about His Savior, Pastor Miller enrolled in Crossroads Christian Academy. He graduated with his diploma in Theology on June 20, 1998.

Pastor Miller was a godly man with a heart like Jesus. Part of Matthew 20:26 states, ". . . but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." In the Spirit of Christ, Pastor Miller, along with First Lady Miller, served their community – both church and neighbors. They loved to cook and to share their tasty meals with all, especially those less fortunate. They worked together as a team. Pastor Miller had such a loving heart. In addition, Pastor Miller assisted in the rearing of the following nieces and nephews: Shewanna Monroe, James Houston, and Mark Houston.

The Lord began to elevate Pastor Miller and he responded to a higher calling. On June 3, 1984, he was ordained to the office of a deacon and faithfully served in that capacity until 1988. Throughout this time period, Pastor Miller often told the current Pastor, Rev. Frederick, that the Lord sent him there to help him. He was to assist him in any way that he could. This wonderful attitude revealed the true heart of Pastor Miller. He was there to do God's will – and only His will.

The call of God continued to be on Pastor Miller's life. So in 1988, he was ordained a minister. As one of the associate ministers of The People's Community Temple, he preached the Word of God with all of his heart. On March 31, 2004, Pastor Frederick officially appointed the then Minister Walter Miller to be his Assistant Pastor.

As a result of declining health, on June 9, 2005 Pastor William C. Frederick, in the presence of the trustees, wrote a letter resigning from the Pastorate and transferring this leadership position to Assistant Pastor Walter Miller. With the endorsement of the congregation, Assistant Pastor Walter Miller was installed on October 9, 2005 as the fourth pastor of The People's Community Temple, Inc. Pastor Walter Miller began his leadership with the theme, "Going Forward." His main purpose was to follow the life of Christ and to win souls for Him.

Throughout his Pastorate, the church was blessed with a man who preached the unadulterated Word of God. Pastor Miller always would declare, "I just want to be like Jesus." He would often say: "Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life: . . .'" and would encourage us all to be like Jesus.

Pastor Miller's favorite scripture was Isaiah 54:17, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD." He would end each church service with that scripture. His favorite song was, "God's Grace" and he would often bless us with his stirring, anointed rendition of it.

Every Sunday he would tell the congregation, "I love you, and there ain't nothing you can do about it." This wonderful sentiment was so heartwarming you could often hear it repeated among the members as they greeted each other. Pastor Miller was a great model of love, patience and endurance. He will be sorely missed by all who loved him. He pastored The People's Community Temple, Inc. for fifteen years. On August 2, 2020, he finished his course and entered into his eternal rest.

He was preceded in death by his very supportive grandparents, John Nelson and Katie Miller of Thomaston, AL; Stanley McNeal and Lonnie McNeal (brothers); Ed Houston and Charlie Houston (brothers-in-law); and Peggy Houston and Cynthia Houston-Bess (sisters-in-law).

Pastor Walter James Miller leaves to mourn: his loving and devoted wife, Annie Marie Miller; his mother, Ophelia McNeal; four sons, Minister Charles Houston (Tiesha), Aaron Houston (Ruthann), Craig Miller (Shawanna), and Samuel Miller; one daughter, Nefertiti Capers (Jermaine), all of New York; one brother, Leonard McNeal; three sisters, Mary Gamble, Ellenor McNeal and Carol Taylor (Gene); two brothers-in-law, Benjamin Houston and James Bess; two sisters-in-law, Betty Ann Houston and Monica Patterson; three aunts, Penny Miller and Ada Bell Miller of Mobile, AL and Nora Bell Walker of Gainesville, GA; seven godchildren, Elijah Houston, Christina Lane, Rachel Young, Jacqueline Grey, Anna Jones, Ladell King and Edward C.W. Young; nineteen grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and nephews, and other relatives, church family and friends.

Order of Service

OFFICIATING, Dr. Sheila Young
Edward Young, Musician

Processional

Scripture

Old Testament - Job 19:23-27.....Min. Adrienne Dickerson

New Testament - II Timothy 4:5-8.....Sis. Matiwonesa Munyaradzi

Prayer of Comfort.....Min. Flossie Strickland

Selection.....Sis. Stacey Young & Sis. Matiwonesa Munyaradzi

Acknowledgements.....Mrs. Shaneikwa Williams

Tributes

Obituary.....Min. Latarsha Davis

Resolutions.....Pastor's Aide - Sis. Fernec Horton
Trustee Board - Sis. Wanda McNeil

Selection

Eulogy.....Assistant Pastor Sharon Johnson

Final Viewing

Benediction

Recessional

Interment
Rosehill Cemetery
Linden, New Jersey

Asleep

I've closed my eyes and fallen asleep,
So there's no reason for you to weep;
This is a debt we all must pay,
You will see me again someday.
I've endured pain and sometimes sorrow,
Now I don't have to worry about tomorrow.
But life for you must go on,
You must not worry because I'm gone.
You stood beside me all the way,
When I was down, you knew what to say ...
You always told me, "get some rest,"
Let me sleep now, I've done my best.
So please let me rest in peace,
The tears you're shedding soon will cease.
You'll soon realize this was meant to be,
I thank God because He came for me.
-Emily Dickinson

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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