

Precious Memories



Acknowledgment

The family wishes to thank all of you for your prayers, messages of comfort and the many other acts of kindness shown during our hour of bereavement.

May God continue to bless you in a very special way.

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Celebrating The Life of



Barbara A. Burnette

April 24, 1963 - December 30, 2021

Saturday, January 8, 2022 - 10:00 a.m.

St. John the Evangelist Lutheran Church

195 Maujer Street
Brooklyn, NY 11206
Rev. John Nunes – Pastor

Obituary

Barbara Burnette (maiden name Taylor) was born in Brooklyn, New York at The Brooklyn Hospital Center in April, 1963. Barbara was the eighth child born of eight children to the late Willie Mae Taylor (maiden name Burroughs) and Thomas Taylor, Sr.

Barbara spent the first 25 years of her life as a proud resident of the Williamsburg Houses. Barbara attended Saint John's Lutheran Elementary School in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Barbara graduated from Brooklyn's John Jay High School with a concentration in Criminal Justice. Barbara accepted a basketball scholarship to Johnson C. Smith University, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) located in Charlotte, NC. After 2 years, Barbara transferred to West Virginia State University, also an HBCU, to continue playing basketball.

Barbara was sworn in as a New York City Police Officer in July, 1988. After graduating from the NYPD Academy, Barbara was assigned to a training unit in lower Manhattan. In 1989, Barbara was permanently assigned to the 73rd Precinct located in Brownsville, Brooklyn. It was in the 73rd Precinct that Barbara met Lebro Burnette, her future husband. From the day they met until the day Barbara passed on to her Lord and Savior, Barbara and Lebro were very rarely apart.

In 1998, Barbara was promoted to the rank of Detective after several years of extremely dangerous undercover work in the South Bronx.

In 1999, Barbara eventually went on to earn her Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice from Saint John's University located in Queens, New York. Barbara accomplished this goal by going to class nights, weekends and summers all while working on the streets of New York City and raising 3 young children.

In 2001, Barbara was assigned to the NYPD's Intelligence Division. Along with her colleagues, Barbara responded to the terrorist attacks on The World Trade Center on 9/11/2001. Over the next 4 weeks, Barbara worked 7 days per week 12 to 16 hours per day at Ground Zero.

In 2004, Barbara was diagnosed with a deadly lung disease accompanied by severe fibrosis in both lungs. The NYPD retired Barbara in 2006.

In March, 2009, Barbara was asked to travel to Washington, DC to testify under oath before the U.S. Congress in support of a health and compensation bill for sick and injured first responders. Unfortunately, the bill had stalled in Congress and there was little hope that the bill would pass. Barbara described her experiences working at Ground Zero and the severe impact it had taken on her health in an attempt to obtain desperately needed health care for first responders and anyone else suffering from 9-11 related health problems. President Obama finally signed the James Zadroga 9-11 Health and Compensation Act into law in December, 2010. The bill was set to last for a period of 5 years.

In June 2015, Barbara was again asked to travel to Washington, DC to be placed under oath a second time to testify before the US Congress in an attempt to reauthorize the expiring bill. After testifying, Barbara returned to Washington, DC numerous times to speak with individual elected officials in their offices urging them to reauthorize the health care bill. Barbara spoke at press conferences, was a member of a panel discussion hosted by the 9-11 Tribute Museum at Ground Zero. Comedian and 9-11 advocate Jon Stewart accompanied Barbara as she traveled the halls of Congress in her wheelchair fighting to reauthorize the bill. In December 2015, the health care bill was extended until 2090.

In April 2017 Barbara was diagnosed with inoperable lung cancer.

Barbara was strong, courageous and she never gave up. She never stopped fighting. Barbara entered the Gates of Heaven on December 30, 2021. Her husband and all 3 children were blessed to be by her side.

Barbara was preceded in death by her beloved mother, Willie Mae Taylor, father Thomas Taylor, Sr., sisters Valerie James and Ava Taylor, brother Thomas Taylor, Jr., aunt Ann Burroughs.

Barbara is survived by her husband Lebro Burnette, children Yasmeen, Lebro Jr., Tara, brother Christopher Taylor, sisters Debra Knight, Sharon Pressley, Pamela Taylor and grandchildren Azalea, Chris, Kailani, Sanaa and Domenico.

Barbara credited her meaningful, happy and consequential life to 3 indisputable factors. Her unconditional love of family. Her life long attachment and love for Saint John's Lutheran Church. Her identity with and love for the people of the Williamsburg Houses.

Barbara Burnette is loved and respected by all who met her. Her ascension into heaven has left many heartbroken and grief stricken. We take solace and comfort in the fact that we will all be together again.

Order of Service

Procession: Psalm 121

Opening Prayer

First Reading: I Corinthians 15:51-57

Song: "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

Second Reading: John 14:1-7

Homily

Song: "Goin' Up Yonder"

Prayers and Lord's Prayer

Final Blessing

Song: "Soon and Very Soon"

Interment

Maple Grove Cemetery
Queens, New York