

In Loving Memory of



Norman Barrington Branch

ALPHA: DECEMBER 25, 1921 OMEGA: AUGUST 5, 2020

Journey of Life

On August 5, 2020, **Norman Barrington Branch** transitioned from this life of labor to eternal reward. Norman enjoyed longevity and an enriched life supported by family and friends. Norman was born December 25, 1921 in Baltimore, Maryland and was the 2nd child of 3 children born to Grace and Milton E. Branch. His brothers Milton E. Branch II and Paul B. Branch preceded him in death. On January 24, 1942, Norman married the love of his life, the late Lillie Branch and from this strong union their only child Barrington L. Branch was born. Barrington along with his wife Ann and their son Barrington M.A. provided Norman with a loving and supportive family structure that brought to his life many days of joy.

In 1940, Norman became a proud graduate of Douglass High School in Baltimore City. Following graduation, he studied tailoring by enrolling in courses offered by neighboring school Carver Vocational Technical High School. It was at Carver that Norman's insatiable passion for fine tailoring and fashion was further cultivated by his mentors, Mr. Joseph Ray and Mr. Oscar Long. Additionally, Norman received motivation and inspiration from Italian and Jewish tailors, who were highly skilled in a bustling garment district in downtown Baltimore.

Norman proudly served his country as a member the 207th anti-aircraft Battalion in the United States Army from 1942-1945. During World War II, he was stationed in Australia and New Guinea. Upon returning to Baltimore from his tour of duty, Norman began his teaching career at the Veteran's School (Retreat Street) instructing returning World War II veterans. He later transferred to School #452 (McCulloh & Biddle Streets) where he taught until 1956. During the fall of 1956 Norman was elated to return to the school where he received his formal training, the beloved Carver Vocational Technical High School to teach tailoring under the leadership of principal Dr. Saul Perdue. As a Master Tailor, Norman taught the fine art of tailoring to generations of students both day and night because he believed teaching and mentoring did not stop at 3:30 PM.

Notably, while Norman worked full time, he allotted time for his own professional growth by enrolling in higher education courses at Morgan State College, the University of Maryland, and Maryland Institute of Art. Moreover, Norman was recognized in a recent publication entitled "African-American Community, History and Entertainment in Maryland (Pryor-Trusty, 2013), as a premier instructor who shared his expertise with the only licensed African-American furrier and redesigner Selah Rahman as his student in 1975. Norman was extremely prideful about his contributions to students and the community through his gift of teaching.

"To teach is to touch a life forever" – Author unknown

The aforementioned quote speaks volumes to the legacy of Norman Branch and his impact on the students he taught. Endearingly known as the Carver Family, former students maintained ongoing communication during his residency at Sunrise Assisted Living through telephone calls, frequent visits and monthly outings. Of particular note are the daily prayer and devotional calls from former student Josephine Shaw. Another highlight for Norman was attending countless Carver class reunions to be in the presence of former students and colleagues. He wholeheartedly loved them and continued to have a genuine interest in their well-being until the Lord called him home.

"You are where you are today because you stand on somebody's shoulders. And wherever you are heading, you cannot get there by yourself. If you stand on the shoulders of others, you have a reciprocal responsibility to live your life so that others may stand on your shoulders. It's the quid pro quo of life. We exist temporarily through what we take, but we live forever through what we give." –Vernon Jordon

A favorite past time for Norman was visiting Pimlico Race Track to place a wager or two while socializing with friends and making new ones along the way. Whenever Norman was in the presence of others, his pleasant personality gravitated people in his direction. "Nip" as he was affectionately known since boyhood was known as a stingy bettor, thus acquiring the nickname, "Showtime," because he would always bet his horse to show. Another source of enjoyment for Norman was attending live performances of Jazz music with his friends and family. He especially loved listening to the sounds of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Marvin Gay and Ella Fitzgerald.

Norman demonstrated that he was a loyal and faithful servant of God through his active participation at Trinity Presbyterian Church. During his 61 years as a member, Norman assisted the church through various roles including usher, treasurer, and tailor for the congregation.

Moreover, his love of people and service was further extended as a charter member of a childhood group, The Connoisseurs, Inc. along with lifelong friends William Bayton, Sylvester Haynes, Ignatius Jones, Robert Quarles, John Thompson, Billy Wise, and William Young. This group promoted bonding between men as a way of strengthening the west Baltimore community where they all resided. Norman and his friends understood the urgency and importance of standing in the gap as male role models in their community. Norman was the last surviving charter member of The O' Nose, Inc.; a social group who mentored and awarded scholarships to young black men. His commitment to service was evident through his words and his actions. Norman never complained and would often say "I'm Doing the Best I Can, With What I Got!"

A visual hallmark of Norman was his presence as a distinguished dresser and the leader of his family. When you see his son Barrington and his grandson Barrington it is to look at Norman's image which always showed the value of self-confidence and self-pride. A visual glimpse of this family trio, bespoke tailoring, and its fine art intertwined within the fabric of the essence of the Branch men.

Norman leaves cherished and fond memories to his devoted son Barrington L. (Ann); one grandson, Barrington M.A. (Nichelle); nephews Milton E. Branch, III and Kip Branch (Deborah); nieces, Angela Hawkins, Paula Branch France (Goddaughter) and Venetia Lattimer (Jerome); and a host of other nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

A special thanks is extended to James and Sharon Hopkins, Celeste Scott, Josephine Shaw, Narvel Smith, and the Carver family for their consistent love and support.

Norman Barrington Branch's Change of Address

Dear Family and Friends,

Please be advised that I have moved. I received a call from GOD, the Chief Architect the other day, and he informed me that my new home was completed. You all know that I had been working on my new residence, sending up my timber, packing up and getting ready to go. I knew that my house needed some finishing touches and that the Chief Carpenter, Jesus Christ, had to inspect it and give me final approval. Well, on Wednesday, August 5, 2020, he let me know my home was complete and that it was OK to move in. So, HE told me to go ahead and change my address.

Well, my new home is finished and what a sight to behold. It is located on an exclusive estate just behind a beautiful pearly gate. It is just over on the other side of a serene celestial shore. Of course, you know that the streets are paved with gold and every day here is Sunday, just like you've been told. Trees with twelve manners of fruits grace my garden here. I can walk and talk with my Master without a worry or care.

I lived in a home built by man for only a short time, but my new home is so much better than any other place I've lived. There is a peace here, along with joy and happiness. There is no pain or heartaches, only sweet serenity. I can dine at the Master's bountiful table and listen to a Heavenly Choir.

I have my very own designer here who has fitted me with my very own white robe and wings. I could go on and on about my new home, but instead, I'm going to pray that you get to move here yourself someday and I'll see you then. Before I go, let me give you my new address:

***Norman Barrington Branch
90 Heavenly Way
Godstown, Heaven 80520***

*P.S. I don't have a telephone, but you can always call God.
If you don't know his number, read your Bible, it's listed on every page.*

Celebration of Life

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

Wake: 9:00 a.m. Funeral: 11:00 a.m.

The Wylie Funeral Home Chapel

9200 Liberty Road | Randallstown, Maryland 21133

Officiating Reverend Gregory Barrett Pastor

Trinity Presbyterian Church | Baltimore, Maryland

Hymn of Faith.....“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Scripture Readings

Old Testament: Psalm 90: 1-12.....Paula Branch France

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18..... Sharon Hopkins

Prayer of Comfort.....Reverend Gregory Barrett

Selection.....“I Won’t Complain”
Rodney Whitley

Reflections.....Charles Gibbs
Angela Hawkins
James Hopkins
Ron Owens
Brenda Sykes

Acknowledgments.....Patelle G. Harris

Reading of the Obituary.....Nashae Bennett

Selection.....“Jesus Christ Is the Way”
Rodney Whitley

Message of Comfort.....Reverend Gregory Barrett

Benediction

Recessional Selection.....“What Is This”
Rodney Whitley

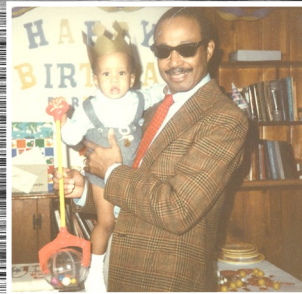
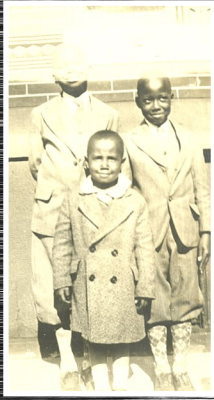


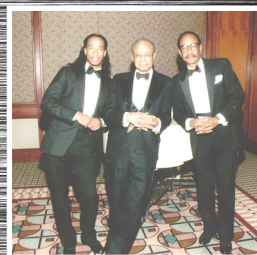
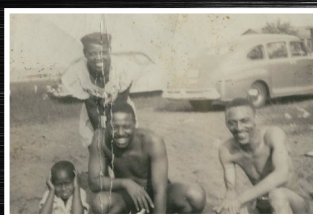
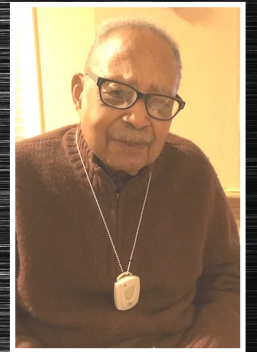
In Memory of Dad

*You were a precious gift from God above,
so much beauty, grace and love.
You touched our hearts in so many ways,
your smile so bright even on the bad days.
You heard God's whisper calling you home,
you didn't want to go and leave us alone.
You loved us so much, you held on tight,
till all the strength was gone
and you could no longer fight.
He had called your name twice before,
you knew you couldn't
make him wait anymore.
So you gave your hand to
God and slowly drifted away,
knowing that with our love we
will be together again some day.
Lovingly Submitted,
Barry, Ann and Barrington*

Great is Thy Faithfulness

*"Great is Thy faithfulness, " O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
"Great is Thy faithfulness, " Lord, unto me!
Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.
"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
"Great is Thy faithfulness, " Lord, unto me!
Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!
"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
"Great is Thy faithfulness, " Lord, unto me!*





"Not how did he die, but how did he live. Not what did he gain, but what did he give. These are the units to measure the worth of a man."



Honorary Pallbearers

Adrian Bell Charles Gibbs
James Hopkins Stanley Scurry
W.L. Smith Dudley Stevenson
Tyrone Weems

Pallbearers

Barrington M.A. Branch Eric Brown
Lamont Ellis Dennis Ferrell
Dwight Harris Steven Wynder

Final Resting Place
Crownsville Veteran's Cemetery
Crownsville, Maryland
Tuesday, August 18, 2020

Acknowledgments

We, the family of *Norman Barrington Branch*, gratefully acknowledge the many kind and beautiful expressions of sympathy and love shown during our time of bereavement. Your words of comfort will be a source of comfort in the days ahead. May God continue to richly bless you. A special thanks to the supportive staff of Sunrise Assisted Living and Anna Smolensky and the staff of Season's Hospice for their dedication and service.

Services of Comfort Entrusted to



701 N. Mount Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21217
(410) 462 - 4070

9200 Liberty Road
Randallstown, Maryland 21133
(410) 655 - 9200

We invite you to sign the guest book at
www.wyliefh.com

Program Designed by The Wylie Funeral Home Print Shop