



Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.

July 29, 1933 - November 20, 2022

On Sunday, November 20, 2022, Mr. William T. Turner, Sr., age 89, departed this life. With deep remorse, the family acknowledges his transitioning to eternal life.

William was an educator with the Durham City School system and will truly be missed.

He leaves to cherish his memory his loving and devoted wife, Ernestine Turner; daughter, Jewel T. Stephens (Anthony); sons, William T. Turner, Jr. (Sandra) and Stephen D. Turner; brother, Reverend Lawrence R. Turner, Jr.; five grandchildren; seven great grandchildren; other extended family members; and a host of dear friends.

Public viewing has been scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2022, from 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., at Scarborough & Hargett Celebration of Life Center, Inc., 309 N Queen Street, Durham, North Carolina 27701.

A celebration of life service to honor the life of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr. will be held at Russell Memorial CME Church, 703 S Alston Avenue, Durham, North Carolina 27701 on Friday, December 2nd; Family Visitation at 11:00 a.m., Masonic Rites Ceremony at 11:45 a.m., and Life Celebration Service at 12:00 noon, with the Reverend Dr. Jerry Christian delivering the eulogy.

To view the Celebration of Life Service for Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.:

Please click the link below to join the webinar,

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85959397765?>

Webinar ID: 859 5939 7765

Passcode: 459594

Please keep this family in your thoughts and prayers.

Cemetery Details

Beechwood Cemetery

3300 Fayetteville St
Durham, NC 27707
(919) 560-4154

Previous Events

Viewing

DEC 1. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Scarborough & Hargett Celebration of Life Center, Inc.
309 N Queen St
Durham, NC 27701
(919) 682-1171
scarboroughandhargettinc@yahoo.com
<https://scarboroughandhargettfh.com/>

Visitation

DEC 2. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Russell Memorial CME Church
703 S Alston Ave
Durham, NC 27701
(919) 682-2523
adrian@russellmemorial.com
<http://www.russellmemorial.com>

Celebration of Life

DEC 2. 12:00 PM (ET)

Russell Memorial CME Church
703 S Alston Ave
Durham, NC 27701
(919) 682-2523
adrian@russellmemorial.com
<http://www.russellmemorial.com>

Masonic Rites

DEC 2. 11:45 PM (ET)

Russell Memorial CME Church
703 S Alston Ave
Durham, NC 27701
(919) 682-2523
adrian@russellmemorial.com
<http://www.russellmemorial.com>

Tribute Wall

AD

“ *He was my masonry teacher in Hillside High School 1996. Very smart and wise.*

Anthony Daye - October 01, 2025 at 03:36 PM



“ *Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.*

October 05, 2023 at 11:31 AM

PW

“ *Blessed are the Dead who die in The LORD from now on; Yes Says The SPIRIT, that they may Rest from their Labors, and their Works Follow them" Revelation 14:1.*



Our Prayers are with you all as you Celebrate the Legacy of your Husband, Dad, Relative, Servant, and Friend..

*Pastor&Sister J Gregory (Kimberly) Willis,
and the Glory To GOD Ministries Church Family, Butner, N.C.*

Pastor J. Gregory Willis - December 02, 2022 at 10:13 AM

TD

“ *Tina Drake lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.*



Tina Drake - December 02, 2022 at 09:45 AM

TD

This eloquent man of God, giant family man, husband of Ernestine, for 70 years, father of 3 wonderful sons and loving brother Elder Lawrence Turner and father of lovely Jewel will miss this eloquent man and cherish his memory forever!! My life as his neighbor, friend co-worker and mentor will be enriched forever! Durham city and county will forever keep his legacy alive! Oh what that reunion will be as he is greeted at the gates by his good friend William...my dad!

Tina Drake - December 02, 2022 at 10:24 AM

PS

“ *Condolences to the Turner family. You are in my prayers.*

Pattie Smith - December 02, 2022 at 09:37 AM

MJ

“ *Condolences to The Turner Family on the loss of an Beloved member of Russell Church. He was a friend to my parents, The Late Percy and Dorothy Joyner and A Mentor for my sons Mario, Robbie, and JaMar. Thank you Mr Turner for being a guiding light for so many people*



♥️ Mary Joyner Jones

Mary Joyner - December 02, 2022 at 08:37 AM

LW

“ *Sending our condolences Linda williams, Amahd Williams, Elliott Julian*

Linda williams - December 01, 2022 at 10:04 PM

PS

“ *Pamela Humphrey Stokes lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.*



Pamela Humphrey Stokes - December 01, 2022 at 07:19 PM

MD

“ *Mary Dempson & Family lit a candle in memory of Mr William Turner, Sr. Rest in eternal peace.*



Mary Dempson - December 01, 2022 at 06:02 PM

RH

“ *On behalf of the James E Shepard Sertoma club of Durham, we would like to express our sincere condolences for the loss of our member, Mr. William Turner. He was a devoted member and he will be truly missed. May the peace of God be with you all during this difficult time.*

James E Shepard Sertoma Club of Durham, Robert Hartsfield

Robert Hartsfield - December 01, 2022 at 03:06 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr..*



December 01, 2022 at 11:41 AM

AH

“ To: Mrs. Ernestine Turner, a devoted Wife, and Family of the Late Mr. William T. Turner, Sr. We were saddened to hear of your Husbands passing. Heartfelt Condolences to the Family. Please remember that God is too wise to make a mistake and too Holy to do anything wrong. Prayer is the key, but it takes Faith to unlock the door. Brother Turner showed by example that what you do speaks so loud that people cannot hear what you are saying. We want to say to the Family that we love you and we will continue to pray that God will give you the strength to bare your great loss for the days, months, and years to come.



*This is with much Love,
Brother Albert and Sister Dorothy Huey*

Albert Huey - December 01, 2022 at 07:39 AM

NF

“ NACA Charlotte family purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr..



NACA Charlotte family - November 30, 2022 at 03:04 PM

LF

“ Love, Mickens, Sybil & Family purchased the Encanted Cottage for the family of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr..



Love, Mickens, Sybil & Family - November 29, 2022 at 10:20 PM

JL

“ Janet H Lynch lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.



Janet H Lynch - November 29, 2022 at 08:14 PM

RP

“ To Reverend Lawrence R. Turner, Jr., & Sister Ernestine Turner and Family

Sending our heartfelt sympathies in the passing of the late Brother William T. Turner, Sr. May it comfort you to know that we are thinking of you at this time. Reverend Turner, as a former Pastor for many years at Holland, we thank you for introducing our members to the Turner Family. As you celebrate his life, reminisce on all the family gatherings that reflect happiness and enjoyment shared during his life.

Reverend Charles Mathews, Senior Pastor, ministerial staff, and members of Holland Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church



Rev. Charles Mathews, Senior Pastor - November 29, 2022 at 06:21 PM

TM

“ On behalf of Boy Scout Troop 144, we send our deepest condolences to the Turner Family.



Tommy T McNeill - November 29, 2022 at 08:19 AM

TW

“ *Tonja Wall lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.*



Tonja Wall - November 28, 2022 at 07:59 PM

RR

“ *Mr. Turner was very instrumental throughout the Durham Community and at Russell Memorial CME Church where he served on numerous of boards and auxiliaries. Mr. Turner is on the Mt. Rushmore among all of the faculty and staff who have taught and encourage many of our students throughout their future endeavors. He was was active in many of our lives beyond the walls of HHS. Mr. Turner was not not only an excellent teacher but a mentor and a role model to many. He will be missed but his work will not be forgotten. I recall in 2006 during Class of 1986 twenty year reunion he had a book of artifacts that displayed our pictures throughout our four years at HHS. He was very instrumental for us all. I will miss his words of encouragement and enthusiasm.*

From the Rivers Family



Rodney Rivers - November 28, 2022 at 09:08 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr..*



November 28, 2022 at 08:25 AM

KU

“ We celebrate Uncle Billy's excellent service, unwavering stability, strong character, and leadership legacy. Rest In well-deserved peace.
~Kellie Umstead



Kellie Umstead - November 27, 2022 at 01:03 PM

RU

“ On behalf of the Umstead Family, we express our profound grief at the loss of an intelligent and inspiring educator, and community and family leader. We will remember his humor, wisdom, strength, and service. May God rest his soul in everlasting peace and joy.

Ronald Umstead - November 27, 2022 at 12:30 PM



“ THE HILLSIDE CLASS OF 1970, sorrowfully acknowledges the passing of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr., the father of our beloved classmate, William “Tommy” Turner, Jr. 🙏🙏
We fondly remember Mr. Turner (Mrs. Ernestine Turner) as very LOYAL HORNETS. On behalf of the class, I extend to our classmate and family, our most profound sympathy 🌸
On a personal note, I will forever treasure Mr. Turner's Kindness, his vote of confidence in me, his constant encouragement and support for all our class projects, especially THE NIGHT WITH THE STARS.
“Hillside High, oh Hillside High. We cherish thee with honor.”
Mary Hall Scott, Class President ❤️



Mary Scott - November 27, 2022 at 07:41 AM

TF

“ *The Spicer & Stephens Family purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr..*



The Spicer & Stephens Family - November 27, 2022 at 06:18 AM

FW

“ *To the family of Mr. William Turner, I send my sincere condolences. My prayer is that God will surround each and every one of you with His peace, love and comfort both now and in the days to come. God bless.*



Floretta L Walls - November 26, 2022 at 07:22 PM

DW

“ *To the Turner Family:
We are sorry to hear of the passing of Brother Turner. Mr. Turner was a respected member of the Durham Community. Always encouraging young people particular boys and young men to get involved in community issues. He was an advocate...a "Drum Major" for the West-End Reunions, Hillside High School, HHS National Alumni, Sertoma Club, Boys Scouts of America and his church (Russell Memorial) where he served many Leadership roles. Mr. Turner was an athlete, mentor, master brickmason, public school teacher and community activist. He will be missed...but not forgotten
The Womble Family*



Dwight Womble - November 26, 2022 at 03:46 PM

BH

“ In 1977, I had the privilege of meeting my colleague, Mr. Turner. His brick masonry shop was on the same basement floor as my English classroom. I recall many laughs and many conversations we shared over the years. We taught many of the same young men. In addition to our conversations about our shared students, I recall Mr. Turner’s love for Hillside and for Mr. Frank Howard Alston. Mr. Turner loved his church and his work with the Sertoma Club. I, too, recall his annual offerings of Claxton fruitcakes. His presence in the Durham community and his pride in Hillside will long live.
Ms. Barbara (Mason)Harvey

Barbara T. Harvey - November 26, 2022 at 12:37 PM

JR

“ Mr. Tuners was an Icon in the Durham Community and throughout the State. Along with Ms. Ernestine, they contributed to so many of us as role models in the education profession and. medical profession as a native of the West End.. His contribution the Hillside Alumni ranges from innovator to pratical and on line leadership since its' inception. As a longtime Prince Hall Mason, he was a dedicated brother who supported young men throughout the 24th District. He will be missed.

Jackie Robinson

Jackie Robinson - November 26, 2022 at 08:37 AM

H1

“ Hillside High School Class Of 1963 lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.



Hillside High School Class of 1963 - November 25, 2022 at 11:37 PM

GS

“ Gary Lamont Stephens lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.



Gary Lamont Stephens - November 25, 2022 at 07:32 PM

SU

“ William Turner "Billy" was a Black Male Role Model,for the Community and my family.
He was a important Man in my life,He stood strong,spoke strong and served strong.My mother Mable Russ Umstead was instrumental in keeping his positive presence before me and my 4 Brothers Ronald,Vernon,Phillip and Craig the Umsteads.

Stanley umstead - November 25, 2022 at 02:53 PM

WB

“ My sincere condolences and prayers 🙏 I Remember the shop classes with him. Mr Turner was always kind and had a listening ear. He was a major part of my formative years of life. REST IN PEACE . Sending love to my brother Steve.

Wilbert Butler - November 24, 2022 at 09:54 AM

BW

“ Barbara Webb lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.



Barbara Webb - November 23, 2022 at 09:15 PM

ED

“*Harriette and I cherish the genuine friendship and the professional collegiality that we shared with Mr. William T. Turner for many years at Hillside High School.*

He had a quick wit and he enjoyed sharing history of his growing years on the West End of Durham. During retirement, we always enjoyed buying holiday fruit cakes from Mr. Turner in support of the James Shepard Sertoma Club.

*Eddie & Harriette Davis
Durham, NC*

Eddie Davis - November 23, 2022 at 05:21 PM

RW

Deepest condolences from the Robert White family - his Sertoma brother.

Robert M. White - November 24, 2022 at 08:03 PM

JC

So sorry to hear of the homegoing of Brother Turner, praying for the family Jerry and Joyace Cobb 🙏

Joyace Cobb - November 24, 2022 at 08:22 PM

JL

My thoughts and prayers to the Turner family. Mr. Turner was a kind and positive role model.

*Brick Masonry - Hillside '87-'89
RIP*

James L. Lyons - November 25, 2022 at 09:11 AM

CJ

To the Turner Family, I was saddened to hear the news of the transition of your wonderful Husband, Father, Grandfather and friend. Mr. Turner was always very supportive and encouraging of our family. May God continue to bless and keep you and make his face to shine upon you this day and forever more. Love
Christa Umstead-Johnson and family

christa johnson - November 25, 2022 at 06:20 PM

EH

“ *Ethel Holloway lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.*



Ethel Holloway - November 23, 2022 at 02:49 PM

MH

“ *Michael Hughes lit a candle in memory of Mr. William T. Turner, Sr.*



Michael Hughes - November 23, 2022 at 12:11 PM