

Celebration of Life for

REVEREND DEAN NELSON

June 21, 1968 ~ December 16, 2023

SERVANT OF GOD

Cornerstone Chapel

650 Battlefield Parkway SE

Leesburg, VA 20175

December 28, 2023





Order Of SERVICE

Video Tribute

Family Processional

Officiant Bishop Bruce Clark

Opening Prayer Dr. Decker Tapscott Sr.

Special Selection Pastor Kevin LeVar Gray
"The Only Thing that Matters"

Old Testament Scripture Reading Rev. Leroy Stewart on
behalf of the Ministers of Fauquier County

New Testament Scripture Reading Bishop Patrick Wooden

The Early Years Coach Jerry Carter

Special Selection Mrs. Joy Carter
"Going up Yonder"

Civic Influence The Honorable Kay Coles James
Lt. Governor Winsome Sears

Prayer of Comfort Bishop Larry Jackson

Reading of Obituary Ms. Lillian Walker

Family Reflections Ms. Erma Robinson and
Ms. Daris Carter

Special Selection Pastor Kevin LeVar Gray
"Goodness of God"

Ministry Impact Bishop Garland Hunt

Further Reflections Mr. Brandon Nelson
and Mr. Keith Frasier

Eulogy Bishop Wellington Boone

Closing Prayer and Call to Salvation Bishop Bruce Clark

PALLBEARERS:

Darrian Summerville, Jr., Travis Gaines, Dillon Epperson,
Nathaniel Taylor, David Nelson, Jerry Lewis

Private interment to follow on December 29, 2023
in Fauquier County

OBITUARY

Reverend Dean Brode Nelson, 55, passed away peacefully on December 16, 2023 after a brief battle with cancer. He was born on June 21, 1968 to Eugene Nelson and the late Zelma Nelson (Anderson). In 1976, the family moved from Falls Church back to their beautiful hometown of Marshall, Virginia, where Dean grew up surrounded by the love of his parents, siblings, and grandparents, as well as countless aunts, uncles, and cousins. He attended Fauquier County Public Schools, where he ran track and played football. He was a member of Salem Baptist Church under the late Reverend Wendell Grant, where he dedicated his life to the Lord at the age of thirteen, and later a part of Faith Christian Church under Pastor Decker Tapscott.

Rev. Nelson graduated from Fauquier County High School in 1986 and attended the University of Virginia. During his time at UVA, he became part of New Generation Campus Ministries (NGM) under the leadership of Bishop Garland Hunt and Bishop Wellington Boone. Upon graduating from UVA in 1990 (BA, Rhetoric and Communication), he entered full time ministry becoming the deputy director and then national director of NGM.

After marrying fellow NGM member Julia in 1996, the couple moved to Atlanta where they had three children, continuing in campus ministry and assisting Bishop Boone and Bishop Hunt with the Father's House church. In 2005, they returned to the Washington, DC area to advocate for pro-life and pro-family causes, leading to his longtime employment with Human Coalition, where he rose to become the Vice President of Government Relations, and to his work as the Senior Fellow of African American Affairs at the Family Research Council. During this time, he also founded the Douglass Leadership Institute to equip faith leaders especially in the African American community to apply Biblical principles to life and the marketplace. His servant heart, patience, and cheerful demeanor enabled him to work with a diverse array of groups including the United Way, NAACP, Prison Fellowship, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Urban League, and TeenPact Leadership Schools. He appeared regularly in a variety of media outlets, including MSNBC, Fox News, ABC, USA Today, CBN and EWTN.





OBITUARY(CTD.)

In 2018, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan appointed Rev. Nelson to serve on the Congressional Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission whose mission was to honor the life and legacy of Frederick Douglass. In 2023, Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin appointed Rev. Nelson to the Board of Visitors for the University of Mary Washington. He was the recipient of numerous awards including the RNC Black Republican Trailblazer Award, The Church of God in Christ World Missions Partnership Award (DLI), AFPI's Champion for Life Award, and many others.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife of 27 years, Julia (Yim) of Montgomery Village, Maryland; daughters Michaela and Amani of Rockville, Maryland; son Brandon of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; father Eugene Nelson of Marshall, Virginia; brother Barry Caison of Ft. Washington, Maryland; sisters Andrea Nelson Gaines (Robert) of Marshall, Virginia; Greta Summerville (Darrian) of Gainesville, Virginia; Aislyn Epperson (Dwight), of Bristow, Virginia, as well as six nieces, nine nephews, and a host of aunts, uncles, and cousins.

*Those from among you shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of streets to dwell in.*

- Isaiah 58:12 NKJV -

Family REFLECTIONS



JULIA NELSON

I fell madly in love with Dean Nelson long before he was particularly aware of my existence, and I still marvel that he chose me to be his wife. Over more than 27 years, that passionate infatuation matured into a profound affection and joy in his company that animated every one of our days together. We talked almost constantly, and he listened to my endless thoughts, ideas, complaints, worries, and excitements for untold hours. Being loved by him made me a stronger, better person. I wish more than anything that we could have had more time, but I will be forever grateful to God for the time that we did have. I will miss you until we meet again, my Love.

MICHAELA NELSON

I am absolutely heartbroken to lose my father so soon and I will miss him dearly. However, I remain overwhelmed with gratitude that I had the privilege of being his daughter and learning from him every day. He frequently quoted Frederick Douglass saying “I would unite with anyone to do right and with nobody to do wrong” and I believe that encapsulated his assignment on this earth. He fulfilled his assignment three times over and did so with poise, excellence and an abundance of grace. Although I will never see him again in this life, I will take comfort in knowing he taught me and so many others how to live a life of character, purpose and joy.

AMANI NELSON

As evidenced by the number of people who are here, my father loved a lot of people. He loved more people than I thought humanly possible and was greatly loved in return. I’m desperately sad that I now have to hold onto so much love from someone who is no longer here but I am secure in the knowledge that my dad’s love made me a better person, and I get to be that person for the rest of my life.

A poem about Frederick Douglass written by the great Robert Hayden ends with the following:

*“This man, superb in love and logic, this man shall be remembered.
Oh, not with statues’ rhetoric, not with legends and poems and wreaths of
bronze alone, -but with the lives grown out of his life, the lives
fleshing his dream of the beautiful, needful thing.”*



BRANDON NELSON

First of all I want to thank everyone for gathering here, joining my family in memory of my father. The hundreds of people inside this church make up only a small fraction of the people my father touched in his lifetime. He meant many different things to many people, including myself, but what I think he was best at, was just being Dad.

I will miss the many father-son moments we shared, including tagging along for ministry adventures, bonding over our frustration in our favorite sports teams, and most importantly, stopping for food on the way home. Mourning the loss of my father's physical presence on this earth has not been easy, and I am afraid that the process may just be starting. However, I have experienced enough life to know that my father's spirit, values, and love for others will continue to live on as he watches over us.

BARRY CAISON

My beloved brother was the most awesome Christian I've ever known. We had a special bond from the start and it got stronger over the years as we spent time together at our annual brother birthday fellowships. We talked about our families, relationships, ministry, politics, business, and sports. Before we both got busy with growing families, ministry, building careers, and running organizations, we spent time annually at men's retreats in the mountains of Pennsylvania in early December. Those were special times: we prayed, worshiped, fellowshiped and played football together like kids. Dean at receiver, me at quarterback and both in secondary on defensive. Together, we were unstoppable! I will truly miss my brother and those special times together.

ANDREA NELSON GAINES

Dean... my first best friend and the one I always looked up to and am incredibly proud of. I have always admired his boldness for the Lord and his accomplishments reflected that. As a big brother, he was there for me countless times and always provided me with prayer, spiritual counsel, wisdom and loving guidance, and strength and support growing up, and continued to do so when I became a wife and a mother. There isn't a childhood memory without him in it and I will forever cherish them. He was truly one of a kind, as well as an inspiration to many, through whom his legacy will continue as we carry his torch. Although he has completed his work here on earth, the Lord has a greater task for him now. Rest easy, my hero, until we meet again. I love you, brother.



GRETA SUMMERVILLE

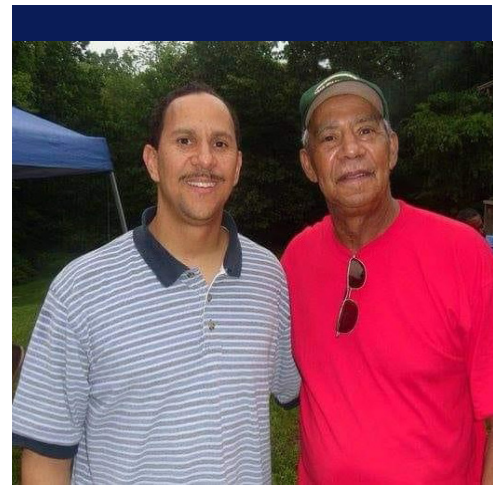
My sweet brother, admired by me for rolling quarters like waves on your stomach, for nimbly walking on your hands, for threatening to call down fire from heaven, but most importantly for loving me, just like Jesus, when I was far from Him. Thank you for Puerto Rico, filled with many firsts; a missions trip, flying on an airplane, witnessing foot washing, serving as a conference interpreter at 17- and wondering why the natives didn't laugh at the preacher's jokes. (I realized later that they'd gotten "lost in translation".) I'll live by what you taught me: "The truest sign of a leader is how he stewards the weaknesses of others," and "Strive to have three people in your life; a Paul, a Timothy, and a David."

Until we meet again... Joshua 24:15 & Matthew 5:16

AISLYN EPPERSON

The only thing that helps this make sense is the scripture that God gave Greta several years ago about mom. John 12:24 says "unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces much grain." God knows what He is doing. Much grain is being produced and the harvest will be great because of you Dean.

Thanks for not getting mad when I used to pull out your feathers (leg hair), getting mom and dad to let us watch the Simpsons and making sure I knew that mom would be proud of me. I know you are happily in the arms of Jesus and mom saving a place for me. Until then, I'll do my best to serve God and serve others like you did.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The family of Reverend Nelson would like to express their deepest gratitude to the countless individuals who prayed for and ministered to them during this time and the many who have worked tirelessly to help all of us celebrate his remarkable life. Special thanks also to:

Cornerstone Chapel
Going Home Cremation and Funeral Care of Rockville
Human Coalition

Musicians:

Anthony Walker, Kenneth Epperson, Mrs. Joy Carter,
Roderick Holcomb, Pastor Kevin LeVar Gray