

Celebration of Life for
William David Thornton, Jr.

“Billy”

Sunrise
June 27, 1951

Sunset
December 21, 2016



Monday, January 2, 2017 - 6:00 p.m.

GRACE BIBLE CLASS CHURCH

54 Pine Street

Passaic, New Jersey

Rev. Bernard Durham, Officiating

Janice Wright, Organist

Reflections of Life

William David Thornton Jr. of Passaic, New Jersey went to be with the Lord on Tuesday, December 21, 2016. William was born on June 27, 1951 in Jersey City, NJ. William was the son of the late William David Thornton Sr. and Mildred A. Thornton.

William, better known as Billy, grew up in Passaic and as a young athlete, participated in the YMCA church basketball league where he won awards from 1967-1969. After graduating from Passaic Senior High School in 1969, Billy attended Shaw University in North Carolina. During his time at Shaw, he was involved in a motor vehicle accident. Although this would have stopped others, Billy persevered. As a believer in God, Billy's steadfast faith carried him beyond his rehab process and allowed him to shift his perspective and belief that all things truly are possible with God's grace, mercy and strength. After rehab at the Kessler Institute, he continued his academic career, at Montclair State College with a Bachelor of Arts in 1982, and later graduated from Kean University with a Master of Arts in Instruction and Curriculum in 2004.

With great determination, Billy excelled while playing wheelchair athletics. He won innumerable medals, plaques, certificates and awards, in the areas of track and field, rugby and basketball, while traveling the world to London, Hawaii, and New Zealand, among other locations. Billy competed at the National Wheelchair Games, the Los Angeles 1984 Olympics, and the Stoke Mandeville International Games in England (the Olympics for the disabled), where he brought home a bronze medal.

Billy's love for teaching and his desire to serve his students also guided his life. As a teacher for 19 years, Billy was honored to make an impact on the lives of his 1st-6th grade students in the areas of reading, vocabulary and computer technology. Billy was humbled by how much his students improved the quality of his own life, and he even participated in a recent student-teacher musical performance.

Billy took pride in ownership of his Mustang and Cadillac cars, and his home, which were fully customized to accommodate his special needs. Billy enjoyed cheering for his cherished football teams, the Pittsburgh Steelers and New York Giants, as well as relaxing on the deck with his family and friends.

Billy was predeceased by his father William Thornton Sr. and brother-in-law Enrick Warner.

He leaves to cherish in his loving memory his mother Mildred A. Thornton, his sister Patrice Thornton Warner, his nieces Danielle Warner Brooks (Robert) and Jillian Thornton Warner, his great nephew Noah, and a host of family and friends.

Order of Service

Processional “Great is Thy Faithfulness”

Hymn

Scripture Readings

Old Testament - Psalm 23

New Testament - John 14:1-3

Prayer of Comfort Reverend Marti Robinson

Words of Comfort

Solo Yvonne Hopkins

Acknowledgements/Reflections of Life

Musical Selection

Eulogy

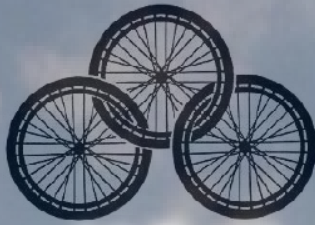
Committal

Presentation

Recessional “Let the Church Say Amen”

Final Disposition

Cedar Lawn Crematory
Paterson, New Jersey



"I Teach"

I teach because there is great fulfillment that comes
in working with girls and boys.

I teach because I wanted to be a sculptor,
and I can do so, by shaping lives for the future.

I teach because I wanted to be an artist,
and I can do so, by painting dreams for children.

I teach because I wanted to be a musician,
and I can, in giving inspiration to children.

I teach because I wanted to be a historian,
and I can in having recorded something
for the lives of great men to come.

I teach because I wanted to be a poet,
and I can in writing impressive passages of mankind.

I teach because of the reward I receive when a child's from turns to smiles,
or when he/she says "Now I understand".

I teach because of the personal growth I receive each day as I venture out
on a quest for knowledge and techniques to help my children understand.

I teach for it is in this that I see the worthwhile
and true fulfillment of living.

Author: Unknown

Acknowledgement

In Loving Memory of **William David Thornton, Jr.** we hold you close
within our hearts, as we acknowledge, with gratitude and appreciation, your
expressions of comfort and sympathy during our time of bereavement.

May God continue to bless and keep each of you.

The Family

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