

Celebration of Life



Shirley Ann Barr

Sunrise: November 16, 1954

Sunset: September 23, 2017

Service

Wednesday, October 4, 2017 - 10:00 a.m.

FIRST CORINTHIAN BAPTIST CHURCH

1912 7th Avenue • New York, NY

Rev. Arthur Anthony Harris, Officiating

Obituary

Life is forever; death is a dream! If we did not go to sleep at night, we'd never awaken to see the light. The joy of watching the new day wake or meeting the dawn by some quiet lake would never be ours unless we slept.

Shirley Irving Barr

My life began on a beautiful Tuesday morning in the month of November 1954. My parents, William and Ella Mae Irving, were happy to begin their family with me, a beautiful, bouncing baby girl, their very first child.

Mom and Dad reared me to fear God. Being born in a Bible land and a Gospel country gave me a faith rooted in Christ. This inspired me to always live by the "Golden Rule."

Growing up, helping my mother around the house and in the kitchen allowed me to understand my gifts. After graduating from Lincoln High School in Brooklyn, New York in 1972, I realized as the oldest child, I would need to be able to pull my weight. This was enough to motivate me to be diligent in my search for employment. I became an active part of the workforce in no time and was happy to help at home.

One summer day while in Harlem, I met a gentleman by the name of Michael Rivers. I found myself mesmerized...the rest is HISTORY. Together, we created a beautiful family from my oldest to my youngest baby girl "Kizzy." My family has always been my greatest blessing...My Masterpiece.

I was raised in a Baptist church, and when I moved to Harlem, I was happy to join the congregation of First Corinthian Baptist Church where I gave my life to Christ.

I continued to seek gainful employment and found it with a company called FedCap, working out of 26 Federal Plaza. My co-workers were absolutely wonderful and treated me like FAMILY. They supported my every endeavor, and for that, I am thankful.

I am an active member of Alberta Chapter #75, Order of Eastern Star, under the leadership of Worthy Matron Tiaka Wright. My biggest accomplishment was when I was crowned 2014-2017 National Order of Eastern Star Queen. Today, I represent Adah Grand Chapter as the Conductress where my Grand Worthy Matron is Sister Amber Burgess-Greene. In addition, I am the Vice Daughter Ruler of Eureka Temple # 22A of the Improved Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World. I became a member because the Daughters of Elks are committed to promoting and enhancing the welfare and happiness of their members. They encourage the cultivation of nobleness of soul and goodness of heart; teach the principles of charity, justice, brotherly and sisterly love, and fidelity; assist and protect their members and their families; and enliven and exalt the spirit of patriotism.

On September 23, 2017, I began to write a letter of love where I reflected upon my life's span. This letter began with these words: "the greater your storm, the brighter your rainbow." I continued by reflecting on my life as, first, a servant of Christ, and then, as a Soulmate, a Mother, a Sister, and lastly, a Friend. And so I ask you, my friends, at the end of life, what really matters? It's not what we bought, but what we built; not what we have, but what we shared. It's not our competence, but our character; and not our success, but our significance. Live a life that matters. Live a life of love. I want you to be at peace because I am. Right now, my soul is free; I am reunited with my Heavenly Father so weep not!

As I leave my legacy of love to: Mike; my children, Yvonne Mitchell of North Carolina, Brandon Mitchell of New York; Michael Rivers, Jr., Joseph Rivers, and my baby, Kizzy Marie Rivers of Troy, New York; my six grandchildren; my sister, Sara Irving; William Irving, and Leon Irving (Denise); her adopted daughter, Katie Belfi, and a host of relatives and very special friends.

I admonish you to never forget the priceless moments we shared, to me, these moments were an essential part of a lifetime of precious memories.

Order of Service

*Rev. Arthur Anthony Harris, Officiating
Senior Pastor, Rescue Baptist Church*

Organ Prelude

Processional

Congregational Song....."I'll Fly Away"

Prayer of Comfort.....Rev. Earnestine Mays
Rescue Baptist Church

Scripture Readings.....Rev. Earnestine Mays
Old Testament - Psalm 42
New Testament - John 14

Selection.....Voices of Rescue

Reflections.....Family

Solo.....Sister Corine Corbet

Obituary.....Rev. Earnestine Mays

Eulogy.....Rev. Arthur Anthony Harris

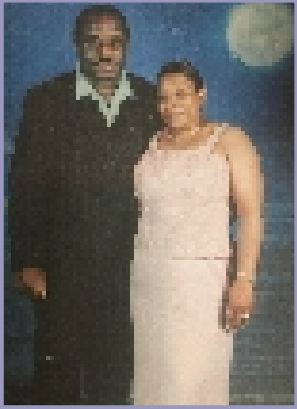
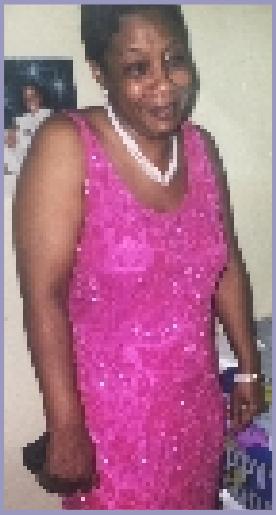
Benediction

Recessional

Committal at Cemetery

Interment

*Forest Green Memorial Park
Morganville, New Jersey*



I'm Free

*Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
 I'm following the path God laid for me
 I took his hand when I heard Him call
 I turned my back and left it all.
 I could not stay another day.
 To laugh, to love, to work or play.
 Tasks left undone must stay that way,
 I found that peace at the close of day.
 If my parting has left a void,
 Then fill it up with remembered joy.
 A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
 Oh, yes these things I too will miss.
 Be not burdened with times of sorrow,
 I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
 My life's been full, I savored much.
 Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.
 Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
 Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
 Lift up your heart and share with me,
 God wanted me now, He set me free!*

-author unknown

Acknowledgement

*The family acknowledges with deep appreciation all acts of kindness extended to them during this bereavement hour.
 May God bless you for all your thoughtfulness and concern.*

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