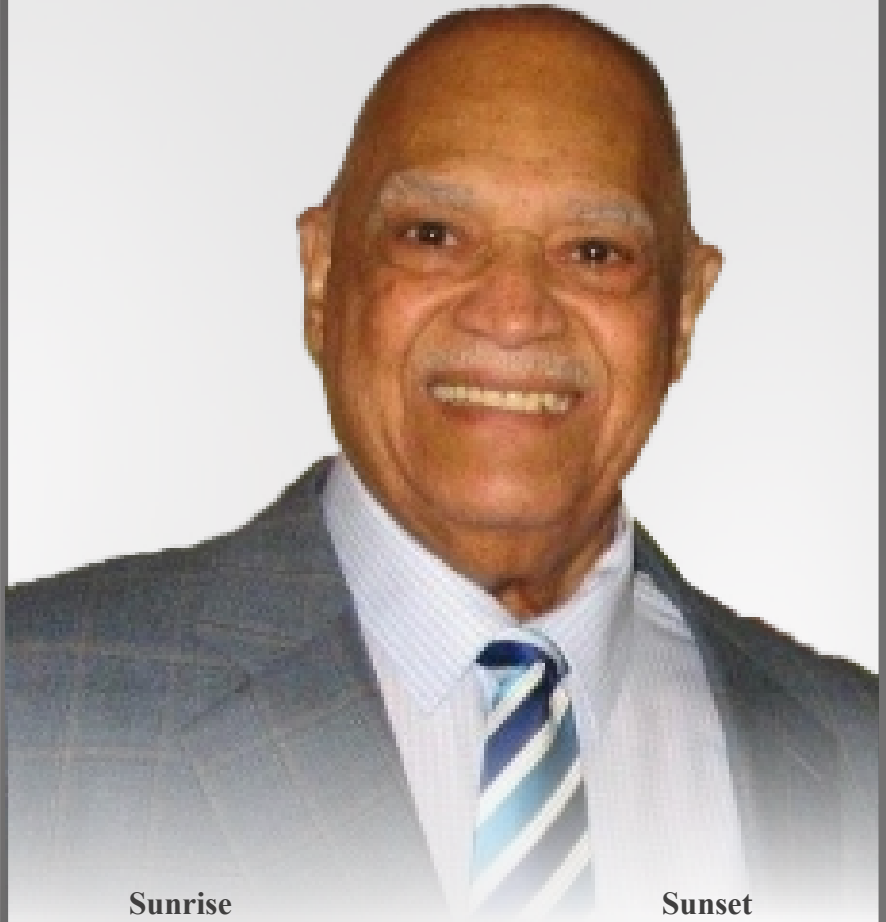


*Celebration of A Wonderful Life*  
*Victor A. Callender*



**Sunrise**  
**January 31, 1936**

**Sunset**  
**May 30, 2020**

**Thursday, June 11, 2020 - 10am**

**UNITY FUNERAL CHAPELS, INC.**

2352 8th Avenue • New York, NY 10027

# *Obituary*

**Victor A. Callender** was born on January 31, 1936 in New York City. He was the second child and youngest son of Victor and Gertrude Callender. Victor and his three siblings Dennis (deceased), Eleanor (deceased) and Barbara were raised in Harlem at 27 Morningside Avenue.

Victor went to Howard Hughes High School and studied textiles. His first job after graduation was at the Echo Scarves company. The women in his family loved it because he always brought home the nicest scarves as gifts. Throughout his life he had a fondness for touching items of clothing and noting the quality of the fabric.

Victor served in the Army for two years and he had the pleasure of serving in Hawaii. Since he did not serve during wartime he was able to play on different sports teams during his service and enjoy that part of the world. He was honorably discharged in 1960 and returned home to New York City.

When he returned home from the service he had two job offers waiting for him from the Police Department and the Fire Department. He did not want to use a gun so he opted to join the Fire Department. This would be one of the best decisions of his life.

He moved out of his family home on Morningside but stayed in the same neighborhood. It was soon after he moved out that he met the love of his life, Lena Johnson. They would marry in April 1965 (another great decision) and this union produced two daughters, April and Karen.

The Callender family moved to a brand new residence at 139th Street on Riverside Drive called River View Towers. Life in this building provided the family with an incredible community of friends, travel buddies and party opportunities. Victor would reside here until his passing.

Victor treasured his time in the NYC Fire Department and cherished the lifelong friends he made with his colleagues and their families. Victor was also a lifetime member of the Vulcans, the fraternal organization for Black Firefighters. He never missed a Vulcan event or card game. Weekends and Holidays were often spent at barbeques, parties and vacations with these special friends.

Victor retired from the Fire Department in December 1989 after 29 years of service. Soon after, his wife retired from her job with a local Assemblywoman. With both daughters in college, they looked forward to a life of relaxation. Unfortunately, Lena passed from stomach cancer in 1991 and Victor went on to live life as a widower.

The next chapter of his life was also rewarding as he was surrounded by faithful friends, his devoted daughters and eventually, a new love. He loved to party, he loved to dance, he loved to travel and he loved food! All of these were plentiful in this phase of life.

Unfortunately, in 2016 he began his battle with kidney disease and it would slow him down for a minute. However, in true Callender style he fought back and found new ways to stay connected and enjoy life.

On April 20th, Victor Callender entered the hospital to start the fight of his life against COVID 19. He battled the virus for over a month and we all thought he had won – but on May 30th his “pure heart” stopped and our world was changed forever.

Victor is survived by: his sister, Barbara; his two daughters, April and Karen; his nephews, Russell, Vernon and Gary; his nieces, Renee, Denise and Natalie; a host of grandnieces and grandnephews; and so many loving lifelong friends.



## Order of Celebration

Presiding Minister, Reverend Dr. Denise Smartt Sears  
*District Superintendent, United Methodist Church*

### **Welcome and Opening Prayer**

#### **Having A Pure Heart**

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"* Matthew 5:8

*My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure*  
- Alfred Lord Tennyson

### **Musical Selection**

#### **Having A Strong Family**

*"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."* — Exodus 20:12

*"A happy family is but an earlier heaven."* —George Bernard Shaw

### **Reflections**

#### **Obituary**

#### **Having A Life Well Lived**

*His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master'* - Matthew 25:21

*Life is short, Break the Rules. Forgive quickly, Kiss slowly. Love truly. Laugh uncontrollably And never regret ANYTHING That makes you smile*  
- Mark Twain

### **Closing Prayer**

Victor A. Callender will be buried at Fair Lawn Cemetery in New Jersey at the conclusion of the celebration ceremony.



## *A Life Well Lived*

A life well lived is a precious gift  
Of hope and strength and grace,  
From someone who has made our world  
A brighter, better place  
It's filled with moments, sweet and sad  
With smiles and sometimes tears,  
With friendships formed and good times shared  
And laughter through the years.  
A life well lived is a legacy  
Of joy and pride and pleasure,  
A living, lasting memory  
Our grateful hearts will treasure.  
- Author Unknown

## *Acknowledgement*

***The family of Victor A. Callender would like to express our heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation for all of the love, kindness and support shown to us during this most difficult time.***

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