

*Celebrating the Life  
of*



*Joseph Gillespie, Jr.*

Sunrise: June 4, 1944

Sunset: March 18, 2024

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

Viewing: 10 a.m. Service: 11 a.m.

First Baptist Church of Glenarden

3600 Brightseat Road

Landover, MD 20875

Pastor John K. Jenkins, Sr.

Reverend Duane E. Dickens, Sr., Presider

Reverend Dr. Stephen A. Hurd, Eulogist

# *Order of Service*

## *Processional*

## *Scripture Reading*

Old Testament: Job 19:25-27

New Testament: 1 Thess. 4:14-18

Rev. Dr. Willitta Gordon-Hawkins

## *Prayer*

Keshia Dixon

## *Ministry of Music*

FBCG Music & Creative Arts Department

"God Is"

## *Acknowledgements*

Funeral Service Department

## *Remembering Joseph*

Please read silently

## *Reflections*

(please limit reflections to two minutes)

Rev. Charles Davis

Jeanette Gillespie

## *Ministry of Music*

FBCG Music & Creative Arts Department

"Let Go & Let God"

## *Message*

Reverend Dr. Stephen A. Hurd

## *Committal*

## *Benediction*

## *Recessional*



# *Celebrating the Life of Joseph Gillespie*

On Monday, March 18, 2024, Joseph (Joe) Lorenzo Gillespie Jr. peacefully departed this life after battling a long illness.

Joseph Lorenzo Gillespie, Jr. was born on June 4, 1944, in Fayetteville, North Carolina to Joseph L. Gillespie, Sr. and Nannie M. (Bryant) Gillespie. Joe (also known as Junior) excelled academically throughout school. He attended Newbold Elementary School, Washington Drive Junior High School, and E.E. Smith Senior High School. During his years within the Fayetteville school system, Joseph received outstanding accolades in football, basketball, baseball, track and tennis, and served as team captain and earned All-State recognition in high school football. Joseph graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and Biology from Fayetteville State Teacher's College (now Fayetteville State University). During his time at Fayetteville State, Joe became a member of Epsilon Beta Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated. He also earned the position of team captain and All-CIAA honors as a safety for Fayetteville State's Broncos football team.

After migrating from North Carolina and settling in Washington, DC, on October 1, 1966, Joe married his lifelong love (since 3rd grade) Barbara Ann (McNeill) Gillespie and they moved to Capital Heights, Maryland. From this union, were born two children, Kimberly Gillespie and Travis Gillespie. Joseph and Barbara had been married for 47 years.

Joe honed his academic background in Mathematics by pursuing a career in education, which expanded over 40 years. Joe taught at Roper Junior High, Spingarn High (S.T.A.Y.), Kelley Miller Middle and H.D Woodson High School in Washington, DC. After retiring from the District of Columbia school system, he was sought after to continue teaching high school math (Algebra I and II) to students at Suitland High School in Prince George's County Maryland. Joe's love for sports extended from playing tennis to coaching football at the high school level. He also supported and had a positive impact on inner-city youths through the Boys & Girls Club of Washington, DC. Joe's love for his three grandsons was steadfast as he was present and chauffeured them to football, and basketball games.

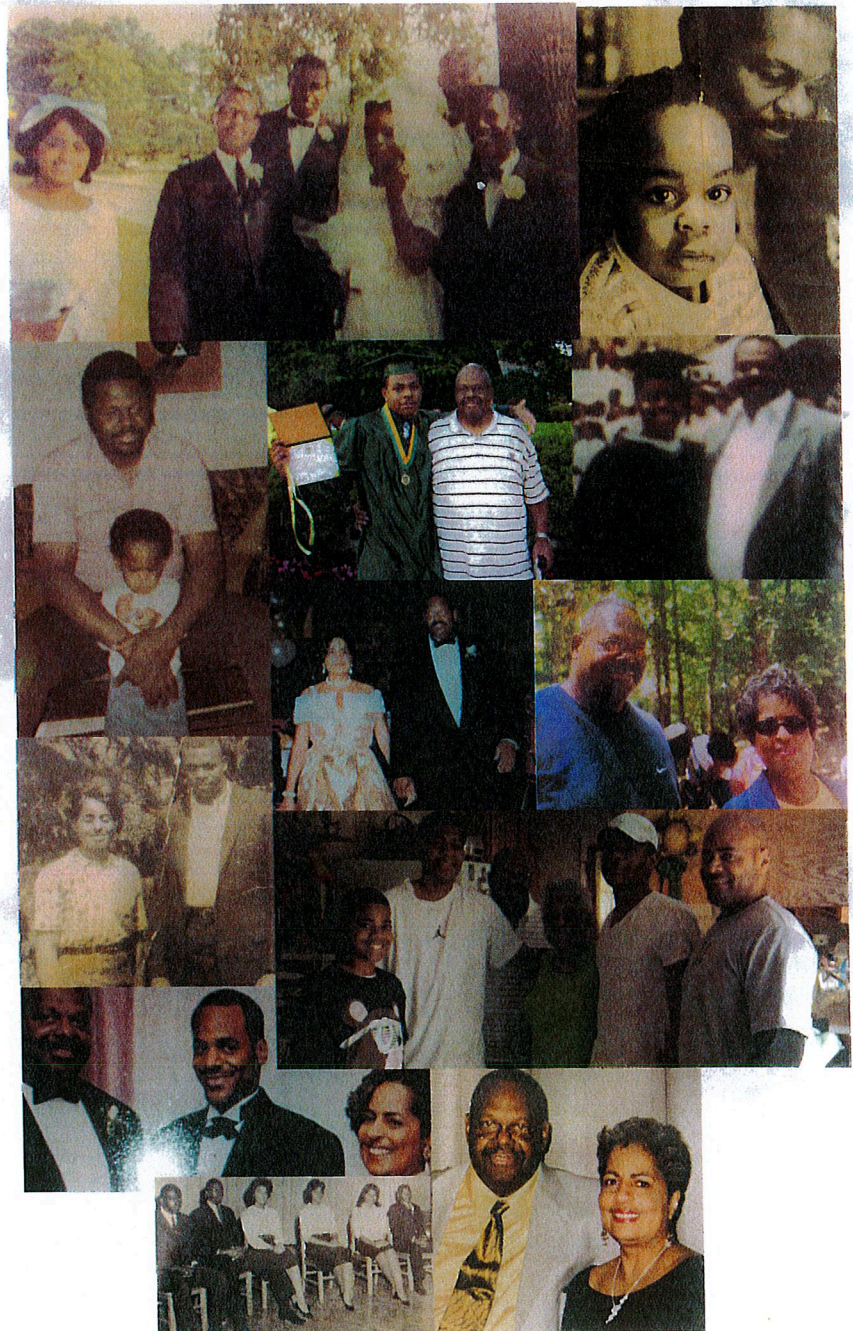
Joe's presence, kind spirit, and charming conversation enriched many lives, including those that cared for him at SpringTime Homes assisted living in Upper Marlboro, Maryland and Complete Care Nursing Home in Annapolis, Maryland. His witty personality and dynamic way of storytelling kept us laughing and thinking all at once.



# Memories

Joe was preceded in death by his father Joseph Lorenzo Gillespie, Sr, mother, Nannie Mariam (Bryant) Gillespie, sister Gwendolyn Gillespie, and wife Barbara Ann (McNeill) Gillespie. He leaves to cherish his memory: daughter, Kimberly Gillespie; son, Travis Gillespie (Angela); grandsons, Omar, Jalen and Jeremy Gillespie; stepmother, Thelma Gillespie, sisters, Jeanette Gillespie and Linda Diana Gillespie-Polite; brothers, Philip McNeill (Cecilia) and Kenneth Gillespie (Eileen); and a host of loving nieces, nephews, in-laws, relatives and friends.

In Ephesians 2:6 We rejoice knowing, God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the Heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.





Grandad,

Trying to find the right words to express our admiration for the extraordinary person you are feels like an impossible task.

You have been the cornerstone of our family, a beacon of strength, humility, and wisdom. Your unwavering integrity has left an everlasting mark on all of us.

From your humble beginnings to the heights of your achievements, you have shown us what it means to persevere in the face of adversity.

Your accomplishments stand as a testament to your hard work, resilience, and unwavering dedication.

But beyond your remarkable achievements, it is your humor, generosity, and humility that truly set you apart. You have always been there for us, offering your guidance, support, and unconditional love every step of the way.

As we look to the future, we can only hope to follow in your footsteps and live lives filled with integrity and compassion.

We want you to know that you mean the world to us. Your love has shaped us into the individuals we are today, and we are forever grateful for the countless lessons you have taught us.

We love you more than words can express. Thank you for being the heart and soul of our family.

With all our love,

*Omar, Jalen and Jeremy*



At about 6' 2" and 225 lbs., this guy played the game like he was 6'8"; 250 lbs. He was strong, fast and quick as a cat. During the game, Joe was assigned the opponents best receivers, with his skills and knowledge of the game he anchored the defense. Joe was a physical force on the field, I remember watching Joseph play and watching the crowd quiver as Joseph put the pads on against potential receivers. This guy would hit you and would hit you hard. As I heard in the stands so often, "When that Joe Gillespie hit you, you did not want to run his way again." Hey, that was just how he played the game!

Joe had a natural instinct when it came to sports, during a different time in a different era, he would have been a professional football player. Black athletes in the sixties and early seventies had little or no opportunities to play pro sports, regardless of having superior athletic talent like Joseph Gillespie. Hopefully, Joseph will eventually become an E.E. Smith High School and Fayetteville State University Hall of Famer.

Now that the Sun has set on my brother-in-law, Joe and my sister Barbara, may they rest together in peace in the arms of our almighty God.

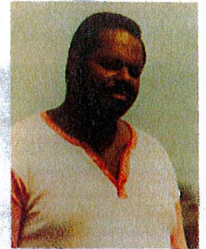
LOVE YOU BIG GUY, *Roy McNeill*



# From the Heart of the Family

## Father-in-Love

You meant so much to all of us  
 You were special and that's no lie  
 You brightened up the darkest day  
 And the cloudiest sky  
 Your smile alone warmed hearts  
 Your laugh was like music to hear  
 We would give absolutely anything  
 To have you well and standing near  
 Not a second passes  
 When you're not on our minds  
 Your love we will never forget  
 The hurt will ease in time  
 Many tears we have seen  
 They have all poured out like rain  
 We know that you are happy now  
 And no longer in any pain.



Thoughts from Angie  
 -Author Unknown-

## Pallbearers

Omar Gillespie Jalen Gillespie  
 Jeremy Gillespie Kenneth Gillespie Raphael McNeill  
 Allen Anthony



## Floral Bearers

Friends of the Family



## Acknowledgements

The family of Joe Gillespie wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the comforting messages, prayers, and many other expressions of kindness and concern during our time of mourning.

## Interment

Private

## Services Entrusted to:

Strickland Funeral Services  
 6500 Allentown Road  
 Temple Hills, MD 20748

