

Obituary

PAUL EUGENE RAY • 1937 - 2025

PAUL EUGENE RAY was born on November 17, 1937, the seventh and youngest child of Frederick D. Ray and Sarah F. Ray, in Woodbridge, VA. He attended Summit Elementary School in Woodbridge, VA, then Manassas Regional High School in Manassas, VA, and later Howard University School of Architecture and Engineering in Washington, DC. Paul became an architect licensed to practice in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, primarily involving the design and renovation of hospitals, churches, educational structures, and apartment buildings.

Paul joined Mt. Olive Baptist Church of Woodbridge, VA, as a youth, remaining a member there until he and his wife, Sonja, joined Shiloh Baptist Church of Washington in 1983. At Shiloh, Paul was assigned to Hope Circle where he enjoyed fellowship with Circle members at monthly meetings and special holiday events. He served as a church Trustee and worked faithfully in the finance office for many years. He was a dedicated member of the Caleb Bible Class. Paul thirsted for knowledge of the Word, sought wisdom, and utilized his understanding to live by the word daily. In earlier years at Shiloh, he volunteered his time with the Male Youth Project under the leadership of Deacon G. F. Bingham. Paul participated in Veterans Recognition Sundays, as he had served in and was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army.

On June 16, 1973, Paul was united in holy matrimony to Sonja Yvonne Smith of Upperville, VA. In 1977, they welcomed their son, Errol Eugene, to the family.

Paul was a dedicated father and loving husband. Over the years he developed camaraderie with his neighbors and became an asset by raking leaves, sweeping walkways, and shoveling snow for others to make life more manageable for everyone; he modeled this for Errol who followed suit.

One of the highlights of Paul’s social life was joining the Bachelor-Benedict Club, Inc. The activities and events they sponsored, especially their Red Sash Ball, provided wonderful opportunities to interact with brothers across the DMV in an atmosphere of good food, fellowship, music and dancing.

When his health began rapidly declining, we would hear Paul praying quietly with confirmation that he trusted God to be in control of his life. As he ended the prayer, we would hear him say, “Not my will, but thy will be done. In Jesus’ name... Amen. Amen.” On Friday, September 26, 2025, he left us at God’s appointed place and time, at his home in the 5300 block of Second Street, NW, Washington, DC, quietly and peacefully early in the morning.

We give God the glory for our beloved Paul, Poppie, Uncle Paul, or Cousin Paul who showed us, through his strong faith that He believed God’s word from his favorite scripture; “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”

Paul was preceded in death by his parents, Fred and Sarah Ray and his six siblings: Fred, George, William, Melissa Swann, Lancewell, and Leah Adams. He leaves to cherish his memory: his devoted wife, Sonja; a loving son, Errol (Phyllis); nieces, Natalie Allen (Edward), Cynthia Murphy, Jocelyn Tyree (Charles); Fredericka Baker (Jeffrey), Natalia Borden, Althea Ray, Kimberly Adams (Lisa); nephew, Arnett Ray (Patricia); first cousins, Jean Cleckley, Ralph Watts (Sharon), Ola Smith (Carl), Joseph Ray (Diane), Deborah Ray; sister-in-law, Alease Smith-Pinkett, brother-in-law, Glenn McKay Smith; adopted nephew, Christian Frederick, and a host of other relatives.

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Paul’s Order of Service

MUSICAL PRELUDE

PROCESSION OF CLERGY AND CHURCH OFFICIALS

CALL TO WORSHIP AND INVOCATION

Rev. Desiré P. Grogan
Interim Assistant Pastor for Christian Education

HYMN OF PRAISE #153

Great is Thy Faithfulness (William Runyan)

READING OF SCRIPTURES

Psalm 91:1-3, 9-11 - Deacon Leslie A. Petersen, Sr.
II Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18 - Deacon Jocelyn Frye Summers

PRAYER OF COMFORT

Rev. Rodney L. Smith, Sr., Pastor
Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, Marshall, VA
PRAYER RESPONSE: *Praise Him, Jesus Blessed Savior*

MUSICAL SELECTION

Lord, Help Me to Hold Out (James Cleveland)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

JoAnne Beasley, Church Clerk

TRIBUTES AND REFLECTIONS

Rev. Dr. Wallace Charles Smith, Pastor Emeritus
Anita C. Jordan-Duckett, Leader, Hope Circle
James T. Wynne, Jr., Past Chair, Board of Trustees
Deacon James A. Cole
Lead Teacher, Caleb Bible Class
Family

PREPARATORY PRAISE

God Is (James Cleveland)

EULOGY

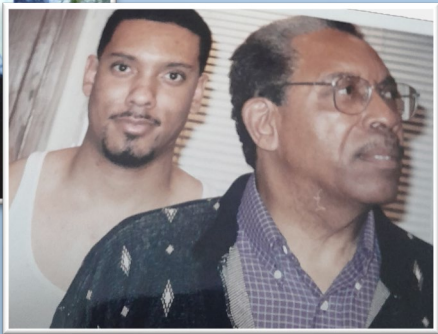
Rev. George E. Mensah Sr., MDiv, Interim Pastor

FINAL BLESSING

RECESSIONAL

Soon and Very Soon (A. Crouch)

MUSICAL POSTLUDE





PALLBEARERS

Robert C. Gunn
George T. Hardy, Jr.
Jimmy McCants

Linwood Moore
Eric Smith
Frank R. Walker, Jr.

FLORAL BEARERS

Deaconess Ministry • Hope Circle

With Grateful Hearts

We are grateful for all expressions of sympathy and compassion shown to us during Paul's illness and passing. We extend special thanks to the medical and palliative care teams, social workers, and the extended hospital staff on C61 at Georgetown University Hospital for their exemplary care of Paul; to Dr. Chitra Venkatraman and her staff at the infusion center; and to Dr. Anthony and the Vitas Health Team for their counsel, compassion, and care. Our gratitude is eternal.

~The Family of Paul E. Ray

God saw you getting tired and a cure was not to be
so, He put His arms around you and whispered,
"Come with me."

[We said our goodbyes then you slipped away]

Although we love you dearly,
we could not make you stay.

A golden heart stopped beating,
hard working hands are at rest.

God broke our hearts to prove to us
He only takes the best.

We will always *Love* you!



Music provided by

THE SHILOH MUSIC MINISTRY

Dr. Thomas Dixon Tyler, Director

Evelyn Simpson-Curenton, M.M., Organist

Services for our loved one were entrusted to
MCGUIRE FUNERAL SERVICES

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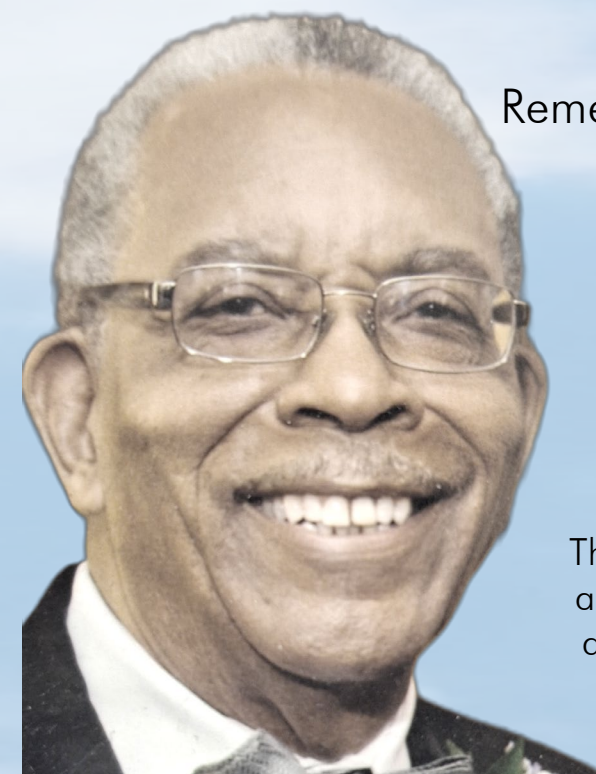
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Remembering with LOVE

Paul

EUGENE RAY

1937-2025



The steps of a good man
are ordered by the Lord:
and he delighteth in his
ways. Psalm 37:23

♣ SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2025 ♣

Viewing: 10:00 AM

Service: 11:00 AM

www.shilohbaptist.org/livestream

- REPAST -

A repast will be held immediately following the service
in Heritage Hall of the
Henry C. Gregory III Family Life Center

- INTERMENT -

Lincoln Memorial Cemetery
4001 Suitland Road | Suitland-Silver Hill, MD 20746



1500 Ninth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Rev. George E. Mensah, Sr., MDiv
INTERIM PASTOR
www.shilohbaptist.org