

*When I come to the end of my journey  
And I travel my last weary mile  
Just forget if you can, that I ever frowned  
And remember only the smile*

*Forget unkind words I have spoken  
Remember some good I have done  
Forget that I ever had heartache  
And remember I've had loads of fun*

*Forget that I've stumbled and blundered  
And sometimes fell by the way  
Remember I have fought some hard battles  
And won, ere the close of the day*

*Then forget to grieve for my going  
I would not have you sad for a day  
But in summer just gather some flowers  
And remember the place where I lay*

*And come in the shade of evening  
When the sun paints the sky in the west  
Stand for a few moments beside me  
And remember only my best.*

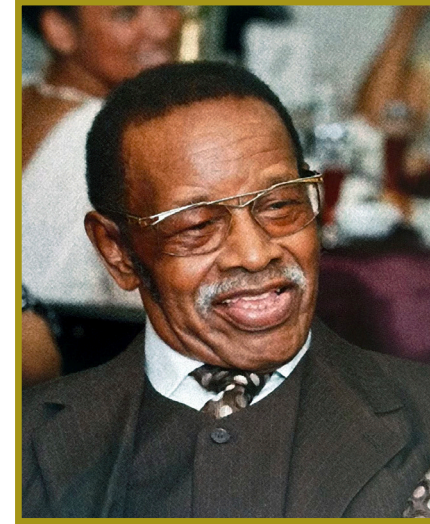
## *Acknowledgments*

The Early family wishes to extend our sincere gratitude for the support, and prayers during this difficult time. The calls, texts, and profound outpouring of love, has been extremely meaningful and uplifting. Through our cherished memories, **LONNIE** will live on in our hearts forever. May we continue to celebrate his life by living with gratitude every single day that we have the ability to take a breath and share our lives with our loved ones.

## *Arrangements Entrusted to:*

  
**BENTA'S**  
Funeral Home, Inc.  
630 St. Nicholas Avenue  
New York, NY 10030  
Phone: (212) 281-8850  
Fax: (212) 234-3600

## *A Celebration of Life for*



## *Lonnie Charles Early*

SUNRISE: AUGUST 7, 1933 - SUNSET: JULY 8, 2024

## *Funeral Service*

Friday July 19, 2024 • 10:30 A.M.

**BENTA'S FUNERAL HOME**

630 St. Nicholas Avenue • New York, NY 10030

**MINISTER ARTHUR MUHAMMAD, Officiating**

## *Interment*

**CALVERTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**

Calverton, New York

# Order of Service

INVOCATION ..... MIN. ARTHUR MUHAMMAD

SCRIPTURE ..... TARIQ EATMAN

OLD TESTAMENT

NEW TESTAMENT

PRAYER OF COMFORT ..... SHARITA ROBINSON

REFLECTIONS ..... JEREMY PRIDGEN

BETTY HILL

HAKIM EATMAN

JAIME EARLY

OBITUARY ..... RASHAD EATMAN

WORDS OF PRAISE ..... MIN. ARTHUR MUHAMMAD

COMMITTAL ..... MIN. ARTHUR MUHAMMAD

BENEDICTION ..... MIN. ARTHUR MUHAMMAD

FINAL VIEWING ..... FUNERAL DIRECTOR

RECESSIONAL ..... CLERGY & FAMILY

# Obituary

**LONNIE CHARLES EARLY** was born in Leland, Mississippi to John and Sarah Early on August 7th, 1933. He was the fifth-born child of eight children – (Deceased) Elizabeth Early, Alex Early, John Early Jr., Elnora Riddle, Willie Mae Belcher. (Living) William Early and Betty Hill.

In 1944, he was 11 years old when the Early family moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana from Mississippi. Lonnie attended and graduated from Fort Wayne Central High School. In 1952, he was drafted into the United States Army and fought in the Korean War, serving until 1955. Shortly after his honorable discharge, Lonnie met and married Annie Bell Brailsford in 1955, and they remained married until her passing on June 9, 1997. From their union, they had two children, Jacqueline Early and Vanessa Eatman. He also has a son, Lorenzo Jacobs.

Lonnie worked for the New York Transit Authority for several years before working as a bus driver and parking attendant at Yankee Stadium. He was raised with Christian beliefs and values and was baptized at Pilgrim Baptist Church in Fort Wayne, where he later became a member under Reverend John Dixie.

Lonnie is survived by his daughter Jacqueline Early, son Lorenzo Jacobs, siblings William Early and Betty Hill, grandsons Jaime Pridgen, Jeremy Pridgen, Rashad Eatman, Tariq Eatman, Hakim Eatman, Lorenzo Jacobs II, and Austin Jacobs, great-grandchildren Jaime Early, Eisah Eatman, Bilal Eatman, and Surayah-Bell Eatman, granddaughters-in-law Danyel Eatman and Medinah Eatman, and his son-in-law Alfred Eatman, husband of his youngest daughter Vanessa Eatman who transitioned on December 27, 2021. He is also survived by a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws, and close friends near and far.

Lonnie was a loving man who served his family and friends alike. His leadership and zest for life were evident in his everyday demeanor. He lived on his terms, with happiness as his ultimate goal. Lonnie attended every graduation, birthday celebration, wedding, baby shower, and other family events, always sharing in the joy of those around him.

He lived to the age of 90, and his family and friends were blessed to experience the best parts of him during his time with them. Lonnie will live eternally through his family and the genuine friendships.

May he rest peacefully, and may God be pleased with his good works.

Lovingly submitted,  
The Family

