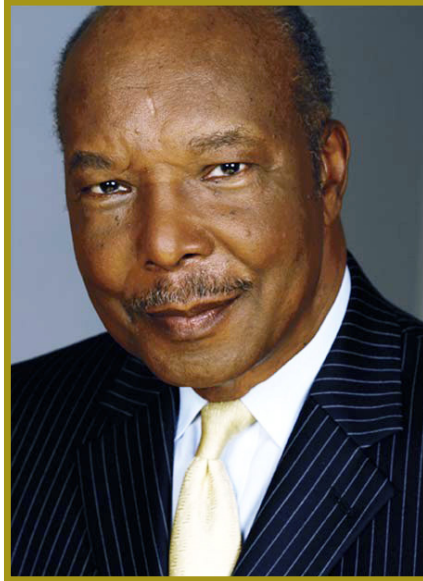


A Celebration of Life



William "Bill" Aiken, Sr.

SUNRISE: MARCH 11, 1934 ~ SUNSET: JULY 24, 2024

Homegoing Service

Thursday, August 8, 2024
Viewing – 10:00AM-11:00 AM
Service – 11:00 AM

CONVENT AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
420 West 145th Street • New York, NY 10031

REVEREND DR. JESSE T. WILLIAMS, JR., *Senior Pastor*
REVEREND BOOKER T. MORGAN, *Presiding*
REVEREND DR. CHARLENE FAISON, *Eulogist*
DR. GREGORY H. HOPKINS, *Minister of Music*

Order of Service

ORGAN PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL

OPENING SENTENCES REV. BOOKER T. MORGAN

HYMN "GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS"

PRAYER OF COMFORT REV. BRENDA PRICE

SCRIPTURES

OLD TESTAMENT PROVERBS 3:5-6

NEW TESTAMENT LUKE 24:13-35

SELECTION "AMAZING GRACE"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS CHURCH
ORGANIZATIONS
FAMILY

OBITUARY

SELECTION "I WON'T COMPLAIN"

EULOGY REV. DR. CHARLENE FAISON

SELECTION "LET THE CHURCH SAY AMEN"

FINAL VIEWING

COMMITTAL

CLOSING PRAYER REV. BOOKER T. MORGAN

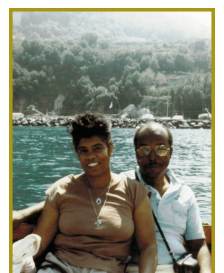
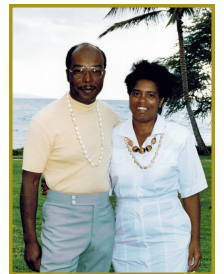
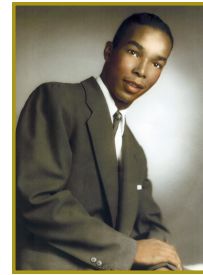
RECESSIONAL

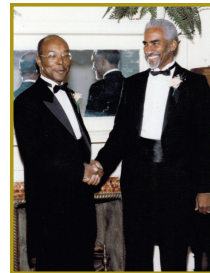
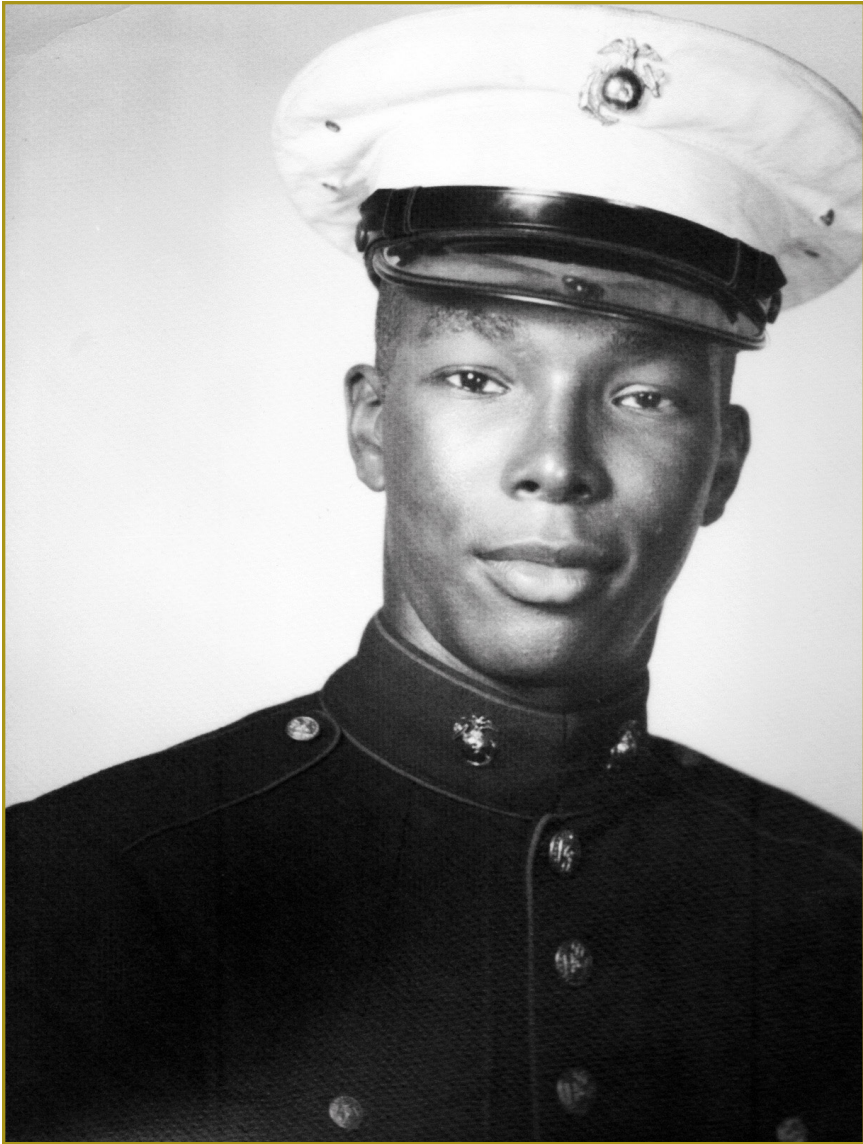
Repast

ALHAMBRA GRAND BALLROOM

2116 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. • New York, NY 10027

Following the Funeral Service, the family will be hosting a reception to bring family and friends together to celebrate William. Please join us at 2:00PM.





Obituary

WILLIAM “BILL” AIKEN was born on March 11, 1934 in Harlem, New York to his parents, Eugene Aiken, Sr. and Ida Lee Aiken (née Brown). Bill’s parents migrated to New York from South Carolina in the 1920s, along with other African Americans seeking better lives than they had under the Jim Crow laws in the South. His mother was a presser in the Harlem garment industry. His father had a dream of becoming an electrical engineer which was stifled by his denial of entry into the electricians’ union due to the racial discrimination, leaving his father to ‘fire up’ huge boilers in a laundry mat instead.

After graduating from Seward Park High School, Bill joined the United States Marine Corp. He served three years, earning the rank of Sergeant. In 1954, Bill married Dorothy Harris and from that union five children were born. In 1988, he was remarried to the former Joyce Blackwell.

Bill graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration from Bernard M. Baruch School of Business and Public Administration (“Baruch”) in 1963, where he majored in accounting and worked full time as a senior account clerk. He became a Certified Public Accountant in the State of New York in 1969.

In a lifetime of firsts, Bill was a barrier breaker and an influential member of the accounting profession. In December 1969, nine African American financial leaders met in New York to discuss the unique challenges and limited opportunities they faced in the accounting profession. As a result of that meeting, the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) organization was born. In that year, there were only 136 African American CPAs out of a total of 100,000 in the United States. Bill joined NABA soon after its founding, becoming its second president in 1970. He served three additional terms—in 1972, 1983 and 1984. As an active member of NABA, Bill traveled across the country starting chapters at various universities, epitomizing NABA’s logo and motto—“Lifting As We Climb.” Today, the organization boasts over 10,000 members and 150 active professional and student chapters.

While simultaneously attending Baruch part time for his MBA and working full time at the New York State Insurance Department, Bill sought an auditing position in a “Big Eight” accounting firm. He graduated with his MBA in 1970. After mailing his résumé to the firms, he was granted interviews, but was subsequently rejected. Obtaining one of these positions was a formidable goal for African Americans at that time. Bill’s dreams finally came true when he was hired as an auditor at Arthur Young (a precursor to today’s Ernst & Young) in 1967, due to a progressive managing partner. He left Arthur Young in 1972 to co-found the African American public accountancy firm, Aiken Wilson & Brown. He was later named to the New York State Board for Public Accountancy in 1974, as the first African American to serve on the Board.

In 1978, Bill became the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for budget control at the New York City Human Resources Administration during the Ed Koch Administration. In 1980, he was hired and became an Audit Partner at Peat Marwick, now KPMG. He served as an American Arbitration Association (AAA) commercial arbitrator from 1985 to 2024.

Bill later became the first African American CFO of both the Long Island Railroad in 1990, as well as the Jewish Child Care Association of New York in 1996. He also served as the Union Theological Seminary’s interim CFO in 2010.

Having been a dedicated member since 1981, Bill served on the Board of Directors of the New York State Society of CPAs (NYSSCPA) from 2002 to 2008, and again from 2012 to 2014. He served as president of the Manhattan/Bronx Chapter in 2001–2002. He was also a member of the Advisory Board for the Career Opportunities in the Accounting Profession (COAP) program at Baruch in 2002–2003.

Today, only 2 percent of all U.S. CPAs are Black, according to the AICPA, and Black accountants make up only 1 percent of partners in accounting firms. In acknowledgment and celebration of Bill’s commitment to making the profession a more inclusive one, he became the recipient of the 2024 “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Champion Award” from the NYSSCPA. His achievements have also been recognized and documented in various publications over the years, including Forbes.

Bill was a proud and active member of the National Montford Point Marines Association, Inc. He was also a Board Member and former Board President of the Netherland Gardens Coop Association, at the complex in Riverdale, New York, where he lived.

Bill was a dedicated member of Convent Avenue Baptist Church for many decades. He served as both its Treasurer and its Chairman of the Board of Trustees for many years. His favorite scripture was Proverbs 3:5, and his favorite religious songs were “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”, “I Won’t Complain” and “Amazing Grace.”

Bill was also an actor. His favorite acting role was “John Prentice, Sr.” in a video recreation of a scene from the iconic film *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?*

Aside from spending time with family and friends, Bill enjoyed traveling, golfing, swimming, taking long walks, cooking-- especially as a part of “Men Who Cook,” music, attending theatre and concerts and writing poetry. His favorite film is “Shane” (1953). His collection of poetry, *Compelling Joy: A Poetic Journey Through Life*, was published in 2001.

Bill took great pride in mentoring and inspiring people of all ages to pursue their passions and achieve their goals. He loved to sing and dance, inclusive of a signature silly dance move that brought joy and laughter to all who observed it. Bill jokingly referred to himself as “A Small Boy From Harlem.”

Bill was predeceased by his parents Eugene Aiken, Sr. and Ida Lee Aiken, and his brother Eugene Aiken, Jr.

Bill is survived by his wife Joyce; children Adrienne Aiken, William Aiken, Jr. (Karen), Candice Aiken Fitzgerald, Nicole Aiken, and Sharla Sterling (Dwane); step-children Teresa Blackwell, Jacqueline Singleton, Ronald Garner, Lynette Garner; grandchildren Cory Young (Jessica), Amber Young, Harris Aiken, Maiya Nicole Fitzgerald and Brielle Sterling; step-grandchildren Aswad Ali, Charlene Singleton, Malcolm Blackwell, Rashad Roberts, Ashley Garner; sisters Ida Mae Williams and Joann Gaynor, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and dear friends.



*Goodbyes are not forever,
Goodbyes are not the end,
They simply mean I'll miss you until we meet again.*

Interment

(FRIDAY, AUGUST 9, 2024)

CALVERTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

210 Princeton Boulevard • Calverton, NY 11933

In Appreciation

Our family would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation for the many kind expressions of sympathy extended to us during our time of bereavement. May God bless and keep each one of you in His tender, loving care.

Arrangements Entrusted to:



BENTIA'S
Funeral Home, Inc.

630 St. Nicholas Avenue
New York, NY 10030
Phone: (212) 281-8850
Fax: (212) 234-3600