



## Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr

November 19, 1914 - December 19, 2020

Milton's Secrets to Longevity... "Trust in God; Treat everyone as you wish to be treated; Do everything in moderation and live one day at a time; If someone disagreed with his views, He would say "Keep on living, you will see."

Milton Joseph Wiggins – Lived to be 106! And that was just one of many feats that makes his life, his legacy so amazing! He was a trailblazer of his time, possessing an unwavering entrepreneurial spirit. He was a music lover with a beautiful bass voice heard above the others in the church choirs that he sang with. He was a fighter who survived cancer and a major car accident where he fractured his neck, all after the age of 80! Affectionately known as Dad, Brother, Grandpa, Pop-Pop, Uncle Milton, or Mr. Wiggins, he went home to be with his Lord on Saturday, December 19, 2020, one month after celebrating his 106th birthday.

Milton, a native of Sunbury, in Gates County, North Carolina, was born on November 19, 1914, the oldest male of 12 siblings to Aaron and Ida Wiggins. He attended and graduated from TS Cooper high school in 1934 and in 1940 he married the love of his life, the late Ethel Irene Gatling. During their 52 years of marriage they raised their 2 children, Bessie, and Milton Jr. As a young married man starting a family, Milton made the best of the limited work options in Sunbury, including farming, painting, and logging. However, to secure more stable work and to build financial security for his family, he left Sunbury for Brooklyn, New York in 1952, vowing to one day return to Sunbury

to build his family home.

Milton moved to the Bedford Stuyvesant area of Brooklyn, near his older siblings who had relocated a few years earlier. As a faith-filled hard worker and family man, Milton believed in himself and knew if given the opportunity, he would be successful at any job. After becoming a relied upon laborer at a factory in Brooklyn, filled with an abundance of self-confidence, he decided to leave the “security” of a regular job to pursue one of his first entrepreneurial endeavors, owning and operating a liquor store in Brooklyn. But it would be his true labor of love, landscaping and gardening that would provide for him and his family for years to come. In 1967 Milton and Irene relocated to Hackensack, NJ where he operated his successful landscaping business until he retired and sold the business in 1991 at the age of 77. Never wavering on his vow to build a house back HOME, after retirement he and Irene excitedly returned to Sunbury to live in the home, he built on Sugar Run Road, where he lived out 29 more of his 106 years.

Worship has always been integral for Milton, so he and his family made First AME Zion Church in Brooklyn, NY their church home for the many years that they lived in the NY area. There he sang with the senior choir, performing in concerts and delivering many requested solos. He also served on the Board of Trustees leaving a legacy that is still remembered at the church today.

Once he returned to Sunbury, he immediately immersed himself in St. John AME Zion Church in Sunbury, NC, where he sang in the choir and kept up the grounds of the church.

Over the years Milton got great enjoyment out of celebrating his centennial birthday with more than 200 family, friends, church family and community leaders. He was proud to be the oldest person in the area. After his 100th birthday, he was amazed at his celebrity status in the community. He received many acknowledgments and citations from Gates County, local officials, and surrounding churches in honor of his birthday. It was a testimonial to all the lives he had touched. Even at 105 years old, he continued to drive to visit the sick, and other churches in the community and to do his own shopping. Milton

showed his true spirit and love for home when he refused to leave even as his health was failing. Finally, in September 2020, he consented to move to Cincinnati, OH with his son, where he received much love and close monitoring of his health. Milton Wiggins quickly made a name for himself even in Cincinnati with his caregivers who all admired his lively and out-going spirit. Milton leaves behind a loving blended family who all loved him dearly. Daughter, Bessie Edwards of Brooklyn, N.Y and Son, Milton Wiggins, Jr (Sandra) of Cincinnati, OH. Grandchildren – Monique Gallaway (David), of Upper Marlboro MD, Marci Edwards (Robin) of Washington, D.C., Aaron Wiggins (Christine) of Atlanta, Ga., and David Wiggins (Sharda ) of Atlanta, Ga.; Great-grandchildren- Isaiah, Layla, and David Gallaway; Milton Edwards and Christopher Campbell; Caleb, Abigail, and Joshua Wiggins and Austin Wiggins, Montana Graham; and a host of nieces and nephews, grand and great-grand nieces, and nephews, cousins and friends.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 6. 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Hertford County Undertakers  
416 S Main St  
Winton, NC 27986  
(252) 358-3141

## Grave Side Service

JAN 7. 1:00 PM (ET)

ST John AME Zion  
Sunbury, NC

# Tribute Wall



“ *Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr*

November 09, 2022 at 12:28 PM



“ *Glendale P Boone lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr*



**Glendale P Boone** - January 09, 2021 at 03:37 PM



“ *Thanks for your friendship and wisdom you shared with us. May your soul rest in peace with God.*

*Murray and Glendale Boone*

**Glendale P Boone** - January 09, 2021 at 03:36 PM



“ *Grandpa you will be missed. Your words of wisdom and comfort were so appreciated throughout my life. I trust you are in good hands now with God, grandma and all of your siblings.*



**Monique** - January 09, 2021 at 01:47 PM

GE

“ *I never met Mr. Wiggins . just reading about him is inspiring. I am sure his family and friends loved him very much. I look forward to meeting him in heaven.*



---

**Gwendolyn Edwards** - January 08, 2021 at 11:21 PM

GP

“ *G Pipkin lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr*



---

**G Pipkin** - January 08, 2021 at 05:40 PM

GN

“ To the family of Mr. Milton Wiggins,

*What a wonderful person, such a joy to be around, inspiring over all of the fifteen years that we were allowed to be his friend. We broke much bread together, shared insightful and meaningful conversations, and basked in warm fellowship. Mr. Wiggins will be greatly missed. He was our oldest friend - much beloved. The day lily that he extracted from his front yard, the one that we planted in our front yard will always remind us of Mr. Wiggins.*

*We loved him, respected him, enjoyed his company, and will miss him. To the family of Mr. Milton Wiggin, Sr., you have our heart felt condolences. He deserved every year that God allowed him to enjoy.*

*George & Faye Norfleet  
Hampton, VA*

---

**George Norfleet** - January 08, 2021 at 03:14 PM

DH

“ Delores Harvey sent a virtual gift in memory of  
Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



---

**Delores Harvey** - January 07, 2021 at 01:10 PM

AC

“ *My deepest sympathies to the Wiggins Family in the loss of Mr. Milton Joseph Wiggins, Sr. Such a blessing to have been his age! May the memories continue to be in your hearts. Love to all of you.*  
*Annie Carr*  
*Stockbridge, Ga*



---

**Annie B Carr** - January 07, 2021 at 09:44 AM

DK

“ *Mr. Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr. was an African American New York City & New Jersey entrepreneur giant. As Minister of Music at the Great First African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church of Brooklyn, New York we met years ago with his dynamic Chancel Choir Bass voice. We rehearsed weekly preparing for our Anthems, Hymns, Spirituals and Gospel Music. Three years had passed, while ending a rehearsal Mr. Wiggins, who was thrilled with our extensive music repertoire asked me, "Boy, where did you study to master this great big Pipe Organ"? Never did I even imagine he was not only from my parents Sunbury, North Carolina home town but also attended high school with them. Several times when Mom visited my New York home attending service they chatted as if a reunion. Somehow God had it planned upon my returning to the Hampton Roads area to reconnect. We became buddies, he and Mrs. Wiggins before and after her demise. I was always encouraged to take my monthly drive down to visit his lovely home. I shall never forget him and the many stories told of my parents and relatives growing up in Sunbury. We even chatted about this very time of his soon departure. He, Mom, and Dad are having a great time fellowshiping with the Wiggins clan in Heaven.*



*Dr. J. Leon Knight*

---

**Dr. Joseph Knight** - January 06, 2021 at 11:14 PM

RW

*Yes cousin Joseph, he was such a positive person and will definitely be missed by so many good friends, community people and family members.*

*Fannie Wiggins*

---

**Reginald and Fannie Wiggins** - January 07, 2021 at 08:14 AM

PR

“ *To the Wiggins Family,*

*May God continue to comfort you during this difficult time in your life. My Stepfather, Emerson Howell, always spoke so highly of his Uncle Milton. Hearing about him through the years and seeing how he was so well respected, I can understand why he was so loved.*

*With Deepest Sympathy,  
Paul and Jackie (Wolfrey) Robertson  
Fort Washington, MD*



---

**Paul and Jackie W. Robertson** - January 06, 2021 at 02:10 PM



“ *Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White was purchased for the family of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr.*



---

January 06, 2021 at 11:00 AM

ER

“ *Mr. and Mrs. Milton and Sandra Wiggins, Jr., and Family,  
You are in our thoughts, our hearts and our prayers as you gather to remember the life and embrace the legacy of your beloved father, the late, Mr. Milton Wiggins Sr. As you celebrate the transition from labor to reward of one so dear to you all, just know that we your friends and prayer partners are with you with deepest and heartfelt.*

*Evangelist Geraldine H. Robinson and Prayer Partners, Eutaw, Al, Ohio, Ga, Florida and Mississippi.*



---

**Evangelist Geraldine H. Robinson** - January 06, 2021 at 08:24 AM

DE

“ *Blessings and eternal peace to Mr. Wiggins, Sr. May the cherished memories of a life well-lived give comfort to Milton, Jr. & his entire family.*



---

**Dr. Bonita Taylor Ewers** - January 06, 2021 at 07:50 AM

QH

“ *Queen Harrison lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr*



---

**Queen Harrison** - January 05, 2021 at 10:11 PM

CG

“ Carrie Gibson sent a virtual gift in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



Carrie Gibson - January 04, 2021 at 06:13 PM



“ Prayers and condolences to the extended family. Uncle Milton was an example of faith and keeping active. He will be missed.



Andrew Ryan - January 04, 2021 at 01:25 PM

SS

“ Shelia Howell Spence lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



Shelia Howell Spence - January 04, 2021 at 11:57 AM

WL

“ William & NETTIE Lassiter lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



William & NETTIE Lassiter - January 03, 2021 at 04:53 PM

FH

“ Fred & Gloria Harvey lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



Fred & Gloria Harvey - January 03, 2021 at 01:50 PM



“ Red & White Sympathy Standing Spray was purchased for the family of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr.



January 01, 2021 at 01:34 PM

RW

“ In memory of a life well-lived and a most lovable uncle. We will cherish our memories of Uncle Milton.



Reginald and Fannie Wiggins - January 01, 2021 at 12:43 PM

LH

“ Lloyd Thomas Howell lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



Lloyd Thomas Howell - December 31, 2020 at 05:09 PM

NL

“ I was honored to have been one of Mr. Milton Wiggins church musicians at St. John AME Zion Church. I loved hearing his voice all over the church with such power, even after he retired from the choirs. Heaven has gained a wonderful voice for God's heavenly choir. Rest on Mr. Wiggins



Natalie Lassiter - December 31, 2020 at 03:00 PM

CG

“ Carrie Gibson lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



Carrie Gibson - December 31, 2020 at 07:38 AM

LB

“ Larry & Dorothy Beamon lit a candle in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



Larry & Dorothy Beamon - December 31, 2020 at 12:52 AM

SV

“ Shirlean W. McCaskill..King George VA sent a virtual gift in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr



Shirlean W. McCaskill..King George VA - December 30, 2020 at 10:55 PM



“ *Shelia Harrison\_Beamon sent a virtual gift in memory of Milton Joseph Wiggins Sr*



---

**Shelia Harrison\_Beamon** - December 30, 2020 at 09:21 PM