Pallbearers

DERRICK MATHIS
ERIC MONDINE
HASSAN RASHID
HANEEF RASHID
DAVID RUSSELL JR.
JATHAN MOYER

Honorable Pallbearers

DENNIS MONDINE
DAKARAI ARMSTRONG
VICTOR ARMY



Acknowledgements

THE FAMILY OF WILLIE MATHIS JR. EXTENDS HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO EVERYONE WHO HAS OFFERED PRAYERS, LOVE, COMFORT, KINDNESS, AND SUPPORT DURING THIS TIME OF BEREAVEMENT. YOUR PRESENCE, CALLS, VISITS, AND EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY HAVE STRENGTHENED AND COMFORTED THE FAMILY. MAY GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND COMPASSION.



Final Resting Place

CHAPEL HILL MEMORIAL CEMETERY
2894 PATTERSON AVE SE
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49512

Repast

FOR THE FAMILY, IN THE MULTIPURPOSE ROOM IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SERVICE

SERVICES ENTRUSTED TO AND PROGRAMS DESIGNED BY

Toombs by Crystal Funeral Services

TENAE'S TOUCH
DESIGNING WITH PURPOSE, CREATING IMPACT

In Loving Memory of

Willie Mathis Jr.



APRIL 1, 1927 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

12 OCTOBER, 2026

VISITATION 10:00 AM - 11:00 PM
CELEBRATION OF LIFE 11:00 PM

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
130 DELAWARE ST SW
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49507

Order of Service

PROCESSIONAL.....

CALL TO WORSHIP.....REV. HOWARD C. EARLE JR

MILITARY HONOR GUARD.....KENT COUNTY VA

SCRIPTURE..... NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
OLD & NEW TESTAMENT

PRAYER.....NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

SOLOIST.....NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

REFLECTIONS/REMARKS.....KHALIL RASHID

READING OF OBITUARY.....CHINAW MOYER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS/RESOLUTION.....DR. CATHY LARGE

SOLOIST.....NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

EULOGY.....REV. HOWARD C. EARLE JR.

.....RECESSIONAL / LAST RIGHTS

Obituary

Willie Mathis Jr., age 99, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, September 30, 2026, surrounded by his surviving children.

Willie was born on April 1, 1927, in West Point, Mississippi, to Willie Mathis Sr. and Ludell Hodges Mathis. After completing the 10th grade, Willie left school to help provide for his family. In 1944, at the age of 17, he was given the extraordinary responsibility of leading his mother, brothers, and sisters north by train to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where his father had gone ahead to establish a home for the family. Willie successfully brought his family to Grand Rapids and was reunited with his father.

In May 1946, Willie enlisted in the Army Air Corps. He proudly served his country and was honorably discharged in June 1947.

Willie met the love of his life, Earlene Harper. They married on August 14, 1948, and built a loving family, raising five children: Willie III (Billy), Khalil, Barbara, Janet, and Kindra.

Willie was a hardworking and devoted provider. He spent 42 years working for the C&O Railroads, where his dedication and commitment earned him a promotion to supervisor. He retired in 1987.

New Hope Baptist Church was his place of worship and a cherished part of his spiritual journey. In 2022, the church honored Willie as its oldest living member.

Willie found great joy in life's simple pleasures. He loved spending time in his yard, planting and tending to his flowers. He enjoyed playing cards and dominoes at the Cruiser's Club, where he was a lifetime member, playing poker with his brothers and playing his daily lottery numbers. He was a wonderful family man who treasured time with those he loved.

Willie was also known for a remarkable gift: he could fix almost anything. Whether something was broken around the house or needed a little creativity, Willie could usually find a way to make it work. His hardworking hands, strong character, wisdom, and generous spirit were gifts to his family and everyone fortunate enough to know him.

Willie gave his family strength. He gave his community his presence. He gave those around him his wisdom, humor, helping hands, and love. His 99 years were filled with memories that will be treasured forever.

Though his earthly journey has ended, Willie's legacy lives on in every life he touched, every lesson he taught, every flower he planted, every problem he fixed, and every memory shared by those who loved him.

Willie was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Earlene Mathis; his son, Willie Mathis III (Billy); his parents, Willie Mathis Sr. and Ludell Hodges Mathis; his sisters, Alice Louise Coleman, Lorine Smith, and Mildred Ann Franklin; and his brother, Walter Lee Mathis.

He leaves to cherish his precious memories of his children, Khalil (Michelle) Rashid, Barbara Moyer, Janet (Victor) Mathis, and Kindra Williams; his grandchildren, Dennis Mondine, Melanie Putnam, Tina Mathis, Derrick Mathis, Eric Mondine, JeDonna Mathis, Hassan (Yvonne) Rashid, Haneef Rashid, Kimberly (Matthew) Tennill, Ryan Pedley, Chinaw Moyer, Latoya Inge, Dakarai Armstrong, and David Russell Jr.; 27 Great-Grandchildren and 16 great-great-grandchildren.

Willie will also be lovingly remembered by his brothers, Ernest James (EJ) Mathis and Ralph Mathis; his sisters, Christine Herron and Catherine (James) White; his brother-in-law, Earl (Louise) Harper; and many extended family members, friends, and loved ones.

He will be deeply missed, lovingly remembered, and forever cherished.

Rest peacefully, Willie. Your work here is done.