

I love my grandpa very much and he loved me so much. My daddy and Grandpa always took me to fun places when I go over my daddy's house. He also took me to the park sometimes. Grandpa loved to take me to the ice cream shop, and we went to the butterfly garden with my friend Tay Tay and I remember grandpa took me to this fun place where I can slide down slides and bounce on trampolines and play in the playpen. Those are the best memories I had with my grandpa. I'm truly gonna miss him, even though we didn't get enough time.

I love you grandpa.
Love, Kinyada

You left us beautiful memories; your love is still our guide. Although we cannot see you; you're always at our side. Love, Alexis

Your love was steady. Your presence, comforting. Your smile, contagious. And your style? Unmatched. I remember being young and telling people, "My Paw Paw is on tour right now. He's a famous gospel singer!" I was so proud of you. But even that pride pales in comparison to how proud you always were of us. I know you're in a better, much happier place—probably trying to teach someone how to tie a tie most of us have never even heard of. And of course, reuniting with those who've gone before you that you've missed. While I will miss having you here Earthside more than words can express, I take comfort in knowing you're with me every single day now. Being your granddaughter has been one of the greatest blessings of my life. You taught me kindness, humility, patience, and how to love with quiet depth. You also constantly instilled faith and the ways of the Lord in me. I'll miss your voice. I'll miss the feeling of your chin hair every time you kissed me on the forehead. I'll miss you pinching my cheeks—even when they weren't so chubby anymore and it kind of hurt LOL! I'll miss how reclusive, yet full of warmth you were—something I always admired about you. But most of all, I will miss your unmistakable, unabashed, unapologetic love. When you loved someone, they knew it—fully, fiercely, and forever. You made everyone around you feel seen and cherished. We are who we are because you loved us so deeply. A man of great faith. A man of God. A man of 1,000 stories—and 1,001 "hatz." Part mystery; part legend. 100% of our hearts. Thank you for being everything a girl could ever ask for. I love you Paw Paw, D'Asia

I know you're in a better place
You already sent the signs
I can hear you say, "Son be strong"
And remember the good times
My heart is so heavy
I miss your scent already
I can't believe you really gone
I miss saying, "I love you Daddy"
I told you I remember taking naps on your back
You said "Wow son... you remember that?"
Even though I was like two or three
I wish I could get them times back
That smile you had lit up the room
You always stayed so clean and bold
A soul couldn't tell you nothing
When you had that one gold
I can't believe I'm sitting here writing this
While reminiscing over the years
It's hurting me deep inside
Trying to fight back so many tears
You lost your parents at a young age
I don't think I could have phantom that storm
I can imagine the day you transitioned
How fast you ran to your Mother's arms
I will cherish every moment we had
And ask God to continue resting your soul
When you get a chance, ask God.....
To please let the Bengals win a Super Bowl
"LOVE YOU DADDY"
Darrell Eugene Sanders, Jr. aka "Moon"

Acknowledgements

The family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of love, concern, prayers, and kindness shown to them during this hour of bereavement.
May God Bless and Keep You!
- The family of Darrell E. Sanders, Sr.



Known for Excellence. Trusted for Value.

Celebrating the Life of



Darrell E. Sanders, Sr.

December 22, 1953 - May 15, 2025

Walker Funeral Home

2625 Gilbert Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45206

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Family Gathering: 5:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Memorial Service: 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Officiant: Reverend Michael Wright

Obituary

Darrell Eugene Sanders, Sr. was born December 22, 1953, in Cincinnati, Ohio to Mary Francis Sanders and Maurice Oliver. He went home to be with the Lord on May 15, 2025, at the age of 71. Darrell was raised by his devoted grandparents, Mr. James and Mrs. Willa Mae Sanders, following the early passing of his parents. His adored aunt, Ms. Cora Colvin, affectionately known as "Aunt Sis," played a vital role in helping raise Darrell and his siblings, offering love and guidance throughout their upbringing. Darrell graduated from Hughes High School in June 1972, where he developed a passion for the arts - becoming a master of calligraphy, a talented artist, and a gifted poet. His creativity and expressive spirit were evident in everything he did. Growing up in Millvale, on Cincinnati's west side, Darrell played basketball at the local community center and formed lifelong friendships. In his earlier years, he was a proud member of the social club, "Ain't No Stopping Us Now," a group of men who brought joy to the community through social events and entertainment. These neighborhood bonds, along with monthly meetings with childhood friends, remained strong into his later years. Professionally, Darrell worked at Whiteway in South Cumminsville from 1972 to 2007, where he dedicated 35 years of his life crafting lighting and fixtures for business signs. There, he also established a connection with individuals that would endure for eternity. Darrell's life was forever changed with the birth of his son, Darrell Eugene Sanders, Jr. in October 1977. His joy multiplied with the arrival of his daughter, DeMeka LaNett Sanders, in June 1980. His love for his children was evident to all—so much so that whenever he saw them, the family would lovingly say, "grinning took place." On March 29, 1986, Darrell married Pamela L. Grafinreed. Through this union, he embraced fatherhood again with the cherished birth of his son, Clayton James Sanders in January 1987, while also taking pride in being a father to his bonus sons, Angelo and Orlando Grafinreed. Together, this blended family, with all his children, created valuable memories that have lasted a lifetime. A dedicated man of Christ and of deep faith, Darrell was one of the founding members of the gospel group, The Anointed Sons of God, a unique gospel singing ensemble that traveled around the country spreading GOD'S word in song. Darrell provided that sweet, melodious, high voice required, as the group became known as the "Gospel Temptations", complete with dress attire and smooth choreography. The group traveled to destinations such as Michigan, New York, Georgia, Tennessee, New Orleans, Missouri, Kentucky, and various other locations. During those trips, the group participated in numerous gospel showcases and workshops and made many promotional radio and TV appearances, including the Bobby Jones Gospel Show. He even performed as background singer and was an opening act for the Mighty Clouds of Joy. Darrell was known for his impeccable style and he knew it; always dressed in top-notch hats and adorned with stylish matching shoes. He was an arts connoisseur - frequently traveling to attend concerts, stage plays, and museums. He was also a devoted Cincinnati Bengals fan that always believed with the rest of us, that THIS was our year. In his later years, Darrell found great purpose transporting special needs children to and from school—a role he embraced with service, humility, pride and compassion.

Darrell was preceded in death by his parents; grandparents; his sister, Rose Mary Sanders, and his niece, Nikkia Sanders. He leaves to cherish his memory: his wife, Pamela L. Grafinreed; his children, Darrell (Milisa) Sanders Jr., DeMeka Sanders, and Clayton Sanders; his bonus sons, Angelo Grafinreed and Orlando Grafinreed; grandchildren, D'Asia Leathers, Alexis Sanders, and Kinyada Watts; great-grandchildren, Aaliyah and Antjuan Sanders; his beloved Aunt Cora Colvin; brother, Kenneth Sanders; his very close cousin/brother, Elwin Colvin; and a host of nieces, nephews cousins, extended family, and dear friends. Darrell's legacy of faith, deep love for family, friendship, music, style, creativity, service, and unwavering devotion to those he held dear, will live on in all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Daddy, you took my breath away with this one. I still don't have many words; just a feeling of emptiness that is sharp and constant. I talk to you constantly and I still feel your presence. I don't know if that'll be something that just dissipates over time or if it'll be for eternity. I pray it's the latter. I'm uncertain about alot of things, but one thing that I know is that I feel that you're okay. You send me signs. Please keep doing that. It keeps me going. It keeps me from shutting myself off from the world. I hear your voice all the time in my head and I hear you say to me, "All is well in my soul, Baby." I take comfort in knowing that you truly lived your best life. You had a more active social life than me! I don't know, Daddy. I guess I just always felt you were Invincible. Especially after the couple of health scares you had the last couple of years. It's kinda of weird, but those are my most memorable moments of US. I'm not sure if it's because it's the most recent or if it's because we really got to know the current versions of each other. With every surgery, doctor's appointment, phone call, video sent, I realized that whatever we did, we would get a good belly laugh, with a little snorting, and hitting each other from a loss of words, while we gasped for air from laughing so hard. See... I am like you in that way... I will find a reason to laugh at anything; even when people don't understand. I take solace in knowing that I get to carry a piece of you everywhere I go now. The Bengals games won't be the same without our texts suggesting how to fix all their problems, and how in the off season, I suggest you watch Lifetime movies with me and you'd say "that's one thing I can't swallow babe, I guess I'll see what Gunsmoke is doing." Or how everytime I scroll the channels and I come across your show, Mash, and I tune in to see what Hawkeye and them are up to. I feel I'm rambling now. I just don't want this conversation to ever end, Daddy. I'm so incredibly heartbroken. I won't ever let you go; I promise. I'll keep walking around, talking to you. Promise me you will talk back? As I would always say to you, "thank you for telling me you love me my whole life."
 Love, Meka "Fats"
 Your Pride and Joy

I was the golden child and the last of them all. Where should I start when it comes to the greatest hero in my life? Well it's a lot and he was everything to me and what any boy that didn't grow up with a dad would want. I was blessed to have that. He did his part as my father and a real man. My dad, my mom, me and my two brothers grew up in the house on Tremont Street. It was home and we had family get togethers all the time. My pops was very strict; he didn't play no games. He taught me how to love, never disrespect my elders, always do what's right, make my earnings legit, don't sell drugs or do them, and that stuck in my hand ever since. He told me that my pops worked hard to make sure his family was good. We didn't have a lot of time together as father and son because he worked a lot and I was outside a lot, but when he took vacations he did take all of us on trips. We went to Coney Island, Americana and Gatlinburg in the gray family van. Those were the good old days. I will tell you, my pops was a leader to his community. A lot of people looked up to him. My Pops was a smooth dresser and talker. Let me tell you... he carried himself very well and stayed with the nicest cars. He loved his Lincolns. I am my dad in every way. I remember we raced each other up in Clifton. He couldn't see, he never ran again. He said, "Dang Clay or Mann (those were his nicknames for me), but he was like, "You are very fast. Didn't know you can run like that son. You made me twist my ankle." We laughed about it and I helped him to the car. But that's the first time me and my pops had a one on one bond together. I was more on my mom; I was a mama's boy. I am very protective when it comes to my mom because my dad put that tool in me to be the man of the house, when he went to work or was going to rehearsal with the group called The Anointed Sons of God, because it was just me and him at the time. We had our days when we got into it, but what family do you know where everything was good? We had more great times than bad times. I had to grow up fast and learn how to be a man earlier in my life and learn responsibility. My dad was very to himself really. I seen my sister and brother here and there, but my pops made sure we all bonded together when he took us all out to dinner. Ponderosa was the spot for us. So those are the memories I have of my pops.
 I'm truly gonna miss my big Guy, my hero.
 May you rest in Heaven dad.
 Love, Clayton

Order of Service

- Musical Prelude
- Prayer Rev. Lavelle Thompson
- Scripture Min. Cheryl Hammonds
- Ministry in Song Northern Kentucky Brotherhood Singers
- Acknowledgements D'Asia Leathers
- Remarks Genii Baker
 Min. Cheryl Hammonds
 Pastor Earnest Davis, Jr.
- Selection "Goodness of Janet Napier
 God"
- Reading of the Obituary
- Video Presentation
- Selection "Yesterday" Pam Crumbley
- Eulogy Rev. Issac Dudley
- Recessional Clergy, Family & Friends



Repast
 Thursday, June 12, 2025
 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
 Walker Funeral Home
 2625 Gilbert Avenue,
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45206