

CELEBRATING THE LIFE
OF

Phyllis Diane Searles

(SEPTEMBER 11, 1952 - AUGUST 22, 2026)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2026
1:00PM

The Terrace at Cedar Hill
800 Westmere Avenue
Charlotte, N.C. 28208





Phyllis' Greatest Hits

"My Girl- I've got sunshine on a cloudy day...I've got a sweeter song than the birds in the trees"

"Dream in Color"

Phyllis Diane Carr was born on September 11, 1952, the cherished daughter of the late John Fred Carr and Ruby Norman Carr.

Phyllis was educated in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, where she developed a special interest and love of all things mathematics. She was a proud 1970 graduate of North Mecklenburg High School. Even in those early years, Phyllis had a curious mind, a determination to succeed, and dreams that stretched far beyond the classroom. She saw life not simply for what it was, but for all that it could become. She dreamed boldly, she dreamed brightly, and she dreamed in color. Those dreams would soon carry her beyond Charlotte and into the next chapter of an extraordinary life.



"Lean on Me"

She then headed to Washington D.C. to attend Howard University. While there, she became a proud member of the Alpha chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She graduated from Howard University in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Mathematics. However, Howard University gave her more than an education. Howard was where she came into her own, built lifelong friendships, and found a sisterhood that would remain by her side through every season of life. Those years taught her the true meaning of having people to "lean on," and of being that same source of strength, love, and support for others.



"Endless Love"

On July 20, 1974, Phyllis met the love of her life, "Tony", who says it was love at first sight. From that night on, they were inseparable. They were married on August 26, 1978, beginning a deep and enduring union that blessed them with four children: Andria, Anthony II, Alyssa and Aaron. Through their union, Phyllis was also blessed to gain a bonus daughter, Arveice. Later, Phyllis cherished being a grandmother, or "Mimi" to her grandchildren: Adrienne, Austin, Amir and Ayla and bonus grandchildren, Keith ("J") and Armon.



Together, Phyllis and Anthony built a family grounded in love and devotion to one another. Through every season, their love remained a constant, growing deeper with the passing years and extending into the lives of the family they created together. What began as love at first sight became a love without end - a legacy carried forward through her husband, her children, her grandchildren, and all those fortunate enough to be loved by her. That enduring legacy is now eternal because true love never dies. It reverberates in the hearts of those whom were blessed to have known her, and its reach has no end - it is limitless.

"Song for Mama"

Phyllis dedicated several years to the insurance industry, working as a senior underwriter at both Blue Cross Blue Shield and Liberty Mutual after gaining her series 7 license. However, her most meaningful and worthwhile job was fully devoting herself to raising her children. For her children, Phyllis was their first teacher, biggest cheerleader, and a constant source of encouragement. She believed in nurturing their individual gifts and made sure each of them had every opportunity to discover who they were and who they could become- whether it be advanced academic courses, dance class, football, basketball or baseball games, gymnastics, ice skating, track meets or music instrument classes. No activity was too small, no dream too big. Later, being "Mimi" to her grandchildren brought her a special kind of joy, with a new generation to pour more love into.

The lessons she taught, the sacrifices she made, and the love she gave so freely became part of the foundation of her family. Her children and grandchildren were among her greatest accomplishments, and through each of them, the beautiful song of her love will continue to play for generations to come.



"I Hope You Dance"

Phyllis lived a life filled with joy, kindness, and creativity. Music was one of her greatest loves. She absolutely loved her family and friends, and especially enjoyed throwing the most beautiful events and parties for them, or trying new recipes for family and friends to experience. She loved to read and research all types of topics, and taking on new ventures with her family, whether it be real estate or event planning. She was happiest when creating, whether making costumes or clothes for her children, or crafting decorations for her grandchildren's parties. Holidays were her absolute favorite, especially Christmas, where she would turn the entire home into a Winter Wonderland. Along with the high value she placed on education, Phyllis nurtured creativity and expression, ensuring her children and grandchildren were exposed to the arts. She looked forward to every music recital and dance competition. She also loved sports and would be the loudest one cheering at her boy's sports events or for her favorite football and basketball teams. Above all, Phyllis treasured time spent with loved ones. Her warmth, humor, and generosity brought happiness to those around her and created memories that will be cherished for years to come. Through the way she lived and loved, Phyllis reminded us all to embrace life with joy, celebrate every moment, and when given the choice, never be afraid to dance.

"God, Turn it Around"

In the final chapter of her life, Phyllis faced a courageous battle with cancer. It was a journey that brought difficult days and unexpected challenges, but she met them with the same strength, grace, and determination that had carried her throughout her life. Even in moments of uncertainty, Phyllis held on to hope and leaned on her faith, trusting God with what she could not control.

She was surrounded by the love of the family and now they had the opportunity to pour love back into her-encouraging her, caring for her, praying with her, and standing beside her every step of the way. Phyllis and the family prayed for God to "turn it around" and He did-multiple times. When things looked as if they could go one way Phyllis' strength and God's grace were readily apparent. In the end, Phyllis's journey reminds us that even through our biggest battles, God is still working: turning fear into faith, uncertainty into trust, and even our deepest sorrow into a testimony of pure love, grace, and courage.

While we may all wish for forever, we accept that ultimately God has his own timeline for when a living Angel is called home. Phyllis' everlasting spirit is amongst us each and every day, and sometimes all we need to do is just turn around and she is right there.

"Goodness of God"

On Saturday, August 22, 2026, Phyllis Diane Searles was called to eternal rest, surrounded by her family at home.

She was preceded in death by her parents: John Fred and Ruby Carr; her sister: Marva Yvonne Carr Howey-Mitchell, her brothers: Fred Carr, John Gilbert Carr, Fred Lee Carr, Howard Claude Carr, Olanda Carr, Sr. and Eric Wayne Carr; her sisters-in-law: Jenise Washington, Delia Marionetta Carr and Brenda McNair Kyle; her brothers-in-law: Donald McNair, James Earls "Billy" Howey, Jr, John William Mitchell Jr., and Jerry Watts.

Dutiful Daughter. Devoted wife. Loving Mother. Extraordinary grandmother. Caring sister. Supportive aunt. Cherished Cousin. Unwavering friend.

Phyllis moved through the world with grace, leaving a legacy of generosity, laughter, and timeless traditions. Her memory will forever be cherished by her loving husband: Anthony D. Searles, M.D., J.D. of Charlotte, NC, her devoted children, Andria Searles, Anthony Searles (Haley), Dr. Alyssa Daniel (Michael), Aaron Searles (Lauren) all of Charlotte, NC and Arveice Washington (Damon) of Washington, D.C; her beloved grandchildren: Adrienne Daniel, Austin Daniel, Amir Searles and Ayla Searles of Charlotte, NC and Keith ("J") Taylor and Armon Washington of Washington, D.C.; her mother in law, Ruby McNair of Washington D.C., her sister Shirley Carr Watts and brother Tyrone Carr of Charlotte, NC; her aunt, Gladys Norman Gresham of Charlotte, NC; her sisters in law, Rhonda McNair of Washington D.C. and Barbara Knotts Carr of Charlotte, NC; goddaughter, Alayne McLaughlin-Nelson, along with a host of cherished nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family and dear friends.

Through every chapter of her life - the love she gave, the family she cherished, the friendships she nurtured, and the lives she touched, Phyllis' journey was a beautiful reflection of the Goodness of God.









Phyllis
DIANE SEARLES

ORDER OF SERVICE

Prelude Song....."Hero"

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Prayer of Comfort (Psalm 23).....Minister Demetris Renee Gray

Phyllis' Greatest HitsLife Tribute Slideshow

Acknowledgments

"I Believe" Dance Tribute.....Adrienne Daniel & BB Dance

Remarks.....Family & Friends please limit remarks at 2 minutes or less)

"I'm Free" Poem Tribute.....Austin Daniel

Final Song....."Stand by Me"

Love and Appreciation from the Family

The family of Phyllis Diane Searles extends its deepest and most heartfelt love and appreciation for the many acts of kindness, expressions of sympathy, and the outpouring of love shown throughout her life and in the days since her passing.

Your calls, prayers, visits, comforting words, thoughtful gestures, and unwavering support have brought us strength and solace during this very difficult time. We are grateful for her life and grateful for the love, grace, generosity, and friendship you have so lovingly shared with us. Thank you.

A special and heartfelt thank you to Rosalyn Gayle McLaughlin-Nelson, Dr. Valerie Williams Dargan, and the Charlotte Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated for honoring our mother with such a beautiful and meaningful Omega Service during her viewing. Your love, sisterhood, and tribute to her life meant more to our family than words can express.

Services entrusted to:

GRIER
FUNERAL SERVICE

115 John McCarroll Ave.
Charlotte, NC 28216





To Those I Love & Those Who Love Me

When I am gone, release me, let me go
I have so many things to see and do.
You mustn't tie yourself to me in tears
Be happy that we had so many years.

I gave you my love. You can only guess
How much you gave me in Happiness.
I thank you for the love you each have shown,
But now it's time I traveled alone.

So grieve awhile for me if grieve you must,
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It's only for awhile that we must part
So bless the memories within your heart.

I won't be far away, for life goes on
So if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I'll be near;
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear
All my love around you, soft and clear.

And then, when you must come this way alone
I'll greet you with a smile and a
"Welcome Home."

-Mary Alice Ramish

