



## James M. Sawyer

June 26, 1945 - April 24, 2013

DEACON JAMES MCKINLEY SAWYER is the great-great-grandson of Luke Sawyer and Benjamin (Ben) Stewart, Crockett Davis and Calvin English of Fairfield County, South Carolina, was born on June 26, 1945 in Baltimore, MD to the union of Samuel Sawyer and Frances English-Sawyer. James was the second of eight children born to this couple. His siblings are, Samuel Robert, Juanita, Chester Arthur, Addie C., Maggie L., George M. and Arlette S.

James received his education in the Baltimore City Public School System. He graduated from Baltimore City College in 1964. Shortly after graduation he was drafted into the United States Army. After basic-training he was sent to VietNam during the height of America's involvement and he would eventually serve two tours of duty there. James received several Metals which included the VietNam Service Metal, Good Conduct Metal and a Bronze Star. James' distinguished military service follows that of his father and uncle Nathaniel who served during World War II and his brother Robert and uncle John who served in Korea, but more importantly that of his great-great-grandfather, Luke Sawyer who served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. James was honorably discharged in 1968.

Upon his return to civilian life, James would continue his education

at the Community College of Baltimore in Business Administration. He held several jobs before becoming employed with the Board of Election and the Department of Human Resources.

James received his early Christian training at the New Friendship Baptist Church under the leadership of the late Joseph Culp. In 1961, James joined the Sweet Prospect Baptist Church under the founder and leadership of his uncle, the late Rev. Calvin C. English and was forever faithful in his service. James was a follower of Christ; he was a believer, and he was a witness for the King. James found the "Watchmen" Men Ministry here at Sweet Prospect. His unselfish signature of service, his time and financial resources are present throughout this building.

James' "Passion" was always singing. He was a member of the Youth Choir and the Chapel Gospel Singers of Sweet Prospect before the VietNam War. This early contemporary group included his brother Robert, sister Juanita, Lee Pitman and Betty Pennington. Even then one could see his innovative ideas in making each song the group's song. His love for composition would eventually show up when he became a professional singer, song writer and composer.

After the VietNam War, James would again follow his dream to become a professional entertainer. He and two of his childhood friends, Lee Pittman and Herman Gaynor help found the R&B group, The Sultan. The other members of this Five Men Group were Bobby Guye and Freddie Harper in 1969-1970. Within a year these Five Guys were a major attraction on the Baltimore music scene. They were a magical blend of harmony. James, Lee and Herman background was gospel, Quartet, and southern call and response which blended beautifully with the smooth classical catholic music of Bobby and Freddie's musical background. Their unique style would eventually be heard worldwide as The Sultans

aka. Tomorrow's Promise released their No. #1 single, "You're Sweet, You're Fine, You're Everything," (1973) written and arranged by James and the top 10 recording "That's The Way It Will Stay." Tomorrow Promise recorded for Mary's Records a local company. But success was to come with Capital Records and Mercury Record companies. James as a Businessman was unselfish with the group's success. He became a coowner of the former Mother Lodes Night Club with his brothers in an effort to help promote other local talent.

On May 24, 1997, James and Sharon were wed and out of that union three children were born, James II, Jordan and Monyair. It was the happiest time of James life. The children were his life. He was a devoted husband and father, who always showed his love for his family. A hard worker, dedicated to his job, he was always on time never late, and always ready to help and comfort others. A family man, who enjoyed "family nights" on Friday's big movie buff, he loved to be at home and watch all kinds of SYFI movies and eat pizza with the kids, a dedicated husband, devoted family man, and the love of my life, who could ask for more.

He leaves to cherish his memory: five children, Anthony Taylor (Mekong), Tiffany, James II, Jordan and Monyair; two brothers, Samuel R. and George Sawyer (Shirley); four sisters, Juanita Watkins, Addie Ruffin (Howard), Maggie Duncan and Arlette Holley (Bobby); four grandchildren, Anthony Young, Antwon Taylor, Kwami Taylor and Antonio Taylor; six great-grandchildren, Tenea, Nathaniel, Teona, Tiera, Jaydon and Bandi; one uncle, John B. Sawyer; three aunts, Mary E. Jones and Celia Jackson of Baltimore, MD and Sallie Green of Patterson, NJ.; and truly a host of nephews, nieces, cousins, other relatives and friends.



# Cemetery Details

## Garrison Forest Veterans

11501 Garrison Forest Road  
Owings Mills, MD

# Previous Events

## Public Viewing

MAY 3. 8:30 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - East Baltimore  
1101 East North Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
(410) 727-3300  
info@marchfh.com

## Wake

MAY 4. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Sweet Prospect Baptist Church  
901 E. Eager Street  
Baltimore, MD 21205

## Service

MAY 4. 11:00 AM (ET)

Sweet Prospect Baptist Church  
901 E. Eager Street  
Baltimore, MD 21205



# Tribute Wall



“ *James M. Sawyer*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



**Jordan Sawyer** - April 24, 2018 at 09:21 PM



“ *Muneera Jones (annette) lit a candle in memory of James M. Sawyer*



**Muneera Jones (annette)** - May 20, 2016 at 09:09 PM



*Thank you.*

**Tiffany Sawyer** - September 21, 2016 at 09:32 PM

TS

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



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**T. Sawyer** - May 04, 2013 at 12:51 PM

M(

*So sorry for your loss! He was a good guy! Met him In the 70's!*

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**Muneera Jones (annette)** - May 20, 2016 at 09:07 PM

TS

*Thank you very much for your condolences. It means so much that my dad was loved and admired. He was a person of integrity; and full of love and loyalty. Even now, he is still being remembered and I deeply cherish that. I miss him with every fiber of my being and I am truly grateful to have had such a wonderful father in my life...my very best friend. - Tiffany*

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**Tiffany Sawyer** - September 21, 2016 at 09:31 PM

AS

“ To the family and friends of James M. Sawyer I send my deepest condolences to you. In the Bible book of Ecclesiastes 9:4 it states: "For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all" which brings out the point that the deceased do not feel pain, sadness, troubles or anything at all as if living--death can be likened to a sleep state of mind. However all deceased persons have the opportunity to live again through the means of Jesus Christ death which gave all mankind a hope. In the Bible book Of Revelation 21:4 it gives the promise of: "And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." The scripture demonstrates that in a soon time period death will never again occur, no pain of death. I hope that these scriptures have brought you comfort and hope to see your loved one again.  
[www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org)

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**A Bible Student** - April 29, 2013 at 08:05 PM



“ We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.

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**March Funeral Homes** - April 29, 2013 at 12:28 PM

WG

Sorry to hear of the passing of your dear Love one. Knowing that he is sleeping with his Heavenly Father God Bless you Wendolia English Gilliard

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**Wendolia Gilliard** - May 04, 2013 at 12:19 AM