



## Mary Emma Gardner

October 23, 1939 - January 27, 2015

### The Life of Mary Emma Gardner

The beautiful and gentle spirit known as Mary Emma Gardner was born on Monday, October 23, 1939 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to the late John Edward Garfield and Mary Catherine Williams. She was a delight to her parents and they doted on the only child born of their union.

Mary was introduced to the love of Christ and accepted His plan of salvation as a child at Arnett African Methodist Episcopal Church. Always a woman of strong faith and a believer in the unsullied word of God, she decided she needed more from her worship experience. In 2000, she was added to the 63rd and Vine Street Church of Christ in Philadelphia, PA. Instantly, she knew that she had finally found her special church home. Mary was a faithful member until her health failed her in 2008 and she had to move Richmond, VA to be cared for by her eldest daughter, Catherine.

Mary was educated in the School District of Philadelphia. She was a highly intelligent woman and academically sound. At the age of seventeen, she graduated from West Philadelphia High School in 1957. After graduation, Mary entered the workforce, but it was not until 1964 that she found her niche working for the City of Philadelphia. She was quickly identified for her outstanding performance as a housekeeper. She was hand-picked to be Lead

Housekeeper for the Mayor's office. After 33 years of faithful, exemplary service, her physician recognized that her extensive arthritis placed her in a vulnerable position. She was forced to retire from a position in which she loved and thrived. Mary took pride in her ability to clean and leave every surface spotless!

Mary loved to sew and to sing...and sing she did. Her contralto voice brought joy, healed the wounded, revived the weary, removed heartache, and always encouraged those who heard her sing. Her voice had the ability to make angels stop to listen.

For anyone who knew Mary, they would tell you that above any job or hobby her love and care for her family was her greatest accomplishment. She married the absolute love of her life Kenneth Edward Gardner on November 26, 1959. She pledged to love him forever. Although their union ended in 1972, she kept her promise to love him until he entered into eternal rest on September 26, 1997. Their union created the greatest gifts that can be seen and experienced in the persons of Catherine and Donna.

Not only did Mary love and nurture her daughters, but her nurturing was extended to neighborhood, wayward, and orphaned children and adults. Her love knew no boundaries and she was replete kindness and understanding. She loved with a mother's heart. It was unfailing and unconditional.

She leaves to cherish her memory: two daughters, Catherine Rochelle and Donna Yvette Gardner; goddaughter, Darcie Davis; special church daughter, Pearl Gray; step-grandson, Dante' Smith; step-granddaughter, Dionn Vigilance; two step great-granddaughters, Navejia and Arianté Smith; step great-grandson, O'mari Wallace; the loving and caring Autumn Care family; childhood friend, Elizabeth Dozson, and a host of loving church family and friends.



# Cemetery Details

## Forest Lawn Cemetery

4000 Pilots Lane  
Richmond, VA 23222

# Previous Events

## viewing

JAN 30. 11:00 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Home-Laburnum Chapel  
Richmond, VA 23222

## Service

JAN 31. 12:30 PM (ET)

March Funeral Home-Laburnum Chapel  
Richmond, VA 23222

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Emma Gardner*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *Mommy is what I called her. She took pity on a poor, scared little girl and claimed her when others walked away. She was my confidante and anything that I shared with her, she took to heaven with her. If I listen carefully, I can still hear her laugh. When I close my eyes, I can see her smile. These are the things that I will miss on this...the time side of life. She was special in a way that mere words cannot encapsulate. She left me with a legacy of love, acceptance, and a beautiful big sister, Catherine Rochelle. I will never forget her love, care and attention. She will always be mommy to me and I will love her always, Darcie.*



**Darcie Davis** - February 13, 2015 at 03:22 PM



“ *My sweet Momma... You will always be my one "True Love"... I miss you terribly each and every day and although I continue on; it is a struggle. I missed getting my birthday call from you this morning and I will be tore up this evening when I don't get my birthday hug and kiss... I know that you are with the Almighty now because He, like you, wanted your pain and suffering to end. No more emergency room trips, no more surgeries, no more needles, no more medicine with bad after tastes, no more tears and no more dialysis. Rest well Momma, rest well my love...*



**Catherine R. Gardner** - February 13, 2015 at 08:57 AM

DN

*My first and only mother in law. She gave me her best in her first born. Heaven in much brighter now.. GOD BLESS MOM*

**DAVID NELSON** - June 03, 2015 at 10:36 PM

DA

“ *Please accept my heartfelt sympathy in the loss of your loved one . How comforting to know that Almighty God has not only the power but the desire to reunite us with our loved ones by means of the resurrection hope Jesus spoke of in the Bible at John 5 : 28,29*

**Delores Allen** - February 01, 2015 at 07:02 AM

MP

“ *I didn't know ms Gardner personally but I know there is a void in life when you lose your mother. The bible gives us great hope at Isa 25:8 where Jehovah will swallow up death and it will be no more. I hope this is a comfort to you and your family*

**malvena palmer** - January 31, 2015 at 03:20 PM



“ *Mae Dozson lit a candle in memory of Mary Emma Gardner*



**Mae Dozson** - January 31, 2015 at 12:27 PM



“ To my dearest & best friend-sister of over 60+yrs--This is our favorite poem that I sent to you many yrs ago. **WHAT MAKES A CARING FRIEND**--An open heart, a listening ear, a love that comforts & brings good cheer. A caring way, a thoughtful deed, a faith that prays when there's a need. A walk that's true, a life that's blessed, a will that always seeks Gods' best. For all these ways His love shines through, I thank the Lord for making you. I miss you so much already & will miss talking to you everyday. I know I will see you again. That someday we'll walk those golden streets together, forever praising the name of our Lord & Jesus Christ. Much love & peace to your family--Your buddy LIZ

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**Mae Dozson** - January 31, 2015 at 12:23 PM

PB

“ Paulette Battle purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mary Emma Gardner.



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**Paulette Battle** - January 31, 2015 at 08:06 AM

EH

“ May your hearts soon be filled with wonderful memories of joyful time together as you celebrate a life well lived.

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**E. Huskey** - January 30, 2015 at 09:44 PM

MA

“ To the family of Ms. Mary Gardner,  
I am so very sorry for your great loss. It is never easy when someone you love dies. I have drawn much comfort from the real hope and promise found in God's word. At Isaiah 25:8 it says "He will swallow up death forever, and the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will wipe away the tears from all faces." I sincerely hope this truth will bring your family much comfort.

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**Margaret Awoyera** - January 30, 2015 at 04:10 PM

TS

“ My sweet Mary Gardner, an angel on earth and now an angel in Heaven. I want to start by thanking your family for sharing your last days on this earth with us. We had the opportunities to hold your hand, kiss your face, say I love you, and pray together. You are grace and beauty, sunshine on a cloudy day, kind and gentle, and the brightest rainbow after a storm. Even as people visited your room in your final hours, you asked, "How are you doing, baby?" Always so humble, caring, and thinking of others. I am blessed that our paths crossed and a better person for knowing you. I pray that God allows you to hear my prayers and that you help watch over and protect my boys as they grow so quickly. I loved you since I met you, and I will continue to love and remember you. While it hurts that you are no longer here, I know that you are happy, at peace, and boldly and beautifully singing for all the other angels. My Dad is up there in Heaven with you, and I pray that he has seen your kindness and that your paths cross as well. May the stars shine brighter at night and the rain smell even more pure. When God calls me to Heaven, I hope to bring you a warm cup of coffee with 3 French vanilla creamers and 3 packets of equal. Always in my heart and thoughts, love your friend and OT.

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**Tonya Suarez** - January 29, 2015 at 05:30 PM



“ *Finding myself thinking about you more and more then the tears start coming down. Love and miss you Ms. Gardner*



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**Shakita Minor** - January 29, 2015 at 04:02 PM

TB

“ *Please except my deepest sympathy for the family and friends of Ms Gardner. Please consider this bible scripture during this time. 2Corithians 1:2-4.*

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**T. Berry** - January 29, 2015 at 10:43 AM

GB

“ *May your family find peace in the hope that the bible holds out for our dear love ones.Revelation21:3,4 and John11:11,13, 14.*

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**gay-lee baker** - January 29, 2015 at 09:52 AM

TJ

“ *I would like to send my deepest and heartfelt condolences to the family Mary Gardner. I am truly sorry for the loss that your family is feeling. When we loss such a caring and loving person, it is the hardest experience that a family can go thru. And my thoughts and prayers are with the family. During this difficult time, know that God wants you to rely on him for comfort. So please cherish the wonderful memories that you have of Mary. These precious memories will console the family in the day's ahead.*

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**Toya Johnson** - January 29, 2015 at 02:52 AM

Having a good day



“ Hey Ms. Gardner sugar  
I am so lost for words right now. I miss you so much. I have gotten so attached to you and it was a wonderful feeling. I went in your room today and I called your roommate your name smh. I'm going to miss seeing you at the door in the sunshine singing and doing your word cross book. But like your daughter told me you are at peace now and you don't have to hurt or suffer with pain anymore. But you make sure you be the gates of heaven singing your heart out welcoming people in like you did at autumn care. And I will see you when Hod is done with me on this Earth. You not gone because you are in my heart. You rest well baby.  
Love you always.



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**Shakita Minor** - January 28, 2015 at 06:27 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** - January 28, 2015 at 01:58 PM