



## Virginia Ellan Barber

February 20, 1935 - May 24, 2026

Virginia Ellen Matthews Barber, daughter of the late Robert Matthews, Sr. and Gertrude Matthews was born on February 20, 1935, in St. Stephen, South Carolina.

Virginia was affectionately known as “Honey” by her late husband David, and as “Aunt Gin” by her nieces and nephews. Virginia was a mild-mannered devoted mother, sister, aunt, friend and mentor. She was an excellent troubleshooter who would give sound advice to anyone who was encountering challenging situations.

In 1954, Virginia graduated from Russellville High School located in St. Stephen, South Carolina. Shortly after graduating, she moved to Baltimore, Maryland where she resided with her beloved Aunt Helen Montague and Uncle Bernard Montague.

In 1955, she was introduced to the late David Barber by her brother Robert Matthews, Jr. at a church service. On Sunday November 15, 1959 they were joined in Holy Matrimony by the late Elder Conway C. Green at the Christian Community Church of God. This union yielded three children Derek, Glynis and Dana.

Virginia accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized at St. Stephen

Baptist Church under the leadership of Reverend I.A. Jefferson. During her early years, she began singing hymns and gospel songs with her brother Robert and her sister Minnie and the singing ushers at St. Stephen Baptist Church.

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance, for you serve the Lord Christ” Colossians 3:23-24

Virginia emphasized the importance of having strong work ethics. She often told stories about working on the farm, gathering tobacco in the hot sun, and assisting her mother with raising her younger siblings whom she adored. She occasionally worked as a caterer with her aunt Helen and worked as a laundry attendant. Unfortunately, she was dismissed from her position as a laundry attendant after advocating for improved working conditions and fair treatment for employees through union organizing efforts. As time progressed, she decided to formalize her lifelong calling by pursuing a career in nursing. She developed a strong commitment to compassionate nursing care ascending through the ranks from a candy stripper to a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), and finally to a Registered Nurse (RN). She was proud to be among the first group of African American nurses at St. Agnes Hospital. Her nursing career in the orthopedics unit spanned over 42 years. She garnered such deep professional and personal esteem that her colleagues hosted two farewell events in her honor. Virginia never lost her passion for nursing; she continued to give instructions to the nursing staff at every healthcare facility that she entered during her brief illness. She had to be constantly reminded by her daughter that she was officially off duty.

“These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgements that are true and make for peace.” Zechariah 8:16

Virginia was a spiritual woman who believed that the truth shall stand. She put her faith in God above everything. She spent countless hours reading religious materials and sharing her faith with others by analyzing bible verses and having positive discourse about the underlying meanings of various scriptures. While she was in the hospital, she often shared the Word of God and the plan of salvation with the staff. Some staff members would return to her room to pray with her. Her family was amazed by the impact she had on the diverse group of health professionals.

She loved hosting dinners, cookouts, parties, and other gatherings for her extended family. She was always concerned about her siblings. She made sure that she kept in touch with them at least once a month. She made delicious southern dishes for her family and friends. She loved traveling with her family to various destinations. Virginia also enjoyed knitting, sewing, and making decorative artwork from pine combs and seashells to enhance the beauty of her home. She possessed a rare, intuitive green thumb. Her gardening skills were an extension of her soul. She loved going to gospel concerts, plays, and jazz concerts. She was so excited when she met the late Albertina Walker at a concert in downtown Baltimore. She told Ms. Walker how she had been following her career for 30 years. She was an avid fan of the late B.B. King. Whenever B.B. King performed in Baltimore, she would get tickets to the show as early as possible. She was a lifetime member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

“Serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”  
Deuteronomy 10:12

Virginia was affiliated with the First Abyssinia Baptist Church, and the Christian Community Church of God where she sang on the Hallelujah Gospel

Choir and the Green Gospel Chorus. She received high praises from the congregation for her renditions of "God Specializes" and "Going Up Yonder to Reign in Jerusalem." She also sang with the Quinett Gospel Singers who performed locally. In 1978, she joined Gospel Tabernacle Baptist Church under the leadership of the late Reverend Edgar L. Reid and continued her membership under the leadership of Bishop Reginald L. Kennedy until her death. She served faithfully on the Gospel Tabernacle Baptist Church First Responders, soup kitchen staff, the GTBC Mass Choir, Voices of Tabernacle, and the Women of Praises. She was known for her soulful renditions of "Got to Serve the Lord", "I am Redeemed," and "I Can Depend on God." She was a faithful member of Sunday School Class #3. Virginia participated with the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education. She really had a deep admiration for Bishop Reginald L. Kennedy and First Lady Kelly Kennedy. On her last evening at home, she thought she heard Bishop Kennedy preaching on the television, but she was reminiscing about his thought-provoking sermons in her mind.

Her favorite scripture was 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." Virginia transitioned peacefully at home after an evening of praise and worship on May 24, 2026, which was Pentecost Sunday morning.

Virginia leaves to cherish her memory: her daughter, Glynis M. Barber; two sons Derek Barber and Dana C. Barber; three brothers Master Sergeant Bobby James Matthews (Lurae), Moses Matthews (Carolyn), Nathaniel Matthews (Edna); brother-in-law, George Bradley (Millie); her best friend Mrs. Vertie Lou McKoy; godson Tivell Byrd; and a host of cousins, nieces, and nephews, and other relatives. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband David Barber, daughter-in-law Marsena Harris-Barber, three brothers

Robert Matthews, Jr., Joseph Matthews, Silas Matthews, sister Minnie Lee Matthews, and sister-in-law Francis Matthews. Special recognition to Minister Yneatha Plummer, Ms. Mary Dockins, Ms. Eunice Dargan, Sister Ida Kelly, Deaconess Brothus Polk, Celeste Matthews, Joseph Matthew, Nathan Matthews, and Sister Sylvia Washington.

## Cemetery Details

### Maryland National

Balto., MD

## Previous Events

### Interment

JUN 13. 11:00 AM (ET)

Maryland National  
Balto., MD

# Tribute Wall

JF

“ *Jerrod & Daphne Rivers and Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Virginia Ellan Barber.*



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**Jerrod & Daphne Rivers and Family** - June 11 at 08:09 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Virginia Ellan Barber.*



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June 11 at 06:09 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Virginia Ellan Barber.*

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June 11 at 06:09 PM

CH

“ *Chris purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Virginia Ellan Barber.*



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**Chris** - June 10 at 06:12 PM



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Virginia Ellan Barber.*



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June 10 at 05:24 PM



“ *The Browns-Hawaii purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Virginia Ellan Barber.*



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**The Browns-Hawaii** - June 05 at 06:12 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Virginia Ellan Barber.*



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June 03 at 10:31 AM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Virginia Ellan Barber.*

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June 03 at 10:31 AM

JJ

“ Our thoughts and prayers extend to all of you who are faced with the displeasure of losing a loved one to our worst enemy called Death, in these critical situations it's normal to feel helpless not knowing where to turn. However, our heavenly creator has assured us in HEB: 6/11 that it is impossible for him to ever forget us, He also stated in John:5/28/29 that all those who have fallen asleep will here is voice , So GOD is given us all his promise of hope of us being together once again. Meanwhile we can give our thanks to the funeral directors: for their perfectonal assistance and their heartfelt concern toward the unfortunate friends and families; THANKS.

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**Joseph Jones** - June 01 at 01:21 PM

CG

“ Chenoa Gordon lit a candle in memory of Virginia Ellan Barber



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**Chenoa Gordon** - May 30 at 06:31 AM

CU

“ Cheryl Barber Utley lit a candle in memory of Virginia Ellan Barber



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**cheryl barber utley** - May 29 at 05:23 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** - May 29 at 12:15 PM

DB

*Thanks and God Bless you all .*

*Derek*

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**Derek Barber** - May 31 at 12:40 PM



*Our condolences to the family. Keeping all in our Prayers. Classmates Bobby and Nathaniel Matthews in South Carolina.*

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**Gloria Devine** - June 02 at 04:52 AM