

Celebrating the Life of



Sherman Howell

Sunrise: November 4, 1942

Sunset: August 2, 2023

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 2023

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc

OMEGA SERVICE

11:00 AM

HOMEGOING SERVICE

11:30 AM

ST JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH

9055 Tamar Drive

Columbia, MD 21045

Rev. Dr. Robert A. F. Turner, Senior Pastor



Obituary



Sherman Howell was born on November 4, 1942, in Eads, Tennessee, the son of the late Herbert Earnest Howell and Eldora Howell. He transitioned from this life on August 2, 2023, at the age of 80, surrounded by his family and loved ones.

Early in his life, Sherman accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior and was an active member, of St John Baptist Church, of which he was a founder, located in Columbia, Maryland in Howard County. He was actively involved in the Civil Rights Movement and a lifetime advocate for social and political issues affecting minority communities in our country, including more than 40 years focusing on local affordable housing.

Sherman Howell grew up in the segregated town of Arlington, TN, but he participated in demonstrations to integrate public facilities there. His involvement in civil rights and community service was inspired by his family's interest in "Tent City," a series of civil rights voter registration events that took place in Fayette County, TN, from 1959 into the early 1970s. At 17, he graduated from high school, got a full-time job, entered college, and immediately began focusing on civil rights, specifically the eradication of Jim Crow laws of the Deep South.

Sherman served in the Army during Vietnam as academy staff instructor for two years and was a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Memphis. His SNCC group joined the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, headed by King. Sherman also supported the Vietnam War opposition and the Poor People Campaign.

At 22 years old, Sherman traveled 300 miles through the night from Memphis, TN., to Selma, AL., in March 1965, and joined with his fellow civil rights protesters in convincing their bus driver to stop on Edmund Pettus Bridge. This third march was the only march that succeeded in reaching Montgomery, AL. Regarding the march Sherman, spoke to an issue of equal importance today, "Voting rights were a matter of life and death for black people. I could see the relationship between voting and basic democracy." Sherman was also prescient in his identification that the next big conversation for all of us would be citizenry-police relations.

He accepted a three-year grant from the Washington, D.C., Police Department, helping to address community dissatisfaction with police and community relations; from there, he worked for the Peace Corps.

Sherman earned a M.A. from American University where he acquired the depth of his knowledge in software development, finance and foreign policy. He would later work as a software engineer for different government agencies and launch another successful career as a freelance writer.

He moved from Washington, D.C. to Columbia, MD in 1971 for its promise of racial inclusiveness, and at this time, he transformed Howard County to Howell County! In HoCo, Sherman served on numerous boards and commissions for Columbia (MD), Howard County and Maryland. He not only ensured that his family lived well, but Sherman also ensured he would do good works including:

- Getting Columbia's library to subscribe to Black newspapers in the 1970s
- Advocating for funding of the Oakland Mills Youth Center as a Board member
- Founding and serving as first chairperson of the Howard County Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Commission
- Working to convert the former Harriet Tubman High School, the county's first African-American high school, into a community center (now the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center)
- Arguing against school redistricting to ensure equity and diversity
- Protesting the attempted honoring of Howard County residents who died fighting for the Confederate Army during the Civil War

Sherman served as an expert on affordable housing development, provided expert testimony to state and local elected bodies to raise awareness on critical issues and was often quoted in the media; including the Washington Post, Dallas Morning News, Baltimore Sun and Business Monthly.

A man of full measure, Sherman received numerous honors and awards for vital participation, organization, leadership, and engagement around the issues of our lives and was awarded the NAACP Platinum Year Award in 2017 and the 2023 Heritage Housing Partners Corporation Legacy Award.

That legacy now has a focal point that will bear his name. The Community Ecology Institute bestowed the building naming honor of the Gray Howell Community Engagement Center to Dr. C. Vernon Gray and Mr. Sherman Howell. The Reis Foundation was "honored to name the Center after them because "these two gentlemen embody community engagement - they've spent nearly a century between them building bridges across racial, economic, and cultural divides in the true spirit of Columbia. We're certain the Center will help cultivate the next generation of citizens to follow in their large footsteps."

A living lesson in power and humility, Sherman was once quoted as saying, "I don't need rewards from being a pioneer because I did what needed to be done; but I've been rewarded anyway."

He leaves to cherish his memories his loving wife of 52 years Yvonne Howell and their devoted daughter Candace Howell of New York City, New York; Sherman's eldest daughter Minister Toni Washington of Chicago Illinois; His beloved sister, Joyce Howell (Los Angeles, CA); and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives. Preceding him in death included his three brothers Willie A Howell, Wade Howell, Clinton Howell, and two sisters, Curtys Harding and Gladys Moore.

Order of Service

- Prelude Music.....
- Processional Music....."Wind Beneath My Wings".....Ms. Lavenia Nesmith
Accompanied by Mr. Terrence Richburg
- Call to Celebration.....Rev. John West
St John Baptist Church
- Opening Hymn....."Great Is Thy Faithfulness".....
- Prayer of Consolation.....Rev. Rickey Harvey, Jr.
St John Baptist Church
- Old Testament.....Psalm 100.....Ms. Sukari Bowman
Mrs. Evelyn Waters Brady
Ms. Natalie Herring
- New Testament.....2 Timothy 4:7-8..... Ms. Candace Dodson-Reed
- Musical Selection....."Take Me to the King".....Ms. Lavenia Nesmith
Accompanied by Mr. Terrence Richburg
- Reflections.....Honorable Dr. Calvin B. Ball
Howard County Executive
- Dr. C. Vernon Gray
Former Howard County Council Member
- Mr. Willie Flowers
President, NAACP, Maryland State Conference
- Ms. Jo Glasco, Esq.
African American Coalition of Howard County
- Ms. Precious Cade
St John Baptist Church Usher Ministry
- Mr. Harry Evans
Family friend and fraternity brother

Order of Service

Resolutions.....Presented by organization and friends

Musical Selection....."My Way"Ms. Lavenia Nesmith
Accompanied by Mr. Terrence Richburg

Reading of the Obituary (silently).....

Eulogy.....Rev. Todd S. Yeary, Senior Pastor
Douglas Memorial Community Church

Benediction.....

NAACP Musical Tribute....."Lift Every Voice and Sing"Mr. Ronald Rolling

Recessional.....Clergy and Family

Repast

Directly following service
at
ST JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH

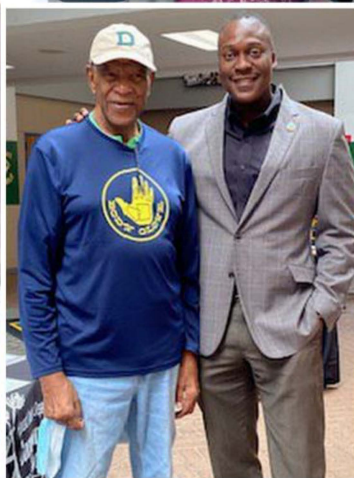
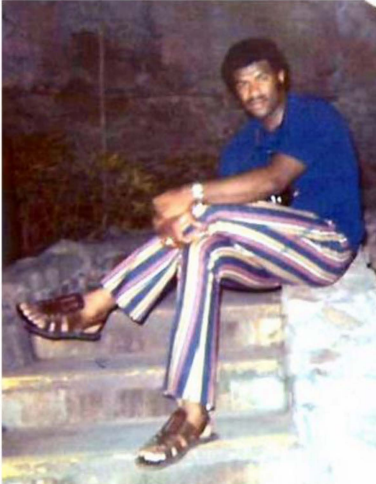


In Honor of Sherman Howell

Please feel free to make a donation in his name to the Community Ecology Institute and the Gray-Howell Community Engagement Center at 8000 Harriet Tubman Lane in Columbia, MD. The mission of the non-profit organization is to cultivate communities where people and nature thrive together by working at the intersections of education, environment, equity and health. The community center is named after Dr. C. Vernon Gray and Mr. Sherman Howell.

<https://www.communityecologyinstitute.org/>





Honorary Pallbearers

David Barrett

Bernard Batie

Jerard Batie

Harry Evans

C. Vernon Gray

Jarvis Howell

Willie Albert Howell, Jr.

Ken Jennings

John Kellier

Lorin A. Powell

Special Acknowledgments

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc, Howell Funeral Home, St John's Baptist Church, and the "healthcare providers" that cared for him.

The family of Sherman Howell would like to express our sincere gratitude for every prayer, visit, meal, phone call, text message, Facebook message, cards, gifts, flowers and support.

And Special Thanks

And leaving the best to last, we would like to thank Dr. C. Vernon Gray for guiding us patiently and tenderly through this journey with his recommendations, organizing arrangements, contacting people and most of all loving us. Thank you, Dr. Gray, for all that you do, especially your big "bear" hugs.

Thoughts from the Family

Nephew Jarvis Howell: "I appreciate Uncle Sherman, and I thank him for all he has helped us with. He's a perfect example of a real man."

Sister Joyce Howell: "Sherman was a fine young man, beautiful heart and always willing to help someone."

Interment

PRIVATE FAMILY CEREMONY

Professional Services Entrusted to:

HOWELL FUNERAL HOME

10220 Guilford Road
Jessup, MD 20794