

Obituary

Brother Willie James Bates, beloved son of the late Virgil and Annie Lee Bates, was born on June 13, 1951, in Newberry County, South Carolina and departed this life on March 25, 2025, in Columbia, South Carolina. Raised in a large, loving family, Willie was surrounded with love and support from his parents, siblings, and cousins.

Affectionately known as *“Mr. Willie,”* Willie James was educated in the public school system of Newberry County. As a child, he often could be found playing with his siblings outside. As he grew, he worked with his family to meet the household needs. Mr. Willie incorporated his hard work ethic into everything he completed. After high school, he became a loyal member of the Counts Sausage Company family and provided over 20 years of faithful service to the organization. After his retirement, he served as an Environmental Specialist at Gleams Rikard Head Start Center and later expanded his services to Newberry Hospital in the same capacity. In addition to serving these organizations, he also served to beautify his community by providing residential lawn care services. In his spare time, Mr. Willie enjoyed socializing with his friends and cooking. He was famous for his Mac and Cheese, and it was requested at all the family gatherings.

All who knew Mr. Willie, knew him as a man of faith. Growing up in Prosperity, his family attended Lower Mt. Olive AME Church. He accepted Christ into his life and continued in this faith tradition until he departed this life. Prior to his illness, Brother Bates served on the Steward Board, Steward Pro Tem, Male Chorus, and Senior Choir. He was also a member of the Solid Rock Lodge #243.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Virgil and Annie Lee Bates, his brothers, Virgil Bates, Jr. and Eugene Bates, and a sister, Helen Blondell Bates.

Brother Willie James Bates leaves to cherish his memories, his siblings, Georgia M. Williams, Hattie Worthy, and Curtis (Audrey) Bates, all of Columbia, SC; Johnnie Lee (Sandra) Bates of Newberry, SC; and Barbara Coleman of Prosperity, SC; his fur baby, Tippy; a host of nieces, nephews, and other loving relatives and friends, all of whom will miss him dearly.

Memories



Order of Service

Saturday, April 5, 2025 – 12:00 Noon
Lower Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church
Prosperity, South Carolina



Reverend Michael Harp, Pastor

- Prelude
- Processional
- Viewing.....Funeral Directors
- Opening Hymn.....Lower Mt. Olive AME Mass Choir
- Prayer.....Reverend Dr. Dennis Broughton, Jr., Cousin
- Scripture Reading.....Reverend Jamal Bates, Nephew
Old Testament – Psalm 23
New Testament – II Timothy 4:7
- Instrumental.....Mr. Curtis M. Bates, Nephew
- Remarks.....Mrs. Glendell Wells, Niece
(Three Minutes, Please) Dr. Katrina Pitts, Niece
Lower Mt. Olive Church Family
Friends
- Selection.....Mr. Tamarquine Bates, Nephew
- Words of Comfort.....Reverend Michael Harp
- Selection.....Lower Mt. Olive AME Mass Choir
- Recessional
- Postlude



Committal, Benediction and Interment
Lower Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church Cemetery
2532 Wheeland School Road
Prosperity, South Carolina

Brother

You gave no one a last farewell, Nor ever said
good-bye.
You were gone before we knew it, and only God
knows why.
A million times we will miss you. A million times
we will cry.
If love alone could have saved you, You never
would have died.
In life we loved you dearly. In death we love you
still.
In our hearts you hold a place, no one else can
fill.
It broke our hearts to lose you, but you didn't go
alone,
for part of us went with you, the day God took
you home.
We will meet again someday we know, in a better
place.
There will never be another, we thank God, He
made you our Brother.

Submitted by Ms. Latasha Bates for all his
Brothers & Sisters

Pallbearers



Nephews & Friends of the Family

Floral Bearers

Nieces & Friends of the Family

Acknowledgement

We, the family of Brother Willie James Bates would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the many acts of kindness shown as we celebrate his homegoing. We extend our sincere thanks to the dedicated medical professionals who cared for Willie James during his time of illness. Our deepest appreciation is also extended to the many people who prayed continuously for his healing and recovery. Your thoughts and prayers covered him during this process. It is our prayer that God bless each one of you with His unfailing love for being a blessing to our family during this difficult time.

CONTACT US: Taylor Street Chapel 803-771-7799 Lower Richland Chapel 803-776-6922 WWW.LEEVY.COM I. S. Leevy Johnson <small>-Owner-</small>	Services Entrusted To:  Chris Leevy Johnson <small>-Managing Director-</small>	SIGN THE ONLINE REGISTRY:  Leverette A. Williams, II <small>-General Manager-</small>
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