

10:00 AM
FEBRUARY 4, 2023



CELEBRATION OF LIFE

JEFFERY D. CUNNINGHAM



SUNRISE
JANUARY 23, 1958 — JANUARY 21, 2023

SUNSET

JEFFERY D. CUNNINGHAM BIOGRAPHY OF LIFE



Jeffery Darnell Cunningham was born January 23, 1958, in Gary, West Virginia to the late Lewis Washington Cunningham, Jr. and Mattie Louise Cunningham. His family relocated to Chester in 1958 and Jeff attended Franklin Elementary, Booker T. Washington and Douglass Middle Schools. He graduated from Chester High School in 1976.

While in High School, Jeff was a member of the infamous CHS marching band under the direction of Claire Fitzpatrick.

He played the trombone and enjoyed attending Band camp. Jeff and Joe Kane always went back and forth on how certain Douglass students didn't have to audition for the band. Jeff was a member of the Jazz Band. He loved music and he and his friend Winston Ferguson would sit and listen to music and always talked about the base player. In school Jeff was known for his style of dressing but more importantly his hair cuts.

He was employed by Fair Acres in Lima, Pa prior to enlisting in the United States Marine Corps in 1976. Jeff trained boys to men he was a Cross County Chaser, Sharp Shooter and held various administrative positions where he sent soldiers to do battle; Persian Gulf War (Desert Storm), he left with an Honorable Discharge in 1991.

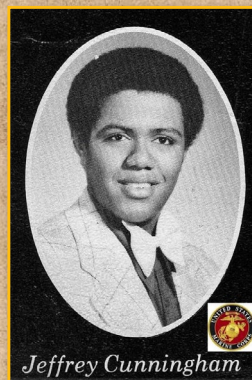


Jeff married the love of his life, Patrice Pryor, November 27, 1982, and from this union had two daughters.

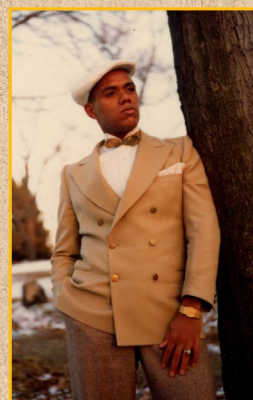
Jeff and Brother Kevin Muhammed owned and operated Bow Ties Unlimited. He made and sold bowties and hankies in the United States and in various countries, as well as to many churches in the tri-state area. He made special bow ties for Nation of Islam Leader, Minister Louis Farrakhan. In 1996, he purchased Tornado Janitorial from the late Donald I. Butler (God father). He was Owner/Operator and employed many family members and youth as their first job. His work speaks

for him as his motto was: "Excellence in Service through Pride and Commitment." He developed numerous relationships and Oh, the conversations he had especially with his friends, Sister Maggie and Sister Cathy.

Jeff joined Shiloh Baptist Church in 1982, under the pastorate of Rev. Gregory S. Hardaway where he served on the Youth Choir. He held various positions, included but not limited to: Young Adult Choir, Sr. Choir even though at that time he wasn't a senior; Men's Day Chairman, President/Leader of the Burn the Mortgage Committee, The Leaf Wall, organized the SBC Campers/Divers, Help Meet of the Women's ministry, Jr. Trustee (where he counted the pennies), elevated to Trustee, he was a member of Shiloh's Board of Directors. He also was a leader of the Youth ministry and they called him Uncle Jeff. He had a heart for his seniors and would do anything for them; delivering dinners, helping them up or down stairs, grabbing the mic, cleaning up spills, encouraging words and Oh did he have a great sense of humor and always smiled through it all.



Jeffrey Cunningham



Jeff had an extra-ordinary relationship with Pastors, Vaughn B. Wilson and E. Ervin Millsaps. They could depend on Jeff for telling the truth even when he stood alone which was most times. Not only was Jeff a servant, he was a fighter and would stand up and say what needed to be said even when it was uncomfortable for most. He was a man of great character and prided himself on exceptional leadership not only would he put out the money he would roll up his sleeves and do the work. Jeff Cunningham had a style like none other, not only would he give his best service he showed up always in his "Sunday Best". He said if you look good you feel good and others would too, that was our Jeff.

Jeff Cunningham walked amongst the people. He was a member of the Nation of Islam; the relationships he developed with the Brothers and Sisters was undeniable. He knew and understood the word of God from both the Bible and the Quran. When he greeted the youth in the church and in the city of Chester, he would say, "Hey Black Man" to remind them of who they are and the greatness within. Oh yes, he was extra-ordinary. Jeff organized 15 charter buses to travel to Washington, DC attending the Million Man March in 1995. He joined men, fathers and sons, brothers, and nephews. It was a collaborative effort with the Ministerial staff of Chester and Vicinity.

Jeff is the CEO of the 1st Sunday breakfast, where he mentored regarding relationships, finances, God, and any topic of interest. Open and safe environment, judgment-free zone.

"What a man, What a man, What a mighty great man." He served his community well. Some called him the C-City Community Activist. He supported and served the Boys and Girls Club of Chester and was a mentor to many. He was a member of the Atlantic Rangers Scuba Diving Club. He was President for many years of the Atlantic Rangers, Youth Education Services. He raised money for the Club to support the education and training of young divers. Jeff was an active Board Member of Drexel Neuman Academy, Chester, PA. where he supported and strategized fund-raising events. Jeff loved his class the CHS 76ers (we all know them by name). He was a member of the Alumni, class photographer, the FB news reporter, the Homecoming team setup crew and clean up, leader of the 76ers Scholarship awards. He supported the CHS Alumni committee and was actively engaged with the Classes of 1975, 1977, 1982 & 1983.

Jeff captured the moments of many occasions with his camera. It was his gift to his community and to his church. Folks called him all the time to ask for photos of their loved ones; he would share photos without cost. CHS Class of 75, "He was the benefactor, and we were the recipients of all the love, time, discipline, training, and talent that he had to give".



Jeff leaves to cherish his memory; his wife Patrice of 40 years. He is survived by his daughters; Danielle Denise Cunningham, Daneisha Nicole (Kerume) Dunkley; son, Steve Wilson; two grandsons, Gage Nirvana and Kairo Jeffery; and one granddaughter, Kalani.

He is also survived by his mother, Mattie Louise Cunningham; brother Alton Cunningham; and sister Pamuela Cunningham. He was predeceased in death by his father Lewis W. Cunningham, Jr.

Jeff has touched the lives of many. Two nephews he raised; Tyrone L. Pryor, Sr. and Germane Jason Pryor, Sr. He has a host of sister and brother in laws and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces and so many "bonus" children too many to count.

Many loved Jeff, he had numerous brothers: Davis "Sug" Northern, Darrell Mosley, Willie Bowman, Joe Kane, Charles Caples and Winston Ferguson and his best friend, Jackie D. Goldsborough.



JANUARY 23, 1958

JEFFERY D. CUNNINGHAM

JANUARY 21, 2023



JEFFERY D. CUNNINGHAM

THE MAKING OF A GOOD SAMARITAN AND TRUE NEIGHBOR

By Karriem Allah

In the Bible, in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 10, a lawyer questions Jesus about how he could inherit eternal life. Interestingly, Jesus doesn't say to this lawyer that he could achieve that goal by merely declaring to accept Jesus as his lord and personal savior, as most of us might have presumed.

No, Jesus raises two questions to this lawyer. In verse 26, it states:

He (Jesus) said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou?

In the first question, Jesus reminds this lawyer about the law of God. Although the second question infers that Jesus wanted the lawyer to explain to him how he interpreted the law of God, Jesus was also subtly suggesting that this lawyer was not compliant to the law of God. Verse 27 contains the lawyer's response to Jesus' questions:

And he (lawyer) answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

Here, the law of God is Love—for God and for one's neighbor. Jesus agreed with the lawyer's answer and admonished him to live according to his answers if he wanted to achieve eternal life. Again, Jesus did not say that the man had to declare, with his mouth, to accept Jesus as a personal savior. Why not? What good would that do if the lawyer was in violation of the law of Love?

This lawyer did not take kindly to Jesus' subtle admonishment of his deviation from the law of God, so he raised the question to Jesus as to whom is deemed a neighbor. Perhaps, he wanted Jesus to consider how well he treated his fellow lawyers or wealthy buddies, whom he may have believed were his neighbors. Jesus answered this lawyer's question through a parable, which begins in verse 30:

30) And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31) And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32) And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. 33) But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, 34) And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35) And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Well, Jesus finished his discourse with the lawyer by raising the question as to which of the three persons was a neighbor to the one that was mugged by the thieves. The lawyer was compelled to affirm that the one who showed mercy and compassion was the neighbor. Jesus then told the lawyer to go and do likewise. Again, what Jesus required this lawyer to do to achieve eternal life was far more than just simply making an oath.



Anyone who knew Jeffery Cunningham would, without any doubt, say that he fit this "Good" Samaritan to the "T". We all have testimonies of how Jeffery helped so many people in so many ways, so we can reflect on those experiences.

This parable doesn't tell us what made this Samaritan do what he did. In other words, what qualities made him a good neighbor? We can discover the answer to this question by reflecting on Jeffery Cunningham. One quality is that Jeffery enjoyed interacting with people. He had a splendid beauty in relating to people. He made it his purpose to always share knowledge to enlighten those who crossed his path.

Another quality of a Good Samaritan is integrity. Jeffery was honest and tolerant, but forthright, to say the least. You would never leave a discussion with him and have questions about his motive. He was a man among men.

Another quality of a good Samaritan is sincerity. Anything that Jeffery said to you, you knew he believed it and meant it; and you felt the passion and commitment behind his words and actions.

Another quality of a good Samaritan is self-sacrificing. Most of us sacrifice for others because we have to, but few people sacrifice for others because they want to. Jeffery was among the few. He sacrificed his time and resources for others because he wanted to help improve their situation or circumstances. Again, we have personal testimonies of Jeffery at work.

An often-overlooked quality of a Good Samaritan is practicality. Again, according to the narrative in Luke 10, the man accosted by the thieves was left half dead, so he needed practical services—food, shelter, clothing and first-aid. A simple prayer wouldn't do. Jeffery exemplified practicality in serving his family and being a good neighbor to others. He did not believe in abracadabra. He believed in rolling up his sleeves and putting his time and money to work to resolve the issue.



The quintessential quality of a good Samaritan is to be humane, which is characterized by tenderness, compassion, and sympathy for people, especially for the suffering or distressed. Jeffery deeply empathized with others, regardless. He was not religiously, politically or economically territorial. He was a servant of Almighty God and not of any specific religion.

Jesus' position, according to Luke 10, that doing good deeds of sacrifice is a prerequisite for eternal life, is also found throughout the Holy Quran. In Chapter 2 of the Quran, it states:

But they who believe and do righteous deeds – those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally.

(Al-Baqarah [Holy Quran 2:82])

In closing this reflection on Jeffery, I am reminded of a quote that I saw many years ago. I am not sure who the author of it was, but I believe Jeffery embodied it:

"Don't look around to see who's coming to help, God sent YOU."

JEFFERY D. CUNNINGHAM ORDER OF SERVICE



Officiant Brother Darrall Mosley

Processional.....Clergy, Family and Friends

Opening Hymn.....Rodney Bradley & Friends Choir

Prayer of ComfortDeacon Lonnie Richardson,
Shiloh Baptist

Scripture

Old Testament Reverend Kenneth Symonds,
Shiloh Baptist

New Testament.....Trustee Charles Caples,
Bethel AME Church

Quran.....Brother Lamont Muhammad,
Masjid Al Fajr

Selection.....Rodney Bradley & Friends Choir

Spoken Word.....Chioma Sheri

Reflections

SelectionRodney Bradley & Friends Choir

Reflections

Spoken Word.....Ms. Kassidy Hynson

SelectionRodney Bradley & Friends Choir

Eulogy.....This is Us – The Family

Benediction/RecessionalReverend
Kenneth Symonds,
Shiloh Baptist Church

Rodney Bradley & Friends Choir

*The family of Jeffery D. Cunningham is thankful
for the outpouring of love and support and will
acknowledge all acts of kindness at a later date.*



Not, How Did My Brother
Jeffery D. Cunningham Die,
But How Did He Live?

Not, how did Jeff die,
but how did Jeff live?

Not, what did Jeff gain,
but what did Jeff give?

These are the units to measure
the worth of a man as a man,
regardless of his birth.

Nor what was his church, nor what was his creed?
But had Jeff befriended those really in need?

Was Jeff ever ready, with words of good cheer, to bring
back a smile, to banish a tear?

Not what did the sketch in the newspaper say, but how
many were sorry when Jeff passed away?

No suffering, sickness, yes not even pain, those who did
good, eternal life they'll gain.

Your one and only sister
Pamuela Cunningham



I KNOW HEAVEN IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE BECAUSE THEY HAVE MY SON.

*Our time together was special
So were the memories we made
although you live in Heaven now
Those memories never fade*

*I bow my head in silence
And remember you my son with love
I know that you are up there
Watching from above*

*Every day is a struggle
And nothing feels the same
my heart breaks a little more
Every time I hear your name.*

*You'll always be remembered
And time may heal my heart
But a piece of me is missing
Since the day you and I had to part
If Heaven is for Angels
Then I know that's where you'll be
I know you and your dad will be waiting
When Heaven calls for me.*

*I love you Jeff. I'm so proud of the life that you
lived and the legacy that you
leave for others to follow.*

Mom - Weezie

