



## Mr. James L. Gray

May 6, 1930 - January 13, 2024

### In Loving Memory Of

James L. Gray transitioned on January 13, 2024, after a brief illness. James was the beloved son of the late Lonnie and Mellie Rose Gray, Also, preceding him in death were his stepmother, affectionately called “Ma” Millie Gray; son, Antonio “Tony” Gerome Gray; brothers, William E. Gray, Willie B. Gray, Wayne “George” Gray, Sammie L. Gray, Daniel Gray; sisters, Alfonsa Lewis, Vernice Rufus, Marjorie Hurt, Mary Wilks, Georgia Polk; brother-in-law, Dan Hurt. sister-in-law, Barbara Gray; nephews, Joel Rufus, Marvin Polk, Chester McFadden and Dwayne Hurt; niece, Doris Beasley; special kinship, James Rufus, Wendel “Tony” Harding, Barney Browner Sr., Israel Browner and Isaiah Brown.

James L. Gray, was born in Haywood County, Tennessee. After completing his formal education in Madison County, Tennessee School District, James moved to Chicago to find employment at Republic Food Product Company, where he worked for almost two years until he was drafted in the United States Marine Corps. James served in the Marines for eight years, two years in active duty and six years in reserves and was honorably discharged. James then moved to Detroit, MI.

Upon moving to Detroit, James met and married Carolyn Browner. And to this union, two children were born (Tony and Tonya). While in Detroit, James co-owned and operated the Tapawingo Club, on Tireman Ave., in Detroit, for over eight years. It was a fun and rewarding venture. He was also, gainfully

employed at Awrey's Bakery as a truck driver for over 14 years. Many family members fondly remember, James bringing them pies, cakes and cookies. James also, had fond memories of driving across the country and being able to visit many different places in his life. After leaving Awrey Bakery, James was employed as a truck driver for Amaco Heating & Cooling Company, for seven years. In 1980, James again decided to become a business owner, and for 6 years he successfully owned and operated the Glory Maid Service, where he contracted employees to provide cleaning services for local office buildings. James' last employment was as a driver, for Robinson Transportation Service. James was employed there for 15 years, until he retired in 2002.

James was the ultimate family man! He enjoyed going to family reunions (James only missed one family reunion in 34 years!), traveling and visiting family, and having cookouts. James was known as the "grill master!" Grilling some of the best barbeque around. James was devoted to attending ALL family functions whether for fun, celebration, or grief, he rarely missed an event. James was often the crowd pleaser, finding jokes, quirky or funny sayings to keep people laughing or talking about something. The party wouldn't really get started until he arrived. James (Jim), was everybody's "Uncle Jimmy!" Family and friends often joked, that James' twin was the TV character, Fred Sanford, from the television show "Sanford and Son." James also was a sports enthusiast! Whether, going to the games or watching the games on TV, he had to be there! His personal favorite pastimes were going to outdoor concerts with his daughter Tonya (James particularly enjoyed 'blues' concerts), attending church, and spending quality time with the apple of his eye and the only person that could make his heart melt, his granddaughter "Corri." James was the patriarch of his family and he acted in the role of a "surrogate father," to many of his nieces and nephews. James devoted his life to helping his family, and being a caregiver himself, for his younger brother Sam, until his departure. James loved and supported his entire family, in any and every way possible. He always showed up for his

family!

# Cemetery Details

## Grand Lawn Cemetery

23501 Grand River  
Detroit, MI 48219

# Previous Events

## Family Visitation Hour

Saturday, Jan. **27**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church  
6330 Pembroke  
Detroit, MI 48221

## Service

Saturday, Jan. **27**. 11:00 AM (ET)

New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church  
6330 Pembroke  
Detroit, MI 48221

# Tribute Wall

CA

“ *My heart goes out to my friend, Tonya. You and your family are in my prayers.*



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**carolyn.everette@detroitk12.org** - January 26, 2024 at 02:26 PM

SB

“ *Forrestine Gray (sister)*

*Hello everyone I want to say a few words about my brother James Gray. He was a kindhearted and generous person. He liked to keep intouch by telephone. So I called him often to see how he was doing. He will be missed greatly. My prayers goes out to all of our family and may all be blessed.*

*Forrestine Gray daughter of Millie Gray of Denmark Tennessee.*

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**Stephanie Brown** - January 25, 2024 at 06:32 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. James L. Gray.*



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January 24, 2024 at 09:43 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. James L. Gray.



January 24, 2024 at 10:44 AM



“ Cynthia Lee Roberson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. James L. Gray.

Cynthia Lee Roberson - January 24, 2024 at 10:44 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family. May God comfort you through his word the Bible and the gift of prayer. Thinking of you all.

Evans family - January 21, 2024 at 10:58 AM



“ My thoughts and prayers are with you Uncle James, the family and anyone ever touched by his joy. Thank you for the memories “Unc”



Kenneth Gray - January 19, 2024 at 03:54 PM



The patriarch of our family. You were the fabric of the family. You ran a good race. Now take your rest job well done King!!

Stephanie Brown - January 19, 2024 at 07:22 PM

KA

*Uncle Jimmy was always kind to me, family oriented and just an overall blessing. I will miss him at family events at Aunt Carol's home, but his spirit lives on forever.*

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**Katrina** - January 26, 2024 at 11:42 AM

SB

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



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**Stephanie Brown** - January 18, 2024 at 10:55 PM