



## Rev. Stephen "Sparrow" O'Neal

January 30, 1967 - September 28, 2023

Today, we celebrate the life and love of Stephen Edward O'Neal affectionately known as "Sparrow" who was gifted to us from his parents Edward and Sandra O'Neal on January 30, 1967. Both parents preceded him in death. Stephen grew up and attended the Detroit Public Schools system and graduated from Chadsey High School in 1985. He furthered his education at Fisk University Major: Management Economics, Minor: Dramatics & Speech. Stephen was employed by Smith Collection, Auto One, Henderson Glass, Titan Insurance and currently a Contractor for LargeScale Commercial Cleaning Service where he supervised the cleaning crews for the Plumbrook Elementary School in Sterling Heights where the students Loved Mr. Stephen. Stephen confessed his love for Christ as his personal Savior at an early age and was baptized at the Unity Baptist Church. Stephen became an Ordained Minister on September 18, 2015 (in honor of the 3rd year anniversary of the passing of his mother).

Stephen's grandmother, Florine Martin "Granny" was a big influence in his life. She loved the song "His Eye is on the Sparrow" and that is how he chose the name "Sparrow".

Stephen had many talents. He was a Reverend, host, poet, guitarist, actor, artist, writer, DJ "SPARRO" and Philosopher. Stephen learned and perfected his craft to allow him to bring poetry to all venues. Stephen's mission was to establish empowerment between individuals that can learn from each other's strengths. He strived to guide and motivate one's passion in a positive

environment. His amazing gift led him to create the Motown MIC Platform, for new and upcoming artists. On September 22, 2023, he humbly received a “Distinguished Honor” from the Motown Museum. Stephen loved music, attending family functions and spending time with his childhood friends playing Slot Cars. He was also a good baseball and basketball player. On Thursday, September 28, 2023, Almighty God summoned Stephen from the trials, tribulations, and woes of this earthly stay to his heavenly home.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

Friday, Oct. **6.** 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

O. H. Pye, III Funeral Home  
17600 Plymouth Road  
Detroit, MI 48227  
(313) 838-9770  
info@pyefuneralhome.com

## Family Hour

Saturday, Oct. **7.** 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Unity Baptist Church  
7500 Tireman  
Detroit, MI 48204

## Funeral Service

Saturday, Oct. **7.** 11:00 AM (ET)

Unity Baptist Church  
7500 Tireman  
Detroit, MI 48204

# Tribute Wall

JO

“ he was such a cool janitor at plumbrook and i remember one time i told him thank you for cleaning the school and being a cool dj for events that took place at plumbrook. rest in peace G.O.A.T.

---

**josephine** - April 26 at 08:54 PM



“ *Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Stephen Sparrow O'Neil:  
Detroit's Spoken Word Virtuoso*

*Subtitle: Remembering a Pioneering Poet and an Unforgettable  
Cousin*

*With heavy hearts and fond memories, today, we honor and bid  
farewell to the esteemed poet, Stephen Sparrow O'Neil. A son of  
Detroit, Stephen was not only a beloved family member but also a  
pillar in the spoken word community, a trailblazer whose voice  
echoed through the halls of creativity and inspiration.*

*A Pioneer in Spoken Word*

*Stephen began crafting his poetry at a time when spoken word was  
just beginning to gain recognition as a powerful art form. Detroit, a  
city with a pulse and rhythm uniquely its own, provided the canvas  
upon which he painted with words. With every line and stanza, he  
captured the essence of life in the city, the spirit of its people, and  
the melodies of their stories.*

*As one of the inaugural figures in Detroit's spoken word scene,  
Stephen was more than just a poet; he was a visionary who saw the  
potential of this craft to move, heal, and unite. Through his  
commitment and passion, he paved the way for future generations  
of spoken word artists, leaving an indelible mark on the community.*

*A Symphony of Words and Sounds*

*For those fortunate enough to collaborate with Stephen,. I had the  
privilege of recording several of his CDs, the experience was  
nothing short of magical. His performances were a symphony of  
words and sounds, weaving a tapestry of emotions that left  
audiences spellbound. Each CD encapsulated his genius, serving  
as a timeless testament to his talent.*

*One of the highlights of his illustrious career was sharing the stage  
with family, a convergence of love and art that exemplified the deep*

*connections forged through music and poetry. These moments were not only significant milestones but also cherished family memories, shining brightly in the tapestry of their shared history.*

#### *A Legacy Preserved in Pixels and Ink*

*In an era where technology allows us to immortalize moments, Stephen's eloquent performances live on, accessible to both those who loved him dearly and those who will discover his work in the years to come. Through the dedicated preservation efforts on the family's website, the world can witness Stephen's mesmerizing presence and hear his voice — powerful, gentle, and imbued with the wisdom of experience.*

*Each video is a window into his soul, a glimpse of a man who lived and breathed poetry. As viewers, we are invited to embark on a journey through his verses, navigating the currents of human experience with grace and insight. For fans and newcomers alike, these recordings are treasures, encapsulating the essence of a life devoted to art and expression.*

#### *A Farewell Not The End*

*As we say goodbye to Stephen Sparrow O'Neil, we do not mourn the silence left in his wake but celebrate the echoes of his voice reverberating through time. His poetry, a beacon of light and hope, continues to inspire and captivate, drawing us into the magical world he created with words.*

*Stephen's legacy is not confined to the ink on paper or the pixels on screens; it thrives in the hearts of everyone touched by his work. For the family, fans, and fellow poets, his memory will forever be a source of strength and inspiration.*

*In celebrating Stephen's life, we acknowledge the immeasurable contributions he made to the world of spoken word and the arts. His passing marks the end of an era, but his spirit dances through every line of poetry and note of music, undying and eternal.*

*May you rest in power and peace, Stephen Sparrow O'Neil. Your words, like stars in the night sky, will continue to illuminate the world for generations to come.*

*Your Cousin: RAY*

---

**Ray Johnson** - October 07, 2023 at 06:58 PM

KC

“ *My thoughts and prayers to the O'Neal and Smith Family may God give you strength in comfort. Kim Leland-Carpenter*

---

**Kimberly Michele Carpenter** - October 06, 2023 at 05:24 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Rev. Stephen "Sparrow" O'Neal.*



---

October 06, 2023 at 02:15 PM

FF

“ *From the Cotman/Shelley family purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Rev. Stephen "Sparrow" O'Neal.*



---

**From the Cotman/Shelley family** - October 06, 2023 at 01:52 PM

TR

“ *My Sincere Condolences to the Family! His kindness will live on in the hearts of many.*



T. Rose - October 04, 2023 at 11:04 PM

LK

“ *I was so saddened to learn of DJ Sparrow's passing last week. He was truly loved by all the students and staff at Plumbrook Elementary. Sparrow was an appropriate name for this gentle soul.*

Laura L Kirsch - October 03, 2023 at 03:35 PM

FR

“ *DJ Sparrow was a superstar at our school. He made each and every student feel special. He put on a performance and recited a poem about how the students fulfilled his life and made him feel loved and happy. It was a very moving poem. Our hearts are saddened with his loss. We will miss you DJ Sparrow.*

Francine - October 03, 2023 at 08:09 AM

EF

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with your family. Continue to rely on God and know that he hears your prayers, because he cares for you. Thinking of you all.*

Evans family - October 02, 2023 at 05:38 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rev. Stephen "Sparrow" O'Neal.*



---

October 02, 2023 at 03:06 PM



“ *Alicia lit a candle in memory of Stephen O'Neal*



---

**Alicia** - October 02, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *My deepest condolences to the O'Neil and Smith families. Gods blessings to you all. Reginald and Sandy Smith*



---

**sandy smith** - October 01, 2023 at 01:22 PM