



## John William Gilford Sr.

July 31, 1935 - December 13, 2019

John W. Gilford Sr. was born on July 31, 1935 in Clio, Alabama to the late Will and Callie Mae Gilford.

He relocated to Cleveland, Ohio at the age of 17. This is where he met and fell in love with the late Anna Marie. They united in marriage on May 29, 1960. The Lord blessed them to raise five beautiful children, Kimberly and John Jr., and nieces Lashawn, Olivia, and Kiera.

In 1998, after 30 years of service, he retired from the Cleveland Board of Education. After retirement, the family relocated to Lawrenceville, GA. John and Marie became members of Antioch A.M.E. Church in Stone Mountain, GA.

John loved his family immensely. He also had a profound way of making people feel welcomed, significant, encouraged, and loved. He never met a stranger. He enjoyed sending daily scriptural texts messages, listening to music and reading. In his earlier years, he enjoyed photography, gardening, traveling, and riding his Harley Davidson motorcycle.

On December 13, 2019, he departed from this earthly life to live eternally with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His loving wife Anna Marie Gilford of 53 years preceded him in death in 2013. He also was preceded in death by siblings Sarah L. Thomas (sister) of Cleveland, Ohio; Willie Baxter (brother) of Cleveland, Ohio; Mary Lou Eskridge (sister) of Lynn, Massachusetts; Ella C. Steward (sister) of Columbus, Georgia; and Willie L. Brown (sister) of Cleveland, Ohio.

His memory will be cherished by all those who knew him including his daughter, Kimberly L. Smith (Michael), of Gainesville, Florida; son, John W. Gilford, Jr. (Missy), of Atlanta, Georgia; granddaughter, Kristy J. Gilford, of Destin, FL; and nieces/daughters Lashawn E. Mitchell of Lawrenceville, Georgia; Olivia M. Mitchell of Southfield, Michigan; and Kiera L. Mitchell of Stone Mountain, Georgia. Siblings; Vera Williams (Clarence), of Cleveland, OH; James O. Gilford of Warrensville Hts., OH; Shirley Blackson of Ellenwood, GA; Louis H. Gilford, Sr. (Ollie), of Silver Spring, MD; Eddie J. Gilford, Sr. of Warrensville Hts., OH; Betty Gilford of Capital Hts., MD; Clifton Arline (Sarah), of Columbus, OH. and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws, other relatives, and friends.

Homegoing services for Mr. John William Gilford Sr. of Lawrenceville, GA will be held Friday, December 20, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at Antioch AME Church, 765 S. Hairston Rd, Stone Mountain, GA 30083. Visitation will be held on Thursday, December 19, 2019 from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Home GWINNETT Chapel, 914 Scenic Hwy. Lawrenceville, GA 30045. (770) 338-5558

# Cemetery Details

## Melwood Cemetery

5170 East Ponce De Leon Avenue  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083-121

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 19. 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Gregory B. Levett and Sons - Gwinnett Chapel  
914 Scenic Hwy  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045

## Homegoing services

DEC 20. 1:00 PM (ET)

Antioch AME Church  
765 S Hairston Rd  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083  
(404) 299-3388

# Tribute Wall

JH

“ Know that you are in our thoughts & prayer during this difficult time.



Jeraldine Henderson - December 19, 2019 at 02:11 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of John William Gilford Sr..



December 19, 2019 at 02:06 PM

BW

“ I have known Mr. Gilford since I was little boy growing up on Iowa avenue in Cleveland, Ohio back in the 70's and 80's. His son Bill and I were thick as thieves. I was always welcomed there. Mr . Gilford was the kindness and coolest father on the block. I recall when he bought the Harley Davidson, he gave all the kids in the hood a ride on the back of his bike, it was thrilling! If there was a tool you needed he had it and he would lend it to you. I have so many good memories of Mr.Gilford I would run out of space. Bill and Kim, I know this is a tough time for you both especially at this time of the year but I believe you guys will weather this tragic event with God's grace and mercy.

Love always,  
Bob Walls

Bob Walls - December 19, 2019 at 11:27 AM