



Dr. Johnny Kennebrew

December 14, 1948 - June 28, 2021

Johnny Kennebrew, 72, of Atlanta, GA passed on Monday June 28, 2021. Visitation will be held on Thursday July 1, from 12-8PM. PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR CONDOLENCES HERE ON OUR WEBSITE. Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Home and Crematory Inc. 4347 Decatur, GA 3003 (404) 241-5656.

A Celebration of the Life, Leadership, and Legacy of DR. JOHNNY LEE KENNEBREW

Life...

From humble beginnings and a strong family heritage of faith and hard work, Johnny Lee Kennebrew was born. He was the firstborn son to Roosevelt and Mary Helen Kennebrew born on December 14, 1948 in Jackson, MS. His father passed away at an early age so at home, his mother, Sister Mary Helen Kennebrew, was a strong model of faith and an educator who poured herself into raising men of strength and honor. As a child, Johnny Kennebrew was prepared to live out his lifelong passion for nurturing, educating, and mentoring young people.

These were the impactful elements that shaped the life and legacy of Dr. John Kennebrew.

Leadership...

Dr. Kennebrew highly prioritized pursuing education to support his professional development and career advancement. He graduated from Lanier High School and then earned a B.S. in Elementary Education, M.Ed. in Educational Administration, and an Ed.S. in Educational Administration from Jackson State University. In 1988, he graduated with a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from Mississippi State University. All of this preparation helped to create opportunities for him to lead in school systems in the states of Mississippi and Georgia. Dr. Kennebrew served as a Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Curriculum Coordinator, Assistant Superintendent of Yazoo City School System and Superintendent of Schools in Yazoo City School System. He also served as a visiting professor of Education at Jackson State University and at the University of West Georgia.

Motivated by excellence, his focus centered on what's best for children, always insisting on high expectations for all and guaranteeing that adult behavior is always directed at maximizing each child's full potential. "Start early, stay focused, and finish strong" exemplifies his leadership philosophy. To that end, he earned a number of notable awards because of his leadership in the schools, school districts, and community including Teacher of the year, Administrator of the Year multiple times, and Who's Who in American Education. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) named him as an Outstanding "Resilience Builder" in 2008. He was recognized with educators around the country who contribute to the well-being and academic achievement of students by fostering resilience at an exceptional level.

Spiritual Life and Legacy...

At an early age, he was introduced to Jesus Christ and grew up a faithful member of the Cynthia Church of Christ (Holiness) U.S.A. There, he served in many capacities. He sang in the youth choir, attended Sunday School, participated in H.Y.P.U. and served as a Deacon. Dr. Kennebrew credited the

beginning of his leadership skill development to the confidence placed in him and opportunities afforded him to serve as an officer in the Jackson and Terry District of the South Central Diocese of the COCHUSA, President of the Sunday School and H.Y.P.U. Department, serving on many committees at conventions through the years, and being mentored by the brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the COCHUSA. When he relocated to Atlanta, GA, he worshipped and served at Higher Calling Ministries where he was an usher and mentor, and he was very committed to the homeless ministry of an Episcopal congregation in midtown Atlanta.

Dr. Kennebrew often spoke of the happy days and good times shared with his only brother, Vernon Kennebrew, cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents while growing up in Jackson, MS. He was married to Janice Sellers. Of this union, two sons were born, Jason Lamont Kennebrew and John Sellers Kennebrew. He always loved to share time with extended family members at family reunions, graduations, dinners, and other fun and even challenging times.

He had a big smile, jovial spirit, caring soul, generous heart, and was full of compassion for others. He loved people and could mix with all. He had an eye for high end men's fashion and collected quality art pieces and furniture. Dr. Kennebrew enjoyed observing historical architecture and loved following the unprecedented growth and excitement that exemplifies the Atlanta metro area.

On June 28, 2021, he succumbed to a short illness and was called home to rest.

Those who remain to cherish his memory are his sons, Jason Lamont Kennebrew and John Sellers Kennebrew, both of Atlanta, GA; his brother,

Bishop Vernon E. Kennebrew (Mary) of Little Rock, AR; friends, Janice Kennebrew of Jackson, MS and Jim Berto of Atlanta, GA; Aunt Mary Lyons of Muskegon, MI; Nichols and Kennebrew first cousins and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, colleagues, and friends.

Tribute Wall

SH

“ *Mr. Kennebrew was not only one of my most influential and memorable educators (as principal of Bowmar Elementary in Vicksburg, MS), he and his family were also an integral part of our Bethel AME Church family in Vicksburg, MS.*

May he rest in peace and may his family be comforted during this time of loss.

- Shawn Jackson

Warren County, MS Supervisor (District 3)

shawn - July 08, 2021 at 12:56 AM

TR

I enjoyed working with Dr. Kennebrew at the Yazoo City Municipal School District when he was the Federal Prigrams Director and later our Superintendent. Loved his family too. They were super nice folks, and I missed them when they moved on the greener pastures. May you feel God's comforting arms during these hard days of readjustment.

Teresa Richardson - July 08, 2021 at 12:03 PM

GW

“ *Mr. Kennebrew was a big brother when we lived on Marshall St also a great mentor*

Gwen Connor Williams - July 03, 2021 at 06:21 PM

BG

“ *Praise the LORD for life. We pray the comfort of the Holy Spirit to the family through this time of bereavement.*

Billy Gooch

BLG Ministries

Billy Gooch - July 02, 2021 at 10:37 PM

WB

He was a great man and teacher

wallace banks - July 12, 2021 at 02:51 PM

KE

He was a great Vice Principal when I taught at Nebo Elementary School in Dallas Georgia in early 2000.

kelly - December 21, 2023 at 11:13 AM

AR

“ *I remember having some classes with him at the historical Lanier High School. He was admired by everyone.*

Anna Thimpson- Rose - July 02, 2021 at 01:36 PM

TR

“ *Heaven has gained a fine man! I worked with Dr. Kennebrew at P.B. Ritch and saw the impact he had daily on the students and staff. He was a kind soul who was well respected and loved. Dr. K always had a smile on his face for everyone. I'm sorry for your loss.*
Tracy Roberts

Tracy L Roberts - July 02, 2021 at 09:40 AM

EJ

*Shocked & Saddened!
Condolences go out Jason, John, Janice, other Family members & Friends! Dr. Kennebrew was truly an amazing and highly respected educator and administrator, in the Vicksburg-Warren School District, here in Vicksburg, MS. I count it a honor to have worked in the VWSD during his era and so appreciative that both my daughters(La'Donna & Yolanda) came through Bowmar Elementary, during his tenure as Principal.
RIP, my Friend! 🙏*

"Bonnie" James

ETHEL "Bonnie" James - July 03, 2021 at 05:35 PM

BO

My condolences to the family. I pray that the Holy Spirit will comfort you as only He can.

Bettye W. Oliver

Bettye Oliver - July 03, 2021 at 05:52 PM

YJ

“ *Our heartfelt condolences and prayers to family and friends. Dr. Kennebrew was a gem. We are thankful for sweet memories we get to keep. When my daughter went to PB Ritch I would drop her off and faithfully Dr Kennebrew would be out front helping, waiving and welcoming as students arrived. My toddler sitting in his car seat always looked for and waived back at the kind smile on the other side of the window. As years went on Dr. Kennebrew continued to have an positive impact on many children. I also had the pleasure of working with him for three years at Nebo and found him to be an exemplary administrator. Over the years my son would stay in touch from time to time and even inviting him to his graduation ceremony when he delivered the salutatorian speech. Although Dr. Kennebrew had retired and didn't live close by, he honored us by coming. The world was better because of him. God blessed us to know him.*

Yvonne Jacques

Yvonne Jacques - July 01, 2021 at 04:15 PM