



Ms. Valerie Denise Gray

February 14, 1970 - April 21, 2023

Valerie Denise Gray departed this earthly life on Friday, April 21, 2023, at her residence in Columbia, South Carolina. Born on February 14, 1970, in Columbia, SC, she was the daughter of Ellen Metze Gray and the late Otis Gray.

Valerie was educated in the Richland County public school system and graduated in 1988 with honors from Lower Richland High School. Valerie attended Columbia College, where she enjoyed the personal interactions with her professors and classmates and the feeling of belonging in a family that attending a smaller college provided. Valerie graduated from Columbia College in 1992 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art and French.

Valerie started her working life at the University of South Carolina in the Earth Science Institute Research (ESIR) and Geography departments which began her interests in plotting and the creation of maps. This led to her initial employment at Lexington County Planning and Geographic Info Systems.

Valerie was a Planning/GIS Technician for Lexington County Planning Division. She assisted in creating, building, maintaining, and modifying various data bases. Valerie also created and maintained the E-911 street and street address data base, assigned new E-911 street addresses as well as providing internal and external user support and training. Valerie also served as the County Emergency Management GIS Liaison and had completed numerous ICS and NIMS courses in an effort to build a better understanding and form a solid partnership with GIS and Emergency Management. Valerie was currently

serving as the Finance Director/Treasurer for SCARC (South Carolina ARC Users Group). She previously served as the first African-American President of the organization and was honored to serve for two consecutive terms.

Valerie's spiritual journey began at an early age. She was baptized at Reeder Point AME Church, Columbia, SC. She participated in the initial Columbia Conference Youth Choir and enjoyed attending Sunday School and the Youth Conventions. Valerie remained active in her adult Christian journey at Bethel AME Church as an Usher and Greeter. She was a member of Pine Grove AME and the first Church Clerk and also served as Church Announcer.

In her spare time, she enjoyed art, music, and travel.

In addition to her father, she was preceded in death by maternal grandparents Frederick Metze and Lilla Blakely Metze.

She leaves to cherish fond and loving memories, her mother Ellen M. Gray; brother Otis Metze Gray; sister-in-law Stephanie Moss Gray; aunts: Alberta Weston; Mary Davis and Amie Montgomery; god sisters; Michele Washington and Chante Rodgers; and a host of cousins, friends, and co-workers who loved her dearly.

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **26**. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223
(803) 786-6300
palmermemorialchapel@gmail.com
<https://www.palmermemorialchapel.com>

Lie in State

APR **27**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Pine Grove AME Church
120 Steward Drive
Columbia, SC 29210

A Celebration of Life

APR **27**. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Pine Grove AME Church
120 Steward Drive
Columbia, SC 29210

Live Streaming

APR 27. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Pine Grove AME Church
120 Steward Drive
Columbia, SC 29210

Live Stream Link <https://pinegroveame.online.church> Facebook: Pine Grove AME Church-Columbia

Tribute Wall



“ *Ms. Valerie Denise Gray*

October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM



“ *Sister Valerie was such a kind, humble and beautiful spirit.*

We're in prayer for continuous love, peace and blessings for Sister Ellen Gray and Family.



Melton Family - April 30, 2023 at 07:35 PM



“ *Lil Sis!!! So thankful for the times we spent, especially for the trips and the laughs. Will forever have in my heart the last words you said to me. My heart is sad but I will remember the good times and the laughs we had. Love you, Little Sis!*

M A Washington - April 30, 2023 at 11:14 AM



*Valerie,
So very sorry to hear the news regarding the passing of your daughter and our cousin Valerie. May God grant peace and love to you and all of us
in our sadness.
Sincerely,
Nell and daughters*

*you and the entire family.
Nell Thompson and daughterS*

 *Nell*

Nell Thompson - May 07, 2023 at 09:12 PM

CG

“ Today I said, my final goodbye to my friend of 30 years..... until we meet again.

“CharlieMae❤️”

Charlene Green - April 27, 2023 at 08:05 PM

SR

“ Shawna Reid sent a virtual gift in memory of Valerie Gray



Shawna Reid - April 27, 2023 at 12:46 PM

WJ

“ I adored my "soul-sista," Valerie. That is what she called us, soul sisters. She was such a beautiful light in this world, and she poured into my life and so many others. Her gentleness, kindness, and faithfulness are to be admired. I once went on vacation with Val, Mama Gray and Michele. What I remember most about that trip was Valerie rising early every morning to spend time with God. Her first act of every day was prayer and studying the Word of God. That deeply touched my spirit. She was a beautiful example of what a godly woman should be, and I am a better woman and friend because of her example. Though my earthly heart is broken with her passing, I know she is resting in His presence. That comforts me and I am rejoicing for her. She has finished the race and I am confident she heard, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Val, I love you and will miss you. Until we meet again, my precious friend. "WG"

Wendy Jeffcoat - April 27, 2023 at 11:50 AM

ID

“ *Every time I saw Valerie, at an South Carolina GIS event, she was always so kind, helpful, humble, and encouraging. We shared many good moments, discussions and laughs. Her presence was always bright and good, someone to whom I looked forward to talking with. She is missed and loved!*

-Ian deNeeve, SCARC member and fellow GIS Analyst colleague

Ian deNeeve - April 27, 2023 at 10:56 AM

SR

“ *Shawna Reid sent a virtual gift in memory of Valerie Gray*



Shawna Reid - April 27, 2023 at 09:23 AM

AT

“ *Alita Taylor lit a candle in memory of Valerie Gray*



Alita Taylor - April 27, 2023 at 08:57 AM

SS

“ *I am completely surprised to hear of the passing of Ms. Gray. My condolences to the family. I will pray for the peace of God to provide comfort and strength for the days ahead. God bless you all.*
Pastor S. Singleton

Stephen Singleton - April 27, 2023 at 08:23 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Ms. Valerie Denise Gray.*



April 27, 2023 at 07:14 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Ms. Valerie Denise Gray.*



April 27, 2023 at 03:54 AM



“ *I was both shocked and saddened to hear of Val's passing. Cousin Val was a beautiful soul with a smile and laugh that was infectious. My heart aches over the loss of our angel. However I feel so blessed to have known her. I will forever cherish fond memories. Cousin Pat loved Val with every fiber of her being. Also I can remember from the time he was a young boy Otis was her champion and protector. Yes sir, he wore "Big Brother" well. The bond each you shared was exemplary. While she has left us here on earth. Heaven has ushered in our precious angel. She is now smiling. As she has been summoned to that heavenly place and our beautiful angel will now watch over each of you.*

Subrena "aka: Tena

J. Subrena Young Williams - April 27, 2023 at 01:51 AM

BB

“ *There is no way to lessen the sorrow of losing someone so precious, but please remember that others care very much and wish you strength and comfort at this sad time.*

beatrice blakely - April 26, 2023 at 09:32 PM

CS

“ *I will truly miss Sister Valerie, my sister in Christ. Her care and concern for others, and gentleness of spirit was consistent and special.*

To the Gray Family: May you feel the strong hand of the Lord carrying you through this time.

*Cynthia Simpson-Obioha
Pine Grove AME Church*

Cynthia Simpson-Obioha - April 26, 2023 at 08:50 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Ms. Valerie Denise Gray.*



April 26, 2023 at 07:40 PM

CB

“ *To Pat and Otis. My heart felt love and prayers*



Carolyn Blakely - April 26, 2023 at 06:50 PM

SM

“ *Stephanie Moore lit a candle in memory of Valerie Gray*



Stephanie Blakely Moore - April 26, 2023 at 05:20 PM

CR

“ *My prayers and heartfelt condolences go out to this precious lady's family and loved ones.*

Val, whom I had never met before, came to my aide one early morning at our work place.

We parked in the same parking garage. I came into the garage that morning and when I parked my motorcycle, I dropped it on my foot. It had me pinned to garage floor. Another coworker came and picked the bike up off of me and Val came running up and grabbed me. I was about to pass out from the sight of the blood coming from my injury. I'm sure that I would have gone into shock had it not been for her kind and calming demeanor. She talked to me until help came.

I was out of work for a few months, and when I returned, I started looking for this sweet lady who helped me that day. I wanted to make sure she knew how much she truly touched me. And how grateful I was that The Lord put her in that place at that time. She was one of my angels that day. I did find her.

And she knew exactly who I was, and told me that I had been in her prayers. We hugged and both of us teared up.

I am blessed to have had the chance to meet her.

Crystal Rogers - April 26, 2023 at 03:51 PM

AD

“ My deepest sympathy to the Gray Family. I meet Valerie when I worked at Lexington County . We would share in lifting each other up by discussing the goodness of the Lord. Valerie is a beautiful spirit and I will always remember how special she is. Until we meet again get your rest. Audrey Davis

Audrey Davis - April 26, 2023 at 02:33 PM

TH

“ To my beautiful cousin Val. May your voice sing among the Angels in heaven as beautiful as you sang at my wedding. I light this candle of love for you until we meet again. Your cousin Tracy Thomas Hambrick



Tracy T Hambrick - April 26, 2023 at 02:28 PM

MM

“ I'm soo loss of words. I'm sending our deepest sympathy to the Grey Family. I met Valerie in 2009 at the county were we worked at. And we became sisters in christ and prayer partner. We share so many memories together. She gave me a nickname KettaLou and I gave her a nickname Valerina, those were our county names. My family had love her soo much. I'm going to miss telling her about my out of the country trips my husband and I take and sharing pictures to her. We're going to miss her but God had a better plan for her. Valerina get your rest and get your crown you earned it. We Love You. Marcetta Mayes AKA KettaLou and Family

Marcetta M Mayes - April 26, 2023 at 12:34 PM

KB

My deepest condolences to the Gray family. You are in my heart and prayers. I was blessed to work with her when she started her career at the county until I retired in October. She was a wealth of knowledge and always willing to step in and help when asked. She was a calm quiet sweet person. To see her laugh or pull an occasional funny with us it was great. She was loved by all and never to be forgotten. Praying for comfort for all she leaves behind.

Kimimmie Burris - April 26, 2023 at 04:06 PM

BG

“*Valerie was such a hard working, loving and kind individual. I didn't work directly with her but we worked together on several projects/addressing situations between Richland and Lexington Counties over the years. I met her through her former co-worker and mutual friend, Brenda Carter. It's hard to believe she's gone but God makes no mistakes. Val, you've run a great race and now it's time to take your rest. We will miss you and love you always.*”

Betty A. Etheredge, Richland County GIS - April 26, 2023 at 11:21 AM

AW

“*Valerie - my friend, my sister. I'm heartbroken. At age 13 when Valerie and I became friends, I gained a sister in her, a mother in Ms. Pat and a brother in Otis. From cross country trips to just sitting on the floor talking for hours, she was as good as they come. Heaven gained a great one. Forever in my thoughts, forever in my heart. Praying through my tears and loving her always.*”

Angela E Williams - April 26, 2023 at 11:00 AM

AW

“ *Angela Williams lit a candle in memory of Valerie Gray*



Angela E Williams - April 26, 2023 at 10:41 AM

LA

“ *This beautiful angel has gained her wings. Sending auntie Pat, and cousin Otis much love during this time. You will be missed cousin!*

Love you, LaTash

LaTash M Adams - April 26, 2023 at 10:37 AM

TH

“ *Sleep in Peace, cousin. I will hold on to the fond memories of the times we spent together as children and beyond.*

Cousins Pat and Otis- I am keeping you in my thoughts and prayers.

Tina Blakely Howard

Tina Howard - April 26, 2023 at 10:11 AM

TH

“ *Tina Howard lit a candle in memory of Valerie Gray*



Tina Howard - April 26, 2023 at 10:05 AM

NT

“ *This candle is lit in remembrance of time shared with Valerie at both Lower Richland High and Columbia College. Rest well.*



Nicole Wilson Thomas - April 26, 2023 at 08:10 AM

SS

“ *Our family has lost a true and genuine soul in Valerie. I still see your beautiful face cleaning pecans for me to take during my brief visit to Columbia a couple if years ago. To my cousins Pat? Otis and the rest of the family, May you be comforted in knowing my prayers are with you and I am just a phone call away.*



Sharon Blakely Salaam - April 25, 2023 at 09:57 PM

ID

“ *Ivy Davis-Green lit a candle in memory of Valerie Gray*



Ivy Davis-Green - April 25, 2023 at 09:35 PM

OG

“ My Lil Sister is who we are talking about, and her "Big Brother" is heartbroken 💔. She is a beautiful light that I guess God wanted to shine in heaven at this point. Her impact on family, friends and co-workers was felt throughout her life. Tell those you love that you love them every day and laugh and cherish the time you have. Be kind, have fun and live a spiritual life honoring God and you will live a life like my Lil Sister.
I love you and I miss you beyond words.

Otis M. Gray - April 25, 2023 at 07:20 PM

AE

“ Adams Ellen lit a candle in memory of Valerie Gray

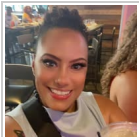


Adams Ellen - April 25, 2023 at 07:11 PM

BK

“ So sorry for your loss...prayers and condolences from our family to yours... The Kilpatricks - Bonita, Walter and the girls

Bonita Kilpatrick - April 25, 2023 at 06:30 PM



“ Stef Moss lit a candle in memory of Valerie Gray



Stef Moss - April 25, 2023 at 06:03 PM



“ *ValerEE is the name that I called her...she touched so many lives with her love of God, the love she had for her family and close friends and her love for music. We will miss you ValerEE. The heavens have opened for this angel to enter. I love you! Stephanie*

Stef Moss - April 25, 2023 at 05:59 PM

AN

“ *Annalisa lit a candle in memory of Ms. Valerie Denise Gray*



Annalisa - April 25, 2023 at 05:53 PM

AM

God stop by and pick you up to take you to a beautiful place that heaven love you

amie montgomery - April 25, 2023 at 10:41 PM

ZS

*“This little light of mine, I am gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine..”
And oh, how Valerie’s light shone. For us as a family, for friends, for co-workers, for community, for cousins, for all of God’s creation she encountered.*

We are forever grateful to God for her quiet spirit, gentle artful hands, and loving light she shared. The light, the work, the lessons and legacy of Valerie Denise Gray shall last far beyond us all.

Thank you God for Valerie!

Your Cousin Winnie (Zina Stuckey)

Zina Brown Stuckey - April 26, 2023 at 11:26 AM

PS

Sending Prayers and Condolences to the family. I am so sorry for your loss. The entity that I work for allowed me to meet and work with Valerie for a number of years. She was always ready to help in any way that she could and it was a pleasure to have known her. She had such a kind and humble spirit that was always the same. Heaven has truly gained an Angel. May God wrap his comforting arms around each of you during this difficult time.

Patricia Gates Saeed - April 26, 2023 at 11:26 AM

SR

I am so very sad to hear of Valerie's passing. I knew her through the SCARC organization as a fellow GIS colleague. Valerie was always so very kind and welcoming and was a great asset to that organization. She will be missed by so many! My condolences go out to all of her family and friends. May God bring Peace to your hearts in this difficult time.

Shawna Reid - April 27, 2023 at 09:22 AM

TG

We pray that today and always, may loving memories of Valerie bring you peace, comfort, and strength.

*With deepest sympathies,
Tina, Erin, Susan, Alita, Misty, Wendy & Nicole (Lexington County Register of Deeds)*

Tina Guerry - April 27, 2023 at 10:06 AM