



Minister William Champaign

August 11, 1953 - July 12, 2024

William Champaign's testimony of God's grace and incomprehensible favor begins the day he was born, Tuesday, August 11, 1953. On that day his mother, Bessie Brown, wept continuously because she wasn't in the position to raise William or give him a good home. She was devastated because she didn't know what would happen to her son and how his life would turn out without her in it.

Little did Bessie know she didn't need to waste her time crying because the spirit of the Lord was in the room the minute William Champaign was born. God had already gone decades in the future to chart his path. If she had taken a moment and listened to the spirit, she would've heard a still small voice say, "William, just as my prophet Jeremiah, before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart" and that day the spirit of the Lord gave William the gift of faith, patience, and selflessness with the heart to help others. In a final act of his perfect love, the Lord anointed William's voice so that he could praise the name of Jesus and bless others through the power of song.

Months later, William's mother would give him to his fraternal grandmother, Mary Love Champaign who stood in the gap and raised William as if he were her own son. God continued to keep his hands on William keeping him safe throughout his childhood. A good example of that was how he got his

nickname. Around the age of 4 or 5, he slipped and fell into a hog pen causing him to sink deep into the mud and frantically struggle to get out. Thank God he was fine the only thing that got hurt that day was his feelings because if you know family, amongst the jokes and the retelling of the story, his name was no longer William, his new name was "Sunk." (Every time people outside of his family heard him being addressed as Sunk; he would have to explain the story clarifying that it did not mean he was like the character Pigpen in Charlie Brown)

In 1973, William graduated from James Island High School and enlisted in the United States Army. Shortly after that, he was stationed at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and became smitten with a beautiful young woman who worked in the Dining Facility on Post. He wasted no time courting Valiant Diane Champaign and married her on May 8, 1976. During that time, William and his wife rededicated their lives to Christ, and it didn't matter the base he was stationed on, you could find William in the church choir praising the name of Jesus just like God ordained him to on the day of his birth.

God's favor kept William safe in the military. William would often testify that during his multiple tours in Korea, many soldiers were slain, losing their lives never to return home to the States. However, God kept William safe and covered him through the tensions of North Korea.

In 1977, while stationed in Germany, William became a father for the first time and vowed to be the best dad he could be as he wanted to exceed the example of fatherhood he received from his father, William Champaign Jr.

Matter of fact he wanted to be such a good dad, that he had not 1, not 2, but 7 children. William L. Champaign, Michael Champaign, Christie Champaign, Quentin Champaign, Malachi Champaign, Tabitha Champaign, and Stephen Champaign. William was also blessed with 3 grandchildren, Aaden

Champaign, Genesis Champaign, and Lucas Champaign.

William's last military assignment was at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He retired from the US Army and remained in Columbia, working as a civilian for the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism.

He and his family joined the Fort Jackson Daniel Circle Chapel (DCC) and the music directors quickly recognized William's gift of song and invited him to join as an inaugural member of the Men's Choir. The DCC Men's Choir soon gained notoriety across the Midlands as they were known to uplift the name of Jesus through spirit-filled harmonies of praise and worship.

William's singing for Christ led him to answer the call to preach. He received his ordination to preach the gospel in 2004 and graduated from The International Seminary, receiving a Diploma in Practical Theology in 2005.

In 2008, William accepted the invitation to join the ministerial staff at James Island United Congregational Church where he preached and worshiped the Lord until he retired in 2023.

William Champaign will forever be known for the love he had for his grandmother, aunts, uncles, cousins, wife, children, grandchildren, church family, and most of all we will remember William for his gift of song that he gave back to God every day until he was called home on July 12, 2024. William is now walking around heaven singing in the heavenly choir all day!

"You've waited for so long, but you held on, you were strong, and for your faithfulness, it's your time!" – Song by Luther Barnes & The Sunset Jubilaires

In lieu of flowers the family asks that memorials be made to William's favorite youth program, TyJasKey Youth Center. TyJasKey promotes and enhances conditions that result in an improved quality of life for youth and their families, through educational outlets and youth development enrichment activities.

Donate Online Here: https://www.midlandsgives.org/index.phpsection=organizations&action=newDonation_org&fwID=388 or Contact 803-269-3628 to mail a donation. You may also use Cash App at \$Tyjaskey or Zelle at Kennisdawson.

Previous Events

Public Viewing

JUL 22. 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223

Lie in State

JUL 23. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Christian Faith Fellowship
2625 Alpine Road
Columbia, SC 29223

A Celebration of Life

JUL 23. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Christian Faith Fellowship
2625 Alpine Road
Columbia, SC 29223

Interment

JUL 23. 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Fort Jackson National Cemetery
4170 Percival Rd
Columbia, SC 29229-8307
(803) 699-2246

Interment with full military honors.

Tribute Wall

PA

“ To the family of William Champaign, please accept our heartfelt condolences! Having only found out about his passing on today, July 23rd, his passing is truly devastating! May his love of God and his musical passion that he shared with everyone be the glue that will bind you all during the difficult days ahead, and may Gods blessings sustain you always! Sincerely submitted today!



Patrick Smith, MSG (Ret), US Army - July 24, 2024 at 12:02 AM

DH

“ To The Champaign Family,
You have our deepest and heart felt condolences. Yes each of us will miss him in our own way, but he is at home with father. Minister Champaign was full of so much joy and love for his Creator. Still he had plenty of love for each of us. Yes, we will miss him but now that beautiful voice will be singing in God's Heavenly Choir. AND WHAT A VOICE HE HAD BEEN BLESSED WITH. Brother William "It's Your Time!"

Dr. Robb and Loretta Hill - July 23, 2024 at 11:22 AM

SW

“ Want to love prayers and condolences to the family praying strength for you at this time my sister he up in heaven having sing good time with all his family blessings to you all

Sylvine white - July 19, 2024 at 09:16 PM

AC

Rip my granddad you will be in my life forever and ever tell everyone I said up there and uncle Michael

Aaden champaign - September 22, 2024 at 01:28 PM

RJ

“ To God be the Glory: he will be truly missed. Our heartfelt love for you and the family will always be etched in our mind. One of his favorite songs, *There is a Lily in the Valley*, now he is one of those lilies. May God continue to keep you and strengthen you is my PRAY. Murphy and Rose Jenkins: the and JUICC Family.



Rose Jenkins - July 19, 2024 at 11:50 AM

CL

“ My fondest memories of Minister Champaign were anytime I watched him sing as a member of the DCC Men’s Choir. In fact, the last time I saw him while I was on staff I was led to ask him to sing. I just wanted to see him sing again. May this memory bring joy to his wife, their children and those who know and love this man of God. He will be missed.

CH (COL) Monica Lawson - July 19, 2024 at 09:40 AM

JM

“ No words can describe how sorry I am for your loss. My condolences to you and your family.



Jacquelyne Mayhue - July 18, 2024 at 06:57 PM

TE

“ Our sincere sympathy and condolences and prayers to the family and relatives and friends.



Tammy Edwards - July 18, 2024 at 06:22 PM

RR

“ According to Scripture, God has both created and called us to sing for three principal reasons: to help us praise, to help us pray, and to help us proclaim. William Champaign definitely understood the assignment.

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With sympathy and love,
The Reesemoran Family

Roslyn Reesemoran - July 18, 2024 at 04:18 AM

RS

“ What a great tribute to Champaign (why I called him when we worked together at South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism). He Spirit for the Lord showed in his daily dealings with those that were around him. My Condolences to the family.

Ray T Stevens - July 17, 2024 at 10:10 PM

DC

“ My Condolences and Prayers to the Champaign Family!!

DELORES ELEAZER CARTER - July 17, 2024 at 08:55 PM



“ *DELORES ELEAZER CARTER lit a candle in memory of William Champaign* ”



DELORES ELEAZER CARTER - July 17, 2024 at 08:53 PM