



Evelyn McGrier

January 20, 1926 - January 14, 2026

Evelyn McGrier was born January 20, 1926, and made her peaceful transition six days before her 100th birthday on January 14, 2026. She is the 2nd eldest daughter of George and LueBertha Carlton. Evelyn spent her formative years in Mt. Olive, North Carolina, where she attended school in Duplin County.

Evelyn arrived in Chester, PA in 1940 with hope and vision for a better life. Her father, who was a sharecropper, left his wife and children to pursue employment opportunities in Chester, PA. He obtained a position at Sun Ship and Evelyn could not wait to follow him to Chester. She had a deep desire to run away from the trappings of the South, so without knowledge of her mother she obtained a one-way bus ticket to Chester at the age of 15! Racism was rampant but she did not let that deter her. She took her rightful place in the front of the bus and anticipated her new life. Evelyn's bold move was the catalyst for her siblings and mother to follow her to Chester over the next three years.

Evelyn married early and from her union with Nathaniel McGrier she had two daughters, Christine Bailey and Francine Payne. She was a skilled seamstress and loved dressing her daughters in beautiful attire. To increase her earning potential, Evelyn attended the Apex School of Beauty Culture in Philadelphia from 1955-1957. She became the proud owner/operator of Evelyn's Beauty Shoppe. She built a loyal clientele for over 40 years and was

an active member of the Modern Beautician's Club. Evelyn enjoyed her club's activities, including fashion shows where she could show her impeccable style and seminars to learn the latest trends. She also enjoyed traveling to places like the Peg Leg Bates Resort, Las Vegas, Canada, Bahamas, Bermuda, and wherever a cruise would take her.

Evelyn was always quietly driven. Her motto was, "If you want something bad enough, you can achieve it". In 1959 when Chester decided to build brand new homes in Norris Park, Evelyn wanted one. She did not have money for a down payment but still shared her dream with her father. Her father entered a drawing where the prize was either a car or cash. He won the drawing and chose cash as his prize, giving Evelyn the down payment money she needed to move into her dream home! Her home became the epicenter of family functions and she loved to entertain. In Evelyn's finished basement was her beauty parlor and it allowed her to work from the convenience of her home until she retired.

Evelyn's favorites were crab cakes, blueberries, chocolate cake and bubble baths! She was known for cooking delicious macaroni and cheese and seafood salad. Evelyn enjoyed gardening and as a member of Bethany Baptist Church was active in the Floral Committee. She also served as the Treasurer for her family's United Family Club, was a member of the Traveling 9 Social Club, and in later years she was a part of the Mount Pleasant Senior Program, where her skill in knitting and crochet was utilized to make blankets for those in nursing homes.

Evelyn leaves to cherish her memory two daughters, Christine (Willie) Bailey and Francine M. Payne; three granddaughters Kenya (Leon) Smith, Monica (James) Washington, and Dana (Phil) Bailey; one grandson Anthony Bailey; ten great grandchildren Destini Cleveland, Antoinette Bailey, Jabree Bailey, Veanee Bailey, Jahmi Bailey-Green, Jayden Bailey, Kameron Smith, Kennedy

Smith, Alaysia Smith, and Pharra Bailey; nine great-great grandchildren William White, Jalen White, Jordan White, and Justin White, A'kai Bailey, Jabree Bailey, Corbin Bailey, and Carter Bailey, and Brooklyn Bailey-Green; a sister, Elouise Kennard; brother, Samuel Carlton (Gloria); one godchild Karen Artwell; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Evelyn is predeceased by her parents, George and LueBertha Carlton; siblings Mary Wray, Elmo Carlton, Daniel Carlton, Aletha Carlton, Essie Davis, Luther Carlton, Catherine Artwell, Clarence Carlton, Wylie Carlton, Gwen Dickerson, and Ralph Carlton; and Godson Andre Singleton.

Cemetery Details

Chester Rural Cemetery

412 W. 15th Street
Chester, PA 19013

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 12. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Bethany Baptist Church
1121 Tilghman Street
Chester, PA 19013

Service

FEB 12. 11:00 AM (ET)

Bethany Baptist Church
1121 Tilghman Street
Chester, PA 19013

Tribute Wall

LA

“ My sincere condolences to your family. Mrs. Evelyn was such a beautiful woman, we enjoyed her at Mt. Pleasant Senior Arts and Craft Ministry. God heals the broken hearted and binds up all wounds.

LaVerne Alexander - January 31 at 02:19 PM

JP

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Psalm 116:15. I offer my condolence to Francine, Christine and family. Your mother was truly a sweet and beautiful lady! Reading her obituary heightened my admiration and honor for her (I only knew her for my short time at Bethany). May the memories of her life be a comfort to you always. God bless you.

JUDY Purnell - February 09 at 08:33 AM

JP

AMEN!

JUDY Purnell - February 09 at 08:34 AM

TG

We offer our condolences to the family and asking God to comfort your heart at this difficult time. Your mother was a dear beloved friend of our mother Coreen Small. They were dear friends, especially as part of the Mt Pleasant Seniors A&C ministry. Praying God's strength and comfort. Sweet Memories of their friendship 🙏❤️

Trindy S. Grundy - February 10 at 08:54 PM