



## Pastor William B. Starks

November 2, 1928 - October 4, 2025

### My Life Story

Rev William B Starks was born on November 2, 1928, to the late Elizabeth and Jesse Starks II in Nashville Tennessee. On Saturday October 4, 2025, at 10:25 am the Almighty God in His Infinite wisdom dispatched an angel to Williams' bedside and called him home with his grandson Keith by his side at Germantown Home.

Rev. Starks attended grammar and secondary school in the City of Nashville. As a very young child, William discovered his gift and love for singing. His mother's cousin Mary Frances, Wilson, a church pianist and soloist, helped him cultivate his talent and always encouraged him. She would take him from church to church on Sundays, either singing with her choir or singing solos at musicals. When William began his first year at Pearl High School, he made a decision that would prove invaluable to him as a singer. He decided to enroll in a Music class. His teacher, Mrs. Moore, who had graduated from Fisk University and was a former Jubilee singer, made arrangements for William and a friend, John McCollough, to study voice under the tutelage of Professor John W. Work, III. For the remainder of their years at Pearl, William and John would continue as students of Professor Work, the influential director of the world-renowned Fisk Jubilee Singers, a Musicologist, and composer of many of the solos and Negro Spirituals they would sing in churches. William would laugh and fondly tell stories of himself and John, walking every evening from Pearl to Fisk, then walking several miles to their East Nashville neighborhood.

Upon completion of secondary studies, military duties called in 1948, and Rev Starks served for four years in the United States Marine Corps. He was the proud member of the Montford Marine Division and was later transferred to Philadelphia, Pa, where he met Inez. William married the love of his life, Inez Baldwin on December 21, 1951, and they shared 63 years of love and devotion. Two daughters were born to this union, Cheryl R. and Rhonda D. Starks.

William was baptized at the Tenth Memorial Baptist Church in Philadelphia during the pastorate of the late Rev. Allen T. Dixon. Later, he moved his membership to the Greater Ebenezer Baptist Church where he was licensed on November 21, 1963, and later ordained under the pastorate of Rev. Fredrick L. Bowers, III on October 28, 1966. He received his theological training at the Phila. College of the Bible and the Bethesda Bible Institute. In 1978 he was installed as Pastor of the Community Baptist Church where he served for 31 years. During his time of service, he traveled from Philadelphia's Cheltenham area to Chester 3 times a week, never missing a Sunday Service. During Reverend Starks time of service as Pastor he worked tirelessly not only in the church, but in the community as well, whether it be ministering to the young people in and out of the church, protesting to close stores that were selling drug paraphernalia to young persons or just making sure that our schools were properly serving our children. He set up a Presidents Council to make sure all organizations in the church worked together. He truly had a heart for the people.

Rev Starks received a certificate of Good Conduct from the United States Marine Corps, numerous certificates from the City of Philadelphia Fairmount Park Commission for his outstanding work performance, several certificates of appreciation for his valuable contribution given at E.C. Emlen School where he volunteered at his grandson's school, three awards from the Chapel of the Four Chaplains Award in recognition of outstanding service to all peoples regardless of race or faith and the Matthew Anderson Alumni Award. On February 9th, 2016, Corporal William B. Starks received the Congressional

Gold Medal which was awarded to living Montford Point Marines.

On Sunday June 1, 2025, the City of Chester along with Community Baptist church gave him his flowers. Although at the age of 96, and due to health issues, he was unable to attend the Street Naming Ceremony, Rev William B. Starks Way, the pictures and videos were shared with him of all the family and friends who attended the celebration.

Under the leadership of Reverend Starks, the church was paid off and the mortgage was burned. His love for the Word of God encouraged him, with the help of Rev. Janet Alston, Rev. Anzer Kirkland and President Thomas to have a Manna Bible Institute Satellite Campus at the church, where many who were young in the ministry could sharpen their biblical gifts and skills.

Reverend Starks truly believed in the church being involved, spiritually, socially and politically. This is why he invited such persons as Reverend Jesse Jackson, Congressman Robert Brady and Governor Ed Rendell and more to come and speak to the people of Chester and Delaware County. He was the first pastor of his era, to open the pulpit and allow women and young preachers the opportunity to preach the Word of God!

Reverend Starks was affectionately known as Big Daddy because he was like a father to so many people. He was Pastor Emeritus of Community Baptist Church, and at 96 years young, still loving and caring the well-being of family, friends and community.

He was predeceased by his parents Jesse and Elizabeth Starks, his wife Inez Starks, his two brothers Jesse Starks and Theodore Starks.

He leaves to treasure his memories, two loving daughters, Cheryl and Rhonda; four grandchildren, Khaliyq, Jaabir, Keith and Kiara; five great grandchildren, Khaliya, Kaylaa, Madison, Logan and Nasir; and a host of nieces and nephews, Jessie (Billy) Boyle, Belinda wells, Shearon, William W., Brenda, Don (Valerie), and A Brandon (Yvonne) Starks, devoted cousin Frances Sanders, all of Nashville, a host of family and friends, his Pastor and first Lady, Rev. and Mrs. Thaddeus Kirkland and the entire Community Baptist

church family.

# Cemetery Details

## Washington Crossing National Cemetery

830 Highland Road  
Newtown, PA 18940

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT 17. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Community Baptist Church  
325 W. 7th Street  
Chester, PA 19013

## Visitation

OCT 18. 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

Community Baptist Church  
325 W. 7th Street  
Chester, PA 19013

## Service

OCT 18. 10:00 AM (ET)

Community Baptist Church  
325 W. 7th Street  
Chester, PA 19013



# Tribute Wall



“ *One of Chester's finest Pastor who knew how to give a powerful and transformational message.* ”

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**Rev. Sylvia J. Diggs** - October 17, 2025 at 03:09 PM