



## Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon

April 14, 1940 - April 21, 2021

Mr. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon, Sr., 81, was born on April 14, 1940 in Money, Mississippi, the third of five children born to Pleasant Gordon, Sr. and Mabel Banks Gordon. He made a peaceful transition from life to life everlasting on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 surrounded by family. Sonny as he was called by family and friends, was educated in the Peoria public school system and attended Illinois Community College.

Sonny married Annie Jo Hunter Gordon in 1969. To their forty-year union, two children were born, Jamal Gordon and the Honorable Jehan Gordon (Derrick) Booth. Together they blended their lives and harmoniously created a family unit that included eight children. Annie Jo took her wings in 2009 leaving a legacy of love for family and community. Her civic contributions live on in perpetuity.

January 18, 2014, First Gentleman Cleveland Gordon and Presiding Elder Elaine were joined in holy matrimony. Elder Gordon added three more children to the family. It was the best season for each of them. Together, they traveled extensively, explored their common passion for good food, good music, a game of bid whist, and a love of good old-fashioned family gatherings. They shared precious moments in Sonny's blue-ribbon garden.

Nothing Sonny loved more than fishing in Stone Lake at Camp Baber,

traveling the connectional AME church, connecting with people from around the world. He genuinely loved people and did not meet strangers. Sonny took great joy and pride in growing greens or mixing up a batch of fried corn to share with Mother Delores Kennedy Williams with whom he shared a love of cooking.

A life-long learner, he continued to take courses in environmental science and would retire as an environmental officer for Peoria Disposal Company (PDC) where he worked for twenty years. Before PDC, Sonny worked at Pabst Brewery for thirteen years until the brewery closed its doors in 1981. Born the son of a sharecropper, Sonny adopted a strong work orientation early in his life and lived out what he believed, “get to work on time, put in a good day’s work, and do the job better than anyone else”.

Sonny, as he was widely known, accepted Christ early and was baptized in the creek at age nine. He was steeped in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ at the guidance of parents who were active supporters and workers in the church. He was a sixty year member of New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church and joined Ward Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, January 12, 2014 to serve with his wife, Presiding Elder Elaine P. Gordon. Sonny served as a faithful Trustee of Ward Chapel, an active member of Ministers, Spouses, Widow and Widowers Organization (MSWAWO), the Lay Organization, and Sons of Allen. Sonny loved Sunday School and Bible study. Even in the COVID-19 season, Sonny logged in every Sunday until the last Sunday of his earthly life. He was a tither, a believer in offerings above and beyond the tithe, and putting in work in His Father’s House. Sonny was a proud long-time member of Henry Brown Lodge #22 PHA.

Cleveland Sonny Gordon leaves to cherish his memory, his loving wife, Presiding Elder Elaine P. Gordon, a sister Georgia Mae Little, a brother Sylvester (Roberta) Gordon, five sons: Jonathon Johnson, Cleveland L. (Jamie) Gordon, Jamal Gordon, Joseph Murphy, Howard (Aisha) Walters; five

daughters: Shando Faulkner (Don) Harris, Chantay (Corey) Gray, Antoinette (Cornelius) Donald, Shelleye Murphy, Jehan (Derrick) Booth; 17 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, and a host of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his mother, Mabel Banks Gordon and his father, Pleasant Gordon, Sr., two brothers, Willie L. Gordon and Pleasant Gordon, Jr., brother-in-law, James Little, a sister-in-law, Ruth Gordon, and a son, Joel Johnson.

Sonny was truly “a man after God’s own heart” who deeply loved his family, his church, and his God. He could be counted on to turn any moment into an opportunity to minister with sage wisdom, simple Mississippi-boy truths, and a good laugh. His unique ministry of love, loyalty, and laughter will be missed, but will live on in all of those whom he touched.

A visitation from 5pm – 7pm on Friday, April 30, 2021 at New Morning Star M.B. Church. The funeral service will be held at 10 am on Saturday, May 1, 2021 at New Morning Star M.B. Church with a visitation prior at 9 am.

Pastor Adrian Johnson of Ward Chapel A.M.E. will officiate. Sonny will be laid to rest at Swan Lake Memory Gardens.

A visitation from 5pm – 7pm on Friday, April 30, 2021 at New Morning Star M.B. Church. The funeral service will be held at 10 am on Saturday, May 1, 2021 at New Morning Star M.B. Church with a visitation prior at 9 am. Pastor Adrian Johnson of Ward Chapel A.M.E. will officiate. Sonny will be laid to rest at Swan Lake Memory Gardens.

Charitable donations may be made in his memory to Illinois CancerCare Foundation, Peoria, IL.

Simons Mortuary has been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences may be made at [SimonsMortuary.com](https://www.SimonsMortuary.com).

The service will be live streamed on Simons Mortuary's Website or Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Simons-Mortuary-232095303487150>

promptly AT THE TIME OF THE SERVICE.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, social distancing and attendance limits will be observed.

In accordance with the Illinois Department of Public Health, Funerals are limited to no more than 50% of the capacity of the sanctuary or less.

To be consistent with recommendations from the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), funeral home directors have been instructed and should follow CDC guidelines on gatherings, including those directly related to funerals, visitations, or graveside services.

\*In an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we ask that everyone in attendance: wear a face mask and refrain from hugging, kissing and shaking hands (as hard as it is to see someone you care about and not touch them).

\*It is our responsibility as a Funeral Directors, to do everything we can to advise families in order to honor our beloved Families and to keep everyone as safe as possible. The sanctuary can socially distance and seat 50% of the capacity of the church. All others will be able to flow through prior to beginning of the service.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

The Services for Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon  
Visitation

Friday, April 30, 2021 - 5-7 PM

New Morning Star M.B. Church

Celebration of Life

Saturday, May 1, 2021 - 10:00 AM

Visitation: 9:00 AM

New Morning Star M.B. Church

Expressions of Love can be sent to:

Presiding Elder Elaine Gordon  
821 South Kickapoo Lane, Peoria, IL 61604  
Email: southdistrict.indiana@gmail.com

#### Charitable Donations

Can be made in his memory to:  
Illinois CancerCare Foundation:  
[www.illinoiscarefoundation.org](http://www.illinoiscarefoundation.org)  
309-243-3437

Letters and Resolutions may be sent to Simons Mortuary  
912 W. John H. Gwynn, Jr., Avenue, Peoria, IL 61605  
Email: [info@simonsmortuary.com](mailto:info@simonsmortuary.com).  
Fax: 309-674-2804

Please send flowers directly to New Morning Star M. B. Church.

# Cemetery Details

## Swan Lake Memory Gardens

4601 W War Memorial Dr.  
Peoria, IL 61615

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 30. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church  
413 W. John H. Gwynn Jr. Avenue  
Peoria, IL 61605

## Visitation

MAY 1. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church  
413 W. John H. Gwynn Jr. Avenue  
Peoria, IL 61605

## Celebration of Life

MAY 1. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church  
413 W. John H. Gwynn Jr. Avenue  
Peoria, IL 61605



# Tribute Wall



“ Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon



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**Simons Mortuary** - June 15, 2021 at 05:22 PM



“ Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon



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**Simons Mortuary** - April 29, 2021 at 02:50 PM

DC

*To see a glimpse of what we shared with those we loved in this memorable presentation only causes my heart to explode with joyful expectation of that "Heavenly Reunion " that awaits all who die in Christ shall be raised with Christ ". This reunion Shall last forever! Praise God for my cousin's life and the legacy of love he has left behind to all he touched. Minister Donald Cummings.*

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**Donald Cummings** - April 30, 2021 at 10:04 PM

LT

*May God continue to wipe the tears from your eyes and comfort you forever. Linda Taylor-Faulkner*

**Linda Taylor-Faulkner** - May 01, 2021 at 09:48 AM



“ *Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon*

January 29, 2023 at 06:10 AM



“ *Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon*

January 29, 2023 at 03:12 AM

BJ

“ *My condolences to the family, Jehan in particular. I used to workout at the River Plex. Often times I would be in the locker room and see a very positive smiling gentleman. He would be talking and joking with many of the other members. Eventually I got to know him a little bit. I always enjoyed seeing him and hearing the upbeat things he had to say.*

*Bob Jorgensen*

**Bob Jorgensen** - April 30, 2021 at 06:27 PM

TP

“ *Tamara Petty lit a candle in memory of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon*



**Tamara Petty** - April 30, 2021 at 02:57 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon.*



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April 30, 2021 at 08:43 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon.*



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April 30, 2021 at 08:38 AM



“ *Pastor Stokes and Bethel Jeffersonville Family purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon.*



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**Pastor Stokes and Bethel Jeffersonville Family** - April 29, 2021 at 05:49 PM



“ *Brother Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon was always a kind man.*

*Presiding Elder Larry James Bell  
Notable North District, Michigan Annual Conference AMEC*

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**P. E. Larry James Bell** - April 29, 2021 at 02:25 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon.*



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April 29, 2021 at 11:38 AM



“ *Carolyn Parham lit a candle in memory of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon*



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**Carolyn Parham** - April 28, 2021 at 08:40 PM



“ *Catherine Woodard lit a candle in memory of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon*



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**Catherine Woodard** - April 28, 2021 at 04:23 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon.*



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April 28, 2021 at 03:50 PM

RA

“ *with my deepest sympathy-Ray Byrd*

ray - April 28, 2021 at 12:19 PM

GR

“ *My treasured moments is back in the 70s, going to Mr. Pleasant's home on Saratoga St, and see the family. They always would let us know, stop running through the yard, and seeing such a man as Sonny & and his brother, we did just that. You will be truly missed by an abundance of family. May The Most High welcome his child back home with open arms.*



Gregg Randle - April 28, 2021 at 12:40 AM

RW

“ *I enjoyed working with Cleveland at PDC for many years and have many fond memories of our conversations and shared experiences. While Cleveland always took his responsibilities seriously, what I always admired is that he was always upbeat, ready to help others, and ready with that smile that his obituary picture captures perfectly. My heartfelt condolences and prayers to the entire family. I hope your memories of such a wonderful man help you through this time of sorrow.*

Ron Welk - April 27, 2021 at 08:15 AM

CG

*Thank you.*

Chantay Gray - April 27, 2021 at 08:38 PM

DS

“ *DEBRINA SMITH lit a candle in memory of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon*



DEBRINA SMITH - April 26, 2021 at 11:13 PM

DC

“ *To the entire Gordon Family and especially Sister Elaine, know my sorrow human words cannot speak but my heart breaks for you and the loss of my first cousin. May God heal your heart as we look forward to the resurrection of the dead to eternal life. God Bless. Minister Donald Cummings.*

Donald Cummings - April 26, 2021 at 07:43 PM

CS

“ *Cathy Smith lit a candle in memory of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon*



Cathy Smith - April 26, 2021 at 12:24 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bro. Cleveland "Sonny" Gordon.*



April 25, 2021 at 10:11 PM

JB

“ *Sending Love Thoughts And Prayers To The Entire Family Of Mr Cleveland "Sonny " Gordon. May God Send His Angels To Help Comfort As Only He Knows Every Hurt That Is Felt By All That Love Sonny. Rest Now For You Have Fought A Great Fight. The Master Has Called You Home To Your New House. RIH GBNF. We Will Miss You Dearly. So Lone For Now* 🙏🕊️❤️



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**Joanie Brown** - April 24, 2021 at 02:54 PM

BG

“ *MY SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO YOU ALL AND MAY GOD GIVE YOU STRENGTH DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME... WE LOVE EACH AND EVERYONE OF YOU AND PRAYING FOR COMFORT* 🙏❤️ ~ *Bre n Nana Gaines and family*

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**Bre Gaines** - April 24, 2021 at 05:00 AM