



William Donnell Street

December 25, 1942 - May 4, 2026

WILLIAM DONNELL “DONNIE” STREET was born on Christmas Day in Baltimore, Maryland, to Sylvia DeLois “Lois” Horton and Henry Marvin Street, Sr., who relocated to Baltimore from Greensboro, North Carolina during the 1940s.

He grew up first in the Cherry Hill neighborhood before the family settled in East Baltimore, where he shared a lively and loving home on Richwood Avenue with his three brothers — Henry Marvin, Jr., John, and A. Keith — and his three sisters — Wilma “Bunnie,” Pearl, and Gwendolyn.

From an early age, Donnie displayed both creativity and determination. A gifted artist and natural athlete, he excelled in track and field at Baltimore City College High School, earning recognition for his talent and discipline. His love of running would remain with him throughout his life, carrying him through countless races and marathons, including the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C.

Donnie’s intellectual curiosity and commitment to justice led him to Howard University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in architecture during one of the most transformative periods in American history. Immersed in the energy of the Civil Rights and Black Liberation movements, he became deeply engaged in questions of self-determination, community empowerment, and

urban development.

In December 1969, he founded Black Land News, a publication connected to the broader Black Land Movement that advocated for community-controlled development, cooperative economics, and the creation of institutions rooted in Black independence and liberation. Through the publication and his organizing work, Donnie helped advance a vision of neighborhoods shaped not by displacement and speculation, but by the people who lived within them.

Following Howard, Donnie earned a graduate degree in advocacy planning from Yale University, where he had served as a visiting professor for Yale's Black (Architectural) Workshop. He brought his training and ideals into both his professional and community work, contributing his expertise to organizations such as the American Institute of Architects and both the Shaw Project Area Committee and the H Street Project Area Committee.

Throughout his career, he worked to ensure that urban planning served communities rather than displaced them. His efforts contributed to the development and preservation of important Washington, D.C. landmarks and civic spaces, including the very first O Street Market, an historic collaboration with Giant Foods in the Shaw community, and the area surrounding RFK Stadium. He was also a part of the urban planning and development teams for Columbia, MD, and Reston, VA.

Donnie's talents extended far beyond architecture and planning. He was also a furniture designer, builder, and general contractor whose craftsmanship reflected the same imagination and care that guided his public work. Through the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, he built not only structures and spaces, but lasting relationships and communities grounded in creativity, dignity, and purpose. Above all, Donnie was devoted to his beloved wife of 32 years, Joyce Lea Street.

He leaves behind his children, Michael, Makini, Kamau, and Sanyika; and his grandchildren, Mikayla, Lanae, Victoria, Chrissy, Agyeman, Asantewaa, Nkrumah, Kilante, Shonari, Nailah, Zaid, Elijah, and Ezra. He was preceded in death by his son, Sundiata, in 2025.

William Donnell Street lived a life guided by vision, conviction, artistry, and love for his people and community. His legacy endures in the institutions he helped shape, the communities he fought to strengthen, the family he cherished, and the countless lives touched by his intellect, generosity, and unwavering belief in liberation and possibility.

Today's Events

Wake

MAY 29. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

New Psalmist Baptist Church
6020 Marian Dr.
Baltimore, MD

Funeral Service

MAY 29. 11:00 AM (ET)

New Psalmist Baptist Church
6020 Marian Dr.
Baltimore, MD

Previous Events

Public Viewing

MAY 28. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center, P.A. – Randallstown
5616 Old Court Road
Windsor Mill, MD 21244
(410) 655-0110

Tribute Wall

SB

“ *Simon Jr., Gregory, Ronald, Betty purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of William Donnell Street.*



Simon Jr., Gregory, Ronald, Betty - Yesterday at 12:08 AM

SB

“ *Simon Jr., Gregory, Ronald, Betty planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William Donnell Street.*

Simon Jr., Gregory, Ronald, Betty - Yesterday at 12:08 AM

JP

“ *The Board of Directors and members of the GI-C. M. Eppes High School Alumni Association, Greenville, NC send our condolences to our schoolmate, Joyce McKay Lea Street and the Street family. God's will shall always be done. We just have to continue to trust and believe in His love for us, as He always knows best. As it is written, "Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal." Keep the faith and continue to look up.*

James Harper, Jr. National President - May 27 at 01:16 PM

JJ

“ *To cousin Joyce and the Street family, please accept our deepest condolences at the calling home of William (Bill). May God strengthen you during this time of bereavement and days to come. Lend on Him as He sends the comforter to abide with you. God bless and keep you.*

James Harper, Jr. - May 27 at 01:13 PM

MC

“ We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love, and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.

March Life Tribute Center - May 08 at 11:17 AM