

When Tomorrow Starts Without Me

by David M. Romano

When tomorrow starts without me,
and I am not here to see
If the sun should rise and find your eyes
all filled with tears for me,
I know how much you love me
as much as I love you.
And each time you think of me,
I know you'll miss me too.

But when tomorrow starts without me,
please try to understand
That Jesus came and called my name
and took me by the hand.
He said my place is ready
in heaven far above,
And that I have to leave behind
all those I dearly love.

Expression of Gratitude

The family of Mr. Earl Ward, Sr. acknowledges with sincere and heartfelt appreciation to the many friends for the sincere kindness extended during their loss. May God continue to bless each of you. and keep you in His perfect care.



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A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Earl Ward, Sr.

SEPTEMBER 29, 1966 - DECEMBER 12, 2025



SATURDAY
DECEMBER 20TH, 2025
2:00 PM

COSTNER FUNERAL HOME, INC
2425 WEST FRANKLIN BOULEVARD
GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA 28052
REV. VERNON PERRY, EULOGIST

Order of Service

Processional

Visitation

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Prayer

Scripture Readings

Old Testament

New Testament

Remarks

Eulogy

Committal

Benediction

The family welcomes all who wish to honor Earl's life and legacy.
Repat will follow immediately after.

Come With Me

God saw you getting tired
and a cure was not to be
so He put His arms around you
and whispered, "Come to Me."

With tearful eyes we watched you
and saw you pass away
and although we love you dearly
we could not make you stay.

A golden heart stopped beating
hard working hands at rest.
God broke our hearts to prove to us
He only takes the best.

Obituary

Earl Ward Sr., 59, passed away on December 11, 2025, in Gastonia, North Carolina, the place they proudly called home.

Born on September 29, 1966, in Chicago, Illinois, Earl married Shannon Brown on February 4, 2000. Together, they built a life rooted in love, partnership, and shared purpose. Over the years, their journey took them across several states, each move bringing new opportunities, friendships, and experiences that shaped their story.

Earl will be remembered for his kindness, resilience, faith, work ethic, and willingness to help others. His warmth and steady presence left a lasting impression on all who knew them.

Earl was preceded in death by his mother, Doris Mae Ward; his father, James Hicks; his brother, Anthony Ward Sr.; his maternal grandmother, Precious B. Ward; his maternal grandfather, Hess Ward; his mother-in-law, Eva L. Brown, and father-in-law, Gerald L. Brown, brother-in-law, Robert G. Brown, Aunt Barbara Jean Johnson-Harrison, cousins Willie Ward, and Rahonda Foster.

He is survived by his wife, Shannon, his children, Earl Ward Jr. of Lima, Ohio, Eyzaah Ward of Gastonia, NC, two bonus sons Anthony Johnson of Lima, Ohio, Coi Brown of Charlotte, NC, a stepfather Arthur Henderson of Joliet, IL, three sisters, Lolitha Ward, Donitha Ward, and Shanitha Burse (Stanley), all of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Six brothers, Antonio Ward of Chicago, Illinois, Rayford Ward and Lashone Ward of Lima, Ohio, Terry Ward, Donald Ward, of Fort Wayne, Indiana, Ronald Ward (Courtney) of Douglasville, GA, and a Bonus brother, Donald Hampton, of Fort Wayne, Indiana. A sister-in-law, Nikia D. Jones (Diako) of Columbus, Ohio, and 14 grandchildren, a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.