



Dr. Nathel Burtley

April 12, 1940 - April 6, 2020

BURTLEY, Dr. Nathel - Age 79, passed away Monday, April 6, 2020 at Hurley Medical Center.

A memorial service will be determined at a later date due to the current public health and safety concerns that we are facing at this unprecedented time.

Dr. Nathel Burtley went home to be with the Lord on April 6, 2020. He was born on April 12, 1940, in the small town of Future City, Illinois. He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He first accepted Jesus Christ as his savior at Shiloh Baptist Church in his hometown of Cairo, Illinois. He was a lifelong Christian and served as a Deacon of Foss Avenue Baptist Church in Flint, Michigan. With the guidance of his mother, Annie Turner, and a host of mentors, Nathel overcame impoverished circumstances to discover his passion for public education. He completed a B.A. in political science and M.S. in speech pathology at Southern Illinois University (SIU). Throughout his entire life, Nathel possessed a special gift for singing. As a freshman at SIU his voice was heard periodically singing on television for a program entitled The Breakfast Show.

Nathel was a dedicated member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, securing student housing for the fraternity at SIU and serving as Graduate Advisor. He described his first child, Darlla Michelle, as coming home from the hospital to his wife, the fraternity house, and 52 Alpha men as live-in babysitters.

Although an Illinois native, Nathel will be forever linked to the state of Michigan and the Flint community. In 1974 he received his Ph.D. in educational administration and urban education from his beloved Michigan State University (MSU). He would go on to serve in a host of positions across the state of Michigan, including: speech pathologist, elementary school principal, high school principal, intercollegiate athletic administrator, deputy superintendent, and superintendent. Due to these efforts, he was recognized by MSU as a distinguished alumnus in 1996.

Nathel became known as a national leader in community-oriented approaches to urban education policy and served as the first African American Superintendent of the Flint Community Schools.

Despite his numerous professional accomplishments, Nathel's family remained at the center of his life. He leaves to cherish his memory: wife, Kathy Vincent Burtley of Flint; daughter, Darlla Michelle Burtley of Southfield, MI; sons, Bryan (Susie) Michael Burtley of Colorado Springs, CO and Christopher Vincent Burtley of Detroit, MI; sister, Florence (Michael) Taggert of St. Louis, MO; siblings-in-law, Jan Reaves of Davison, MI, Paula Muldrew, and Gloria (Gerald) Browning of Flint, MI; three grandchildren, Devin Burtley, Christian Barr and Derek Barr of Colorado Springs, CO; nieces, Camilla Boyles of Milwaukee, WI, Jeffner (John) Grafwallner of Milwaukee, WI, Maria Hayes of St. Louis, MO, Tomi Burtley of Chicago, IL, Mary (Tyrone) Katherine Coleman of Cairo, IL, Quintella (James) Turtue of Milwaukee, WI, Vickie (Ned) Evans of North Chicago, Illinois, Evelynne Tate-Townsell of Milwaukee, WI; nephews, Ronald Burtley of Chicago, IL, Pierre Gerrin of St. Louis, MO, Ronald M. Boyles of Tomah, WI; and a host of other nieces, nephews, cousins, and dear friends, including: Erone and Queenella Miller, John Mathews, Dr. James and Rebecca Ray, Dr. William Coats, Dr. James Hawkins, Dr. Ira Rutherford, Levet Ogden-Burtley, and Tyrone Booth among many others.

Nathel was preceded in death by his mother, Annie Turner; father, Quincy Burtley; parents-in-law, Ernest and Gloria Vincent Sr.; brother, Alvern Burtley; sisters, Areatha Boyles, Herlintt Moore, and Gussella Burtley; nephews, Vernell Boyles, George Gerrin III, Orlando Gerrin, Hashi Burtley and Artie Moore; brothers-in-law, Chedrick Reaves and Ernest Vincent Jr; and mentors, Dr. Louis Romano and Dr. Joseph Pollack.

Nathel's professional career was characterized by numerous awards and honors, but the driving forces in his life were family, relationships, education, equity, and social justice. The family wishes to express their love and thanks to the Foss Avenue Baptist Church family, the Flint community, and Hurley Medical Center.

Memorial contributions may be made in Nathel's memory to the endowed Dr. Nathel Burtley Leadership and Racial Equity Fund established at the Community Foundation of Greater Flint.

Cemetery Details

River Rest Cemetery

G-4413 Flushing Rd.
Flint, MI 48504

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Nathel Burtley*

October 09, 2023 at 07:02 AM



“ *Mary Huddleston lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Mary Huddleston - May 02, 2020 at 11:54 AM



“ *Julia Ruffin lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Julia Ruffin - April 30, 2020 at 06:00 PM



“ *Sidney & Gwen Muldrew lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Sidney & Gwen Muldrew - April 19, 2020 at 06:36 PM

BB

“ *Barbara McFarland Brown lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Barbara McFarland Brown - April 18, 2020 at 03:31 PM

SK

“ *Mrs.Burtley I'm so sorry for your loss love you*

Sherrie Kennebrew - April 17, 2020 at 07:17 PM

IH

“ *Ivy Herron lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Ivy Herron - April 17, 2020 at 06:08 PM

WS

“ *Reta and I extend our heartfelt condolences in your time of grief. Dr Burtley left an indelible imprint on the hearts and minds of our community. We are all better because of his leadership and service.*

woodrow and reta stanley - April 17, 2020 at 12:41 PM

JW

“ *Joanie Williams sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Joanie Williams - April 17, 2020 at 12:07 AM

RF

“ *Life is a burning candle, so fragile and silent it glows. Everyday it burns it's a blessing, but we never know when a cruel wind might blow.*



Rosalind Hardman & Family - April 16, 2020 at 10:05 PM

EM

“ *Edna Mason lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Edna Mason - April 16, 2020 at 05:54 PM

EM

“ *Eddie & Paulette McGhee lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Eddie & Paulette McGhee - April 16, 2020 at 05:53 AM

RK

“ *Russell & Diane Kirksey lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Russell & Diane Kirksey - April 15, 2020 at 09:07 AM

VW

“ *V. Williams lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



V. Williams - April 13, 2020 at 09:54 PM

DC

“ *Dr. Carolyn D. Davis & Children sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Dr. Carolyn D. Davis & Children - April 13, 2020 at 06:50 PM

JS

“ *Jerrel\Dorothy Sanders lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Jerrel\Dorothy Sanders - April 13, 2020 at 06:01 PM

JS

“ *Jerrel/Dorothy Sanders lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Jerrel/Dorothy Sanders - April 13, 2020 at 05:56 PM

CA

“ *It was indeed an educational inducement to work under the tutelage of Dr. Nathel Burtley. A Superintendent processing an instructional visual that enhanced a fragmented that required his expertise to change a system requiring him to worked assiduously to change. An instructional program that he modeled to achieve the standards of acceptability.*

We welcomed his visits to Carpenter Road Elementary School, especially the students as he sat and consumed a school lunch, taught a class or removed his suit coat and played dodge ball.

Authentic, Genuine, Dedicated!

A man of distinguished intelligence and moral fiber that donned his stitches. Dr. Burtley, get your rest because you gave the students of Flint your very best.

*R. I. P.
Charles Atwater*

Charles Atwater - April 13, 2020 at 01:53 PM

JR

“*Dr. Burtley was indeed a dear friend. I have known Nat since he first arrived in the Flint Community School District around 1981 and we maintained both a professional and personal relationship since that time. He was the person most instrumental in facilitating my return-after a brief departure-to Flint where I was able to eventually (as his successor) carry on some of the great and visionary work for young people he had begun. He believed in consistency and continuity. He had only one true mission as superintendent and that was to ensure that every student in the Flint Community School District was provided with equitable opportunities to excel in their respective educational endeavors. Because of his vision and ability to build broad-based support for many of his researched-based initiatives, he positioned the district to be on the cutting edge of important and necessary urban school reform. For this and his unwavering dedication to excellence, I and all the other superintendents, administrators and teachers I have spoken with since his passing, honor him and will continuously hold him as a moral exemplar to his profession and someone whose legacy we will reflect on in perpetuity.*

James Ray

James E. Ray - April 13, 2020 at 01:19 PM

MC

“ Dr. Burtley was my dad's only brother. He was not only my uncle, but my hero. As a young black girl growing up, it was almost unheard of to see someone who looked like you on television. Not only did I occasionally see someone, but that someone was my uncle. He would appear on the local station and sing, what a beautiful voice he had. I felt such pride when friends and family would say that they had seen him too. I had the opportunity to have dinner with him, my aunt Kathy and cousin Michelle, a couple of years ago. Though some things had changed, he still had that calm spirit and would periodically break out in song. It didn't matter what he sang, the voice was the same.

To my family, Tyrone and I send out condolences. You are in our continual thoughts and prayers. We look forward to the celebration of his life that will take place once we're able to come together. God's blessings to each of you during this difficult time. Love, Mary Kathryn.

Mary K. Coleman - April 13, 2020 at 11:58 AM

LH

“ Dr. Burtley was a true educator who always put the needs of the Flint Community Schools first. You would always see him walking the halls of the district's administration building with that big smile. He always had kind words to say. We will truly miss him. Rest on.



Larry/Shirley Henderson - April 13, 2020 at 10:56 AM

LY

“ Dr. Burtley had a smile that would light up a room. Always sweet, happy and ready to chit chat. I always enjoyed his casino stories and him talking about the schools he loved so much! Thoughts and prayers to Mrs. and the kids- us girls at Dr. Mousa Mohamed's office love you and pray for your strength and guidance to get through these already trying times. Thank you for sharing this special man with us- we love you!!



Dr. Mousa Mohamed and Girls (Lynette, Ericka, Martha, Mozella and LaCreasha)

lynette - April 13, 2020 at 03:19 AM

JW

“ *Jerri Winfrey-Carter lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Jerri Winfrey-Carter - April 13, 2020 at 12:06 AM

MB

“ *12 files added to the tribute wall*



Mike Burtley - April 12, 2020 at 04:28 PM

EM

*Without saying much, Dr. Queenella Miller, my wife, and I (Bo), as Nathel chose to always call me, his childhood friend, are deeply saddened by the passing of Nat, my "best" friend. No matter how we say that we are prepared for death, the actual occurrences is beyond what is actual because this experience is so..,indelible that words cannot suffice the feeling. So, all that can be said is, "rest on our friend until we meet again" 🙏.
May God bless the family and friends.*

Erone and Dr. Queenella Miller - April 20, 2020 at 08:54 PM

MB

“ Happy Birthday Dad, we love and miss you so much!



Mike Burtley - April 12, 2020 at 04:18 PM

MV

“ Mike Vance lit a candle in memory of Dr. Burtley

mike vance - April 12, 2020 at 02:16 PM

VJ

“ Vivian Johnson-McMillian lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Vivian Johnson-McMillian - April 12, 2020 at 11:12 AM

WB

“ William And Neysa Burns lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



William and Neysa Burns - April 12, 2020 at 10:45 AM

BB

“ Barbara Bouknight lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Barbara Bouknight - April 10, 2020 at 10:46 PM

TY

“ Tony And Debra Young lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Tony and Debra Young - April 10, 2020 at 08:41 PM

TY

“ Tony And Debra Young lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Tony and Debra Young - April 10, 2020 at 08:36 PM

LC

“ *Lillian F Chandler lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Lillian F Chandler - April 10, 2020 at 07:44 PM



“ *Sandra Morris lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Sandra Morris - April 10, 2020 at 06:52 PM

LW

“ *Lemuel Walls lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Lemuel Walls - April 10, 2020 at 06:22 PM

MO

“ *My sincere condolences and prayers to you and all that loved Mr. Burtley 😭💔 He will be dearly missed. May he RIH/R.I.P. 😞..... Marcella and Quincy ❤️*



Marcella Oden - April 10, 2020 at 05:26 PM

MB

“ 1 file added to the album *Family and Friends Photos*



Michelle Burtley - April 10, 2020 at 04:32 PM

MB

“ 1 file added to the album *Family and Friends Photos*



Michelle Burtley - April 10, 2020 at 04:31 PM

MB

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



Michelle Burtley - April 10, 2020 at 04:27 PM

CM

“ *My sincere condolences to Dr. Burtley's family.
May the God who gives peace be with all of
you.*



Camilla McGee - April 10, 2020 at 02:19 PM

KH

“ *Kya Henley lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Kya Henley - April 10, 2020 at 01:13 PM

MV

“ *Mike and Nancy Vance*



Mike Vance - April 10, 2020 at 12:20 PM

LR

“ *Lawrence Allen Ratliff lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Lawrence Allen Ratliff - April 10, 2020 at 10:00 AM

VC

“ *Vanessa Cobb lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Vanessa Cobb - April 10, 2020 at 01:44 AM

DF

“ *Dr. Steve James And Family. lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Dr. Steve James and family. - April 10, 2020 at 01:26 AM

SJ

“ *Steve, Deon, And Gail James lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Steve, Deon, and Gail James - April 10, 2020 at 12:35 AM

SF

“ *Sam Farah lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Sam Farah - April 09, 2020 at 11:13 PM



“ *Zoe Middleton lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Zoe Middleton - April 09, 2020 at 11:13 PM

DL

“ *Dan Na Luo lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Dan Na Luo - April 09, 2020 at 11:08 PM

EH

“ *Elbert Hicks lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Elbert Hicks - April 09, 2020 at 07:19 PM

JM

“ *Joan McKinnie-Sanders lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Joan McKinnie-Sanders - April 09, 2020 at 06:40 PM

JC

“ *My sincerest condolences to the Burtley family.*



Jennifer Cooper - April 09, 2020 at 02:46 PM

JJ

“ *Jovita Johnson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Jovita Johnson - April 09, 2020 at 11:47 AM

RH

“ *Ruthi Hill lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Ruthi Hill - April 09, 2020 at 10:35 AM

BW

“ *Betty Wesley lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Betty Wesley - April 09, 2020 at 12:01 AM



“ *Cerese Simpson Pennington sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Cerese Simpson Pennington - April 08, 2020 at 10:00 PM



“ *Jacqueline Bridges lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Jacqueline Bridges - April 08, 2020 at 08:55 PM

SD

“ *Shelton Davis lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Shelton Davis - April 08, 2020 at 05:49 PM

DJ

“ *Delores Johnson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Delores Johnson - April 08, 2020 at 03:48 PM

LR

“ *Our Condolence To The Family From Kenneth Waters*



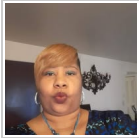
Lorene Randall - April 08, 2020 at 02:09 PM

KW

“ *Our Condolence To The Family*



Kenneth Waters - April 08, 2020 at 01:20 PM



“ *Monique Williams lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Monique Williams - April 08, 2020 at 01:12 PM

JK

“ *Julie Koger lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Julie Koger - April 08, 2020 at 01:05 PM

DS

“ *Deadrea Smith lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Deadrea Smith - April 08, 2020 at 12:08 PM

VH

“ *Vanessa Hicks lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Vanessa Hicks - April 08, 2020 at 10:38 AM



“ *ReGina Adams lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



ReGina Adams - April 08, 2020 at 08:47 AM

LB

“ *Linda&Eddie Booth lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Linda&Eddie Booth - April 08, 2020 at 08:27 AM

TJ

“ *Tonya Jackson-Battle And Brandon Jackson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Tonya Jackson-Battle and Brandon Jackson - April 08, 2020 at 02:19 AM

MN

“ *Marvin Nunn sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Marvin Nunn - April 08, 2020 at 12:25 AM

WH

“ *Wanda Harrison lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Wanda Harrison - April 08, 2020 at 12:14 AM

DS

“ *My sincerest prayers for comfort and strength fir the days ahead.*



Deidre Spight-Woodson - April 07, 2020 at 09:50 PM

CM

“ *Charles & Debroah Metcalfe lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Charles & Debroah Metcalfe - April 07, 2020 at 07:56 PM

SN

“ *Sandy Neal lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Sandy Neal - April 07, 2020 at 06:26 PM

ET

“ *Ernelle Taylor lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Ernelle Taylor - April 07, 2020 at 04:06 PM

PF

“ *Pamela Koutouzos And Family lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Pamela Koutouzos and Family - April 07, 2020 at 03:29 PM

TP

“ *Tiny Presnall lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Tiny Presnall - April 07, 2020 at 03:16 PM

DF

“ *Deborah Whitehead & Family sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Deborah Whitehead & Family - April 07, 2020 at 03:07 PM

CH

“ *Kathy u are family. Be bless u are the best wife and mom. We are praying for u. Hartfield family*



Cheryl. Hartfield - April 07, 2020 at 02:46 PM

LD

“ *La Jean Duncan lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



La Jean Duncan - April 07, 2020 at 02:40 PM

LU

“ *Kathy, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this time of bereavement. Praying that all of you feel the support of caring friends and the blessed assurance of God's love. Lonnie (Cookie) Urquhart*

Lonnie (Cookie) Urquhart - April 07, 2020 at 02:04 PM

LG

“ *Leroy & Cleola Griffis sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Leroy & Cleola Griffis - April 07, 2020 at 01:15 PM

AC

“ *Our prayers are with the entire family at this difficult time. Attorney Hewitt & Dornell Chatman, Plant City, FL*



Attorney Hewitt & Dornell Chatman - April 07, 2020 at 12:44 PM

DS

“ *Dear Kathy, my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult time.
Dr. Nathel Burtley will always be remembered for his dedication to the staffs, students and parents of the Flint Community Schools.
May the Good Lord comfort and keep you.
Love, Dana Smith Simmons*

Dana Smith Simmons - April 07, 2020 at 12:32 PM

BT

“ *Betty Tipper lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Betty Tipper - April 07, 2020 at 12:22 PM

JS

“ James & Sharon Owensby Sr.(Arizona) lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



James & Sharon Owensby sr.(Arizona) - April 07, 2020 at 11:21 AM

EM

“ Ellen Meadows lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Ellen Meadows - April 07, 2020 at 11:14 AM

RM

“ Rev. Phyllis McCree lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Rev. Phyllis McCree - April 07, 2020 at 10:42 AM

HG

“ Henry And Gwendolyn Gaines lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Henry and Gwendolyn Gaines - April 07, 2020 at 10:40 AM

BK

“ *Brenda Kimble lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Brenda Kimble - April 07, 2020 at 10:17 AM

DB

“ *Dr. Lee Belldrleebell lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Dr. Lee Belldrleebell - April 07, 2020 at 08:58 AM

RB

“ *Rhonda & John Butler sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Rhonda & John Butler - April 07, 2020 at 08:32 AM

LS

“ *Lewis Driskell, Sr. lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Lewis Driskell, Sr. - April 07, 2020 at 07:16 AM

RW

“ Rudy And Geneva Ward lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Rudy and Geneva Ward - April 07, 2020 at 05:26 AM

VS

“ Valerie C Southall lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Valerie C Southall - April 07, 2020 at 05:18 AM

BS

“ Bettye Southall lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



Bettye Southall - April 07, 2020 at 05:17 AM

JR

“ John, Tujunana & Nicholas Reaves lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley



John, Tujunana & Nicholas Reaves - April 07, 2020 at 05:14 AM

PW

“ *Pam Williams lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Pam Williams - April 07, 2020 at 02:12 AM

GL

“ *Im so saddened to hear Nate passed away of this horrible Virus! I will always cherish the Memories from the eighties! A man who was the epitome of Class! It was a pleasure and privilege to have known such a Fantastic Man!!*

Gail Lee-Henry - April 06, 2020 at 10:40 PM

FT

“ *Fred Tumer lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Fred Tumer - April 06, 2020 at 10:25 PM

TM

“ *Tim & Jaquetta Moore lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Tim & Jaquetta Moore - April 06, 2020 at 07:19 PM

CC

“ *Clarence And Bettina Campbell lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Clarence and Bettina Campbell - April 06, 2020 at 06:31 PM

TJ

“ *Tanya Jefferson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Tanya Jefferson - April 06, 2020 at 05:49 PM

AE

“ *Dr. Nathel Burtley's memories will live on in the hearts of all whose lives he touched. He was genuine, kind, concerned, and approachable. Every day that he served as Flint Schools Sup't, he gave one-hundred percent to parents, students, and educators. He was truly a model educator and loyal friend. RIH DOC.*
Art (Derryl) Evans

Art (Derryl) Evans - April 06, 2020 at 02:12 PM



“ *So sad to hear. Our deepest condolences to the entire family. May God bless & keep you all.*
Chris & Kim Miller



Kimberly Hall-Miller - April 06, 2020 at 02:07 PM

MP

“ *Mrs. Carmen Patterson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nathel Burtley*



Mrs. Carmen Patterson - April 06, 2020 at 12:49 PM

NB

Norman Bryant Board Member under Dr. Burtley 1991

Norman Bryant - April 07, 2020 at 10:22 AM