



Ernest Holley

October 18, 1955 - December 5, 2025

ERNEST L. HOLLEY entered this world on October 18, 1955, in Edenton, North Carolina, born to the late Ernest Holley Jr. and Dorothy Mae H. Johnson. On Friday, December 5, 2025, Ernest peacefully made his heavenly transition, surrounded by his devoted and loving wife, Madeline "Sukie" Holley, and loved ones.

Ernest was educated in the Bertie County School System and attended Bertie High School in Windsor, North Carolina. He later went on to attend Job Corps, where he earned his high school diploma as well as his trade certification in painting, setting the stage for a lifetime of hard work, craftsmanship, and commitment.

For more than 40 years, Ernest worked diligently at Electric Boat in Groton, Connecticut, where he was known for his strong work ethic, reliability, and quiet dedication. Outside of work, Ernest enjoyed playing pool, capturing memories through videos and photographs, and spending cherished time with his family.

Ernest's journey of faith began at Oxley Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Merry Hill, NC. After relocating to Connecticut, he continued his walk with Christ as a faithful member of Zion First Baptist Church in Middletown, CT. Christ was the center of Ernest's life, and his faith shaped his kindness, his humility, and the compassion he showed to others.

A gentle soul with a heart of gold, Ernest was a man who served without hesitation and loved without conditions. His generosity knew no bounds. He took pride in helping to raise his nieces and nephew and welcomed bonus children into his life with the same love, guidance, and support he gave his own. Ernest found joy in watching his children, nieces, and nephews grow into their potential, encouraging each of them to dream big and aim high. For Ernest, family was not just important—it was the foundation of his world. Ernest also believed deeply in building a legacy of opportunity. He provided financial support to help start a business and contributed toward the purchase of a home. Every dollar set aside carried hope that he could help a family member one day unlock the door to their first home and experience the warmth of a new beginning.

Ernest leaves to cherish his memory his beloved wife, Madeline "Sukie" Holley, the love of his life. Ernest cherished Madeline with a devotion that was evident in all he did. She was his partner, his confidant, and the guiding light in every season of his life. He admired her strength and compassion and the warmth she brought into their home. Loving her was not merely something Ernest felt—it was something he lived daily, through his support, protection, and unwavering presence. Their bond was a quiet, enduring love story that he held with profound gratitude.

Ernest is survived by his children: Talisha (William) Kearse, Direil (Kafi) Riddick, Toraino Parker, and Tokelia Leary; twelve grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. He also leaves his siblings: Donald Holley of Windsor, NC, James Swain of Windsor, NC, Ledall Holley of Virginia Beach, VA, Tremaine James of Windsor, NC, Lenora (Lawrence) Alsop of Ellenwood, GA, Joyce Holley of Merry Hill, NC, Donna Askew of Jamaica, NY, Carolyn (Carl) Bazemore of Windsor, NC, Faye (Pastor Ricky) Williams of Windsor, NC, and Angela (Bruce) Bates of Upper Marlborough, MD.

He is also survived by his loving father-in-law, Curtis Cockfield of Middletown, CT; brother-in-law, William Simms of Willimantic, CT; sisters-in-law, Marion Simms, Mary Simms, and Lorraine Simms of Hartford, CT, Lucinda (Barry) Redding of Willimantic, CT, and Esther Simms of North Carolina; and many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, extended family members, and friends who loved him dearly.

Ernest was predeceased by his beloved son, Lonnie Askew; his brothers, William Ernest Holley III and Darries Holley; his sisters, Gennell Holley and Gerlean Winston; sister-in-law, Priscilla Thigpen; and his mothers-in-law, Pearl Cockfield and Lessie Cockfield.

The family invites all who loved Ernest to join them in honoring a life marked by devotion, generosity, and an unwavering love for family.

Cemetery Details

Pine Grove Cemetery

Middletwon, CT

Previous Events

Calling Hours

DEC 12. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Zion First Baptist Church of Middletown
16 James A Moses Ave
Middletown, CT 06457
(860) 347-5074

Funeral Service

DEC 12. 11:00 AM (ET)

Zion First Baptist Church
16 James Moses Avenue
Middletown, CT

Tribute Wall

WS

“ Wendy Spruill lit a candle in memory of Ernest Holley



Wendy Spruill - December 12, 2025 at 02:02 PM

CW

“ My family and I extends our heartfelt condolences to the Holley family. We're praying for strength, comfort, and peace of mind.

CHRISTINE WALKER-HARE - December 12, 2025 at 09:48 AM

AR

“ I just remember you always being there. When I lost my grandmother in January my uncle Toejoe and aunt Sukie made sure they were there. You never seen him without his camera to capture every moment. I'm definitely going to miss you so much, and you will live forever in my heart.

Azuree Redding - December 12, 2025 at 09:32 AM

AR

“ My uncle Toejoe the man who encouraged me to finished school, the person who always put family first will truly be missed and you will always live forever in my heart. I love you so much and sleep peacefully.

Azuree Redding - December 12, 2025 at 09:26 AM

JB

“ *Julia Bazemore lit a candle in memory of Ernest Holley*



Julia Bazemore - December 11, 2025 at 09:51 PM

WA

“ *Condolences and prayers to the Holley Family. May God continue to bless and keep you doing your time of bereavement. We love you. Willie and Shirley Askew.*



Willie and Shirley Askew - December 11, 2025 at 06:44 PM

TH

“ *Ernest Holley aka ToeJoe. Thank you for giving us memories of family reunions by you taking pictures or just recording the events. You will be truly missed. Thank you for being one of my father's best friend (Cecil Hayes).*



Tammie Hayes - December 11, 2025 at 02:49 PM

AB

“ *ToeJoe love you, love your laughter when we talk on the phone, and when you come home we always have fun and joking with one another. Going to miss you very much, I love you and never will forget you*

Auntie Betty - December 11, 2025 at 11:11 AM

MW

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Montez Williams - December 11, 2025 at 11:08 AM

MW

“ My uncle Toe Joe was one of the smoothest when it came down to dressing. I believe that's where I get it from lol. My uncle was one of the most caring and given person I know. He always put others before himself , making sure his family was well taken care of. He will greatly be missed! He was small in stature, but big in his love and presence. Forever my UNC ❤️💔

Montez Williams - December 11, 2025 at 10:34 AM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Ernest Holley.



December 10, 2025 at 10:15 PM

SS

“ Slade family Beanie Sybil Brenda Sandra planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ernest Holley.

Slade family Beanie Sybil Brenda Sandra - December 10, 2025 at 10:15 PM

NX

“ *New England residential family x planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ernest Holley.*

New England residential family x - December 10, 2025 at 01:59 PM

NX

“ *New England residential family x purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Ernest Holley.*



New England residential family x - December 10, 2025 at 01:59 PM

MA

“ *Every so often you meet someone who shares a moment with you that you never forget. Ernest was there with my family in one of our happiest moment and he brought so much joy to our celebration a smile, smooth dances and style.*



Maribel - December 09, 2025 at 10:42 PM

LS

“ *Toejoe, thank you for always being you. In this moment when are hearts are heavy. We will find comfort in the memories that was made. Sleep in peace my bother. Love always.*

Lorraine S. - December 09, 2025 at 09:13 PM

NC

I thank God for the time that he blessed me to spend with Toe Joe ..I'm going to really miss him. He will not be forgotten.. ~Cousin Nancy

Nancy Cofield - December 11, 2025 at 11:15 AM

PD

Toe Joe was a very special person. When you saw him, he always was happy, lovable and caring.

You could depend on him if needed. A very special person has left us but will forever be in our heart. RIP 🙏 ☐ Praying that God gives us strength and wrap his arms around the family.

Patricia Dail - December 11, 2025 at 11:33 AM

EO

“ My nephew ToeJoe was an inspiration to me. I admired his enthusiasm for life. He had so much joy that it seemed as nothing bothered him. He didn't have to say anything. His character and personality spoke for him. He loved his family and people with great passion. He truly represented the character of Christ. ToeJoe you definitely will be missed. Love you. Aunt Emma

Emma Outlaw - December 09, 2025 at 08:31 PM

AT

“ My uncle ToeJoe, one of the greatest warm hearted person you could ever meet. I will never forget when I was 6yrs old and he was teaching me how to swim, I had on a floaty and I was so scared I cried “uncle toeJoe help me im drowning! Save me uncle toe Joe!”. I would always be excited to stop by and see my uncle, he always accepted people for who they were. He will always be close to my heart, he gave me my name and God gave me a forever uncle. I will miss you and love you uncle ToeJoe.

Alexis Thigpen - December 09, 2025 at 06:17 PM

AT

“ My uncle ToeJoe, one of the greatest warm hearted person you could ever meet. I will never forget when I was 6yrs old and he was teaching me how to swim, I had on a floaty and I was so scared I cried “uncle toejoe help me make drowning! Save me uncle toe Joe!”. I would always be excited to stop by and see my uncle, he always accepted people for who they were. He will always be close to my heart, he gave me my name and God gave me a forever uncle. I will miss you and love you uncle Toejoe.

Alexis Thigpen - December 09, 2025 at 06:15 PM

CB

“ So sorry for your loss. He was truly loved by all and will be missed tremendously. Carolyn Bythwood

Carolyn Bythwood - December 09, 2025 at 05:32 PM

MS

“ Rest in peace Tojo you are gone, but you never will be forgotten. You’ve been in our lives for 42 years. We couldn’t have asked for a better brother-in-law, uncle and friend. My love goes with you brother-in-law till we meet again.

Mary Simms - December 09, 2025 at 05:15 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Ernest Holley.



December 09, 2025 at 04:59 PM

SS

“ Uncle Toejoe was always the loudest voice in the gym, cheering AJ on at every basketball game with a mix of pride and playful humor. He’d clap with all the energy he had and shout AJ’s name like it echoed from his heart, filling the whole gym with his excitement. Those moments and Uncle Toejoe rising out of his seat after every shot and giving AJ a thumbs-up or a booming “That’s my boy!”— became memories stitched into the rhythm of each game. Even now, thinking of him in the stands brings back the warmth of his unwavering support. I’m missing you so much right now Uncle ToeJoe and Aj keeps replaying the last voicemail he got from you. We will make sure Aunt Sukie is good, just rest until we meet again
❤️ Shawnda❤️

Shawnda Simms - December 09, 2025 at 04:43 PM

JR

“ Sorry for your loss From J. Rascoe



Janette Rascoe-B0nd - December 09, 2025 at 03:56 PM

DM

Our condolences and prayers are with you and your family,from(Evans Moore and Dianne).

Dianne Moore - December 09, 2025 at 07:03 PM

JF

“Holley was my right hand man for years, he was my lead steward and when I was on vacation or was unable to be at work he was left in charge, he was trusted and loved by many. I Loved him as a brother, my heart hurts. I am in shock may my brother rest in peace



James Fadden - December 09, 2025 at 10:01 AM

PD

“Rest in Peace Tojo. You will be missed. We didn't see each other often, but when we did there was always smiles and big hugs (and long stories). My condolences to the family. May God Bless you and comfort you with loving memories 🙏
Sincerely, Peggy Davis

Peggy Davis - December 09, 2025 at 08:20 AM

JH

Rip. TJ this hit hard we were best friends doing early disco 17 days before he move to Connecticut we have always been close i were in TJ wedding this really hit hard for the Family-friendly to going to missed 😭 TJ He also voluntary and did my wedding. Love you forever. James Roosevelt Holley

James Roosevelt Holley - December 09, 2025 at 08:20 PM

CM

To-Joe I'm really lost for words right now. You was an awesome father. Co-parenting with you & Sukie was so amazing. The love & laughter that you gave everyone you knew will never be forgotten. To Sukie, Toriano & siblings, family & friends I love you all & praying for you all!!!
RIP Toe-Joe

Carol Parker Pugh (Toriano mom) - December 09, 2025 at 09:03 PM

IS

My condolences to the family. Ernest (Tojo) and I were great friends at JP Law, Bertie High and Facebook. Rest in Peace my buddy.

Inez Hoggard Stokes - December 10, 2025 at 11:23 PM

AW

This one really hit home hard. Thank God I had the opportunity to help my cousin Toe Joe celebrate his 70th birthday. He was a very sweet and lovable person. He is really going to be missed by his family as well as others. I will continue to hold on to the memories that we shared together. We love you but God saw fit to take you home. You will never be forgotten. ❤️❤️❤️🥹

Alfreda Watford - December 11, 2025 at 11:23 AM

JA

Toejoie this is really hard. Your smile and gentle laughter I will always remember. To the family, my heart mourns with you and the loss of your precious love one. May the presence of God gently surround you with His peace and comforting grace during this tender time.

Jennifer Rollins, Toriano's Auntie - December 12, 2025 at 08:49 AM



We are so sorry to hear about the passing of ToeJoe. Sukie, may the special memories you made together help you through this difficult time.

Sincerely, Russell & Barbara

Barbara Bowden - December 17, 2025 at 10:55 AM