



Mr. Willie Horace Cornelius Brown

April 11, 1931 - August 21, 2025

It is with heavy hearts that we share the passing of Willie Horace Cornelius Brown, who left us peacefully on August 21, 2025, at the age of 94.

Willie, a husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, in-law and uncle, was born April 11, 1931, to Willie and Alice King Brown in Fernandina Beach FL. He was the oldest of six children. He had fond memories of growing up with his brothers and sister. Willie graduated from Peck High School in June 1950, where his outgoing personality was evident in his role as senior class president, and co-captain of the basketball team. Willie was the commencement speaker at his graduation.

Upon graduating from high school, Willie went into the United States Air Force. After being discharged from the Air Force, he attended Hampton Institute (Hampton University) where he graduated May 1957 with a degree in Accounting and Economics. While at Hampton, Willie met and fell in love with Celestine Jennings. They were married and had three children, William, Kathryn and Julia.

He went on to graduate school and earned a Juris Doctor from Howard University May 1960. He continued his education at Stanford University as a part of the National Institute Pension Administrators Fellows Program receiving a Graduate Certificate in June 1967.

Willie spent the majority of his professional career working for the Federal government. In his early years he worked as a letter carrier and clerk for the US Postal Services. For a short time, he worked at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia as a clerk typist. From there, he worked at the Office of Personnel Management which started a long and successful career with the Federal Government. He was an Adjudicator, and then a Technical Legal Assistant to the Legislative Chief. Willie advanced as the Chief of the US Civil Service Retirement, Disability and Survivor Benefit Division. In addition to civil service employees, members of Congress, Tax Court Judges, the DC Government, teachers and other employees, prior to them establishing their own retirement system, were a part of this retirement system. From there, Willie took the position of Acting Assistant Director for the Federal Government Worldwide Group Life and Health Insurance programs. Willie then became the Deputy Assistant Director for External Affairs in the Office of Retirement Programs. In this position he interacted with the Assistant Secretary for Administration and their Personnel Directors in the Federal Government agencies across the country giving seminars to employees and also the National Labor Union at their conventions. Prior to retiring, Willie held the position of Assistant to the President for Retirement of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

To relax and enjoy life, he and Celestine started taking ballroom dancing. From the Cha-cha to the Waltz, they would glide across the dance floor with such grace and ease. They belonged to the Banneker Ballroom Dance Club of Washington DC for many years. Willie served as President of the club at times over the years. Their graceful dancing was on display at the always sold-out formal dinner dance events each year.

Willie and Celestine were members of Northminster Presbyterian Church for over fifty years until they moved to Tampa Florida. During that time, Willie served in multiple ministries. He served as the President of the Deacon Board,

President of the Trustee Board and chairman of the Stewardship Committee. He was also the chairman of the Northminster Presbyterian 100th anniversary committee as well as the chairman of the National Capital Presbytery Ministry Group on Church Support and Development.

Willie is survived by his wife, Celestine; children, William, Kathryn, Julia (Thomas); grandchildren, William, Jonathan, Joshua, Elina, Eddie (Linda), Peter (Yonela), Mabvuto, Maxwell, Evan, Jordan and Julian; great-grandchildren; brother, George (Stephanie); nephews, nieces, great nephews and nieces, and great-great nephews and nieces, cousins, sisters-in-law and other relatives and friends.

With love and gratitude, we invite friends, family, and all who knew Willie to join us in honoring his life and legacy. A funeral service will be held on Thursday, September 4, 2025, at 10:00 AM at Northminster Presbyterian Church, with a viewing at 9:00 AM beforehand. After the service, Willie will be laid to rest at Quantico National Cemetery, where he will be honored and remembered.

Cemetery Details

QUANTICO

18424 JOPLIN ROAD
TRIANGLE, VA 22172

Previous Events

Viewing

SEP 4. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

Northminster Presbyterian Church
7720 Alaska Ave NW
Washington, DC 20012

Funeral Service

SEP 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Northminster Presbyterian Church
7720 Alaska Ave NW
Washington, DC 20012

Tribute Wall

VB

“ It is with deep sadness that I write to offer you my sincere condolences to Celestine and Willie’s cherished family, William Kathy and Julie. I would include his grandchildren as well. He beamed with love when he told me about them (I remember Elina especially) and I knew they were his heart. I’m so sorry that I didn’t know until now to be there for you all. My own health declined early this year and I moved with my sister in Oklahoma. My new phone number is 301-266-4481. Please call me. I can say that I know Willie is in Heaven now. I worked with him while he was still at OPM (1977). In August 1986, he retired from OPM and became my Supervisor at NALC Retirement Dept. I know he was a kind hearted man who enjoyed his family, dancing with his wife, NALC Christmas parties. He helped many retirees of NALC, their spouses or loved ones whether it was life insurance, health benefits, navigating their retirement, planning and so much more. He was the speaker at many NALC Conventions prior to and during his tenure at NALC . Willie was one of a kind and could never be replaced. Thanks to you, his family, for sharing his knowledge, kindness and care with all who received his expertise!! Sincerely, Vickie Bowman, Secretary 1986-2003.

Vickie Bowman - October 19, 2025 at 09:03 PM