



John Charles Chandler

February 3, 1926 - November 17, 2020

John Charles Chandler was born on Feb. 3, 1926 in Washington, D.C. He was the eldest child of Charles Benjamin Chandler, a maintenance worker for the U.S. Government Printing Office, and his wife Amanda Brown Chandler, who worked full-time raising the couple's eight offspring.

As a member of the family's congregation, St. John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in D.C., John sang in the choir and was active in the church's youth program.

John's siblings described their brother as someone who kept his nose in a book and regularly visited the library to check out more, especially ones focused on American history.

He more than excelled in D.C.'s then-segregated schools.

After taking a city-wide standardized test in the eighth grade, John's teacher lauded him for attaining one of the highest scores in the entire district, making him a standout among students Black and white.

His graduation from Cardozo Senior High School in D.C. took a circuitous route. He left day high school classes to work for the federal government as a clerk typist. At 18, he went on to serve in the Army, stationed in Europe, in

1944. After being honorably discharged, he spent several weeks travelling throughout Europe.

John returned to D.C. and earned his high school diploma. While still working for the federal government, he attended Howard University to study zoology, thinking he'd go into medicine. An industrious young man, John also delivered newspapers and even drove a black taxicab emblazoned with his name.

John met his wife, Helen Lee Brown of West Virginia, while she was working at Kann's department store in D.C. They married in 1955 and had two daughters, Michele and Vanessa, who joined Josephine, Helen's daughter from a prior marriage.

Family featured large in his life. Many Sundays were spent at his parents' home, which was packed with brothers, sisters, in laws and children who ate dinner, had lively conversations, played chess and rooted for the Redskins.

John treasured his family's history and gained expertise in researching his genealogy roots. That inspired him to make a trip to visit relatives living in the South whom he'd never met, but dropped in on anyway. He kept archives of historic family photos, some dating back to the 1800s.

He had a devoted interest in U.S. civil rights and attended the March on Washington organized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963. To keep abreast of the latest political and social news of the day, he faithfully read the Washington Post, the Washington Star and the Christian Science Monitor, as well as Ebony, Jet and Field & Stream.

John also conducted his own research into African history. He made two trips to Africa, the first with a friend to Kenya for a safari. In 1987, he and Helen travelled throughout Zimbabwe with their daughter Michele and her husband

Larry Olmstead, who worked as journalists in southern Africa.

John relished classical music and jazz, regularly took long walks, rarely missed episodes of "Jeopardy" or "The Price is Right," and fished at the Tidal Basin reservoir or from aboard a motorboat on the Chesapeake Bay.

One with a serious sweet tooth, John ensured there was always plenty of cake in the kitchen.

An ultimate do-it-yourselfer, John once built an electronic reel-to-reel music component set. He maintained the family's cars. Another of his hobbies was scouring antique stores and in-person auctions for everything from furniture to clothing to dishware to books. He also threw himself into complicated home improvement projects. In the early 1970s, he often proudly showed visitors through the basement he refinished in the brand-new home he and Helen bought in Silver Spring, Maryland.

John continued through a long career with the U.S. government, with his last position as a research scientist at the U.S. Geological Survey — part of the U.S. Department of the Interior — working out of their offices in Reston, Virginia.

John was among those involved in analysis of the lunar rocks and soil samples brought back from the moon after the Apollo 11 landing in 1969. He retired in 1979.

Once his daughters left the nest, John returned to regularly attending St. John C.M.E. Church. He joined a group of men from the church who visited sick and shut-in congregants. When he passed away on Nov. 17, at the age of 94, John was the oldest member of the church's Steward Board.

John moved to an assisted living apartment in Bowie in 2017. His nephew Allen Chandler and Allen's wife, Joyce, looked in on John during that time. They provided John with various forms of assistance with compassion, love and dedication, something John's daughters will never forget.

John Chandler is survived by three sisters: Rebecca Talbert, Mildred Thomas and Gwen Watson, and by his three daughters: Josephine Clayton (Ronald), Michele Chandler (Larry Olmstead) and Vanessa Chandler (Alan King). He is also survived by five grandchildren: Helene Meacham (John), Nyasha Olmstead, Jordan Olmstead, Austin King and Jared King; two great-grandchildren, Irie and Isley Meacham, and many other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his devoted wife Helen; brothers George, Donald, Jim and Russell; and his grandson Victor Keith Martin.

Cemetery Details

Cheltenham Veterans Cemetery

11301 Crain Hwy
Cheltenham, MD 20623

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 5. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Marshall-March Funeral Homes - Prince George's County
4308 Suitland Road
Suitland, MD 20746
(301) 736-1616
info@marchfh.com
<https://www.marshallmarchfh.com>

Service

DEC 5. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall



“ *To View the Webcast of the Funeral for John Charles Chandler, Please Click the Link below.*



Marshall-March Funeral Homes - November 24, 2020 at 09:57 AM



“ *John Charles Chandler*

October 23, 2023 at 08:15 AM



“ *Hi Michele: This is Elder Elaine Dorsey, Michigan Park Christian Church sending my heartfelt condolence to you and your family at the loss of your precious Father, grandfather, great grandfather, brother, uncle and so many other relatives and friends who knew him and loved him. it it my prayer that God will grant you and family the comfort and peace that passes all understanding. Let His divine presence permeate your hearts and souls and give you strength to endure the days to come. This my prayer in the mighty name of Jesus, the Christ. Amen*

*Elaine Dorsey
4711-7th Street,NE
Washington, DC 20017*

Elaine Dorsey - December 08, 2020 at 09:32 PM

LW

“ To Vanessa, Michele, Josephine, your families, and Mr. Chandler's extended family I wish you peace and love at the passing of your father and loved one today and in the days to come.

Lisa White - December 05, 2020 at 02:35 PM

OO

“ John was a man of faith, and a gentleman with an abundance of knowledge and a commitment to mankind. He was an explorer and world traveler who sought to make new and lasting relationships. John was a devoted family man near and far, and a dear friend. He will forever be loved, admired and remembered as a very special relative.

Jimmy and Sharon (Georgia)

ooo - December 05, 2020 at 02:03 PM

DW

“ JC will be surly missed he was the one who connected the George Chandler and the William Chandler together over 35 years ago. RIP cousin.

Daryl Williams - December 04, 2020 at 08:59 PM

VC

“ 2 files added to the album John Chandler



Vanessa Chandler - December 04, 2020 at 07:26 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of John Charles Chandler.*



December 03, 2020 at 05:10 PM



“ *To the Chandler Family,
Please accept our condolences on the loss of John Charles Chandler. We are dear friends of the late Reverend Harold Watson and his lovely wife Gwen. Through them we met Mr. Chandler. He will never be forgotten and his works will carry on.
Sincerely,
Reverend Johnny R. Johnson and Sonja Hunt Johnson*

Sinja Johnson - December 03, 2020 at 04:59 PM



“ *You will be missed Cousin J.C. Take your rest*

Love, Cousin Carolyn Gerald & Family

Carolyn Gerald - December 01, 2020 at 08:33 PM



“ *We would like to extend our condolences to the family. Continue to rely on God and know that he hears your prayers, because he cares for you. Truly sorry for your loss.*

Evans family - November 26, 2020 at 07:25 AM

TW

“ *Sorry For Your Loss, Jesus Christ Loves Me,
We Love You*



Thomas Widgeon - November 24, 2020 at 01:16 PM



“ *We the March Family and Marshall-March 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.*

Marshall-March Funeral Homes - November 23, 2020 at 04:58 PM