



## Ralph Yearwood

September 22, 1931 - May 9, 2025

Ralph Elvin Yearwood was born in Brooklyn, NY on September 22, 1931. His parents, Lionel Yearwood and Edna Boyce Yearwood had immigrated to the United States from Barbados. They built their life here and went on to raise a daughter, Joycelyn, and four sons - Elmer, Ralph, Charles, and Lionel.

Ralph and his family were part of a vibrant West Indian community. With a few other like-minded couples, his parents founded the Refuge Church of God in Brooklyn, which continues in its worship to this day. The Church, where his father was pastor, was at the center of their daily lives. He was a student at Brooklyn Tech High School and Brooklyn Polytechnic University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering and a Masters degree in operations research and systems analysis. He was also an accomplished violinist and played with the New York All-City Youth Orchestra.

Over his 93 years, there have been many words to describe Ralph. Among them are - scholar, musician, engineer, husband, father, grandfather, and most recently, Great Pop-Pop. But perhaps more important than these many roles were the communities he loved and served.

Ralph spent the bulk of his career as a civilian employee with the Department of the Army at Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey. For more than 30 years, he worked on a succession of long-term projects, with the mandate to help

develop new munitions. His career led him to stints at the Department of Defense at the Pentagon and in other agencies in Washington DC, and he formed bonds and friendships that lasted a lifetime.

During his time in New Jersey, Ralph raised five children. He attended hundreds of sporting events, dozens of school concerts and plays, multiple graduations, and family dinners in Chinatown. In addition, he tutored math, played catch and basketball, and lost sleep pretending not to wait up for everyone to come home. Ralph also served on the Rockaway Township Board of Education for more than a decade in one of the many ways he prioritized education.

Ralph married his beloved Barbara in 1983. They were married for more than 35 years and created a life that ultimately led to Palm Coast, FL where they enjoyed friends, entertained their many grandchildren, and traveled widely.

Through all of this, church life remained central to Ralph. Over the years he held almost every role. He was a parishioner, lay reader, Sunday school teacher, youth group leader, pancake chef, tenor, vestry member, treasurer, and diocesan board member. His church communities were integral to his life. His final parish, St. Thomas Episcopal in Palm Coast was no exception. It provided a rich spiritual life, an avocation, friendship, and surrogate family.

It seems clear that Ralph was not just fortunate in finding community. He was committed to helping to create it. He loved people and enjoyed listening to their stories and learning about their lives. He also had many hobbies over the years. He was a skilled stained-glass artisan, raised and maintained tropical fish, maintained a daily exercise routine, and flew radio-controlled planes with his local flying club. He was exceptionally social and took pleasure in meals and conversation; at his and Barbara's favorite restaurants, during Sunday lunches with their St. Thomas friends, on family vacations at the NJ Shore,

New Year's dinner at his son Ralph's and - as frequently as could be arranged - at his grandson Oscar's convivial restaurant, Contento.

Just a few months ago, Ralph moved to his new home in Stamford, CT. There, he seemed to find his new community overnight. He spent the last few months in a home that he loved, making friends that he valued and enjoyed.

Ralph had five children: Ralph, Paul, Patricia, Janet, June, a daughter-in-law, Claire and a son-in-law, Keith. He had eight grandchildren, in whom he took extravagant pride: Katherine, Anne, Steven, Kaylyn, Samantha, Jason, William and Oscar, and his beloved great-grandsons, Lionel and Julius.

Ralph leaves behind family, friends and neighbors who loved and respected him as well as an enduring example of how to live in joy and fellowship.

A Memorial Service will be held on Friday, May 23rd, at 11:00am at The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY.

If you wish to make an online remembrance for the family, you may sign the family guestbook at [www.bosakfuneralhome.com](http://www.bosakfuneralhome.com) or [www.facebook.com/bosakfuneralhome](http://www.facebook.com/bosakfuneralhome).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

MAY 23. 11:00 AM (ET)

Cathedral of St. John the Divine  
1047 Amsterdam Avenue  
New York, NY 10025-1798

# Tribute Wall

RH

“ Our condolences for your recent loss of a wonderful and very kind man, Ralph was an advisor to my husband and myself when we needed the support of church members in creating a Sunday Coffee Hour that would meet the needs of those in the St. Thomas Congregation. Truly wise and helpfull, his advice gave us so much support. We can never forget him,, He is truly missed. Thomas and Rita Hines

---

**Rita & Thomas Hines** - June 07, 2025 at 01:11 PM

GB

“ A good friend for many years in life that I am thankful to have had! He will be memorialized in my mind forever as a person I am fortunate towards Have known and shared time with. I will miss him in the rest of my lifetime and forever after!  
George Batchis

---

**George Batchis** - June 06, 2025 at 09:01 PM

MT

“ The first time I came to St Thomas Ralph was the first person to welcome me. I am from England and I stay in Palm Coast every year for 3 months. He always made me feel so welcome, like an old friend.  
Always smiling with a few kind words. I will miss him so much.  
R.I.P.Ralph.

---

**Margaret Teale** - May 22, 2025 at 02:19 AM

TW

*To know Ralph is to know one of great wisdom. Not a boasted wisdom, but wisdom that you can share. When Ralph went on to his new home/community is when one realizes truly how much you could miss a person of humility. Ralph a person of honesty, humility, and caring for others will be truly missed at St. Thomas, Palm Coast. Rest on in His eternal peace Ralph.*

---

**Tom Witherspoon** - May 23, 2025 at 12:36 PM

EC

“ *I knew Ralph and Barbara from St. Thomas church, Palm Coast Ralph was always a gracious and kind man May the family be consoled knowing that Ralph was liked by many at St. Thomas.*

---

**Eileen Cavanagh** - May 21, 2025 at 07:02 PM

GK

*I'm the daughter of Edgar Boyce who lives in Trinidad and is Elcina's sister, I wish to send my condolences on the death of my cousin and pray that God will grant the family courage and strength in their time of grief. Much love and blessings 🙏 to all.*

---

**Grace Knights** - May 23, 2025 at 01:29 PM