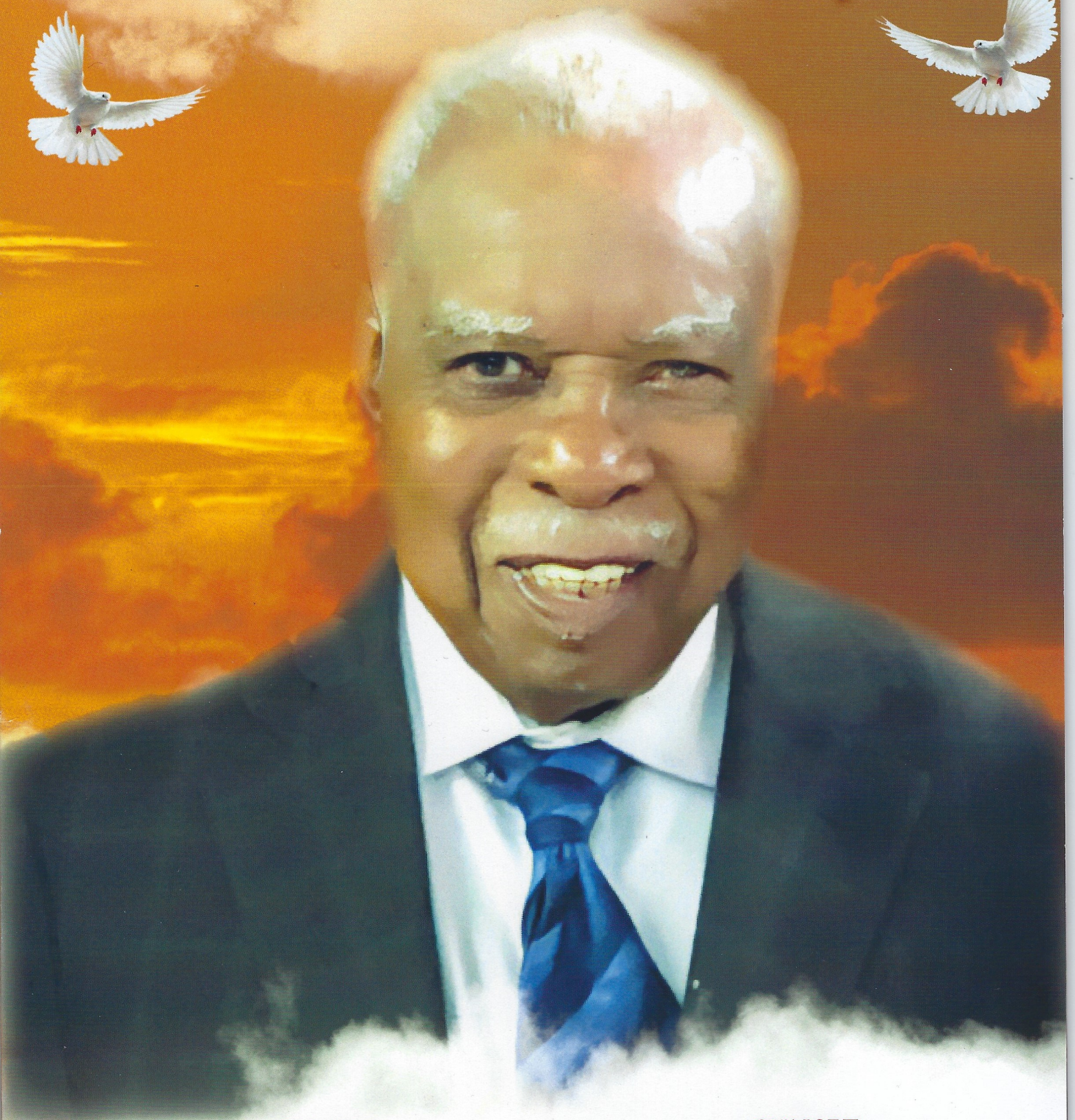


IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Dr. Charles Rosco Bridges



SUNRISE
JANUARY 10, 1925

SUNSET
JULY 19, 2023

CELEBRATION OF LIFE SERVICE

Friday, July 28, 2023

Viewing: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM • Service: 11:00 AM

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

500 East Mount Pleasant Avenue | Philadelphia, PA 19119

ORDER OF *Service*

PROCESSIONAL

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR CONNECTING LINKS OF THE
LINKS, INCORPORATED Dr. Kimberly White

President, Penn Towne Chapter of The Links Incorporated

INVOCATION Reverend Green

OPENING SELECTION Bertha Morgan and Bishop Dorion Morgan

SCRIPTURE READINGS AND REMARKS Jonathan Bridges

Dr. Kenneth Bridges

Dr. Charles Bridges Jr.

SELECTION Elder Larry Arrington

PRAYER OF COMFORT Pastor Joy Morgan

REFLECTIONS

OBITUARY READING Amanda Bridges

Lauren Bridges

Giselle Bridges

SELECTION David White

EULOGY Pastor Joy Morgan

SELECTION Bertha Morgan and Bishop Dorion Morgan

BENEDICTION Pastor Joy Morgan

RECESSIONAL Reverend Green

ENTOMBMENT

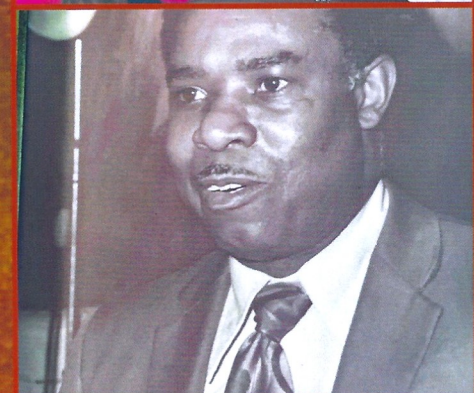
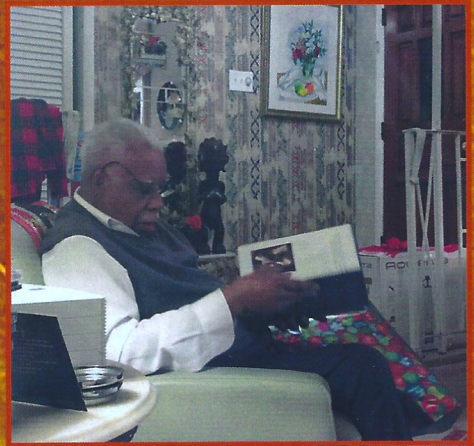
Ivy Hill Cemetery

1201 Easton Road | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19050

REPAST

Hilton Philadelphia City Ave

4200 City Avenue | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19131



CHARLES' LIFE STORY

Husband, brother, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, doctor, and veteran are just a few ways to describe Charles Rosco Bridges. He was born on January 10, 1925 to the late Aquilla Ford Bridges and Jesse Green Bridges in Philadelphia, PA. He was the fourth of seven siblings: William, Nellie Mae, George, Edna, Vivian and Bertha.

Charles and his siblings grew up in the Elmwood section of southwest Philadelphia. Living together as a family of nine, there was never a dull moment in the Bridges household. As a child, Charles played the piano and violin, and worshiped at St. Paul AME Church, where his grandfather was the minister. After school and on weekends, he ran his Uncle's tailor shop, and also sold the newspaper throughout the neighborhood. With his irresistible charm and hard work, Charles won over enough new customers that he was rewarded a bike through a local competition. Tragically, one day, while delivering papers on his new bike, he was hit by a car. He was taken to Mercy Douglas Hospital where he lay unconscious for two weeks. He was cared for by Dr. Magruder, a black doctor who brought Charles back from the brink of death. When he woke up, Charles was so inspired by Dr. Magruder that he decided right then and there he would become a doctor himself.

After spending two months in the hospital, he went back to John Bartram High School. In school, Charles and his black classmates were automatically put on the

"industrial" track. In order to go to college, you had to be put on the "academic" track. Now that he wanted to pursue a career in medicine, he needed to switch to the academic track.

Though his parents could not afford to send Charles to college, his mother Aquilla told Charles that if college was what he wanted, college was what he was going to get. She marched over to Charles' school and told the principal that

Charles' family indeed had the funds to send Charles to college, so the school had better switch her son to "academic."

The school granted Aquilla's wishes. A determined Charles studied year-round to make up for the classes he had missed. Thanks to his mother,

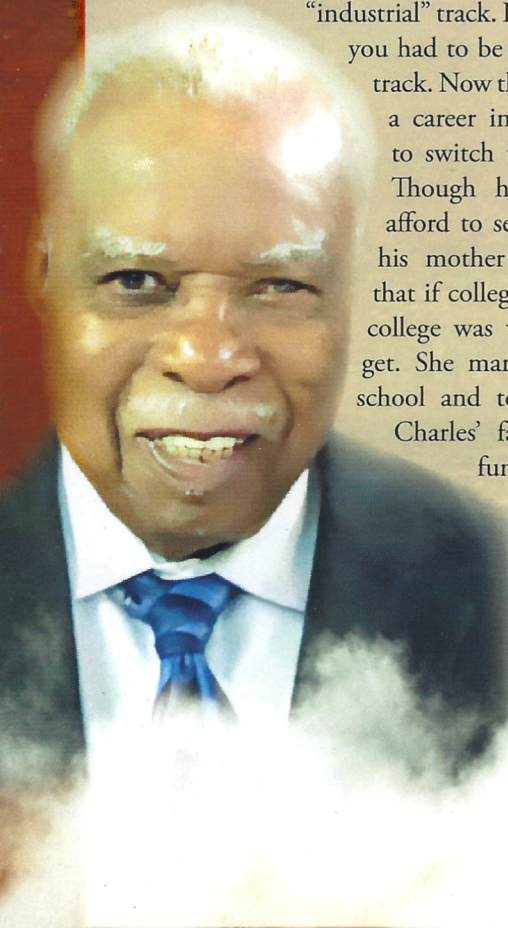
a true force of nature, Charles graduated high school in 1943 with the eligibility to attend college.

After graduating, at age 18, Charles was drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II. The Army later told him he did not have to attend the war, given the injuries he had suffered from the bike accident. But a resilient Charles decided to go anyway. Departing out of California, Charles and his fellow soldiers traveled to New Guinea and later to the Philippines. Charles first served as a company clerk and was later promoted to staff sergeant.

After returning from the War, Charles enrolled at Howard University, which he was able to attend with help from the G.I. Bill. In June 1950, Charles graduated with a B.S. in Chemistry and moved back to Philadelphia. There, Charles started dating his childhood neighbor Bessie Ruth Young. As kids, the two were friendly, and even dated. A chivalrous Charles would carry Ruth's books for her as they walked home from school together. But Charles never walked too close to Ruth's house, for fear of Ruth's father Henry, who watched Charles like a hawk. Luckily, when Charles later proposed to Ruth, her parents approved. In November 1953, Charles and Ruth married. The two eventually settled in Mt. Airy with their three children - Jonathan, Kenneth, and Charles, Jr. Much to the delight of Charles, their home often served as a gathering spot for the whole family, not dissimilar from how Charles' own home had functioned when he was a child. Charles and Ruth always knew how to throw a party. If you were lucky enough to attend, you would've heard them playing some of Charles' favorite musicians such as Lena Horne, Harry Belafonte, and Fats Domino.

For 10 years, Charles worked as a chemist in the Research and Development department of the Philadelphia Quartermaster Corporation, and later at the Rohm & Haas chemical company. In 1958, Charles taught chemistry at Eleanor Roosevelt Junior High School in Germantown, where he became the head of the science department. His dream of being a doctor persisted, but he thought he couldn't possibly go to medical school at age 35 with three children. After sharing this doubt with a friend, his friend scoffed, explaining that he knew someone who went to medical school with five children. Hearing this, Charles was again inspired. After discussing the prospect of medical school with Ruth, who expressed her support for his dream, Charles enrolled in the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. In 1964, he received his D.O. degree, proudly becoming Dr. Bridges, the first doctor in the family.

In July 1965, Dr. Bridges opened his own family practice in West Philadelphia with a loan from the teachers' credit



union. As a general practitioner, Charles did a little bit of everything – made house calls, performed minor surgeries, delivered babies, and when those babies grew up and had babies of their own, he delivered those, too. His medical practice was a major success. Patients would line up around the block just to get a moment with Dr. Bridges. Eventually, he sold his practice to the University of Pennsylvania, and, an extremely dedicated doctor, he continued to practice primary care medicine until he retired at age 81.

Charles' service to the community extended beyond his medical talents. His patients came to him for recommendations for colleges and jobs, he was a frequent speaker at the nearby Calvin Episcopal Church, educating teens and adults on everything from hypertension to career planning, he mentored Penn Medical students, and he served as president of the Holy Cross Lutheran Church Council where he was named Man of the Year in 2000 for his involvement and commitment. Charles received many honors for his service, including a community service award given by the Chapel of Four Chaplains, an organization established to recognize cooperation and selfless service among all people. Additionally, he served as the secretary president of Chi Delta Mu fraternity, an organization composed of black physicians, pharmacists, and doctors that was founded at Howard. He was a member of the National Medical Association, the Philadelphia Osteopathic Medical Association, and the Medical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania. Charles also served as a medical ambassador for the People to People program which was established by former President Dwight D. Eisenhower "to enhance international understanding and friendship through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities."

For 98 years, Charles led a life filled with loving family and friends. As of this upcoming November 2023, Charles and Ruth would have been married for 70 years. Throughout that time, they traveled the world, visiting such distant countries as Spain, Panama, and China, among others. Charles was someone who everyone in his extended family looked up to, turned to for advice, and could count on in their time of need. Despite growing up at a time when black people lacked basic civil rights and faced rampant racism, Charles defied the odds and, with the help of his loving wife Ruth, paved a path to success for him and his family for generations to come. While his career and personal achievements are laudable, none of those achievements amount to the level of pride he felt as a husband, father, and grandfather. As he lays down to rest, he knows that the love his family, friends, and community have for him is eternal.

He is survived by his wife Ruth Bridges, his sons Jonathan Bridges, Dr. Kenneth Bridges, and Dr. Charles Bridges, his sister Vivian Bridges, his grandchildren Dr. Kimberly Bridges-White, Kenneth Bridges II, Hillary Bridges, Amanda Bridges, Lauren Bridges, and Giselle Bridges, his great-grandchildren Michael White, Jr., Kenneth Bridges III, Laila Bridges, and his goddaughter Adrienne Horn, who will all miss him dearly, among many others.





PSALM 23

*The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down
In green pastures:
He leadeth me beside
the still waters
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me
In the path of righteousness
for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil:
for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff
they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table
before me in the presence
of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head
with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy
shall follow me
all the days of my life:
and I will dwell
In the House of the Lord forever.*

THANK YOU

The family of the late Dr. Charles R. Bridges wishes to express sincere gratitude for the numerous calls, prayers, and all expressions of sympathy they have received during their time of bereavement. May God continue to bless each and every one of you.

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