

SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING
For The Life of



Desmond Hulvy Rivers
December 21st 1951 - March 30th 2025

Ninety and Nine Church
209 Powell Smith Road, West Bay
Monday April 21st 2025
3:00PM

Officiating Minister
Pastor Dave Kelly

Interment will follow at Boatswain Bay Cemetery



Order of Service

Opening Remarks Pastor Dave Kelly
Prayer Hope Rivers
Congregational Song Let the Lower Lights be Burning
Obituary Andrea Calderon
Tributes:
A Tribute From Son, Paul Chelsea Rivers
Song..... When He Cometh
Sermon Pastor Dave Kelly
Special Song From Paul Lead Me Home
Benediction

Pallbearers

Mr. Jordan Rivers
Mr. Danley Rivers
Mr. Daniel Rivers

Mr. Jacob Rivers
Mr. Michael Rivers
Mr. Jehu Rivers

Honorary Pallbearers

Mr. Paul Rivers
Mr. Branden Rivers
Mr. Dexter Rivers
Mr. Dwight Rivers
Mr. Owen Cliff Smith
Mr. Adolfus Jackson
Mr. Kenneth Ebanks
Mr. Jehru Anderson
Mr. Lewey Ebanks
Mr. Gladston Ebanks
Mr. Owen Smith
Mr. James Parsons

Pianist

Mrs. Reina Jefferson, MBE

Service Hymns

LET THE LOWER LIGHTS BE BURNING

Brightly beams, our father's mercy
From his lighthouse evermore
But to us, he gives the keeping
Of the lights along the shore

Let the lower lights be burning
Send a gleam across the wave
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman
You may rescue, you may save

Dark the night of sin has settled
Loud the angry billows roar
Eager eyes are watching, longing
For the lights along the shore

Let the lower lights be burning
Send a gleam across the wave
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman
You may rescue, you may save

Trim your feeble lamp my brother
Some poor sailor, tempest-tossed
Trying now to make the harbour
In the darkness may be lost

Let the lower lights be burning
Send a gleam across the wave
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman
You may rescue, you may save
You may rescue, you may save

WHEN HE COMETH

When He cometh, when He cometh
To make up His jewels,
All His jewels, precious jewels,
His loved and his own.

Like the stars of the morning,
His brightness adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for His crown

He will gather, He will gather
The gems for His kingdom;
All the pure ones, all the bright ones,
His loved and his own.

Like the stars of the morning,
His brightness adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for His crown

Little children, little children,
Who love their Redeemer,
Are the jewels, precious jewels,
His loved and his own.

Like the stars of the morning,
His brightness adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for His crown.

OBITUARY

Desmond was born on the 21st of December 1951 in Birch Tree Hill at the home of the famous Mid-Wife, Nurse Rowena Barnett. Desmond was the first son of Denton and Hilda Rivers. Desmond grew up in Birch Tree Hill along with his parents and grandparents Jacob and Clayton Ebanks and with other family attended church at the Full Gospel Hall in West Bay.

At an early age Desmond attended the school of Ms. Redly Powery on the seashore at Bosun Bay, where he excelled in reading, arithmetic and biblical principles. At Ms. Powery's school he also made many lifelong friends - Alfonso and Allan Ebanks, Ed, John and Joseph Ebanks. He also made close friends with Machado Ebanks and Carlyle Ebanks.

At the age of 8 Desmond transferred to the Government West Bay School, located in the Town Hall. At the age of 12 he then attended the Cayman Government Secondary Modern School and was active in the school football team and cricket team. Desmond became known for his goal-keeping skills which he would later use playing with other senior teams on the island.

After leaving school at the age of 15 he went to work in the construction industry and worked for the builder Mr. Will Wallace. Some of the earliest construction projects were the Seven Mile Beach homes of Mr. Mitch Miller and Doctor Grimmer.

Desmond at the age of 17, did what many other young men of the 1960's did, that was take a job as a seaman with the National Bulk Carriers. While at sea he also made close friends with Richard Welds and Danford Ebanks.

Desmond's only child Paul Rivers was born on October 8th, 1969.

After returning home from National Bulk in 1971 he worked in construction for a short while before making two more short trips to sea. After completing these sea faring jobs, he then returned home continued to work in the construction industry and was employed by such builders as Mr. James (Jimmy) Powell and Mr. Thomas Boddin. He later worked for Mr. Delano Bush with whom he'd worked previously in the early days - building homes in Governor's Harbour and Town Hall Crescent.

Desmond also worked for many years with Mr. Allan Bush alongside his lifelong good friend Ray Bush.

Throughout his life Desmond loved animals and at one time was one of only two people that owned a horse in West Bay. He also owned many different dogs.

In his spare time and on weekends Desmond did a lot of deep-sea fishing and on a few occasions he and his brothers were very lucky to catch some nice large Wahoos.

Desmond liked fishing at Barkers where he often caught snappers at night and barracudas and shellfish in the days.

While working in construction over the years Desmond also played football until he suffered a leg injury which side-lined him.

In the last 15 years of his working career, Desmond worked in construction for Owen (Cliff) Smith along with his close friend Lewey Ebanks.

In his retirement years Desmond spent lots of time on the West Bay Public beach where he frequently played dominoes and chatted with close friends.

Desmond did some part time work up until 2021, but his badly injured leg did not permit him to do much work, and he stopped working in 2021.

Throughout his life he remained close to his Aunts Jessie and his late Aunt Marie, and he would visit his Aunt Jessie at her home daily. He had a close bond with Aunt Jessie as her birthday was the day after his.

Desmond is preceded in death by his mother and father Hilda and Denton Rivers, Sister Sophia Rivers-Parsons and infant niece Sophina Parsons.

He leaves to mourn one son, Paul and his wife Chelsea and three grandchildren, Jordan, Brandon and Amelia.

Three brothers, Denton (Denny), Hurly and Dexter and two sisters-in-laws, Hope and Colleen and their children and grandchildren. Desmond also leaves behind one loving Aunt Jessie Parsons and her two children, James and Jessie, and their children along with lots of cousins and friends - far too numerous to mention.

❤️ May his soul rest in eternal peace. ❤️

Tribute from Paul, Son

Today I am here not just as a son saying goodbye, but as a man reflecting on what it means to remember someone who wasn't always there — but whose presence still left a mark.

My father and I didn't share the kind of relationship you often hear about at times like this. We didn't have regular talks or spend every birthday together. There were many things we didn't do, many words that were never said. But I've come to understand that relationships are rarely simple, and sometimes the moments that matter most are the ones that speak quietly, not loudly.

When I turned seven, my father gave me a horse.

To many, that might seem like just a gift. But to me — even then — it was more than that. That horse wasn't just an animal. It was freedom, responsibility, joy and challenge all wrapped into one. It taught me discipline, it taught me connection, and it taught me what it meant to love something enough to care for it every single day.

That gift, that single gesture, ignited a lifelong passion in me. It shaped who I became — as a rider, as a competitor, as a business owner. Today, horses are not only part of my life, they are my life. They've taken me places I never imagined I'd go. And that journey began because of him.

I often wondered if he knew the impact of that gift. Whether he meant it to be symbolic, or simply something he thought a little boy would like. But looking back now, I like to believe he saw something in me — a spark maybe — and that giving me that horse was his way of lighting it.

So today, I don't speak from a place of regret, but from a place of quiet gratitude.

He wasn't always present, but he gave me the one thing that would define my path - and for that, I thank him.

Rest in eternal peace, Daddy, someday we'll ride together again.

From Dexter, Brother

Desmond was not just my brother - when I was a child, he was like a father to me. He took me along with him on fishing trips to Barkers and he taught me how to play football and cricket in the back yard. When I needed clothes, he was the first to put his hands up. He would provide a fare for the movies and gave me lunch money for school, if necessary. He loved animals, and especially horses, and taught our sister, Sophia, how to ride a horse. That was the first time I ever saw a girl riding a horse and I remember how scary that felt. Although we argued sometimes, he knew I was acting in his best interests. I will remember the many early morning fishing trips along the coast of North West Point and at Barkers. He will be missed until we meet again.

Tribute from Friends

Desi,

You were more than just a co-worker; you were a true friend and an exceptional individual.

For approximately 20 years, we had the privilege of working alongside you in the construction field.

You were skilled in math, masonry, carpentry, and steelwork.

Despite the long hours and the relentless heat of the sun, you showed unwavering commitment, never arriving late.

Your integrity shone brightest when you worked alone—your honesty with your time was something we deeply admired.

No day was too tough because you always approached it with a positive attitude.

We are grateful for the years we spent together, for the laughter, the hard work and the camaraderie.

Rest in peace, Desi, until we meet again.

Clifford Smith, Lewey Ebanks, Dexter Powery, Jeffery Bush, and Clemense Ebanks

With Gratitude from the Family

The family of the late Desmond Rivers wishes to express heartfelt thanks to all those who offered support, prayers and kind words during this difficult time.

We are grateful for the assistance of our Aunt Jessie Parents and her children over the years.

We extend special gratitude to the doctors, nurses and staff at HSA for the care and compassion shown to Desmond during his final weeks.

To the dear friends who stood by him when life was at its hardest — your kindness and presence meant more than words can express.

Thank you for being there when he needed you most.

May God bless you all.

Graveside Service

Prayer: Hope Rivers
Committal: Pastor Dave Kelly
Song: Oh Lord, My God
Song: Nearer, My God, To Thee
Song: In the Garden
Benediction: Pastor Dave Kelly

OH LORD, MY GOD

When I, in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout the universe displayed

CHORUS:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration
And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art

IN THE GARDEN

I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

CHORUS:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him
Tho' the night around me be falling;
But He bids me go; thro' the voice of woe,
His voice to me is calling.

NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE

Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me,
still all my song shall be,
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,
darkness be over me, my rest a stone;
yet in my dreams I'd be
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

There let the way appear, steps unto heaven;
all that thou sendest me, in mercy given;
angels to beckon me
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

Then, with my waking thoughts bright with thy
praise, out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise;
so by my woes to be
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

Or if, on joyful wing cleaving the sky,
sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly,
still all my song shall be,
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!