



## Mrs. Evelyn Griggs Key

August 20, 1959 - January 17, 2025

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.” - 2 Timothy 4: 7-8

Evelyn Griggs Key, affectionately known as El, passed away peacefully on January 17, 2025. If you ask anyone here what El meant to them, I guarantee the answers would be filled with warmth. She carried herself with a holiness that touched everyone. She was a woman of many talents and even more passions—a true Renaissance woman with a personality as vibrant and magnetic as the sun.

She attended North Pitt High School, class of '77 and received her bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from NC State in 1982. Shortly after completing her degree, she began her 36 years of service with the Federal Government Department of Navy. During her time with the government, she received numerous awards for her contributions to designing aircraft carriers, including the third-highest award for civilians, the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award. After retiring, she worked as a government contractor for Barry Engineering for five more years before transitioning into full retirement in 2024.

Evelyn was truly a "hidden figure," playing a pivotal role in creating the first women's living quarters at sea and designing numerous aircraft carriers,

including one that her nephew served on during his military deployment. She not only became a pioneer for Black women in the civil engineering world, but she also inspired some of her nieces and nephews to follow her footsteps and get into similar career fields.

Over the years, she wore many hats: writer, fashion designer, club owner, real estate agent, traveler—the list goes on. Her interests were as diverse as her music playlists. From Yolanda Adams to Tupac, Al Green to Tom Jones, Prince to Kenny Rogers, her love for music filled every corner of the house. Of course, musicals held a special place in her heart—she would blast songs from *The Greatest Showman* at full volume, and though she preferred *The Wizard of Oz* to *The Wiz* (a questionable choice, we agree), her all-time favorite was *The Sound of Music*. El also had a deep passion for travel. Over the years, she had the opportunity to visit numerous exotic destinations, both for work and leisure.

Whether she was rearranging furniture for the fifth time that month or eyeing her next HomeGoods treasure, her love for interior design was beyond compare. She could hold her own with any sports fan passionately explaining why the Ravens and Lakers outshined their competition. And let us just say her favorite weekend pastime was all about taking risks and chasing thrills- if you know, you know. But what stood out most was her unwavering love for family and friends.

She was always ready to step up and go to bat for anyone she cared about. Her strength was unmatched. When doctors told her, "You have four months left," she turned those words into five more years filled with love, laughter, and relentless spirit—a true testament to her fighting nature. She was Selfless. Her humor lit up the room, her courage inspired us all, and she had a magical way of turning ordinary moments into something extraordinary. She was the backbone of our family, the glue that held us together, and the reason so many of us felt loved beyond measure.

She did not just speak about family values—she embodied them. To her, love was not just a feeling; it was an action. It meant being there for both the big

and small moments, making time to call and check-in, or staying up late to help solve a problem—whether it was navigating your career, facing a tough life decision, or even bailing you out of trouble. Whatever you needed, even if all you required was just someone to listen, she was always there. She looked forward to her daily 630pm, 830pm and an occasional 1030pm call from Kamala “Pop” just to talk and laugh about their days.

Her bond was so strong with her family that she was even able to convince her sister, Jackie, to move from just five minutes down the road to right next door. They were two peas in a pod. Jackie was her best friend, her confidante, her partner in crime.

On August 20, 1959, an angel graced the world. She was preceded in death by her loving parents, Sammy and Ida Mae Griggs of Bethel, North Carolina; her brothers, Alton and James Griggs; her sister, Shirley Griggs; her brother-in-law, Michael Key; and her sister-in-law, Belinda Blackshear.

She leaves behind the love of her life, Anthony Key, and their three cherished children: Kristin, Sydney, and Jordan Key. She is also survived by her beloved siblings: Louise Butler (the late George), Marjorie Powell (William), Barbara Griggs (Tony), Joyce Griggs, Jackie Brigman, Samuel Griggs (Pat), and Larry Griggs (Gail). Additionally, she will be deeply missed by her in-laws: Beverly Gibbons (Peter), Sammy Key Jr., Timothy Key (Martha), LeeAnne Taylor, and Carlos Key. Her legacy lives on through a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and countless friends whose lives she touched. Her presence will continue to watch over and protect us, reminding us of her boundless love.

To Evelyn, El, Aunt El, Mom - You will be deeply missed. Your love, your laughter, and your spirit will always be a part of us. You will forever be our guiding light. Rest peacefully.

# Cemetery Details

## Pinelawn Cemetery

328 Cemetery Road  
Bethel, NC 27812

# Previous Events

## Viewing/Visitation

JAN 25. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Delight Church of God  
593 US 64 Alt  
Bethel, NC 27812

## Celebration of Life Service

JAN 25. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Delight Church of God  
593 US 64 Alt  
Bethel, NC 27812

# Tribute Wall

PS

“Your beloved El is resting with the Father. Her legacy will continue and memories of her will be with the Key and Griggs family forever. May God’s love and compassion continue to be your strength and comfort.

Patricia Silas - January 29, 2025 at 06:37 PM

NF

“Growing up on Smith Street in Bethel, NC, memories that will never be forgotten. Sending my condolences to the Key and Griggs family.



Nancy Hines Nazario and family - January 27, 2025 at 02:34 PM

EH

“You have always been a dear and kind person, and that smile. Our condolences goes out to the family. When this scripture is fulfilled [ Revelation 21:1-4] All of us will see one another again. Eugene and Jean Hyman

Ellis E Hyman - January 25, 2025 at 01:02 PM

YS

“ I am much taller than El in stature however I looked up to her. She had an enormous heart and unshakeable spirit! El was an intellect, yet humble. She was genuine, kind, welcoming and always made me feel like family. She didn't talk as much as I do but whenever we chatted she patiently listened.

A few years ago I shared one of my favorite scriptures with her (Romans 12:12) and it warmed my heart when she told me that she recited it daily.

To my friend Jackie, Tony, Kristin, Sydney Jordan, and the entire Key and Griggs family please find comfort knowing I am praying for you.

El left an indelible mark on this world!

Love y'all

Yvette

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**Yvette Shearin** - January 25, 2025 at 08:54 AM

DL

“ The descendants of the great family of Samuel McCray, Sr. and Esther Heath McCray, parents of Lillie Belle McCray Griggs, send our love and condolences to the family of Evelyn Griggs Key.

The McCray-Heath Family Reunion Committee

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**Deloris McCray Lawson** - January 24, 2025 at 05:59 PM

EY

“ *Carra and I will truly miss Aunt El. She has always been the most caring and loving person, welcoming with open arms ,I look forward to the time when we can chat again and Carra can get those hugs she truly does miss. (Rev.21:3,4)*

*Our hearts go out to the family especially Tony, Kris, Sydney and Jordan.*

*We love you! Carra and Errica*



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**Errica Yates** - January 23, 2025 at 11:29 PM

BH

“ *Barbara Highsmith lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Evelyn Griggs Key*



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**Barbara Highsmith** - January 23, 2025 at 09:19 PM

GL

“ *She was a beautiful, caring, and giving person. May you find comfort in remembering the special moments that brightened your day. My deepest condolences to the family. May God continue to bless and strengthen each of you.*

*- Gracie Little*

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**Gracie Little** - January 23, 2025 at 02:25 PM

LU

*To God be the glory for a beautiful and loving cousin, Evelyn. Memories will always be with me to be a part of the family for 4 summers in Bethel. Love Ya'll ❤️*

LucyHorne - January 24, 2025 at 06:55 PM

JR

“ *To the family of El, I send my love and deepest condolences to you during this difficult time. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."*

Jo-Ann Ragland - January 23, 2025 at 02:14 PM

SK

“ *Remembering, a truly special person who touched my life. I will never forget her kindness and willingness in giving me the opportunity to find a job in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. She will be deeply missed. My thoughts and prayers are with the family during this difficult time. May your remembrance of fond memories of the time shared help ease the pain. - Sandra Little Kpadeh*

Sandra Little Kpadeh - January 23, 2025 at 07:09 AM

PB

“ *Pauline Bellamy lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Evelyn Griggs Key*



Pauline Bellamy - January 22, 2025 at 08:00 PM

PB

“ *Sincere condolences to the family.*



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**Paula Bowens** - January 22, 2025 at 03:15 PM

SD

*Sorry for your loss. Sincere condolences to the family. She was a wondering and caring person. God bless all of you.*

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**Selena Dixon** - January 27, 2025 at 01:41 PM

TK

“ *To the family of Aunt El, that's what I called her because that is what my sis Kam (Pop) called her, and I grew up calling her that as well. She was a beautiful spirit with the kindest heart. I remember during a time in my life when I was trying to figure out my career, she made time for me, by offering me lots of advice and wisdom. She was giving, loving, and unforgettable because of the good and love inside of her. She will be missed. I send my love and deepest condolences to you during this difficult time. Rest heavenly peace Aunt El.*

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**Tamara Kelly** - January 21, 2025 at 03:45 PM

DR

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



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**Derwin Rinwicks** - January 20, 2025 at 06:52 PM

DR

“ To the family of Evelyn you have my deepest condolences.. In remembering Evelyn in our early school days she was always kind considerate with an awesome smile and extremely smart, I can honestly say for me just knowing her was a blessing. We all are part of one family and should always be there for each other in the time of Need, Evelyn will never be forgotten and in our hearts she will always be loved forever.. To the friends and family of Evelyn Griggs Key. Always love because we're all are a part of God's plan.. Derwin Rinwicks

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**Derwin Rinwicks** - January 20, 2025 at 06:47 PM

BT

“ Memories that will never be forgotten.  
Sending my condolences to the Key and Griggs family.



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**Barbara Worsley T.** - January 20, 2025 at 05:08 PM

CS

“ Cecily Sene lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Evelyn Griggs Key



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**Cecily Sene** - January 20, 2025 at 12:58 AM

JP

“ *May the peace of God comfort your hearts and minds during difficult time. I mourn with you in the loss of Evelyn, a brilliant, giving, and kind woman.*



**Joyce Parrish** - January 19, 2025 at 09:04 PM

JP

“ *May the peace of God comfort your hearts and minds during this difficult time. I mourn with you for the loss of Evelyn, a brilliant and kind woman. - Joyce Parrish*

**Joyce Parrish** - January 19, 2025 at 05:41 PM

CS

“ *Cecily Sene lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Evelyn Griggs Key*



**Cecily Sene** - January 18, 2025 at 06:12 PM

CG

“ *With love and remembrance, we share in your sorrow. "We hope you know we are by your side during this time of sorrow." Camille Griggs and kids*



**Camilla J Griggs** - January 18, 2025 at 09:05 AM

BH

“ *Barbara Hollis-Carr lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Evelyn Griggs Key*



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**Barbara Hollis-Carr** - January 17, 2025 at 10:20 PM

CS

“ *Congleton Funeral Home and Staff wishes to express our sincere condolences on the passing of your love one. We light this candle in their memory.*



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**Congleton Funeral Home and Staff** - January 17, 2025 at 06:36 PM