



Shawna Michelle Easterly

May 11, 2017

☐☐ Shawna Michelle Easterly

Some people live long lives -- lives that might be called a good, normal, uneventful life. Then there are those who burst upon the scene with intensity and a drive that amaze and astound those of us around them. Such was the life of Shawna Michelle Easterly.

Shawna was born on October 8, 1956 in Toledo, Ohio to parents Howard and Lelia Haynes. She transitioned from this life on May 11, 2017 at the age of 60.

Shawna accepted Jesus Christ in April, 1972 and soon united with Calvary Baptist Church, under the late Rev. L.H. Newsom. It was there that she received the foundations of her Christian walk. She quickly joined the Calvary Baptist Youth & Young Adult Choir that she enjoyed immensely; as a tenor she blossomed under the directorship of Rev. Jesse Lee Hicks Jr.

She married the love of her life, the Rev. Tony Easterly, on February 28, 1977. To this union 4 children were born. Unbeknownst to Shawna, Tony had a calling to the state of Washington. After the heartbreak of a miscarriage and with three children in tow, Shawna went westward ahead of her husband to Los Angeles, California in 1983 where Shawna's mother resided, a licensed practical nurse who could help care for her. Rev. Easterly followed a couple of months later. There the Easterly's received certificates of completion from ZOE Christian Leadership Training Center then helped to found ZOE Christian Fellowship under the pastorate of Bishop Frank Stewart. Shawna became the Director of Children's Ministry revolutionizing the ministry to children and teaching parents how to share faith with their children in a way that really helped children understand the word of God. The journey with her family took her to Bakersfield, California in 1986 and eventually to Seattle, Washington in the summer of 1987. Once again, becoming founding members of a new church; this time was for the Emerald City Bible Fellowship, under Rev. Harvey Drake, Jr.

Shawna was a hopeless romantic and if you've followed her on social media it was common to see pictures of her and Tony sharing a kiss somewhere around the country. Shawna and Tony were married for forty years and through the years they were often asked, what was their secret to marriage success? Shawna once sent him a card with a phrase they adopted as the theme for their relationship. It was: "Wherever our love takes us, that's where I want to go." Through the ups and downs, the triumphs and disappointments, through tranquility and trauma this theme was like a compass ever pointing them forward on their path together in this life.

As Tony once said, his wife was "active to exhaustion". Her involvement and accomplishments were many. Shawna had a fierce passion for ministry to young people and particularly to the families of people of color as well as for people lacking a voice in society.

A small glimpse of her involvement was that she was an active member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists. She was a visiting professor at Antioch University, and a Case Manager for Project Homestead under the auspices of Sound Mental Health providing support and services for chronically homeless individuals and families with mental health needs. After being diagnosed with a life threatening disease, Shawna chose to continue to work and leave the rest up to her Savior; no matter what the conclusion - the will of God be done.

Shawna did not take a seat during her lifetime, but she was an active participant in all areas of her life. The Easterly home was a haven of delight for growing children as Shawna was a Brownie Leader, conducted Vacation Bible School as well as holiday cookie bakes and a host of other age-appropriate activities involving her own children and was open to all the kids in the neighborhood. She did homeschooling and also helped care for the occasional teenagers Rev. Easterly brought home; youths in immediate need of stability and compassion found just that in the Easterly home. After the arrival of one young teenaged girl Shawna decided it was time for she and Tony to become licensed foster parents. She also determined they would never break up a sibling group since the children were already traumatized by being removed from their home. So, the Easterly's frequently had two to four or five additional mouths to feed. She became the Administrator for the Emerald City Early Childhood Development Center for five years, then Family Services Director at Emerald City Outreach Ministries for another seven years. She was a worship leader and praise team vocalist for her husband's benefit concerts which raised nearly a hundred thousand dollars over an eight year stretch for a small preschool in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Shawna established Bridges Counseling Ministry, recruiting its first staff psychologist ever, all while raising a family of very active teens of her own and

conducting marriage workshops and retreats to help married couples grow strong and stay together. Shawna and Rev. Easterly were certified Life Innovations, Inc. Prepare/Enrich Counselors.

Once their youngest child reached middle school, Shawna set out to keep the promise she had made to herself to go back to college and get her degree.

Shawna found true love with Tony, and raising godly children was the light of her life. Once the nest emptied, with a familiar passion she turned her attention towards the completion of her college education. Being a Woodward High School graduate in 1974, she was never content to let that be all. In 1998 she went on to attain her Associates Degree from Seattle Central Community College, graduating summa cum laude! She received her Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Behavior in 2003, and earned her Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy in 2006, both from Seattle Pacific University.

Shawna was very proud that all of her children are college graduates, and that each of them work in fields for which they are extremely passionate and provide services to young people in one form or another. Following the example of their "MamaBear" as they affectionately dubbed her, Robert an attorney at law, Veeda a practicing doula and Ariana Nicole a case manager with Big Brothers Big Sisters, are each working to help make the next generation better!

Shawna was a part of the Traveling Sisters, a special group of 8 women who had known each other for over 40 years. These women prayed for each other, laughed together, cried together, and shared hopes and dreams with each other. Just last summer Shawna went with the Sisters to Jamaica where she snorkeled, ate, laughed, and never hesitated to scold someone. There will be a gaping hole now in the group, and no one can take her place!

Shawna was preceded in death by her loving father, Howard Haynes, and her beloved daughter, Michelle Yvette Easterly.

Shawna is survived by her devoted, loving husband of 40 years, Pastor Tony Easterly; her mother, Mrs. Lelia Cooper of Seattle, Washington; her children, Robert Anthony (Dr. Talitha) Easterly, Esq. of Lansing, Michigan, Veeda Ra'chelle (John) Holmes of St. Louis, Missouri, Ariana Nicole (Kyle) Dickerson of Washington, D.C.; stepdaughter, Brikti Monique Butler of Rex, Georgia, and foster son, Timothy Lawrence Hall of Seattle Washington. Also left to mourn are Shawna's siblings, Renee James of Seattle, Washington, Tony (Jean) Haynes of Toledo Ohio, and Harley (Ruth) Haynes of Los

Angeles, California. She is also survived by her precious grandchildren, Ezra Easterly, Immanuel Easterly, Jackson Holmes, Levi Holmes, Aysa Holmes, Keambi Gibson, Kashif Gibson, and Kathy Lee Andrew. She leaves behind a host of nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews, plus many other family members and friends who loved her.

Visitation will be Thursday 5:00-8:00 p.m. Dale-Riggs Funeral Home Chapel, wake services Friday 10:00 a.m. followed by funeral services 11:00 a.m. at Friendship Baptist Church, Bishop Duane C. Tisdale officiant. Interment Forest Cemetery.

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[View the online memorial for Shawna Michelle Easterly](#)

Comments



“ I am sorry to learn about the death of your loved one Shawna. I know that this is a difficult time for you but please know that our loving heavenly father knows and cares about us all. He assures us that our loved ones are only sleeping and will come back to life by means of the resurrection. Can you imagine the joy that will fill our hearts at that time? Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in the promises of God and find inner peace of mind and heart. Once again I am sorry for your loss!

Joy - June 02, 2017 at 12:12 PM



“ Wow, my classmate Shawna Haynes. Sorry our paths never crossed but it looks like you had a full life. I was hoping to see you at the reunion of the Angelic Choir, but you'll be singing in the heavenly choir. Rest easy Polarbear until we meet again!
Prescilla Brown Hutchens

Prescilla Brown Hutchens - May 21, 2017 at 10:36 PM