

A Life Well Lived

Barbara Battle Gorham was born on December 29, 1960, in Whitakers, NC, to the late James and Geneva Battle, where the foundation of her faith, her love for people, and her giving spirit began to take shape. She transitioned peacefully, on March 19, 2026, at her home in Kernersville, NC, surrounded by the love of her family, ushered in with praise, worship, and heartfelt words as she entered the presence of the Lord.

She was a proud graduate of Northern Nash High School, Class of 1979, and matriculated to East Carolina University, where she graduated in 1986. It was also at ECU, in a Spanish class in 1979, that she met the love of her life, James Roy "JR" Gorham, whom she lovingly called "Gorham." From that moment on, they journeyed through life together, building a life rooted in faith and family. JR will tell you that he fell in love with Barbara's spirit, and anyone who knew her understands exactly what he meant.

Barbara was a woman of purpose and calling. Everything she did, she did "as unto the Lord." She spent more than 30 years faithfully serving as the Human Resources Director at St. Peter's World Outreach Center, where she seamlessly merged ministry and operations. She didn't just see her work as a job, she saw it as an assignment. In addition to serving as a member of the daytime staff, she faithfully served in various capacities, including the music ministry, KidZone ministry leadership, Women's ministry, and as a cell leader, among many other roles. For the last three years, she continued her professional journey as the Human Resources Director for the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, bringing that same excellence, wisdom, and heart for people into every space she entered.

To know Barbara was to experience patience, kindness, and a love that showed up, consistently and without condition. She cherished being a mother and loved each of her children with such intentionality, care, and purpose. She understood that each of them was a unique blessing from God, and she nurtured their individual gifts and personalities with unwavering support. In her family she was a connector and had a way of ensuring that everyone felt seen and included.

Barbara was a "girl's girl", the kind of friend who walked with you through every season of life.

Cherished Memories

She prayed with you, stood beside you, and never judged you. Her presence was steady, her spirit was gentle, and her love was real.

One of Barbara's passions was writing music. One night, in particular, she wrote over 30 songs, each one inspired by the Holy Spirit. Her words, her voice, and her heart for worship will continue to minister to her family and friends for years to come.

Barbara was preceded in death by her beloved son, James Roy Gorham II "Jameson"; her parents, James and Geneva Battle; and her siblings, Fannie Mae, Raymond, William, Wilbert, James, Ernest, and Stoney.

She leaves to cherish her memory and continue her legacy, her loving husband of nearly 40 years, James Roy Gorham; her children, Tony Witherspoon Gorham of Winston-Salem, NC, Jamie Royelle Gorham of Greensboro, NC, and Joshua Caleb Gorham of the home; her sisters, Wanda (Max) Battle Avent of Rocky Mount, NC, Brenda Battle Addison of Raleigh, NC, and Lorene Battle Hudson of Pennsylvania; her brothers, Tommy (Sabrina) Battle of Fairbanks, Alaska, Clinton Johnson and Larry Battle of Whitakers, NC; her sisters-in-law, Diane Battle of Rocky Mount, NC, Angela Hilliard Battle of Enfield, NC, Joyce Gorham of Forrestville, MD, Lillie Gray Darden of Greenville, NC, Sarah Smith of Port Tobacco, Maryland, Madie Sue (David) Shackelford of Farmville, NC, Vickie (Donnie) Phillips of Greenville; her brother-in-law Walter (Velma) Gorham of Lanham, Maryland; her godchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and dear friends.

Barbara leaves behind more than memories. She leaves a legacy of giving, her time, her talent, and her treasure. A legacy of presence, reminding us all to show up, not just for the big moments, but for the everyday ones that become the memories we hold onto. We are so grateful for the many ways she showed up for us, for the love she poured into us, and for the example she set. And because of that, her impact will continue through every life she touched, every song she wrote, and every memory we carry forward.