



*A Celebration of Rising “Joy”!*



DR. MAYA ANGELOU

APRIL 4, 1928 ~ MAY 28, 2014

# *Sympathy*

*I know what the caged bird feels, alas!  
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;*

*When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,  
And the river flows like a stream of glass;*

*When the first bird sings and the first bud opes, And the faint  
perfume from its chalice steals — I know what the caged bird feels!*

*I know why the caged bird beats his wing  
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;*

*For he must fly back to his perch and cling  
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;*

*And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars And they pulse again  
with a keener sting — I know why he beats his wing!*

*I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,  
When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore, —*

*When he beats his bars and he would be free;  
It is not a carol of joy or glee,*

*But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core, But a plea, that  
upward to Heaven he flings — I know why the caged bird sings!*

*— Paul Laurence Dunbar  
Writer, 1899*

*The Homegoing of  
Dr. Maya Angelou*



*Saturday, the seventh of June,  
Two thousand and fourteen*

*Wait Chapel  
Wake Forest University  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina*

# Obituary

Doctor Maya Angelou was born to Vivian Baxter and Bailey Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri on April 4, 1928. She passed to her Heavenly Reward quietly on May 28, 2014 in her home in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She is survived by her son, daughter-in-law, two grandsons and two great-grandchildren, a nephew, a niece, grandnieces, great-grandnieces, grandnephews, great-grandnephews and a host of beloveds.

From the time she was a child, Dr. Angelou proved that she was a unique individual with amazing commitment and focus.. The birth of her son when she was seventeen did not prevent her from continuing in pursuit of her dreams for a creative career. From her start as a singer in San Francisco's Purple Onion and the Hungry I in 1953, to the installation of her portrait in the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC. In 2014; she was continuously on a dramatic, musical or political stage.

Dr. Maya Angelou was a dancer, a singer, an actress, a poet, a writer, a magazine editor, a playwright, a film director as well as a college lecturer, full Professor and a fearless, outspoken activist. She never let her various vocations inhibit her activism or her willingness to speak out against injustice and inequality. She performed in a number of major productions. She was in both the 1954 International Touring Company and the subsequent movie of Porgy and Bess. She was also in the 1977 television series of Alex Haley's 'Roots' and in the 1995 film 'How to make an American Quilt.' There are too many other productions to name. She directed the films 'Georgia, Georgia' and 'Down in the Delta.'

Dr. Maya Angelou's first book 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings' was published in 1970. She went on to write thirty-six other books including autobiographies, poetry and essays. A number of Dr. Angelou's works were best sellers and were published in a number of languages.

Throughout her life Dr. Angelou's activism never flagged or waned. In 1959, during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, she headed the New York office of Dr. Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1959. Next, she worked for the Arab Observer News Magazine in Cairo, Egypt which was the premiere English language magazine in the Middle East. Later she moved to Ghana and met Malcolm X. She returned to the United States to work for him, but he was assassinated four days after her arrival in New York. She continued to be a voice of humanity, speaking out against anything that fettered the human spirit. Her life and her body of literary work trumpet the importance of love, tolerance and forgiveness. She was a warrior for truth, justice and love.

*“I’ve learned  
that people  
will forget  
what you  
said, people  
will forget  
what you*



*did, but people will never forget how  
you made them feel.”*

*- Dr. Maya Angelou*

# Order of Service

Officiating  
Dr. Serenus T. Churn, Sr.  
Senior Pastor  
Mount Zion Baptist Church  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

<i>Prelude</i>		Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Ensemble
<i>Processional</i>		The Family of Dr. Maya Angelou
<i>Welcome</i>		Mr. Elliott Matthew Jones Grandson
<i>Call to Worship</i>		Dr. Serenus T. Churn, Sr.
<i>The Holy Scriptures</i>		
<i>New Testament</i>	<i>John 14: 1-6, 27</i>	Ambassador Andrew Young
<i>Reflection</i>		Ms. Cicely Tyson Actress
<i>Opening Song</i>	<i>Just a Closer Walk with Thee</i>	Dr. Bobby Jones Bobby Jones Gospel Choir
<i>Official Tribute</i>		The Honorable Bill Clinton 42nd President of the United States
<i>Musical Tribute</i>	<i>I Hope You Dance</i> Written by Mark D. Sanders and Tia Sillers	Ms. Lee Ann Womack Performing Artist
<i>Reflection</i>		Dr. Edwin Wilson Provost Emeritus, Wake Forest University

# *Order of Service*

<i>Musical Tribute</i>	<i>God Put a Rainbow in the Clouds</i>	Ms. Alyson Williams Performing Artist
<i>Reflection</i>		Ms. Oprah Winfrey
<i>Musical Tribute</i>	<i>Stand</i> Written by Donnie McClurkin	Mr. Bebe Winans & Choir
<i>Official Tribute</i>		Mrs. Michelle Obama First Lady of the United States
<i>Eulogy</i>		Dr. Serenus T. Churn, Sr.
<i>Personal Tribute</i>		Mr. Guy Bailey Johnson, Son Mr. Brandon Bailey Johnson Great Grandson
<i>Musical Tribute</i>	<i>Remember Me</i> Written by Ashford and Simpson	Mrs. Valerie Ashford Simpson Performing Artist, Family Member
<i>Closing Tribute</i>		Mr. Colin Ashanti Johnson, Grandson
<i>Recessional</i>	<i>Been Found</i>	1996 Recording, Dr. Maya Angelou with Ashford and Simpson

A L I F E F U L L Y L I V E D



A L E G A C Y T O L I V E F O R E V E R



Maya Angelou by Ross Rossin, 2013, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Andrew J. Young Foundation.

# *The Last Oasis*

*For my grandmother Vivian Baxter  
and my mother Maya Angelou*

Red sandstone massifs stand windward above  
a strip of sheltering green that cleaves  
the mauve bedrock of the barren desert  
where the silted, still, sweet water surfaces.

The sun is a platinum disk reflecting  
the images of hell on the unending dunes.  
Shimmering bodies made of sand undulate  
across the parched skyline like old memories.

The traveler, skin wrinkled, eyes opaque  
listens to the wind calling from the dunes  
and stares out on the torrid sands  
at visions of destiny we cannot see.

In the shadows of date palms and twisted acacia  
we stand and wait for the chill of nightfall.

The doctors flash utensils designed to  
distract wayfarers from their destinations.

At twilight we gather by the traveler's  
smoldering fire and in its flickering light,  
kneel to whisper of memories reawakened,  
and the tales of unrepentant thirst.

The traveler has had the gift of audience  
by blood and beloved; she has drunk deeply  
from sweet water that rises from sandstone beds.  
This moment has been a creation of the heart.

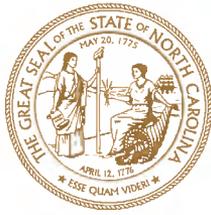
The fire that once flared, spreading warmth in our lives  
is now but a dying ember; it matters not  
how we fan it, there is a growing darkness.  
Already there is a deeper chill in the air.

The landscape is defined and exaggerated  
by the surreal light of a swollen moon.  
A lonesome butte casts a long dark shadow  
across the Gate leading into desolation.

The guide, a silhouetted, faceless presence  
is impatient for the dry winds of the waste,  
but the traveler cannot let loose the hold;  
the mind seeks to reconcile with the Gods.

But where the wind-blown desert meets the stars  
all holds are loosened, for we are all travelers  
returning to that whence we have come,  
back into the sands beyond this, the last oasis.

Guy Johnson  
May 1991



# State of North Carolina

**PAT McCRORY**  
GOVERNOR

IN MEMORY OF MAYA ANGELOU

2014

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
A PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, the State of North Carolina mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished residents, Dr. Maya Angelou, who passed away in Winston-Salem on May 28, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, Marguerite Annie Johnson was born April 4, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri; she spent most of her formative years in Arkansas, where she and her older brother were raised by their grandmother, but also spent time in California with her mother; she was nicknamed Maya by her brother; and

**WHEREAS**, at the age of eight, Angelou was sexually assaulted by a boyfriend of her mother, who was convicted, sentenced to one day in jail and killed four days after his release; this horrific experience silenced Angelou for five years; it was also the impetus for her finding her voice in literature, social action and performance; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Maya Angelou was a poet, civil rights activist, dancer, film and television producer, playwright, actress and professor; she may be best known for her book, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, an autobiography of her childhood; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Maya Angelou was a “Phenomenal” woman who touched many individuals through her writing, performance and teaching; she leaves a legacy of hope, determination and belief in oneself and abilities despite circumstance; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of North Carolina recognizes Dr. Maya Angelou as a great North Carolinian and leader of our state;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, PAT McCRORY, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim June 7, 2014, in memory and in honor of “MAYA ANGELOU” in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this third day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand and fourteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-eighth.



*Pat McCrory*  
PAT McCRORY  
Governor



*The family of Dr. Maya Angelou would like to express our deepest gratitude to Wake Forest University for the care and support provided during this difficult time.*

*Guy Bailey Johnson*

*Stephanie Floyd-Johnson*

*Colin Ashanti Johnson*

*Elliott Matthew Jones*

*Caylin Nicole Johnson*

*Brandon Bailey Johnson*

*Grandma Omi*

*Rosa Johnson*

*Ross Johnson*

*Damien Johnson*

*Rosa Suzette Shields*

*Olivia Angeles*

*Helena C. LeRoy*

*Alvin Fulcher*

*LaTasha Payne*

*Dori Colly*