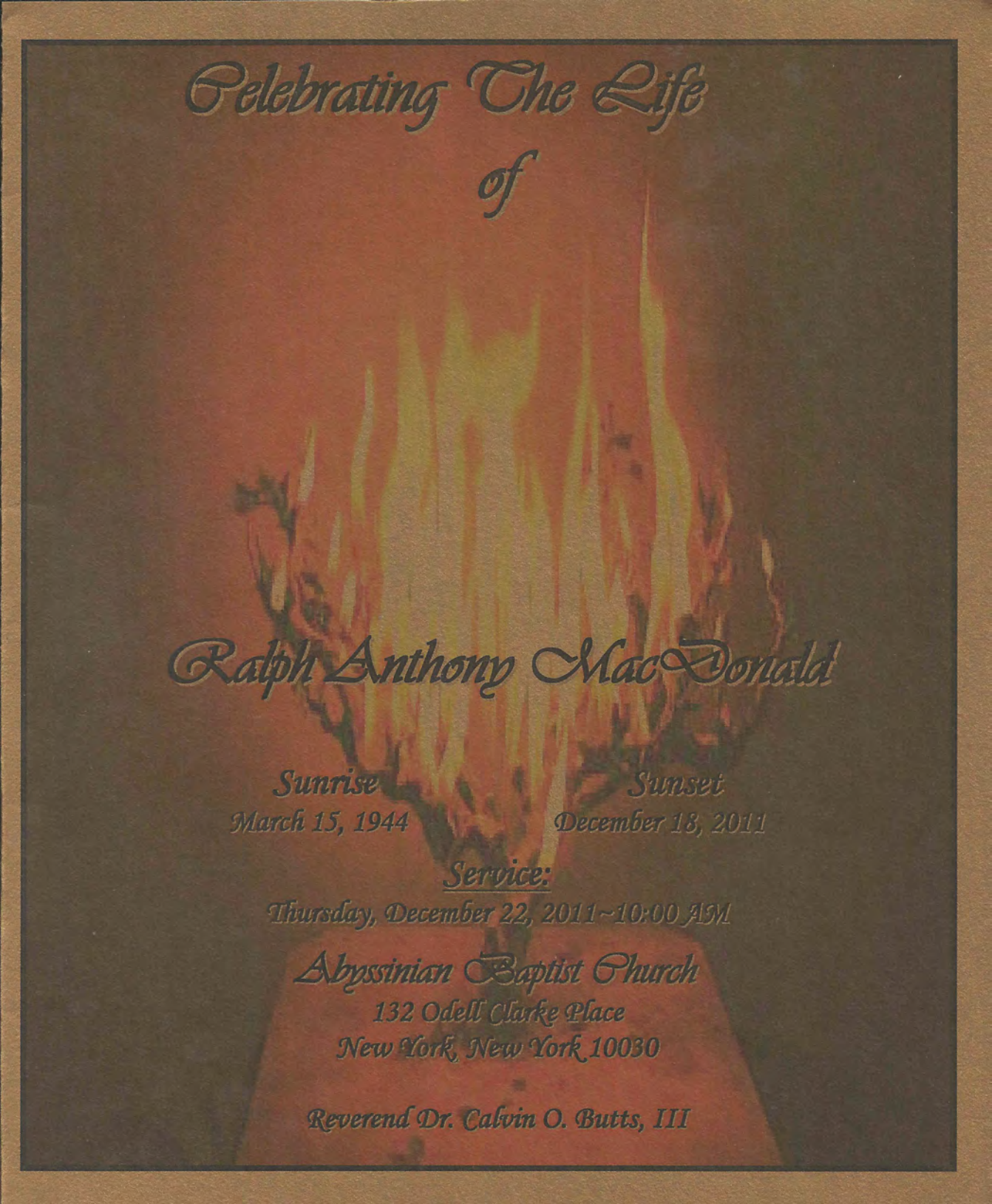
Celebrating The Life of



Ralph Anthony MacDonald

Sunrise
March 15, 1944

Sunset
December 18, 2011

Service:
Thursday, December 22, 2011~10:00 AM

Abyssinian Baptist Church
132 Odell Clarke Place
New York, New York 10030

Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III

Order of Service

Prelude ..... *James Davis, Jr. Director of Music Ministries & Fine Arts*
The Abyssinian Baptist Church

Processional ..... *Abyssinian Ministers and Officers*

Invocation ..... *Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III*

Congregational Hymn ..... *Blessed Assurance #508*

Scripture Readings ..... *Old Testament – Psalm 23 – Dennis Niles*
..... *New Testament – II Corinthians 13:4-14 – Michael Daniels*

Prayer of Comfort

Obituary ..... *Written and read by Jovanni MacDonald Patrick*

Solo ..... *"My Way" – Dennis Collins*
..... *Accompanist, Leon Pendarvis & Robert Greenidgo*

"Of Joy and Sorrow" by Khalid Gibran
Read by Nefra-Ann V. MacDonald

"Letter to Papa" ..... *Jaelyn Patrick*

Musical Tribute ..... *Bobbi Humphrey - Flutist*

Eulogy ..... *Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III*

Solo ..... *"We Are A Family" - Roberta Flack*

Benediction ..... *Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III*

Recessional Hymn ..... *"I'll Fly Away"*

Recessional

Final Disposition

Woodlawn Cemetery
Bronx, New York

Obituary - Written and Read by Jovonni T. MacDonald Patrick

Ralph Anthony MacDonald was born in Harlem New York, March 15, 1944, to Trinidadian parents, Patrick Fritz MacDonald known as "MacBeth" and Evelyn King Fritz MacDonald. Ralph's father was the noted Calypsonian MacBeth the Great, who entertained the Harlem West Indian community with his cooking fourteen-piece band and took young Ralph along. "I would be on the bandstand hitting the conga drum until I fell asleep," Ralph remembers. "And then I would go home and dream more music every night." Macbeth hoped that his son would play saxophone or trumpet, but was frustrated by the availability around the household of numerous instruments. Several of Ralph's uncles were drummers. Only basketball could compete with drumming for his affections, and when the enmity of a high school coach prevented him from making the team, Ralph lost interest in school.

Providentially, Ralph fell in with some West Indian teenagers who played steel drums and had secured an audition with Harry Belafonte, then at the height of his popularity. He accompanied his buddies to the audition, carry their drums, but there was a line waiting and they had to come back. When they returned one of the drummers was absent, so Ralph auditioned and Belafonte hired him. He was all of seventeen. There was only one problem, at the time he was hired to go on tour with Belafonte, Ralph did not own his own set of drums. It was at that time that Gerri Holder won some money and bought him his first set of conga drums, and the rest was history.

At the age of seventeen Ralph married Gerri in 1962, that marriage lasted until 1983 and out of that union were two children, Anthony Sean MacDonald and Jovonni Tanesia MacDonald. In 1962 Ralph switched from the steel drums to congas and met two important people in his future, songwriting partner William Salter (then bassist with Belafonte's co-star, Miriam Makeba) and William Eaton(who became Belafonte's musical director). After traveling with Harry for several years, Ralph decided branch out on his own and start his own music company with his long time songwriting partners William Salter and William Eaton. Ralph created Antisia Music Publishers Inc. the company's name was formed from his son Anthony (Ant) and his daughter Jovonni's middle name tanesia to form Antisia in 1969. Ralph then brought to life his recording studio RoseBud, named affectionately after a nickname for Roberta Flack with whom he has worked closely on compositions. To name a couple were killing me softly, where is the love and numerous others. Some of the iconic musicians Ralph had the pleasure to work with were, Paul Simone, Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, David Bowie, Luther Vandross, Amy Winehouse, Carol King, Donny Hathaway, Bill Withers, Shirley Bassey ,Valerie Simpson and Nick Ashford, Johnny Mathis, Grover Washington Jr., Carley Simon, Brecker Brothers, Miriam Mekeba, Rick James, Quincy Jones, Bette Midler, Denise Williams, Mini Ripelton, The Bee Gee's Bobby Humphrey, Tom Scott, Eric Gale, and the most recent Jimmy Buffet and the Coral Reefer Band, and the list goes on.

In 1986 Ralph started working with Jimmy Buffet and the Coral Reefer Band and he enjoyed every minute, every second that he was on stage. Although Ralph was always on the go he found time to find love once again. Ralph met Grace Day- Stokes 1986 in his favorite place Trinidad. They traveled the world together and lived life to the fullest. Ralph and Grace married in, and out of that union came son, Atiba MacDonald. Ralph and Grace had the opportunity to add a wonderful addition to their family and adopted grace's niece Nefra-Ann into the MacDonald family and raised her as their own, that was just the type of person Ralph was. If there was something that you needed, you could always count on Ralph to be there. We will all miss him dearly and he will be forever in our hearts. However his music will live on for many life times to come for all to enjoy.

Ralph is survived by wife Grace Macdonald sister Sylvia Pristell, son Anthony S MacDonald, Daughter Jovonni T MacDonald Patrick, son Atiba MacDonald daughter Nefra-Ann MacDonald. Grandchildren Serrin Xavier Jackson, Kyle Gavin MacDonald and Jaelyn S Patrick. Nephews Michael Daniels, Lamont Moreno, Mark MacDonald, Paul David Butin. Niece's Aylise Fritz and Jacqueline Harper. He leaves behind a host of extended family and friends that will mourn and remember him.

Ralph was predeceased by brothers Allwyn Fritz, Aba Akowe, Sisters Olive MacDonald and Geraldine (Gerri) Forrest.

Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference

God doesn't promise that the journey will be easy but He does promise to walk with us

Pallbearers

Michael Daniels
Michael Daniels, Jr.
Mark Angeles
Mark MacDonald
Lincoln Patrick
Darnel Turner

I will never leave you or forsake thee
Hebrews 13:5

Acknowledgement:

The family wishes to express sincere thanks and deep appreciation for all the expressions of love and condolences rendered during the illness and passing of our loved one. We will forever remember your kindness and generosity.

Funeral Arrangements Entrusted To:

Granby Funeral Service, Inc.
4021 White Plains Road
Bronx, NY 10466
(718) 519-6047