



## Asfaha Embaie

October 5, 1932 - June 30, 2025

### A TRIBUTE TO OUR FATHER – A STORY ABOUT A GREAT MAN ASFAHA EMBAIE

It is with profound love and heavy hearts that we gather to honor the life and legacy of our beloved father, Asfaha Embaie—known to many simply as “Happy.” He passed away peacefully on the morning of June 30, 2025, surrounded by the love of his children and grandchildren. He was 92 years old.

Born in Croce Rossa to his parents, Embaie Gebre Kristos and Kedes Weldeab, Asfaha was one of eight siblings—Tsehaytu, Haialu, Fana, Abraha, Zewdi, Geremeskel, Lemlem, and Haile. He was raised in Medeber, Asmara, Eritrea, in a home grounded in faith, tradition, and enduring family values.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Abrehet Tesfai, with whom he shared a joyful and devoted marriage. Their love was both enduring and playful—a quiet strength that carried them through life’s triumphs and trials. They even had a secret code in their letters: “80,” representing the initials of his beloved, Abrehet Tesfai (AT).

Together, they were blessed with eight children: Ruth, Adiam, Sandro, Nitzhiti, Eden, Hosanna, Mesfin, and Ketem.

He was a proud grandfather to ten grandchildren—Lumuel, Bethiel, Faven, Tomas, Daniel, Isaac, Yoel, Naomi, Justice, and Naod—and a joyful great-grandfather to Christian Washington.

He cherished his extended family, beginning with his beloved sister-in-law Zaid Alemu, her late husband Kidane Ketema, and their children—Mussie, Aron, and Medhanie, Zion and Lydia, along with Lydia's husband Robiel Tsegai and their daughters, Sidona and Syenna. His nieces Elsa Yohanes and Sara Tesfai brought him laughter and companionship over the years. He also held deep love and respect for his four sons-in-law: the late Ambassador Girma Asmerom, the late Sahle Melles, Yonas Michael, and his dear friend and beloved son-in-law, John Richards.

Asfaha answered to many names. To his parents, he was Asfaha. To his children, he was Baba, Aboy, or Babuchi. To his nieces and nephews, Akoy. To his siblings and lifelong friends, Asfahaley. But the name he chose for himself captured him best: "Happy." And that is exactly who he was—a man who radiated peace, joy, and quiet strength.

He never raised his voice. He never held a grudge. Even in hardship, he walked with humility and grace—choosing love, patience, and kindness every time. He greeted the world with a warm smile, open arms, and a heart big enough for everyone.

He was a gifted storyteller, a writer, and a lifelong learner. He loved books, music, and dancing—oh, how he danced! The tango, the waltz, the twist, the cha-cha—every step filled with joy.

He published two books: *The Way to Wisdom (Lebona)*—after which his great-grandson, Lbona Medhane Kidane, was lovingly named—and *The Story*

of Mary: The Mother of Jesus. These works reflected his deep faith and his reverence for truth and beauty.

He was such an accomplished world traveler that he even carried a business card declaring it: “World Traveler.” To him, every journey was an opportunity to learn, to connect, and to grow. He often said:

“The eyes never get tired of seeing, the ears never get tired of hearing. Keep living, and keep seeing new things.”

For him, travel wasn’t just movement—it was celebration.

From a young age, Asfaha demonstrated discipline, humility, and brilliance. At just 15, under the British administration in Asmara, he began working as Chief Police Secretarial Assistant. His favorite supervisor, Mr. Olsen, became a lifelong mentor. “He taught me everything,” Asfaha often said—lessons in professionalism, diplomacy, and clear thinking.

Yet his loyalty always belonged to his people. He loved Eritrea fiercely and believed in its right to freedom and dignity. In 1975, his political activism led to imprisonment for two years—a sacrifice that became a lasting testament to his courage and principles.

He later served as Station Manager for Ethiopian Airlines in Asmara for 32 years, during which he proudly took his parents to Jerusalem in 1964—a lifelong dream fulfilled.

In 1987, he and Abrehet immigrated to the United States—a journey he often called “destiny.” Though he lost her just six years later, in 1992, he continued to live with grace, resilience, and unshakable faith. For 33 years, he lived without her—but never without her memory. He never remarried. He remained

faithful, devoted, and steadfast in honoring their love.

After moving to the U.S., he worked as a bellman at the Hilton Hotel in Harrisburg—a job he carried out with dignity and quiet pride. For him, no work was beneath him, especially when it meant serving others and supporting his family.

He cherished his extended family in Harrisburg and the many friends who became family. Whether near or far, he checked in, offered blessings, and made sure everyone knew they mattered.

He connected with everyone—elders, children, priests, professors, ambassadors, and neighbors alike. He called them all Bechay—his way of saying, “You are my friend. You are loved.”

He was a pillar of the Eritrean community in Harrisburg. As President of the Eritrean Association and a founding member of the Eritrean Orthodox Church, he brought people together—encouraging unity, cultural pride, and faith in action.

His devotion to God was unwavering. He believed the Bible was the greatest gift and shared it generously. Bible study was a daily rhythm in his home. Whether reading scripture, singing Mesmure, or praying with his children, his faith was a living, breathing part of who he was.

Asfaha didn't just live a long life—he lived a full one. He laughed freely, gave generously, and found joy in the beauty of everyday life. He loved nature—whether it was admiring a bouquet of flowers or walking along the Susquehanna River.

Even in his final days, he taught us how to live. Though he longed to stay with

us, he understood that all things have their time. He often reminded us:

“To travel the world, you need a passport and a ticket.

But to travel to Heaven, you must die.

Death is the only passport to Heaven.”

We will miss him dearly. But we also celebrate him, knowing that his journey has not ended—it has simply transformed. He is now with his beloved Abrehet, reunited at last. And his legacy—his love, wisdom, and faith—lives on in each of us.

Respectfully Submitted, The Family of Asfaha Embaie

Immediately following the Service of Interment, a luncheon reception will be held at Christ the Savior Orthodox Church, 5501 Old Locust Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17109.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CLICK ON THE SHARE A MEMORY TAB TO POST VIDEOS, SHARE MEMORIES, CONDOLENCES, REFLECTIONS OR SIMPLY LEAVE YOUR NAME.

# Cemetery Details

## **Paxtang Cemetery.**

490 North Paxtang Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17111

# Previous Events

## **Flower Delivery**

JUL 5. 8:00 AM (ET)

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
1000 Yverdon Drive  
Camp Hill, PA 17011

## **Visitation**

JUL 5. 9:30 AM (ET)

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
1000 Yverdon Drive  
Camp Hill, PA 17011

## **Memorial Service**

JUL 5. 10:00 AM (ET)

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
1000 Yverdon Drive  
Camp Hill, PA 17011



# Tribute Wall

AF

“ *Alga Fessihatsion lit a candle in memory of Asfaha Embaie*



Alga Fessihatsion - October 12, 2025 at 12:00 PM

AF

*አስፈላጊ ሰለምታይ አብ ገነትካ።  
ክንደይ ከም ዝፈቐኩኽ እንተገፈፈጥ ምተመለስካ።  
ሰመዖዊ ሰለምታይ ምስ ናፍቕቱ።*

Alga Fessihatsion - October 12, 2025 at 12:03 PM

LT

“ *Lia Tsegai lit a candle in memory of Asfaha Embaie*



Lia Tsegai - July 06, 2025 at 01:40 PM

LT

“ *We lost a truly special father someone who was more than just a father or a friend. Baba Asfahayey was gentle, loving, and deeply caring to everyone around him. A father to many, he carried not only great knowledge but also profound wisdom and kindness. His presence was a blessing, and his absence is deeply felt. He will always remain in our hearts remembered with love always.*

*Love you, Baba Asfahayey MeArey* ❤️

Lia Tsegai - July 06, 2025 at 01:38 PM

TK

“ Dear Papa Asfaha Family,

*I was so sorry to hear of Papa Asfaha passing. He lived a remarkable life, and at 92, leaves behind a legacy of kindness, loyalty, and deep friendships that stood the test of time.*

*He was part of a group of childhood friends who remained close throughout their lives - a testament to the kind of person he was: devoted, steady, and full of heart. Papa Asfaha wasn't just a friend to my father Papa Yaine Kinfu he was a piece of his history, a reminder of where they grew up and all they experienced together. His presence brought joy to so many, and his memory will continue to live on in the stories we share and the impact he made on us around him.*

*Please accept our heartfelt condolences. Wishing you peace and comfort during this time.*

*Warmly,  
Yaine Family*

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**Tablez Kinfu** - July 05, 2025 at 11:16 PM

AC

“ We are sending prayers, condolences & hugs to the entire family from The Cobb family. God well be with you as you go through this difficult moment. XOXO

*By it being four of us who worked at the Hilton at one time, we have great memories of working with Asfaha. He also attended a lot of our family gatherings.*

*Calvin loved Asfaha & Asfaha loved Calvin. Ironically they both went from labor to reward this year. RIP our friend.*

*You will be truly missed, Sir.*

*Blessings & Love*

*Anna Cobb & Family*

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**Anna Cobb** - July 05, 2025 at 03:21 AM

LK

“ Dear Ketem and family,  
*Mr. Embaie was a truly remarkable person, and he will be missed deeply. Please accept our deepest condolences for the loss of your father. Our thoughts are with you and your family during this difficult time.*

*Layla & Mohamed Kamil*

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**Layla & Mohamed Kamil** - July 04, 2025 at 02:50 PM

CR

“ *Sending love and comfort to Asfaha's family. He was so loved and respected by all his Hilton family. He was an incredibly intelligent, caring and loving soul. God speed Asfaha....RIP*

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**Carol Rossi** - July 04, 2025 at 01:18 PM

WB

“ *Wanda BakerSmith lit a candle in memory of Asfaha Embaie*



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**Wanda BakerSmith** - July 04, 2025 at 12:49 PM

WB

*Tecumseh & Wanda BakerSmith & family had 20 trees planted in memory of Asfaha Embaie.*

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**Wanda BakerSmith** - July 04, 2025 at 12:56 PM

AC

“ Ketem,  
 I am still in shock & can't believe this sad news of loss of iconic, intelligent, humble, & lovely Aboy Asfha. He was my best friend, father, advisor. Always the worlds that come from his mouth are incredible & it impacted mine, my families, & my friends in Denver in a positive way. His golden words are engraved in my heart like a tattoo. His advice is like GPS that provides direction to happiness and peace of mind.  
 The speech he gave during my daughter's wedding is amazing & it is remembered by hundreds of people attending the wedding.  
 Aboy Asfha - I don't have the right words to express my immense love and admiration for you and how much you mean to me and my family.  
 Let me say something in Tigrigna because I don't want to miss its full meaning in translation  
 ናብ መርዖ ዓለይ ክመጹ ከለዉ ከምዚ ኢሎሙኒ  
 “አለም ወይይ ናይ ዓል ሐፍተይ መርዖን ናይ ዓልካ መርዖ አብ ሓይ መዐልቲ ዋዒሉ ደሐር ፀሎት ገይረ ናይ ስጋ ዝምድና ወይ ፍቕር ይሓሽ ኢሉ ምስ ሓሰብኩ ፍቕር ሲዒሩ ናበኻ መዓኤ”  
 “ክትሓተኑኑ ትደሉ? መን ደኣ ክልኪሉካ”  
 “ዘይፈልግ ሰበይቲ ተመርዖዎ ዝፈልጎም ደቀይ ክስእን ኣይደልይን”  
 Alem and Helina  
 Denver Colorado

Alem & Helina From Denver Colorado - July 04, 2025 at 11:59 AM

CA

“ Sending my deepest condolences to the family. Ketem always spoke so lovingly of her father his memory will live on through the stories, strength and love he passed down. May he rest in peace.

Catalina - July 04, 2025 at 09:41 AM

CR

“ *To Ketem and Family*  
*Please accept my deepest sympathies. Your father was a kind and loving. May you find comfort in the memories you shared with your father.*

*Chudney R.*

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**Chudney R** - July 03, 2025 at 08:39 PM

DB

“ *Prayers of comfort and strength over Asfaha's entire family. He always had a smile and a kind word, that helped to brighten up many of my hard days at the Hilton. Such a sweet gentle spirit.*

*Dee Barbour*



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**Dee Barbour** - July 03, 2025 at 01:47 PM

DM

*Prayers of comfort to the family of a wonderful man. Many memories of Asfaha during our Hilton experience R.I.P dear soul. David McRae*

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**DAVID MCRAE** - July 03, 2025 at 04:49 PM



*Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me,[fn]"Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*

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**Emad Samir** - July 03, 2025 at 05:21 PM

WB

“ *Wanda BakerSmith lit a candle in memory of  
Asfaha Embaie*



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**Wanda BakerSmith** - July 02, 2025 at 08:46 PM

WB

*His light will never leave, his spirit will continue to shine brightly*

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**Wanda BakerSmith** - July 02, 2025 at 08:48 PM