

Michael Jackson Memorial Updates

Contributed by Samantha Wilkins
Tuesday, 07 July 2009
Last Updated Tuesday, 07 July 2009

11:15 am

The family is at Forestlawn cemetery. And it is pretty much certain that Michael's body will be at Staples Centre. The question everyone is asking is where he will actually be buried. Forestlawn Cemetery is apparently the logical place, but so many people, including his family do hope that it would be at Neverland.

11:25 am

The doors are now closed at Forestlawn cemetery and the private service has begun.

11:45 am

Doors to the Staples Centre are now open and those with tickets and wrist bands are starting to enter in a orderly and somber fashion, Inside - big stage and huge screens - plus flowers arranged at the front of the stage to have casket placed in a prominent spot, Once inside, fans get a beautiful gold program book, Inside on the front cover is a large picture of Michael in a recording studio, messages from LaToya, Jermaine and other, along with extensive photo gallery of people Michael loved and who loved and respected him. Plus quotes from his songs and from the Bible throughout the book - a definite collectors item and a great tribute!

12:00 Noon

At the Forestlawn cemetery, the casket is being transferred into a limousine - seeing it covered with beautiful red flowers really brings to reality that he is gone.

12:20 pm

Police escorted motorcade with the hearse and cars carrying Jackson's family and those attending private service is now on its way to the Staples centre. There is such a huge police and security presence that for quite a distance, there is nobody around - which is most definitely certain to change as soon as the motorcade enters the area that has not been blocked off. There is a lot of talk about who will perform and what they will perform - the latest is that the service will end with all scheduled performers signing "We are the World" - definitely a fitting tribute and one that will not leave a dry eye anywhere.

12:40pm:

While the motorcade is making its way to the Staples Centre, CNN reporters are talking to fans. One pretty incredible story - this lady from North Carolina came with two others, took 3 days on buses to be at the Memorial. Not just that - she sold everything she had to be able to make the trip. She has no ticket, no way to do anything more than just to stand on the street and see the hearse - now - that is a fan!

1:00 pm :

The casket is now at the Staples Centre and all fans should now be inside. Outside crowds are very orderly and the police presence is overwhelming. Apparently, this Memorial Service is costing City of Los Angeles \$4 million and they actually have a website that people can contribute through to cover the costs.

1:15 pm

Smokey Robinson opens the Memorial reading a messages from Dianna Ross and Nelson Mandela. And it is followed by an absolute dead quiet and dark, only part of the stage is lit up. 20,000 people in at the Staples Centre are very quietly waiting for the Memorial ceremony to start.

1:35 pm

Memorial service has just started. Michael Jackson's casket is being brought in to a choir signing : "We are going to see the King"

Rev. Lucious Smith has opened the ceremony, remembering Michael and what he meant to his family, his friends and to the world.

1:40 pm:

Myriah Carey is following with signing : "I'll be there" and in the background on the large screen pictures of Michael are being displayed. Myriah is joined by Trey Lorenz in the beautiful performance.

1:45 pm

Queen Latifah is now remembering Michael - buying her first album with her brother - it was the "Dancing Machine". She is sharing poetic words from Mia Angelo : "We had him - and we are the World" is the last statement from a very touching speech.

1:50 pm:

Well anticipated performance by Lionel Richie signing "Jesus is Love" - that will for sure be one of the highlights.

1:55 pm:

"He was driven by his hunger to better himself" are the first words of Berry Gordy, Motown founder. Expressing his condolences to the family and remembering 10-year old Michael with his brothers auditioning for him and blowing everyone away with his ability to perform. He sang "Whos loving you" - Smokey Robinson song like a man who has experienced love to its deepest. Berry Gordy's family and the Jackson's family were very close - including regular baseball game after which, apparently the Gordy family cried a lot. In 1983, the Jacksons reunited for 25th Motown Anniversary and Michael made history with the iconic performance of Billy Jean, tip of the hat and unforgettable moonwalk. Remembering the master of performances, he noted that the King of Pop is not good enough to describe Michael Jackson - that he is simply the best entertainer that ever lived.

2:05 pm:

And now - clips from his videos - simply bringing back memories and remembering images we may have briefly forgotten. It is almost hard to watch and listen to Michael Jackson sing "You are not alone"

Stevie Wonder just entered and sat behind a piano - wishing he wasn't experiencing this moment but saying that God must have needed Michael more than we do. "I never dreamed you'd leave in summer" is a song Stevie is performing to say his good bye to Michael.

2:15 pm

Kobe Bryant is now paying a tribute to Michael Jackson - the humanitarian who broke the Guinness Book of World records by the most money donated to charities by an individual. Magic Johnson joins Kobe Braynt, recalling meeting Jackie Jackson and meeting his family. And going on a tour where he got to see the genius of Michael Jackson. Magic remembers when he met Michael to discuss staring in his video and his surprise when he discovered that Michael eats Kentucky Fried Chicken.

2:20 pm

Another memorable performance follows - Jennifer Hudson in her top form, fighting emotions and singing "Will you be there" and the spoken words, simultaneously appearing on the large screen and very powerful.

2:25 pm - Al Sharpton remembers as well - recounts family history and their dreams and their beliefs, recalling what Michael Jackson has done by interconnecting people and music, allowing all races to be comfortable together. Very passionate speech, acknowledging and thanking the parents for giving the world a human being that made the difference. Telling Michael's childrent that they have to know there was nothing strange about their dad, it was strange what their daddy had to deal with. And ending his speech with saying "Thanks you Michael" three times in a strong, booming voice.

2:35 pm

John Mayer is now performing : "Human Nature" playing an acustic guitar, standing by the casket and supported by back-up singers.

2:40 pm

Clearly emotional Brooke Shields has special memories of Michael. Being tagged in tabloids as the most unlikely couple and yet to her it was the most natural and a beautiful relationship and understanding to each other so well. It was because they grew up being children who had to behave like adults and were in an adult world so very early in their age.

She remembers just how much he loved to laugh and will remember him not as a king but as real little prince. "You have to look with your heart - what is most important is invisible - and Michael saw with his heart". She ends her tribute with a line from Michael's favourite song : "Smile - even thou your heart is breaking"

2:45 pm

And now there is Jermaine - performing "Smile" - most probably not a dry eye in the audience and anywhere else either. And notice - Jermaine and all the Jacksons are wearing the famous glove - silent tribute but very effective, Wow - I have no words to describe that performance...

2:50 pm

Martin Luther King III is now paying his tribute with Bernice King beside him. The message: what Michael stood for and believed in was :if your job is to sweep streets, sweep them the best you can" Believing in that what you do you must do well. Reinforcing Michael's efforts and accomplishments as a humanitarian and his strong family beliefs.

3:00 pm

Republican Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas is bringing a message of appreciation of what people like Michael do for the human race and to say "Thank You" She presents Resolution 600 that declared Michael Jackson humanitarian and an icon by the United States Congress.

3:10 pm

Yes - here is Usher singing "Gone with a Wind" with photos from Michael's life being displayed in the background.

3:15pm

Sing Michael sing - like nobody else can! There is that little guy in a pink hat being unbelievable as always!

