

Obituaries



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Pastor Lifer is survived by his wife, Dianna Lifer; daughter, Marci Miller; son, Andy Lifer; grandchildren, Bethany Hudgens (Gabriel) and Beau Miller; great-grandson, Levi Hudgens; bonus children, Richard Drousche (Sharon), Carolyn Dixon (Jed), and Michael Drousche (Patti); sister, Linnie Scarbrough (Randy) and nephew, Jonathan Golden, as well as a host of extended family members and friends.

Pastor Lifer is preceded in death by his first wife, Janie Lifer and parents, Rudy and Evelyn Lifer.



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John was born in Winston County, Mississippi, to Roger Hampton Schoolar and Ottie Cockrell Schoolar on May 22, 1930. He married Clara Lucille Huckaby on December 20, 1947, in Winston County. Clara passed away February 21, 2024. They are now united enjoying the presence of the God they served so faithfully.

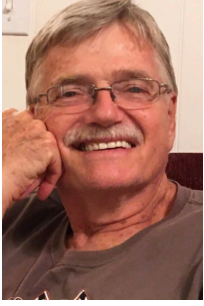
In the late summer of 1946, John felt God's call on his life

to preach the Gospel. He preached his first sermon at Murphy Creek Baptist Church. His first church as a part-time pastor was at Crystal Ridge Baptist Church in October 1946. He pastored several churches in Mississippi. He then went into Home Missions and started several churches in Ohio before joining the Foreign Mission Board. His first overseas church was Koza Baptist Church in Okinawa, Japan. Later he and Clara continued their mission work in Namibia, Africa. They returned to Mississippi in 1979. He graduated from Bond High School, Mississippi College, New Orleans Seminary and Luther Rice Seminary receiving his TH. D. in 1967.

John is survived by his son, Roger Huckaby Schoolar and his wife, Judy, of Hamilton, Ohio; and his daughter, Johnnie Clair Moss of Moseley, Virginia. One of his greatest joys was his three grandchildren: John Brian (Carla) Schoolar, Lauren A. (Will) Showalter, and Madison J. Moss (Zane Chao), as well as his five great-grandchildren: Kayla Schoolar, Anna Schoolar, Melissa Schoolar, Kinsley J. Showalter and Tessa J. Showalter. John was preceded in death by his parents and his two brothers, Roger Rudolph and Ray Schoolar.

Serving as pallbearers are Brian Schoolar, Greg Schoolar, Will Showalter, and Roger Schoolar.

Our family would like to express their appreciation to Dad's caregivers: Bertha Haynes, Vera Hathorn, Roxie Loving, Mary Thompson, and all the previous caregivers over the past seven years. The family is very thankful to the people at Accent Hospice Care for loving and praying with Dad for the past 16 months.



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Marvin was preceded in death by his parents and son, Jason Dennis Howard, and is survived by his wife of 44 years, Susan Howard, siblings, Deonna (Peter) Tanchi, Debbie (Roger) Fleischer, Denise (Mark) Strother, sister-in-love, Junko Miura, daughter, Margaret (Cody) Cunningham, son, Matthew (Marlee) Howard, daughter-in-law, Jennifer Howard, and grandchildren, Conner and Caroline Howard; Josiah, Charlotte, and Levi Cunningham; Harper, Jonathan, James, and Caleb

Howard.



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Rev. Walker was born on September 26, 1938, to Lester and Bessie Walker in Smith County, MS. He married the love of his life, Glenda Faye Tebo, on June 18, 1965. They had 58 wonderful years of marriage together. They lived in Brandon, MS and are members of Briar Hill Baptist Church. Rev. Walker loved the Lord so much that he became a ministering pastor. A true shepherd. He was a Baptist minister for 18 years. He was an encourager. A jolly, joyful man. Always smiling. He had a servant's heart. Always willing to help anyone in need. To know him was to love him. Rev. Walker loved his family very much. He also enjoyed cooking.

Rev. Walker is preceded in death by his parents; and 2 sisters, Mildred St. John, and Jerry Hailey. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Glenda Faye Walker of Brandon, MS; son, Carrol R. Walker Jr. (Crystale) of Richland; daughter, Karen Fairchild (Adrian) of Valley Park, MS; adopted son, C. A. Smith (Laurie) of Magee, MS; grandchild, Carrol R. Walker III (Karaline) of Richland, MS; and great grandchildren, Leighton Carrol Walker, and Rylan Randal Walker.

Dr. Alvis K. Cooper, 87, passed away Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at the New Albany Health and Rehabilitation Center in New Albany, MS. He was born May 16, 1936, to Audi and Sally Cooper in Lee County, MS. Mr. Cooper served in the United States Air Force from 1955 until his retirement in 1975. After his retirement, he was a Baptist minister where he pastored numerous churches throughout North Mississippi. Dr. Cooper also loved to garden.

He is survived by daughter, Melody Littlejohn (Rickey); son, Marty Cooper; four grandchildren, Marcus Cooper (Christine), Jessi Cooper, Claire Tatum (Preston), and Aaron Littlejohn; five great-grandchildren; one sister, Martilla Croft; and a host of nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents; first wife of 54 years, Martha Cooper; second wife of nine years, Bonnie Cooper; two brothers, Talmage Cooper and Dwight Cooper; and two sisters, Pauline Helms and Maxine Wiggington.



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At the center of his world stood his beloved wife, Becky Parker, their bond a testament to unwavering devotion. Through 29 years of marriage, Billy Ray exemplified steadfast care, often seen holding Becky's hand and being by her side everywhere they went.

He loved his children, Ray, Danny, Vic, Ashleigh, Deanna, and Elizabeth. They never walked a day on this earth without being covered in prayer. Raising three lively boys and three spirited girls, he instilled in them the confidence to pursue their dreams. He was always there to comfort in times of need and remind them of their calling to love God and love others.

Billy Ray found ultimate delight in every one of his grandchildren, singing to them "You Are My Sunshine" from the moment they entered this world. His presence brought joy and warmth, creating cherished memories that will forever live in their hearts. As his days on this earth were coming to an end, he comforted each of them saying, "It's not goodbye, it's see ya later."

He loved his best friend and brother, Wesley Parker. Between the two of them, they knew how to fill a house with joy, laughter and food every Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve.

Dedicated to his church, Brother Billy Ray served as pastor of New Hope Fellowship Baptist Church for 10 years, fostering a

spirit of unity and devotion among its members. Together, they gathered in fellowship, delved deep into scripture, and embraced the mission to share His love with others.

With the most beautiful hazel eyes, Billy Ray possessed a remarkable ability to perceive the needs of those around him, offering words of encouragement, warm embraces, Biblical guidance, or incredible meals of deer meat and potatoes when needed or wanted.

A fervent evangelist, he seized every opportunity to share the message of Jesus Christ, engaging with nurses, doctors, strangers at the grocery store, and passersby going at the ball fields, leaving a trail of light wherever he went.

He possessed an incredibility mind, one that could remember every number and name that crossed his path. Coupled with an indescribable work ethic and ability to lead and manage processes and people, he retired as the plant manager of a local manufacturing industry.

Billy Ray cherished the simple pleasures of being outside, whether it was the satisfaction of mowing the lawn, the camaraderie shared with friends over a crawfish boil or fish fry, or the serene moments spent swinging on the front porch alongside his cherished chocolate labs. He found solace, often seeking refuge in a tree stand with his crossbow in hand, communing with nature and his Creator.

Brother Billy Ray Parker, left us all with a legacy of love, faith, and service that will endure for generations to come. Though his earthly journey has come to an end, his spirit will forever shine brightly in the hearts of all who were touched by his grace.

Billy Parker was preceded in death by his son, Danny Adam Parker (2010); Sister, Bonnie Parker (1945); and grandson, Adain Dumas (2013). He is survived by his wife, Becky Parker, and his mother-in-law, Marynita Shaw. His surviving five

children, Barney Ray Parker of Clinton, MS; Victor Shane Parker (Robin) of Brandon, MS; Ashleigh (Chad) Rommerdale of Brandon, MS; Elizabeth Danielle (Cody) Phillips of Pisgah, MS, Deanna Lanae (Curtis) Dumas of Walnut Grove, MS, his brother Wesley Parker (Ann) of Morton, MS and step brother, Jimmy Gould of Morton. He is also survived by 13 grandchildren: Hunter Parker, Brody (Chelsea) Parker, Shelly McDill (Hobie), Anna-Claire Dickerson, Chandler Dickerson, Railey Rommerdale, McKinley "Mac" Parker, Taylor Shane Parker, Madison Phillips, Kailyn James Phillips, Parker Dumas, Emma Sue Dumas, and Radain Dumas. He is also survived by one honorary grandchild, Daniel Shaw. He is also survived by four great-grandchildren, Waylon Ray Parker, Paisley Mae Parker, Louie Clyde McDill and Jed Jackson McDill.



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Ministries / Music Association / Worship Leader at Calvary Church in Tupelo, Mississippi

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After graduating from Pontotoc High School in 1994 Casey went on a tour of colleges and universities including Northeast MS Community College where he studied English and was a member of Campus Country; University of MS where he studied history and philosophy; Blue Mountain College where he received a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies and History; and finally Liberty University where he received a Master of Arts in Theological Studies.

He served as a camp counselor at Camp Lake Stephens in Oxford; Youth Minister and Worship Leader at By Faith Church in Pontotoc; Minister of Youth at Meadowood Church in Amory; Mentor at Global Youth Ministry in Bristol, England; Associate Pastor of Students and Mission at First church in Amory.

Services will be 11:00 am March 22, at Calvary Church in Tupelo with Matt Stark and John Boler officiating. Burial will be at Pontotoc Memorial Gardens.

Survivors include his parents; wife, Heather Deaton of Tupelo; daughter, Josie Dove (Dylan Laird) Deaton, son, Gideon Case Deaton, daughter, Lydia Mae Deaton; sisters: Johnna (Jim) Corley and Cara Holley; father-in-law, Jimmy Dale Weeden, mother-in-law, Mona Weeden; sister-in-law, Alanna (Mark) Bledsoe, sister-in-law, Jodi (Josh) Forsyth; and several nieces, nephews, and grandparents-in-law. He was preceded in death by his grandmother, Reba Deaton, grandfather, Delton Simmons, and grandmother, Sarah Simmons.



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Cliff is survived by his wife, Katherine Nelson; son, Reed Nelson; grandchildren, Jenni (Thomas) Hoey, A.J. Griffing, Jake (Sarah Hogue) Nelson, MacKenzie McMurtray, J.T. Phillips, Maddie Phillips, Kari Keeling, and Kelsie Rice; great-grandchildren, Jane Kratochvil and Graham Vaughn; and nieces and nephews that he loved so dearly.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Carol Nelson; his parents, Donald and Loraine Nelson; sons, Scott and James Nelson and Mac McMurtray, daughter-in-law, Jodie Nelson; siblings, Donald Nelson and Deborah Ganzerla; nephew, Chad Stocks; great-granddaughter, Norah Kate Vaughn; and countless other beloved family members and friends.

As a Baptist Minister, Cliff officiated hundreds of weddings, funerals, and baptisms and preached thousands of sermons and Sunday school classes; Cliff's message of love and faith resonated deeply with everyone he encountered. He was a

passionate believer who, without fail, did his daily devotions and prayers, constantly seeking further light in the word of the Lord. He embodied the essence of a true Man of God and was an example for many to follow.

He was a proud supporter of Hinds Community College, an institution in which he gladly served for more than 25 years as a vocational-technical counselor, academic counselor, college registrar, director of Admissions and Records, coordinator for Academic Counseling, and director of Counseling, Testing and Disability Support Services. He was recognized with many awards and was selected as one of the 100 People Passionate About Hinds. He held close to so many great friendships with those he worked with.

Cliff was an avid outdoorsman and conservationist. He found solace and divine connection in nature's tranquility, often sharing his passion for hunting and the outdoors with others. His wisdom and mentorship extended beyond the pulpit as he mentored young men, imparting hunting and fishing skills and invaluable life lessons from the shoreline, boat, and deer stand. He often cited that the beauty of the Lord could be best seen in a deer blind.

Cliff's thirst for knowledge was insatiable. A lifelong learner, he constantly sought to deepen his understanding of faith and the world. His intellectual curiosity and humility endeared him to all who crossed his path. With his infectious laughter, warm demeanor, and a resonant, commanding voice that echoed his love and warmth, Cliff had a remarkable ability to forge friendships wherever he went. His legacy of kindness, humor, and wisdom will endure, leaving an indelible mark on all fortunate to know him.



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Born on August 3, 1944, in Angie, Louisiana, Ray Hodges grew up with a strong sense of service and devotion. After completing high school, he enlisted in the United States Army before feeling a calling from God to pursue a career in ministry. With an unwavering commitment to growing in knowledge and understanding of God's Word, "Brother Ray", as was affectionately known to the scores that loved him, furthered his educational journey at the New Orleans Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana; Southwest Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kansas; Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, Florida; and the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Through years of

diligent study, he earned both a Master's Degree and a Doctorate in Theology. Brother Ray exemplified the biblical principle found in 2 Timothy 2:15: *"studying to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."*

Brother Ray's passion for ministry led him on a lifelong journey of serving Southern Baptist Churches across multiple states. In a loving partnership with his wife, he shepherded congregations with love and dedication, instilling hope and faith within their hearts. Locally, he ministered at Crooked Creek Baptist Church where he made lasting connections with countless individuals and families. Additionally, he played an instrumental role in founding the Shalom Baptist Church—an enduring testament to his commitment to spreading God's message of love and unity.

After forty-eight years as a full-time pastor, Brother Ray decided to retire but continued to supply pulpits whenever his gifts were needed. His compassionate guidance touched many lives throughout his tenure as he offered words of comfort, shared biblical wisdom, and provided unwavering support to those in need. His dedication as a servant of God shone brightly through each sermon he preached and every life he touched.

Beyond his pastoral duties, Brother Ray Hodges possessed a remarkable talent for carpentry and woodworking. He also enjoyed being out on the dirt track where he fearlessly raced his L88 car. Devoted to gospel music, Brother Ray also loved to get with his fellow brothers in Christ and sing of a blessed hope and an eternal home beyond the skies.

In addition to his parents, Brother Ray is preceded in death by daughter, Syvonda Ready; and his siblings, Willie Hodges and Carolyn McCain.

His memory will forever be cherished by his beloved wife of 58

years, Gladys Ruth Hodges of New Hebron; his daughter, Mydonya (Keith) Shows of New Hebron and his son, Chad (Lindsey) Hodges of Hooker, MS; his brother, Steve Hodges of Silver Creek; sisters, Brenda Newsome of Franklinton, LA and Mary Hamilton of Gulfport. The legacy of their Pawpaw will also live on through his grandchildren, Shane Aultman, Beau Peavey, Erica Reeves, Katlin Graves, Meagan Ready, Alexis Hodges, Chadrick Ray Hodges, Jr. and 15 great-grandchildren.