



## Don "Sparky" Smith

August 16, 1939 - September 2, 2022

Memorial services for Don "Sparky" Smith, 83, of Tyler will be held on Saturday, September 10, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. at Stewart Family Funeral Home Chapel with Chaplain John Lindsey officiating. A reception will follow the service at Hollytree Country Club in Tyler.

Don passed away Friday, September 2, 2022, in Tyler. He was born August 16, 1939, in Gladewater to Hubert Lloyd and Versanoy McDougald Smith.

Don was a member of Green Acres Baptist Church for over 30 years. He graduated from Hawkins High School and the University of Texas with a degree in Industrial Engineering and Management. Don joined Marketplace Chaplains USA in 1990 and served as Region Director for the Southwest, Southeast, and Northeast Regions. The primary focus of his career with Marketplace Chaplains was developing and overseeing the Employee Care Program with Pilgrim's Pride, their largest account. Don worked for Mickey Bonner Ministries from 1987 until 1990. Mickey tried to persuade Don for several years to help him organize his ministry. Don told his family that he knew at some point that God would call him to fulltime ministry. He shared the gospel with almost everyone he came in contact with up until his passing.

Before entering the ministry on a vocational basis in 1987, Don worked for 25 years with Burlington Industries, Inc., the world's largest textile company. His

experience with Burlington included a number of executive management positions in manufacturing, industrial engineering, and training. He served as a plant manager over manufacturing operations in Texas, South Carolina, and Arkansas. While working at Burlington, Don also served as a bi-vocational minister doing bible conferences, revival meetings, and mission work. He also served in the US Army on active reserve duty from 1962-1966.

Don was preceded in death by his wife of 58 years, Mary Jane Bryant Smith. He married his high school sweetheart, and together they raised three children. The children left to cherish their memories include son, Russell Smith and wife Kelley of Tyler; daughter, Renee Hood and husband Kelly of Tyler; and daughter, Roseann McDonald and husband Tommy of Salem, Virginia; brother, Fred Smith and wife Ellen, nephew, Derran Smith his wife and their three children all of St. Charles, IL; as well as many loving members of the Bryant family. Don was a godly, wonderful, loving, and dedicated father and grandfather. He loved individual time with his grandchildren, and made sure each knew just how special they were. He was known for taking them to breakfast on Saturday mornings called "Sparky Breakfast." His grandchildren include, Jackson Woodard, Harrison Woodard, MaryClaire Woodard, Savannah Jane McDonald, Charlie McDonald, Conner Smith and Abigail Smith.

If desired, memorials may be made to Marketplace Chaplains Benevolence Fund, 2001 W. Plano Parkway, Suite 3200, Plano, TX 75075.

# Cemetery Details

## Hawkins Cemetery

Hawkins, TX

# Previous Events

## Service

SEP 10. 10:00 AM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home  
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy  
Tyler, TX 75703  
(903) 581-2008

## Reception following service

SEP 10 (CT)

Hollytree Country Club  
6700 Hollytree Drive  
Tyler, TX 75703

# Tribute Wall



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Don "Sparky" Smith

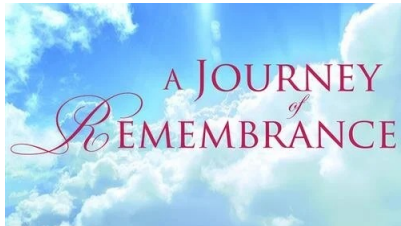


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**Stewart Family Funeral Home** - September 10, 2022 at 09:03 AM



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Don "Sparky" Smith



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**Stewart Family Funeral Home** - September 08, 2022 at 05:06 PM

EH

“ *What a beautiful service that honored so perfectly such an amazing, godly man. I wish I could have known him better. They do not make men like Don Smith anymore.. and how it breaks my heart that his generation is fading out of this world. Yet, there legacy will live on forever! May each of us strive to be Don "Sparky" Smiths in this short time we are given. I pray for God's comfort for his family, friends and for all the men and women who had the great privilege to work alongside him.*

*With all my love and respect,*

*Erica Horton (Marketplace Chaplain employee)*

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**Erica Horton** - September 10, 2022 at 12:42 PM

LM

“ *Don was one of a kind. He was quick to offer encouragement, advice and prayer anytime I needed him. I could call him anytime any day and he was never too busy for me. I will forever be grateful for our times together and the knowledge he passed down to me. It's going to be hard to live without him. His love for the Lord shined in every thing he did.*

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**Laressa Myers** - September 09, 2022 at 06:55 PM

MH

“ *Mark and Robyn MCMillan, Bobbie Hood purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of Don "Sparky" Smith.*



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**Mark and Robyn MCMillan, Bobbie Hood** - September 09, 2022 at 03:31 PM



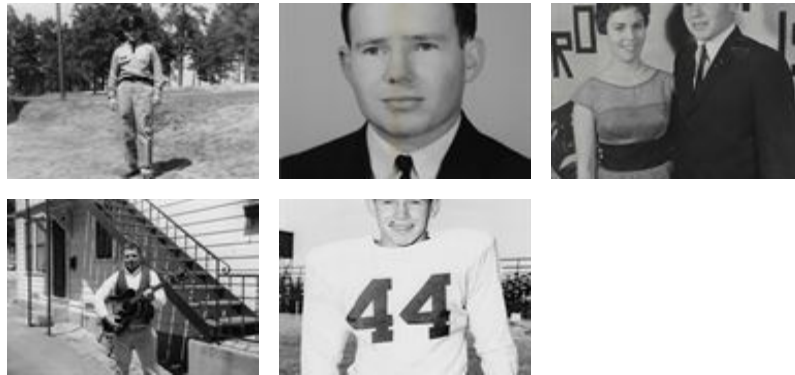
“ A New Sunrise Spray was purchased for the family of Don "Sparky" Smith.



September 08, 2022 at 09:23 PM



“ 117 files added to the album Life Tributes



Stewart Family Funeral Home - September 08, 2022 at 05:04 PM



“ Our Uncle Don was so loving and caring with our large family. He always stayed in touch with us and gave endless words of encouragement and always gave the prayers before our special family meals. His life was a beautiful example of kindness and caring. His legacy will live on through his family. We will miss you Uncle Don!

Laurie Panich - September 08, 2022 at 11:13 AM

BS

“ Don was unique and special. He was always encouraging to talk with. He did not take himself too seriously but did take the Lord and his chaplain ministry seriously. He always had a kind word to share, joke to tell, nugget of wisdom to pass along or update on UT football. Only the Lord knows and eternity will reveal how many lives across the Pilgrim's footprint were transformed as a part of Don's influence and obedience. He will be missed but his impact lives on. Praying for the family as they grieve his passing and celebrate his life.

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**Brent Spears** - September 07, 2022 at 08:42 PM

LM

*You are spot on Brent. - Laressa. Thank you for the kind words*

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**Laressa Myers** - September 09, 2022 at 06:46 PM

JW

“ Don was a great friend over the last 16 years. He was also a great leader, mentor and teacher. I learned a lot from Don. I enjoyed conversation and lunch with Don and Laressa in our Pilgrims office on Texas St in Pittsburg, Texas many times. In our meetings he always required you to have a pencil and pad to take notes on. He will be missed greatly.

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**jim wagoner** - September 07, 2022 at 04:29 PM

JB

“ I am so grateful to have known and worked with Brother Don! He was so bold in his faith and was definitely "a thermostat in any atmosphere rather than a thermometer." Don would set the tone whenever he was around. He will be missed and remembered often for his many years of faithful service.

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**Joseph Bennett** - September 07, 2022 at 02:03 PM

JY

“ Don was a major part of my life and ministry at Marketplace for the last 15 years or so. I learned a lot from him and was blessed by his straight-forward ways that were balanced with compassion and care. Don was a sounding board for me many times and helped me see things more clearly in my ministry and personal life. Don enjoyed hearing about and seeing pictures of my family but especially our livestock. As a huge UT fan, he loved our Texas Longhorn cattle. Don was especially fond of our mule, Sammy. I had jokingly named Don the Godfather of Sammy when he was born, and Don enjoyed sharing that story! My family and I (including Sammy) will all miss Don but we'll forever hold tight to his legacy.

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**John Yeates** - September 07, 2022 at 02:01 PM

RG

“ Don was so kind. He always remembered my birthday! And I so appreciated his commitment to prayer and for his prayers for my Dad when he was in hospital and rehabilitation. Grateful for his many years of service. May God bless your family as you both grieve and celebrate his life and homegoing.

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**Renee Getz** - September 07, 2022 at 10:25 AM

TG

“ Don was always so positive and encouraging! He was quick to offer a prayer and an encouraging word, and you always felt better after being around Don as the warmth of God's light shone through him so brightly. May the Lord be with you as you grieve but also celebrate a life so well lived.

Tony G

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**Tony Guagliardo** - September 07, 2022 at 09:55 AM

DF

“ *Don's heart for the Lord Jesus shined through his smile. It was an honor to work with him.* ”

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**Doug Falt** - September 07, 2022 at 09:45 AM