



## James Ross Fife

September 7, 1935 - September 9, 2021

James Ross Fife, 86, of Tyler passed from this life into the arms of Jesus on Thursday, September 9, 2021 in Tyler, Texas. He was born September 7, 1935 in Port Arthur to Ross L. Fife and Alma Irene Fife, who both preceded him in death.

James was a member of the Glenwood Church of Christ. He graduated from Abilene Christian College, majoring in music education and Christian education. He did post graduate study in Christian Education at ACC, the University of Indiana and the University of Alabama.

In his long career in Christian ministry, he was a youth director, Christian Education Minister, Campus Minister at Tyler Junior College, Worship Leader, and Older Adult Ministry Leader. He served primarily at three churches: the Glenwood Church of Christ in Tyler, the Central Church of Christ in Birmingham, Alabama, and the Shaw Street/Burke Road Church of Christ in Pasadena, Texas.

Never stepping away from ministry, James also enjoyed a successful mid-life career as a “tent-maker” in finance, real estate and property management, and was a visionary residential home builder in Pasadena, Texas.

James was also a pioneering innovator in the world of Christian education within the Churches of Christ. He attended the very first Christian Education Conference of the Churches of Christ, early annual meetings of Bible Chair directors, and was there at the formation of Campus Evangelism and Mission Journal.

His passion for congregational singing is legendary among people who knew him and those that worshipped in song under his leadership. He believed that congregational singing expressed the faith, hope and praise of communities of faith in a way that was timeless - as ancient as King David and as current as the breath one just took. Anyone who worshipped under his leadership was moved to open their mouths, take that breath and SING!

James was an influential mentor to countless men and women throughout his life. He had the great gift of seeing the gifts and capabilities of others, even before they themselves did, and calling those individuals into lives of service to the church, and to those that Jesus called "the least of these." He loved and lead selflessly with his big James Fife Heart. His legacy was long, deep and wide.

James was deeply passionate about his family. He adored each member and led by Christian example, always encouraging, advising, and serving. One could not have asked for a more loving and devoted father, husband, or son. We mourn, but he sings a new song.

James is survived by his loving family including his wife of sixty-five years, Martha Fife; children, Julie (Lynn), Janie (Enrique), Jim (JoAnn), and John (Kelli); grandchildren, Matthew, Andrew, Amanda, Daniel, Anna, Kyle, Adam, Jonathan, and Jenna; great-grandchildren Michaela, Emily, Talon, Cohen, Rowen, Emily, Hadley, Jacob, Lianne, and David.

Memorial services for James will be held on Thursday, September 16th, 2021 at 10:30am at Glenwood Church of Christ, 5210 Hollytree Drive, Tyler, Texas, with Ben Siburt officiating. A second memorial service will be held on Saturday, September 25th, 2021 at 3:00pm at Clearpoint Church, 5151 East Sam Houston Parkway South, Pasadena, Texas, with David Wray officiating. Visitation will be on Friday, September 24th from 6:00 - 7:30pm in the Clearpoint Church - Youth Suite.

In-Memorium Gifts can be directed to:

Christian Homes & Family Services [www.christianhomes.com](http://www.christianhomes.com)  
And/or Bethesda Health Clinic [www.bethesdaclinic.org](http://www.bethesdaclinic.org)

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

SEP **16.** 10:30 AM (CT)

Glenwood Church of Christ  
5210 Hollytree Dr.  
Tyler, TX

## Visitation

SEP **24.** 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

Clearpoint Church  
5151 East Sam Houston Pkwy S  
Pasadena, TX 77505

## Memorial Service

SEP **25.** 3:00 PM (CT)

Clearpoint Church  
5151 East Sam Houston Parkway South  
Pasadena, TX

# Tribute Wall



“ *Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of James Ross Fife*



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**Stewart Family Funeral Home** - September 16, 2021 at 04:37 PM

CG

*What a beautiful service for a godly man! I loved the stories and testimonies. Such an amazing family! Much love and God bless you all.*  
*Carylene Gentry*

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**Carylene Gentry** - September 16, 2021 at 11:44 PM

TT

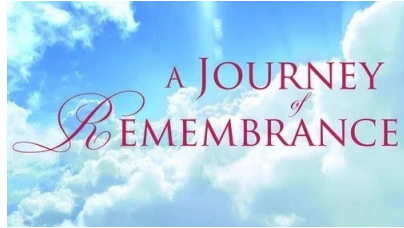
*What a lovely, lovely man! I remember his sweet spirit and his big smile! Our daughter Gena was just a toddler when the Fife family came to worship at Shaw Street. He was probably The best song leader that Shaw Street/Burke Road ever had. He was a wonderful example of who God calls us to be. While we mourn with the family and all who knew and loved him, all Heaven is rejoicing and I picture him leading the chorus!!*  
*In loving memory,*  
*Tom and Gail Taylor and family*

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**Tom and Gail Taylor** - September 17, 2021 at 04:30 PM



“ *Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of James Ross Fife*



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**Stewart Family Funeral Home** - September 15, 2021 at 04:04 PM

“ *Memories of James Fife from Marjorie J. (Pope) Laningham*  
*In 1975, I was at a crossroads in my life, and received a phone call from James Fife, asking me if I would be interested in becoming a real estate agent and opening a residential real estate firm with him. The next thing I knew, we entered the real estate world where I eventually became a Broker, James became a home builder and also received a designation as a commercial real estate manager; a prestigious designation in the real estate community. This opportunity afforded me a lifetime career that I loved for 35 years I helped people find homes from all areas of the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Africa, Russia, Bangladesh, and India! I want to thank James and give him the credit for believing in me and launching into a career that was my life's calling - Thank you James - and Martha.*

*On a beautiful morning in December 2006, I received a call from my oldest son, Gary that his sister, Terri, was in Bayshore Hospital and that he would meet me there. My husband, Bill, drove me there, dropped me off at the ER, and told me he would park the car and then meet me inside. When I walked into the emergency area and asked to see Terri, I immediately noticed a change in the way I was being treated, and in the pit of my being felt that something was not okay - to find out that my Terri had passed from this world. My life became a blur and then I noticed that James was in my home, quietly helping us navigate our unbelievable grief with all the decisions that had to be made. James, along with my husband, Bill, and Terri's siblings, Kathy, Gary, Gary and Jon worked together to arrange the Memorial Service to be held at Burke Road Church, deciding on a video with pictures and music.*

*During a time of grief and tragedy, a little humor comes forth to relieve the tension. Terri loved to sing, and many times plagued her siblings with her rendition of Janis Joplin's song, "Me and Bobby McGee". Terri's brothers and sister wanted to include this song in the video for her service. James, after reviewing the lyrics, encouraged them not to include this song. A compromise was*

*reached (without James's knowledge), and "Me and Bobby McGee" was played quietly after the service was over while people were leaving and visiting. I do not know if James noticed, but if he did, it was never mentioned.*

*There are no words to express our love for this versatile man and his loving wife, Martha, except to say thank you for your ministry to me and my family.*

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**Marjorie (Pope) Laningham** - September 26, 2021 at 05:45 PM



“ *I will always be so grateful for the loving example that James was in my life. He was definitely an influence on my faith that has kept my eyes on our Lord Jesus.*

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**Roci Gainey-Graham** - September 16, 2021 at 06:22 PM



“ *11 files added to the album Life Tributes*



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**Stewart Family Funeral Home** - September 15, 2021 at 04:03 PM

JW

“ *The Fife family and the Wiginton family were very good friends during our mutual membership at the Burke Road Church of Christ in Pasadena, TX. James and Lamar had a deep love and appreciation for each other. James gave our family a priceless gift by leading the singing at Lamar's Memorial Service in 1995. James had recently had some serious heart procedures and could barely get his breath, but Blessed Assurance never sounded sweeter. Love and Peace to all,  
Joyce Wiginton*

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**Joyce Wiginton** - September 14, 2021 at 12:55 PM