



Dr. James A Nelson

March 11, 1919 - January 9, 2016

Dr. James A. Nelson (Pastor Jim) was born March 11, 1919 in Brant, NY, a farming community outside of Buffalo, to David Jay and Mary Zella (Baird) Nelson and passed away January 9, 2016, in Peoria, AZ, at the age of 96. In his early years, Jim lived in Hamburg, NY, where he attended local schools. He graduated from Wheaton Academy in 1937 and attended Wheaton College where he met and married Betty Dobson in January of 1939. He later attended the University of Buffalo, Arizona State College (NAU) and Dallas Theological Seminary where he graduated with his Masters in Theology in 1950. Later in his ministry Jim received a Doctor of Divinity Degree from Denver Seminary.

Jim pastored churches in Carrollton, TX, Flagstaff, AZ, Stockton, CA, Denver, CO and Santa Barbara. Jim was the first pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Santa Barbara, a position he held for 18 years. Following his retirement in 1983, Jim was president of International College and School of Theology in Honolulu, HI. In 1989 Jim and Betty moved to Sun City West, AZ where he was interim pastor at West Valley Baptist Church in Peoria, AZ and at Grace Bible Church in Sun City, AZ.

Jim is survived by Betty, his wife of 76 years; three children, Judy Moffitt (Bob) of Phoenix, AZ, Beverly Ericson (Doug) of Rancho Cucamonga, CA and Jim Nelson (Marie) of Santa Barbara; seven grandchildren, Tasha, Barak, Nate, Andy, Heidi, Jimmy and Erin as well as fourteen great-grandchildren. His brother, Dr. Lincoln Nelson, predeceased Jim.

A Memorial Service to celebrate the life of Jim will be held at Santa Barbara Community Church on Saturday, January 30 at 2:00 pm.

Contributions in memory of Pastor Jim can be made to Flagstaff Mission to the Navajos, 6 W. Cherry Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001 or to Dallas Theological Seminary, 3909 Swiss Avenue, Dallas, TX 75204.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 30. 2:00 PM (PT)

Santa Barbara Community Church
1002 Cieneguitas Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93110
(805) 687-7797
<http://www.sbcommunity.org/>

Tribute Wall

JB

“*Dr. Jim Nelson was my first pastor. I have just learned of his passing through this website. "Pastor Jim" was or rather "is" (as He is with Jesus now and more alive than any of us are on this earth) I deeply admired his humility. One story I think incapsulates his spirit was of my father, Newell Bohnett, taking him along on a trip to visit one of his Sambo's Restaurants. My dad couldn't find him for awhile after talking to the manager, only to find Pastor Jim talking to a cook, deeply interested in the work that he was doing. He cared about people and what they did in their vocations. Pastor Jim, baptized my grandparents in my parent's swimming pool and my parents in the church. He conducted the memorial services for my grandparents and my mother. He preached with the fire and passion of a lion but was gentle as a lamb one on one. He showed Christ-likeness to me like none other throughout his life. Pastor Jim, I love you and honor you and look forward to embracing you in the the heaven that you so wonderfully wrote about in your book and now are enjoying for eternity.*

Jamie Bohnett - July 09, 2016 at 08:19 AM