



James Durwood Morrison, Jr

November 11, 1925 - April 5, 2016

James Durwood Morrison, Jr, 90, of Charlotte, died Tuesday, April 5, 2016, at CMC in Pineville.

James was born in Statesville, NC, on November 11, 1925, the son of James Durwood Morrison, Sr. and Mary Troutman Morrison. He answered his country's call to service during World War II and honorably served in the United States Marine Corps. James went on to graduate from Lenoir Rhyne College, majoring in Music & Education. He began his teaching career in 1951 in Spartanburg, SC. He later moved to Charlotte and taught at A.G. Jr. High & West Mecklenburg High School where he taught Choral Music from 1954 until 1990.

James also enjoyed serving the Lord and using his musical talents to do so. He was the Minister of Music at Park Rd. Baptist Church from 1954 to 1976. In addition he also served with the following parishes: Steele Creek Presbyterian Church, Living Savior Lutheran Church, Wedgewood American Baptist Church, and First Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Statesville, NC. Not limited to serving churches, James also used his talents for the benefit of his community. He served as chorus master for the Charlotte Opera Association in the 1960's as well as also being a Water Safety Instructor and lifeguard at public and private pools in Statesville, Spartanburg, Hickory and Charlotte. His passion later in life was travelling with his wife,

Celeste. James' life was about serving others and using his musical talents, but what he most loved was the time spent with family and friends. He will be sadly missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him.

James is survived by: son Chad Morrison & wife Lisa of Vero Beach, Florida; daughter Amy Owenby & husband Paul of Glendive, MT; stepson John Needy & wife Nancy of Spartaburg, SC; stepdaughter Carol Scovel & husband Terry of Charlotte, NC; stepson Bill Needy & wife Karen of Chattam, VA; grandchildren: Allie Morrison, Will & Micky Owenby, Elizabeth Geddes, Stephen Needy, Barry Scovel and wife Heather, Kim Schermerhorn, and Holly Needy. He was preceded in death by his wife, Celeste; a daughter, Patricia Bishop and sister, Maryhelen Morrison.

Services honoring James will be held at 10 am on Friday, April 8, 2016, at Southpark Christian Church, 6650 Park South Drive, Charlotte. Inurnment will follow in the church columbarium.

James' family has given the family of Lowe-Neddo Funeral Home the privilege of caring for them. Please take a moment to share a memory or photo of him and thank you for keeping his family in thought, prayer and deed during this time.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

APR 8. 10:00 AM (ET)

Southpark Christian Church
6650 Park South Drive
Charlotte, NC 28210
<http://www.southparkchristian.net>

Tribute Wall



“ *James Durwood Morrison, Jr*

October 05, 2023 at 07:26 AM



“ *James Durwood Morrison, Jr*

October 24, 2022 at 08:52 PM



“ *I was so very fortunate to have J.D. as my guide when I undertook my last semester at Pfeiffer college as a student teacher at AG Jr High School. J D was a wonderful man and a great teacher! My 'student teaching class' under his tutelage was perfect! What a guy JD was! I loved working with him and I loved those kids!! I've been teaching music every year from that year of 1969 until my recent retirement from the music school at Western Ky University. Still singing and .. Doug James I remember being there and playing guitar with you as well.*

JD will definitely light up that heavenly chorus now!!

Prof. David Kelsey

Professor Emeritus Music Western Ky University.

David Kelsey - April 16, 2018 at 07:06 PM

DG

“ I was privileged to sing in the Mitchell College Mens Quartet for several years with J. D. We had many Wonderful experiences. Winning 2nd prize the State fair contest in Raleigh, for one. Another member died just this week, April 20, 2012, Houts Beaver. I will always cherish those memories.

Dayle Grose

Dayke Grise - April 24, 2016 at 12:56 PM

SS

“ "J.D." Was the chorus director at West Mecklenburg Sr. High School when I was hired as a young band director. He was most helpful in showing me the way. Peace and blessings to his family.

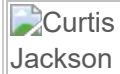
Sonja L. Smith - April 13, 2016 at 07:15 PM

BW

“ I fondly remember Mr. Morrison well from attending West Mecklenburg where he worked with my dad, Paul Guy. I also remember his fabulous performance in a play at theater Charlotte and his beautiful rendition of the Lord's Prayer at my sister's wedding. Such a wonderful, talented man.



Betsy Guy Wallace - April 13, 2016 at 05:20 PM



Curtis
Jackson

“ *Mr. Morrison was my Jr. High School music teacher and later he joined me at West Mecklenburg...boy was I excited...he taught me to use my voice and sing from my diaphragm. Little did he know it took me to places I never knew and because of him I play piano today and Minister Music ay my church...Loved this man, he was more like a father than a teacher.*

Curtis Jackson - April 12, 2016 at 09:29 AM



“ *Mr. Morrison was by far the most memorable teacher I had during my years at AG Junior High School. He was a positive influence in my life, and helped to foster my lifelong love of music. Thank you!*

Laura Fortson Elam

Laura Elam - April 08, 2016 at 10:25 AM

BR

“ *Mr. Morrison was one of my very favorite teachers at AJ Junior High in Charlotte NC and the impact he had on me, my siblings, friends and other students was nothing but positive. He would accept nothing less than your full attention and effort, which was easy to give, not just because it was fun material to work on, but also because of the results we and the parents and others who came to our performances could hear and feel. His professionalism as a teacher and a musician was special, and he generously gave me my first opportunities as a performer to step out in front of our chorus on stage and play tunes I had started learning on 5 string banjo. His skillful guidance set me on the path that I'm still on today as a professional musician. I will always be grateful that I got to have him in my world at such a formative time. Rest now, Maestro. Thank you.*

-Boo Reiners

Boo Reiners - April 08, 2016 at 09:43 AM

MJ

“ *I was a student of Mr. Morrison at AG, in 1972! I thoroughly enjoyed chorus, with his wonderful teaching! I can still remember the songs we sang and our performances. A teacher truly does not know how far their influence will go- I hope his family feels the gratitude we all feel for this wonderful teacher. My thoughts and prayers to his family.*

Mary Jo - April 08, 2016 at 09:00 AM

DT

“ My condolences to the family of J. D., he was a very special person that I was fortunate to have known when he was at A.G. Junior High. always smiling and loved getting the best out of his students.

Doris Terrell

Doris Terrell - April 08, 2016 at 08:50 AM



BH

“ The heavenly chorus just got sweeter and more melodious when J.D. joined in. No one on earth could sing "How Great Thou Art" with more emotion. Now I will think of him singing in the celestial choir, and hope one day I get to hear him sing it again. My sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Barbara Hall

Barbara Hall - April 07, 2016 at 09:39 PM



JP

“ Janice Pharr lit a candle in memory of James Durwood Morrison, Jr

Janice Pharr - April 07, 2016 at 07:57 PM



AB

My deepest sympathy goes out to the Morrison Family. I was one of Mr. Morrison's students at Alexander Graham and West Meck. Mr. Morrison was a Wonderful chorus teacher and person. I could not sing but he taught me more than singing . He taught me tone and how to read sheet music. I will truly miss Mr. Morrison. Again my deepest sympathy goes out to you the family. May God ve eith you. Alesia Broome

Alesia Broome - April 08, 2016 at 06:48 AM

JP

“ *From the first time that I saw Mr. Morrison in his hallway with a big smile on his face until now I know I will always love this man.He was a father, husband teacher, singer, actor and a great friend. I remember the many mornings we would listen to WDAV and he helped me to identify the instruments that I heard.I was so proud of myself when I got them right because he was such a great teacher. He was always the perfect gentleman. We would go out to eat and he would finish before me and the waiter would ask to remove his plate. "No, the lady is still eating. You can do that when she finishes". I felt so special.*

We would listen to a song he sang years ago that he would play on the 78 vinyl. It was called Old Man River.He sang that song so beautiful and strong it would make me cry sometimes and often. I asked him how did he hold the notes so long as he did and he said "Practice" with a twinkle in his eyes.

He treated me like family instead of his caregiver and always talked about his family with love so much so that I knew all of them too and came to love all of them.

I will miss you so much but I knew you have a smile on your face because now you are with the Duchess who has been waiting a long time for you.

Thank you for all the memories.Janice Pharr

Janice Pharr - April 07, 2016 at 07:46 PM

DG

“ I was a student of Mr. Morrison's at Coulwood as a 9th grader and will forever be grateful to him for letting me accompany the chorus that year. It helped my self esteem and really cemented my love of music and helped to make my choice of a career in music. Because of him, I ended up teaching Elementary Music in Charlotte Meck for 35 years. Many times I remembered back to the songs we did in chorus and taught my kids, not only the good ones but the down right silly ones that he had taught us. Such good memories of a wonderful man who made music so fun. I had the pleasure of running into him at the cleaners not too long ago and made a point of speaking to him. So glad I did.
Deborah Duncan Goforth

Deborah Duncan Goforth - April 07, 2016 at 02:25 PM

L.

“ I would like to express my condolences to your family during this most difficult time. I can see that Mr .Morrison was such a talented person. May you be strengthened by the fact that God can be our comfort in distressing times if we turn to him who loves us. [Jeremiah 29:12,13]



L.W - April 07, 2016 at 02:07 PM



“ Some of my earliest memories are of JD and his booming voice. He served the youth of Park Road Baptist Church as choir director and I believe youth minister in the 50's. Summer bible school was a treat through his organization and the daily ball games he supervised. He was always the pitcher. The kids in the church all wanted to sing in his youth choirs and many eventually graduated into the adult choir. A few years ago my wife was participating in a local community theatre group, She came home all excited one night to tell me about a guy in the play who had the most magnificent baritone voice. "His name was JD something". Needless to he still had it. It was nice to reconnect after all these years. He'll be missed by many, but his fond memories and influence will last forever.

David Brantley - April 07, 2016 at 01:56 PM



“ Mr. Morrison was one of the teachers I admired and respected most in all my years in school. He was a fantasticlally talented teacher, a phenomenal singer, and a genuinely kind person. I have frequently thought of him through the years and can only imagine what he's adding to the celestial choir.

Pat Hogan

Pat Hogan - April 07, 2016 at 01:16 PM



“ Les and Roberta Farnum and the Home Instead Senior Care Team purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of James Durwood Morrison, Jr.



Les and Roberta Farnum and the Home Instead Senior Care Team - April 07, 2016 at 12:48 PM

CT

“ *Mr. Morrison was one of my favorite teachers at AG Hr High. He was a natural at working with and teaching his students. I still have the LP we made with him. There are some people whose purpose in life is to teach, Mr. Morrison was one of those people.*



Cindy Tyson - April 07, 2016 at 11:54 AM

 Sandra Hammond

“ *This man will forever be remembered by so many of us. As a Choral student at AG Jr High he will always be remembered as an amazing talent, teacher and person. Heaven is singing with his wonderful voice and spirit. He was so loved and respected. I feel so blessed to have known him. His Old Man River will sing on in many hearts.*

Sandra Hammond - April 07, 2016 at 10:11 AM

SH

“ *Sandra Ragsdale Hammond lit a candle in memory of James Durwood Morrison, Jr*



Sandra Ragsdale Hammond - April 07, 2016 at 10:01 AM

DJ

“ *Jim Morrison was a consummate musician, and a kind and generous man. Some of my first "professional" musical experiences were under his direction, playing guitar for the A.G. choir in many shows, and in the recording of an LP record with that group. I was 15 years old at the time!*

Doug James - April 07, 2016 at 08:55 AM

VW

What a fantastic teacher Mr. Morrison was for so many of us at AG. He was simply a lovely man who thoroughly enjoyed his craft and taught us with great passion and kindness. Truly beloved by me all members of our chorus in 1969.

"Love makes the world go round "was the title of our LP and he showered us with his.

My sincere condolences to his family and friends.

vee allen waldrop - April 08, 2016 at 04:24 PM

JF

“ *Was fortunate to know J.D. in two "lifetimes"... once as a student in 1969 and later as an adult. Was the Beadle to his Judge Turpin in Sweeney Todd at Theater Charlotte. And, ironically, we shared a barber. Good memories.*

James Flynn - April 07, 2016 at 08:30 AM

JF

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



James Flynn - April 07, 2016 at 08:21 AM

EH

I have a picture in my mind of Mr. Morrison and the AG Jr. High yearbook page is it. I wasn't musically inclined but he made 7th grade chorus fun and to this day I can still sing Aquarius. He had such a gift and shared it with us. May the Lord bless his family with comfort and memories.

Ellen Kirby Harvey - April 10, 2016 at 06:53 PM



“ Chad and Amy, I was saddened to learn of your dad’s death. He was one of the most special people I’ve ever known. You’re so fortunate to have had him as your father.

I had the privilege of knowing J.D. both through Park Road Baptist and as a teacher at A.G. He, more than anyone else, is responsible for my love of music and my own singing through my lifetime. His leadership of choirs at Park Road planted the seeds for a music program that bloomed under his tutelage and has continued to be part of the church’s heart ever since. I was blessed to be part of that program as a child and youth, and to return to it for much of my adult life.

Part of J.D.’s ministry that wasn’t mentioned was his ministry to youth and children. One of my first memories of him was pitching kickball for playtime for the children’s choir. Later on, his putting on the Gilbert and Sullivan musicals with the teen choir made for several special summers.

His teaching was also special – and his pastoral skills showed there as well. He was the chorus teacher at AG for two years when I was there. His calming words to the choir after one of its members committed suicide (at age 14) were so meaningful to many of us. J.D. lived a long and fruitful life, and it will continue to bear fruit, both in your lives, your children’s lives, and in the students, musicians, and churches he served. May God’s peace which passes understanding be with you in the coming days and always.

Dave Yarbrough

David Yarbrough - April 07, 2016 at 08:05 AM

EN

“ Mr. Morrison was a wonderful chorus teacher at AG Jr. High when I was in 7th grade. I’ll always remember his enthusiasm and all the fun we had because of what a great teacher he was. RIP

enurkin - April 07, 2016 at 06:26 AM

MY

Mr. Morrison was a great teacher of song, a great neighbor ,but most of all someone I could talk to when I needed a male role model in my early years. Gave me some great advise that keep me out of more trouble than I did get into. So sorry for your Dads passing Chad and Amy!

Mike Yates - April 07, 2016 at 08:03 PM

LC

OMG!!! I just received the news today. This Man right here was the most talented funny man that I am glad was apart of my life. Mr. Morrison made me bring out my talent in singing and I truly thank him for that. RIP MY FAVORITE MUSIC TEACHER

Luwania Canty - April 11, 2016 at 10:02 AM