



Joseph Leroy Hackett Jr

July 12, 1941 - December 23, 2019

Joseph L. Hackett, Jr., age 78, of Schererville, Indiana, went to be with his Lord and Saviour on Monday, December 23, 2019.

The light of day, December 23, 2019 began with Jon stepping on the back porch, for a breath of fresh air, as he started the day's care of his dad, Joe. His eye captured movement in the tree next to him and he followed the movement, as a Cardinal flew to his Cherry tree, where he landed next to his partner. While absorbing the beauty of the symbolism of a visitation of loved ones passed, he then saw a Blue Jay and his mate resting in the same tree reflecting the beauty of love rejoined. As Jon leaned in to enjoy the unusual visit, he then noted a pair of red-headed Wood Peckers resting there, as well. Not accepting that final symbolism of loss, Jon began the day of care with extra support from the nursing team and Lori's visit. We enjoyed the morning with song, Dad peeking at us through one eye, and his glorious smile of recognition and comfort. The last song dad tried to join us in singing, he was only able to repeat the last phrase "Please don't take my sunshine away".

When we think of Joe what we see is: The handsome face on par with any Superstar; blue eyes with the strength of steel and brightness of the joy of love; a warm spirit of compassion; a brain sharp with knowledge and continuous learning; a sweet smile, coupled with a robust laugh; a tenor voice equal to Pavarotti; an exemplar musician who mastered playing and repairing every band instrument; a great Theologian coupled with being a world history buff; he was meticulous and a perfectionist, which created the geometrical master at games and tasteful artist we know and love, with an eye for the beauty and individualism in each of his subjects. As a historian, Joe would stop at historical sites across America, when traveling with his family, and would collect a rock from each site. He even brought lava rocks back from Jamaica. He used these rocks to create a fascia on our family home. He also collected artifacts which he displayed as a teaching tool for his students. Joe's impact has reverberated across the globe.

Joe gave everlasting love, through a pure heart of gold, a very rare gift. He steadfastly

supported his wife and five beautiful children, for whom he was so proud. Simply stated, Joe was Best-in-Class as a son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, educator, colleague, teammate, guide, mentor and a bright reflection of Godliness.

Joe's parents were Joseph LeRoy Hackett, Sr. and Ruthanna Hackett (predeceased). Joe was born on July 12, 1941 in Millville, New Jersey, the firstborn son, five years later followed by his brother, Donald Hackett. Additionally, through marriage, eight (8) Siblings; Grace Williams (predeceased), Verna Summers (predeceased), Edward (Kay) Laws III, Paula Curran, Elaine McClurg, Geraldine Laws, Leslie Harvey, from which there are a full group of nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews, who Joe thoroughly enjoyed watching grow. He had a deep abiding love for his parents, and grand-parents. His dad is in the Bridgeton New Jersey Hall of Fame as a baseball pitcher who played with many greats like Babe Ruth. As many of the professional teams traveled, they always requested Joe Sr to pitch in their practice games when in New Jersey. During war times he served as an Electrician in support of our Armed Services and went on to be an Under-Sherriff and Chief Probation Officer for Bridgton, NJ, setting the example of a life in service of others for Joe and Don. Joe additionally learned a strong work ethic and unconditional love from his mother and grandmother, who nurtured him collectively throughout his childhood. Joe's mom, Ruthanna, worked with an interior design company for many years and his family owned Hackett's Corner, a restaurant serving subs with additional daily specials. In times when his mother worked, his Grandmother, Anna Ethel (Rickards) McIlroy, cared for them. Children and parents worked together gardening, gleaning vegetables and fruit for meals. Joe's mom and grandma spent hours in the kitchen cooking each day. Joe expressed religiously the joy he felt about gardening, in anticipation of the delicious meal to come. He shared these stories with the group of friends he developed, during inpatient rehabilitation. Friends that marveled in his appetite and the pleasure he felt when eating. One lunch, as Joe was finishing his meal, he looked at Lori and whispered, "Lori, they made an announcement earlier today that we are allowed to request another meal for lunch of roast and mashed potatoes." Lori replied, "But dad you're just finishing your lunch now, aren't you full?". He immediately raised his hand, the protocol to request assistance, and told the attendant he heard the announcement and he needs Roast and mashed potatoes. She told him she didn't know if they had any available but would talk with the Chef. The Chef came to dad's table, heard his plea, promptly prepared and brought his desired meal. We then received the pleasure of seeing dad's beautiful smile as he ate a second meal. He also brought many instances of humor in his reactions to situations, while confused. His favorite meal of the day was breakfast and one morning he had eaten a couple items on his plate, then looked down and realized items were missing...then proclaimed, "I don't understand it, this is not breakfast, it's like we're not even in America." The table of his friends roared in laughter, and the staff added the items he needed to make a truly

complete American breakfast.

Joe and his brother were five years apart inhibiting their time together. However, they did share an attic suite when they were young. Don always said, “Joe got the talent and I got the looks.” Each of them had both attributes in their own right. Joe was interested in art and music and Don was a gear head. They bonded once again as teenagers when Joe got his license and began driving Don to and from, hither and yon. Don again had the opportunity to stay with Joe and Jeanne, after they graduated from college and were married, in South Carolina, where Joe took Don in his 1959 Chevy to get his license. Their lives mirrored each other in that Joe always held the door open for his Preacher as he entered the platform to preach, and Don always provides the water on the platform for his Preacher during the service. Likewise, Don cared for their father Joe Sr. in the end stages of his life as he suffered with Dementia/Alzheimer’s, and Joe Jr. had the same, for which we implemented care. Don’s advice and helpful hints were invaluable, as we worked through this time.

Joe’s family raised him in faith, and he accepted and received Christ as a child, from which he did not waver. Joe, a man of great humility coupled with great pride in what he stood for, stated the most impactful Bible verse and his favorite verse is God’s message of salvation, the basis of his faith, for which he served his life.

John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Joe enjoyed his sail through life, steadfast in his faith through God’s grace, with a focus of serving others with love. He was a strong and mighty Captain for his family and students. Joe’s Captain was the Lord, no middle-man required. He exuded joy through song and shared humor with everyone he encountered. His intelligence shone through, even during the state of dementia, as he would respond with sharp quips and a splendid gift of repartee on an elevated level. We often did not see it coming.

He sheltered his mind and heart to be pure of thought, creating an innocence which saw the goodness in every person he encountered. He continually educated himself with a resolve to serve in furtherance of the development of every student he taught. He even complied with leadership’s request to transfer to the College to educate and guide future teachers at Hyles-Anderson College, even though teaching Junior High was his career delight. He unconditionally gave all he possessed to elevate every idea expressed, project, goal and task imparted to him, to an exemplary outcome. His greatest heartbreak was realizing his inability to provide continued service. His spirit was clearly reflected in

his final days in that his hallucinatory physical behaviors were filled with painting, leading the band, project work and sewing, as he did when he was a young man mending curtains in support of his mom's interior design work. His verbal behaviors were "I must go take the papers/books to the children. They can't complete their work without these items."

Joe & Jeanne Hackett were knit together for 58 years in a music-filled life of nurturing love and teaching service. The bond and strength of their love was a most beautiful story to watch. They met at Bob Jones University (in 1960) and would sit and enjoy each other's company on the walkway benches, on which Whippoorwill's would sit and sing. This bird whistle became the signal from Joe and Jeanne to their children, when in public, to rally us together. Joe asked Jeanne to marry him on their first date. She said "Sure", as she was confidant he was kidding. This first date was the beginning of their happily ever after. They were married (in 1962) and birthed all five of their children in Greenville, South Carolina.

Together they delighted in the growth of their legacy, through three generations. They derived great pleasure spending time with their family. They were generous with their time, supporting and providing unconditional love for their family. They had 5 children, 18 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren, all of whom gave them a great deal of pride. Beginning with Joseph (Theresa) Hackett III (Joey predeceased) with their children and grandchildren Jamie (Amie) Mathews and daughter Adriana Mathews, Jeremy (Alexis) Mathews, and sons Jack and Theodore Mathews, Gabriella (Jake) Plimack and Skylar Hackett. Second, Jeannette (Edward) Torres with son Vincent (Eve) Torres and their children Violet and Lucas Torres, and Chae Torres. Third, Lynne (Dan) Whelan with their children Jessi (John) Staff, and their daughter Kenzi Staff, and Chad and Kayla Whelan. Fourth, Joanna Barnett with children Joe (Zoey) McQueen, and his daughter Jaidyn, and Anson Coates, Yezen Al-Swaiti, Casey Barnett, and Hailey Barnett. Fifth, Jonathan Hackett with his children Jonathan, Jolee, Lola, and Lilly Hackett. Joe, thank you for being our Captain, knowing when the sails needed to be raised on the masts for strength and lowered for comfort. You taught us so much we use every day as we sail forward in our lives. We impart these tools to your grandchildren and great grandchildren; we also know many of the thousands of young people you taught will follow suit.

They graduated (from Bob Jones University) together, Joe with a degree in Bible Theology, followed with a Master of Education (from Hyles-Anderson College), he become an ordained minister in March of 1974. Jeanne with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Practical Christian Teaching. Jeanne began teaching at Hammond Baptist Schools; and a year later Jeanne let Mrs. Lively know that Joe was looking for a job, that same morning Mr. Lively had mentioned to his wife that he was in need of a music teacher, and so began Joe's

career educating students in the Junior High, teaching world history, Bible, art and band, later teaching art and working in the Activities Department at Hyles-Anderson College, and Jeanne in the Grade School teaching music for Kindergarten ages 4 through the 6th grade. Jeanne wrote many songs, some of which were incorporated in the 170 plays which she also wrote. She was an excellent seamstress developing costumes, many without aid of a pattern. She used this sewing talent to make clothes, many times that matched, for herself and her children. Joe is a great artist, freely sharing his work with Alumni from Hyles-Anderson College. They worked as a team in creating stage settings for the Music programs at the Grade School, later for the stage settings at Hyles-Anderson College in the Activities Department, as well as for the various First Baptist Church conferences. Let's pause for a moment of accolade for the five worker bees they birthed, with whom the programs were achieved. Joe had great stamina, he was excellent at timing project progression and working long hours to achieve deadlines. They each taught school for Jeanne for 37 ½ years and Joe for 36 years. Jeanne using her violin, singing talent and creative writing in her work and Joe's artistry and skill for learning to play every band instrument in order to teach students to play in the band. They also followed each other to teach Sunday School Bible lessons in the Junior 5 Department for 35 years. They also enjoyed singing duets at the school and church for services, weddings and funerals. They also took mission trips to other Countries to be a witness in song and testimony.

They both received awards for years of service, educational service excellence, loyalty and faithfulness, Who's Who Among American Teachers, and appropriately Joe received the Hylander Lion Award.

Joe and Jeanne acted with fairness in student choice for class participation and program part assignments, that encouraged and uplifted those they recognized had extra needs; from simple shyness, poor self-image and/or a tough or deficient home life. They taught with excitement and exuberance to ensure all the children truly felt the power of music to uplift, exalt, sooth and embrace us through joyous times and during times of need. On several occasions, fellow students approached Lori and said, "Your Dad saw me coming out of the movies and he didn't turn me in, what's going on?". Joe exhibited great patience and understanding with the Junior High age group, sometimes protecting their indiscretions, believing it could be more impactful to effect change if children felt the pain of disappointing their teachers, parents, or other authority, affording them the ability to learn as they grow in privacy. He developed a wonderful repertoire of what we call "Junior High jokes and quips", which he continued to religiously share. We always had to watch what we said around him, but rarely could we stay a step ahead of him. Friends who visited him, in the last few months, enjoyed this banter even when he was experiencing confusion.

We enjoyed almost three months of time giving our Dad love, dedicated support, kindness, compassion, we had the joy of keeping him secure and comfortable through family care, emotional support, encouragement, cleaning, feeding, sitting next to him listening to him breathe, singing and praying through his moments of pain and fear. It was our pleasure to support and care for him, as Jeanne wished us to continue to do. These are many of the wonderful attributes Joe gave to others throughout his life. During these last few months we were able to heal multiple infections, reduce symptoms of edema, and participate in Speech, Physical and Occupational Therapies each day. While he was limited in the level of improvement he could achieve, he worked hard to achieve strength and cognitive advancement.

We prayed for God to envelop Joe in his loving arms and bring Jeanne close to him as he desperately longed for, as he stated, his precious wife, his precious life. One day in the Rehab Center the scheduled entertainment were two violinists. Dad was too ill to go to the commons area to enjoy the music. Lori went to them at the end of the show and inquired whether they could come play for Joe as his wife, Jeanne, who recently passed, played the violin; and at home, she would play while they sang together. She let them know any hymn will do, they conferred and played two songs; Amazing Grace and In the Garden. Joe, the nurses, the violinists and I were crying through the songs, as Dad directed them as if they were his band. We felt God set up this prearranged visit knowing mom's presence was needed that day, as this was one of the most painful days Joe experienced. As his life was waning, he saw Jeanne regularly, saw his mother and grandmother and begged to get up and go with them. In his slumber, he would randomly laugh, as he enjoyed their presence.

Joe sailed through to the glory of heaven, full sail, in the peacefulness of his slumber, where, we are confident, he was greeted with the warmest tenor voice stating "Ship Ahoy...Ship Ahoy!"

He is survived by his children: Jeannette Lori (Edward) Torres, Lynne (Dan) Whelan, Joanna Lois Barnett, and Jonathan Hackett; 18 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jeanne Hackett in September 2019; his parents: Joseph & Ruthanna Hackett, Sr.; and his son, Joseph Hackett III.

A viewing and visitation will be held on Monday, December 30, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Memory Lane Funeral Home, 6305 W. Lincoln Highway (US 30), Crown Point, Indiana. The funeral will immediately follow at 1:00 p.m. An entombment service will follow at Memory Lane Memorial Park. Please contact the funeral home for more

information (219) 322-2050. www.memorylanepark.com

Cemetery

Memory Lane Memorial Park

6305 W. Lincoln Highway
(US 30)
Crown Point, IN, 46307

Events

DEC 30 Visitation 10:00AM - 01:00PM

Memory Lane Funeral Home
6305 W. Lincoln Highway (US 30), Crown Point, IN,
US, 46307

DEC 30 Service 01:00PM - 01:45PM

Memory Lane Funeral Home
6305 W. Lincoln Highway (US 30), Crown Point, IN,
US, 46307

DEC 30 Burial 02:00PM

Memory Lane Funeral Home
6305 W. Lincoln Highway (US 30), Crown Point, IN,
US, 46307

Comments



“ Thoughts and prayers are with you all. I only met Joe twice and both times he was the sweetest man I met and made me feel so comfortable. Both he and your mom were remarkable people

Donna D

Donna DiMele - December 27, 2019 at 02:03 PM



“ Prayers for your family as you remember and lay to rest a great man with a greater legacy. Vince Barnes Ft Myers, FL

vince barnes - December 27, 2019 at 07:42 AM



“ Praying for your family during this difficult time. I know that you will miss Joe, as will many of us ~ his friends. We appreciated Joe and Jeanne's life and testimony. They were beautiful role models to anyone who came into their "world". Extremely blessed were the students that had the privilege to sit under their influence to learn and master music. Also blessed are those that had the opportunity to participate, under direction tempered with humor, in a multitude of memorable school musicals. So many young lives have been touched by this man and his wife. May God wrap His arms around you, his family, and may His peace and comfort be with you in these days to come.

Steve and Kitty Sloan - December 26, 2019 at 11:38 PM



“ Jonatan, thank you for sharing the tribute to both, your Dad & Mom. I didn't realize how much he had deteriorated since i last saw him visiting your Mom in the Hospital. I loved them both very much, & appreciated their love for me, which they always expressed every time they saw me. They were two of the finest Christians i knew & i'm glad to have gotten to know them when they came up to be at First Baptist. Thanks again for sharing with us !

Lanny Cantway - December 26, 2019 at 04:15 PM