



Mr. James Lyndell Yates

NOV 26, 1945 - AUG 1, 2019



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James L. Yates, age 73, passed into eternity Thursday morning, August 1, 2019, at his home in Norton Shores. He was born November 26, 1945, in Muskegon to Wilton and Wilda (Hardie) Yates. At an early age Jim attended Sunday School at Calvary Baptist Church and that association continued for many years, where he served as deacon, Sunday School Superintendent and on various Building Committees. He and Barb later considered Bridge Bible Church their home. Jim graduated from Muskegon High School in 1963 and then Memphis State University in 1968. He married Barbara Anne Boiley in 1966 and they celebrated 53 years of marriage. Jim held positions in sales at Kaydon Bearing, Seaway Pattern, and retired from J.R. Automation after serving as Vice President of Sales after seven years of what he called his “favorite job ever.”

Jim was disabled due to a fall from a horse in 2006 in Nashville, and lived as a quadriplegic for more than thirteen years. He was well known around Muskegon as he and his wife, Barb, would speak at local schools, Mary Free Bed Hospital in Grand Rapids and a number of other groups with their message that “Life can change in a minute.” He would tell audiences that there are no accidents, only events. And God knew all about his fall before it happened. As Barb would say, they belonged to a club that no one wanted to join, and those who found themselves in similar circumstances agreed: without believing in a sovereign God, there is no purpose to living like this. Jim used every opportunity, handing out over 700 copies of his “story” to anyone he came in contact with.

Jim was determined to make each day count. He decided that the best thing he and Barb could do would be to devote their lives to their children and grandchildren – to be their cheerleader, their prayer advocate, their counselor and special listener. The phone calls, emails, and messages flew through his computer. Conversations were sometimes daily, hourly. Jim was, unlike many who are not in his situation, always available.



Obituary

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He read over 400 books in 11 years. He was editing two books for friend-authors when God called him home. He was an expert at Dragon Naturally Speaking and Excel. There weren't enough hours in the day for him to get all his work done.

His resilience made him a favorite at school events as he followed his grandchildren and frequented area restaurants. Thanks to the support of special friends and caregivers, Jim's health was stable and he and Barb traveled and enjoyed much of what they had pre-fall.

Jim is survived by his wife, Barb; his two daughters, Laurel (Richardo Carrion) and Michelle Yates; five grandchildren, James, Justin, Claire, Brendan and Cameron; a sister, Gail (Duane) Cook of Zeeland, MI. His family was the joy of his life.

A celebration of Jim's homegoing will take place 3 p.m. Sunday, August 11, 2019 at The Lee Chapel of Sytsema Funeral and Cremation Services 6291 S. Harvey St., 231-798-1100, with visitation at 2 p.m. Jim's preference would be to designate gifts to Bridge Bible Church Missions rather than flowers. Share memories with Jim's family at his online guest book at www.sytsemafh.com.




Events

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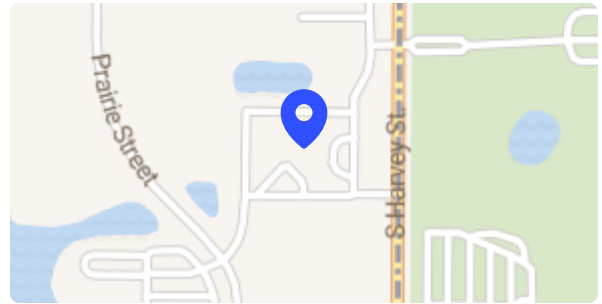
Visitation

 **Sunday**, August 11, 2019

 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM ET


 **Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services - The Lee Chapel**


6291 Harvey St., Norton Shores MI 49444



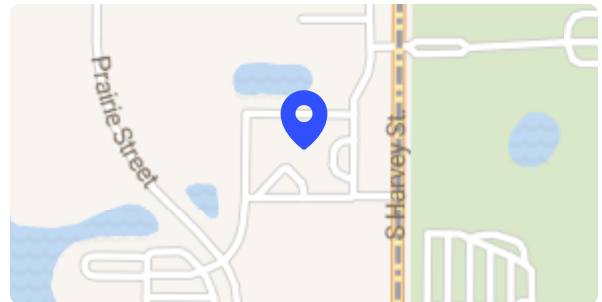
Celebration of Life

 **Sunday**, August 11, 2019

 3:00 PM ET

 **Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services - The Lee Chapel**

6291 Harvey St., Norton Shores MI 49444





Tribute Wall

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Karen Kern posted:

I have so many fun and sweet memories of Jim. When Michelle and I would go home to Michigan to visit from college I was always welcome like one of the family. Jet skiing, boating, rollerblading and going to church together was just a few of the many precious memories. Jim showed Christ in so many ways. He even gave me his sweatshirt to wear on a outside outing as I never seemed to have the right clothing for the temperature. That became a running joke between us. I am honored to have known him. He has left a wonderful legacy and an inspiration to us all to share Christ and praise Christ in all things. I love you all and send my prayers.

August 11 at 6:08 AM



Linda Wiley lit a candle in honor of James .

I met Barb and Jim and the girls while they lived and worked in the Cincinnati area. Their life was a major highlight of the years we attended the same church and attended many church services and activities together. I was young and immature and pregnant and did not fully appreciate all the kindness they offered me and my husband. We visited a few times in the Villages and Jim's life was an amazing example of how life might be difficult but sharing the Lord's love is still possible. I wish all of Jim and Barb's family and friends the Lord's richest blessings in life and hope perhaps he is enjoying a ride on his motorcycle as he did in Cincinnati. Jim's life made the world a better place. Sending love and prayers, Linda Wiley



August 10 at 5:29 PM



Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Yates family.



August 6 at 11:00 AM



Eric Strattan shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Since meeting Jim, Barb, and the girls in 1983, the Yates family has been a huge part of our lives. Attending the same churches and serving alongside one another in a variety of ministries has been a great privilege, and we are unbelievably glad for such a rare friendship. In spite of incredible hardship these last thirteen years, Jim was always an encourager, and the steadfast ways he and Barb modeled genuine faith serves as an example to all.



August 5 at 1:32 PM



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Steve Churchley posted:

My sincerest condolences to Jim's family, I know how much he will be missed. I worked with Jim several years at Kaydon. He was always kind, good natured, cheerful and a gentleman. Around 1992 he invited my family to the Christmas and Easter dramas at Calvary Baptist Church, as a result of which we began our lives as Christians. Thanks to his initiative and the Spirit's guiding, three generations of our family (and many friends) came to know Christ. I imagine many, many others who knew him can say the same. What a great legacy. Thanks Jim. Enjoy your heavenly rewards. Steve Churchley

August 5 at 6:59 AM



Kelly Carey posted:

I'm so sorry for your tremendous loss losing people you love is the most heartache anyone can go through. Both of you touched our lives in such a meaningful way. Jim was so kind to Jeff and always willing to sit and talk with and teach him anything he wanted to know I'm so touched and honored that we got to be in your lives even if only for a short while. My deepest condolences Kelly Carey

August 4 at 4:36 PM



Barbara Greenwood shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.



August 4 at 5:29 AM



Barbara Greenwood lit a candle in honor of James .

My thoughts & prayers to the Yates family. I met Mr Yates at the Frauenthal Theater, in May of 2017, when I was ushering. He made a good impression on me. He was friendly and told me about his life. He gave me one of the papers he carries, about his life. I still have it. I have a cousin whose daughter fell off a horse in Holton, Mi.



August 4 at 5:26 AM



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TW

Thomas L. Watkins posted:

Where does one begin to state the impact that Jim has had on my and so many other lives? What a champion for God and what it means to have the mind and attitude of Christ. His gracefulness and kindness extended to me and multitudes of others will forever leave a legacy of love on his behalf. From the moment we met in 1987 I knew that he was the real deal for God. When we served on the deacon board at Calvary Baptist together in the 1990's he was a great mentor to me, as he was Chairman and I was Vice-Chairman of that board. He demonstrated how to run a meeting with love and firmness. He would always be willing to answer any question or share his wisdom with me. Through the years he was a constant man of God who shared his faith and passion for Him. Many times at his home or at a men's breakfast or at church he would be the rock for many. God has called home a LEGEND and now he is dancing and joyfully shouting to God. Finally home and healed. May God use his legacy to stir our hearts to deeper devotion to our great God and Savior Jesus Christ and realize that every day must count for Him.

August 3 at 11:12 AM

CG

Chastity Gray posted:

Dear Barb, Michelle, Laurel and family, It was such a delight to know Jim all these years and to experience his love and friendship. He was always a joy to be around and he will be missed very much. Truly a man of God who was a blessing to all he met, and who at this very moment is walking side by side with Jesus down streets of gold! Sending all my love and prayers to you Barb, Michelle, Laurel and family. Love, Chastity

August 3 at 9:34 AM

BG

Barbara Gipson posted:

Jim was my cousin but we didn't get to see much of each other due to the miles that separated us. I remember how appreciative he was one time when he and his family were visiting my parents and I just spent some time with laurel at the piano. As sad as his situation was he used it to tell others about the Lord. What a blessing! Praying for you, Barb, Laurel & Michelle. Love y'all, Barbara Hardie Gipson

August 3 at 5:36 AM



Media

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Eric Strattan shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

August 5 at 1:32 PM





Barbara Greenwood shared a photo to the Memories Album album.

August 4 at 5:29 AM

5-17-2017

Life Changed Instantly!

Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, Friday, April 28, 2006 4:40 p.m. CDT

I swung into the saddle and Breeze (my daughter's quarter horse) took me into the woods. I followed my eight-year-old grandson, James, who rode his pony, Bandit. 15 minutes later we cleared the woods and came into sight of home and I decided to finish the ride at a faster pace. I snapped the reins to encourage Breeze forward. I didn't know I had spinal stenosis in my neck, a condition which put me at risk for paralysis. When Breeze took off like the wind, I was startled and immediately pulled on the reins and shouted Whoa! My neck snapped at vertebrae C3/C4 (whiplash), causing me to slump down the side of the horse and fall to the ground. My life changed instantly!

As I lay on the ground, unable to move or breathe on my own, my wife, Barbara and daughter, Laurel raced to my side. Laurel had trained to run a marathon the next day, (and she is a Nurse Practitioner) so she was prepared to breathe for me. Barb called 911, and we waited, waited and waited... When the EMT team arrived (they were lost for half an hour looking for our country address), no one felt comfortable with their competency and the Vanderbilt Life Flight helicopter crew was called. Within five minutes I was on board, and en route to University Hospital.

I was comatose for three days! Then hallucinations! And finally I was fully awake, alert and conversant. Thankful that I escaped death three times, [yes, I'm a quadriplegic - a bit of an inconvenience] but I am certain God left me on earth for a purpose. Maybe it is to talk with you.

I'm ready for another life-changing event, someday I'll walk again, and even run and jump! I hope you'll be there to see it too. Are you a Christ follower? If not, would you like to be? That would be your life-changing event. No matter who you are or what you've done, God loves you and has a plan for your life. He sent His Son, named Jesus to give you a new life filled with hope and a bright eternal future. I have great things to look forward to, even if I never walk on this earth. I'm sure of my future. If you'd like to know more about His plan for your life, you can e-mail me or visit this website.

www.EInternational.org

Then: select select

[Resources](#)
[Steps to Life](#)

Please let me know that you'll be there to cheer me on! My e-mail address is: JamesL.Yates@MSN.com



2017 05 17-James L Yates-Kaydon-Frauenthal Theater, Musk.Mi.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring James by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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