



Donald Stuckey

Medora | Sunday, August 6 2023

Donald Jerome Stuckey, 88, of Medora, IL was welcomed into heaven on Sunday, August 6, 2023. Don was born in East St. Louis, IL on February 5, 1935, the son of Jesse Homer and Lois Lucille Stuckey. Don recalled that in the Stuckey home, “you loved your family, made strong commitments to God, set high personal standards, attended church several times a week, worked hard, treated others with respect, and made education a top priority.” These values, instilled by his parents, became the foundation of Don’s life.



On September 24, 1944 at the age of nine, Don gave his heart to Jesus and accepted Him as his personal Savior. At the age of 15, he made a deeper commitment of his life to the Lord and never swayed from that life-changing decision. Don was always proud to share that his decision to become a Christian was the most important of his life. His faith in Jesus became the greatest influence in every aspect of his life from that point on.

Don married Mary Ruth Lankford in Dupu, IL on November 23, 1954. He recalled that Ruth was the “finest Christian girl I’d ever met”. Their sweet love story would span 66 years and included times of joy, accomplishment, sorrow, and hard roads, but most of all devotion to one another, their family, and their faith. Don and Ruth held each other accountable from a mutual respect for one another and devotion to the Lord: they believed in each other’s best abilities and the steadfastness of God. Even after all of their years together, Don still looked at Ruth as if she’d hung the moon and would spend hours shopping for just the right gift for her.

Don and Ruth became the proud parents of four children: Richard (Candy) Stuckey of Brighton, IL, Cristie (Tim) Lewis of Troy, IL, the late Melissa (Harry) Clendenin of

Sidney, OH, and Ericka (Tim) Uskali of St. Joseph, IL. Don and Ruth firmly believed in Proverbs 22:6, which says “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” They loved their children deeply and taught them to pray, trust God, forgive, give to others, set goals and strive to reach them, use their creativity, love music and the power of words, and to live their lives focused more on others than self. One of his greatest joys in life was that of being a grandpa to Sarah (Wayne) Pondrum, Jesse Stuckey, Shaun (Chelsea) Stuckey, Andy (Kasey) Lewis, Valerie (Justin) Orr, Lindsay (Andrew) Bowen, Brad (Erin) Lewis, Gail (Daniel Hoy) Clendenin, Nate Clendenin, Jalee (Stuart) Helmuth, Sam Clendenin, Mike (Briana) Uskali, Aaron Uskali, Amber Uskali, and Isaiah Uskali. He was also so proud to be a great-grandpa to Henry Don and Julianna Vogelmann, Gus and Ben Stuckey, Kyndle and Kason Stuckey, Brooke, Ryan, and Claire Lewis, Ezra, Isaac, and Jonah Orr, Evangeline Bowen, Charlotte, Jolene, and Elizabeth Lewis, and Abigail, Emery, and Rhys Uskali. Don shared a strong bond with his siblings, the late Robert (Suzanne) Stuckey, and Carol (William) Fulkerson. He was preceded in death by his sweetheart, Ruth, his daughter Melissa, his parents, and his brother Bob, and we can only imagine the grand reunion that is happening with them in heaven today.

Don was a lifelong learner who received a bachelor's and master's degree, an additional 60 graduate level hours and a Superintendency certificate. He attended Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and Loyola University in Chicago, all while raising a family with Ruth. He prepared for a career in wildlife management research with hopes of being a Forest Ranger, but couldn't find work, so he took a job as a high school Biology teacher at Southwestern School District in Piasa. He intended to stay one year, but remained for 34 years, serving as a teacher, guidance counselor, Assistant Superintendent, and Superintendent. Following his retirement from Southwestern, Don served as the Assistant Regional Superintendent for Calhoun, Greene, Jersey, and Macoupin counties. He was instrumental as a founding member of the Southwestern School Foundation of Educational Excellence and served on the board that established Lewis and Clark Community College. Don's leadership at the school district and in the community was one of integrity, belief in others, and genuine concern for the well-being of students, staff, and families.

Don led a life of service, not only as an educator, but across the globe. He lived his Christian faith each day and was a proud and active member of his church, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in Medora, where he served as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, and chaired numerous committees at the church and throughout the region. For many years, one of his joys was to deliver Christmas baskets of food to those in need in the community. Building the new church building in 2017 was a highlight for him because he viewed it as a significant outreach opportunity to the area. Don was a board member for the Illinois Baptist State Association for eight years and a Trustee for Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for ten. After Don and Ruth retired from education, they

found a new focus and passion, serving in short-term volunteer mission work around the world with 18 mission trips on 6 continents in 14 countries and led countless people to Christ from Africa to Asia to South America and Eastern Europe and many places in between. They also served with Disaster Relief with the Southern Baptist Convention, responding to crisis and great needs around the United States, including work in New York City after 9/11. It was truly their joy to serve people together and share their faith in Jesus. He fed into the lives of others throughout the entirety of his life and leaves a strong legacy, with an impact that will be felt for years to come. Don will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Don's family will receive family and friends on Thursday, August 10, 2023 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in Medora, IL. A celebration of Don's life will be held on Friday, August 11, 2023 at 10:30 a.m. at the church with Rev. Timothy Lewis and Bro. Sherman Smith officiating. Burial will be in the Medora Cemetery and funeral arrangements are in care of Anderson Family Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church or the Southwestern Foundation for Educational Excellence. Condolences may also be expressed to the Stuckey family at the funeral home's website www.andersonfamilyfuneral.com .