



James H. Johnson

September 3, 1921 - October 18, 2011

James Henry Johnson, age 90, of Mentone, Alabama, passed away on October 18, 2011, after a brief stay at Shepard's Cove Hospice of Marshall County following an extended time at Collinsville Health Care Center. The family wishes to express deep gratitude for the compassionate care rendered by the staffs during his time in these facilities. Funeral services will be Friday, October 21, 2011, at 11:00 AM at Mentone Community Church (formerly Mentone Wesleyan Church) of Mentone, Alabama. Burial will follow at Bank Head Cemetery with Wilson Funeral Home directing. Visitation is Thursday, October 20, 2011, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM at Wilson Funeral Home. Mr. Johnson is survived by his daughter, Betty Sue Rickman, and son-in-law, Dr. Claude M. Rickman, of Clemson, South Carolina; son, Fred Johnson, and daughter-in-law, Susan Johnson, of Rainsville, Alabama; grandchildren: Stephanie Rickman Salsman and husband, Dr. John Salsman of Evanston, Illinois; Phillip Johnson and wife, Page Johnson, of Cleveland, Tennessee; Paige Johnson and Peyton Johnson of Rainsville, Alabama; and great-grandchildren: Will and Ellie Salsman of Evanston, Illinois. In addition to his parents, Rev. H.A. and Effie Johnson, he was preceded in death by his wife, Betty Joe Jones Johnson, and two sisters, Florice Joiner and Bernice Johnson, and a brother, Talmadge Johnson. Born in Mentone, Alabama, on September 3, 1921, he was the youngest child of Rev. Henry Austin and Effie (Albright) Johnson. He attended Valley Head High School, Wesleyan Methodist Academy/College (now Southern Wesleyan University) in Central,

South Carolina, and graduated from Winder High School in Georgia. He was drafted to serve in Gen. Patton's 3rd U.S. Army and assigned to the 80th Division. A member and Clerk of Company I, 317th Infantry Regiment, he attained the rank of Sergeant and was fully committed to combat during his service career until the end of the war at which time he was honorably discharged. Upon his return from the war, James married his childhood sweetheart Betty Joe Jones in 1946 and celebrated 62 years of marriage. He was a devoted husband and provider, loving father, doting grandparent and great-granddaddy, dedicated churchman, respected tax accountant, successful telephone executive, and an active citizen and member of the community. James was employed for 30 years at Farmers Telephone Cooperative in Rainsville, Alabama, one of the largest telephone cooperatives in the nation. He served as General Manager for 10 years until his retirement, serving also as officer of regional telephone organizations during his tenure as manager. Recognizing his outstanding contributions to rural telephony and service to the state, the Governor, the Senate and the House of the State of Alabama honored him in joint session in 1985 with a citation and legislative luncheon. Possessing a boundless capacity for work and an impeccable work ethic, he also maintained a private accounting practice and was a beloved and highly-valued advisor who provided far more than accounting expertise to his loyal clients for over 50 years. James was a devout Christian and as a young man, he began using his abilities to serve the church and community. A long-time member of the Mentone Community Church (formerly Mentone Wesleyan) where his father pastored three different times during his ministry, James served in many leadership roles, including church treasurer for 52 years, Church Board of Administration 56 years, and long-term teacher of the Fellowship Sunday School Class. On a church denominational level, he received awards for his service as District Treasurer and member of the District Board of Administration for the Alabama and Delta District of the Wesleyan Church for 40 years. He was elected as a district delegate to eight Quadrennial General Conferences of the Wesleyan Church International. Also

dedicated to Christian Higher Education, he was elected and served as a Member of the Board of Trustees for 28 years (and subsequently awarded trustee-emeritus status) for Southern Wesleyan University, a denominational university located in Central, South Carolina, where he was also recognized as an Outstanding Alumnus of the Year and awarded a presidential citation. A respected community member, he was elected and served on the Mentone Town Council, was elected AARP Man of the Year, and was a popular inspirational speaker for churches, clubs, and men's breakfasts, always provoking thought and motivating positive action amid laughter with an unparalleled ability to mesmerize an audience with his keen Southern wit. Though a man of many talents, accomplishments, and awards, it is not honors that best describe James Johnson. It is the quality of his Christian example, his person, his deep love and commitment to his family, his drive for excellence, and his unquestionable integrity. A kind and true Southern gentleman with a genteel spirit combined with great strength, he was a man of deep faith and servant-heart with an all-encompassing commitment to honor God, family, and others before self. Truly, James lived out his life verse consistently from Micah 6:8 "...What does the Lord require of you but to do justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God..." Memorials may be made to Southern Wesleyan University for Johnson/Rickman Scholarship Fund at Southern Wesleyan University at PO Box 1020, Central, SC 29630 for students needing financial assistance; Mentone Community Church Scholarship Fund at 90 Summerville Road, Mentone, AL 35984; Hospice of Marshall County at 408 Martling Road, Albertville, AL 35951 to enable others to also receive loving, quality care at the end of life. It is hoped that this lasting legacy will commemorate his life-time commitment to the use of his God-given abilities to serve others and will encourage aspiring young business leaders to follow his example. Wilson Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements, online guestbook, www.wilsonhinc.com

Tribute Wall



“ *James H. Johnson*

January 12, 2023 at 10:45 AM



“ *Rest in peace and God bless. Jim was always so nice to be me while I was living in Mentone.*

Mason White - October 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ *Sue, Fred and Families: Knowing your father was one of the great blessings of our lives. He and your mother were so welcoming and supportive of our ministry as DS in the Delta District. Our lives were truly enriched by knowing both of your parents and James was undoubtedly the best district treasurer in all of recorded history! He is the only such person where others looked forward to the treasurer's report as a highlight of the district proceedings. Please accept our deep sympathy and warm regards. HC and Gloria*

HC and Gloria Wilson - October 21, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ *I am so sorry we did not get to attend James' funeral. He has always been the absolute example of a Christian gentleman and family man. I have admired James and Betty ever since I met them over 50 years ago. They were role models who left a legacy that will endure.*

Mary Catherine Joiner - October 21, 2011 at 12:00 AM

PT

“ Fred and family: Please accept my condolences. I will remember you in my prayers.

Paul Tumlin - October 20, 2011 at 12:00 AM

KG

“ Fred, I am very sorry for your family's loss. Your Dad was a backbone to the church and I admired him greatly. Thoughts and prayers are with you and rest of your family.

Keith Golden - October 20, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JG

“ Our families thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. We love you guys.

Jana Csgle Groghan - October 20, 2011 at 12:00 AM